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East Palo Alto Today



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East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

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Police chief finalists greet city residents

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

The East Palo Alto community had an opportunity to meet the three finalists who are in the running to be East Palo Alto's next police chief. The introductions took place at a community "meet and greet" event this past Saturday, August 9, in the East Palo Alto City Council Chambers.

During the event, which ran from 3:30 p.m. to about 5 p.m. community members and the press were introduced to Brian Ferrante, Thomas McCarthy and Albert Pardini, who are vying to be East Palo Alto's police chief.

According to the original format for the meeting, the three candidates were only going to meet individually with interested attendees at the event. But after numerous requests from community members, it was decided to allow each of the candidates to address the assembled group who came to see them.

So, all three finalists made brief presentations. Ferrante was the first to speak and he said that he had just retired after 20 and a half years with the San Jose Police Department.



Photo by Henrietta J. Burroughs

This photo shows the three finalists who are vying for the position of police chief in East Palo Alto. Standing left to right are Brian Ferrante, Tom McCarthy and Albert Pardini. The three candidates met with the East Palo Alto community on Saturday, August 9, 2014 in the East Palo Alto City Hall.

He said he was a captain in charge of the city's Foothill Division, which encompasses "everything east of Highway 101."

Ferrante described the Foothill Division as an area that was "in a lot of ways very

similar to the demographics of East Palo Alto and had a lot of the same issues." He said, "This was a fantastic opportunity to come up here and work for you, to work for the community and bring the police department and the community

closer together to work to solve the problems. I'm really excited about the opportunity." He offered to answer the audience's questions personally after the presentations were completed.

Albert Pardini spoke next

and said that he worked for the San Francisco Police Department for the last 31 years. In remarks that were longer than the two other candidates, Pardini said that he thought that being the chief of police in East Palo Alto would be a great opportunity and that he lived 10 minutes away.

He added that he had been watching East Palo Alto for years, because one of his assignments in San Francisco was the Bayview, where he was the captain of the station, which made him the chief of the area.

He said that there were a lot of similarities to the type of crimes that were occurring in the Bayview as well as in East Palo Alto. So he used to watch to see the strategies that were working in East Palo Alto and see if "they would work and mesh together with the problems" that he was working on in the Bayview.

Pardini emphasized that he had a vast amount of experience with community policing and said, among other things, that he would start out with town hall meetings and weekly emails.

The third candidate to continued on page 11

Sea rise will bring severe flooding to Silicon Valley's eastern edge

By Ngoc Nguyen



Photo shows houses underwater during flooding

Thirty-year-old Gustavo Leal remembers the floodwaters reaching the doorstep of his family home in East Palo Alto. "It was bad enough that you couldn't get out of your driveway," he said.

Next time the floodwaters could swamp the entire house. That's the findings of a new study released today by Climate Central, a research and journalism organization.

In February 1998, an El Niño storm brought high-speed winds combined with abnormally high sea levels that wreaked havoc in the Bay Area. El Niño is an abnormal weather pattern that brings severe storms to the western Pacific every few years.

As a result of the heavy rains, many low-lying areas, including East Palo Alto, were swamped. Records of tidal gauges in the area show that waters reached two and half feet above high tide during that El Niño storm, which damaged about 1,700 properties in East Palo Alto and neighboring cities.

Record floods like the one Leal experienced will become more frequent and severe with rising sea levels, according to Climate Central's analysis, which uses federal data, historic flood statistics and sea rise projections to map flooding in 11 U.S. coastal states.

The research found that Northern California residents, many from low-income and minority communities, will bear the brunt of sea level rise, with San Mateo County – just south of San Francisco – as the hardest hit in the Bay Area.

Statewide, \$36.5 billion in property and 145,000 people are located on land less than three feet above the high tide line, with 90 percent in the San Francisco

Bay and Delta. More than half of the total people affected are in San Mateo County alone, home to an international airport, major corporations including Facebook, Oracle and Genetech, and Stanford University.

Residents in that county could experience floods reaching three feet above the high tide line every year by mid-century, according to the analysis.

"Sea level rise means more floods, reaching higher – and that's already happening today, long before the threat of permanent submersion," said Dr. Ben Strauss, study lead and Climate Central's vice president for climate impacts, in a statement. "Northern California will likely break local records before most of the rest of

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Photo courtesy of New America Media

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City council agrees how to select next city mgr.

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

The East Palo Alto City Council decided that it will select an interim city manager to replace Magda Gonzáles, the city's current city manager, when her contract runs out this October. Council members also decided that the city will seek the services of an executive firm to find a permanent manager for the position.

The council reached its decision during a special council meeting that was held on Tuesday, July 22. After exploring several different options



Photo courtesy of Jamauri Bowles
City Attorney John Nagel is shown talking with East Palo Alto Mayor, Laura Martinez, just before the start of the special East Palo Alto City Council meeting that was held on Monday, July 14, 2014.

during the meeting for finding a permanent city manager, the council voted three to two to have the city's HR department

post a job listing to advertise that the city is seeking an interim city manager

Mayor Laura Martinez announced publicly at the council's regular meeting on July 16 that the council would seek a replacement for Gonzáles. At its special Tuesday meeting this week, the council agreed to accept applications for the interim city manager position from interested city staff members as well as from candidates who might come from outside the city

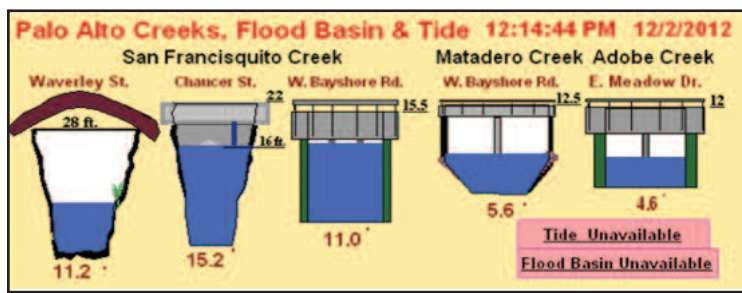
Before the council's vote Tuesday, Council member Ruben Abrica contended that

the council should assume the responsibility of recruiting an interim city manager rather than give the task to an executive search firm. He said that the council could advertise the job vacancy and then interview the candidates, who responded to the advertisement in September after the council returned from its August summer break.

If the council could not decide on an interim city manager following its interviews, then Abrica said that it should seek the services of the re-

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Preparing for flood hazards in East Palo Alto



By Brent Butler
East Palo Alto Today

In preparation for the upcoming rainy season, the City

of East Palo Alto is engaging in public outreach activities to educate local residents about the potential risks from flooding in East Palo Alto.

The City's review of the Local Annex to the Association of Bay Area Government's Hazard Mitigation Plan will occur at the September 8, 2014 Planning Commission meeting at 7pm in the City Council Chamber at 2415 University Avenue.

Staff has also made flood protection information available on the city's website (<http://www.cityofepa.org/index.aspx?NID=509>) and at the

East Palo Alto Library in a binder entitled "Flood Protection Information for the City of East Palo Alto" which has multiple publications regarding flood damage mitigation, local flood protection regulations and information regarding the City's participation in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) which has saved the community nearly \$700,000 by entitling those who own property in the flood zone with a

15% discount on their flood insurance premiums. A committee was also established to guide the public outreach plan for flood preparedness. This committee helps develop programs to engage the community in matters related to flood protection.

Before the start of the raining season each year, city staff mails a brochure to every East Palo Alto resident.

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Study highlights barriers to voting in California

By Candace Francis
East Palo Alto Today

A new report released by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area (LCCR) "Voting Rights Barriers and Discrimination in Twenty-First Century California: 2000-2013", based on an in-depth study of voting discrimination in California over the past 13 years, chronicles a trend in voting rights violations and disenfranchisement throughout

the state. Produced in response to the Supreme Court's 2013 decision in Shelby County v. Holder that gutted the federal voting rights act, the report finds that California voters face barriers and discrimination in voting across five categories: (1) vote dilution, (2) the systemic de jure and de facto disenfranchisement of currently and formerly-incarcerated Californians, (3) voter suppression, (4) language access barriers and (5) disability access barriers.

*Accompanying the Lawyers' Committee report is an interactive, searchable

database that catalogs state and federal voting rights cases in California. Also included are NGO report findings and examples of individual instances of voting problems on Election Day. The data gathered spans the years 2000 to 2013. The report and database are intended to be useful resources

for voters, elections officials, administrators and legislators as well as community civic engagement and civil rights organizations.

"The trends that emerged from our research demonstrate that significant discrimination and voting

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The Sequoia Union High School District

...is seeking applicants to serve on the District's Construction Citizen Oversight Committee

This committee will meet four times per year to monitor expenditures for the building projects of the recently approved Measure A school construction bond. Periodically, the committee will report bond expenditures to the community.

Applications

Applications may be downloaded from the Sequoia District web site at www.seq.org/departments/administrative/construction or may be requested from the district office by calling Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services Enrique Navas at 650-369-1411, ext. 22218.

Send completed applications to
Enrique Navas
Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
Sequoia Union High School District
480 James Avenue
Redwood City, CA 94062

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Wednesday, August 20 at 5:30 pm
or
Tuesday, September 9 at 5:30 pm

To register:
email: connections@foothill.edu
or
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URL: www.foothill.edu/fcc/myf

Community News Briefs

Two East Palo Alto police chief finalists are the subject of federal lawsuits

In a stunning newly uploaded online article, the Palo Alto Weekly reported that two of the current candidates vying to be East Palo Alto's next police chief "are, or have been, the subjects of federal lawsuits."

The article, written by Sue Dremann, states that Lt. Brian Ferrante is involving in several lawsuits that are ongoing, and "San Francisco Captain Albert Pardini was sued for violating a legal observer's civil rights during a demonstration."

Assistant City manager, Barbara Powell, said that each of the candidates would be subjected to extensive and thor-

ough background checks before any final consideration of their candidacy is made.

Read the complete online article about the lawsuits at <http://paloaltoonline.com/news/2014/08/14/east-palo-alto-police-chief-candidates-named-in-three-federal-lawsuits>.

East Palo Alto's city manager has a new job

Magda González, East Palo Alto's current city manager, did not have her contract renewed by the East Palo Alto City Council last month, but she has quickly found a new job. The City of Half Moon Bay issued a press release on August 7 announcing that González has been hired to be Half



Magda González

Moon Bay's new city manager.

After her contract is publicly approved by Half Moon Bay's City Council, her starting date with the city will be announced at the August 19 Half Moon Bay's City Council meeting.

East Palo Alto candidates are qualified to be in the November 2014 Election

Thus far, three East Palo Alto residents qualified to be listed on the November 2014 election ballot as candidates for the two open seats on the East Palo Alto City Council.

The candidates are incumbents Ruben Abrica and Donna Rutherford. They are joined by Kimberly Carlton, who describes herself as a business woman and a non-profit manager.

Marcelino Lopez is running again for a seat on the Ravenswood City School District Board. His opponent in the race is Nicolas Valdez, a special education teacher.

Major staff changes are taking place at Collective Roots

In July, Kris Jensen left his

position as Collective Root's executive director, citing personal reasons as the cause of his departure from his position.

Now other staff changes are on the horizon. In acknowledging the changes, the Collective Roots board issued a statement: Collective Roots is seeking



candidates for two open positions (Executive Director and Manager of Community Initiatives).

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Route changes for EPA's free shuttle

By Sharon Jones
City of East Palo Alto

A new free shuttle route started on July 1st. The new shuttle will provide service between the Woodland Avenue/Newell Road/West Bayshore Road neighborhood in East Palo Alto and the Palo Alto Caltrain station at Alma Street/Lytton Avenue.

The new shuttle route is the result of a partnership between East Palo Alto and the City of Palo Alto.

In order to avoid overlap with SamTrans bus routes, reduce du-

plication of service, and maximize the efficient use of limited funds, the free shuttle service on the east side of Route 101 will be discontinued.

While the free shuttle will no longer operate on the east side of Route 101 as of July 1, residents in those neighborhoods are served by existing SamTrans bus routes 280, 281, and 296, as well as SamTrans Redi-Wheels for seniors and disabled residents. Schedule, fare, and route information for SamTrans buses and Redi-Wheels is available by calling



650-660-4287 (TTY only at 650-508-6648), or going online to www.samtrans.com.

In addition, door-to-door shuttle service is available to qualified senior and disabled residents in

East Palo Alto, to and from the East Palo Alto senior center. More information on this program is available by contacting Tammy Holloway at 650-853-5907 or by email at tholloway@cityofepa.org.

After July 1, East Palo Alto residents seeking assistance with accessing any of these alternatives are encouraged to contact Michelle Daher, East Palo Alto Environmental Coordinator, by calling 650-853-3197, visiting 1960 Tate Street, or emailing mdaher@cityofepa.org.

Further information including a

map of the new route is online at www.cityofepa.org/FreeShuttle or available by calling 650-853-3197.

Collective Roots is hiring an Executive Director & a Manager of Community Initiatives.

Visit collectiveroots.org for details! We work with youth and adults in East Palo Alto to increase access to fresh, healthy and affordable food!

Lawsuit filed to stop sale of church



By Jamauri Bowles
East Palo Alto Today

Arthel Coleman is suing the pastor of the Born Again Christian Center in East Palo Alto. Coleman is a former deacon in the church. He is suing the church pastor, Andre Harris, for allegedly trying to sell both the church and a house, Harris lives in for personal profit. Coleman's lawsuit was filed by lawyer Stephen Pappas, on the church's behalf.

Members of the Born Again Christian Center said that they had no knowledge of the attempted sale of the church property, since they were not consulted about it. Coleman said that Harris was "stealing the church, and the church's property."

"He has no right to sell the church's property," Coleman said.

According to Coleman, Harris and his wife Gloria Harris, changed the deed of the house from the church and put their names on the deed to sell

the house. But, since there are prohibitions on transferring property from religious organizations, they later changed it back to the church in order to complete the sale.

An attempt was made to reach Harris through the church's number, but the number was disconnected.

In selling the house, Harris had the assistance of his brother, Ken Harris, who is the owner of Alpha Century 21 in East Palo Alto. Ken Harris sold the house and his wife, Rhona Edgerton Harris, allegedly notarized some of the documents necessary for the sale.

When contacted for his side of the story, Ken Harris replied that he had no comment. An attempt was made to reach his lawyer, Thomas D'A-mata.

Coleman expressed disappointment in Andre Harris' decision to sell both the house and the church.

"Everybody thought he was sincere," Coleman said. "I don't know how he thought he could get away with something

like that."

Since 1999, Harris has been the pastor for the Born Again Christian Center. While the house, located on 871 Weeks Street beside the church, located at 891 Weeks Street, is still on the market. The lawsuit seeks an injunction to prohibit the sale of the church, and to rescind the sale of the house.

The church's members will hold a rally in front of the church on August 16. Members of other churches in the community are invited to attend, as well as anyone else who wishes to show support for the church. Coleman said there are plans to hold another rally at a later time.

He also said the goal of the rally is "to let the community know that we're concerned about our church," as they "[wait] for the justice system to do its job."

Pappas expressed the same wish as Coleman to keep the church and the house.

"We're trying to preserve the church and save the house for the East Palo Alto community," Pappas said.

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From the Editor's Desk

Humanity needs another drop in testosterone

In an article that appears in the August 2014 issue of the journal, *Current Anthropology*, five authors, who worked jointly on the article, contend that two coexisting occurrences in the human body 50,000 years ago, led to humanity's current level of advancement.

One of these developments was the feminization of the human skull and the second significant development was a reduction throughout the human body in the levels of the male hormone testosterone.



Henrietta J. Burroughs

With these two developments, the authors, led by Robert L. Cieri, contend that humanity became more civilized and began to develop behaviors that led "to continued innovation, planning and abstract and symbolic thought."

These are also behaviors associated with high levels of social tolerance, music, art, complex language, science and other qualities that we associate with the human species today.

In other words, because of the changes in our skulls that made them more rounded and a decrease in the level of testosterone, a hormone that leads to aggressive behavior, human beings became more sociable and started living more peaceably among themselves.

With these two changes, the authors say that the human species started on the road to making cultural and technological advances that led to our modern civilization.

Would it be an overstatement to say that, with these two developments, humanity became more feminine?

When one considers the state of the modern world today, with countless wars taking place all over the world, one might not be reaching a hasty conclusion to say that the human species might well be served by having another drop in the level of testosterone, similar to the one that took place 50,000 years ago.

With all of our global connectivity enhanced by our technical devices, we don't seem to appreciate our social connectedness too much.

I admit, since I'm a woman

that I might seem biased in saying that the world might seem better off with another drop in the male hormone testosterone.

However, women's bodies also need testosterone to function properly, just not as much of it as men. What is not well known is that men's bodies need a certain level of estrogen if their bodies are to function properly.

But just as too much of anything can be harmful, the question then be-

comes how can we reduce what it is that leads to the type of human aggression that we see in the world, where human beings go out en masse for the sole purpose of enslaving, using and killing each other.

Studies have long shown that having a higher ratio of women to men in society leads to less wars.

Women, as a whole, are more caring and more nurturing.

No, I'm not asking that men become more feminine, just that the human species becomes less eager to wage war. With our technological advances, we created more sophisticated ways of killing each other. We no longer have to engage in hand to hand combat to win wars, we now use guided missiles and drones to do the killing.

Our morals have not kept up with our technological warfare. With our stockpiles of nuclear weapons, humanity has long been on the verge of wiping itself out.

So, even with the feminization of the human skull and the drop in the levels of testosterone circulating through the human body thousands of years ago, we still have not been able to tame our aggressions. We've only slowed them down long enough to increase our effectiveness at killing each other.

But, if future generations are going to survive and thrive, if our planet is to stay whole, or even to become whole, then we might consider how a little more feminization of mankind might help us all survive together more peacefully.

A new children's playground is underway at Bell Street Park



Photo by Jamauri Bowles

This photo shows the construction taking place on the new 4,000 sq. foot children's playground in Bell Street Park. On Wednesday, August 20, the City of East Palo Alto will hold a kick-off event in the park and welcome more than 450 volunteers, who will work to create the park. Expect music, murals and ice cream. The event will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., ending with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Letters in East Palo Alto Today

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death

Dear Editor:

In 1988, California voters passed Proposition 99, which imposed a \$0.25 tax on every pack of cigarettes sold in the state. Since then, a portion of those funds have been dedicated to tobacco prevention and education services in every county. Our County has a strong history of advancing campaigns that assist smokers to quit and protect the health and well-being of all non-smoking youth and adults.

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States. Most citizens know this but we miss the fact that some communities are at even greater risk of targeting by tobacco companies..

African Americans who smoke lose an average of 16.3 years of life. Tobacco-related cancer and cardiovascular disease are the top two causes of death of Asian/Pacific Islanders and Latino high school students have the second highest smoking prevalence of all high school students.

If these stats weren't bad enough, 43.4% of our LGBT young adults smoke compared to just over 10% of their general population peers.

These numbers are beyond unacceptable!

We know that more work needs to be done to change things around, but we can't do it alone. We need new ideas, community insight, and dedicated individuals with specific understanding of each of these communities to help us target our efforts.

Our coalition meets quarterly and all are welcome to attend. For more information about our current work, please contact us at 650-573-3777 or flomotan@smcgov.org. San Mateo County Tobacco Education Coalition www.smhealth.org/TobaccoEducationCoalition

Shaunda Scruggs, MSHS
Public Health Educator
Tobacco Prevention Program
Director Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention Division
San Mateo County Health System, 2000 Alameda de las Pulgas Suite 230 San Mateo, CA 94403, (650) 573-2747

Police mistreatment

Dear Editor:

The following letter was written to Interim Police Chief Steve Belcher with copies sent to the East Palo Alto City Council on June 26, 2014.

Steve Belcher, Captain of Police
East Palo Alto Police Department
141 Demeter Ave
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Dear Chief Belcher,
I am writing this letter of complaint about the mistreatment I received by the hands of one of your officers. This is the second such incident by your agency.

On Sunday, June 22, 2014, while in a church service, I was contacted by my contractors to check on the Law Office located on University Ave. I responded to the building to check things out per their request. It should be noted I am the custodian for this building and am there cleaning up every day Monday through Friday. This means I have complete access and responsibility for this building. I arrived and observed the door was open. I looked in and asked if anyone was there. There was no response so I went in to check out the building and lock it up.

I was accosted by this African-American officer who immediately started treating me in an unprofessional, disrespectful and abusive manner. This could have been an easy situation, but clearly the assumption of this officer is that everyone he comes into contact with within the con-

EPA Today's Policies & Principles

In order to better serve the communities of East Palo Alto and Belle Haven, East Palo Alto Today has made the commitment to operate with high professional standards and to adhere to a strict code of ethical conduct.

The principles and policies stated herein serve as an agreement with our readers, advertisers and all others within our service

area.

East Palo Alto Today is dedicated to conscientious journalism. We maintain this commitment by seeking and reporting the truth, acting with integrity, and serving the public interest. We will report the news thoroughly and accurately and include multiple perspectives without favoring one over the other.

We will hold ourselves accountable to common standards of decency, treating our colleagues, news sources, and the public with respect.

We are committed to maintaining our independence by avoiding partnerships, investments or business relationships that would compromise the integrity of our news reports.

East Palo Alto Today

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www.epatoday.org and www.epamedia.org

Opinion

The ideas expressed on this page are solely the views of the individual authors, who do not represent East Palo Alto Today's board or staff

“Tipping Point” leads to reforms benefiting minority students

By Candace Francis
East Palo Alto Today



Candace Francis

How far should students go and how long should it take to get to high school? This question was posed last July in “Pushing the Line”, a report released by Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area and Bingham McCutchen LLP. Today we got the answer we were looking for - one that will increase educational opportunities for students in East Palo Alto.

“Pushing the Line” demonstrated how through a jigsaw

of attendance boundaries, Sequoia Union High School District’s (SUHSD) student assignment plan divided minority students from East Palo Alto between three different

high schools across non-contiguous attendance zones. As a result, the District’s process for assigning students to high school appeared to be discriminatory. The report outlined how the District’s assignment plan potentially ran afoul of federal and state civil rights law and urged the District to change its school assignment practice.

Among its recommendations, the report urged the District to remove the current attendance boundaries that divide East Palo Alto, craft a student assignment plan that treats all students equally, and

develop better high school transition programs.

We are pleased to report that, in answer to our report, the Sequoia Union High School District Board unanimously approved permanent changes to their student assignment plan. These changes are exactly what the “Pushing the Line” report made clear were necessary.

Specifically, all Ravenswood students will now be assigned in the first instance to Menlo-Atherton High School. This will put an end to the inequitable system that has for years splintered the

predominately low-income and minority community of Ravenswood/East Palo Alto across three different and distant high schools, resulting in long bus rides for many students and exacting a heavy toll on students and their families.

Community members singled out our report as the critical event that changed the course of the debate and ultimately led to these reforms. In the words of one: “We cannot thank you all enough for all your work and dedication around this issue.” Another re-

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Identifying and addressing racism in San Mateo County

By Tim Donohue
East Palo Alto Today

Racism should never be taken lightly as its consequences can be devastating. Unfortunately racism thrives in San Mateo County because the average county resident is either unaware of this racism or is too busy to be concerned.

First let’s identify the problem.

All 5 San Mateo County Supervisors are white. This is a concern because whites in San Mateo County make up only 42% of the county’s total population. Where is the representation for the rest of the 58% of our population? A community’s leadership should reflect the ethnicity of that community’s population so problems that affect a particular racial group are better recog-

nized and properly addressed.

But the problem goes a step further as the following County leaders are also white: the County Manager, the Assistant County Manager, the County Legal Counsel, the District Attorney, the Sheriff, and the Controller. These are a significant majority of the top leadership positions in San Mateo County.

However, the San Mateo County leaders don’t seem to get it. A recent San Mateo County committee that reviewed its court-appointed-attorney system had five members - all are white. Since a vast majority of defendants in this county are minorities, this is clearly wrong. There should have been minority representation on this committee which ironically ruled that its court-appointed attorney system



Tim Donohue

is a “model for the national to follow.” Several African American mothers who wanted to testify that their sons received harsher sentences than they deserve because their court-appointed attorneys just should up to court were not allowed to testify.

So what are the conse-

quences of this racism? Because most of these leaders do not live in minority communities, they may not understand the extra obstacles many minorities endure in this County. To begin with: There are severely under-performing schools in East Palo Alto that are robbing minority students of their minds and future.

Unemployment rates among Hispanics and African American in Silicon Valley are surprisingly high (certainly the San Mateo County Supervisors are not setting a good example). Other concerns include higher high-school, drop-out rates among minorities in this County, higher forecloser rates, more drug-related arrests and longer jail sentences (the all-white committee failed to address minority concerns that many court-appointed attorneys

often just show up to court hearings unprepared). These are serious issues that affect far too many African Americans and Hispanics for the rest of their lives.

I would like to add that African Americans are leaving San Mateo County in large numbers. In 1980, this County had 35,575 African Americans, according to the U.S. Census. By 2010, the African American population in this County dropped to 20,436 despite an overall population increase of 130,000. Why are African Americans fleeing San Mateo County in such huge numbers? Is this flight a consequence of racism? The issues of poor schools and high unemployment may be better addressed if San

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Letters

fines of East Palo Alto must be a criminal and as such they are not worthy of the courtesy and respect in trying to find out the circumstances.

Any professionally trained law enforcement officer would have quickly ascertained that I was there for business reasons and could produce the keys that allow me access to this building. Instead I was treated harshly, unprofessionally, and disrespectfully by this officer.

I am a 70 year old man, who did not pose any threat and with some common courtesy could have resolved the issue. Instead, I was handcuffed and subjected to rough handling by this officer. It was only after his fellow officer, a Caucasian female, apprised him that I used to have the contract to clean the police station that I was released.

This officer’s reprehensi-

ble conduct does not serve to enhance the reputation of the East Palo Alto Police Department with its citizens. While your department is charged with protecting and serving the citizens, this officer has an occupation mentality where even the law-abiding citizens are enemy forces and must be dealt with heavy handedly. The lack of courtesy, respect, professionalism, and poor judgment to a long time resident and business owner in the City of East Palo Alto should not be tolerated.

As I mentioned previously, this is not the first time I experienced this attitude and behavior. Again, I was working on one of my contracts and was accosted by officers from your department. They manhandled me, handcuffed me, arrested me, and jailed me. It was clear that I was working at Faith

continued from page 4

Missionary Baptist Church that day, but that did not make a difference with those officers.

Our citizens feel like your department is an occupying force and has the view that everyone is a criminal, unless it can be proven otherwise. This biased attitude makes it difficult to trust those who are charged with our protection.

I am calling on you to take the appropriate corrective measures with this officer to ensure that this treatment does not reoccur and that he will be a good representative of the East Palo Alto Police Department with respect for the citizens he is supposed to serve.

Sincerely,
Chester Prince
East Palo Alto resident

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Lifecycles

Senior Center volunteer luncheon is a big hit



By Jamauri Bwles
East Palo Alto Today

An awards ceremony took place during the volunteer luncheon in the afternoon at the East Palo Alto Senior Center on July 19. The entire event was organized by the Senior Center's Executive Director Millicent Grant, staff and supporters.

The luncheon featured appearances from members of the East Palo Alto City Council: Mayor Laura Martinez, Vice Mayor Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier, and Council Members

Ruben Abrica and Donna Rutherford.

Before the introduction of awards, one of the speakers during the luncheon, Yarbrough-Gauthier, spoke about the "Bring Back Our Girls" campaign that began after the kidnapping of over 270 female students in Nigeria back in April.

"It's not over until we can bring our girls back," said Yarbrough-Gauthier.

Mayor Martinez assisted in the presentation of the first few awards. More than 50 people were recipients of volunteer awards. There was plenty of excitement in the room.

Local leaders receive recognition

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

The East Palo Alto Section of the National Council of Negro Women held its "Annual Recognition Luncheon Celebrating Community Service."

During the luncheon, which took place at the East Palo Alto Senior Center, Rosemary Steele made the opening re-

marks and introduced Isaac Stevenson, who was the master of ceremonies.

The awards presentation was the highlight of the luncheon. This year, seven local leaders were honored for their accomplishments and for their service to the community.

The honorees included Pearlie Young-Rainer, who re-

continued on page 11



Photo courtesy of Isaac Stevenson

From left, Charles Jones, Rosemary Steele, Chris Williams, Eric Haynes, Marie Davis, and Martha Thomas. Seated, from left, James Ella James and Pearlie Young-Rainer.



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www.epatoday.org/treasured_memories/index.html



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Lifecycles

Free home tutoring program readies children for kindergarten

By Paul Thiebaut III
East Palo Alto Today

Walking into the home of three-year-old Leonardo, 10 Books A Home volunteer "Role Model," Kate, can hear giggling and loud whispers from behind a closed door. Having tutored Leo privately in his



Leo

home for over a year now, she knows exactly what he's up to.

As soon as she opens the

closet, Leo explodes with laughter before taking a seat alongside his "Role Model" on the living room floor. He selects a book from a huge pile of the many he's received from Kate each month, places it on the floor, and flips it open to read along with her.

Leo is one of 70 "Learners" currently enrolled in 10 Books A Home's (10BH) free Child-Parent Home Tutoring program. Learners in the 10BH program receive two years of weekly one-on-one home tutoring, a bookcase, and over 50 donated children's books. Each book is selected by the Role Model to ensure they cover topics that the "Learner" is excited to learn about.

As founder Paul Thiebaut III explained, "We don't just put books into homes and call it a day. We select books that the

children are interested in and read those books with the kids."

10BH's program is designed to ensure that children enter kindergarten with skills and practices known to support positive educational and life outcomes. Since the establishment of the 10BH Child-Parent Home Tutoring Program in 2012, the program's first group of Learners to start kindergarten in the 2013-14 school year is performing at or above grade level.

Specifically for Leo, what started out as rocky and silence filled lessons, quickly turned into a weekly hour of fun activities and learning. Leo's mother, Maria, notes that he has, "grown tremendously during his time in the program," and that, "Leo has gained confidence and will be

more than ready for the new world of transitional kindergarten this year."

Right down the road at the East Palo Alto Head Start, a preschool program in East Palo Alto, another 10BH Learner, Kayla, just received her most recent evaluation. Staff members at the preschool specifically noted that they are "excited for Kayla to enter (transitional) kindergarten next school year and they believe that 10 Books A Home and East Palo Alto Head Start have prepared her for this next challenge."

10BH is working to build upon its initial success by increasing its enrolled Learners to 130 within the next year, and to 300 Learners by 2017. All families living in East Palo Alto and East Menlo Park, with children between the ages of one and four, are encouraged

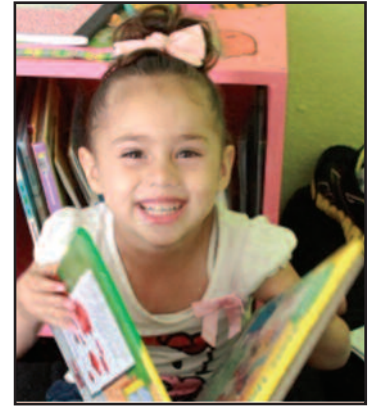


Photo courtesy of 10 Books A Home
Kayla

to apply by calling (650) 485-4877.

If you would like more information about 10 Books A Home or their free Child-Parent Home Tutoring Program, please contact 10 Books A Home at info@10booksathome.org.

Programa gratis de tutoría alista los niños para kindergarten



By Paul Thiebaut III
Traducido por Angela González
East Palo Alto Today

Al entrar en la casa del pequeño Leonardo, una de las maestras y voluntarios de 10 Books A Home, Kate, oye unas risas y susurros fuertes desde detrás de una puerta cerrada. Habiendo tutorizado el niño de 3 años durante más de un año, Kate ya sabía exactamente lo que estaba tramando Leo.

Tan pronto como se abre el armario, Leo estalla en carcajadas antes de sentarse al lado de su maestra en el suelo del salón. Él selecciona un libro de una enorme pila de los muchos que ha recibido de Kate cada mes, lo coloca en el suelo, y lo abre para leer junto con ella.

Leo es uno de los 70 "Aprendices" actualmente inscritos en 10 Books A Home (10BH), el programa gratis de Child-Parent Home Tutoring. Estudiantes en el programa 10BH reciben dos años de enseñanza uno-a-uno en su casa semanalmente, un estante para libros, y más de 50 libros donados para niños. Cada libro es seleccionado por el maestro de cada niño para asegurarse de que cubren temas que el "alumno" se excita a aprender.

Como explicó el fundador Paul Thiebaut III, "No nos limitamos a simplemente dejar los libros en las casas y llamarlo un día. Seleccionamos los libros que los niños estén interesados en y leemos esos mismos libros con ellos."

El programa de 10BH está diseñado para asegurarse de que los niños entran

en kindergardin con los habilidades y prácticas que apoyan resultados educativos y una vida positiva. Desde el establecimiento del 10BH Child-Parent Home Tutoring Program iniciado en 2012; el primer grupo del programa de Estudiantes para comenzar kindergardin en el año escolar 2013-14 están mas adelantado o al nivel de grado.

Específicamente para Leo, lo que comenzó como lecciones rocosas y llenas de silencio, se convirtieron rápidamente en una hora semanal de actividades de diversión y aprendizaje. La madre de Leo, María, toma nota de que su hijo a, "crecido enormemente durante su tiempo en el programa", y que "Leo ha ganado confianza y estará más que listo para el nuevo mundo de kindergarten este año."

Justo en la calle, en el East Palo Alto Head Start, un programa preescolar en East Palo Alto, otro 10BH Learner, Kayla, acaba de recibir su evaluación más reciente. Los miembros del personal de nivel preescolar señalaron específicamente que están "emocionados por Kayla para entrar (de transición) kinder el próximo año escolar y creen que 10 Libros A Home and East Palo Alto Head Start le han preparado para este nuevo reto."

10BH está trabajando para construir sobre su éxito inicial, aumentando sus alumnos matriculados a 130 en el próximo año, y 300 aprendices para el año de 2017. Todas las familias que viven en East Palo Alto y Medio Menlo Park, con niños entre las edades de uno a cuatro, se les anima a solicitar el programa, por

favor llame al (650) 485-4877.

Si desea obtener más información sobre

10 Books a Home o del Child-Parent Home Tutoring Program gratis, por favor póngase en

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Ravenswood Ranch throws a community rodeo

Jamauri Bowles
East Palo Alto Today



Photos courtesy - Jamauri Bowles
Child getting her face painted.

On a sunny afternoon, hundreds of people came to see the Ravenswood Ranch hold a rodeo show on June 22. The event, titled "Big Hope Little Rodeo," aimed to benefit Abilities United, a non-profit organization that supports children and adults with disabilities. For over 4,000 people in the San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, Abilities United "provides a lifetime of services to individuals with developmental and physical disabilities."

The rodeo show featured many activities, including some that involved audience participa-

tion from younger children. The show included not only horse riding, but bull riding as well. Outside of the show, the ranch also had a mechanical bull and face painting stations for visitors to check out.

Perla Ramos, an East Palo Alto resident, assisted in the promotion and organization of Big Hope Little Rodeo. She helped out in the search for volunteers, mak-

ing signs, and advertising the rodeo. Ramos thought that the rodeo was an amazing success.

"It was great to see so many people at the rodeo enjoying all the events and being a part of the horsemanship world at Ravenswood Ranch," she said. "I was very happy to see people who were new to this world because this was their first real exposure to it."

Nichelle Barajas, another East Palo Alto resident, was also happy to see how the event turned out.

"I was happy to see the bleachers full of people at all times," Barajas said.

Ramos described seeing so many people engaging with the

event as a "surreal" experience.

"I was very happy to share the joy I feel as a horse lover with all of them," she said.

Barajas also contributed to the organization of the rodeo. Acting as what she calls a "behind the scenes" person, she made the logo for Big Hope Little Rodeo, and created a Facebook page for the event. Like Ramos, she was pleased with how well the event was shared and appreciated amongst her community, as well as the impact it creates for Abilities United.

"I'm sure the kids at Abilities United will appreciate the help given to them by the community," Barajas said.

Seeing the excitement and fun everyone was having, Barajas said it was "the best reward I could have gotten that day."

Barajas' father, Jose Rojas, served as the rodeo producer and announcer for the show. The pur-



Photos courtesy of Jamauri Bowles
This photo shows Nichelle Barajas, the Rodeo Queen of the show, presenting the American flag before the event starts.

Red Cross creates six special Spanish apps

By Carlos M. Rodriguez
East Palo Alto Today

The American Red Cross is launching six free Spanish-language apps for disasters and home emergencies with simple lifesaving information that will help keep families safe.

"With natural disasters, it's vital that people can receive and share warnings, preparedness information and their own status immediately with their social networks, and that's what these Red Cross apps do," said Mark Cloutier, Regional CEO, Gateway to the Golden State Region.

"If people can take only one step to make their family better prepared for disasters, they should download these free Red Cross apps and help their loved ones download

them too."

The six Spanish-language apps are the Red Cross First Aid, hurricane, tornado, earthquake, wildfire and flood apps. The Red Cross First Aid App gives people instant access to expert advice for everyday emergencies.

The five Red Cross disaster preparedness apps give people local and real-time information for severe weather or disaster threats, and offer step-by-step instructions that let users know what to do before, during and after a hurricane, tornado, earthquake, wildfire and flood.

The Red Cross apps of special importance to people in the Bay Area are First Aid, wildfire, flood, and earthquake.

The Red Cross apps have a feature that enables users to easily toggle between English

and Spanish language on their app. Previously, users needed to set their entire phone language to either English or Spanish.

The Red Cross, with its experience working with people during disasters, knows that people behave differently when under stress – such as a First Aid emergency or a weather emergency.

In these times, people want to consume important information in the language they are most comfortable with. The Spanish toggle makes the lifesaving information in the apps easier to get in emergency situations.

Each one of these Spanish-language apps are free and available for iPhones and Android devices in the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. They can also be found

at RedCross.org/SpanishApps (English) or RedCross.org/AppsenEspanol (Spanish).

All the apps offer pre-loaded content ensuring that Red Cross guidance is available anytime, anywhere – even if no Internet connection is available.

Another important feature in the disaster preparedness apps allows users to let family and friends quickly know they are safe with a customizable "I'm Safe" alert for Facebook, Twitter, email and text.

The apps also have interactive quizzes allow people to earn badges that they can share with friends on social networks.

The Red Cross created and released the six Spanish-language mobile at a time when smartphone use among His-

panics is surging.

A 2013 study by the Pew Research Center found that Latinos own smartphones and go online from a mobile device at similar – and sometimes higher – rates than other groups of Americans.

These six free Spanish-language apps build on the Red Cross legacy of teaching lifesaving skills to people across the country. Overall, the award-winning Red Cross apps have been downloaded more than 4.7 million times.

While apps can prepare people for disasters, it's important to remember that downloading any of the Red Cross apps is not a substitute for training.

To learn more about Red Cross First Aid and CPR/AED courses or to register, visit red-cross.org/TakeAClass.

Support the East Palo Alto Today newspaper

The East Palo Alto Today newspaper is published by the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media, a nonprofit agency that was formed in January 2003 to create media outlets in East Palo Alto and provide the type of positive, relevant information about the community that is not easily found elsewhere. If you like what you see in East Palo Alto Today, then we ask that you enable us to serve the community better. You can do this by completing the partnership card below and mailing it with your tax deductible donation which will go directly to the center's media efforts. You can read more about the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media online at www.epamedia.org. You can also donate to the center at the EPA Today and the EPA Media websites. Please contact us if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you.



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Rotary scholars hold a summer party

Jamauri Bowles
East Palo Alto Today

The Rotary Club of Menlo Park held its first ever Rotary scholars summer party, on Jul. 15 in Atherton, at Menlo College in Brawner Hall. At the small gathering, pizza and refreshments were provided for the attendees to consume, while experiences and pieces of advice were shared for everyone to consider and reflect on.

Michelle Tsui is the Rotary Scholarship Continuing Support Program Chair, and Club President-elect for the Rotary



Photo by Jamauri Bowles
Alfonso Avila speaks about his college experiences.

Club of Menlo Park. Tsui said the summer party was part of the Rotary Scholarship Continuing Support program that began with this year's scholarship winners.

Tsui also said it was grati-

fying to see some of the Rotary scholars, from different years, conversing and sharing their experiences with one another at the summer party.

"It is much more effective for students to hear from their peers than from older adults," she said. Even though Rotary members have had more life and professional experiences, she feels that "the scholars can relate to one another much better."

For the Continuing Support program, each four-year college recipient has a Rotary supporter, who is a Rotary member who stays in touch

with the student throughout the four years in college.

Jose Luis Sanchez, a Rotary Club of Menlo Park scholar and graduate from Eastside College Preparatory School this year, said it is "very important" to stay in touch with Rotary members, especially since they are financially assisting him with his college education.

"They really want me to succeed and that is what I appreciate about the program," said Sanchez, who will start his first year of college at Wesleyan University in the fall.

Tsui stated that the sum-

mer party would allow "a forum for the scholarship recipients to get together" and establish a support network, since she said it is important for Rotary scholars to communicate through networking. There is a Facebook group that was set up for the Rotary Club of Menlo Park scholars to share their experiences.

"It is our goal to build a strong network where the Rotary scholars will support one another in all aspects of life," she said.

Kayte Toscano, another

continued on page 12

Project WeHope graduates show their pride



Jamauri Bowles
East Palo Alto Today

Graduation marks the culmination of a hard-fought journey and the beginning of a new one. Twenty-five graduates of Project WeHOPE's graduation banquet might certainly look at graduation in this way, since many, if not all, of the graduates come from Project WeHOPE's homeless

population.

The banquet, which was held on June 27 at Project WeHOPE's offices on Bay Road, seemingly highlighted the organization's stated mission to add to "the health of [the] city by developing transformational leaders that will address the critical issues facing our community."

Project WeHOPE began as a non-profit organization that was established to serve the homeless in the winter of 2009. Since its founding, the organization added a housing program for homeless individuals from the San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

At its graduation banquet, representatives from different local organizations addressed

the graduates. Speakers came from Renaissance Startup, Healthy Relationships California, Nuestra Casa, MMBSC (Mind, Music, Body and Spirit Connection), and Retraining the Village.

Tim Russell, who is the executive director of Renaissance Startup and an administrator of its Secure Future\$ program, told the graduates about the importance of



Photo by Jamauri Bowles
Tim Russell congratulates one of the WeHope graduates

keeping up with their financial stability. Russell made a remark about always checking his bank account before his Facebook account, stating that the amount of likes he gets for a photo, for example, is not going to help him pay bills.

"I check to make sure that I'm on track," Russell said.

Alicia Garcia, the associate director of Project WeHOPE, spoke about how the organization has grown and developed over the years.

"Our mission became a lot broader," she said, "because we realized that if we wanted to be a transitional shelter, we needed to equip [our clients] with the tools that [they] would

need to help [them] to be self-sufficient."

Before the presentation of their certificates, the graduates were asked to share their goals for the future. Some of their goals were financial, others were personal, and still others were educational. While their goals varied, they all shared their common confidence and determination to accomplish their aspirations.

After their goal sharing, the graduates received their certificates, and the graduation banquet came to a close with dozens of smiling faces.

For more information about Project WeHOPE, go to <http://projectwehope.org/>

Study highlights

rights barriers continue to plague California elections. The findings make clear the need for consistent enforcement of existing legal protections, as well as stronger voting rights protections under state and federal law," says Joanna Cuevas Ingram, attorney and Equal Justice Works Voting Rights Fellow at LCCR, who authored the report along with Georgetown Legal Fellow, Rachel Evans.

The case for additional oversight is supported by over twenty cases that were filed under the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) since the start of the millennium. The report also found that that over 140 local jurisdictions, including city councils, school districts, community college districts, county boards and water districts, have sought to convert from at-large elections to district-based elections in order to comply with the CVRA and address ongoing concerns of vote dilution in California.

Additional challenges addressed in the report include the de facto disenfranchisement among more than

350,000 currently and formerly incarcerated Californians who are otherwise eligible to vote, and over nine California cities and counties the U.S. Department of Justice identified as acting in violation of their language access obligations under the federal Voting Rights Act.

LCCR recommends several actions that state and federal governments should take to address the concerns identified in the report. Samples of them are:

Adopt and enforce clear statewide standards for voter registration, pollworker training, auditing and evaluation.

Ensure and protect the right to vote among 350,000 current and formerly incarcerated Californians who are otherwise eligible to vote under current law.

Strengthen and expand state and federal language and disability access voting rights protections.

Strengthen the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) to address ongoing vote dilution

of communities of color in single-member district-based election systems, and provide clearer remedies for violations.

Adopt a new coverage formula in the proposed Federal Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2014 (VRAA) that brings California within federal protection and oversight before common discriminatory election practices cause any further harm to California voters.

Read the full report at <http://cts.vresp.com/c/?LawyersCommitteeforC/22aabe9fc7/11a2bc0452/f5e16a2932>. Get more information about the database, the executive summary, and a new infographic and fact sheet on the California Voting Rights Act from the website for the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights at www.lccr.com.

Candace Francis is the Communications Director for the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area.

See another article by her on this issue's Opinion section on page 5.

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Sea level rise

the nation.”
Driven by global warming, sea levels have been rising because of the expansion of the water as it heats up and the unprecedented thawing of the massive Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets. Sea level is expected to rise by one foot by mid-century and about three feet by 2100.

“It’s not just gradual sea level rise [that’s a problem],” said Jeremy Lowe, a scientist who studies estuaries and wetlands with ESA. “It’s when we have a high tide and a storm and big waves in the Bay. That’s when we are going to have flooding and those events are going to be more frequent and they are going to affect us sooner.”

San Mateo County is ground zero

San Mateo County is ground zero for sea level rise impacts. More than 90,000 people and \$21 billion in property are at risk of flooding. More than half of the people affected are from immigrant and minority communities, mirroring an important fact about sea rise in the Bay Area: it affects more people of color here than whites.

Flood map showing vulnerable areas

Who’s most vulnerable in a flood event?

This map is displaying social vulnerability in areas below the water level. **HIGHLOW** – Click map to enlarge and see additional information.

According to an analysis by New America Media and Investigative Reporters and Editors of census data and projected sea rise data by the U.S. Geological Survey, about 60 percent of Bay Area residents at risk of a flood by mid-century are from ethnic communities. Climate Central’s analysis found similar results.

Juan Luis del Hoyo, 25, grew up in East Palo Alto and remembers that during the 1998 El Niño storm, he had to evacuate because his middle school was flooded. He now rents a house just eight blocks from the creek that flooded during that big storm.

“We wouldn’t want our stuff to get messed up by the water,” he said.

But as a renter, del Hoyo is more vulnerable in a flood disaster than a homeowner who has flood insurance.

Because they are located in a federally-designated (FEMA) flood zone, homeowners with a federally-backed mortgage here would

be required to purchase flood insurance. That would make them eligible for federal disaster relief in case of a flood.

“[When] flooding [happens] in a community, the first line of defense is insurance, [which can help the homeowner] recoup and recover from that disaster,” said FEMA spokesperson Olivia Humilde.

East Palo Alto residents vulnerable in a flood

San Mateo County has the highest number of “high social vulnerability” residents impacted by flooding in the nine Bay Area counties. (The social vulnerability index takes into account things like income level, language barriers, race/ethnicity and age, and is used by disaster planners to direct resources during an emergency.) The bulk of the county’s most vulnerable population is in East Palo Alto.

City Manager Magda Gonzalez said the community of 30,000 has an unemployment rate that is about triple that of the county (5 percent) and the median income in the area is about half that of the county. As a comparison, neighboring Palo Alto has a median household income of about \$122,400, while East Palo Alto’s is just under \$48,000, according to census figures.

“Most of the people here are low-income... they provide a lot of the service jobs for Silicon Valley... so they are not making the high salaries that the high tech industry is making,” she said. “Yes, [sea level rise] is definitely going to impact our community. This is an environmental justice issue.”

The foreclosure crisis in 2007 had a significant impact on the community, Gonzalez says.

“Most cities get their money from property taxes and sales taxes,” she said. “We were impacted ... about one third of the community went into foreclosure during the housing bust ... so property values went down significantly, which means property taxes then go down and money

doesn’t go into city coffers.”

This tax base is important, Gonzalez says, because it helps to fund public works projects, including improvements to levees, that could better protect the city and its neighbors – Palo Alto and Menlo Park – from flooding at nearby San Francisquito Creek.

The San Francisquito Creek’s headwaters originate in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and waters winds roughly 12 miles through parts of Palo Alto and Menlo Park before exiting into the Bay. During a big storm, the creek catches all the storm water and flows through

down the channel,” he said. “If it is concurrent with high tide, that significantly increases the amount of water in the channel in East Palo Alto and increases flooding. With sea level rise that is going to be made worse.”

Materson says the new levee will be able to protect against a 100 year flood – which has a one percent chance of occurring each year – and 26 inches of sea rise.

“The National Research Council had three different scenarios: aggressive, moderate and smallest scenario,” he said. “We chose the most aggressive. In 50 years, 26

inches [of sea rise] is pretty large for a 50-year number. I feel comfortable that we’re on the right track.”

Materson estimates the new levee project will cost \$37 million, with a “hefty contingency” built in, he says, and could be built in two years. The proposed

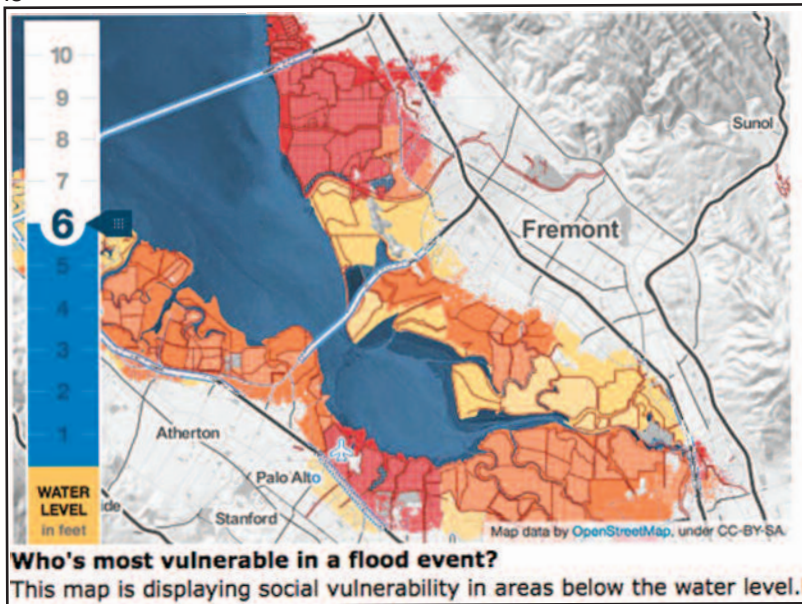


Photo courtesy of New America Media

East Palo Alto – the bottom of the creek – before draining to the Bay.

In a big storm, like the El Niño event in 1998, creek waters in East Palo Alto often swell to the top of the channel.

Gonzalez says the levee is “not certified, meaning it’s not strong enough,” noting that the creek levee gives a 12-year-flood protection, while the standard is a 100-year-flood protection.

Building a bigger levee East Palo Alto is part of a regional partnership to protect the area from future floods by constructing a new levee. The San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority also includes Menlo Park, Palo Alto and two county-wide agencies.

Len Materson, executive director of the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority, says residents in East Palo Alto and neighboring cities are doubly exposed to flooding – on the creek side and Bay side.

“Forty percent of properties in the creek flood plain are in the bay flood plain,” he said, noting that sea level rise will make flooding worse.

“When there is a big storm event, a lot of water is coming

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United for Community Action (YUCA), an environmental justice organization based in East Palo Alto. She joined the group when she was 13, and now, at 30, heads it.

She says the community’s work to close down the plant, which occupied nine acres of bay-front property, paved the way for the transformation of the area into a patchwork of restored wetlands that now attract wildlife, including the endangered California clapper rail.

Cooley Landing, a peninsula jutting into the Bay that used to house a garbage dump, was cleaned up, restored, and now boasts a park. A wildlife education center is slated to be constructed there.

“I think the towers of the [Romic] facility was the last piece that needed to be removed to really, fully restore the wetland,” Loya said. “Part of it was ... that we could re-imagine the city. Part of this area could become a vital place and build a tax base for the city ... so then we could be able to re-imagine the entrance into Cooley Landing now that the towers were gone.”

Although YUCA’s efforts paved the way for tidal marshes – which other cities are now adopting to gird against higher sea levels, bigger waves and storm surges – Loya says the group has only in the last year started to talk about climate impacts, including sea level rise.

“All these Bay lands would also be submerged, which is perhaps why people don’t see [sea rise] as a huge concern,” she said. “We don’t know how quickly that could happen. So, how much time would the community and the city have to develop its preventative measures?”

This story is part of a New America Media-led collaborative reporting project (“Surging Seas Coming to Your Neighborhood Soon?”) on the local impacts of sea level rise involving six Bay Area ethnic and community media reporters. The project was conducted in partnership with Climate Central, Stamen Design and Investigative Reporters and Editors, and funded by the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, Mize Family Foundation, and the Fund for Investigative Journalism.

The above article by Ngoc Nguyen was originally posted on the New America Media website on Jun 10, 2014 and is reprinted here by permission.

Preparing for floods

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Palo Alto property in the flood zone, approximately 1,800 households. Information in this brochure describes how to prepare for a flood and what to do. <http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=524> The Community and Economic Development Department will assist members of

the public with questions and concerns, and can be reached at (650) 853-3189.

In the past year, staff repealed the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance and renamed it Floodplain Management. New provisions require the elevation of new and substantially improved homes to

18 inches above the height of floodwaters anticipated once every hundred years. These regulations are accessible online, <http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=527>.

For more information, contact Planning and Housing Manager Brent Butler at (650) 853-3121.

Racism

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San Mateo County had a representative number of minority leaders.

Unfortunately, most San Mateo County and Bay Area residents are unaware of this racial bias. Yes, many know all 5 Supervisors are white as this story has been reported by the media. However, the San Mateo County leaders being nearly all white and then

selecting an all-white committee has been ignored by the media.

This is an issue that desperately needs to be addressed. Minorities in San Mateo County deserve representation.

Tim Donohue is the executive director of Key4hope, a Silicon Valley think tank.

Council agrees

cruitment firm, which would also be chosen to assist the council in its search for a permanent city manager.

Before Abrica made a formal motion that included his recommendations, Council member Larry Moody urged that the council seek the services of a search firm to assist the city in filling the interim city manager position. He said that he did not think that he, personally, had the skill set to ask the necessary questions that involved current city projects such as “public works or development projects, the lining up of grants and [those affecting] the police department.”

He said that an executive search firm is designed to do

just that and would make the load lighter for the council. Moody described the city’s human resources department as overloaded and a little unstable and suggested that the council be mindful of these factors and do everything possible to help the staff fill the city’s two top open positions: the chief of police and the soon-to-be vacant city manager position.

Council member Donna Rutherford agreed with Abrica. She said, that the council is here to make decisions and can’t make excuses about doing its part. “I know we can do that.. formulating some questions. It’s not really that hard to do. It’s not that difficult

to appoint someone for a period of time and then hire a search firm to do the other part of the process.”

Vice Mayor Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier stopped short of saying that the city was in “crisis mode,” but she said, “We need to make some really hard decisions to keep our city going.” She said that the city needed “to heal and keep going forward to get those projects done, because we can’t wait until the last minute... We have some critical positions that we need to get filled,” she said.

Abrica’s motion was seconded by Rutherford and approved by Abrica, Rutherford and Yarbrough-Gauthier. Mar-

tinez and Moody voted no.

After the motion passed, John Nagel, the city attorney inquired of the council whether the solicitation for the city manager’s position would be handled in the same way that the recruitment is being handled in the search for a new city police chief; namely, that after the council’s interviews and selection of finalists, there would be a community panel to interview the finalists and a community meet and greet.

The council confirmed that the recruitment for the city manager’s position would be handled in the same way.

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Having sleep problems?

If you are 60 years or older, you may be eligible to participate in a study of Non-Drug Treatments for Insomnia sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, and conducted at the Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Medical Center.

Participants will receive extensive sleep evaluation, individual treatment, and reimbursement for participation. **For more information, please call Stephanie at (650) 849-0584.** (For general information about participant rights, contact 866-680-2906.)

Community News

After four years of dedication and service, Kris Jensen, Nicole Wires, and Neha Bazaj will be moving on from Collective Roots.

They will be greatly missed, but will continue their involvement in the food justice movement and planning the strategic direction of the organization. To learn more about these job positions, please visit the Collective Roots website at www.collectiveroots.org or email boardchair@collectiveroots.org.

See the Collective Roots job advertisement in EPA Today on page 3.

Crime burglary tips

The following tips were presented in the East Palo Alto Police Department’s August 2014 Newsletter:

If you arrive at your home or business and feel that it has been burglarized, DO NOT ENTER, but go to another location and call the police.

Let the police search the



property to make sure that no suspect is still present.

Upon entering your home or business, do not touch things unnecessarily as you may disturb or destroy fingerprint and other evidence.

Inform the police of anything that have been moved from its original position so that it can be checked for prints.

Notify the police if you find anything that is not yours that may have been left behind by the burglar such as tools, clothing, etc.

(Driver’s licenses and other identification have been left behind by burglars before!)

Be prepared to provide the police with serial numbers and a complete description of all missing property.

Tell the police if you have engraved any of the items with your driver’s license or other personalized number.

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The remaining August Beat meeting for Beat One and Four will be held on Thursday, August 21, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the Community Room at City Hall located at 2415 University Avenue, EPA, CA 94303.

Local leaders

ceived the Pioneers Award for her efforts in founding the East Palo Alto branch of the National Council of Negro Women.

Both Eric Haynes and Christopher Williams received the Christian Youth Award. Brenda Robinson was given

the Humanitarian Award, Patsy Character received the Community Service Award. Charles Jones, the owner of Jones Mortuary, was given the Buysinessman’s Award.; Millicent Grant was honored with the Community Service to Seniors Award.

Tipping Point

marked: “I have no doubt that your report was the tipping point.”

The Lawyers’ Committee and Bingham McCutchen will monitor implementation of these changes and ensure

that the needs of Ravenswood students are accommodated in the transition.

To read the full report, click here.

Police chief finalists

speak was Tom McCarthy who said that he has been with the Alameda County Sheriff’s Department for the past 31 years. McCarthy has served as the chief of police in Dublin, CA for four years and he said that he has had a lot of different assignments over the course of his career that have shaped who he is and what he does. He explained that a paradigm shift occurred when he was a sergeant with the Alameda Sheriff’s Department when he had to implement community policing – starting it off, fixing it and tweaking it. He said that he had a history of being a teacher for the sheriffs department and understands staffing level questions and different benchmarks for measuring public safety. He said that it was really critical that the police are talking to the community and getting the community’s views.



Photos courtesy of Jamauri Bowles Police Chief finalist Brian Ferrante is seen speaking with two community residents.

After listening to the candidates, community members at the meeting spoke with each other and shared their concerns. Eve Sutton, an East Palo Alto resident, gathered some of these concerns during the meeting and shared them in emails with various community members afterwards.

In the ideas they shared with each other, community residents said that they wanted a police chief who is strong in the following areas: First, the new chief should be able to commu-

nicate with all segments of the community: Stanford folks, Spanish speakers, Tongan & Samoan communities, and immigrants and really communicate with residents.

Second, the chief should be able to do grant writing to bring in new resources to the police department.

Third, under the new chief, the East Palo Alto Police Department should communicate and uphold East Palo Alto’s special position with regard to not reporting illegal immigrants to ICE.

Fourth, residents said that they wanted the new chief to uphold East Palo Alto’s special position on Operation Cease Fire, which they said was different from neighboring police districts. They wanted East Palo Alto residents who commit minor offenses in other cities to be brought back to East Palo Alto to stay in the Operation

Cease Fire program.

Fifth, they felt that it is important for the new chief to incorporate police chaplains into police work.

Sixth, the chief should maintain and enhance the city’s use of ShotSpotter and keep the city’s contract with the company that provides the device.

Seventh, the chief should pursue alternative sentencing and restorative justice, especially for first offenders.

Eighth, community residents said that they wanted the chief to be an advocate of Youth



Police chieece finalist Albert Pardini is shown talking with several interested listeners.

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Court. Ninth, they emphasized the importance of continuing Parolee Re-Entry programs in the community and tenth, they wanted the new chief to hire a crime analyst for the department.

At the end of Saturday’s meet and greet with the police chief candidates, East Palo Alto’s Assistant City Manager, Barbara Powell, invited those who attended the meeting to provide feedback to her office on the candidates. She said the feedback would be given to Magda González, the city manager, who will make the final selection.

Given the specific requirements that community residents expressed that are presented in this article, it is very clear the qualities, skills and the mindset community residents want their chief of police to have to bring to his new job

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jane.jones@cbnocal.com

Community Calendar

East Palo Alto City Council meetings. First and third Tuesdays of the month. Meetings usually start at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building at 2415 University Avenue, East Palo Alto. The city council is on a recess until September 2014.

-Genealogy Class - September 04, 2014

We get great satisfaction and

fun from knowing the history of our ancestors- where they lived, how they managed their challenges, and why you have that family heirloom. This series of classes will get you started and well on your way to a delightful excursion of a lifetime. Location: Little House 800 Middle Avenue Menlo Park, CA. 94025. Time: 10am - 12pm. For more info

(650)326-2025 ext. 222.

Small Business Legal Advice Clinic - September 05, 2014

Receive free legal advice to help your small business grow! A clinic will be held on September 5, 2014 in East Palo Alto from 2pm-5pm. If interested, please call (650)326-6440 to book an appointment. Appointments are mandatory

and the deadline to register is August 29, 2014.

Water-Efficient Gardening 101 - September 06, 2014

"Water Efficient Gardening 101" will cover the basics of plants, planting, care and on-going maintenance for a garden landscape featuring water-wise or drought-tolerant plants. courtesy of the Friends of the Menlo Park Library.

Time: 11 a.m. at the Menlo Park City Council Chambers, located at 701 Laurel Street.

See more community calendar events at the website for the East Palo Alto Today newspaper at www.epatoday.org/events.php

Photos taken at the Santa Clara Levi Stadium

By Roberto Gutierrez Perez
East Palo Alto Today

Below fireworks supplied by Great America



San Jose Earthquakes Captain Chris Wondolowski faces Seattle Forward Kenny Cooper in a coin toss.



These photos were taken by me on the day of the game on Saturday August 2, 2014 at the Santa Clara Levi Stadium. I was grateful for the opportunity to visit the new stadium of the San Francisco 49ers. The San Jose Earthquakes defeated the Seattle Sounders 1-0 earning 3 points in the 2014 MLS season. I was able to meet the players along with the San Jose staff of the soccer team.

Talking with Henrietta

Rising Sea Levels: How Can We Protect Ourselves?



Photo courtesy of Talking with Henrietta
East Palo Alto's Planning and Housing Manager, Brent Butler, show host, Henrietta J. Burroughs and journalist Laura Flynn sit on the Talking with Henrietta show set after their discussion on the dramatic effects that rising sea levels will have on low-lying communities like East Palo Alto. For more information on this show, which airs locally on Comcast Channel 27 and streams on the Internet, go to www.epatoday.org.

Media Center interns create new media

By Jamauri Bowles
East Palo Alto Today



Five students from the Eastside College Preparatory School's newspaper, The Eastside Panther, were enrolled in an internship program at the Midpeninsula Community Media Center in Palo Alto.

While two of the students focused on the realities of anorexia and bulimia, the other three decided to make a film that would compare the differences between life in Palo Alto with life in East Palo Alto, since their internship focused on film production done by youth.

Corine Forward is a rising senior at Eastside. She has been a member of the school's newspaper staff since her sophomore year. She will be the editor-in-chief at her school's newspaper for the upcoming year. Her job during

the students' internship was to oversee the group of three and help them with reporting and interviewing.

She liked and appreciated the opportunity she had to supervise the students.

"It established my position to them early on," Forward said. "Not just as a 'boss,' but as a genuine person to come to for help."

In giving assistance on their project, she found it challenging to present precise clarity to the group.

"I think learning how to be patient and explain certain topics in different ways to ensure the students understand you,

were both hard," she said. "But in the end, I was able to do both."

Wendy Avelar, a rising sophomore at Eastside who was one of the three students exploring life in each of the cities, said she was drawn to the topic due to "the many differences that exist between [the] two cities."

"I thought it would be interesting to look further into this topic and do research about both cities," she said, "so that the community can be more aware of the city that we live in and our surroundings."

With the Media Center, Avelar was not only able to learn more about how to use technology when interviewing by camera, but also able to become more comfortable around other people while reporting.

"I got to experience working with people that I usually

don't work with, which helped me become a better journalist."

Jonathan Guillen, another rising sophomore at Eastside, who did the same project as Avelar, was intrigued by the chance to learn more about both cities.

Guillen lives in East Palo Alto and spends a lot of time in Palo Alto, so he described it as "an easy choice."

Working with the Media

Center allowed Guillen to see how much work goes into creating a video, and more broadly, into journalism.

"Writing stories involves much more than just sitting down and typing," he said, "but there's research and interviewing and more."

The short film they are producing about Palo Alto and East Palo Alto will be aired on one of the Media Center's television channels in the future.

Ravenswood Ranch

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pose behind the rodeo show was to raise money for scholarships to low-income families that need, but can't afford therapies from Abilities United.

He said that he worked hard to make sure what he visualized for a show became a reality.

"I tried my best to make every detail possible and bring

a good quality show to the community," Rojas said.

Barajas said that without her father helping out with Big Hope Little Rodeo, "nothing would have been possible."

For more information about Abilities United, go to <http://www.abilitiesunited.org/>

Rotary scholars

Rotary Club of Menlo Park scholar and Eastside graduate, will begin her first year of college at UC Davis in the fall. She also said it is really important for her to have that support from Rotary.

"I think having a close relationship with the Rotarians and mentors will allow us to blossom in college and strive for success," Kayte said.

Also, she would look forward to having a chance to speak to future Rotary scholars about her college experi-

ences, and what they can do to have positive ones for themselves.

"I benefited from hearing college students speak and provide us with key pieces of advice," Kayte said. "If I was granted the opportunity to do the same, I would not hesitate to say, 'Yes.'"

Sanchez had a similarly positive view about speaking with future Rotary scholars about what he got out of his time at college.

"I would get the advantage

of speaking towards younger students and giving them an outlook of the program," he said.

The Rotary Club of Menlo Park is just one of the 34,000 clubs within the Rotary organization, which has 1.2 million members in over 200 countries. Since its formation in 1905, Rotary has committed to see worldly challenges in different and unique ways, applying and finding unique solutions to social issues, and making a difference around

the world. With the inclusion of different occupations, cultures and countries, the organization has maintained its passion to accomplish with service, during its growth and expansion in the last 110 years.

The Rotary Club of Menlo Park is dedicated to performing meaningful work through its service to the community. Since its foundation's goal is to provide college scholarships to students who meet its scholarship and need criteria, the organization awards need-

based scholarships to local graduating high school seniors from Eastside, East Palo Alto Academy, Menlo-Atherton High School, Menlo School, and Sacred Heart Preparatory School every year.

There are plans to host another party for Rotary Club of Menlo Park scholars in the winter.

One can learn more about the Rotary Club of Menlo Park and the organization's involvements, go to <http://www.menloparkrotary.org>

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