



Woods and Abrica are re-elected!



Woods and Abrica are re-elected page 3 Remembering three outstanding residents page 10



Residents create vision for RBD/4 corners page 3

East Palo Alto Today

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical



East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

October - November, 2010

Vol. 5 No.24

Flood protection comes just in time

By Sean Charpentier
East Palo Alto Today

One of the largest storm drain improvements in East Palo Alto in recent years is under construction at the end of Runnymede Street. The Runnymede Bypass project will reduce the risk of local storm flooding by adding a by-

pass to divert excess storm water to the O'Connor Pump Station.

During major storms, the storm drain systems in East Palo Alto collect rainwater from the gutters and carry it to the Bay. For example, rainwater flows off a driveway, into the gutter, through a grate into an underground pipe, and

then out to the Bay. There are two main storm drain systems in East Palo Alto: the O'Connor system and the Runnymede system.

The O'Connor system drains along O'Connor Street to the O'Connor pump station near the Friendship Bridge over San Francisquito creek. The O'Connor pump station

currently operates at about 30% of its capacity.

The Runnymede system uses gravity to drain about 1/3 of the City, from IKEA to City Hall, to an outfall along the Bay at the end of Runnymede Street. The Runnymede system is highly dependent on the tides because it does not have



Photo courtesy Sean Charpentier
A photo of one of East Palo Alto's new storm drain systems

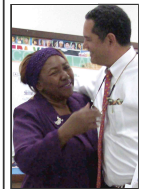
continued on page 19

Inside News



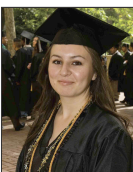
Students learn in LEAD program
Page 13

Two community authors:
Wilks

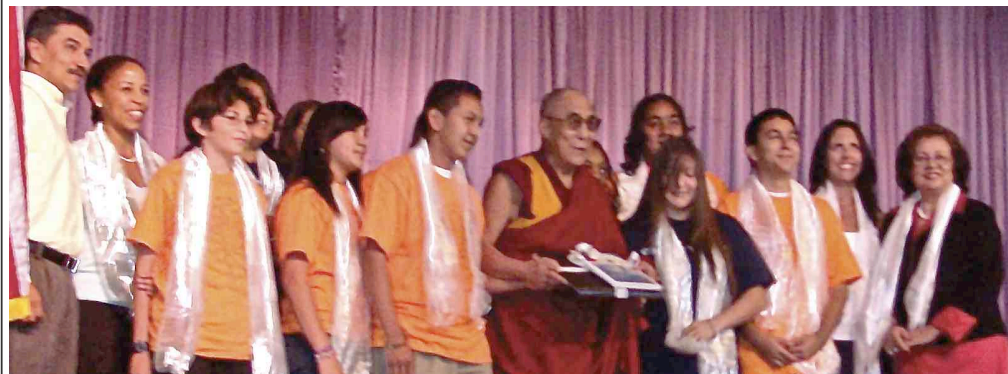


and
Warren
Page 11

Lissette Valadez:
An amazing student
Page 17



The Dalai Lama impresses East Palo Alto



The DaLai Lama stands on the stage at the Costano School gym in East Palo Alto flanked by the ten students who asked him questions after his presentation, there, on Wednesday, October 13. The students' teachers are standing with them. His Holiness visited the Ravenswood City School District to engage in a public conversation with children who reside in East Palo Alto. He spoke to an audience of over 400 students and special guests.

Photo courtesy Henrietta J. Burroughs

City receives large grant for Cooley Landing

By Lily Lee
East Palo Alto Today

This October, East Palo Alto city officials learned that the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) offered East Palo Alto's Cooley Landing project a \$600,000 subgrant for cleanup of its brownfields site. East Palo Alto has long

wanted to open Cooley Landing, which is a 9 acre peninsula at the end of Bay Road, surrounded on three sides by San Francisco Bay, as a public park and nature and history education center.

Now, the City is trying to secure the required matching funds that would ensure that the cleanup would begin in 2011 and the park can be

open to the public in 2012. This DTSC program was created by a US EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund, and funds for this project would come from American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funds that supplement the original USEPA funds.

Over a period of months, hundreds of residents attended community meetings

and gave their input to help create the Cooley Landing Vision Plan.

The City Council voted on July 20, 2010, to support a further study of the plan, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The latest version of the draft plan is on view at

continued on page 17

Two and a half square miles

By Ruxandra Guidi
East Palo Alto Today

Whether you're coming in from the six-lane Dumbarton Bridge or from Route 101, with its heavy traffic flowing from San Jose to San Francisco and vice-versa, the city of East Palo Alto

can feel foreign to this area, with a mellow and small-town feel. It has no real downtown and only a few parks. But University Avenue, with its handful of traffic lights, strip malls, gas stations, barber shops, markets and restaurants, is where much of the action takes place.

Off of that main artery, the

streets of East Palo Alto branch to the east and to the west for a few long blocks – the entire city is only two-and-a-half square miles in size. A bird's eye view of the city would show you that the streets run perfectly due east of University; Weeks, Runnymede, Garden and Beech Streets all reach a

dead end flanked by fenced empty lots and a view of the Baylands.

Western Runnymede looks more like a narrow and curvy country road, twisting around homes and front yards as needed. It has no sidewalks or curbs and it

continued on page 15

Inside

- Editorial
- News Briefs
- Opinions
- TV Listings
- Youth News

Rethinking TRASH

Learn About Your New Recycle, Compost and Garbage Collection Services!

Join us for an informative community meeting on the new Recycle, Compost and Garbage collection services coming to your community. Representatives from RethinkWaste and Recology San Mateo County will provide information and answer questions regarding all of your new services.

Additional community meetings will be held throughout the RethinkWaste service area on the following dates:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Foster City - NOV 10 | West Bay Sanitary District - DEC 1 |
| Burlingame - NOV 17 | Unincorporated San Mateo - DEC 2 |
| Hillsborough - NOV 30 | Atherton - DEC 6 |

Light refreshments will be provided

**THURSDAY
OCTOBER 28, 2010**
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

*Council Chambers
Belmont City Hall*
One Twin Pines Lane
Belmont, CA 94002

**THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 4, 2010**
7 p.m. – 8 p.m.

*Multi-Purpose Room
Fair Oaks Community Center*
2600 Middlefield Road
Redwood City, CA 94063

**MONDAY
NOVEMBER 8, 2010**
6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

*Community Room
East Palo Alto
Government Center*
2415 University Avenue
East Palo Alto, CA 94303



CartSMART

Visit RecologySanMateoCounty.com or RethinkWaste.org for details.



Community News Briefs

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

Woods and Abrica are re-elected!

In early returns with 13 percent of the vote tabulated, East Palo Alto's current mayor David Woods and city council member Ruben Abrica shot off to early leads.

By nine p.m., shortly after the polls closed, both had a two to one lead over city council candidate Douglas Fort.

The early count showed that Abrica was leading with 40.68% of the vote, Woods had 38.31% and Fort held

21.01%. Unless there is a complete upset, which isn't expected, Woods and Abrica will retain their council seats.



Photo courtesy Henrietta J. Burroughs
Abrica is seen speaking during one of his campaign events.

Voter unhappiness

Not all went well on election day. Voters were made to wait more than an hour and a half at the polling station at the City Hall Community Room at 2415 University Avenue in East Palo Alto.

According to city resident Jeri Oakley, who arrived to vote at 3:15 p.m. the polling station ran out of paper ballots and a long line of voters, including many young people, were simply left to stand and wait until more ballots arrived.

Oakley said she called the San Mateo County Registrar's office and was told that more ballots were being sent and

should have arrived. When she told the person that no ballots had shown up, she said she was told that people could come back.

"We are being disenfranchised," Oakley said. People came out to vote in good faith. They did not expect as many people to show up and they should have been able to accommodate those who came to vote."

Voters ended up using four voting machines and some turned in their own sample ballots.

Ora Colbert-Johnson said she experienced the same thing where she went to vote at 330

Donohoe St. and she said that more ballots never arrived. She voted with her sample ballot.

East Palo Alto wins prestigious award

The International Government Finance Officer's Association recognized the City of East Palo Alto for its Comprehensive Annual Finance Report (CAFR) for the Fiscal Year 2009.

East Palo Alto's interim City Manager, ML Gordon, said, "This is a prestigious honor and the first for the city. The Finance Staff worked hard for this honor and should be recognized."

EPA residents create vision for RBD/4 Corners

By Sean Charpentier
East Palo Alto Today

The East Palo Alto community created a Draft Preferred Land Use Alternative (LUA) for the RBD/ 4 Corners Specific Plan (Specific Plan). The Specific Plan will create a new land use vision for the RBD/4 Corners and determine if East Palo Alto can potentially connect to the future Dumbarton Rail Project. The Specific Plan is funded by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the City of East Palo Alto.

The City hired Design, Community & Environment (DC&E) as the planning consultant to facilitate the Specific Plan process.

Community members have been working with the City for



Photo courtesy of Sean Charpentier
This photo shows East Palo Alto's Vice Mayor Carlos Romero on the far right standing behind some of the city's residents who attended the Ravenswood 4 Corners' workshops.

over a year to create a community vision for the RBD/ 4 Corners area. Community members have spent many hours at the public meetings. There have been 9 well-attended public meetings, including 3 community workshops. Attendance has averaged 35 people per meeting.

The collaborative process

and extensive City outreach program have ensured excellent attendance at all meetings. To date, the City and DC&E have mailed over 20,000 postcards, sent thousands of emails, and made hundreds of phone calls to encourage participation in the meetings.

The community created a

Draft Preliminary Preferred LUA at the third community workshop on October 12, 2010. The workshop started with an introduction from Vice Mayor Carlos Romero.

Then, DC&E presented a summary of the Alternatives Memo, which analyzed the three LUAs created by the community at workshops in February and March; and provided an overview of the relative benefits and costs of the different land uses.

Four groups of community members used the information in the Alternatives Memo to create their optimal LUA. Each of the four groups presented their vision while DC&E simultaneously synthesized the four LUAs into one Preliminary Draft Preferred

LUA with three core themes.

First, it would create a walkable downtown along Bay Road between the 4 Corners and Tara Rd. The street level will have inviting and vibrant retail. Above the retail will be housing, or offices in some locations. The goal is to create an attractive downtown where friends can meet for coffee or a dinner and residents can shop at neighborhood stores. The downtown will be anchored by a park and a community center at 4 Corners.

Second, there is a major employment center with Office, Industrial, and Research and Development (R&D) uses clustered north of Bay Road, and in the area bound by Bay Road, Pulgas Road, and

continued on page 14

City, County & State Government Meetings & Contacts

East Palo Alto City Council

The City of Council meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers, East Palo Alto City Hall, 2415 University Avenue; (650) 853-3100 or Fax: (650) 853-3115. Website: www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us

East Palo Alto City Council Members

David E. Woods Mayor
(650) 853-1907

Carlos Romero Vice Mayor
(650)328-4363

A. Peter Evans
(650) 321-1009

Ruben Abrica
(650) 321-4001

Laura Martinez
(650)714-5337

East Palo Alto Agencies, Boards, Commissions, Committees

Planning Commission
Second and Fourth Monday

Rent Stabilization Board
Second and Fourth Wednesday

Public Works & Transportation Commission
First and Third Wednesday

Youth Advisory Committee
First Thursday of each month

Senior Advisory Committee
Meets first Monday of each month 6:30p.m. - City Hall.

East Palo Alto Sanitary District

Open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon and re-opens from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

901 Weeks Street
East Palo Alto, CA 94303-1310 (650) 325-9021

Menlo Park City Council

The Menlo Park City Council holds meetings every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at the City Council Chambers located at 801 Laurel Street. You can subscribe to receive the agendas and minutes by e-mail when they are published. An agenda is posted in advance of the weekly meeting, and past agendas and minutes are filed by the date they were held. Call the City Clerk at 650.330.6620.

Menlo Park City Council Members

Mayor
Richard Cline
(650) 228-5166

Vice Mayor
John C. Boyle
(650)906-7163

Kelly J. Fergusson
(650) 327-4533

Heyward Robinson
(650) 208-1512

Andrew M. Cohen
(650)327-5332

Menlo Park Boards, Commissions, Committees

Arts Commission
Bicycle Commission
Environmental Quality Commission
Housing Commission
Las Pulgas Committee
Library Commission
Parks and Recreation Commission
Planning Commission
Transportation Commission

San Mateo County Bd. of Supervisors

Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson, Fourth District

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors meets on March 3, 17, 31, & April 14, 28 2009 in the County of San Mateo Hall of Justice & Records 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063. Roll call at 8 a.m. 9 a.m.

Regular & Consent Agenda Items.

State Officials

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-445-2841
Fax: 916-445-4633
Email: governor@governor.ca.gov

Assembly Member Ira Ruskin

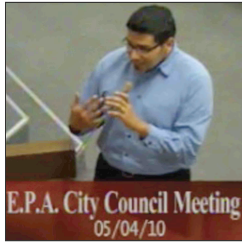
District Address
5050 El Camino Real
Ste. 117
Los Altos, CA 94022
650 691-2121

Senator Joseph S. Simitian

District Address
160 Town & Country Village
Palo Alto, CA 94301
(650) 688-6384

Get free money for your business

By Oscar Dominguez
East Palo Alto Today



Oscar Dominguez is shown speaking before the EPA City council last in May of this year.

At least once a month I take a call or receive a visitor to our office inquiring about free money for small businesses.

While this is completely understandable given the "buzz" about the economic stimulus efforts of the federal government, the truth is that unless your business is in a very select group of industries or you already have a large operation with plans to create dozens of jobs or more, most of these funds are inaccessible.

We all remember "Cash for Clunkers" and perhaps "Cash for Appliances" both of which pumped billions of dollars into the economy by stimulating big ticket pur-

chases of durable goods.

If your company paves roads or builds bridges, the huge increase in federal spending on infrastructure means there are lots of those types of jobs on which to bid. Similarly, if you are a contractor who specializes in weatherization, then there is suddenly lots of demand for

your services created by programs to increase the energy efficiency of homes of low and moderate-income owners.

Finally, if you happen to be building the "cars of the future" like Tesla Motors or expanding a business like Dale Hardware in Fremont and creating a significant number of jobs, then you may qualify for a low or no-interest government-backed loan.

So where does that leave the average small business owner? On the surface at least, it looks like he/she is out in the cold. This, however, could not be further from the truth.

Many economic development nonprofits like Renaissance received stimulus funds in the last year to con-

tinue our work and help our clients start and grow small businesses. From our business planning classes to our one-on-one consulting and referrals to pro-bono legal services or loan packaging, we have the training, skills and connections to help aspiring and current business owners help themselves.

Similarly, support from the City of East Palo Alto this year made our home-based business initiative and "Virtual Incubator Program" or "VIP" possible. Thanks to this generous funding, in addition to our individualized consulting, all our business planning courses are completely free-of-charge for owners of registered home-based EPA businesses.

Our "VIP", meanwhile, is designed to provide the critical logistical/operational support

businesses operated out of the home often require such as space for meeting clients, an address for receiving deliveries/mail and a solution to nearly every office productivity need that could arise.

Give us a call at 650-321-2193 to find out more about our VIP or any of our other services for current and aspiring business owners.

Oscar Dominguez is the program manager for Renaissance Mid-Peninsula, in East Palo Alto. The organization was formerly known as Renaissance Start Up and it is located at 1848 Bay Road in East Palo Alto.

For more information, see the Renaissance Mid-Peninsula ad on page 9 of this issue

Options to use to avoid foreclosure

By Armando Arroyo
East Palo Alto Today

In today's troublesome economy many home owners are finding it difficult to navigate the plethora of options that face them when dealing with a looming foreclosure.

Often home owners, who are facing the possibility of losing their home, do not know how to overcome this type of loss? Fortunately, there are options for those who wish to find a solution.

If you are one of those individuals that are facing a foreclosure try these options.

One potential solution is the loan modification option available under the Home Affordable Refinance Program (<http://makinghomeafford->

able.gov/). The loan modification allows the home owner to stay in their home, their current interest rate can drop, and partial loan balance can be deferred. The loan modification option is meant for home owners and not investors.

A second alternative can be the short sale solution. A short sale is a sales transaction in which the seller's mortgage lender agrees to accept a payoff of less than the balance due on the loan. A third solution is Deed-in-Lieu of Foreclosure.

Servicers may also offer to accept a deed-in-lieu of foreclosure through which a homeowner voluntarily transfers ownership of the property to their servicer. Many servicers require homeowners to

try to sell their home before they will accept a deed-in-lieu.

Please note if you have attempted to modify your loan with your lender and you have been denied there is also the The Home Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives (HAFA) Program.

When considering this option you must attempt to modify your loan, if you are denied then you can enter into an agreement releasing you the homeowner from all future liability after the property is sold.

You may also qualify for a \$3,000.00 (three thousand dollars) in relocation assistance after closing.

Keep in mind when choosing one of these options it is best to talk to a realtor who can help you better navigate

your situation. Lastly, the worst thing one can do is let the foreclosure happen and not do anything about it. The negative impacts with a foreclosure are always far worse than a short sale or loan modification. Be proactive and talk to a great realtor who can help

you before it is too late.

Armando Arroyo has been long active in the East Palo Alto community. He is currently a realtor with CasAmerica Realty.

To get more details about his services and get his contact information, see below.

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Cierre este capítulo de su vida Con condiciones a su manera.

Call me to discuss your options.

I can help.

Lláname para presentarle sus opciones.

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I am short sale specialist.
(650) 961-1382

Les puedo ayudar.
Lláname hoy mismo!
Soy especialista en ventas cortas.
(650) 961 1382

Armando Arroyo
Agente de bienes raíces
CasAmerica Realty
(650) 961-1382 OFFICE
(650) 965-5822 FAX
arroyo@casameriarealty.com
DRE # 01874570

CasAmerica Realty REALTOR

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.

Name: _____ Phone # _____

Organization: _____ Email Address _____

Street Address: _____ City _____ State _____

Yes, I am interested in becoming a partner with the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media. Please accept my tax-deductible donation as a personal contribution _____ or as a contribution on behalf of my organization _____.

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*The East Palo Alto Center for Community Media is a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation.

Please check the appropriate box: if you would like to volunteer at the center, if you would like to advertise in East Palo Alto Today, if you are interested in writing an article, opinion piece or letter to the editor. Also let us know if your agency or business would like to be a distribution site for East Palo Alto Today. Call (650)327-5846, ext. 311 or send us an email at epamedia@aol.com.

Making their mark on the marsh

By Anna Peschel,
East Palo Alto Today

The Faber Laumeister Tract is a hidden gem of bayland habitat in East Palo Alto. It is located in the city just south of Cooley Landing and to the east of the Weeks Neighborhood.

The tract provides favored nesting habitat for the endangered California Clapper Rail as well as great opportunities for human inhabitants of East Palo Alto. The levee winds its way toward the bay offering a peaceful space to enjoy the marshlands.

Few knew that the levee could be such a pleasant place to enjoy the pickleweed or to look for marsh birds since it was hidden by towering weeds.

But now the marsh is no longer hidden. This summer I led a crew of eight high school students from East Palo Alto, Redwood City and Menlo Park in environmental restoration work on the levee.

My crew was part of the United States Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), a federal program that employs youth in meaningful, paid, summer jobs. This crew worked for the



Photo courtesy of Anna Peschel
Eight East Palo Alto youth are shown on their summer job where they worked to restore a marshland levee at the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. From left on the front row: Luz Elicea Reyes, Maria Arreola and Janae Peats. On the back row from left, Daniel Marquez-Madrigal, Daniel Diaz, (Alberto Ochoa Jr.) William Gomez and George Nickings.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service on the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Our work plan was ambitious: restore the levee by weeding, implementing environmentally sustainable weed control methods, and growing native plants, while also learning about the marsh habitat and the importance of conservation.

The crew showed up for work at 7 a.m. every day and engaged in demanding physical work well into the heat of the day. The crew accomplished the tasks set before them and so much more. The

restoration project they carried out will have a lasting benefit for the East Palo Alto community.

The work they did enhanced the ecological wellbeing of the levee and made it more accessible for people to come and enjoy this beautiful spot. The crew's experience on the refuge was an awakening.

It gave them a whole new perspective and appreciation for nature and the work it takes to protect and restore it. Their newfound knowledge is already spreading into the community as they share their summer job experience with

their family and friends.

The crew wondered the whole summer if they would ever see the Clapper Rail, the endangered bird the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge was established to protect.

In the last week, as we were finishing up weeding, a crew member pointed out a brown bird scuttling across the mud flats, exposed by the low tide. Then we heard the call and knew that the Clapper Rail was finally saying its thanks.

ter Tract levee.

We are thinking to include a fun activity, some environmental education about the marsh and then have the students do some restoration/service work along the levee.

Do you have any contacts or school programs you know of or are involved with that this would be appropriate for? If so, please contact Kimby Wells the environmental education specialist for the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

For more information, call 408-262-5513x101, Tuesday - Saturday 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Get details about other free nearby environmental education programs at www.fws.gov/desfbay.

If you're interested in volunteering to help with marshland restoration and in

continued on page 9

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Creating a remembrance or memory page on the East Palo Alto Today website allows you, your friends and your family members to leave a memorable legacy in honor of a deceased friend or family member. To see the Treasured Memories section on the EPA Today website,

go online to:

www.epatoday.org/treasured_memories/index.html

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From the Editor's Desk

A question of integrity

It's always interesting when police reports and legal documents are released to the public. When this happens a whole slew of information usually comes spilling out and the results can sometimes be quite revealing. Such is the case with the release of police documents that show the scenes footwork that went on to shore up and protect Page Mill Properties.

Certainly, the two year battle that the City of East Palo Alto had with what was then the largest owner of rental apartments in the city was mind-boggling and it seemed to be a nightmare for both sides. Page Mill Properties filed numerous lawsuits against East Palo Alto as it fought the city's rent ordinance that protected apartment tenants from exorbitant rent increases.

It seems now from the city's and the tenants' point of view that a miracle occurred when Page Mill Properties defaulted in August 2009 on the 50 million dollar payment that it owed to Wells Fargo for its East Palo Alto properties.

But the miracle that many would say took place was hardly apparent during the two-year struggle. During this time, hundreds of East Palo Alto tenants were displaced, leading to untold anguish and suffering on the part of many.

Not only was the City of East Palo Alto being barraged with what seemed like never-ending lawsuits, but various local organizations, including Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto, the Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County, Youth United for Community Action (YUCA), and a host of individuals were also using their resources to defend and advise tenants who were on the receiving end of the exorbitant rent increases. All who were involved need to be commended for their time, their efforts, their commitment and their belief in the cause for which they fought.

During this ongoing battle, enormous pressure was even being applied to dissuade those who were fighting for tenants' rights to discontinue their efforts. The enmity of some of the pressure and the tricks being applied are evident, now, in the newly released police reports and legal documents, which CalPers was ordered to make public by a San Francisco Superior Court judge.

For example, the documents show that there was not only a Palo Alto Police officer working off duty watching Chris Lund, a Page

Mill Property tenant and a prime mover behind the EPA Fair Rent Coalition and its efforts to organize tenants, but there was also an effort to buy him off, or at least, entrap him in a bribery scheme.

The public documents show that the Palo Alto Police Department taped a telephone conversation between Russell Schaadt, Page Mill's director of asset management and Lund, during its investigation into Page Mill Properties' complaint that Lund was seeking

to extort money from the company. In the taped telephone conversation, Schaadt repeatedly offered Lund \$20,000 dollars to give up the work that he was doing on behalf of tenants.

In response, Lund repeatedly declined the offer. At one point he said, "Russell, in good conscience, after having seen all of the stories and talked to people and seen what is happening in this neighborhood, I have never been a money guy and ...even if I took cash like that and gave it to community legal services, you think I am going to walk away from the 4,000 people who still live in this neighborhood who are...are struggling to put food on the table?..."

"...It is not about me walking away with \$20,000. I don't care about the money, not at all. It's about the community and that is always what it has been about..." For his part and to his credit, Lund filed a complaint with the Palo Alto Police against the off duty Palo Alto officer, Lt. Tim Morgan, employed by Page Mill Properties, whom he charged with personal harassment.

It was obvious from the personal conversations I had with Lund a year ago that the pressure he was getting from Page Mill was enormous and it had become a real, personal strain. So, what would have happened in terms of the battle against Page Mill if Lund had verbally accepted the offer of money and agreed to cease his opposition to Page Mill?

We will never know. But it is clear that the work he did was a real thorn in Page Mill's side and his research into Page Mill's link with CalPERS was just invaluable in bringing national attention to the degree to which retirement money was used to underwrite questionable real estate investments.

In commenting on the release of the documents and the

continued on page 19



Henrietta J. Burroughs



Photo courtesy of the Boys & Girls Club

On Tuesday, October 19, sixteen third-graders from the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula's after-school program at Taft hosted a visit by Senator Barbara Boxer and a surprise guest, Vice President Joe Biden. Boxer's staff toured the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula a couple of years ago and for her visit Tuesday, specifically asked to see a site that had recently received federal funds. Everyone attending was delighted.

Letters in East Palo Alto Today

Children without fathers

Dear Editor,

Two articles in your August-September issue give many details about the importance of fathers in the lives of their children.

They also report that many black children grow up without a father in the home. The main reason for that is that many black girls are willing to have sex with boys, or men, who will do many tricks to have sex with a girl.

Some of those men will promise to marry the girl, but, when she gets pregnant, they go away to find another girl. Since only girls get pregnant, it is important to tell them that, if they get pregnant, it is a high probability that they and their children will live in poverty.

Parents, schools and churches should emphasize to all girls that the best way to avoid poverty is to get married before having sex with any boy or man.

Charlie Larson
Mountain View, CA

A Message for East Palo Alto Voters

Dear Editor,

Douglas Fort is running again for city council. When Henrietta Burroughs interviewed him on TV, last election, she asked, "What made him qualified to be on the

city council?"

Fort said, "Because I can go where no one else can go!"

This year ask him, "Where that is? What does he do when he gets there? What has he accomplished in this secret location?"

"If he is a team player, why hasn't he taken any of the other council members, if it is so beneficial for the city? Why hasn't the council given him a recognition certificate, for his accomplishment in the secret place?"

How many city council meetings have Douglas Fort gone to and spoken on public record? I never saw him or heard him at any of the meetings that I have gone to. Google his name and see his public record speeches. You learn about about city council by going to the meetings.

Captain Kirk, of the Enterprise, could go where no one else could go, too!

Did this secret place teach Fort about public policies, union contracts, city budgets, city planning, Roberts Rules of Order, how to balance a budget, and how to read a spreadsheet?

Laura Martinez was a recreation leader. She was not at the city council meeting for the garbage negotiations after the election, which she had won. This would have shown interest in the job for which she was just elected. The garbage talks bring revenue to most cities. How many meetings has Martinez missed since

she was elected?

I think your best bet for city council is Goro Mitchell or Bernardo Huerta as write-in candidates. They both need to register as a write-in candidate to qualify. Support them.

I know a lot about your city. I love the people. I've gone to many of your council meetings, and I don't live there. I have tried to inform the residents of the poisons added to the drinking water under the United Nations: Agenda 21 Depopulation. Councils pay dues to belong to the UN. Ask Councilman Abrica about it, since he is on the BAWSCA water board and Mr. Woods, a former BAWSCA member. Abrica will not speak out against the additives. Senator Jackie Speier created BAWSCA and medicated you with the toxic waste from the Phosphate Fertilizer's scrubbers. It's poison. She is practicing medicine without a license. Fluorosilicic acid with Chloramines increase cancer death rates.

Councilwoman Martinez thought a grocery store would solve your health problems.

Assemblyman Ruskin chaired the BAWSCA water board in its early days. He lied about not having peer review evidence of harm from Chloramines, which was given to him by Dr. Winn Parker. Mike Francois and I gave Ruskin and Senator Simitian

continued on page 13

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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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.

President Obama and the war on AIDS

By His Excellency Festus Mogae
East Palo Alto Today



Pres. Festus Mogae

Imagine if one in four Americans were living with HIV. That's roughly the percentage of adults in Botswana who are infected with the disease.

Most HIV-positive people, of course, don't live in the United States. About 97 percent live in developing regions, like Sub-Saharan Africa where AIDS is the leading cause of death of adults.

They may not be American citizens, but they desperately need America's help. Unfortunately, the Obama administration seems to be pulling back from the fight against AIDS at the very moment when the world has demonstrated what it is possible to achieve in this fight.

Africa is at a crossroads with AIDS—we can finish the

job and win this fight with US support. But if US leadership wanes at this critical moment, we will see progress erode, an increase in preventable deaths and a return to the social and economic devastation of past decades.

AIDS has already killed more than 25 million people. Although AIDS has been converted from a killer disease to a chronic one in many of our African countries, for those without access to antiretroviral drugs, HIV/AIDS is too often a death sentence. In Botswana, an estimated 57,000 children have been orphaned by AIDS of which 49,400 have been registered.

The good news is that the

distribution channels and public health wherewithal to defeat this disease exist—Botswana helped pioneer the provision of antiretroviral treatment in Africa, starting its national treatment program in 2002.

Now, across the developing world, more than five million individuals with HIV/AIDS have seen their lives transformed by the availability of treatment. Drugs that once cost \$12,000 per year can now be purchased for less than \$100. As drug prices have dropped precipitously, every dollar invested can have even greater impact.

In Botswana alone, roughly 151,695 people living with HIV/AIDS now have access to life-saving drugs, and our national goal of achieving universal access has come close to being achieved. 96 out of 100 Botswana infants born to HIV-positive mothers are now born AIDS-free.

A major catalyst for this

success has been America's ongoing leadership and generous investment.

In 2003, President Bush—with support from Republicans and Democrats alike—announced a plan to dramatically increase American efforts to fight AIDS across the globe. The US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) was a critical partner in Botswana's AIDS treatment scale-up, as well as prevention efforts and the fight against tuberculosis, the biggest killer of people with AIDS.

As a key component of its AIDS initiative, the United States made a founding investment in the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, an innovative organization that has helped massively scale up countries' responses to the three diseases. The Global Fund not only finances programs, but it also helps catalyze sustain-

able investments from governments in affected countries.

In just eight years, the Global Fund has allocated \$18 billion in grants for health programs in 144 countries. Today, the Fund is responsible for one-fourth of global spending to combat AIDS and two-thirds of external financing for TB and malaria. A critical portion of that investment comes from the US.

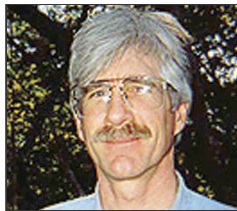
I know that President Obama believes in these programs. While campaigning in 2008, he promised that, if elected, he would provide at least \$50 billion by 2013 to fight AIDS globally, and fully fund the Global Fund.

But there remains a large gap between the president's vision, and his administration's budget. The president's budget actually proposed cutting America's contribution to the Global Fund by \$50 million

continued on page 8

Not good enough for government work

By Steve Kennedy
EPA Today Contributor



Steve Kennedy

As firefighters for the Menlo Park Fire District complain about time spent picking up equipment at one fire station and reporting to work at another and prepare to fight a lengthy court battle over this unpaid overtime, I am reminded of how dogmatic organized labor can be. However, there are other rigid dogmas that the Menlo Park Fire District promotes, participates in and profits from, that keep me awake at night.

In particular, I am concerned by high labor costs and rigidly defined job descriptions and mission statements that put any serious discus-

sions about disaster preparedness in East Palo Alto into Wonderland. Without money in the pot, the best that the officer corps, the Fire District Board of Directors and the City Council can do is blow dope smoke.

As someone who launched a canoe on Euclid Avenue during the flood of February of 1998 and paddled

down O'Keefe Street, I know how vulnerable my neighborhood is to a high tide and a heavy rain. With the University Circle/Four Seasons Hotel complex blocking one more escape route for floodwaters, it seems likely that the next flood will be even worse. With acres of new development on the Stanford Campus sure to contribute to a faster rising San Francisco Creek, it seems likely that the next flood will surpass the \$26 million in damages from the last flood.

This wouldn't keep me awake at night except for one thing. It wouldn't take much of a forest fire in the upper watershed of the Creek to denude the vegetation that absorbs and slows rainfall on its way to East Palo Alto. And with

human nature being what it is and politically well connected residents in the hills likely to demand a chicken in every pot and a fire engine in every driveway during a major fire, it seems likely that homes in the hills, even the ones with bushels of dry twigs and leaves in the rain gutters, will survive the fire at the expense of hundreds or thousands of acres of wildlands that would otherwise be kept from burning.

With federal help for the Creek from the Army Corps of Engineers several miles away at least, residents of East Palo Alto and the Gardens neighborhood sit securely behind crumbling levees that are likely to be breached in the next big flood. The catch is

that I've got the canoe and the Fire District has the paddle.

So what is the plan when residents of the Gardens come swimming out of their bedrooms in their pajamas in the middle of the night? Where will several hundred wet, cold, muddy, traumatized and miserable people go and what will they find when they get there? The catch is that as the sun comes up, the scale of the disaster becomes evident.

As hard as the school administrators and church leaders try, it will quickly become evident that the people with the biggest diesel generator in town and the fattest communications pipe, are the same people who had the power to

continued on page 8

Are you ready for the next big one?

By Dennis Parker
EPA Today Contributor

We have recently experienced some serious disasters in the Bay Area—an aircraft accident, a gas pipeline explosion, and more. But a major earthquake could cause damage ten times as great. Professional first responders such as the fire department have warned that in the event of a widespread disaster, you are on your own for the first three-to-seven days. You must provide your own food, water, shelter, lighting, first aid, and

communication.

Imagine a major earthquake at 2:00 in the morning. A regional power failure would put you in darkness, and your cordless house phone would stop working. If the cell phone towers survive, the circuits would soon jam from overload. The 911 emergency operator would be unavailable, as well as the "reverse-911" system designed to send you emergency notifications. Nearly all of the senior city staff (including Police and Public Works) live out of town, and will not be reporting to work. There will

likely be one police patrol car on duty for each beat, and there will be no one to relieve them when their shift is over. Even if the phones are working, you will not be told where the city-sponsored shelters are located until after the event begins, since the shelters may be disabled by the event itself. Even if the shelters are opened, they are not likely to have enough capacity for all of the evacuees in the city.

You must be prepared to take care of yourself, and this involves disaster preparation

and response.

There are many sources of preparation tips, including the City of East Palo Alto web site (<http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/police/oes.html>) and the First Aid and Survival Guide in the front of your Yellow Pages phone book. Here are some additional things to consider:

In addition to the food (and can opener), water, medications, and first aid supplies that you collect, include a hand cranked radio with a label that lists the stations that will broadcast emergency in-

formation, such as KCBS 740 AM and KSJO 92 FM. Many of these radios also have a flashlight and cell phone charger built in. Remember that candles can be a fire hazard.

In addition to a fire extinguisher and a smoke alarm/carbon monoxide combination, make sure you have a wrench to turn off your gas. Hang the wrench near your gas shut-off valve. Some gas shut-off wrenches also include a fitting for turning off your

continued on page 9

Celebrating nonprofit organizations

By Cammie Vail
East Palo Alto Today Contributor

The Palo Alto Community Fund (PACF) hosted its annual grants reception on Thursday, September 30 at the home of former PACF Board member Bill Reller in Palo Alto.

The event celebrated the 41 nonprofit organizations in the Palo Alto area to receive



Cammie Vail

PACF funding this year. The \$302,000 in grants awarded in 2010 by PACF marked both the largest total and the greatest number of recipient organizations the fund has given to in its 31-year history.

The evening also featured the official announcement of PACF's new capital campaign, "Funding Our Future."

"Surrounded by our generous donors and dedicated nonprofit members, the evening was also a perfect forum for launching our 'Funding Our Future' capital

campaign." Attended by over 250 prominent Palo Alto-area philanthropists, community volunteers and nonprofit

professionals, the event featured music, appetizers, and informational easel presentations by all 41 nonprofit organizations - en a b l i n g parti-

pants to get a deep understanding of the incredible work these local nonprofits are doing, and speak to members of the organizations directly.

The evening also featured remarks from PACF's president and executive director, as well as representatives of two of the recipient organizations, Curtis Haggins, President and Coach of RoadRunners Sports Club of East Palo Alto, and Michele Jackson, Executive Director of Shelter Network.

Martin Thomas, Northern Trust and Went

Vineyards provided generous underwriting for the event.

"Every year this is such an amazing opportunity to hear first-hand what the nonprofit organizations in our area are doing to enhance our community," said Cammie Vail, Executive Director of PACF.

"This event gives our donors the chance to understand how their generous donations to PACF provide a vital source of funds to these organizations and enable critical programs in our community."

This year, 93 local nonprofit organizations applied for grants. PACF is striving to increase the size of its endowment so that more of these worthy organizations can be funded in the future.

About PACF

For over 30 years, PACF has grown and managed its philanthropic endowment, which is nearly \$4 million.

Each year, the proceeds of that endowment directly improve the quality of life in the Palo Alto area through grants to local nonprofit organizations across every area of philan-

thropy, including social services, housing, education, healthcare, environment, youth and family support, community development, seniors and the arts.

The mission of PACF is to grow, sustain, and use its endowment to improve the quality of life in our community. In 2010, PACF made over \$302,000 in grants to 41 Palo Alto-area organizations.

For a complete list of

grant recipients, or to donate to PACF, please visit <http://www.paloaltocomm-fund.org>.

For more information about PACF, contact Cammie Vail at cammievail@paloaltocomm-fund.org or call 650.450.5581.

The website is: www.paloaltocomm-fund.org



Photo courtesy of the Palo Alto Community Fund. The above picture shows one of the signs that was featured at the 2010 PACF grants reception. It shows a partial listing of the grantees who received awards from PACF this year.

President Obama

next year at the very time when the Global Fund needs to double its resources to truly reverse the AIDS, TB and malaria epidemics.

For many of the world's poorest, the budgeting decisions made in Washington mean the difference between life and death.

Health care providers in some African nations have already been forced to turn away new patients. Some find themselves unable to provide medicine, even to those who

have been served by long-running programs.

This is no time to retreat. The world is on the cusp of victory against one of its greatest killers.

Experts estimate that a \$6 billion, three-year commitment by the United States to the Global Fund could have a domino effect that helps turn the tide against AIDS, as well as TB and malaria. Over 100 members of the U.S. Congress have called for a pledge at this level.

Historically, for every dollar the U.S. donates toward the Global Fund, the world matches with \$2. What other investment generates a return of that size? Africa needs President Obama's strong leadership on this issue. Re-committing to the global fight against AIDS will encourage other nations to do likewise, and bring life and hope to millions in Africa.

Festus Gontebanye Mogae was the president of Botswana from 1998 to 2008. He has re-

ceived the Ligion d'honneur from France and in 2008 was awarded the Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership. He is currently Chair of 'Champions for an HIV-free Generation' and a spokesman for the 'Africa Champions for Health' campaign of Friends of the Global Fund Africa, which encourages greater political and financial commitments of African Heads of State to health within Africa.

Festus Gontebanye Mogae was the president of

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continued from page 7

Not good enough

continued from page 7

prevent this disaster in the first place.

Now you'd think that the Fire District, which sent a rescue team to New Orleans after Katrina, would recognize this same old story and design their new, \$15 million Fire Station on University Avenue to provide hot showers, hot chocolate and telephones for the huddled masses while they're away on business but maybe other needs just take precedence.

Like time and a half wages for already well paid firefighters who can't take their gear home with them and have to drive all the way across town to pick it up before reporting to work. I mean, you can't expect

guys who commute in a hundred miles from Central Valley towns to drive an extra five miles, now can you? That wouldn't be good enough for government work.

Here's the bottom line. It won't be long before the plans for the new fire station are written in stone. Talk to your City Council members about emergency community access to the new fire station and remind them that you vote.


East Palo Alto doesn't need a disastrous flood. What we need are elected officials with the vision thing and the guts to make the needs of the people known to their colleagues on the Fire District

Board of Directors.

Steve Kennedy is the author of "The Cannonball Express", a video project in progress about suburban forest fires, fire safety and the environment.

Details are available at <http://www.canonbal.org>

Kennedy served on the Fire District Board from 1999 to 2003 and previously contributed an article about the merits of solar panels versus bullet proof windows for the new fire station in East Palo Alto. He has lived in a studio apartment on the west side of East Palo Alto since 1995.



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Information/Información - (650) 373-1084



Are you ready?

continued from page 7

water at the street meter.

Make sure you have an adapter to charge your cell phone through the cigarette lighter socket in your car, in case you get back some phone service. Even if you cannot make local calls, you can often call outside the state. So pick an out-of-state contact ahead of time, and have that person notify friends and family in the event of a major disaster. If the voice circuits fail, you can often send and receive text messages.

Keep a quantity of small change handy, since ATM and credit card machines, and cash registers (for giving you back change) will not work



Photo courtesy of Henrietta J. Burroughs
Dennis Parker and his wife Luella pass out emergency preparedness information in Tate Street Park during East Palo Alto's observance of National Night Out on August 3.

during a power outage. Make copies of your home, fire, and flood insurance, and keep

pictures of your home, car, and valuable items to help in filing damage claims.

Sign up for San Mateo County Alert to receive emergency messages on your cell phone, or email client. The web address is www.SM-CAAlert.info (the "info" domain is not an error).

Get to know your neighbors. Form a block club, neighborhood association, Neighborhood Watch, or something similar, and get together on a regular basis. Prepare a roster with

names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses.

Include notes of neighbors with special needs, such as insulin and oxygen dependency, vision and hearing impairment, and mobility problems. Also include notes on people with special skills, such as nurses, ham radio operators, or those owning a generator, 4-wheel-drive truck, chain saw, etc.

Sort the roster by street block and make copies for each neighbor. If you are a group leader and need to send a message to the entire group, call the first person on each block, and have them notify the other people on their block. If the phones are out, walk door-to-door.

Use this "telephone tree" to get an assessment of your neighborhood: damage to property, hazards such as downed power lines, fallen trees blocking the street, and the condition of people

in each dwelling.

Once you have completed your assessment, deliver it to the fire station (University Avenue at Runnymede). Kids on bicycles and skateboards can be very effective messengers.

Plan to set up your own neighborhood shelters. Talk to the leaders of your local church, school, or community organization about storing food, water, battery-powered lighting, and bedding pallets in case everything else fails.

Dennis J. Parker is a long time resident of East Palo Alto, who has been ardently interested in emergency preparedness. He serves on the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), is Red Cross Certified in CPR/AED, First Aid and is a Licensed Ham Radio Operator (K1GINQ).

Best dressed seniors

By **Henrietta J. Burroughs**
East Palo Alto Today

The East Palo Alto Senior Center held its annual Elegant Tea on October 2 and selected the best dressed male and female seniors. The well attended event included seniors throughout the area and a variety of donated prizes.

Cecille Vaughters-Johnson, the center's legal advisor, served as the mistress of cer-

emonies. The soloists included Ms. McBea (Virgie McDade) and Darryl Hadley. Millicent Grant, the center's executive director made the event's special presentation.

The highlight of the event occurred with the fashion show and the selection of the tea's most elegantly dressed male and female. The grand prize went to a Redwood City



Photo courtesy of Henrietta J. Burroughs
Rev. and Mrs. Grant

couple Rev. George Grant and his wife Surlene.

Disposing of left-over cooking oil

By **Megan Miller**
East Palo Alto Today Contributor

Thinking of deep-frying your Thanksgiving turkey this year? If so, what will you do with the leftover fat and oil remaining in the pan?

The Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group is reminding residents that grease from turkey fryers, along with any other fats, oils and grease, should not be disposed of down your kitchen sink or any other drain. Residents are asked to properly dispose of cooking grease at special collection events (or ongoing disposal locations) taking place throughout the region during the holiday season.

Fats, oils and grease accumulate over time and can lead to clogged pipes and sewer lines, causing back-ups into homes and spills into creeks and the Bay – all messes no one wants. A consortium of

wastewater treatment plants in the Bay Area, the Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group seeks to reduce wastewater pollution.

"Our goals are to protect Bay water quality and keep the sanitary sewer system flowing smoothly," said Sharon Newton, BAPPG Chair. "Residents can help by not pouring grease and oils down the drain."

The Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group is also going one step further this year. They've teamed up with Orchard Supply Hardware, The Home Depot and numerous independent retailers to place stickers on turkey fryer boxes, encouraging consumers to practice proper disposal methods.

"Deep fried turkeys can be delicious, but this cooking method typically uses at least 5 gallons of oil," said Ms. Newton. "And this cooking oil shouldn't be poured down drains." Ms. Newton added that

this message is especially important during the holiday season because of the rich meals being prepared. Everything from turkey gravy to Chanukah latkes to Christmas cookies and tamales can be a culprit in the fight against clogged pipes.

What should you do with fats, oils and grease? Follow these simple step-by-step disposal instructions:

Place drain strainers in kitchen sinks to catch greasy food particles, and scrape left-over greasy food waste into the garbage or compost container, not the garbage disposal.

Pour cooking oil that is free of water, soap and food scraps into a clean, sealable container. Bring the container to one of the Bay Area drop-off locations.

There are several drop-off locations throughout the Bay Area this fall, and some operate year-round! Check www.BayWise.org for a list of free sites near you.

Making their mark

developing your green thumb!

The next volunteer opportunity to plant native plants to improve wildlife habitat will take place at the Faber Laumeister tract of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge in East Palo Alto on Saturday, November 20, from 9

a.m. to 12 p.m. RSVP to Anna at (510)453-6695 or email arhpeschel@gmail.com

No prior experience is necessary and tools will be provided. Please bring clothes that can get dirty, a hat, sunscreen and a water bottle.


This program is sponsored by

continued from page 5

the San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Anna Peschel is the youth conservation corps crew leader and a partner of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service

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Lifecycles In Memoriam: Remembering three outstanding city residents



By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

East Palo Alto lost three residents, thus far, this Fall who made outstanding contributions to the city.

Charlesetta Darrett Fishman, who moved to East Palo Alto in 1962, died on September 30, 2010, a day after she suffered a massive stroke.

Elbert Estis Mitchell died on October 4, 2010 after a long illness. He had moved to East Palo Alto in 1959.

On September 19, 2010, Jeanne Cuffey Tatum died in her husband Richard's arms. She suffered from a long term illness. She had lived in East Palo Alto for more than 30 years.

Ironically, their memorial services took place during the same weekend.

Fishman and Cuffey Tatum's services were held on the same day, Saturday, October 23. Fishman's was held at 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Cuffey Tatum's was held from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

The coincidental timing of the services allowed attendees to attend both services.

Mitchell's celebration of life service was held on Sunday, October 24 in Elk Grove, CA where he and his wife Dorothy moved to be with their daughter Schery.

Read more about their lives and their contributions on

East Palo Alto Today website: www.epatoday.org



Charlesetta Darrett Fishman
June 5, 1933 - September 30, 2010

Charlesetta Darrett Fishman was born June 5, 1933 in Houston, Texas, to Eula Mae Glenn and Samuel Thomas Darrett. In 1938 Charlesetta and her family relocated to San Francisco where she lived until her early adult life.

In June of 1950, Charlesetta graduated Notre Dame de Namur High School, with the distinction of being the first Negro female graduate. This event was so significant that it was included in the daily column of the famous Pulitzer Prize winning columnist Herb Caen.

Charlesetta became a resident of Palo Alto in 1962, after her mother Eula, a Surgical Podiatrist, relocated to attend Stanford University to matriculate as a General Electric Fellow in Education.

In her long career as an Executive Administrator and Assistant, Charlesetta considered it an honor to work for such organizations as the Stanford School of Medicine, The City of Palo Alto and former Mayor Byron Sher, Jewish Family Services, Ravenswood School District, Congregation Beth Am, and most recently after retirement, as a founding board



Elbert Estis Mitchell
December 13, 1922 - October 04, 2010

Elbert Estis Mitchell was born December 13, 1922, the third son of four children to loving parents, Orlando and Bertha Mitchell in Columbus, Ohio. He was actively involved in the Second Baptist Church, singing in the choir and active in the drama productions.

He studied engineering at Howard University, Ohio State University and proudly attended Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, ...



Jeanne Cuffey Tatum
October 18, 1943 - September 19, 2010

Jeanne was a classic. To quote an old friend, "She was a cute, feisty, funny, no-BS woman", who could have an easy going manner, BUT always with a little edge.

Born October 18, 1943 to Nancy and Wellington Cuffey in Smithfield, Virginia, Jeanne was raised in East Orange, New Jersey where she attended high school and excelled in every subject....

Read their complete obituaries at EPA Today's Treasured Memories at http://www.epatoday.org/treasured_memories/. Here you will find the obits of other community residents and you will have the opportunity to add the names of others and sign the guest book of those who are included in the site.

member of the Ravenswood Family Health Center. Throughout her life, Charlesetta carried on a tradition of service and advocacy for the under represented members of the community of East Palo Alto in which she lived and worked. She, like her mother, as an African-American woman in medicine and education, broke racial and sexist barriers to achieve a better quality of

life for herself and others. Charlesetta was a charming woman, humorous, gracious and elegant. She loved to travel, and thoroughly enjoyed her life. It's not surprising that over the past decades she cultivated an extensive network of friends and family from all walks of life, all over the world.

Charlesetta is survived by her faithful daughters Juanita Duncan-Bracy and

Eve Fishman, her son-in-law James Bracy, her three amazing grandchildren – Israel, Alicia, and James, four great-grandchildren – Alex, Gabrielle, BJ & Derrick, her brother Jay Price and sister Marlowe Felender and large adopted family – Laurie, Rader, Eldon, Lee, Kate, Joe, Jake, Jeremy, Tessa, and Ernesto. She loved them all dearly. She will be missed and forever remembered.

Tribute to Omo

Dr. Omowale Satterwhite was feted with a "Retirement Tribute" this past October 10. Rebecca Matthews wrote about the event which took place at College Track and she shared how Satterwhite had influenced her life. You can read her article, "A Tribute to Omo - My Personal Perspective" below. Her article also appears on EPA Today's Facebook page with a link to the pictures that she took at the event.

By Rebecca Matthews
East Palo Alto Today

Dr. Omowale Satterwhite has been to me a mentor, a stark supporter, an encourager, an advocate, a teacher, a valuable resource and I view him as an absolute friend. I am so blessed to have him in my life, and I consider it to be a privilege to have attended his "Retirement Tribute" on October 10 at College Track.

Omo believed in my abilities and he backed and encouraged me during the Neighborhood Improvement Initiative (NII) that garnered 4.5 million dollars from the Hewlett Packard Foundation for East Palo Alto. Later the Hewlett Packard Company donated over 5 million dollars to the East Palo Alto Digital Village Technology Group, which I spearheaded for three



Photo courtesy of Henrietta J. Burroughs
Omo Satterwhite between on the left and Councilmember Ruben Abrica on the right as he holds the plaque he just received from the City of East Palo Alto.

years as the chairperson of the East Palo Alto Digital Village Advisory Board. This was a truly rewarding experience for me. Some of the programs that were funded are still in existence today; touching and improving the quality of life in EPA. "Honor the work and the work will honor you."

The tribute to Omo began with a slideshow and a meet and greet with refreshments. Kelley Gulley, the President

and CEO of the National Community. Tarés spoke of her father with much love and fondness. She told us that as a child growing up, he was always teaching her who she would know where she was going. She said that he taught her to always remain humble and "to pay it forward," as she shared with others what was taught to her. Tarés expressed her appreciation to all the people he helped along life's journey and to all who attended his tribute.

There was a message

continued on page 19

Tee Ball in East Palo Alto

The East Palo Alto Tee-Ball/Pitching Machine and Junior Giants Organizations held a Baseball Clinic for over 50 young boys and girls between the ages of 4 through age 17 years at Jack Farrell Park this summer. The clinic had three instructors who had played Ravenswood Little League Baseball, Wilbur Jackson, Tony Brewer and Mike Brewer, years ago. Also, David Jefferson, CEO/Owner of Swaggers Athletics, a Sport Training Organization in Palo Alto, California, provided instruction.

The young boys and girls were divided into four groups: The first group instructor, Wilbur Jackson worked on the proper technique to throw a baseball. The second group instructor, Tony Brewer worked on the proper technique to catch a ground ball.

The third group instructor, Mike Brewer worked on the proper technique to hit a baseball. The fourth group instructor, David Jefferson worked on the proper technique to catch a fly ball.

The players rotated from group to group until each group worked with the four instructors.

Three of the four instructors signed and played Major League Baseball: David Jefferson, played

in Montreal Exploder Organization, Mike Brewer, played in Kansas City Royals Organization, and Tony Brewer, played in Los Angeles Dodgers Organization. David, Mike and Tony graduated from Palo Alto High School.

Former Ravenswood Little League Baseball Coach Clarence Burley spoke to the group. He was coaching the team when they moved to Martin Luther King Park from Jack Farrell Park in the 1970's. Coach Burley played baseball at the University of Tuskegee in Alabama. Coach Burley said Jack Farrell Park in East Palo Alto had a rich history of great baseball players who had played in the East Palo Alto Area.

There were a numbers of players on hand who played at Jack Farrell Park as youths: Rene Bordanave in the 1950's, Wilbur Jackson in the 1960's and Hakim Mustafa (formerly known as Sam Floyd) in the 1970's who also played for Coach Burley, as well as, Mike and Tony Brewer.

Lifecycles

Two community authors: Wilks and Warren

The making of a leader

By Jeri Oakley
East Palo Alto Today

On Sunday October 24, 2010 well over 125 people attended the first book signing of the autobiography of Gertrude Wilfus Dyer-Wilks.

Mrs. Wilks' book is called "Gathering Together, Born to be a Leader." Her book signing event also celebrated a Nairobi Day School reunion. The combined book signing and reunion took place at the Eastside College Preparatory School at 1041 Myrtle Ave in East Palo Alto.

Many city officials, citizens, former students and



Photo by Dorian Dawson
Mrs. Gertrude Wilks

supporters attended. It was a time for much hugging, laughter, and the reconnecting of folks who had not been together in years.

People took that spirit of community and the Nairobi

motto of "Our children can learn" to heart, along with the idea also that our parents understand that we must teach our children, beginning at an early age at home.

It was wonderful to hear again the words learning and education are lifelong.

Dr. Charlie Mae Knight was mistress of ceremonies for the afternoon and introduced Mrs. Wilks and local dignitaries.

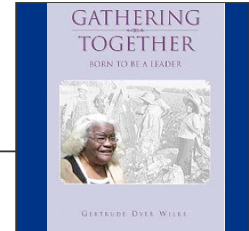
Dr. Knight was the Superintendent for Ravenswood School District for 18 years. Some local seniors, who have been long time supporters of the Nairobi Day Schools and their mission, were also in attendance.

Mr. Joe Prince, who was

raised in East Palo Alto and attended Nairobi is a teacher and author in his own right. Prince is the author of "Liberation School" which details his Nairobi years and his appreciation of the late Barbara Mouton who taught him to read. His book also praises Mother Branch who suggested to Joe's parents that they enroll him in Nairobi.

Mrs. Wilk's work of creating a school system came about as she persisted in questioning the school and the school districts that served her children and the children of the East Palo Alto community.

Forty five years later the quest continues and the challenge of educating remains.



At the end of her book signing, Mrs. Wilks extended a special thank you to Eastside College Preparatory School, Mayor David Woods, the East Palo Alto City Council and Charles Jones for the transportation he provided for seniors.

To get more information about Mrs. Wilks book call toll free: 1-888-795-4274, ext. 7876 or go to www2.xlibris.com. The book is also available at www.barnesandnoble.com/ and at www.amazon.com

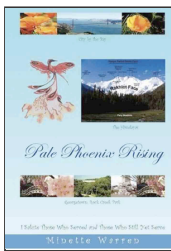
Jeri Oakley is an East Palo Alto resident who has been very active in the East Palo Alto community for many years.

Just believe in yourself: you can do it

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

East Palo Alto city staff members and community residents joined Minette Warren's family as they enthusiastically gave her support at her book signing at the East Palo Alto City Hall on September 30.

Warren did not disappoint her supporters. She shared



how she got the idea for her book 10 years ago and then awoke one morning last November, and decided then and there that she had to complete it.

She told her audience, time and time again, that they could do what they wanted to do if they believed in themselves, focused on their goal

and gave it their best efforts. She said that her own book was a testament to the power of her own belief in what she was saying.

"There were many times I wanted to give up," she said, "but I just couldn't... Day in and day out, something drove me to finish, and I did," Warren said.

Warren is a single mother with three adult children and 5 grandchildren, and her life experiences give her a lot to write about.

Few know that she served in the military during the Vietnam War and that she also writes poetry.

But who would have sus-

pected, as Warren went about her duties as East Palo Alto's city clerk that she was using her personal



Photo courtesy of Henrietta J. Burroughs
Minette Warren gets a hug after her presentation from city Redevelopment Director Carlos Martinez

time to write a book?

Some heard her talk about it, but for others Pale Phoenix Rising, the name of her book was a surprise. It is listed as a book of romantic fiction.

So, can love overcome a painful past? This is a question posed by her book. Readers can answer this question, get more information about her book and see excerpts from it at: <https://www2.xlibris.com/bookstore/bookdisplay.aspx?bookid=62007>

Find out more at www.minettewarrenbooks.com.

Understanding insurance and dental benefits

Dr. Virginia Humphrey, II DDS
East Palo Alto Today

As you may be aware, insurance companies offer benefits which are becoming more confusing with less coverage, as employers demand cheaper policies.

Some types of insurance cover much of one's dental

costs, while others only a fraction designed just to offset but not completely insure the dental needs of some individuals.

Most policies fall with in three groups:

1) HMO - During enrollment you must sign up and go to one provider on the list. Be careful with this plan. Although many items are covered well,

large hidden expenses as well as lower quality may exist. Additionally, the provider can only be changed once a year.

2) PPO - You may choose to go in or out of the network. Insurance companies want you to go in-network as that saves them money. The network provider drops their fees in exchange for patients re-

ferred to them. One might ask why a good provider would need to make that deal. Out of network usually has higher quality, using better materials and labs, plus you may choose your own dentist.

Often you can negotiate with the out of network office to make your out of pocket costs similar to what it would be in-network.

Watch out for fee schedules. Negotiated in-network PPO fees are different from a set fee schedule. For example, out of network providers are often reimbursed by the PPO plan at UCR (usual and customary for the area), while a fee schedule is non UCR plan with very low fees that the employer has purchased to reimburse the employee for a particular service. No practitioner will accept that amount, in or out of network.

3) Indemnity insurance where you may choose any private practice provider and the plan pays at UCR.

Other plans include direct reimbursement which is not insurance but an alternative pro-

gram that many small businesses are using which provide excellent benefits while limiting costs.

The employee has a certain amount of funds which he may use for his dental needs each year. The employer saves money by eliminating premium costs, and counting on the fact that many employees will not utilize their benefits completely.

With healthcare in flux, it is important to verify and understand your dental coverage. Your employer or provider may call on your behalf for a break down of your benefits and explain them to you. Sometimes the information given by the insurance representative is not complete or correct, therefore preauthorizing extensive treatment may eliminate unpleasant surprises.

Dr. Virginia P. Humphrey, II is a doctor of dental surgery (DDS). She maintains a dental office at the Ravenswood Shopping Center. You can get more information about her from her ad which is directly beside this article.

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