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East Palo Alto Today

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical



www.epatoday.org

East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

November 17, 2013 - December 19, 2013

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A new city council member is sworn in



Photo courtesy of the Media Center's web stream of the East Palo Alto City Council meeting. This photo shows newly selected East Palo Alto City Council member Donna Rutherford being sworn in by the East Palo Alto City Clerk, Nora Pimentel. Rutherford was selected over 15 applicants who applied for the East Palo Alto City Council seat. See story to the right, East Palo Alto has a new city council member by Dominique Ellis.

By Dominique Ellis
East Palo Alto Today

The East Palo Alto City Council held a special council meeting that focused on filling David Woods' vacant council seat. After Woods' departure from office in October, the remaining council members wanted to fill the open council seat.

There were sixteen candidates who applied for the open seat, including three applicants: Donna Rutherford, A. Peter Evans, and Carlos Romero, who previously served as East Palo Alto City Council members. Because of their prior service, they stood out amongst the other candidates.

The sixteen hopefuls were allotted three minutes each to address the council and support their case for why they should be selected to fill the council seat.

Mayor Martinez generously allowed speakers a few extra minutes to complete their thoughts before ending their time at the podium. The race came down to four applicants: Romero, Archelle Funnié, Kimberly Carlton and Rutherford. Two council votes put

Rutherford ahead when a new voting system the council approved at its November 6 meeting held the race at a deadlock. The new procedure stated that any one candidate with two votes would automatically advance to another round of voting where the council members could vote or abstain from voting for a candidate. After an impromptu six minute recess, Council member Abrica cast the third vote to name the former mayor, Donna Rutherford, the new council person.

Rutherford, wore a flowing purple scarf as she strode to the podium, where she met City Clerk, Nora Pimentel. She was sworn in at 9:21 p.m. on the chilly December night.

Rutherford immediately announced that she would not be running in the upcoming election for the council seat and that this is her last time holding an elected office. She said she would finish the current term and would support hiring more police to patrol East Palo Alto streets.

Dominique Ellis is an East Palo Alto resident who attends San Mateo Community College.

Peninsula Interfaith Action announces a merger

By Elizabeth McDonald-Zwoyer
East Palo Alto Today

Peninsula Interfaith Action (PIA) has served the Peninsula area for 17 years and the San Francisco Organizing Project has been successful for 30 years, both of them training community leaders and helping low-income families gain access to affordable health care, creating new

affordable housing, defending residents against displacement, and creating safer communities.

The two organizations will merge, effective January 1, 2014, to create a new faith-based community organizing network that serves the San Francisco Peninsula.

PIA's Executive Director, Dr. Jennifer Martinez reflects on the merger, "Already, we are beginning to see how our

work for immigrant rights, affordable housing, access to health care and breaking the cycle of violence and incarceration will be enhanced by the alliance of these two longstanding organizations. In addition, based on what we are hearing in neighborhoods across the region, we anticipate launching new campaigns, focused on economic opportunity and equity."

The new organization,

called the San Francisco Organizing Project/Peninsula Interfaith Action (SFOP/PIA), will be co-directed by Erika Katske and Jennifer Martinez and will still be based on the time-tested model of the PICO National Network, the largest faith-based organizing network in the country. It will explore new methods, new partnerships, and new visions to address the social justice needs of the San Francisco



Peninsula region. **Elizabeth McDonald-Zwoyer** is a communications specialist for PIA.

For more information, see PIA's website at <http://www.pico-apico.org>.

Abrica calls for more community input

By Nozipo Wobogo
East Palo Alto Today

At the city council meeting of November 19, 2013, Council member Ruben Abrica, who at the time was still the city's mayor, raised the issue of a method for hiring a new East Palo Alto police chief. He indicated that recent



Council member Ruben Abrica news of a complaint filed against

outgoing police chief Ron Davis and resultant questions from residents had prompted him to think about a way to accomplish this.

Abrica mentioned an open letter he had addressed to the community, the city manager and the city council about the task of finding a new police chief. In the letter, he expressed his thoughts on the

need to have the community as well as the city council become more engaged in the hiring of the police chief as has been done in the past.

Abrica emphasized that one of the main incentives in the struggle to become a city was achieving

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See **my** progress.

AN LAM
SENIOR GAS ENGINEER

“PG&E is investing \$4.5 billion every year to improve pipeline safety and strengthen our infrastructure. Let me tell you about our work right here in San Mateo County.

My name is An Lam. I live in San Mateo County and I've worked at PG&E for eight years. I work every day to improve safety and strengthen reliability in our community.

Across San Mateo County, my colleagues and I are making progress every day. We have **validated the maximum operating pressure** on all gas pipelines; **constructed three miles of brand new transmission pipeline; installed 16 new automated safety valves;**

and **hydrostatically tested 41.3 miles of gas transmission pipeline** to ensure safe operating pressures on every gas pipeline in the county. Together, we are working to strengthen the safety of our gas system in San Mateo County.

My co-workers and I know that the work we are doing now is some of the most important work we will ever perform. Across Northern and Central California we are strength testing 577 miles of pipe and we've already replaced 77 miles of pipe. By the time we're done, we intend to reach our goal of replacing 185 miles of older pipeline.

Our work is taking place all over California, but my job is right here in San Mateo County and I would be proud to show it to you.

You can take a look for yourself at www.pge.com/SeeOurProgress. PG&E is making progress and you can see it all around. PG&E is made up of people like me—and I'd love to show you my progress in protecting our communities.”



LANDIS MARTTILA
Executive Board Member,
San Mateo County
Central Labor Council:

Our members are working hard every day to make our gas and electric system safer. They are

dedicated to the goal of establishing the safest gas system in the nation. See their progress at:

www.pge.com/SeeOurProgress



An Lam

Community News Briefs



New supervisorial district boundaries for San Mateo County are now a reality

The boundaries of San Mateo County's five supervisorial districts officially change today, a month after the Board of Supervisors approved a new map.

The new map will be in effect through the end of the decade. The adopted map divides four cities between districts: Belmont (Districts 2 and 3), Menlo Park (Districts 2 and 4), San Bruno (Districts 1 and 5) and South San Francisco (Districts 1 and 5).

Belmont, South San Francisco and Redwood City were divided between districts in the existing map. The new map unifies Redwood City, which under the previous map had the Redwood

Shores area in a separate district.

The Board of Supervisors began studying potential boundary adjustments after voters changed the County Charter in November 2012. The change requires that only voters within a district can elect a supervisor who lives in that same district to represent them.

Under the prior system voters countywide elected all five supervisors. For a complete list of cities within each district, an on-line district locator and maps, please visit <http://www.smcgov.org/bos>

The city council honors the EPA Greyhounds and the Viking Cheerleading Squad

The East Palo Alto Greyhounds got a lot of support from the East Palo Alto City Council for their participation in the National Championship tournament in Orlando, Florida

that took place from December 5-13.

The council allocated \$8,000 to support the team's trip. The team also received a \$5,000 donation from Equity Residential Realty, which was presented during the council meeting.

The council also awarded \$7,000 to the MA Viking Cheerleading Squad to assist them with their travel costs to Orlando for the games.

While the Greyhounds did not maintain their winning streak, they also toured Disneyland and by all accounts had a memorable trip to Orlando.

Michaun Auzenne, an ardent team supporter said, "We are so very proud of the East Palo Alto Greyhounds and their many accomplishments.

They have put East Palo Alto on the map for something positive! We would like to

thank all of the people who donated to the Greyhounds and helped us accomplish this amazing feat. We couldn't have done it without the support and prayers of those very special people!" [Editor's note: See Michaun Auzenne's article on the EPA Greyhounds on page 9.]

EPAPD Toy Drive

The East Palo Alto Police Department, in partnership with the East Palo Alto Police Officers Association, will distribute toys to needy children in the community on December 21.

The East Palo Alto Police Department is requesting donations in the form of new or unwrapped toys, gift cards, or monetary donations and is asking that donations be dropped off or sent by mail by December 20 to Officer Veronica Barries at the East Palo Alto

Police Department's headquarters, which is located at 141 Demeter Street.

For more information, contact Vickie Porter at (650) 853-3163 or Officer Veronica Barries at (650) 853-3143.

City Newsletters are online

The City of East Palo Alto is publishing a newsletter that it is sending to city residents.

Residents might already have seen two newsletters: one published for August 2013 and a recent one for November 2013.

The newsletters are written in English and Spanish and the latest one covers such topics as emergency preparedness, the city's general plan and an update on the San Francisco Creek Flood Protection plan.

The newsletters can be found online on the city's website at <http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/index.aspx?nid=488>

East Palo Alto City Council members elect new leaders

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today



Mayor Laura Martinez and Vice Mayor Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier

The East Palo Alto Council's reorganization is a regular event that takes place each year. But, while the event is an annual one, the positions of the participants taking part in the event change. This year was no exception.

At the council's reorganization this past Tuesday, December 3, council members selected a new mayor, Council member Laura Martinez, and a new vice mayor, Council member Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier, to represent the council

and the city.

Both the mayor and the vice mayor were elected separately on a 3 to 1 vote.

The election started with Yarbrough-Gauthier nominating Martinez. Council member Larry Moody nominated himself to a round of applause

from the audience who attended the meeting. During the voting, Mayor Ruben Abrica, and Council members Martinez and Yarbrough-Gauthier voted for Martinez, while Moody cast the 'no' vote, making the vote 3 to 1 for Martinez, who became East Palo Alto's new mayor.

After Martinez' selection, Council member Abrica nominated Yarbrough-Gauthier to be the city's vice mayor. Again, Council member Moody nominated himself. During the voting, Mayor Ruben Abrica, and Council members Martinez and Yarbrough-Gauthier voted for

Yarbrough-Gauthier, while Moody again, cast the 'no' vote.

So, Yarbrough-Gauthier was elected as the vice-mayor by a vote of 3 to 1.

When the voting was over, Moody made it a point to tell everyone that he was "a team player" and that he fully supported Martinez as the mayor and Yarbrough-Gauthier as the vice mayor. He said it was important for the council to work together to make the proper decisions for the residents of East Palo Alto.

The council's next order of business is the selection of a new council member to fill the

vacant seat that was held by Council member David Woods, who resigned from the council on October 1.

The selection took place during a special council meeting that was held on Thursday, December 5 at 6:45 p.m.

[See this issue's cover story for more details about the council selection.

This edited article originally appeared on the EPA Today website at:

http://epatoday.org/news/2013/december_2013/changes_made_to_the_east_palo_alto_city_council_2013.html].

City, County & State Government Meetings & Contacts

East Palo Alto City Council

The East Palo Alto City 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

Laura Martinez
Mayor
(650) 714-5337

Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier
Vice Mayor
(650) 387-4584

Ruben Abrica
(650) 380-4987

Larry Moody
(650) 389-7165

Donna Rutherford
drutherford@cityofepa.org

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
The East Palo Alto Sanitary District office is 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. for service. Regular Board Meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 pm.

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. For questions about an agenda, call the city clerk at 650.330.6620.

Menlo Park City Council Members

Peter I. Ohtaki - Mayor
Cell:(650) 328-0300

Ray Mueller - Mayor Pro Tem
Cell:776-8995

Catherine Carlton
Residence:327-5332
Cell:575-4623

Kirsten Keith
(650) 308-4618

Richard Cline
Residence:328-0300
Office:330-6631

Menlo Park Boards, Commissions, Committees

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

San Mateo County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Warren Slocum 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. 650 691-2121

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State Senator
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San Mateo, CA 94301
(650) 212-3313

From the Editor's Desk

What's in a handshake?

There is much ado being made about President Obama shaking hands with Raul Castro, the president of Cuba. The handshake came at Nelson Mandela's memorial on December 10.

One tally showed that 79 government leaders from all over the world showed up at Soccer City stadium in Johannesburg, South Africa to show their respect for Mandela.

According to news-casts, the stadium was filled with tens of thousands of people who all came to honor a man who represented peace, understanding, forgiveness and reconciliation.



Henrietta J. Burroughs

Certainly, it takes a giant of a person to be able to forgive the very people who engaged for decades in brutal actions geared toward suppressing the rights of millions of other people. This brutality was not just an abstract concept for Mandela to ponder in some protected place.

He lived under the laws of Apartheid, which divided people into four groups and separated them according to their race: "African, Coloured People, Indians, and Whites."

Everyone had to carry a pass that described their race and the freedoms to which they had access. Only those classified as white could vote and they held 90% of the wealth of the country. Africans were severely restricted in where they could live, in their employment and in their educational access, which for millions of African youth in the country was almost non-existent.

Those who protested Apartheid could be arrested, banned from the country, tortured and, even, killed with government approval. Untold thousands, perhaps millions, died in their struggle against this brutal system.

As a leading opponent of Apartheid, Mandela spent 27 years of his life imprisoned on South Africa's Robben Island, where he was charged with treason and where he contracted pneumonia working in the island's limestone pits.

I, personally, remember the peaceful protests that took place in Sharpeville, South Africa in which 69 people were killed and 186 wounded. Those killed were unarmed and simply shot down by government troops and police officers. I remember seeing the photos of people lying dead; many men and women shot in the back as they tried to run away. It was an incident that made world headlines.

How do you ask the families of those victims – the children who were orphaned or the husbands and wives who lost their spouses to forgive those who shot their loved ones?

I had the opportunity when I first moved to New York City to work with some of the African freedom fighters who came to raise funds for the independence movement in their countries.

They would later see the liberation of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, which became Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, etc. They, like all of us, would see Mandela rise to power.

Forgiveness is not easy. But somehow, Mandela managed to forgive and urge millions of Apartheid's victims in South Africa to do the same.

Given the warmth with which he conducted his own relationships with his former oppressors and the open, gracious conduct that he urged others to follow, it stands to reason that Mandela would have given his stamp of approval to the Obama-Castro handshake.

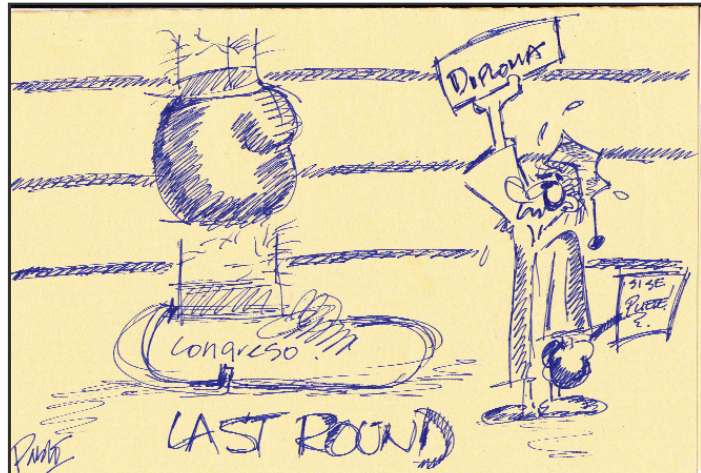
But then, I need to ask a very simple question: How can we ever have peace in the world or even have an understanding between two individuals if we can't shake hands with one another.

As a human race, we would do well in our progress towards being enlightened to stop categorizing each other on the basis of our apparent differences.

That was at the root of Apartheid. It's our ability to categorize others as 'kooks and dinks', as in the Vietnam War, or as 3/5ths of a man, as in slavery, or as towel heads, as in the war in Afghanistan, or as wetbacks that human beings can dehumanize, abuse and kill other human beings.

At what point can we face those whom we would classify as an enemy, or as different, and say, "You believe one thing and I believe another, but given how short life is anyway, what can we do, in spite of our differences, to work together for the good of generations to come and for the good of the planet?"

Through his life, and even in death, Mandela set a sterling example – an example for all of us to follow in the quest for the extension of social justice, basic human rights and opportunity for all. I believe that it is through this quest and through mutual respect that peace will ultimately be achieved.



Cartoon by Pablo Maldonado for East Palo Alto Today

Letters in East Palo Alto Today

California poverty

Dear Editor

Your editor's letter [in the Nov.3-Nov. 16, 2013 issue of EPA Today] stated that it was incredible that California has more poverty than states like Alabama, West Virginia, and other states that we generally think of being poor.

This is an example of availability bias

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Availability_heuristic). It's easy to think of examples of people in Alabama being poor, so we think it's more likely that Alabama has more poverty. And while California certainly has lots of images of poverty that come to mind, there are lots of memorable stories of the fabulously wealthy – high tech millionaires, Hollywood stars, etc.

But, the reality is, California has about 8 times the population of Alabama. So, it would be extraordinary if California DIDN'T have many more people in poverty than Alabama did. Or many more rich people. Or many more left-handed people. Or many more people that like eggs for breakfast. You get the idea.

Kevin Philbin
Menlo Park

[Editor's response: It stands to reason that given California's size it would have more poverty and more of the other things that you cite, but it doesn't necessarily follow that size is the only contributing factor. Even Gov. Brown mentioned the high rate of immigration in the state of those who are poor and can't find good jobs and the down economy as contributing factors to California's high and growing poverty rate. The current alarm is over the higher percentage of poor people in California now with the lower percentage of poor people in the state only a few years ago]

Bias in Police Hiring in East Palo Alto

Dear Editor

FOR: East Palo Alto City Council
THRU: City Manager
SUBJECT: Police Hiring/Discrimination of Negro Applicants

1. In view of the recent news article alleging racial bias against former Police Chief Ron Davis, I have grown naturally curious about this topic as I am among those who applied for a position with the department during the period in which only one Negro was hired. I hold no animosity to-

ward Chief Davis on this matter, but ask you to investigate and provide any justification for the alleged actions.

2. My application for employment was advanced within the department to where I appeared for an oral interview with department heads during that time. I would appear my application was denied. I have requested a copy of my background file so that I may learn of any deficiency in my application for hire. To this date, I have received nothing.

3. The situation is even more perplexing as I came to East Palo Alto a retired Army veteran and a P.O.S.T approved basic academy graduate, ready for hire. Were I to have been hired at that time, perhaps it would have saved the city several thousand dollars in training as I had put myself thru the academy and graduated, a requirement for any new hire. I have no felony and a clean driving record.

4. I would ask that you accord me the same status as those in my class seeking any answer as to hiring practices and discrimination against Negroes.

In Valor,
Charles Ivan King
Former East Palo Alto
City Commissioner

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

Publisher: East Palo Alto
Center for Community Media
Editor-in-chief: Henrietta J. Burroughs

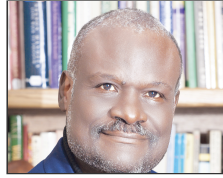
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www.epatoday.org and www.epamedia.org

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

Saying goodbye to Nelson Mandela, an outstanding world leader

By **Meda Okelo**
East Palo Alto Today



Meda Okelo

Not long after Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was released on February 11 1990 from serving 27 years of a life sentence, an official from the South African Consulate in Los Angeles called the city of East Palo Alto with an interesting request. She wanted the city to formally rescind a resolution it had adopted urging divestment from all companies doing business with South Africa.

The call was routed to me probably because I may have been the only African working at the city at the time. I remember politely informing the caller that the request was not that simple and that if she wanted the resolution rescinded, the consulate needed to make a formal request, in a letter, to the mayor.

I however cautioned her that such rescission would not be likely, reminding the caller that Mandela had been

un-justly tried and imprisoned and that it was hard to trust that the same government would make any effort to keep him alive. It was too early, I suggested for the city to even contemplate taking such an action. I, of course, reiterated that that was a personal opinion and the action requested would still have to be made by the city council.

That request was never made. The city probably still has, in its books, a resolution condemning the South African government for the unjust imprisonment of Mandela and calling all companies operating in the country to divest.

Other than city government resolutions and ordinances, local citizen groups joined with others to put pressure on the state as well as the federal government to support the divestment campaign. One local group targeted the Shell Gas Station on University and Bell demonstrations urging motorists to not gas up their cars at the station.

Bomani Siwatu Lonnie Bogan and Elena Becks amongst others were the protestors who regularly paraded the intersection discouraging motorists from fueling up at the station.

Others worked with groups from Stanford and other cities to organize massive rallies up and down the peninsula. Others provided accommodations to visiting South Africans in the country to testify at state legislatures, city councils and college campuses urging support for the divestiture campaign.

Shortly after his release, on that fateful day in February 1990, a group gathered at

East Palo Alto's city hall, and in an impromptu celebration, paraded the streets of East Palo Alto chanting and dancing in celebration. A few of us even did some South African freedom dances and chants.

At the end of June 1990 when Mandela visited Oakland to thank all involved in the campaign to free South African, Bala Ba Colleeq, a local youth dance troupe participated in the welcoming celebrations.

With his death the entire world is wondering how we can pay tribute to a man who despite the mistreatment meted out to him for a significant part of his life, came out of prison and healed a whole nation traumatized by many centuries of oppression.

Mandela's life is a reminder that meanness and revenge are not the pathways to peace and that the dictum "forgive them, for they know not what they are doing" is a better roadway to peace than the oft lauded "a tooth for a tooth".

Abiding by values such as these would go a long way in ensuring peace on the streets of East Palo Alto as well as within the various corridors of power within the many institutions providing services to the residents in the city.

The best lesson we can learn from Mandela's life, indeed the best tribute we can pay him is to adopt values and once adopted let them guide our lives particularly our relationships with others.

On December 20, 1993 the City Council on a 3-2 vote rescinded Resolution 00388 adopted on June 1 1987 ceasing purchases of Shell products and the usage of Shell credit cards until the apartheid system was dismantled.

Meda Okelo is the founder and publisher of EPA Information, a local directory.

He is the former director of East Palo Alto's Community Services Department, which was merged into another city agency.

The need to bring an end to busing

By **J. Samuel Diaz**
East Palo Alto Today

BUSSING: A HOLDOVER FROM A STALLED CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Busing is perhaps one of the worst holdovers from a stalled civil rights movement. When it started, bussing of students was meant as a means to accelerate the process of desegregation. Schools located in African American, Mexican and other neighborhoods not considered part of mainstream society tended to have the worst educational resources and facilities. This appeared to slowly improve with key changes in education through the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education decision and the civil rights acts of 1957, 1960, 1964 and 1968.

Eventually, government institutions at all levels began realizing that more impoverished students would continue to demand equal

and fair access to all public facilities and institutions, as granted to them under the various civil rights acts, each of which allocated just a tad more each time so as not to emancipate folk too quickly. Perhaps you can sense a hint of cynicism in my voice when I state this. That is because of how "equal and fair access" to education was granted: Busing.

DIVESTING FROM EDUCATION IN POORER NEIGHBORHOODS

Rather than identify the root cause of the problem as being the fact that the best educational institutions were solely established in white, Anglo-Saxon neighborhoods that traditionally excluded all non-white students, education boards decided to take the federal government's lead and establish



J. Samuel Diaz

busing. So rather than begin to build up educational resources in the impoverished side of town, those mainly African American students would now be bused to neighboring schools.

Busing also meant that any student funds allocated to each of those students – note that each student was granted equality in funding – transferred to the new schools along with the bused students. In the case of Ravenswood High School, the Sequoia Union High School District Board decided to bus a large number of its African American students to the hinterlands of the school district. The immediate effect felt at Ravenswood High School was a rapid defunding of dollars from its budget that forced it to face hard times.

Granted, East Palo Alto and

Belle Haven had more than enough students locally to fully populate the high school. Yet bussing changed that and forced a heavily populated area to divest from its educational resources and the District Board decided to close the fully functional high school in 1976. The main reasons given were because of its low student numbers (inside of a heavily populated urban area), its budgetary woes (due to its student funds moving to the hinterland high schools), and its inability to diversify.

Exactly how it was going to diversify if not enough students from the wealthier areas were, in kind, forced to be bused to Ravenswood H.S. points to a key flaw in our democracy: The opinions of the wealthy weigh more in decision making than do the opinions of the underrepresented and poorer residents. Because of this major flaw, it never occurred to District Board members, who traditionally come from the wealthier

families in the region, to fully implement an effective desegregation plan that would completely eliminate segregation of our schools in California by moving students to the wealthier schools.

Looking back in hindsight and also to the present, we see that K-12 schools in poorer areas have pretty much remained underfunded, while schools in wealthier areas have profited tremendously. With the bussing of poor students to wealthier areas, those wealthier schools retained their privileged status while bringing in tremendous amounts of funds that came along with the bused students. Because bused students generally get tracked for failure and provided with minimal resources, it meant most of those new funds could be allocated to benefit the wealthier students.

In effect, the way desegregation was implemented desegregated public educational facilities

Having empathy can be healing for others and for oneself

By **Ebonni Black**
East Palo Alto Today

Over the past few weeks I've thought about the devastation caused by the Typhoon in the Philippines. When I think of those whose lives were lost, there's an overwhelming sense of sadness for their surviving family members and friends.

To experience something of that magnitude is unfathomable.

Which brings me to the point of my story. Everyone in this world has some battle or another that they face daily.

As we struggle to deal with whatever personal issues we may have, we can often forget that there are other people in this world



Ebonni Black

dealing with greater issues.

Not to minimize ones pain, but when you weigh struggling to pay a bill versus experiencing a typhoon, there's really no comparison.

The ability to empathize can truly work wonders when we find ourselves facing our

own personal challenges.

The weight of the world is quite heavy when you feel there's no one to talk to or understand your struggle. Especially during the holidays when there's generally a sense of loss and sadness in the air.

However when you think of people going without food, water, shelter, or watching helplessly as their loved ones were swallowed up in a Typhoon, you'd have to know that in the midst of your own

storm, you're blessed.

Hopefully this story will serve as a reminder to embrace your struggle. And remember when it seems like the world may be falling apart, consider that there are others who literally have watched their world be taken apart. Please remember to keep those in the Philippines in prayer.

Ebonni Black is a former East Palo Alto resident who is very concerned about the health and well-being of the residents in the city.

Lifecycles

FACT TRACK ON AGING: Social Security Denied to Many Ethnic Elders

By Paul Keyman

Even in this period of intense national debate over the National Debt, Americans fiercely want to protect Social Security from benefit cuts. But while 40 million seniors received retirement support from the program in 2012, about one in 10 seniors in the United States don't qualify for Social Security, leaving many without a safety net.

Of the approximately 4 million U.S. seniors not receiving Social Security old age support, a disproportionate one-third are ethnic elders. In fact, according to the U.S. Census, one-in-six African American, one-fifth of Latino—and nearly

one-in-three (29 percent) Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) seniors cannot draw on the national retirement pension program to make financial ends meet.

African Americans "Under the Radar"

Many older African Americans who don't qualify for Social Security "have lived under the radar because they have worked in domestic roles and



been paid cash for their labors" with no contributions going to the program, said Karyne Jones, president and CEO of the National Caucus and Center on Black Aging (NCBA) based in Washington, D.C.

Jones continued, "With most women, it's the child rearing and caregiving years that don't rake up any credit towards Social Security." She added, "Let us not forget chronic unemployment."

Also affecting access to

Social Security support, she and other experts said, may be the high incarceration level among black men. As they get released at older ages, many will end up with little or no Social Security benefits. This would leave their spouses with inadequate incomes later in life.

Because the Social Security Administration calculates retirement benefits based on credits people receive for at least 40 quarters of covered work—10 years' worth during one's working life, she said, many African Americans paid cash or under the table don't realize they benefit from the program "until it's too late."

Ineligibility for Social Security is particularly high for immigrants. Many who arrive at age 50 or older end up with very low coverage or none at all. About half of Hispanic seniors in the U.S. and 80 percent of older Asian Americans who receive no Social Security support are either naturalized citizens or immigrants.

While undocumented immigrants are flatly ineligible for U.S. benefits, many legally present immigrants do not have enough documented years of work to qualify for eligibility.

Financial security for the growing number of black and other ethnic elders is a looming

issue. A poll released in September [[http://bit.ly/HtgFq5] by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies found, "Nearly half of black Americans (46 percent) — and about a third of white Americans (36 percent) — say they would like to save for retirement, but don't seem to have enough money to do so."

Wilhelmina Leigh, who coauthored the survey report, stated in an earlier study, "Modifying the Social Security system must include voices of African Americans and other racial/ethnic subpopulations whose dependence on the system is great, but whose patterns of usage may differ from the norm."

Barriers Facing Immigrants Making ends meet is especially difficult for Asian retirees. Those who do get Social Security checks average \$2,000 a year (\$13,066) less than the total for all U.S. retirees, says a 2011 report from the Insight Center. Pacific Islanders receive even smaller benefits—if any at all—says the study. For instance, Native Hawaiian seniors, because so many had low-wage jobs, average Social Security benefits of less than half that of other Hawaiian elders, including other Asians.

The Insight Center report's continued on page 8

Celebrating A Decade of Service		Celebrando Una Década de Servicio	
Primary health care for residents of East Palo Alto, Belle Haven and Redwood City.		Cuidado médico primario para los residentes de East Palo Alto, Belle Haven y Redwood City.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary medical care Dental care for adults and children Behavioral health counseling Chronic disease care Prenatal care and Family Planning Immunizations and school physicals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Servicios médicos primarios Cuidado dental para adultos y niños Asesoramiento de la salud mental Tratamiento para las enfermedades crónicas Cuidado prenatal y planificación familiar Vacunas y exámenes físicos 	<p>To enroll as a new patient: 650.330.7416 Para ingresar como nuevo paciente: Para sus citas médicas: 650.330.7400 For dental appointments: 650.289.7700 Para sus citas dentales: 650.289.7700</p>	
<p>Children (18 and under) can receive dental care without being enrolled as a medical patient.</p>		<p>Niños menores de 18 años pueden recibir tratamientos dentales sin estar registrados como pacientes médicos.</p>	
Ravenswood Family Health Center 1735A Bay Road, East Palo Alto	Ravenswood Family Dentistry 1007 Bay Road, East Palo Alto	Belle Haven Clinic 100 Terminal Avenue, Menlo Park	

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MONITORIZAR LOS HECHOS: Seguro Social denegado a muchos ancianos étnicos



Por Paul Keyman
Traducido por Liz Gonzalez.

Incluso en este período de intenso debate nacional sobre la deuda nacional, los estadounidenses quieren proteger ferozmente el Seguro Social de los recortes a los beneficios. Pero mientras que 40 millones de adultos mayores recibieron ayuda para su jubilación del programa en 2012, aproximadamente uno de cada 10 adultos mayores en los Estados Unidos no califica para el Seguro Social, dejando a muchos sin una red de seguridad.

De los aproximadamente 4 millones de personas mayores de Estados Unidos que no reciben

apoyo de tercera edad del Seguro Social, un desproporcionado un tercio son ancianos étnicos. De hecho, según el Censo de EE.UU., uno de cada seis afroamericanos, una quinta parte de los latinos y casi uno de cada tres asiático americanos e isleños del Pacífico (AAPI por sus siglas en inglés), mayores no pueden depender del programa nacional de pensiones de jubilación para llegar a fin de mes.

Afroamericanos "pasan desapercibidos"

Muchos afroamericanos mayores que no califican para Seguro Social "han vivido desapercibidos, ya que han trabajado en roles domésticos y se les ha pagado en efectivo por su trabajo" sin contribuciones para el programa, dijo Karyne Jones, presidente y CEO del National Caucus and Center on Black Aging (NCBA por sus siglas en inglés) con sede en Washington, D.C.

Jones continuó: "Con la mayoría de las mujeres, son los años de crianza de los hijos y del cuidado que no contribuyen algún crédito al Seguro Social". Y

continued on page 8

Lifecycles

Stories about deportation and family separation

Adapted from the E4FC website
East Palo Alto Today

Three E4FC students were featured in a heart-breaking article in Aljazeera America about the devastating effects of deportation. "Deportations Creating A Generation Scarred By Parental Loss,"

profiles young people left behind after their parents were deported to places they no longer consider home.

One student, Nadia, was brought to the U.S. as a child. Nadia received her undergraduate degree from UC Berkeley and recently completed her Master's in Public Health from

UC Davis. She has also served on E4FC's outreach team.

In the article, Nadia talks about the traumatizing experience of having to say goodbye to her mother and brother after they were ordered deported.

Nadia said she still has vivid memories of the exact

moment when immigration agents came to detain her family. "I see the frightened faces on my mom and my sister as they are being patted down while the officers are doing the same to me. I feel the cold metal against my skin as they place handcuffs around my hands and chain

them to my stomach."

The following excerpt from Nadia's autobiographical story, A Knock on the Door, is taken from the story that she wrote in E4FC's creative writing program. □□

To see Nadia deliver her story, go to <http://e4fc.org/artscreativity.html>

Nadia's autobiographical story - A Knock on the Door

Nadia

Thump, Thump

The vibrating sound of knuckles pounding against the wooden door of my apartment penetrates through the walls

I'm in the middle of reading my Facebook wall updates—I just found out that my friends Katie and Chris are in a relationship! I didn't even know they were dating!!! I knew there was something fishy about them spending a lot of time together. But all of a sudden I hear the noise coming from my door.

Thump, Thump

Slowly I close my laptop, turn my radio off and lean closer to make sure I wasn't imagining the sound.

Thump Thump

The unmistakable noise indicating



Photo courtesy of the E4FC website

someone's presence at the front door

I wonder who it is? Could it be my uncle? No, no, can't be him. He would have called before coming. He knows better. Should I open the door?

Thump Thump

As if a rewind button was pressed in my memory, my mind travels back 5 years ago
The door creaks as I open it early

on a cold winter morning, five days before Christmas

Two officers in navy blue uniforms with the letters I-C-E written all over their suits enter my home pretending to be police looking for a man they knew did not live within the house

"We're looking for a man named Juan Gonzales. He listed this address as his residence. Is he home?"

"We don't know that person", my mom answers.

"Ma'am we apologize, we must have been mistaken. Can I see your ID? Don't worry, it is just part of the process." Thump, Thump

"Ma'am, are you aware that you and your family have an order of

deportation?"

Thump, Thump,

I see the frightened faces on my mom and my sister as they are being patted down while the officers are doing the same to me

I feel the cold metal against my skin as they place handcuffs around my hands and chain them to my stomach

I hear my mom's pleading voice "Why are you doing this? What did we do wrong?"

"Please, don't hurt my daughters!"

Thump, Thump

The sound brings me back to the present.

Are they coming for me, again? Or are they coming to take away the rest of my family members? Are they here to tear my heart

into more pieces?

Have they not inflicted enough pain upon my family and me?

I peek through the cracks of my bedroom door making sure their eyes are not peering through the windows

Quietly, I tiptoe on the soft carpet to the front door hoping they can't hear my heart beating quickly

After traveling what seemed like 12 miles when instead it was 12 feet, I reach the front door

I peer through the hole in the door

A man in a brown uniform, alone, holding a square package in his hand

I breathe a sigh of relief. I open the door

"Delivery for Nadia. Can you please sign here?"

A tribute to the life, love & legacy of Blanche Ferrell

Miss Blanche Lee Lambert was born August 7, 1918 to the union of Lee and Mrs. Ivory Lambert in Bearden, AR. Growing up in the Holly Springs community, she worked alongside both of her parents and siblings on the family farm. She joined Faithway Church of God In Christ at an early age and attended faithfully with her mother. She would also attend White Springs AME Church, with her father, who was a trustee and loyal member.

In March 1934, she married Mr. Waymond Ferrell and to this union, eight children were born, five preceding her in death. As a homemaker, she ensured her daughters were trained to be ladies and her sons, as gentlemen. She disciplined and taught all of her children how to maintain a home, garden, cook, manage money and work hard as well as complete their education, which would establish a strong foundation for their future.

Her strong innovative, tenacious and industrious spirit led her to take her children and relocate to California in 1952. While staying with her sister and another relative saved enough money to purchase

her first home in East Palo Alto, CA. In the early 1960's, she completed training to become a Licensed Practical Nurse, later garnering a nursing position at Woodside Women's Hospital. She later accepted a dorm mother position at Stanford University, where she supervised young ladies living in the dormitory and attending the university.

In 1968 her dream of becoming a business owner was realized. She opened a boarding care facility and named it Ferrell's Home I. Through her business, she was able to utilize her experience in personal care, nursing, homemaking, gardening and caregiving to make a difference in the lives of her family, others and her community.

The business expanded and she eventually opened Ferrell's Home II. Mrs. Ferrell, with the assistance of her children, maintained the business for more than 35 years. She retired in 2003 at the age of 85 years old.

Through her faith in God,



Blanche Lee Ferrell

love for her family and hard work ethic, Mrs. Ferrell was able to make a difference in many lives. She has traveled to Arkansas often to visit her mother, children, grandchildren, family and friends as well as support events honoring the legacy of her parents.

She participated and contributed generously to the Lambert Community Reunion, created by her father Mr. Lee Lambert and other leaders to support the White Springs Cemetery. She would also return in September to attend the Annual Granny Gathering, commemorating the legacy and birthdays of her mother, who lived to be 113 yrs. old.

Mrs. Ferrell loved cooking, entertaining, gardening, shopping, traveling and collecting antiques. She was able to travel with her daughter and

her friends, touring France, Italy, Germany, Mexico and other locations. Her greatest pleasure was spending time with her family.

Many recall family holiday dinners, in which Mrs. Ferrell prepared a delicious feast, aligning beautifully decorated tables with appetizing entrees, desserts and beverages. She maintained an immaculate home and garden, and was always available and willing to teach others how to cook, clean, garden, shop and seize the many opportunities in life.

Mrs. Ferrell was preceded in death by her parents Mr. Lee Lambert and Mrs. Ivory Ross Lambert; her husband, Waymond Ferrell, Sr.; five children; Mr. James Ferrell, Mrs. Norma Ruth Ferrell Juniel, Ms. Margaret Ferrell, Mr. Billy

Mack Ferrell and Mr. Lee Carlton Ferrell; and three siblings, Mr. Moses Lambert, Mrs. Arbie Dee Lambert Moyer and Mr. William Lambert.

She leaves to cherish her memory, one daughter Mrs. Ann (Derek) Ferrell Zabaldo of Palo Alto, CA; two sons, Mr. Waymond (Rochelle) Ferrell of Palo Alto, CA and Mr. Thomas (Evaughn) Ferrell of Yuba City, CA; one sister-in-law Mrs. Lucille Lambert of Rockford, IL; one daughter-in-law Mrs. Virgie Ferrell of Bearden, AR;

She also leaves seventeen grandchildren; 23 great grandchildren; 15 great-great grandchildren and one great-great-great grandchild and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.



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Emergency preparedness planning is well underway

By Ryan Zollicoffer
East Palo Alto Today

On Tuesday, December 3, 2013 both counties, the cities of East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, and Palo Alto, along with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, the SFC Joint Powers Authority (SFCJPA), and the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) took an important step in conducting a Multi-Agency Coordination Workshop and Tabletop Exercise based on the real world events of December 23, 2012.

Last year around Christmas Eve the City of East Palo Alto was hit hard by a major



Photo courtesy of Ryan Zollicoffer This photo shows attendees watching a presentation during an emergency preparedness multi-agency coordination workshop and tabletop exercise.

rain storm that caused over 2 million dollars in damage and resulted in the City Manager (Magda Gonzalez) signing an emergency proclamation, in efforts of seeking State finan-

cial assistance to aid with some of the recovery efforts.

"This tabletop exercise is designed to make sure all of the various government agency stakeholders are coor-

inating," says Kenneth Dueker, the Director of Emergency Services for the City of Palo Alto. "We are involving a deliberate mix of executive leadership, such as city managers, along with public information officers, public works, utilities, and public safety (police, fire, and emergency services) staff."

This event is sponsored by the SCVWD, hosted by the Menlo Park Fire District, and implemented by the City of Palo Alto. "Whether it's a flood or another emergency, planning together and working as a team among disparate jurisdictions and disciplines is essential," says Ryan Zollicoffer,

the Emergency Manager for the Menlo Park Fire Protection District

During a major storm or flood in the area of the San Francisco Creek (SFC), government agencies from both San Mateo County and Santa Clara County need to coordinate to ensure an effective response and recovery. This exercise continues to strengthen the city's emergency preparedness efforts, while building effective relationships on both sides of the County in the process.

Ryan Zollicoffer is the Emergency Service Coordinator for the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.

Abrika calls for more

this particular goal. He stated, "Having a local police force responsive to the community was one of the strongest motivating forces for the movement to incorporate East Palo Alto and establish our own city government..."

Citing historical precedence, Abrika tells of a time in 2005, a community panel and city council members were involved. They were able to interview finalists for the position thus widening the scope and perspective of opinions. He pointed out that in keeping with the laws of East Palo Alto, the ultimate decision will be made by the

city manager, Ms. Magda Gonzalez.

Abrika said that he would like to see Ms. Gonzalez adopt a more inclusive approach so that the city council, and the rest of the community will have some input into her final choice. Abrika wrote, "However, my hope is that the current city manager, Ms. Magda Gonzalez, will continue the East Palo Alto civic tradition of wider involvement and does not choose a rigid interpretation of the authority granted to her as chief administrator."

Read Abrika's letter:
November 19th, 2013

OPEN LETTER to the City Manager, City Council, and Community

RE: Process for the recruitment, interviewing, and selection of a future Chief of Police

Having a local police force responsive to the community was one of the strongest motivating forces for the movement to incorporate East Palo Alto and establish our own city government, and the community did so in 1983.

At various times since then, the process for selecting the Chief of Police has included the community and the city council in several

ways. East Palo Alto, as a General Law City, grants the ultimate decision in selecting a Chief of Police to the City Manager.

However, my hope is that the current city manager, Ms. Magda Gonzalez, will continue the East Palo Alto civic tradition of wider involvement and does not choose a rigid interpretation of the authority granted to her as chief administrator.

As was most recently done in 2005, a community panel and city council members were also involved in interviewing the finalists and provided input to the city man-

continued from page 1

ager who then made the final decision.

For the good of the community and out of respect for our civic tradition, I think that in the spirit of dialogue, Ms. Gonzalez needs to present as soon as possible, and sooner rather than later, her ideas on the Process for selecting a Chief of Police. For this sensitive process, the community needs an opportunity to dialogue and not be left in suspense for an indefinite period of time,

Sincerely,
Ruben Abrika
Mayor

FACT TRACK ON AGING

author Meizhu Lui noted cultural and other barriers to assistance for Asian and other immigrants. "Language barriers lead to a lack of knowledge about the Social Security program," she wrote.

Among other barriers to Social Security that Asian elders encounter, says Lui, are "cultural aversions to large bureaucracies, pride in being independent and a fear of government based on home-country experiences can make eligible foreign-born Asian sen-

iors hesitant to apply."

A University of Southern California analysis of Latino retirement cites another reason for many low-income immigrants. It calls agricultural labor "a telling example of sub-minimum wage employment where salaries and Social Security contributions for workers often go unreported."

Ironically, the Social Security Administration has estimated that unauthorized immigrants contributed more than \$12 billion alone to the program's trust

continued from page 6

fund in 2010 more than the \$1 billion the agency says it paid out in fraudulent benefits to undocumented residents. Many undocumented immigrants pay into the system through jobs they got using fake Social Security cards. But they can never collect benefits when they need them.

[This article is reprinted with the permission of New America Media - www.newamericamedia.org. See a TV interview with the author at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyQ7RbhOy8>.]

MONITORIZAR LOS HECHOS:

continued from page 6
añadió: "No olvidemos el desempleo crónico".

También afectando el acceso a la ayuda del Seguro Social, ella y otros expertos dijeron, puede ser el alto nivel de encarcelamiento entre los hombres negros. A medida que se liberan en la edad avanzada, muchos terminarán con poco o nada de los beneficios del Seguro Social. Esto dejaría a sus cónyuges con ingresos insuficientes en el futuro.

Debido a que la Adminis-

tración del Seguro Social calcula las prestaciones de jubilación sobre la base de créditos que recibe la gente por lo menos 40 trimestres de trabajo cubierto — equivalente a 10 años durante la vida laboral de una persona, dijo, muchos afroamericanos a quienes se les paga en efectivo o debajo de la mesa no se dan cuenta de que se beneficiarán del programa "hasta que es demasiado tarde".

La inelegibilidad para el Seguro Social es especialmente alto para los inmigrantes. Muchos de los que llegan a la edad de 50
continued on page 9

Treasured Memories
Create a Memorable Legacy
for your Family Member or Friend

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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The East Palo Alto Greyhounds make history

By Michauzen Auzenne
East Palo Alto Today

Eighteen players and six coaches/chaperones traveled to Orlando last Thursday. They played their first game on Saturday and unfortunately, lost 28-0 to a team from Virginia.

It was a great learning experience and the coaches and players were able to regroup and improve for the consolation game this past Tuesday. They lost that game, as well, but it was a much closer game with a score of 14-12.

They have had a great time at Disney World and Pop Warner went all out last night with a Celebration/Party for all of the participants with free food, drinks, rides, music and



fireworks.

The kids were able to meet people from all over the United States and represented East Palo Alto well.

In 2005, when the East Palo Alto Greyhounds organization was established, our GOALS were to:

- Build a Strong, Year-Round Youth Sports Club in

East Palo Alto, CA

-Positively Affect the Community

-Create Different Avenues of Success for Our Youth

-Keep Growing!

The East Palo Alto Greyhounds is much more than just another youth sports program. It is a year-round intervention program, in which East Palo

Alto kids are kept busy playing football, basketball and track, as part of a close-knit team family that provides positive role models, adult mentoring and academic support.

To support the Greyhounds is to support an effective program for at-risk youth in the East Palo Alto community. Home grown, the program knows how to influence and support kids to make positive choices, and to develop an ethic of hard work and dedication to both school and sports.

The objective of the East Palo Alto Greyhounds, simply put, is the pursuit of excellence in athletics and academics. Sports programs have been drastically cut in East Palo Alto, leaving the children without avenues to direct their time

and energy.

These children are continually at risk for misdirection and violence. The Greyhounds involve the kids in sports and use this connection to focus on character, leadership and education.

We began as strictly track and field, and added Football and Cheer/Dance in 2008. We are the first football program in East Palo Alto to be a part of the Pop Warner Organization.

Now in our sixth year of existence, our football program has grown and has had incredible success. Last year, we were moved from Division 3 to Division 2! And this year, our Jr. Pee-Wee (ages 8-11)

continued on page 11

Busing

continued from page 5

and pushed segregation to the classroom: Those bused students now got enrolled in remedial classes with P.E. and study hall thrown in to balance out their downgraded schedules. It meant California schools could now proclaim victory against that insidious, southern institution of segregation and show itself as a forward-thinking state.

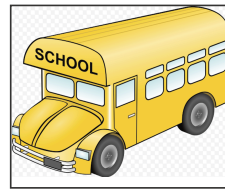
Yet this false victory did not change the situation for African Americans, Mexicans, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans and others. In the case of African Americans, many of their once-thriving neighborhoods have now been impoverished. Any new areas where they were allocated housing turned into ghettos. And any infrastructure that added value to their neighborhoods has been purposely ripped out in the name of progress.

OTHER EXAMPLES IN THE

BAY AREA

Though East Palo Alto is one example, others abound. Just look up north to our forward-thinking neighbor: San Francisco. There you will find two districts that have experienced similar, detrimental changes. Looking at Bayview District, we see but a shadow of what it once was: A thriving area full of African American-owned businesses and leaders. Go there today and you still find the gentlemen dressed in their suits and now tending mostly empty stores. That was the effect redlining had on this district and that denial of business and home loans prevented it from prospering while San Francisco's other districts have become landmarks, heavily visited by tourists and with plenty of investment money flowing into them.

The other San Francisco district is Hunter's Point. You simply



Courtesy of <http://www.wpcipart.com>

cross 3rd Street from the west side (Bayview District) and you are in Hunter's Point. But I don't recommend going there. When my friend and I worked in San Francisco, we would go for walks all over Bayview District and up 3rd Street and I still remember his advice to never cross over to Hunter's Point.

For you see, Hunter's Point is full of the poorly planned projects; housing that was meant to concentrate black folk into very dense buildings and as far away from the wealthier areas of town as was possible. This district has a higher crime rate and the only time I ever

saw cops head out of Hunter's Point was the day I saw a caravan of patrol vehicles, police vans and motorcycles all with their lights blazing and running through red lights to get the heck out of there.

And so, returning to the story of East Palo Alto, we see a similar story. It is devoid of many businesses that usually are taken for granted even in small towns. It had no real banks until California Bank & Trust and the San Mateo Credit Union moved into town with the intent of bringing real banking services to the city. Prior to that, banks avoided the city and forced many locals to seek out loan sharks and high-fee ATMs you'd find inside of local markets. E.P.A. no longer has a high school and has no real downtown; the high school had been its core, its heartbeat and it left a huge void when it closed.

Because of busing, E.P.A. now has the majority of its students bused to four disparate high schools. That has divided its lo-

alties into four fragments and allowed gangs to take advantage of that fragmented society and thrive there. Before, when Ravenswood High School had been the center of life in E.P.A., that had simply not been the case.

E.P.A. students who are bused to other high schools have a 20% truancy rate. And each year it's a completely different blend of students who are cutting classes. If you consider that each bused student wastes an average of three hours each school day related to busing, you realize so much of their day is being wasted. Add to that the fact that most E.P.A. students will generally get downgraded to remedial coursework upon arrival at their bused home school and reset each subsequent year to the same remedial status and you realize they are being told, whether directly or indirectly, that they are doomed for failure.

[Editor's note: See the next issue of EPA Today for the author's solutions and conclusions.]

MONITORIZAR LOS HECHOS cont. from page 8

años o más terminan con una cobertura muy baja o ninguna en absoluto.

Alrededor de la mitad de los ancianos hispanos en los EE.UU. y el 80 por ciento de los asiáticos americanos mayores que no reciben apoyo del Seguro Social son ciudadanos naturalizados o inmigrantes.

Mientras que los inmigrantes indocumentados son categóricamente ineligibles para los beneficios de los Estados Unidos, muchos inmigrantes que residen legalmente no tienen suficiente años de trabajo documentados para cumplir los requisitos para ser elegibles.

La seguridad financiera para el creciente número de ancianos negros y otros ancianos étnicos es un problema inminente. Una encuesta publicada en septiembre por el Centro Conjunto de Estudios Políticos y Económicos encontró que, "Casi la mitad de los estadounidenses negros (46 por ciento) - y alrededor de un tercio de los estadounidenses blancos (36 por

cientos) - dicen que les gustaría ahorrar para la jubilación, pero que no parecen tener suficiente dinero para hacerlo".

Wilhelmina Leigh, coautor del informe de la encuesta, declaró en un estudio anterior "Modificar el sistema del Seguro Social debe incluir voces de afroamericanos y otras subpoblaciones raciales/étnicas cuya dependencia del sistema es grande, pero cuyos patrones de uso pueden ser diferentes de la norma". Las barreras que enfrentan los inmigrantes

Llegar a fin de mes es especialmente difícil para los asiáticos jubilados. Los que si consiguen cheques del Seguro Social reciben un promedio de \$ 2,000 al año (\$ 13,066) menos que el total para todo los jubilados estadounidenses, según un informe de 2011 del Centro Insight. Personas de las islas del Pacífico reciben beneficios aún más pequeños - si es que reciben algo - dice el estudio. Por ejemplo, los adultos mayores indígenas de Hawái, debido a que muchos de ellos tenían empleos de bajos

salarios, reciben beneficios del Seguro Social de menos de la mitad que otros ancianos de Hawái reciben, incluyendo a otros asiáticos.

El autor del informe del Insight Center Meizhu Lui señaló las barreras culturales y de otro tipo a la asistencia para inmigrantes asiáticos y otros inmigrantes. "Las barreras del idioma conducen a una falta de conocimiento sobre el programa del Seguro Social", escribió.

Entre otros obstáculos al Seguro Social que enfrentan los ancianos asiáticos, dice Lui, son "aversiones culturales a las grandes burocracias, el orgullo de ser independiente y un miedo al gobierno basado en las experiencias del país de origen puede hacer que los asiáticos mayores nacidos en el extranjero y elegibles sean reacios a aplicar".

Un análisis de la jubilación latina de la

Universidad del Sur de California cita otro motivo para muchos inmigrantes de bajos ingresos. Llama al trabajo agrícola "un claro ejemplo del empleo menos del mínimo donde los salarios y las contribuciones al Seguro Social para los trabajadores a menudo no se declaran".

Irónicamente, la Administración del Seguro Social ha estimado que los inmigrantes no autorizados contribuyeron con más de 12 mil mil-

lones de dólares al fondo fiduciario del programa en sólo 2010, más de los mil millones de dólares que el organismo dice que pagó en beneficios fraudulentos a los residentes indocumentados. Muchos inmigrantes indocumentados pagan al sistema a través de puestos de trabajo que consiguieron usando tarjetas falsas de Seguro Social. Pero nunca pueden recibir beneficios cuando los necesitan.

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Are we lazy in our approach to educating boys?

By Edmond J. Dixon, Ph.D.
East Palo Alto Today

They Have Fundamentally Different Learning Patterns, Says Pioneering Expert; Uncovers Secrets & Offers Tips



Dr. Edmond J. Dixon

The problem of boys in education is not a new one – data has been mounting for many years that our sons are simply falling behind our daughters, says pioneering veteran in education, Edmond J. Dixon, Ph.D. But it's not because boys are any less intelligent than girls, he adds.

A recent study from researchers at the University of Georgia, which followed 10,000 students as they moved from kindergarten to eighth grade, indicates that

though-boys scored well on tests, indicating mastery of material, girls got better grades. Researchers account for higher scores in girls because they comported themselves better than boys while in the classroom.

"I think that, by now, most academics have accepted that boys and girls have fundamentally different learning needs; girls are better at sitting

still and listening, whereas boys learn better via kinesthetic learning, which involves more physical activity," says Dixon, who has more than three decades experience as a teacher and is a parent of boys, and is the author of "Helping Boys Learn: Six Secrets for Your Son's Success in School," (Helping-BoysLearn.com). He also has a teacher's edition titled "Helping Boys Learn: Six Secrets for Teaching Boys in the Classroom."

"There are many other studies, however, showing boys underperforming in school; now, it's a matter of what we're going to do about it."

Dixon, a cognitive-kines-
thetics specialist, discusses

why his first three "secrets" are so important in helping boys with active minds and bodies.

•Movement matters: Nearly ever time, the student who disrupts class because they cannot sit still is a boy. Research reveals that young boys' brains develop a tremendous amount of neural wiring to facilitate movement and sensitivity for how things "fit" together. When a boy is a toddler, we would never think that a sedentary child is a good indicator of health, so what makes us think that he should change while in grade school? One tip: Allow a boy to use his "movement wiring" by allowing him to use his body as he learns to represent the topic.

•Games work: Their testosterone makes males are natu-

rally competitive. If you want them to become suddenly engaged in something, make a game out of the lesson—it's just like flipping a switch on. Just look at sports talk shows with analysis such as "Pardon the Interruption;" each expert has a clock clicking down to make his point. Little gaming tricks like this works on the male brain. Tip: create clear rules – they help boys understand victory, and they add legitimacy to the lesson. Games also serve as an excellent method for male bonding, too.

•Make them laugh: Observe a group of males; whether young our old, they bust each other's chops. Not only is it okay, they enjoy it!

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Responding to the racial incident at San Jose State

By Roberto Gutierrez Perez
East Palo Alto Today



The campus of Silicon Valley's San Jose State University is considered a multicultural society, with students from all around the country and the world.

It is, therefore, quite a surprise to it's students that there was a recent hate crime on one of the student dorms.

Three white freshmen students were charged with the crime of putting a bike lock around their African American roommate's neck.

They were also accused of demonstrating other hate behavior, which included the hanging of Nazi symbols and a Confederate flag around

their campus apartment and writing racial profanity on a dry-eraser board that was in the suite they shared.

The three students were suspended from school and are facing misdemeanor charges for verbally and physically abusing their African American roommate

Graduating SJSU senior Victor Amadi, a former East Palo Alto resident, who now lives in a dorm in San Jose

State, commented regarding the incident:

"I was shocked and in disbelief, because I couldn't picture this incident happening at campus. There is a big minority population and the university promotes the campus as a diverse campus, but in reality you are on your own.

It is a big issue for some of the minority populations at school. There are not enough resources available to promote cultural diversity due to funding cuts of various subjects such as African American Studies. If it wasn't for the media," Amadi said,

"The school would have swept it under the rug and continued to promote itself as a culturally diverse and ac-

cepting campus. However, with diversity there's division and the schools decision to cut ethnic studies classes is a blatant contradiction to what it stands for. It's the administration's job to facilitate unity amongst the numerous ethnic identities here and it has failed to live up to its mission," Amadi said.

Many students rallied under the school's 1968 Olympic statue in outrage over the incident on November 21 after hearing the school announce the suspension of the students.

The students also expressed concern and felt as though the administration was being negligent.

The students who are ac-

cused of committing the crime turned themselves in.

They have been identified as Logan Beaschler, Colin Warren, 18, and Joseph Bomgardner, 19.

The group was charged with misdemeanor battery and hate-crime charges by prosecutors.

A task force was formed to investigate the crime and is expected to release its findings early next year.

Roberto Gutierrez Perez is an East Palo Alto resident, who is a student at San Jose State University.

Dominique Ellis is also an East Palo Alto resident and a student at San Mateo Community College. He assisted with the above article.

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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Community Calendar

Monday, December 16, 2013
Public Meeting - Cooley Landing Education Center
 6.30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
 East Palo Alto City Hall, Community Room, 2415 University Ave., East Palo Alto, CA. The City of East Palo Alto invites everyone to the third in a series of eight meetings about the design of the new Cooley Landing Education Center that will begin construction in the

Fall of 2014. The December meeting will look at the character or the personality of the building. Should we be aiming for a building that is quiet and restrained, or one which is dynamic and expressive? Should the building be open and transparent or protective and sheltering? The input and feedback of city residents will shape the design.

Tuesday, December 17, 2013
East Palo Alto City Council meeting 7:30 p.m. until.
 East Palo Alto City Hall, Community Room, 2415 Univer

Wednesday, December 18, 2013
the San Francisco Veterans Town Hall/Collaborative at the Philip Burton Federal Building, 450 Golden Gate Ave, 2nd Floor, CA/NV Room
 Learn about some of the issues

facing veterans and hear about the resources, programs, benefits available for our veterans and families. Call Eddie Ramirez (415) 740-4399 for more information.

Thursday, December 19, 2013
Santa visits the East Palo Alto Library from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the East Palo Alto Library- 2415 University Ave. East Palo Alto, CA. Call (650) 321-7712 for more information.

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

Are we lazy

Everyone has a positive chemical reaction with laughter; boys, however, often use humor as a form of communication, an asset with which most girls do not have a problem. Research has demonstrated that boys' emotions are processed initially in the more primitive parts of the brain and come more indirectly to the

speech centers. That's why making a crude joke is easier for males to communicate sensitive feelings. Tip: Before starting homework or an assignment, ask a boy to consider what might be funny, weird or strange about it; his mind will be more focused on the topic afterwards.

"This is just the tip of the

continued from page 8

iceberg; if parents and teachers are serious about getting their boys off to a better start in life, I encourage active participation and education," Dixon says.

Dr. Edmund J. Dixon is a human development specialist and the founder of KEEN, an organization dedicated to helping struggling learners.

Residents plan East Palo Alto's future

By Jackie Keliiaa
 East Palo Alto Today

The City of East Palo Alto hosted a Citywide Town Hall (public workshop) to engage community members about the Vista2035 General Plan Update. The General Plan provides a long term vision for the City and directs decisions on topics such as land use, transportation, parks and public safety. The workshop, which took place on Saturday, November 23, 2013, was held at Costafio Elementary school and was attended by over 50 community members, including Mayor Ruben Abrica, Council members Larry Moody and Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier, and City staff from the Community Development office.

Matt Raimi of Raimi + Associates opened the meeting with a presentation about the Vista2035 project and existing conditions for the City. Following the presentation, the "open house" forum allowed for community members to visit nine activity stations where they could learn more about existing conditions, vote on community priorities and share their ideas. Stations were facilitated by experts on the consulting team who engaged in in-depth discussions about topics such as housing and transportation.

At the activity stations, participants mapped where they live, work and shop; voted on community and economic development priorities; identified neighborhood boundaries, and mapped transportation issues among many others. The activity stations included:

Station 1. Living, Working,



Photo courtesy of Raimi+Associates
 This photo shows Council member Ruben Abrica speaking at the November 2013 General Plan workshop.

and Shopping Station 2. Community Needs and Priorities; Station 3. Visioning; Station 4. Neighborhood Identification and Planning; Station 5. A Growing Community; Station 6. Market and Economics; Station 7. Housing; Station 8. Transportation and Station 9. Methods of Outreach.

Overall, community members expressed the desire for socially and economically vibrant and safe neighborhoods. Of the many topics discussed at each station, participants reiterated a number of common concerns including the need to reduce crime, increase employment opportunities for residents, improve transportation and preserve affordable housing.

At the Economic Development station participants asked for more locally serving stores including healthy food retail, pharmacies and grocery stores among others as well as the promotion of locally-owned business. The top three Economic Development Priorities were: 1) improved job training and youth apprenticeship programs; 2) stronger local hiring for businesses and 3) more locally-owned businesses.

At the Transportation sta-

tion, community members mapped the location of missing sidewalks, speeding and traffic congestion among other concerns. Participants highlighted intersections of particular traffic concern which included: Newbridge Road and Willow Road; University and Bay Road; and much of University Avenue.

At the Community Priorities station the top three Community Priorities were: 1) reduce crime; 2) increase jobs and economic development, followed by 3) improve parking in neighborhoods and 4) reduce pollution and health hazards which were tied with the same number of votes.

The full results of the Citywide Town Hall meeting will be available on the project website in approximately one week. The November 23 workshop marks the first in a series of Town Hall meetings that will be held throughout the Vista2035 planning process. You can sign up for email and text updates, and download meeting results on the project website at vista2035epa.org.

Jackie Keliiaa works with Raimi+Associates, the consulting firm that is charged with engaging the community in the City of East Palo Alto's General Plan.

Talking with Henrietta Youth Empowerment: Making It Happen



Photo courtesy of Talking with Henrietta
 This photo shows Renee Castro, Henrietta J. Burroughs and Anthony Hueimui on the set of the latest Talking with Henrietta. See more information about this show at www.epatoday.org/tv.html.

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East Palo Alto Greyhounds continued from page 9

are undefeated and have made history by winning the Peninsula Conference Championship!!

Our Jr. Pee-Wee cheer/dance team also has a great chance of making it to compete in Florida. They recently qualified for the regional competition which was held on 11/29/13 and they ranked among the top two teams to compete in the National Championships.

The EPA Greyhounds is a non-profit organization, and the fees for team members is kept to a minimum. In some cases, there is no cost at all. The team's leaders feel that

the team should be exposed to as many positive experiences as possible.

Practice and competition is what we would like the team to focus on the most, while the financial support is kept in place.

For more information about the EPA Greyhounds or to make a donation to help the team to continue to make history, visit the team website at www.epagreyhounds.com or www.gofundme.com/50pgv8

Michaun Auzenne is an East Palo Alto parent who is kept to an ardent supporter of the East Palo Alto Greyhounds.

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