



Creating a community vision page 10



Health & Safety Fair page 3



Scenes from March events in East Palo Alto? page 4

East Palo Alto Today

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical



East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

March - April 17, 2010

Vol. 5 No.21

EPA lags in census returns

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

While San Mateo County's mail-back response rates for the 2010 Census are slightly above the national average, the results show that East Palo Alto residents are returning their responses at a low rate than other cities.

In San Mateo County, as of April 1, Millbrae leads the county with a 62% return rate, while East Palo Alto ranks at the

very bottom with a 40% return rate.

The national participation census form return rate is 60%. In comparison, the State of California has a 58% return rate. Iowa leads the nation with a 70% return rate.

Why is the rate of return and responses to the census so important? For every person missed in the 2010 Census count, state officials say the state could lose close to \$3,000. Officials calculate that the money lost equals \$30,000 per per-

son over the next ten years.

The number of people counted in each state also affects the number of representatives that a state has in the U.S. House of Representatives. Ironically, for the first time, the State of California might be in danger of losing a representative in Congress.

Also important is the fact that a communities' population figures determine the amount of money local communities receive in federal and state funding. Such funding goes to support public works proj-

ects like bridges and highways, community centers, job training programs, activities and centers for seniors, hospitals, and emergency services among other programs and services.

The federal census is taken every ten years and it is required that every person, citizen as well as non-citizen, is counted.

So, unless residents in the city return their census forms East Palo Alto stands to lose millions if not billions in county, state and federal funds.

East Palo Alto's low census mail back rate is not indicative of the efforts of various groups within the city to encourage residents to return their census forms.

On Saturday, March 20, One East Palo Alto and Nuestra Casa, two city nonprofits, held a rally on University Avenue at Bell Street to encourage city residents to mail back their census forms.

The event was called a Census Awareness Raising Rally for the whole family and it included a variety of entertain-

continued on page 8

Inside News



Falling in love with the media

Page 1

The value of knowing who you are



Page 2



Getting an H1N1 Flu shot

Page 3

Celebrating local award honorees



Page 6



Photo courtesy of Yana Rudakov

Census 2010 volunteers stand at the corner of Bell and University Streets to distribute information to passersby to encourage them to participate in the 2010 Census.

Assisting youth with a curfew

By Richard Hackmann
East Palo Alto Today

In late February the East Palo Alto Police Department conducted a special curfew operation aimed at reducing the number of youth on the streets in the late hours of the night.

In a joint effort between the East Palo Alto Police Department and the East Palo Alto Youth

Court, officers conducted a special curfew operation on the night of Thursday, February 25 with a continuing point of emphasis on curfew violations for the nights of Friday, February 26 and Saturday, February 27.

In total, the operation resulted in seven detentions, four of which were for curfew violations. Once detained officers transported the violators to a secure lo-

cation where the detainee's parent(s) and/or guardian(s) were able to both pick up their dependent and meet with police officials and representatives from the East Palo Alto Youth Court (EPAYC).

According to police records, youth detained for curfew violations were able to participate in the EPAYC and receive counseling services rather than a citation and entry into the juvenile criminal jus-

tice system. Since its inception in early 2009, the EPAYC, under the leadership of Executive Director Leor Neta, has sought to provide juvenile offenders a community-based diversion program by working with police and local schools.

"The East Palo Alto Youth Court is closely partnered with the East Palo Alto Police Department

continued on page 2

Falling in love with the media

By Rebecca Fisher
East Palo Alto Today

Girls TV is the first of many television programs to come out of the 8-80 Multimedia Zone at the San Francisco 49ers Academy in East Palo Alto.

Now in its second year, the show comes from an all-fe-

male after school program at the school and features many segments created by the sixth, seventh and eighth grade girls in the program.

In my role as Youth Services Coordinator at the Mid-peninsula Community Media Center, I created this program in an attempt to give female

students a chance to fall in love with media.

After noticing there were a larger number of male students interested in video production, I recognized the need for a safe space where the girls could step out of their comfort zone, experiment with new things and receive support

from their peers.

The curriculum for Girls TV was designed with a focus on girls' empowerment, self-esteem, team bonding, and celebrating women in fields that are typically male-dominated.

During the first term of the

continued on page 10

Inside

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

Creating a community vision

By Sean Charpentier
EPA Today

The latest East Palo Alto-sponsored Community Workshop occurred on March 31. Fifty community members attended the previous workshop on February 18, 2010 to express their vision for the future of the RBD/4 Corners area.

The workshops are part of the Land Use Alternatives phase of the RBD/4 Corners Transit Oriented Development 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. There have been 5 well-attended public meetings to date. Attendance has averaged approximately 40 community members per meeting. The workshop was the culmination of several months of steady progress on



East Palo Alto community members are shown at a community workshop as they work with maps to create their vision for the city.

the Specific Plan.

The workshop began with an introduction from Mayor David Woods. Mayor Woods welcomed the 50 community members in attendance and highlighted how the City structured the Specific Planning process to maximize community involvement.

Then, DC&E provided critical context for the upcoming land use exercise by presenting information on the Existing Conditions Report, principles of successful Transit Oriented Development, and the types of development and their relative tradeoffs.

The different types of development were residential, industrial/R&D, office, retail, mixed use, parks, and community services. DC&E then discussed the relative trade-

offs associated with each development type, including market demand, quality of life improvements, job creation, potential land use conflicts, revenue potential, and contribution to transit ridership and placemaking.

Next, the 50 community members divided into 6 groups. The community members created maps based on their future vision for the RBD/4 Corners. The maps were created using a blank map and stickers for each land use (also blank stickers for additional land uses).

At the end of the group exercise, a spokesperson from each group reported on the key themes of their vision and map.

Several central themes emerged. The 4 Corners area

was envisioned as a walkable district with new retail, community services, and residential uses. Bay Road was identified as a major connective element that needed a strong design presence. Also, mixed uses (residential and commercial over retail) could extend along Bay Road from 4 Corners into the RBD.

Many participants felt that the existing industrial areas north of Bay Road should remain oriented towards industrial/R&D and office uses and that the area south of Bay Road could include community services and office uses.

In addition, there was strong support for new open space including community gardens and pocket parks along the PUC Right of Way in the University Village neighborhood.

Other items that were mentioned were affordable housing, job training for East Palo Alto residents, and affordable commercial workspace. The presentation and meeting summary are available at: <http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/economicdev/dumbarton.html>.

There are still many opportunities to provide input.

There are at least 4 more public meetings during the Land Use Alternatives Phase of the Specific Plan. These meetings include:

Field Trip of TOD Sites (Please RSVP) - Saturday, April 17th

2nd Community Workshop to refine the Land Use Alternatives - TBD

4th CAC Meeting to recommend a Preferred Land Use Alternative - TBD

Planning Commission meeting to consider approval of a Preferred Land Use Alternative- TBD

All the meetings are open to the public. **If you want to attend the April 17th Field Trip, you must RSVP with Sean Charpentier ((650) 853-5906) no later than Wednesday, April 7th.**

In addition, there will be another 12 public meetings after the completion of the Land Use Alternatives Phase.

Now is your chance to help the city create a vision for the RBD/4 Corners.

For more information, please contact Sean Charpentier, RDA Project Coordinator II, at (650)853-5906 or scharpentier@cityofepa.org.

The value of knowing who you are

By Anita Cuellar
East Palo Alto Today

Who are you? What do you do?

Not being from the community, these are the first questions that I am asked when I meet with individuals and organizations,

I can't help but chuckle, (not because they are perfectly valid questions) but because I have had to summarize what I do in three sentences or less. So after 6



Anita Cuellar

months of practice this is what I have been able to come up with:

"I am the Executive Man-

ager, of the WiFi 101 Project. This project maintains a wireless network, provides refurbished computers & tech support at a reduced rate, sponsors an internship program, and hosts digital literacy classes for the communities of East Palo Alto & Menlo Park."

Then I patiently wait to answer more specific questions related to the project.

There are 6 organizations that are involved in the project: the Ravenswood City School District; One East Palo Alto; El

Concilio of San Mateo; Job Train (formerly OICW); Community Wireless and Computers For Everyone.

I oversee the entire project; but since July 8, 2009 I am directly responsible for Community Wireless and Computers For Everyone.

Both entities provide two different types of services. Community Wireless objective is to connect individuals and organizations to each other through a dynamic, usable & sustainable information net-

work that will ensure that community members have the opportunities to fully benefit from the technological revolution.

They have done this by building a free online wireless network in East Palo Alto. Which means that if you are in a building, and depending on how much interference there is in your area, will determine the signal strength. (Improving the signal strength, is on my

continued on page 8

Assisting youth

with the goal being to reduce youth crime," said Neta.

"The great benefit of the curfew violation operation is that since a curfew violation is a municipal violation we as a community can decide to enforce that law in any way we choose unlike some other crimes," he said.

Unlike traditional methods of law enforcement, the EPAYC focuses on peer and community oriented rehabilitation of offenders and unlike standard judicial practice the EPAYC uses a combination of peer support and adult guidance. Thus, one of the most distinctive characteristics of the program is that a majority of the roles within the Youth Courts are staffed not by professionals but by youth.

As East Palo Alto Police Captain Carl Estelle, one of the officers

in charge of this operation, noted, "No one was arrested. Offenders were instead introduced to the Youth Court and its coordinator. By taking these young people through the Youth Court we offer many more options for their development."

Estelle went on to say, "The goal of this operation was to get the message across to be home after 11:00pm because if kids are out until 11:00, 12:00, 1:00 in the morning the probability of them not making it to school the next day is high. The operation was for their safety. It teaches them personal responsibility."

Neta elaborated on Estelle's comments saying, "I can't tell you what a direct link there is between a curfew violation and an absence from school the following day so this operation is especially relevant

continued from page 1

Sunday through Thursday."

East Palo Alto resident Lupita Segura said, "I definitely believe that a minor should not be out past a certain time because if they are out past a certain time they are doing things that are not positive."

"Since the East Palo Alto Police Department is approaching it in a way where violator's peers can help them solve their problem instead of just adults, I think it's great."

Presently, under the East Palo Alto Municipal Code, youth detained for a curfew violation, who are not involved in the EPAYC program face a maximum fine of \$250 for a first offense.

Richard Hackmann is the co-founder and executive director of the Center for Community Action and the current chair of the Palo Alto Young Professionals.

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Community News Briefs

East Palo Alto Health & Safety Fair

It was a beautiful, sunny day and the beauty of the day was especially welcomed by the 24 community groups that collaborated to hold East Palo Alto's Health & Safety Fair on March 27. There was a steady flow of visitors to the fair with 127 people registering to compete for raffle prizes.

The fair featured games, healthy snacks, dance classes, a tree planting session, community information booths, and a variety of activities designed to stress the importance of maintaining a healthy mind and body.

Many raffle prizes were given out and the top prize, a child's bicycle, was given to Deiana Gomez, a five year old



Deiana Gomez

at the EPA Charter School.

One of the key features of the fair was the free H1N1 Flu Clinic, which was sponsored by the San Mateo County Health Department.

The clinic marked the last free H1N1 flu clinic the San Mateo County Health Department would hold in the county this year.

One county representative estimated that 75-100 people filed through the clinic to get

the flu vaccine.

Ravenswood City School District Trustee Larry Moody brought 10 members of his family and Mitchell Dempsey who said that he was 93 years old was one of the oldest residents to get the vaccine during the free clinic.

Those interested in getting the flu vaccine can check the county's website for additional local suppliers: www.smhealth.org/flu

In getting community members outdoors and in the park,



Mitchell Dempsey

council member Ruben Abrica said the fair had accomplished its purpose.

New leadership at Collective Roots

Dave Kane is now the interim executive director at Collective Roots. He acquired the position upon the departure of Wolfram Alderson, who served in the position for three years.

Alderson's departure is the result of a mutual agreement between Alderson and the group's board of directors.

Kane is on the verge on launching four new programs and initiatives, that will consist of a brand new website, cooking classes and more.

CA State Assembly Candidate visits East Palo Alto

Democrat Josh Becker is running for the California State Assembly to replace Ira Ruskin who will be running for the State Senate in the next election.

Last month, Becker hosted community seniors at the East Palo Alto Senior Center. On February 26, Becker was himself hosted at Brock Plaza, which is located at University Avenue and Donohue Street.



California State Assembly candidate Josh Becker at the East Palo Alto Senior Center.

Officials report on plane crash in EPA

By Richard Hackmann
East Palo Alto Today

Two months ago, East Palo Alto Today reported that the East Palo Alto City Council was nearing completion of an Emergency Preparedness Plan that "shows no signs of letting the community down in the event of a catastrophic event."

Just before 8:00 a.m. on Feb. 17, that plan was put to the test when a twin-engine Cessna carrying three Tesla employees crashed into Beech St. in East Palo Alto shortly after takeoff from the

Palo Alto Airport, killing all three people onboard.

The crash, which occurred during severe fog, is still under investigation by both the FAA and NTSB; yet, that has not stopped the City of East Palo Alto from conducting its own investigation to determine what occurred during the response to the disaster and to determine what lessons it can learn to improve its emergency response in the future.

On March 2, less than two weeks after the incident rocked the community, East Palo Alto Police Chief Ronald Davis and Menlo Park Fire

District Chief Harold Schapelhouman made their first formal comments to the East Palo Alto City Council about what they, and so many others, witnessed on that tragic morning.

While a formal investigative report is still under way, Davis and Schapelhouman reported that the plane disaster reflected the need for a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan. They stated that while many things occurred properly during the city's response, there is still room for improvement.

In explaining the need for a complete assessment of the

incident, Davis said, "Part of our debriefing is to identify what went right, so we can do it again; to identify what did not go right, so it doesn't repeat itself, and to assess ways to better serve our community in such a disaster, if it were to happen again. Although the smoke has cleared and the wreckage is removed there are still a lot of long lasting affects that our community will deal with."

Following Davis's initial comments to the City Council, Schapelhouman noted that it was ironic that the last time he and Davis were before the City

Council it was to discuss planning for just this sort of an occurrence. After giving a brief description of the tactical units that were deployed following the crash and some of the events that occurred that morning, Schapelhouman described what the analysis of the disaster would contain.

"What we will do is a post incident evaluation which is written. Our next step is to deal with our crews and do the debriefings with them necessary to get the full picture of what happened. We're col-

continued on page 8

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

Richard Cline
Mayor
(650) 228-5166

John C. Boyle
Vice Mayor
(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
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Assembly Member Ira Ruskin

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Senator Joseph S. Simitian

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Palo Alto, CA 94301
(650) 688-6384

From the Editor's Desk

Should it matter where you live?

Scenes from March 2010 events in East Palo Alto

It needs to be noted that we've reached a low point in East Palo Alto when the city's Chief of Police Ron Davis has to defend himself at an East Palo Alto City Council meeting by stating that he is not a resident of the city, but that he comes to the city each day prepared to die, if need be, to defend the city and its residents.

It seems that no one is immune from the handful of East Palo Alto residents who continually confront others with the charge that they are not city residents and, therefore, lack the necessary legitimacy and knowledge to be effective in working in East Palo Alto.

Well, it is time these naysayers cease and desist with their charges.

First of all, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights give U.S. citizens the right to live and work in America wherever they choose. City residency is not required unless one is seeking to serve as an elected city official or on a city's boards or commissions.

So, given a few exceptions, being a city resident is not a requirement for working in any U.S. city. The lack of city residency does not make any nonresident who works in a city less qualified than the city's residents when it comes to dealing with city issues. An exception is made when it comes to the ballot. Residents can vote in a city and nonresidents can't.

Second, the idea of putting down or demeaning those who volunteer or work in East Palo Alto because they are nonresidents is not only wrong and crude, but it is also extremely shortsided.

The idea that only East Palo Alto residents will always do what is in the best interest of their city is fallacious. Residency does not convey the superiority that some people in the city would have you believe.

Having someone in a position who is not qualified to do the job, simply because that person is a city resident is much worse than having a nonresident in a position who is qualified to do the job and is giving a top performance.

Those city residents who want to promote East Palo Altans first and foremost need to recognize that it is possible to have nonresidents working within the city who can make wise decisions that benefit the residents of the city.

It is also possible to have East Palo Alto residents working within the city who make lousy decisions that, accordingly, adversely affect the residents of the city.

It is also possible to have qualified residents working in East Palo Alto who can make good decisions for the city.

Obviously, residency, in and of itself, does not make one superior in terms of anything - even when it comes to having a commitment to the city. People should stop looking at residency status and

focus on performance. Good decisions, excellent skills and abilities and the willingness and desire to do a job well are not functions of residency.

The question should always be who is the best qualified person for the job and who will perform the job to the highest level to which it needs to be performed.

These are some of the considerations and the requisites needed to improve the quality of life in

any city. Third, the act of using residency as a way of gaining power and clout in the past to silence people is quickly becoming outmoded as a tool for keeping nonresidents subordinate when it comes to sharing useful ideas either around the table or in various public forums.

Finally, East Palo Alto needs every positive resource that it can get to deal with the challenges it faces and, like any city, it needs to attract the best pool of talent that it can get. To demand that all of the needed talent pool comes from East Palo Alto is impractical. We should all be focusing on the challenges and how to deal with them effectively rather than getting side tracked by issues that leech valuable time and energy and needlessly pit people against each other.

The key question should not be, "Do you live in East Palo Alto?" The important, key questions should be: "What do you have to offer? What can you give and what can you do to provide the type of solutions needed to move East Palo Alto in the direction its residents would like for it to go?"

Wouldn't it make sense for EPA to be a welcoming city - open to new ideas and different approaches - as it keeps what is considered good about itself and improves what needs to be better?

Perhaps, as more residents feel more secure and more empowered themselves, then they can be more welcoming to others who live in the city as well as to those who live outside of the city, but work in it.

If the fear is that outsiders will come in and take over, then more residents need to step up to the plate and acquire the skills and the resources that are needed in the areas that they consider important.

The time for divisiveness has passed, if that time ever existed. There is no going back to some golden time in the city's history. Life moves on and East Palo Alto most move on with life, if it is to survive and thrive as a healthy, productive, peaceful city that improves its standing among other cities.

We are all a part of the EPA community, whether we live in the



Henrietta J. Burroughs



From bottom left going clockwise: Two Red Cross speakers discuss emergency preparedness at the March Fellowship of Faith Lunch. Next, Meda Okelo raffles off prizes at EPA's Health & Safety Fair on March 27. Third photo, the Kinney family brings their son to get the H1N1 vaccine at the free flu clinic. Three photos courtesy of Henrietta J. Burroughs. In fourth photo, volunteers stand on University Ave. for Census 2010 rally. Fourth photo courtesy of Yana Rudakov.

Letters in East Palo Alto Today

In the name of justice

Dear Editor,

It is poetic justice that Page Mill Properties got sued by 19 of their investors. This lawsuit is much deserved because of all the suffering that they put tenants through since 2007.

While Page Mill has left the East Palo Alto scene, tenants continue to pay for the consequences that Page Mill put us through in the name of greed. In the further interest of justice, we hope that the rents get rolled back for all tenants to pre-Page Mill 2007 and to end the painful odyssey at Page Mill that East Palo Alto has suffered.

Jessica Kirton and
Anthony Clark
YUCA
March 30, 2010

2010 Census

Dear Editor,

The 2010 Census has arrived! Households across the United States and East Palo Alto have now received the official 10-question document that is only sent out every ten years.

However, as of Friday, March 26, 2010, only 19% of households in East Palo Alto have participated in the 2010 Census.

The participation rate of East Palo Alto is quite disturbing because of the severe impacts an undercount will have on our community for the next ten years. Census data is used to distribute over \$400 billion dollars of federal dollars annually that will be used for our roads, schools, language

services, hospitals, emergency centers, and other vital community services.

If history repeats itself, we can turn to the 2000 Census data to extrapolate what this early response rate of 19% will indicate for the overall participation results.

In the 2000 Census, East Palo Alto ended with only a 60% mail-back response rate. In comparison, San Mateo County achieved an astounding 75% mail-back response.

In the wake of strenuous financial times, the lack of participation in East Palo Alto must change now. In 2010, we must make sure everyone is counted to ensure our community receives the funds, resources, and political voice

continued on page 7

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

city or work in it, as nonresidents. East Palo Alto is a better community because of the positive work we are all doing in it together to confront the challenges it faces. The more we face those challenges together, the greater the city will be.

As one humanity, our future is linked and we must develop a bigger vision about ourselves and others - a vision that is, of necessity, inclusive not exclusive.

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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Editor: Henrietta J. Burroughs

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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.

Solar cash cow or \$15 million castle

Steve Kennedy
EPA Today Contributor

Without much serious debate, the East Palo Alto Planning Commission has given the Menlo Park Fire District a green light to design almost any kind of structure it wants for the corner of University Avenue and Runnymede. Approval has been given for the demolition of two suburban houses behind the station (which have already been purchased by the district and boarded up) and for the merger of the three parcels into one buildable lot.

Upon completion and receipt of the architect's blueprints, the East Palo Alto City Planning Department will review the plans to ensure they meet all local, state and federal building, electrical, disabled access and fire codes. This could take a month or it could take a year. In any case, soon it will be too late to influence the design of

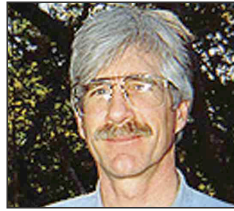
the station because upon approval of the plans, companies will be bidding for the work and labor contracts will be signed.

After completion of this state of the art fire station, the people of East Palo Alto may find themselves lucky to enter the building to vote on election day. For any other community use the station captain will respond, "We're sorry, the building wasn't designed for that" and his answer will be written in stone.

With construction estimates between \$10 and \$20 million, the people of East Palo Alto really deserve better than that.

And we sure don't deserve a hulking building that sends the wrong architectural message to the people of our beautiful city.

At the top of Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman's architectural wish list are bullet proof windows and walls. Justification for this multi-million dollar line item comes



Steve Kennedy

from a 25 year old "bullet hole" in one of the roll up doors of the station and the 9/11 attack in New York.

While the bullet hole may be the product of a drive by shooting (or a ricocheting bullet fired by a drunken homeowner in eastern Atherton) this Fire District

Board member was told by fire fighters during a visit in 2001 that "the hole in the wall was patched up," while no one on the crew could even

roughly point to where the slug had lodged. As to the need demonstrated by the 9/11 attacks....didn't this Board member predict the attack on America to the crew at

Station Two and again later in an audio taped Board meeting a full three weeks before 9/11? (The transcripts from the board meeting are on the author's web site at <http://www.canonbal.org> in the link entitled, Steve's 9/11 Prediction).

The sense of entitlement exhibited by Chief Schapelhouman is ridiculous given the thread bare finances of the treasuries at all levels of government.

A far better and more fiscally responsible design would incorporate solar panels into the roofs of all the buildings on the building site including the south, southwest and western walls and the roofs of the carports as well.

This would make the building a true symbol of yankee ingenuity,

hope and progress to the residents and the thousands of commuters who will stream past the complex every day.

Further environmental touches including appropriate landscaping and insulation could give the building a silver LEEDS rating without much further expense.

Solar panels could generate hundreds of thousands of dollars of revenue over and above the needs of the station during the 50 year lifespan of the panels. For firefighters and board members who can't do mathematics, lease options are available have a zero down payment and that will still result in a net profit to the fire district.

Many solar companies would like to bid on this solar installation for the simple right to advertise their workmanship with a small, roof top sign lit by LED's.

This entrepreneurial and com-

continued on page 8

Defending the work of the EPA Youth Court

By Tasia Lacey
East Palo Alto Youth

I believe the East Palo Alto City Council should recognize the East Palo Alto Youth Court because there is no one better to help the kids and teens of our community than the teens themselves.

Adults are always speaking on how upset they are about the rate of juveniles in

jails and we (the Youth Court) are here to help with this. We help the kids by finding out what made them make the mistakes they did and help them through it and find a better outlet for how they feel rather than resorting to violence or acting out.

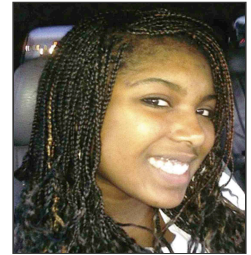
Most of the kids we deal with are just struggling with some sort of problem either at home or with friends and just

need some help. As the Youth Court we help rather than punish the kids of our community. By helping them repay their debts to society they learn what they did was wrong and they give back.

To me that's what's important, making sure they know what they did and teaching not punishing them. Everyone deserves a second chance and everyone makes mistakes and

if everyone didn't get their second chance then there would be no success in this world. This is just the right thing to do.

Tasia Lacey is a sophomore at the East Palo Alto Phoenix Academy. The remarks she written here are very similar to the remarks that she made to the East Palo Alto City Council on February 16, 2010.



Tasia Lacey

Why an education is so important

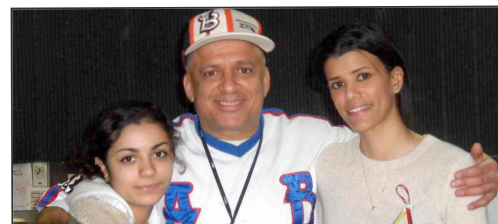
By Skye Ontiveros
EPA Today Contributor

It's scary when you think about the future. Not knowing what's going to happen. It's an unstable, uncertain, too confusing and just too hard type of fear.

This comes from the decision that "I can just settle where I'm at and work laboring jobs for the rest of my life." You only think as far as your social future.

How much respect you'll have, how many friends you'll be surrounded by, or how fun the simple life will be. Unaware, in the back of your mind, a fear has been growing.

That's the feeling that keeps you from thinking "what if." What if I can travel the world? What if I could make a difference? What if there's something greater than this? What if there is something that I could actually reach?



From left, Skye Ontiveros, KPOO 89.5 radio host Donald Lacy and Kail Lubarsky, the development and marketing manager for JobTrain, which is located in Menlo Park.

When's the last time you asked yourself that? When's the last time you believed, even for a second that you could? Have you ever? Or is your mind stuck on your social life?

This world would be absolutely different. It could be even a heaven on earth, if we all just believed it could be. Can you imagine a world without worrying what people think?

It could be a world where you do what makes you happy, whether it's

rock climbing, scuba-diving, or becoming the next president.

Now, if someone somewhere has done all these things before, how come you can't? What makes them deserving and not you? Is it where you're from? Is it because you have no support or money?

Well, I dare you to defy all odds and pave your own way. Prove to society you can, instead of proving that society is right. They say, "you grew up with no shots

in life and that's how it's going to stay." Don't let your laziness prove them right. Get up and get in school.

Why? When you're done, people will actually pay you to do what you love. How? There will be more people able to flip burgers who are less trained and ready to do whatever it is you want to do. But you'll be trained and ready. So, you get paid more. It's that simple.

If you're confused on where to start, use the system. You can get money, you can get transportation. Your support will only get stronger as your testimony does. Anything you need there's a way. College is the way.

There are so many programs, grants and scholarships that will give you MORE than you need to get through. And it's not too hard. As soon as you're in

the class, you're so caught up in the idea that you're actually in college, that the feeling alone is persuasive enough to make you feel anything is possible, even the homework that comes along with it.

Don't you want to stand out? Don't you want people to look at you and be amazed at where you were and where you are? If so, just take the first step, and the rest follows. I promise you, your story will be one worth hearing.

But it starts here and now. It starts with you.

Skye Ontiveros is a freshman at the College of San Mateo. She recently became the executive director of the new local non-profit Teens Against Truancy. This February she had a radio debut/interview with Donald Lacy on the KPOO 89.5 radio station in San Francisco.

Lifecycles

Celebrating local award honorees

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

March 2010 was a time for celebrating local heroes. Here are just a few local citizens who received honors for their contributions to the community.



Luisa Buada

Luisa Buada, CEO of Ravenswood Family Health Center, was inducted into the San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame which was established by the San Mateo

County Board of Supervisors and the Commission on the Status of Women. On March 18, Luisa was acknowledged for her vision and leadership, which significantly expanded the safety net of health care services for residents of South San Mateo County.



Leif Erickson

Leif Erickson is the Executive Director of Youth Community Service, an organization dedicated to building bridges between the diverse communities in Palo Alto and East

Palo Alto through engaging young people in service opportunities. He was one of six local heroes honored by the Media Center on March 7.



Curtis Haggins

Curtis Haggins is Dean of Students at Midpeninsula High School. He grew up in East Palo Alto and he constantly draws on his growing up experiences to mentor the students with whom he comes in contact.

He serves as a basketball coach at the school and has been a powerful role model for many

students. He, too, received the Media Center's Local Heroes Award.



Robert Hoover

Bob Hoover mentored generations of young people in East Palo Alto and established Nairobi College, an African-American centered Liberal Arts junior college. In 1991 he started the Junior Golf Program. He now coordinates the Parole Re-entry program run by Free at Last in East Palo Alto, linking clients to job training and employment opportu-

nities. He also received the Media Center's Local Heroes Award.

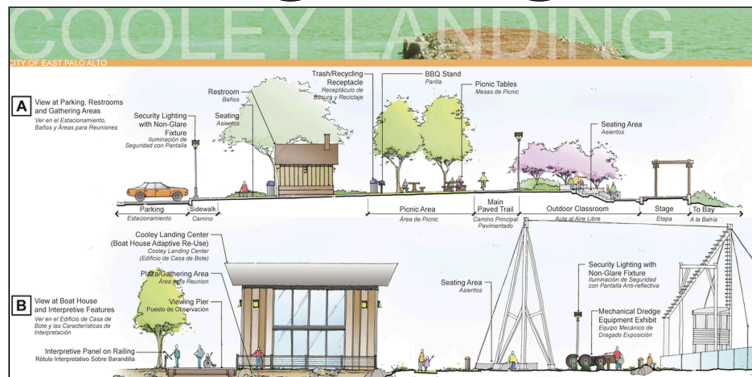


Faye McNair-Knox

In selecting Faye McNair-Knox, Ph.D., as the District 21 Woman of the Year, California State Assemblymember Ira Ruskin said, "She has a long history of making a difference in East Palo Alto and this state....She is dedicated to the improvement of youth, students, and her community – and an inspiration to me personally." She accepted the honor on March 8, 2010.

Selecting a design

continued from 9



A conceptual drawing of one plan for Cooley Landing. Courtesy of Lily Lee, Cooley Landing Project Manager, E.P.A.

put back on display. A transparent wall would protect a visitor from the wind. Information about what you are seeing to the north can be etched into the glass.

After the meeting, the City hired East Palo Alto resident Will

Molina of EPA.net to create a web-based survey at www.cooleylanding.org so residents who could not attend the workshop can see displays and photos of the results of the above process. These draft plans already incorporate input from three dozen meetings with

members of the community. Seniors want shade above seating areas, benches with back support, and wheelchair-accessible bathrooms. Seniors also want parking, seating, shade, water views, bathrooms, bus stops, and wheelchair-accessible trails to be

close together, so they are clustered to the south of the building. Seniors want wheel-chair accessible trails and ramps to link parking, bathroom, and seating facilities. The draft plan

Other residents wanted a jogging/walking trail to be a loop. Teachers want classroom space to accommodate a typical class size. Youth asked us to design space for them to "hang out" and for local artists to perform music or spoken word poetry, so the outdoor classroom and the building will accommodate these (unamplified). Some residents want an overlook platform on top of the former boat lift.

Some residents want a life-size sculpture of a former "dredge" incorporating actual former parts. This boat, potentially from the 1930's, was used for dredging the San Francisco Bay, but it unfortunately burned down in 2008.

The landscape architect has honored this historic artifact with a new sculpture that will evoke the scale and structure of the dredge, incorporating seating and historical interpretive information.

Residents asked for a natural, "wild" look for the landscaping, so the draft design uses native plants

and a naturalistic landscaping plan. Residents toured the building in April, 2010 and reported they want the building to preserve its rustic historic look.

Many residents asked for picnic tables near barbecue pits clustered in large groups to accommodate large family gatherings.

Commenters want railings on the overlook to prevent people from falling in the water. They also want security protection and control of homeless camping, so security lights and an electronic gate are added.

Another resident at the tour of the Palo Alto sailing station suggested windbreaks because it was so windy there, so we placed a windbreak to the north of the dredge. The plan has not community gathering places in the leeward side of the building for wind protection.

We look forward to seeing you at the next community workshop in April and getting your feedback on more park plans!

Lily Lee is the Cooley Landing Project Manager for the City of East Palo Alto.

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