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East Palo Alto Today

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical



East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

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Carlos Martinez selected as city's new manager

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

The East Palo Alto City Council chose Interim City Manager, Carlos Martinez, as East Palo Alto's next city manager.

Martinez was one of three finalists for the position and was chosen by the council during a special closed session held on Saturday, February 7.

Mayor Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier made the official an-

nouncement as council members gathered in the city council chamber to report the decision that was made during their closed session.

Martinez's appointment to the position is pending until salary and other contract

terms have been negotiated with the city.

Yarbrough-Gauthier and Vice Mayor Donna Rutherford will comprise the city's negotiating team.

After the council adjourned Saturday, Yarbrough-Gauthier

said, "We thought long and hard. Carlos matched the requirements we had for our ideal candidate."

Originally thirty applicants applied for the city manager position. Twenty five of the ap-

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East Palo Alto police officers give roses for Valentine's Day



Photo courtesy of the East Palo Alto Police Department and Isaac Stevenson

In this photo taken on February 14, the day before Valentine's Day, East Palo Alto Police Officer Veronica Barries and Officer Tommy Phengsene are shown passing out roses at the East Palo Alto Senior Center. The officers were accompanied by the city's new Police Chief, Albert Pardini, and several other members of the force, who surprised the center's staff and the seniors, who were in the center during the morning breakfast session, by giving them roses.

San Mateo County supervisors approve \$5 million in jail safety renovations

By Christa Begue

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors on a 4-1 vote today approved approximately \$5 million in safety renovations and upgrades at the Maguire Correctional Facility – changes that include an eventual move toward all-video visitation of inmates and alignment with the systems to be used at the soon-to-open new county jail.

Sheriff Greg Munks agreed to foot about one-third of the \$5,323,738 bill with the county covering \$4,942,738 from its



Photo courtesy of San Mateo County

This photo shows the entrance of the Maguire Correctional Facility

non-departmental ERAF reserves. The agreement with CML-RW Security, LLC, includes renovation of security electronics and detention

doors, the replacement of detention doors, food passes and glazing in the administrative segregation pods at the jail in Redwood City. The con-

tract also includes a video visitation system, a new head-end detention door pneumatic system and a new intercom and paging system.

The request required a four-fifths majority approval. Supervisor Dave Pine dissented, saying he preferred waiting until decisions are made about the future use of Maguire once the new jail opens. Others on the board, like Supervisor Adrienne Tissier, called the renovations and upgrades a "critical" need for a long time.

While the security electron-

ics systems at the Maguire Correctional Facility were

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Child support payments are easier to make in SMC

By Effie Milionis Verducci
East Palo Alto Today

Over 8,000 individuals owing child support to San Mateo County residents have another convenient option to make their cash payments. Thanks to a collaboration between the State of California and Moneygram, those owing child support can now go to any of the thousands of locations nationwide to send payments.

Child Support Director Iliana Rodriguez stated "While most payments are garnished

through wages, others have to make considerable efforts each month to deliver their support payment. This will be most helpful to those who are self-employed, contract employees, unemployed, or just prefer to pay in cash."

Currently, options include sending a check to the State Disbursement Unit in Sacramento, paying by credit card on state's website, or making cash payments in the County office for the 21% that make



their payments voluntarily. Monthly trips to County offices may not be feasible for those living in extended areas of the County, who are without transportation, or live outside of the County. Only one third of individuals owing child support currently live in San Mateo County, and twenty-four percent live out of state.

The State Department of Child Support will be notifying parents by mail beginning January 26, 2015, providing ID

codes and instructions needed to make payments at Moneygram kiosks.

San Mateo County is hoping the Moneygram option increases the likelihood that non-custodial parents will make their child support payments, which average \$500 per month. "While this is a convenience to the parent, our ultimate goal is to get this assistance to the children. A difference of \$500 each month, given this County's high cost of living, supports the basic needs of children and makes the difference in whether they

can afford to participate in after-school activities or have access to tutoring. This is just one of the many ways that child support offices are empowered to assist both individuals in a co-parenting relationship." said Ms. Rodriguez.

While many child support payments are court-ordered, privately negotiated agreements can also be managed by the county offices. In monitoring, enforcing, and facilitating the accounting of the

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San Mateo County and East Palo Alto expand David E. Lewis Community Reentry Center

By Christa Bigue

A collaborative effort by the County of San Mateo and the city of East Palo Alto is keeping the doors open on the David E. Lewis Community Reentry Center, bolstering the existing facility with new resources aimed at reducing recidivism and helping the formerly incarcerated succeed.

On Thursday, Jan. 29, 2015, community leaders and stakeholders in the unique partnership adding Service Connect with the center's existing resources celebrated with a grand opening of the East Palo Alto facility.

Speaking to an audience of more than 100 attendees, East Palo Alto Mayor Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier thanked not only the city and county for coming together to keep the community center open, but also David E. Lewis Community Reentry Center program manager Bob Hoover, "who never let this dream die," she said.

The center is named for the late community activist who lobbied for the original reentry program and, based in part on his own experience, believed recovery was best reached in a person's own community. Hoover was asked by David E. Lewis in 2008 to run the pro-



Photo by Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Mayor Lisa Yarbrough Gauthier and other San Mateo County officials participate in the unveiling of the new sign in front of the David E. Lewis Community Reentry Center.

gram. In 2014, a lack of state money threatened to close the center until the County of San Mateo and the city of East Palo Alto stepped in first with emergency funding and, in September, nearly \$214,000 in existing AB 109 realignment dollars.

The money funded the center's three existing workers and established it as a satellite office of Service Connect serving East Palo Alto and Menlo Park. Service Connect is a multi-department effort providing former prisoners support like health, job and housing help under one roof.

"Today's grand opening represents the County joining a strong team," said District Four Supervisor Warren Slocum. "With our combined efforts, the center will

strengthen and continue services such as counseling, job placement, family support, and most importantly the radical idea that all people deserve opportunities to succeed."

Speakers at the event also included County Manager John Maltbie, Deputy County Manager Mike Callagy, Chief Probation Officer John Keene, Steve Kaplan, head of the County's Health and Recovery

Services, and David E. Lewis Community Reentry Center Program Manager Bob Hoover.

"It's fitting today that we launch this outstanding partnership between the City of East Palo Alto and the County of San Mateo here at the David E. Lewis Community Reentry Center because David understood and promoted the idea that success comes from collaboration and helping each other," said Deputy County Manager Mike Callagy in the opening remarks.

Program Manager Bob Hoover later acknowledged the clients in the audience, "who regained their lives through our program," he said. "We are so proud of them and the work they do for the community."

Following the speakers, a brief ceremony included the

unveiling of a new sign showcasing the collaboration between the City of East Palo Alto and County of San Mateo as well as a reception with refreshments.

"This is a great example of the County's collaborative spirit," said John Keene, County of San Mateo Chief Probation Officer. "We work together, which really has to be the hallmark of a successful reentry program."

The David E. Lewis Community Reentry Center opened in 2011 to resurrect an earlier pilot parolee reentry program providing support services, job training, advocacy, case management and personal development classes. Center clients have shown a significantly less recidivism rate than the statewide average.

"The fabric of the community really depends upon the successful reentry of people who were incarcerated," said County Manager John Maltbie, "to rebuild lives and communities."

Christa Bigue is the social media manager for the County of San Mateo. She can be contacted by email at cbigue@smcogov.org.



Photo by Henrietta J. Burroughs
This photo shows a portion of the audience, who attended the grand opening of the David E. Lewis Community Reentry Center on January 29, 2015.

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Community News Briefs

Coffee with Carlos

A small group showed up at the Starbucks in East Palo Alto to attend the Coffee with Carlos session held by East Palo Alto's Interim City Manager, Carlos Martinez.

It was the second session that Martinez held, and it was held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, February 7, at the same time that the East Palo Alto City Council was deciding on the

candidate who would be the city's permanent city manager. (See article on page 1 of this issue.)

The members of the group shared their concerns about such issues as a need for public restrooms for the homeless, a list of wraparound social services published in one place that can be easily accessible by everyone, and the need for a noise ordinance that would give the police

more power to stop excessive that constantly disturb community residents.

Members of the group suggested that Martinez hold more meetings like his coffee in a larger venture that could hold more community members.

Martinez said he would plan to do so, if he was chosen as the permanent city manager.

Rev. Jesse Jackson meets with community members

The Rev. Jesse Jackson addressed a very receptive group during the 'community lunch' held in the Community Room at the East Palo Alto City Hall on Monday, January 26.

Jackson's remarks, which covered such topics as diversity in Silicon Valley tech companies, the Civil Rights movement and the movie Selma



Photo courtesy Henrietta J. Burroughs This photo shows the Rev. Jesse Jackson standing with three East Palo Alto City Council members during his appearance on January 26 at a community meeting at the East Palo Alto City Hall.

earned him a standing ovation. He answered questions from the luncheon audience and at the end shared the spotlight with several city council members and community representatives.

The lunch preceded Jackson's later appearance at Stanford University to discuss with panel members how the issues of self-determination

continued on page 14



Photo by Henrietta J. Burroughs

Some of the community members who attended the Coffee with Carlos event on February 7, 2015 are shown in this photo.

East Palo Alto City Council passes noise ordinance

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

Last year, the East Palo Alto Police Department received 687 complaints about noise from East Palo Alto residents over a six month period. This type of testimony played a decisive role in the East Palo Alto City Council's decision to pass a noise ordinance at its meeting on February 3.

Since the council had to give the ordinance a second hearing, it discussed the ordinance, again, at its meeting on February 17 and passed it unanimously.

At its February 3 meeting, the council voted 3 to 1 for the

ordinance. Councilmember Donna Rutherford abstained from voting, because she felt that she needed more time to consider it. Councilmember Abrica was absent from the meeting.

The city already has a general noise ordinance on the books, but the ordinance the council adopted is specifically aimed at "unreasonable noise and unruly gatherings."

The new ordinance will enable the police, when responding to a noise complaint, to issue a warning and, then, when called again, to issue a fine.

During the first hearing on the ordinance, a representative from the Community Legal

Services in East Palo Alto shared his agency's concerns that the ordinance would give landlords grounds to evict tenants.

The council decided, however, that the ordinance could be amended/ so that it would not give landlords a reason to evict any tenants who are cited.

Mayor Lisa Yarbrough Gauthier said that having the ordinance "boils down to being good neighbors to each other." She said that we all deserve to live in peaceful communities.

The ordinance needs to have two hearings before it is passed. It had its first hearing when it was introduced to the council at its February 3

meeting on February 7, Carlos Martinez, who was then acting city manager said that the staff decided on recommending the noise ordinance when they started seeing a lot of complaints that community

members were making on the Nextdoor online community website.

[Editor's note: Read more in Renee Roberts' article on page 11 about the meeting community members held regarding noise in their neighborhoods.]



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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

Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier Mayor
(650) 387-4584

Donna Rutherford Vice Mayor
drutherford@cityofepa.org

Laura Martinez
(650) 714-5337

Ruben Abrica
(650) 380-4987

Larry Moody
(650) 389-7165

East Palo Alto Agencies, Boards, Commissions, Committees

Planning Commission
Second and Fourth Monday

Rent Stabilization Board
Second and Fourth Wednesday

Public Works & Transportation Commission
Third Wednesday of month

Oversight Board
Third Thursday of each month

Senior Advisory Committee
Meets once a quarter - Next meeting in April, 2015

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

Catherine Carlton - Mayor
575-4623

Richard Cline - Mayor Pro Tem
650-207-1677

Peter I. OhtakiCell:(650) 328-0300

Ray Mueller - 776-8995

Kirsten Keith
(650) 308-4618

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

State Officials

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

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

State Senator Jerry Hill
District Address
1528 South El Camino Real
San Mateo, CA 94301
(650) 212-3313

East Palo Alto's groundwater management plan is underway

Editor's note: East Palo Alto's first groundwater management workshop was held on December 4, 2014 in the Community Room at the Municipal Building. The following is the actual summary of the workshop that was prepared by Iris Priestaf, the president of Todd Groundwater, who was one of the facilitators at the meeting.



Photo by H.J. Burroughs
The meeting's two facilitators are shown in this photo.

Workshop Number One was attended by 28 people. The Workshop objectives were to introduce the GWMP process, present basic concepts of groundwater hydrology and resources, define the goals for GWMP, describe groundwater conditions of the San Mateo/San Francisco Subbasins, and to identify issues to address in GWMP.

An illustrated presentation first addressed the reasons why the City is preparing a GWMP, defined the Plan Area

along with the San Mateo/San Francisco Subbasin areas, and described the GWMP process including the public stakeholder elements. A second portion of the presentation provided an introduction to groundwater resources, including the hydrologic cycle, recharge of surface water, and the nature of groundwater occurrence. The presentation described groundwater flow processes from recharge to discharge areas, the interconnection between groundwater

and surface water, and pumping of groundwater via production wells. Groundwater quality concepts were introduced.

Subsequent discussion addressed the City's preliminary GWMP goals to:

- Provide the City of East Palo Alto with a long-term, reliable and affordable high quality supply;

- Maintain or improve groundwater quality and quantity for the benefit of all groundwater users; and

- Provide integrated water resource management for resilience during droughts and long-term climate change effects.

Suggestions for the goal

statement included consideration of goals listed in the City's resolution in support of a sustainable groundwater management in the San Francisco Creek area, consideration of surface water, mention of sustainability, and cooperation among groundwater users.

The third portion of the presentation focused on groundwater conditions in the San Mateo/San Francisco Subbasins. The geologic framework was illustrated on maps and a geologic cross-section. Groundwater flow directions and water level trends over time were discussed along with known production wells in the subbasin.

Concepts of the water balance and sustainable yield were introduced along with potential adverse impacts of pumping. Discussion touched on recharge areas, the number of private wells, depths of wells, pumping amounts, drought conditions and pumping impacts.

The last part of the presentation presented potential issues to be considered in the GWMP. Breakout sessions among meeting participants were conducted to identify issues. Review of the issues reveals three major concerns:

- ⊕ Potential adverse impacts of pumping on other wells, groundwater levels and storage, subsidence potential, surface water (San Francisco Creek), and groundwater quality (including saltwater intrusion and contamination)

- ⊕ Lack of data to assess groundwater levels, groundwater quality, the water balance, subsidence, wells, pumping amounts and impacts, etc.

- ⊕ Need for collaboration among local agencies/groundwater users/residents, public outreach/education, and regional management for sustainability.

Other specific issues included:

- ⊕ Concern over a lack of process for groundwater use evaluation, and about locations of City wells and proximity to City limits

- ⊕ Concern over general availability of City water supplies and reliability of wells in event of earthquake

- ⊕ Interest in regulating groundwater wells and pumping

- ⊕ Interest in utilizing other water sources (e.g., recycled water) and

- conserving groundwater
- ⊕ Interest in mapping significant recharge areas

- ⊕ Interest in managed recharge of groundwater (e.g., with recycled water).

The meeting concluded with a description of the next steps and upcoming Workshop No. 2.



Photo by Henrietta J. Burroughs

This photo shows some of the attendees at the groundwater workshop. Many in the group represented various municipal agencies and environmental organizations.

Grand Opening of Incubator

Thursday, February 19, 2015

5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

1848 Bay Rd, East Palo Alto



Please join

Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center

for the Grand Opening of

East Palo Alto's first

Small Business Incubator

The incubator will serve emerging entrepreneurs

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building support (reception, telephone, internet,

meeting rooms etc.), networking and

consulting services to support the

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The Grand Opening will be held at

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Project WeHOPE

Measure AA delivered for the residents of East Palo Alto



Tina Hugg

By Tina Hugg
East Palo Alto Today

On June 3, 2014, voters in San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties approved Measure AA: the Regional Open Space Access, Preservation and Restoration Bond placed on the ballot by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen). The ballot measure was approved with 67% of the vote district-wide and an impressive 75.8%

of the vote in East Palo Alto. Midpen is now able to issue up to \$300 million in bonds to fulfill 25 major regional open space project portfolios. These portfolios were developed over an 18-month public input process that included focus groups, a civic engagement web site, workshops and hearings, as well as technical and scientific analysis.

In November 2014, Midpen's Board of Directors voted to prioritize work on two major regional projects in its Ravenswood Open Space Preserve, a 376-acre preserve located in East Palo Alto and Belle Haven.

Connect the Bay Trail

Midpen will work with landowners to fill in gaps in the Bay Trail to the north and south of Ravenswood Open Space Preserve. When these

critical gaps are filled, East Palo Alto and Belle Haven residents will have a safe recreational and commuter route for pedestrians and bicyclists through some of the densest urban areas of the county and direct access to one of the premier trail systems in California. This particular stretch of the Bay Trail will be 60 miles long and will extend north to Redwood City and south to Alviso and the East Bay.

Cooley Landing

Ravenswood Open Space Preserve adjoins the city-managed Cooley Landing Park on two sides. As part of Measure AA, Midpen plans to partner with the City of East Palo Alto to help design and implement interpretative facilities, infrastructure and signage. This project will create free, family-friendly educational and inter-

pretive experiences.

Combined, these two projects will create an open space recreational and educational destination in East Palo Alto where people of all ages and varied abilities can share in healthy activities, have a safe route to walk and bicycle, and explore and enjoy the natural wonders of the marshlands.

With the passage of Measure AA, local voters chose a vision in which the region's natural beauty and assets are

protected, and where people can connect with and experience nature from the Baylands to the Coastside for generations to come.

To receive email updates about Measure AA Bayside Projects, sign up for announcements at http://www.openspace.org/measureaa/measur eaa_email.asp.

Tina Hugg is a senior planner with the District and is our liaison to the City of EPA for the Cooley Landing Park Project.



New nonprofit offers outdoor activities



Photos courtesy of Outdoor Endorphins College Track students are shown during one of their outdoor events sponsored by the new Outdoor Endorphins groups.

By Ania Alam
East Palo Alto Today

Outdoor Endorphins is a newly-formed nonprofit organization that has partnered with College Track and Midpeninsula Open Space District to facilitate monthly hiking, cycling and quarterly camping trips among the youth of the Bay Area.

This organization started out as a student life activity club within College Track, as the CT Running Club, that met every Tuesday at 4:30pm to go for group jogs

to nearby parks, have group discussions about proper nutrition for athletes as well as learn about the biological benefits of exercise.

Connections were made with the students of College Track and many showed increased interest in outdoor activity, sharing that they often do not have the opportunities to explore places that are in their own backyards.

Outdoor Endorphins started as an extension of the Running Club, leading weekend hiking trips, made possible through community

fundraising in addition to partnerships with College Track's Academic Coaching and Enrichment department and Open Space District.

They are in the process of expanding and applying for local grants to help fund more trips for the 2015 year, hoping to have joint events with Upward Bound of USF and Midpeninsula Open Space District.

As an organization made up of individuals who have personally benefitted from outdoor activities as a stress outlet, they believe in encouraging students and community members from underprivileged areas to do the same in an effort to improve lifestyles and find healthy ways of relieving stress.

If interested in playing a part in their mission and for more information, visit www.outdoorendorphins.com or email them at outdoorendorphinsepa@gmail.com!

Ania Alam, the author of the above article, is the founder of Outdoor Endorphins



Students are shown on a hike through the woods under the sponsorship of Outdoor Endorphins.

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From the Editor's Desk

What can we learn from Brian Williams?

By now, millions around the world have heard how NBC TV anchorman, Brian Williams, was caught lying about some of his news reports. For many, it seems unexplainable why someone of his stature, with his accomplishments would have to fabricate about who he is and what he has done.

So, it is easy for me to see why with all of his money and fame, Brian Williams could still feel that he needed to prove himself over and over again, and what he had done and was doing was not sufficient.

Even though he had reached the top, he didn't feel a sense of inner security.

As a journalist, who started working as a broadcast news reporter at WNBC TV in New York City in the same building at 30 Rockefeller Center, where the Today Show, the NBC Nightly News and other NBC TV shows are taped, I think I have some insight into the forces that might have contributed to Williams' felt need to fabricate.



Henrietta J. Burroughs

At WNBC, I worked with people like Brian Williams, who were at the height of their broadcasting career. They were in a city, being the number one media market, that represented the pinnacle of broadcasting. Journalists from all over the world would give their eyeteeth to work in New York City for a major broadcasting outlet in the number one news media market. They would think that they had arrived.

But, I learned quickly, as a starting reporter, that the people who were at the top felt that they had a lot to lose.

They had, indeed, arrived but their arrival didn't make them feel secure. They knew that they could be out the door at any time. This level of insecurity showed in some of the advice they gave. For example, they said, "Don't go away for a two week vacation, go away for only one week." Why? The decision makers at the station might begin to like the substitute replacement better. They also cautioned, "Always remember, you're only as good as your last story."

As a broadcast news reporter, it can be difficult to rest with the knowledge that you have accomplished anything lasting, especially when television news stories are usually no longer than a minute and a half, if that long. Television newsrooms can present the type of atmosphere and culture that breed insecurity if one feeds into it.

It's a culture that can keep on-air talent, directors and producers looking over their shoulders constantly, since so much depends on ratings.

So, what lessons can we learn from him?

For me, one thing seems obvious. One can have loads of fame and all that money can buy, but if you don't feel good about yourself, money and fame will not be sufficient to fill the inner void that exists.

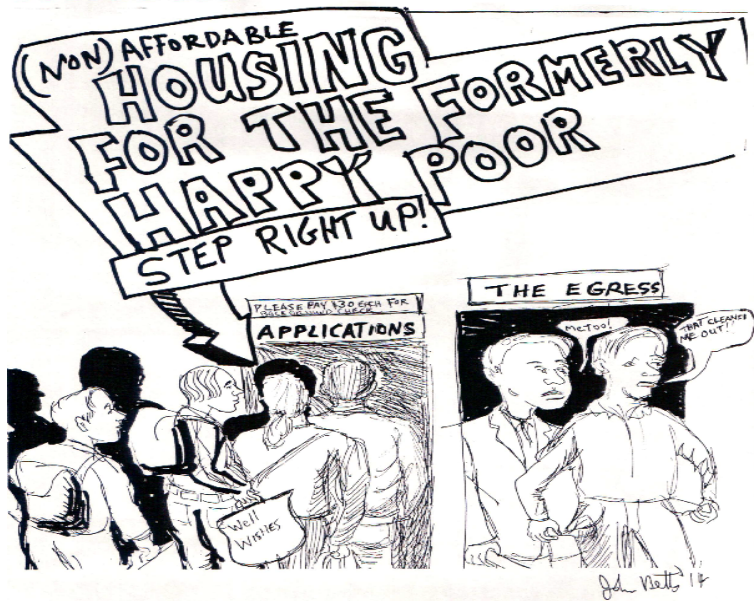
No matter how much one increases one's net worth, it does not automatically increase one's sense of worth.

The one person to whom Brian Williams needed to prove himself was to Brian Williams. He had reached a pinnacle of success, with a multiyear contract for millions of dollars, still not feeling worthy to be where he was.

In my mind, people who feel whole and complete do not have to embellish who they are and what they have done. Cases like Williams' or Michael Jackson's or Whitney Houston's and many other stories of the tragic lives of those who are rich and famous show us that even an abundance of money doesn't make up for deep feelings of emptiness, unworthiness and pain.

We will give our children an invaluable gift if we can, as we bring them up, enable them to feel: loved and wanted, complete unto themselves, whole and capable, and respectful and appreciative of themselves and of those around them. If we can bring them up in this way, they will not need to embellish who they are, use drugs to feel high, or put others down or show them up to feel better about themselves. If we can just bring them up to feel worthy and good about themselves, then they will be prepared to meet the world and better able to deal with life's challenges.

This is not an easy task, but it is a worthwhile endeavor and our children's future and the future of our planet might well depend on the level of inner peace and security that we all can feel and pass on.



Letters in East Palo Alto Today

Uniting the two halves

Dear Editor:

East Palo Alto faces a peculiar challenge today: How to retain its core identity in the face of gentrification. While it's great to add new folks to the community, those currently living there ought not be shoved to the side. So many folks made EPA what it is today and so many residents from neighboring cities look up to EPA to lead the way. Its wealthier neighbor, Palo Alto, just recently considered closing down a mobile park home and moving out more of its lower income residents.

Yet EPA residents were not afraid. As one EPA resident stated openly: East Palo Alto does not have homeless. It was a bold statement, and it reflects EPA's forward looking stance on making living affordable in this little haven called EPA. I don't think any other neighboring city can honestly state the same.

East Palo Alto continues to be a great place to live and whose future is still determined by its residents. For this reason, I wanted to suggest an idea that may seem a little radical at first, but that may be one that can make East Palo Alto whole: What if Belle Haven and East Palo Alto merged under one city charter?

When I look at Belle

Haven, I see the other half of East Palo Alto. It seems that only an invisible line drawn at Willow Road divides the two. Adding to that, both Belle Haven and East Palo Alto residents already belong to one Ravenswood School District. So why not make the two halves whole under one united city charter?

I honestly do not know how that would be done officially. I do not know if there would have to be a special election proposal added to ask residents of both halves that question. But what I do know is that noble actions have been taken thus far by East Palo Alto's city government and that now is the time to do something better.

So while EPA's city government may have defined a path of self-determination, its neighbors in Belle Haven quietly await.

So the question is: Will EPA continue on the current path it has forged ... or can it build something better with Belle Haven?

Sincerely,
J. Samuel Diaz

The Obama and the nation's legacies

Dear Editor:

Discussions and speculations are already underway on the legacy of President Barack

Obama; expectedly, much of it is expected to be cynical and negative.

From my perspective, his legacy should be framed in the annals of history by his being nominated by his party, and by his being elected and re-elected as the first African American president of the USA. These unprecedented events were not given to him, but were merited by his professional, political and academic achievements.

There is another concern. And that is how some sectors of the nation responded with bias and negativity to President-Elect Obama, even before he was sworn in for his first term as president. There is now deep concern over how the shameful legacy of the nation's responses, especially the US House of Representatives, to the Obama presidency will be accurately—or inaccurately—recorded by historians. It seems clear that embers of the Civil War have remained over the years, and were stoked by President Obama's election and achievements, though politically and diplomatically successful. Nevertheless, President Obama nobly espouses a fearless audacity of hope in this nation.

Henry Organ
Menlo Park

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.

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Opinion

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Together we can make a difference

By Roberto Gutierrez Perez
East Palo Alto Today



Roberto Gutierrez Perez

Going to school, takes a lot of time and effort. Through education one can develop abilities and skills that can be part of us throughout our lifetime.

We all come from different social backgrounds and cultures and share the same purpose in some day obtaining stability and fulfillment in our lives. We want to be able to provide for our families, become role models, and accomplish our dreams.

It's been a struggle among African Americans and Latinos to stay motivated and continue going to school. There are fi-

nancial and social issues that get in the way. But one of the hardest things is to deal with racism and discrimination in our lives.

There have been several racial incidents that occurred recently on the San Jose State University campus. For example, exactly a year ago in February 2014, San Jose State students protested the fact that San Jose State Board member and donor, Wanda Ginner, talked in a disparaging way about Latina students at the school during a meeting

with several school employees. "I contribute to this university because these little Latinas do not have the DNA to be successful," Ginner allegedly said.

We need to let people like Ginner know that our dreams are possible through parents, mentors and role models.

The harsh reality of racism and discrimination among minorities regarding our academic capabilities is one thing that I and other students don't tolerate at San Jose State University.

Faculty, staff and administration should encourage us to do well in school. Together we can make a difference. That is why we need to take action and make sure every one is respected and appreciated. Students are the future.

We look up to mentors and hope they in return will encourage us to make the most of our opportunities and develop our skills and abilities to the fullest.

Roberto Gutierrez Perez is a San Jose State student and a regular contributor to East Palo Alto Today.

Have you ever waited for an apology?

By Ebonni Black
East Palo Alto Today

Have you ever waited for an apology ?

Many people will not admit that a genuine, heartfelt apology could turn a situation around. It may not erase the hurt, but it can definitely ease the pain. Lots of times those who are guilty of causing pain and headache find it easier to either distance themselves or hide behind denial. Making an apology means that a person must be willing to face themselves and accept that they're wrong. In a world plagued with mental illness, you'll often find people doing things to hurt others with no type of remorse in site. My heart ached when I learned that Officer Darren Wilson would be cleared of all

charges in the killing of Michael Brown. And as if that wasn't a crushing blow to the black race, Eric Garner also lost his battle with both life and justice. For a moment I waited. I figured a reporter would surface saying there was a glitch in the system and the ruling was wrong. Yet as night fell, the reality sunk in that America had fallen back on its old ways. Or, had it ever really changed?

The blatant disregard for the lives of my brothers in Christ is what led me to host a town hall meeting in the city of East Palo Alto, CA.

The meeting was tailored to meet the hearts of the young people. In disastrous times like these, it's absolutely critical that the young black children of America are



Ebonni Black

loved on and reminded of their value. It's also a way to invite other ethnicities to be educated on the black race (and not in the watered down version that keeps the heart of the struggle underneath the rug).

For far too long the topic of racism has been danced around in order to pacify it's heinous reality. Yet when evi-

dence and proof still cannot bring about a conviction, then the only other choice of action is to demand that black lives be accounted for. I owe it to each of my ancestors to use my voice to assist in the restoration of my people.

My hope is that these meetings (which I plan to hold bi-monthly) will serve as a universal effort to promote much needed understanding of the black race. It is often said that we are "stuck in the past" and "always crying that we're being abused", and it's because that is exactly what is happening and has happened since the days we were enslaved.

I anticipate being met with challenges along the way, but I stand committed to uplifting the young people of the world so that they will not become

victims of a system that has continuously failed them time and time again.

We are not animals that deserve to be shot down in cold blood and left in the street for hours. We are a royal people who deserve respect like any other ethnicity on the earth and the time has come for that reality to become America's truth.

And we'd like to believe that America will accept that the rug has been lifted where painful truths will be exposed and certainly hope it will make that long awaited apology. Amen.

Ebonni Black is the founder of the Storytime Reading sessions for youth and adults that are generally held at the East Palo Alto Library.

Taking a closer, personal look at depression

By Michael Uhila
East Palo Alto Today



Michael Uhila

When the actor Robin Williams died last August of suicide, it didn't surprise me that he was suffering from depression. He made a living by acting and his depression might have helped him hide himself under those characters he played. Depression doesn't exclude anyone. Even actors.

What is depression?

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):

Depression is a mind state that goes well beyond being temporarily sad or blue.

What kind of depressions are there?

During the winter months, the cold could make you miserable. This is classified as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

The following symptoms

are: lack of energy, sleeping too much, over-eating, weight gain and a craving for carbohydrates.

Postpartum Depression. Did your wife just have twins? Is it past the two week mark since childbirth and she's still sad. She might be suffering from Postpartum depression. This is a form of depression that happens to women after child birth and can last for years. It will effect the mother, the child and any family members near the mother.

Bipolar disorder is suspected when someone has extreme mood swings. They can experience periods of depres-

sion, periods of mania, and long periods with normal moods in between.

What are the symptoms of depression?

An unusual sad mood
Loss of enjoyment and interest in activities that used to be enjoyable
Lack of energy
Isolation
Feeling worthless or feeling guilty though not at fault.
Difficulty concentrating or making decisions

Depression is real because I was diagnosed as moderately depressed in 2010. My mother actually saw it and I'm glad that it was detected early than later.

I hated my family, lost my job, felt lonely, was homeless, got bronchitis in the winter and nearly died. That depression kicked in. I kept my self isolated sometimes. Became anti-social and introversion felt better than socializing. Besides, how would you talk to people if you were depressed?

Why talk to people when they're constantly judging me?

Depression is manageable and I still do cognitive behavioral therapy and meditation to cope with depression. I took the medication, went to therapy and attended all the San Mateo County mental health programs.

If you're living with a depressed person you might want to be more understanding of this condition before you judge them or dismiss them as crazy. You could be supportive. You could point them to mental health centers in your neighborhood. You could just listen to them without judgement. We can help one another but leave the diagnosis to the professionals.

Depression will affect you directly or indirectly so take a look at yourself and ask, Am I depressed? The stress that we encounter in our daily life can lead to depression and even suicide like the case of Robin Williams.

Because of the death of Robin Williams back in August, it brought national attention to depression as if "depression was the flavor of the month." I don't need national attention, but I appreciated it.

Those of us who are depressed can keep going to therapy, taking the anti-depressants or do other holistic methods such as Tai Chi or yoga.

My experience through hell made me feel like nobody cared. My mother cared and I obeyed her to go to therapy. Just like the Alcoholic has to continue going to AA meetings, depressed people keep up with their treatment.

You can go look this information up yourself. You can seek treatment, but leave the diagnosing to the professionals.

I'm not the authority on depression but it takes one to know one.

Ecumenical Hunger and Peninsula Humane Society team up

By Karen Zamel
East Palo Alto Today

Since 1975, the Ecumenical Hunger Program (EHP) in East Palo Alto has provided community members a helping hand with food and other essential life items. Now, it can do the same thing for their pets.

EHP offers food, furniture, clothing and other resources to those in East Palo Alto and surrounding areas who request assistance. But, pet food was sometimes scarce.

Thanks to a partnership created by the Peninsula Humane Society (PHS) and EHP, the Humane Society will donate a truckload of pet food – literally hundreds of pounds of dog and cat food – to the East Palo Alto facility two to three times a year.

The first pet food delivery of 500-600 lbs. arrived in December. Clients served by EHP can request this food



Photos courtesy of the Peninsula Humane Society

whenever it's available.

It's a classic win-win

Individuals and organizations donate pet food to the Humane Society all year long, according to Scott Delucchi, PHS senior vice president of communications. However, much of the food can't be used since shelter animals are on a consistent diet — one brand and one formulation. This reduces stress on each animal's digestive track and simplifies enclosure cleaning for staff and volunteers.

So, instead of letting food languish and expire or disposing of it, Delucchi said PHS

wanted to donate it to a local organization that had a great distribution system and could get the product into the hands of people who needed it. That's when he contacted the Ecumenical Hunger Program Executive Director, Lesia Preston.

"We had some pet food before, but not on a regular basis," Preston said. It's a blessing to have this for people who request this. When you don't have money, it's nice to have something nutritional for your pet."

PHS will warehouse the food in its Burlingame facility until enough is stored to fill the

truck. Deliveries will be rotated between EHP and the Pacifica Resource Center, a community agency serving residents in need on the coast.

What impact does Delucchi hope the pet food donations will have on East Palo Alto?

"First, we know it will make those who donate pet food feel good about their donation," he said. "More importantly, it will help people who love their pets and need some assistance to provide for them. This program, like others we offer, helps companion animals stay in homes where they are loved!"

PHS offers other programs in EPA, including a free spay/neuter service. It is available through the PHS mobile clinic parked at the Bell St. Community Center each month.

For information or to donate to the Peninsula Humane Society, call 650/685-8510, email Delucchi@PHS-

SPCA.org, or go to the Humane Society website. To donate to the Ecumenical Hunger Program, call 650/323-7781, visit the facility at 2411 Pulgas Avenue, EPA, or go to the EHP website.

Karen Zamel serves on the board of the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media, the 501c3 under which the East Palo Alto Today newspaper is published.



Child payments

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payments, helping to establish parenthood, or in re-negotiating orders as the family's circumstances change, the County can be an effective problem-solver and help parents navigate this process.

The Moneygram option can be used beginning on January 26, and the Money-

gram website provides a map-based search for locations, including 18 retail chains such as CVS, Wal-Mart, Albertson's, 7-Eleven and Raley's/Bel Air. Find a location at www.MoneyGram.com/Locations or call 1-800-926-9400. You will need your child support Participant ID number and Receive Code 14630 for California child support payments.

More information on using Moneygram for San Mateo County child support pay-

ments is available at <http://dcss.smcgov.org/> or the State Disbursement Unit website:

[https://www.childsup.ca.gov/v/payments/statedisbursementunit\(sdu\).aspx](https://www.childsup.ca.gov/v/payments/statedisbursementunit(sdu).aspx)

Effie Milionis Verducci, the author of the above article, is the communications manager for the San Mateo County Human Services Agency. She can be contacted by email at everducci@smchsa.org.

San Mateo County

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modern when installed, Munks told the board they are now outdated and prone to failures that create safety risks for inmates and staff and heighten repair and maintenance costs.

As an example of the equipment's age, Munks said parts for the jail's perimeter doors are purchased on eBay.

In contrast, the Maple Street Correctional Center, scheduled to finish construction late this year, will be equipped with state-of-the-art equipment with en-

hanced facility and inmate monitoring through a separate contract previously approved by the Board with CML-RW.

Offering the same at Maguire eliminates the need for training on two systems the economies of scale also reduce both the time and costs of system maintenance.

Christa Bigue, the social media manager for the County of San Mateo, can be contacted by email at cbigue@smcgov.org.

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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American GI Forum makes its presence known



Duane Goff, Jr.

During World War II Mexican-Americans fought on the side of the United States. They were Americans, they loved their country, they knew the evil of Nazism had to be stopped and they knew the United States needed their support. They, also, believed

the promises that had been made and believed America would thank them for their support and welcome them home with open arms. But it was not to be and the racism continued.

The American GI Forum was founded in 1948 by Major Hector P. Garcia, M.D. Doctor Garcia founded the AGIF to advocate for and protect the rights of returning Mexican-American war veterans and their communities. Knowing the importance and the power of education, Dr. Garcia declared "education is our freedom and freedom should be everybody's business" and that has been our motto for 66

years.

The AGIF has committed itself to defending the civil rights of all people, especially people of color. We advocate for our children in the area of education and for the whole community in the areas of medicine, nutrition, and legal and for fair treatment by all offices of the government. When there is a need in the community the AGIF will be there. We are a national organization with 22 chapters in California and in 18 states and we are starting a new chapter in East Palo Alto. We have brought food to the hungry, scholarships to students, defended people wronged by the government,

lobbied in Washington, D.C. and spoken truth to power.

We are veterans. We are Americans. When America called we responded, put on our uniforms and went to war. When our community called we, again, responded. As long as there is need and as long there is inequality, the AGIF will be there, defending our community and addressing the needs of the people.

The AGIF is a veterans and family organization and has three components. The Veterans Forum is for veterans although 25% of the membership can be non-veteran. Providing support and assistance is the Women's

Forum. In the Women's Forum you do not have to be a veteran. In addition, there is a Youth Forum. The Youth Forum is led by the Women's Forum with support from the Veterans' Forum. The youth are taught the value of community service and are taught leadership skills with an emphasis on education.

If you would like to assist the AGIF in your community, call 650-390-4817 or send an email to kernagif@gmail.com. Returning Iraq and Afghan veterans pay no dues for their first year of membership.

Duane Goff, Jr. is a commander in the American GI Forum of California.

El American GI Forum tiene impacto

Duane Goff, Jr.
East Palo Alto Today



Durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, los mexicano-americanos que vivían en los EE UU, se unieron a las fuerzas armadas de los EE UU. Eran americanos y leales a su patria y sabían que se le tenía que poner un alto a la maldad de los nazis. Al igual, sabían que los EE UU necesitaba su ayuda. También crean en las promesas de los EE UU y crean que los EE UU les iba a dar las gracias y recibirlos con los brazos abiertos. Pero, esto no sucedió y el racismo continuó.

El American G.I. Forum se fundó en 1948 por el Major Héctor P. Garcia, M.D. El Dr. Garcia fundo el AGIF para abogar y proteger los derechos de los mexicano americanos, veteranos de la guerra,

sus familias y sus comunidades. Conociendo la importancia y poder de una educación, el Dr. Garcia declaró "la educación es nuestra libertad y la libertad deberfa ser el asunto de todos." Esto ha sido nuestra meta por 66 años.

El AGIF se ha comprometido a defender los derechos civiles de todos, especialmente la gente de comunidades diversas. Abog-

amos por nuestros hijos en el área de educación, y para toda la comunidad en las áreas de salud y bienestar, nutrición, la ley y un tratamiento de igualdad por medio de las oficinas del gobierno. ¡Cuando hay una necesidad en la comunidad, el AGIF estara allí!

Somos una organización a nivel nacional, con 22 sucursales en California, y aparte existen 18 sucursales estatales en 18 estados y estamos comenzando una sucursal nueva en East Palo Alto. Hemos traído comida al hambriento, becas para estudiantes, defendido los derechos de las personas acusadas injustamente por el gobierno, abogado en Washington, D.C. y hablado la verdad al poder.

Somos veteranos. Somos americanos. Cuando los EE

UU llamo, respondimos. Nos vestimos de uniforme y nos fuimos a la guerra. Cuando Nuestra comunidad llamo, otra vez, respondimos. Siempre y cuando haya una necesidad y falta de igualdad, el AGIF estara presente para ayudar a la comunidad.

El AGIF es una organización de veteranos y familias. Consiste de tres partes: 1) El foro de veteranos, mujeres, la juventud. No tiene que ser veterano para participar. Posiblemente, algún familiar

participo en las fuerzas armadas o exista un interés. Cualquiera la razón, usted podrá participar. El foro de la juventud es importante porque son el futuro. Se les ensena el valor del servicio comunitario y liderazgo con un enfoque en la educación.

Si tiene interés en participar o ayudar al AGIF en su comunidad, por favor llame al 650-390-4817 o mande un correo electrónico a peninsulaagif@gmail.com.



Residents express their frustrations about the high levels of disturbing noise

By Renee Roberts
East Palo Alto Today

Many East Palo Alto residents were so ticked off about noise in their streets that they attended a Neighborhood Noise meeting that was held on January 14 to express their growing concern about the high decibel levels in East Palo Alto.

Residents complained that they were increasingly making noise complaints to police department about noises that ranged anywhere from dogs barking, construction sites nailing and hammering, airplanes flying low overhead, fireworks and gunshot celebrations on the Fourth of July.

The most talked about complaints at the meeting concerned outdoor parties neighbors held with bands and loud music playing at extreme volumes.

Most of the people who attended the Neighborhood Noise meeting were homeowners who live in East Palo Alto.

East Palo Alto's new police Chief, Albert Pardini spoke primarily about what residents can expect from their police department going forward.

Rick McManis, who is the city's building official, spoke about construction projects and how they impact the community.

McManis said that the noise from these sites can also be a concern. So, the code and building departments will make sure projects are not done during unauthorized hours.

Kamal Fallaha the city engineer and Carlos Martinez, the Interim City Manager also participated and provided phone numbers and contact information for those at the meeting,

Outdoor parties are becoming a nuisance to people who live next door them, and those who complained about this said that they did not care that their neighbors had parties, but they would like them to stop at a reasonable hour.

They said that they would also like to see them show some respect as to the noise volume. In some instances, windows have been damaged due to the shaking from the music playing.

The original problem of the noise also brings a lack of parking for the party goes with party goes taking all of the available parking on the streets and sometimes even blocking drive-ways causing emergency and safety hazards - in addition to being a nuisance.

The problem residents are running into is that they feel that when calls are being made to the East Palo Alto Po-

lice Department, their concerns are not being taken seriously. They said the police might not come out and if they do come out, not much is being done.

Whenever the people throwing the party do get addressed, excuses are given such as we are having parties for the kids, to pay the ex-

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RCSD holds Stem Fair and gives awards

By Nozipo Wobogo
East Palo Alto Today



Photos by H.J. Burroughs
Two Los Robles students stand in front of their project, which won first place.

The annual STEM (Science Technology Engineering Math) was in full swing January 29 at 4:30 in the Costano school gym with projects that were entered by students from the Ravenswood City School District. The participants in the STEM Fair were first, second and third prize winners from each grade level at their respective school.

The children begin their projects in December and

completed them in mid-January. While the Stem Fair involves students from grades 5-8, Brentwood Academy's participation begins in kindergarten.

Once all the students' work

in the fair was evaluated, winners were announced and celebrated with applause by those in attendance.

Looking at some of the projects, it was plain to see that even ordinary everyday things become more complex when studied or researched in depth.

For instance, a fifth grade experiment sought to discover which frozen dessert would melt faster. Ashley Barriga, A fifth grader involved in this particular project, explained an error she made while work-

ing on her experiment. She said, "When setting things up, I made a mistake when I did not account for differences in temperature that would be found when using more than one location."

She discovered that fats and proteins like that found in ice cream are slower to freeze and quicker to melt.

Other projects included one on recycling carried out by Jacqueline Cerda and Yafet Barajas, both eighth graders. They experimented with making clothes out of recycled material. Yafet said, "People

might not like the outfits made from these recyclables because they are not used to them."

Seventh graders Esmeralda Sanchez Cardenas and Kimberly Garcia experimented with light absorption and won second place.

When setting up their projects, students must learn the scientific method and be disciplined in doing their work.

Science teacher Dr. David Liggett said, "They may not like it, but I continue to stress how important it is nonetheless."

Students in grades 5-8 who won prizes in the STEM Fair, will proceed to the San Mateo County competition. Those winners are as follows

Students	PRIZE	SCHOOL	TEACHER/S	PROJECT
Grade 5				
Crystal Alcantar, Cindy Taulava	1 st Place	Chavez	Ms. Johansen	The balloon pop
Gio Anguiano, Ian Motuliki	3 rd Place	Chavez	Ms. Johansen	Paper controller
Oscar Botello	2 nd Place	Brentwood	Dr. Liggett, Ms. Smith	Tennis ball and temperature
Alberto Pacheco	3 rd Place	Brentwood	Dr. Liggett, Ms. Chen	Effect of caffeine
Aileen Moreno	3 rd Place	Brentwood	Dr. Liggett, Ms. Chen	Effect of dancing on Heart
Grade 6				
Shawn White, Pablo Quevedo, Marlon Guerra	1 st Place	Belle Haven	Ms. Cellars	Boomerangs in the air
Leo Barriga, Juan Angel Quevedo	3 rd Place	Belle Haven	Ms. Cellars	Does more air matter?
Edith Narango, Emeline Falepapalangi	2 nd Place	McNair	Ms. Robillo	Pop rock expander
Alyssa Talamantes, Alex Ayala, Graciela Santa Cruz	3 rd Place	Chavez	Ms. Streed	Windmill electricity
Brandon Alvarado	3 rd Place	Costano	Ms. Williams	Can Tetris reduce pain
Jose Angulo, Jesus Cornelio, Orlando de Leon	3 rd Place	McNair	Ms. Robillo	Vinegar power
Johnathan Escudero, Jose Rodriguez, Manuel	3 rd Place	McNair	Ms. Robillo	Sports drink vs orange juice
Grade 7				
Seema Lal, Anthony Gomez Wenses, Mele Mataele	1 st Place	Willow Oaks	Ms. Gross	Plant Wi Fi
Esmeralda Sanchez Cardenas, Kimberley Garcia	2 nd Place	Willow Oaks	Ms. Gross	Light absorption
Howi Desta, Andres Avina Barajas, Cesar Peralta Sankdov	3 rd Place	Willow Oaks	Ms. Gross	Musical Bacteria
Briant Avalos Franco, Miguel Tostado Aguilar	3 rd Place	Willow Oaks	Ms. Gross	Do plants make oxygen?
Nancy Moran, Perla Rios	2 nd Place	Chavez	Mr. Martinez	Music Extravaganza
Dasha Gomez, Noemi Magdeleno	3 rd Place	Loz Robles	Mr. Cardenas	Fluffy cupcakes
Grade 8				
Kenia Baires, Yajaira Rascon, Marlene Galvan	1 st Place	Los Robles	Mr. Juarez	Chocolate or Coffee
Nery Roman, Alberto Alegre, Durt De La Cruz	3 rd Place	McNair	Ms. Robillo	Soda-Straw Rocket
Irene Garcia, Giselle Talavera, Katie Mendez	2 nd Place	Willow Oaks	Ms. Eskildsen	Perfume Scents
Paola Maciel	3 rd Place	Willow Oaks	Ms. Eskildsen	Water Filtration
Carlos Contreras, Jose Vargas, Edgar Martinez	3 rd Place	Belle Haven	Ms. Card	What affect do angles have on shooting a soccer ball?
Roxana Bravo, Whitney Ramos	3 rd Place	Belle Haven	Ms. Card	Which oil will cause Alka-Seltzer tablets to dissolve fastest?
Erika Aleman, Emily Lineras	3 rd Place	Belle Haven	Ms. Card	Which Battery make coil spin longer?



Two students discuss their project with a parent.

RCSD launches new health & wellness program



Photo by Tony Avelar/Invision for Sonima Foundation/AP Images
Gavin Newsom, Lieutenant Governor of California, speaks during the Sonima Foundation health and wellness program launch.

By David Wollin

The Ravenswood City School District launched a partnership with the Sonima Foundation today in a new effort to improve the health and wellness of its students.

Three thousand four hundred students in East Palo Alto will be joining the more than 24,000 who already benefit from Sonima Foundation Health and Wellness programs in California, Florida, New York and Texas. California Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom and Justin Tuck of the Oakland Raiders were

among those in attendance at the launch.

Sonima Foundation Health and Wellness programs are a dynamic blend of yoga-based exercises, mindfulness practices and nutrition education. Health and Wellness instructors trained in Sonima Foundation curriculum introduce students to skills necessary for living a healthier lifestyle; students learn to focus their attention and calm their minds, which has been shown to reduce stress. A programmatic objective of Sonima Foundation programs is to support classroom teachers by giving

students tools which will help them feel calmer and more focused in class, thus improving their ability to absorb information.

The Ravenswood City School District is committed to improving the lives of all of our students," said Dr. Gloria Maria Hernandez-Goff, RCSD Superintendent. "Sonima Health and Wellness programs offer students the skills to become healthier and happier, and better position them for success. The Ravenswood City School District is grateful for the new programs that will benefit thousands of our students across seven school sites."

The Ravenswood City School District, Stanford University Medical Center and the Sonima Foundation, in partnership with the Center for Education Policy and Law at the University of San Diego, are launching a new, four-year study to investigate the cognitive benefits of the Sonima Foundation curriculum. This study will be spearheaded by Dr. Victor Carrion, a distinguished member of the Stan-

ford faculty who has extensive experience bringing yoga-based exercise and mindfulness practices to students in the East Palo Alto area. The Stanford research team will recruit third and fifth grade students to participate in a series of assessments over the next four years with the goal of quantifying the impact the Sonima Foundation has upon the people it serves. Dr. Carrion hypothesizes that students enrolled in the Health and Wellness programs will display improved emotional regulation, higher academic performance and a generally healthier lifestyle.

The Sonima Foundation is proud to join the RCSD team,"

said Sonima Foundation Executive Director Eugene Ruffin. "We are honored to be partnering with Stanford University, and with a scientist as distinguished as Dr. Carrion. The Sonima Foundation is eager to provide RCSD students with dynamic health and wellness program opportunities, and to begin our work with Stanford. It is our sincere belief that by working together, we will be able to positively impact the lives of children in East Palo Alto – and by extension, have a positive impact on the entire community."

David Wollin is with DKC Public Relations, Marketing & Government Affairs



Photo by Henrietta J. Burroughs
Students are shown doing yoga exercises with Jason Tuck.

Unveiling East Palo Alto mural in Jack Farrell Park



Photo by Henrietta J. Burroughs

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

It was a beautiful day for a mural unveiling and the mood at the unveiling seemed to match the

brightness of the day. East Palo Alto's Mural Music & Arts Project (MMAP) unveiled a very colorful 1,700 sq. ft. mural in Jack Farrell Park Saturday. The afternoon pro-

gram for the community unveiling in the park, which is located at 2509 Fordham St., included: MMAP's Deputy Director, Tefferi Mogus Brook; the Ravenswood City School

Superintendent, Gloria Hernandez-Goff; Melvin Gaines from the East Palo Alto Police Department; MMAP's Director of Outreach, Dany Ceseña, and of, course, the mural's de-

signer, MMAP Artist in Residence, Edward "Scape" Martinez. The mural, which is a 'must see' "represents many voices in chorus...creatively expressing a collective hope."

Residents express their frustrations

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cessive rent.

Sometimes when law enforcement leaves, people complained that the music goes right back up again. This is a huge problem for many residents

An information sheet was distributed at the meeting, which stated that there are two ways law enforcement can take action regarding loud parties and other excessive noise. None of which involve criminal charges.

There are currently two penal code sections covering disturbances. 415 and 370. In order to use these the peace has to be disturbed for a victim, who can make a citizen's arrest. The complaining party has to sign a citizen's arrest form, most don't fearing retaliation. Under 415, punishment can involve imprisonment in the county jail for a period of not more than 90 days, a fine of not more than

(\$400), or both such imprisonment and fine:

Penal code 370 covers anything which is injurious to health, or is indecent or offensive to the senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property,

The second option is the use of the current noise ordinance, which sets the limits on decibels at various times of the day. Exceeding those decibels is a violation of the municipal code. In

order to determine the decibels it requires a sound meter. The department has recently purchased a sound meter. If the noise does not exceed the decibel level, then even though it may be disturbing it is not a violation of code.

The third tool is the loud and unruly ordinance which the council passed. If the officer arrives on the scene and determines the incident fits The

minimum charge recommended is \$100 and the maximum is \$1000.

The Loud and Unruly Ordinance is meant to be a tool to help the residents of East Palo Alto empower themselves to know that they do not have to be "tortured" by their neighbors loud music and bad behavior.

Juntos podemos hacer una diferencia

Por Roberto Gutierrez Perez
East Palo Alto Today



Roberto Gutierrez Perez

Ir a la escuela, toma mucho tiempo y esfuerzo. A través de la educación uno puede desarrollar habilidades y reconocimiento que pueden ser parte de nosotros durante toda nuestra vida.

Todos venimos de diferentes orígenes sociales y culturales, y compartimos el mismo propósito en algún día tener la oportunidad de la estabilidad y plenitud en nuestras vidas.

Queremos ser capaces de proveer para nuestras familias, se convierten en modelos a seguir y cumplir nuestros sueños.

Ha sido una lucha entre

los afroamericanos y los latinos a mantener la motivación y seguir yendo a la escuela. Hay cuestiones financieras y sociales que se interponen en el camino. Pero una de las cosas más difíciles es lidiar con el racismo y la discriminación en nuestras vidas.

Ha habido varios inci-

dentos raciales ocurridos recientemente en las escuelas.

Hace exactamente un año, en febrero 2014 que los estudiantes de La Universidad de San José protestaron por el hecho de que miembros y donantes Junta Estatal de San José, Wanda desmotadora. habló sobre la educación de las mujeres latinas en la escuela durante una reunión con varios empleados de la escuela."

Puedo contribuir a esta universidad porque estas pequeñas latinas no tienen el ADN para tener éxito," Ginner supuestamente dijo.

Tenemos que informar a la gente como Ginner se den cuenta que nuestros sueños son posibles a través de los padres, mentores y modelos a seguir.

La dura realidad del racismo y la discriminación de las minorías con respecto a nuestras capacidades académicas es una cosa que yo y otros estudiantes no toleramos en la Universidad Estatal de San José. Facultad, el personal y la administración deben

animarnos a hacer bien en la escuela.

Juntos podemos hacer la diferencia, es por eso que tenemos que tomar medidas y asegurarse de que cada uno sea respetado y apreciado. Los estudiantes son el futuro.

Tenemos que apreciar a nuestros mentores y esperamos que a cambio nos animan a aprovechar al máximo en nuestras oportunidades de desarrollar nuestras habilidades y capacidades al máximo.

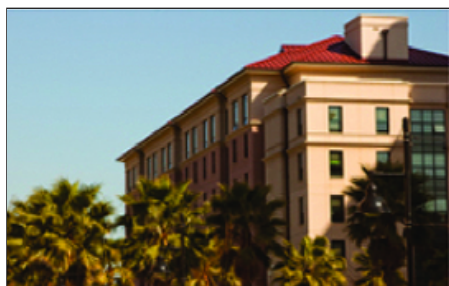


Photo of San Jose State University

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Sustainable Silicon Valley and Net Positive East Palo Alto



Brent Butler

By Josh Tilander
East Palo Alto Today

Sustainable Silicon Valley (SSV) is initiating a project in East Palo Alto with the objective of creating a pilot program for a Net Positive community. What if by 2050, East Palo Alto could generate more renewable energy than it uses, sequester more carbon than it emits and use only local water resources? This program will

address a number of key issues including (but not limited to): residential energy and water efficiencies; renewable energy; recycled water for local reuse; and, access to public transportation and active transportation (safe routes for walking and biking). Reaching out to residents, companies and organizations to make a more resilient community.

SSV will work with local non-profits such as Ecumenical Hunger Program, Nuestra Casa, PG&E and other resource providers to help local families and non-profits upgrade their homes and buildings for more energy and water efficiency and ultimately for adding solar power. Recycling water will help stretch East Palo Alto's limited water supply and help prepare for a hotter, drier future as climate change gets more severe.

SSV's Net Positive Bay Area program aims to direct the ingenuity of Silicon Valley

toward preparing for the challenges of a changing climate. Net Positive is a term that describes a location that produces more renewable energy than it uses, sources water locally, and sequesters more carbon than it emits. Net Positive Bay Area is an action-oriented initiative, which aims to build a regenerative region by 2050. This initiative will serve as a framework to spark a common vision, and to catalyze profound systemic change in advancing sustainability in the Silicon Valley region and beyond.

Net Positive projects provide an exciting platform to engage collaborative stakeholders and to apply technology in ways that can be replicated and scaled at the level of a neighborhood, campus, company, community, or event. SSV has partnered with NASA, PG&E and the East Palo Alto Community Planning Department to develop best practices in providing resi-

dents with energy and water efficiencies and renewable energy, which will contribute to reducing utility bills and help the environment.

SSV facilitates regional cross-sector collaboration, accelerates innovation, and encourages economic prosperity for a sustainable future. We connect businesses, innovators, and policy makers to drive implementation and growth of a clean, vibrant, and regenerative economy. Our partners include Google, NASA, HP, SAP, IBM, Mit-

subishi, Santa Clara University, Stanford University, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, VTA, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Acterra, US Dept. of Commerce, local municipal governments, and many others.

To learn more about Sustainable Silicon Valley and how you can get involved, please contact info@sustainable-sv.org or visit the website www.sustainable-sv.org.

Josh Tilander is with Sustainable Silicon Valley



Photo courtesy of Sustainable Silicon Valley (SSV)

Community News Briefs

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and gentrification are affecting East Palo Alto's future.

During his question and answer session with community members, Jackson stated his interest in seeing East Palo Alto house its own tech center for community residents.

The effort toward making this goal a reality will be something to keep an eye on in the future.

Mayor Lisa Yarbrough Gauthier goes to Washington

When Mayor Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier left the East Palo Alto City Council meeting early on January 20, to go to Washington, D.C. for the 83rd United States Conference of Mayors, she said that she would seek an opportunity at the conference to sit down with Pres. Obama and his staff to talk about regional issues and, specifically, to talk about how to bring IT jobs to East Palo Alto.

During the February 3, East Palo Alto City Council meeting, she told council members that she met a representative from Google and looks forward to developing a working relationship.

She said that she is very supportive of Pres. Obama's Initiative, My Brother's Keepers (MBK), which is "a call to action for all members of our communities, and mayors in particular, ... to implement a coherent cradle-to-college-and-career strategy for improving the life outcomes of all young people to ensure that they can reach their full potential, re-

gardless of who they are, where they come from, or the circumstances into which they are born."

The mayor said that she would like to implement the goals of MBK in the East Palo Alto community. Read more about the My Brother's Keeper at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/my-brothers-keeper>

City Council member gets acknowledged for his county appointments

East Palo Alto City Council member, Larry Moody, was congratulated at a recent city council meeting for two county positions he holds.

Moody is a member of the San Mateo County Housing and Community Development Committee, which focuses "on providing decent housing and suitable living environments and expanding economic opportunities principally for persons of very low to moderate income."

He was selected as the board chair for the current year. His term expires on December 31, 2015.

Moody was also acknowledged for being among at least 11 area council members to receive a League of Cities Presidential Appointment.

Moody said that the appointment was given as "a result of successfully completing all the League of Cities trainings requirements toward a Leadership Certificate," which was awarded to him last November.

Know Your Rights workshop gives lifesaving tips

According to the organizers of the Know Your Rights workshop, that was held on



Photo by Gail Ortega Tameeka Bennett, LaDoris Cordell and Alejandro Vilchez are shown at the workshop.

February 9 at the St. Francis of Assisi Church in East Palo Alto, over 123 youth walked away with lifesaving tips to prevent them from having violent encounters with law enforcement officials.

The workshop was led by former State Superior Court Judge, LaDoris Cordell, who is now an independent police auditor for the City of San Jose.

For Gail Ortega, a community activist and youth advocate, "Police contact with the average person of color presents the possibility of a life altering encounter with deadly consequences."

So, Ortega said, "We have a moral obligation to insure youth and young adults know their legal rights when in contact with law enforcement. There is no more time for "I wish I had known..." or "didn't they know?"

In addition to Ortega's participation, the workshop was hosted by the combined St. Francis Church youth groups and Father Lawrence Goode, with facilitators Tameeka Bennett, the co-program director of Youth United for Community Action (YUCA) and Alejandro R Vilchez, a consultant, mediator and social justice advocate.

Other workshop participants included East Palo Alto's Mayor, Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier, Council member Larry Moody and East Palo Alto's Police Chief, Albert Pardini.

Ninety of the youth who attended signed up to receive information about other similar workshops.

Expect water bill increases

After much discussion and the expression of serious reservations, the East Palo Alto City Council voted to increase water rates at its February 3 meeting.

In the end, it was agreed that the water rate increases would be an investment in the

city's aging infrastructure that would save residents money in the long term.

However, the council said that if 50% of the residents protested the increases, then they would not go through.



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Community Calendar

East Palo Alto City Council meetings. First and third Tuesdays of the month.

Meetings usually start at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building at 2415 University Avenue, East Palo Alto.

Thursday, February 19, 2015 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center for the Grand Opening of East Palo Alto's first Sma Business Incubator at 1848 Bay Road, East Palo Alto. Please come out and celebrate with us with music, food and networking!

Celebrate African American History Month with Midpen - February 21, 2015

The celebration will be held at the Ravenswood Open Space Preserve in East Palo Alto from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm. From Buffalo Soldiers to George Washington Carver, African Americans have a rich history in conservation. At Midpen's African American History Month Celebration, you'll learn about African Americans who

pioneered conservation in America; discover bugs, birds, and your baylands; make some fun crafts and meet a Midpen ranger! With special guests: The California Buffalo Soldiers Association, Senator Jerry Hill, California District 13; Assemblymember Rich Gordon, District 24; Supervisor Warren Slocum, San Mateo County, District 4; Mayor Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier, East Palo Alto and Henrietta Burroughs, East Palo Alto Center for Community Media.

Mental Wellness: The Key to Complete Health - February 21, 2015

This educational program is sponsored by the African American Community Health Advisory Committee and the African American Community Initiative of the Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Division of the San Mateo County Health System. Community members are invited to engage in a conversation to better understand mental health conditions, learn how to

reduce stigma, and understand treatment options available in San Mateo County for you or those you know. Community Church of East Palo Alto, 2201 University Ave 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Breakfast and lunch will be provided at this FREE program. Questions? 650-696-4378

Youth & Children's 2nd Annual Potluck Event

Saturday, February 21, 2015 Belle Haven School (gym), 415 Ivy Drive, Menlo Park, CA

Groundwater Management Plan - Public Workshop #2 -

"When: Tuesday, February 24, 2015"

"Time: 3:30 pm - 6:00 pm
"Where: Community Room, 2415 University Avenue"
"East Palo Alto, CA 94303"
"For more information, please visit:""<http://www.cityofepa.org/index.aspx?NID=554>"

Filing for Social Security: Flexibility & Choices for Your Retirement Income - March 07, 2015

Talking with Henrietta

Improving Health on Every Level



Photo courtesy of Talking with Henrietta

From left, Ana Ruiz, show host Henrietta J. Burroughs, Dr. Stephen Michael Norris and Kristin Wheeler are shown on the set of the Talking with Henrietta television show after the taping of their discussion on January 22, 2015. For more information about this show, go to www.epatoday.org/tv.html.

On March 7, the Menlo Park Library will be presenting a free seminar on optimizing Social Security filing options to best meet retirement needs. Attendees are invited to bring their questions and get them answered during this interactive seminar. Refreshments will be provided, courtesy of the Friends of the Menlo Park Library.

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

Enjoy fun activities at the Midpen Ravenswood Open Space Preserve

By Julie Amato
East Palo Alto Today

This winter, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is offering fun, healthy outdoor activities at the Ravenswood Open Space Preserve for the East Palo Alto and Belle Haven communities.

Midpen's Ravenswood Open Space Preserve is located on the shores of San Francisco Bay, next to Cooley Landing. Visitors can walk and bike on a trail, look at shore birds, and enjoy the beauty of the bay from two observation decks. Located at the eastern end of Bay Road, Ravenswood is a short distance from the center of East Palo Alto, and provides a welcome space for local residents to stretch their legs and enjoy the fresh air close to home.



The preserve is free and open to the public 365 days a year.

On Saturday, February 21, 2015, Midpen is hosting its annual African American History Month Celebration at Ravenswood, from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. There will be nature and craft activities for children, a nature walk, and free food and refreshments for all. Special guests from the California Buffalo Soldiers Association will

share the story of African-American soldiers that served as some of our first park rangers in California. This event is free and all members of the public are invited to attend.

On Saturday, March 7, 2015, at 10:00 am at Ravenswood, Midpen kicks off its first "Walk with a Doc", a series of walks for health. In partnership with the San Mateo County Medical Association

Community Service Foundation, Midpen is hosting six "Walk with a Doc" activities at different Midpen preserves this year.

On these walks, participants will have the chance to walk with physician volunteers from the Medical Association who will answer health-related questions along the way. The physicians speak both English and Spanish. Hikes are free and open to people of all ages and fitness levels.

Spending time in nature has many health benefits for individuals and communities. Being outdoors is connected with greater physical activity, reduced blood sugar for diabetics, and increased mental wellbeing. It also helps children stay more alert during the day, and is associated with physical resilience and longevity. Communities located near open space benefit socially, economically, and environmentally.

Midpen invites all members of the East Palo Alto and Belle Haven communities to come outside and enjoy your Ravenswood preserve today. For more information about Midpen's African American History Month Celebration or the Walk with a Doc program, please call (650) 691-1200 or visit www.openspace.org/events.

Carlos Martinez

licants were considered eligible for consideration. This number was narrowed down to three finalists.

The council and a community panel interviewed two of the candidates on January 16. The third candidate had the flu at that time and was interviewed by the council and the panel on February 7.

While council members were deliberating on the three



Carlos Martinez

city manager finalists, Martinez was holding an informal Coffee with Carlos session at the Starbucks in East Palo Alto on Bayshore Road.

The coffee session was designed for Martinez to get community input on issues that concerned city residents. One resident, Louis Moore, joined the group and said that he had spoken to council members and told them to select Mar-

continued from page 1

tiniez, because "it was the only thing that made sense." The Coffee with Carlos session ended nearly an hour before the council made its decision.

In commenting on Martinez's selection, Vice Mayor Donna Rutherford said, "It involved a fair process that played out as it should have. We look forward to working with him. He is definitely going to move the city forward....We're rebuilding." she said.

[Editor's note: A version of the above article appeared on the EPA Today website on February 8, 2015.

East Palo Alto Council choices for the community panel that interviewed the city manager candidates


Council member

- Laura Martinez
- Larry Moody
- Donna Rutherford
- Donna Rutherford
- Lisa Gauthier
- Laura Martinez
- Larry Moody
- Lisa Gauthier
- Ruben Abrica
- Ruben Abrica
- Ruben Abrica
- Donna Rutherford
- Timoteo Uelese
- Lisa Gauthier
- Lisa Gauthier

Panel member

- Kimberly Carlton
- Larue Ragan
- Bridget Grant
- Marie McKenzie
- Johnny Gray
- Robert Jones
- Goro Mitchell
- Annie Loya
- Rodney Halapio
- Tagiilima Uelese
- Teo Hernandez
- Dee Uhila
- Timoteo Uelese
- Sharifa Wilson
- Melvin Gaines

Community panel members were given certificates of appreciation at the East Palo Alto City Council meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2015.


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Information and group discussion on postpartum care. Parenting information on infant health, stages of development, SIDS prevention, discipline, and healthy family relationships. Activities include personal goal setting and development of a life plan.



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Who is eligible?
 Pregnant African American women who are 18 and older.

Where: **Prenatal Advantage Offices** — East Palo Alto and Daly City
 When: For exact class schedule and location, call the Prenatal Advantage Office at (850) 363-7850

Prenatal Advantage Black Infant Health Project
 2415 University Avenue, 2nd Floor, East Palo Alto, CA
 Email: prenataladvantage@smcgov.org
 Website: www.smchealth.org/bih




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