



A friend of the community Page 10



Seeing how things work page 9



Opiniones Page 7

East Palo Alto Today



www.epatoday.org

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical

East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

September - October 2008

Vol. 2 No.15

EPA policy a model for cities

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
EPA Today

In recognizing that "development as usual" is not enough to improve conditions for residents, the East Bay

Alliance for a Sustainable Economy honored the city of East Palo Alto for its responsible development efforts.

The recognition came at a luncheon held in Oakland on September 24 to mark the

release of the East Bay Alliance's special report titled "Building a Better Bay Area: Community Benefit Tools and Case Studies to Achieve Responsible Development." During the luncheon the

alliance recognized East Palo Alto's First Source Hiring program as a model for other communities. The report said that the First Source Hiring program was indicative of a positive trend by a municipal-

ity to set community standards and policies that benefit its workforce, housing and livability.

In representing East Palo Alto as a speaker at the continued on page 14

Inside News

Lady
Wilma

Page 8



Stealing a
nation
vote by
vote

Page 11

Rapper
makes
a Deal

Page 11



Inch
Scholarship
Winners

Page 12



East Palo Alto resident Lorraine Holmes stands beside a cardboard cutout of Democratic presidential nominee Senator Barack Obama in the smallest Obama Campaign Headquarters in Northern California. The informational center is located on the grounds of the Whole House Building Supply at 1955 Pulgas Avenue in East Palo Alto.

The rent crisis continues

By Dana Tom
East Palo Alto Intern

East Palo Alto resident and Santa Clara University history teacher Eric Oberle has not been able to do his laundry in the building of his Page Mill Properties apartment since December 2007. Despite six letters to his landowner and similar complaints from his neighbors about other main-

tenance problems on the property, Oberle has not received any response.

"Page Mill has an interest in annoying tenants out of living on their property," he said. "They intentionally do not respond. They think that if they intimidate us out of their buildings, maybe people will leave."

In addition to his complaints

of poor maintenance, Oberle filed a class action lawsuit against Page Mill Properties on July 15 in the San Mateo Superior Court. He claims that the company has illegally avoided registering its property with the EPA Rent Stabilization Board in order to evade state rules on rent increases.

Page Mill Properties is the

largest apartment owner in East Palo Alto. Representatives for the firm say Page Mill Properties can legally organize its 1,700 units into groups of four; thus setting up Limited Liability Companies. Rent Stabilization Board member William Webster claims that the creation of the Limited Liability Companies is continued on page 5

Voting rights for jail inmates

By Jennifer Rae Taylor
EPA Today Contributor

On a cloudy Saturday morning in August, the sidewalk outside the Glenn E. Dyer Jail in Oakland seems an odd site for a voter registration drive -- but organizers are targeting an atypical audience: inmates and those visiting them.



Elder Freeman holding voting rights materials.

"You've got the right and reason to register to vote in

this election and so do the people you're coming to visit," said Linda Evans to two women who were approaching the jail entrance. Evans is co-director of the San Francisco-based non-profit All of Us or None, which organized the August 16th Day of Action to raise awareness of voting eligibility. Evans and

the group's members want to counter what they call "widespread confusion about inmates' legal voting rights." Chapters throughout the state held drives in Alameda, Sacramento, Orange, San Mateo, Los Angeles and San Diego counties.

continued on page 10

Inside

Editorial
News Briefs
Opinions
TV Listings
Youth News

Fire Prevention Week

Sacramento - A pot holder too close to a lit burner or a space heater left on overnight could be all it takes to start a home fire. In fact, cooking and heating are among the leading causes of home fires in California and that is why CAL FIRE, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, is asking for homeowner's help in "Preventing Home Fires".

CAL FIRE responds to over 300,000 emergencies and calls for service each year. Over 5,000 of these emergencies are fires inside homes and other buildings. "In the past three years hundreds of people have died in home fires in California," said Chief Ruben Grijalva, director of CAL FIRE. "What

is so tragic is that many of these fires are easily preventable when residents take simple steps."

It is because of these startling figures that this year's theme of Fire Prevention Week 2008 is "Prevent Home Fires!" From October 5-11, 2008, CAL FIRE and fire departments across the country will be encouraging their communities to check their homes for fire hazards. With a little extra caution, preventing the leading causes of home fires – cooking, heating, electrical and smoking – is within their power.

Here are some simple steps to help prevent home fires:

Cooking: Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period time,

turn off the stove.

Heating: Keep all things that can burn, such as paper, bedding or furniture, at least 3 feet away from heating equipment.

Electrical: Replace cracked and damaged electrical cords; use extension cords for temporary wiring only. Consider having additional circuits or receptacles added by a qualified electrician.

Smoking: If you smoke, smoke outside; wherever you smoke, use deep, sturdy ashtrays.

Each year, the week surrounding the date of October 9th is celebrated as

National Fire Prevention Week. Why October 9th? The date commemorates the infamous "Great Chicago Fire" of 1871 that killed 250 people and destroyed over 17,000

homes. Fire Prevention Week is organized each year by the National Fire Protection Association.

For more fire safety tips visit the CAL FIRE Web site at www.fire.ca.gov.

Elegant Tea Party

DATE: Saturday, October 4, 2008
TIME: 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
DONATION: \$25.00 per person

ENTERTAINMENT
FREE GIFTS

East Palo Alto Senior Center
560 Bell Street
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

For Information contact
Senior Center
(650) 329- 5900 or (650) 329-5901

Elect Court Skinner as Ravenswood City School District Trustee

Let's work together to fix this district, reduce our high school dropout rate, collaborate with the communities that the district serves and remove the threat of state takeover.

I have 30 years of industrial work experience and additional experience working with local boards, with children and with technology. This experience will be key in enabling the success of our children. I am capable and committed to making collaboration, technology access, fiscal responsibility, special education, safety, good high school relationships and parent participation a reality in our district.

The San Mateo County Democratic Party, Menlo Park and East Palo Alto City Council members, current and former RCSD Trustees, teachers, and many others have endorsed my candidacy. We've been patient for too long. Let's raise expectations and make this district the best in Silicon Valley.



Court Skinner

Vote!
Tuesday, November 4, 2008

1. Read
2. Rite
3. Ride

As you prepare for school this fall, don't forget the "Third R" in a kid's education. You can rely on Samtrans to get your child to school - ready to learn.

For information about routes, times and fares, call 1-800-440-4287 or visit www.samtrans.com



An office of the

Start Up **renaissance**
prosper ✶ prosper Entrepreneurship Center

We re Moving!
Effective Monday, **September 15, 2008**
our new address will be:
1848 Bay Road, East Palo Alto, CA

¡Nos Estamos Mudando!
Estaremos de vuelta el lunes **15 de septiembre** 2008, nuestra dirección será:
1848 Bay Road, East Palo Alto, CA

We help small businesses grow and prosper!
¡Ayudamos a los pequeños negocios a crecer y prosperar!

(650) 321-2193
1848 Bay Road, East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Community News Briefs

Police Foundation

The East Palo Alto Police Department is in the process of forming the East Palo Alto Police Foundation. The Police Foundation will be a not-for-profit organization whose primary goal is to establish public-private partnerships to enhance public safety in East Palo Alto.

By partnering with private corporations, institutions, and donors, the Police Foundation will enable the East Palo Alto Police Department to strengthen its outreach programs and enhance its inter-

nal capacity, training, technology, infrastructure, and its ability to engage in progressive crime-fighting techniques without increasing its General Fund expenditures.

Chief Davis and the police captains have met with several major private corporations and institutions that have agreed to provide support to this endeavor. Over the next couple of months, the Police Foundation will be formalized and an independent governing board selected. The governing board will be responsible for fund raising and will decide what type of grants

and/or in-kind services (like equipment and technology) the Police Foundation will provide to the police department. However, as with any grant or donation offered to the City, the East Palo Alto Police Department must obtain the approval of the East Palo Alto City Council prior to receiving any grants and/or donations.

Impact on EPA

Citigroup's acquisition of Wachovia Bank could affect Wachovia's office in East Palo Alto at 1950 University

Avenue. Wachovia has 14,000 square feet of office space at that location.

Simitian Bill signed into law

The elderly and those living on the margin economically now have additional protection against those who would prey upon them.

Senator Joe Simitian's bill SB 1400 sets new restrictions and requirements to prevent deceptive sweepstakes solicitations.

"The public is particularly susceptible to this kind of

thing in a difficult economy," Simitian said. "When folks are worried or desperate, they're easy targets."

SB 1400, which was just signed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, came out of Sen. Simitian's annual "There Oughta Be A Law" contest, which invites state residents to submit ideas for new state legislation.

The bill was the idea of Menlo Park resident Lisa Conrad and it has the support of many senior advocacy groups and consumer groups.

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

Patricia Foster- Mayor
(650) 328-3944

Donna Rutherford
Vice Mayor
(650) 327-7926

Ruben Abrica
(650) 321-4001

A. Peter Evans -
(650) 321-1009

David E. Woods
(650) 853-1907

East Palo Alto 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 the 1st Wednesday
of each month - 6:30p.m. -
City Hall.

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 sub-

scribe 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. If you have questions about an agenda please call the City Clerk at 650.330.6620.

Menlo Park City Council Members

Andrew M. Cohen - **Mayor**
(650)327-5332

Heyward Robinson
Vice Mayor
(650) 330-6631

John C. Boyle
(650)330-6630

Richard Cline
(650) 228-5166

Kelly J. Fergusson
(650) 327-4533

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 February 7, 28 March 7, 14, 28, 2006 in the County Government Center: Hall of Justice & Records 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063. Roll call at 8 a.m. 9 a.m.

Regular & Consent Agenda Items.

State Officials

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

Assembly Member Ira Ruskin

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

Senator Joseph S. Simitian

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

Re-elect Kelly FERGUSSON for Council

Vote for Kelly November 4

Experienced leadership

www.ReElectKelly.org

Paid for by Kelly Fergusson for City Council FPPC #1265917

After School Program Director

East Palo Alto Charter School
1286 Runnymede St.
East Palo Alto, Ca 94303

Tel: 650-614-9100 x13-102
Fax. 650-614-9183

www.mygccandle.com/aromaticexperience

Your ad could go here.

Make it happen.

Call us at

(650) 327-5846, ext. 311

Want the City to fix our streets?

Vote for

Bernardo Huerta for the East Palo Alto City Council

Bernardo Huerta

He has 8 years experience in the City's Public Works and Transportation Commission, focusing on outside the City funds for street improvements.
\$800K for sidewalks by State SRTS funds, on its way.
\$900K for sidewalks by Federal SRTS funds, proposal sent.
\$447K paid annually for pavement repairs by County Measure A.
Local Free Shuttle increase and mobility manager by County CBT Plan.
If elected will fully use these monies on local streets and not hide monies.
Will work to increase these funds from inside and outside the City.

This will increase home values.

Information to ensure a safe dwelling

By Frank Rainone
EPA Today Contributor

The information illegal dwellings in the May/June edition concerning illegal dwellings was very helpful and timely. The purpose of this article is to provide information to help residents and property owners to understand what is required, from the City of East Palo Alto's perspective, and what they can do to ensure provision of a safe, habitable dwelling. Also, information is provided in the article regarding how the violation abatement process works.

CODE CONSIDERATIONS
The housing code establishes minimum requirements for a habitable dwelling unit. It mandates such things as a fully complying kitchen with working cooking appliances. The code requires at least one bathroom, which would contain a bathtub, shower, sink and toilet. The electrical system should be completely safe; covers on all boxes, all lighting, fans, motors, and receptacles should be in working order. The building or unit should have a fully running hot and cold water system. The emergency egress system from all sleeping rooms should be in working order and bars on windows are prohibited. Another major part of a habit-

able unit is proper light and ventilation for all rooms. An occupancy inspection can be made at the owner's request and expense to insure the unit meets the general provisions for a habitable dwelling unit.

DO RESEARCH
A prospective tenant likewise can take precautions before entering into a rental agreement. For instance, if a person is contemplating on renting a portion of a building such as a garage that was converted, the prospective tenant can always visit the Building Services Division under the Community Development Department at 1960 Tate St and review the building file to see if a permit was obtained for the garage conversion. If no permit exists, then the conversion is illegal and in most cases will not allow proper human habitation. In some cases, if the tenant has to move out of the property because of an illegal issue, the owner may be liable for relocation fees.

On the other hand, it is not recommended for a tenant to try and lower monthly rent payments in exchange for allowing existing nuisances or code violations to go unrepaired. In most cases the tenant is unknowing about the seriousness of the existing violations. It is better to have

the property owner make the needed repairs to bring his or her building or property back into compliance then allow violations to exist that may cause harm to life, property or even death.

INSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS
Property owners may want to review their home owner's insurance policy. In most cases, illegal construction may not be covered under the policy thus any damages incurred may be out of pocket cost to the owner.

EXISTING VIOLATIONS
The City has a process in place through its Municipal Code that deals with nuisances or code violations caused either by the property owner or tenant. In either case, there is a process for the City to eradicate such nuisances as outlined in Chapter 8 of the City's Municipal Code. The process usually is started, by giving the owner of the property written notice based on an inspection by either the building inspector, or the code enforcement officer, to abate a nuisance or code violation within an appointed time period. If the nuisance is not abated by the time given, an abatement hearing will then be scheduled and held. If, before the abatement hear-

ing is commenced, the owner takes action to rid the property of the nuisance, the hearing can be canceled, after a site inspection is done by either the building inspector, or the code enforcement officer to verify the nuisance has indeed been removed. This information that the nuisance was removed will be placed in the building file and this case closed. If the owner does not take care of the abatement, and has gone through the abatement process including the hearing and appeals and still ignores the Cities' abatement orders, then the City may take steps to abate the problem with its own resources, completely at the property owner's expense. In some cases, further action such as civil or criminal penalties may be charged against the property owner or other actions taken. There is also an emergency provision built into the Code that allows the City to take

immediate action to remove or contain any nuisance if the situation threatens life limb or property.

In a nutshell, the forgoing is the process the owner of a property is taken through in order to handle issues as they relate to abating nuisances or code violations on their property.

Again, I sincerely hope this information provides some useful guidelines in helping people to understand what is required in providing a habitable dwelling and how the abatement process works. Please feel free to stop by the city's Building Division, located at its One-Stop Center at 1960 Tate Street or call (650) 853-3189 and we will try to answer any questions you may have about these subjects or questions dealing with building codes in general.

Frank Rainone is the Chief Building Official for the City of East Palo Alto

OAKWOOD MARKET

Products & Services

Meat, beverages, vegetables, and other groceries.
Also available Western Union, Orlandi Valuta,
check cashing and PG&E station.



A picture of the deli counter

2106 Oakwood Drive, East Palo Alto, CA 94303
Phone: (650)324-1937

Hours of Operation
Monday - Saturday 8 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Sunday 8 a.m. - 9 p.m.



Goro Mitchell

Endorsed by (partial list):

Bob Hoover	Hon. Pat Foster
Larry Moody	Steve Teu
Hon. Marcelino Lopez	Dr. Omo Sattewhite
Dr. Faye McNair-Knox	Rev. Paul Bains
Stewart Hyland	J.T. Turner
Julio Garcia	Patrick Brock
Rev. John Liotti	Douglas Fort
Dee Uhila	Dr. William Webster
Hon. David Woods	
Cruz Montes-Hyland	

Elect!
Goro Mitchell
For EPA City Council
On November 4th

*Experienced
Innovative
Lifelong Resident*

**Together We Can
Improve EPA!**

650-324-3632
650-814-1644
goro_mitchell@yahoo.com
Donate: www.goromitchell.com

I support Douglas Fort, EPA City Council

Qualifications

Son of Elbert and Dorothy Mitchell (50 year residents)

Masters Degrees in City Planning and Political Science

Elected Trustee, EPA Sanitary District

San Mateo County Commission on Aging

EPA Planning Commission

Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Advisory Committee

EPA, Community-based Transportation Planning Committee

Mapped crime hot spots for EPA Police Department for effective crime reduction

Focus Issues

Safe streets

Accessible housing

Community cultural and recreational spaces

Jobs from development and redevelopment

Full service supermarket

Community owned business

Youth development

Real community input into public decision-making

Endorsed by:



save the date

please save saturday, october 4, 2008 for womenade,
a luncheon celebration of the wonderful work
done by ravenwood family health center.

date: october 4, 2008
time: 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
place: little house
800 middle avenue
menlo park, ca

bring your daughter, your
sister, your friend, your
mother... and come help us
make a difference in
the lives of rfhc patients!

Space is limited. Make sure to RSVP to Kathleen Alexander at (650)330-7418.
Donations are welcomed at the door

Rent crisis continues

continued from page 1

an attempt by Page Mill Properties to evade registering its apartments with the Rent Stabilization Board.

"That's the kind of game they play," said Oberle. "Page Mill has acted so illegally in the past year that every tenant is thinking of a lawsuit. It's that bad. They are banking on the idea that they can break the law and no one will call them on it. The citizens of EPA need to call them on it."

Heller-Ehrman, a private law firm from San Francisco, is representing Oberle and other residents in court.

Lawsuits Filed

Webster said Page Mill Properties filed a lawsuit in July, which challenges the board's claim that the company fails to properly register its property, Webster said.

Stanford University law professor Juliet Brodie, who is Director of Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto, said that Page Mill Properties filed another lawsuit against the Rent Stabilization Board that challenges the board's July 9 modifications to the regulations of the city's rent-stabilization ordinance.

The modifications updated and clarified the language of the regulations, which detail the board's ability to enforce the rent-stabilization ordinance rules, Webster said.

Maximum rent increases

According to the city's rent-stabilization ordinance, the maximum rent increases cannot exceed the Consumer Price Index, set by the federal government at 3.2 percent this year.

However, Page Mill Properties' claims that their average rent increase of 32 percent, although higher than ordinance regulations, is an accumulative increase of past years when tenants experienced no increases, according to the company's spokesman Lance Ignon.

Brodie said that the recent modifications made by the East Palo Alto Rent Stabilization Board make it clear that Page Mill Properties' system of "banking rent increases" is illegal.

In discussing the back and forth lawsuits taking place, Webster said that Page Mill Properties filed yet another lawsuit against the city in July. He said that the latest one claimed that the registration fee increases that landlords are required to pay to the Rent Stabilization Board are too high. The fees recently increased from \$135 to \$240.

Ignon declined to comment on the company's July lawsuits and Page Mill

A Chronology of Recent Events

Since this article was filed: Page Mill has filed several motions in San Mateo municipal court trying to block the city from obtaining the information on rent levels which it has requested and is under the ordinance entitled.

On September 1st, members of the Fair Rent Now Coalition and EPA YUCA marched on Page Mill Properties' Headquarters in East Palo Alto, presenting Mr. Taran with hundreds of demand letters from aggrieved tenants. Hearing of the March, Page Mill closed their office. YUCA and The Fair Rent Now Coalition have promised monthly marches on Page Mill Properties and its investors, until they follow the law.

In early September, the Fair Rent Now Coalition presented over 140 formal petitions to the Rent Stabilization Board. Residents made detailed complaints concerning the rent increases they have experienced under Page Mill, provided extensive documentation and asked for legal relief.

On September 3rd, Superior Court Judge Quentin Kopp ruled that the Rent Stabilization Board had made a procedural error in imposing an increased fee for the next fiscal year past the deadline for doing so.

On September 5th, Superior Court Judge Marie S. Weiner ruled against Page Mill Properties's refusal to provide information regarding the actual rents charged in Page Mill Units. The city prevailed in asserting its right to know the amounts that were being charged so that it could prevent increases from exceeding the annual percentage. Page Mill's claims that this information was withheld in order to "protect tenant privacy" were rebuffed by the Judge Weiner.

Properties' lawyer Christine Griffiths was unavailable for comment.

Webster said Page Mill Properties also increased its tenants' rents twice this year, this past February and this August. The ordinance passed by East Palo Alto's Rent Stabilization Board only permits rent increases annually.

The city filed a Temporary Restraining Order against Page Mill Properties July 31, in order to stop all rent increases during the upcoming court hearings, Brodie said. The city was denied the injunction this week, but the city attorney will probably try again in the future, she added.

"The decent thing for Page Mill to do would be to not impose new rent increases and accept the standing rent rates while these lawsuits play out," Brodie added. "That would be a gesture of good faith."

Brodie suspects that Page Mill Properties will raise the rents this month and repay tenants if they eventually lose in court. She said that many low income families do not possess enough money to wait for repayment after a court decision, which may take years.

It was in December 2007 when the struggle over rent increases between Page Mill Properties and the city escalated.

Ignon said that when Page Mill Properties tried to raise rents in December 2007, the board changed the rules of

legal maximum rent increases, "clarifying" that landlords cannot raise rents beyond the Consumer Price Index value of that year. Ignon said the board did not notify Page Mill Properties of this rule until after their December 2007 increases.

Page Mill sues

Page Mill Properties sued the city in January after the East Palo Alto City Council declared an "emergency rent freeze," in response to the December 2007 raises. Brodie said the city declared the six-month moratorium on rent increases because the company's rent increase exceeded the maximum rates of the rent-stabilization ordinance.

Page Mill Properties made similar arguments about their further rent increases in their July lawsuit against the Rent Stabilization Board.

Webster added that the company only gave tenants a 30 day advance notice for their December 2007 increases, despite the required 60 day advance notice for a rent increase greater than 10 percent.

Ignon said Page Mill Properties tried to negotiate with the city before the company filed the lawsuit, but the city council refused "a sit down."

"The city took an adversarial stance against the company early on," Ignon said. "We're trying to improve the quality of life for EPA residents, so we should have been welcomed to the city with open arms."

The court declared that the city had no legal right to declare an "emergency rent freeze," Ignon said. But, Page Mill Properties did eventually modify its notifications to tenants, allowing a 60 day advance notice.

Also, as a part of the January lawsuit, Page Mill Properties asked the court to approve a declaration that established its rent increases as legal. That court decision is still pending.

Ignon said that although the city thought that the December 2007 rent increases would force "hundreds to thousands" of tenants to leave, only 13 of the 1,650 tenants explicitly notified the company of financial strain after the rent increases were implemented.

"There was no emergency," Ignon said. "Page Mill isn't interested in moving tenants, and we're doing all that we can to ensure that tenants are living in a safe and secure environment."

Despite Page Mill Properties December 2007 rent increases, which were only implemented in February due to a legal battle the previous month between the company and the city, Ignon said the property rents are still either below or at market value.

The Community Legal Services and Heller-Ehrman motioned to join the lawsuit on August 7, but the court denied their motion and suggested they try again the following week, Brodie said. She said that by joining the case, the Law Community Legal Services and Heller-Ehrman will provide the city with more legal resources.

Motion denied

The judge also denied the Community Legal Services' motion Thursday to involve Page Mill Properties tenant Arnold Hart in the case. Brodie said involving an individual tenant would enable him to share his experiences. Oberle experienced a 32 percent rent increase in May. Other residents dealt with an average 10 percent increase in February after the January court decision. They also can expect an average 7.7 percent increase on August 15, Ignon said.

"You get upset coming home because there's always a new notice on your door, which is confusing and vaguely intimidating," Oberle said. "Page Mill is a big, powerful and rich bully, and I just don't like bullies. They make glib statements that 'we've received no complaints' and 'we tried to negotiate,' and that they 'are improving the properties.'"

These are the worst kinds of smirking misrepresentations. Page Mill has received many complaints. Their desire to "negotiate" away the law is understandable, but would have been illegal. So they are pretending like they want to help, when their apparent goal is to harass. They are cackling over the fact that have driven many residents from their homes through a vast misinformation campaign. Every one of their claims can be read two ways. Shame on them."

Improvement to properties

Ignon said Page Mill Properties made an \$11 million investment "commitment" to improve the property, including new roofs and increased security. Oberle, however, said he and his neighbors see no improvements except for external landscaping changes.

Brodie said her offices received 150 complaints from tenants, all of which encourage the Rent Stabilization Board to solve the Page Mill Properties' rent issue in local EPA system instead of in the state courts. She added that these complaints will be addressed in the coming weeks.

"Dealing with Page Mill Properties is like dealing with the Wizard of Oz," Oberle said. "David Taran, [Page Mill Properties' CEO], sits in his palace and looks down on EPA in more ways than one." The local Fair Rent Now Coalition, a group of "concerned" EPA residents, including Oberle and his wife, gathered signatures and held an event on July 26 and August 2. Tenants shared their experiences with the recent rent increases at these events.

The Fair Rent Now Coalition encourages tenants to not be afraid of Page Mill Properties, and it helps residents under. "The main thing I teach my students is that democracy is a combination of people's will and the law," Oberle said. "It has become obvious that the big bully on the block is breaking the law, and someone has to do something. It us up to the people to demand that the law be enforced, and that everyone know the truth. It is a shameful truth. Shame on Mr. Taran, Shame on Mr. Ignon. Shame on CalPERS (the California Public Employees Retirement System) for investing in people who would behave this way. The truth will come out to the people."

Dana Tom is a student at Menlo School in Atherton, CA.

From the Editor's Desk

Crossing paths and paying tribute

On Sunday, September 22, I heard a radio report that almost took my breath away. The reporter said that Nancy Hicks Maynard had died in Southern California of complete organ failure. What a shock.

When I met Nancy Hicks Maynard in New York City several decades ago, she was a reporter for the New York Times. I had just received a masters degree in International Affairs and had worked a few months as a reporter for the New York Post. At the time, I was thinking of applying for a position at the New York Times. One of my colleagues suggested that I speak to Nancy Hicks. So, I called Nancy and introduced myself. She invited me to the New York Times for lunch.

When the appointed day came, Nancy and I met at her job and during our lunch, Nancy was open about her current employment and was very encouraging. In the end, I decided not to pursue the job and focused, instead on another position. I had an opportunity to work at a television station in New York if I attended a summer program at the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University.

In the summer program which was funded by the Ford Foundation and major television stations, I met other minority students from all over the country. For five days a week for nearly three months, I attended sessions to learn the fundamentals of television reporting with Geraldo Rivera, Isabel Duron, Maureen Bunyan, Michelle Clarke, Roger Sims, Gail Christian, Christopher Chow and others who would later launch outstanding media careers throughout the country.

It was a who's who of future media stars and superstars.

But at the time we were all simply students with no idea of what the future would hold. We had all been admitted into the program in the aftermath of the racial disturbances that swept the U.S. following Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's assassination. The government investigation

of the disturbances, known as the Kerner report recommended, among other things, that America needed to counter the racial divisions in the country, by having a more honest portrayal of what was happening in minority communities rather than the persistent articles and reports that focused on the negative events in those communities. Who was better equipped to give those reports than minority journalists?

At the end of the summer, we all dispersed to serve as reporters at various television stations and newspapers throughout the country. In a few years, the summer program for minority journalists ended. But the concept for the program didn't die. It lived on on the West Coast because of the dedication and commitment of two people – Nancy Hicks and Robert Maynard, a couple who enlisted others to work with them to refine the concept of the program. Bob Maynard, who was a successful journalist in his own right, became the publisher of the Oakland Tribune, a position which made him the first and only African American to own a major American newspaper. This talented couple started the Maynard Institute, to train minority journalists. Bob and Nancy are now dead. But the institute that bears their name continues to train journalists



Henrietta J. Burroughs



The demolition of the shopping area on University Avenue and Donohoe Street started at the end of September. The building of University Plaza is about to begin.

Letters in East Palo Alto Today

Knowing can help defeat Proposition 6

Dear Editor
As if being from one of the many low-income communities of color in California isn't tough enough. Everyday we as a people are labeled as "criminals" and "gang affiliated." For more than 20 years, there has been a mass incarceration of Black and Latino people. Even with the reported decrease in violent crime, the state stands motionless with a clairvoyant opportunity to do a sweeping revamp both of the criminal justice system and the fatally flawed "robo-budget". Yet here comes Proposition 6. Like the state of our economy, it gets worst for us. It was authored by two state legislators, George and Sharon Runner. This pair obviously knows nothing about the urban areas that surround their suburbia lives. They put this initiative on the November ballot, aiming to lengthen sentences by a decade on gang members, to expand 40 new crimes and penalties, and to

increase funding to prisons, jails, probation and police. Sadly enough this initiative would also expand circumstances under which juveniles (our kids) as young as 14 could be tried as adults. This initiative is so reminiscent of the March 2000 Prop 21 "Juvenile Justice Initiative", which also targeted youth. Like Prop 21 there would be less funding for schools. The education of our future leaders will be cut and prison funding once again will increase. In addition, it adds \$500 million to build jails for all the prisoners snared under the new provisions, according to Legislative Analyst Office. -Proposition 6 targets Black and Brown youth by requiring anyone 14 years or older charged with a "gang-related" felony, including nonviolent felonies to be tried, as adults! -Targets low-income people by providing money to local housing authorities (Section 8) to conduct intensive background checks of Section 8 recipients, that may result in a loss of housing assistance.

- Targets immigrants by denying bail to undocumented immigrants charged with "violent" or "gang-related crimes." Prop 6 also requires an immediate report of documentation status. Prop 6 would also remove drug/alcohol treatment groups from participating in local juvenile justice policy making. Our prisons are severely overcrowded and not up to constitutional standard. Lack of full knowledge hurts too many people. Voters make it worst by passing tough-on-crime laws that fill up the prisons--- or would, if the prisons weren't already bursting with the disease that fills the hallways of our California State Prisons. Residents of East Palo Alto, this proposition directly affects all of us. We must rise up and defeat Prop 6! The time is now. This matter is urgent! VOTE NO on Proposition 6!

Eliza Smith
East Palo Alto resident
YUCA member

EPA Today's Policies & Principles

In order to better serve the communities of East Palo Alto and Belle Haven, East Palo Alto Today has made the commitment to operate with high professional standards and to adhere to a strict code of ethical conduct. The principles and policies stated herein serve as an agreement with our readers, advertisers and all others

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

We will hold ourselves accountable to common standards of decency, treating our colleagues, news sources, and the public with respect. We are committed to maintaining our independence by avoiding partnerships, investments or business relationships that would compromise the integrity of our news reports

East Palo Alto Today

Publisher: East Palo Alto Center for Community Media
Editor: Henrietta J. Burroughs
EPA Mentorship Director: Julie Patel
East Palo Alto Today is published bimonthly;
Address all letters to: East Palo Alto Today
321 Bell Street, East Palo Alto, CA 94303
(650)327-5846, ext 311 (phone)
(Fax) (650)327-4430
epatoday@aol.com; epamedia.org and epatoday.org

continued on page 12

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.

Breathe Deep East Palo Alto

In memory of Friolan Chan-Liongco, a man who cleaned the air with his courage

by Raj Jayadev

Breathe deep East Palo Alto. For Froilan Chan-Liongco, breathe deep. The toxics that may have once filled your lungs -- the pollutants from the chemical waste plant that threatened cancer, asthma and birth defects -- are no longer. Friolan Chan-Liongco, who passed away last week due to a heart attack, cleaned the air for you. A former employee of the high tech toxic waste plant named Romic, Chan-Liongco stood up to the company who had for decades sacrificed East Palo Alto community members health in its pursuit

of profit. Two years ago, at the age of 64, he was burned, literally, at Romic in a chemical explosion that lead to an 11-day hospital stay, chronic pain and unemployment. But Froilan refused to be bought, silent, or defeated and filed grievances with the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration. His filing, as it turned out, was the tipping point that lead to the demise of Romic. There had been decades of community organizing against Romic, imploring public health and safety agencies to hold the rene-gade company to standard. Friolan's case made the chorus of calls by the community

to shut down Romic undeniable, his was the voice they needed all along. They have since shut down Romic, and East Palo Alto is cleaning the land of whatever contaminants lay hidden its soil. From now on, there is generations that may grow up not knowing what dangers once seeped, leaked and exploded there. They may never know of Friolan, a Filipino immigrant who was a David to a modern day Goliath, a multi-million dollar company backed by the most powerful industry known in the history of the world. And the old orthodoxy of organizing that once existed in utter isolation, if not opposition of

each other -- worker organizing inside the plant gates, community organizing outside -- was debunked by Friolan's gesture by reaching out to East Palo Alto, and the residents receiving him as one of their own. That relationship, that synergy that shut down Romic, was not just strategic, it was caring, personal, sincere. It is why at Friolan Chan-Liongco's viewing last week, amongst his immediate family and friends, three rows were filled with East Palo Alto youth from Youth United for Community Action(YUCA). They came because their common cause also made them family. And sleeping

peacefully through the viewing ceremony was baby Breathe Deep Kierce, hardly a month old, in her mother Annie's arms. Annie, the 24-year-old director of YUCA, fought Romic since she was a fourteen-year-old. Baby Keirce will have never met Froilan, but his life protected hers, saved her from perils that previous generations had to bare. Take a deep breath East Palo Alto, and honor Froilan Chan-Liong. Raj Jayadev is the editor of Silicon Valley Debug. The magazine's website is: <http://www.siliconvalleydebug.com>

Point, click, get healthy

By Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson
EPA Today Contributor

A quiet house is unusual when you have children or grandchildren. Yet, adults in our County and Country roam the house to an awkward silence. The reason? Children and grandchildren are found sitting at the computer surfing the internet.

Unfortunately, all that clicking burns few calories and contributes to America's childhood obesity epidemic. I'm not going to counsel you to take away that computer, but San Mateo County unveiled a new tool that may prove the old saying, "if you can't beat them, join them." Last week, San Mateo County unveiled a web site dedicated to engaging youth

in an effort to combat childhood obesity. www.yspacesmc.com provides kids of all ages with tools and information to build healthier bodies, homes, and communities. Specifically, the web site provides great information and links that show our youth how to eat healthy, exercise, deal with stress, and get involved in our communities. Also, there

are great videos made for youth by youth. Overall, the site is a great lifetime learning tool, and I urge everyone to visit www.yspacesmc.com with the entire family. Once you get the kids outside exercising, adults should visit www.getthehealthysmc.org. www.getthehealthysmc.org contains useful information for parents, healthcare pro-

fessionals, educators, activity directors and others. The site gives advice on ways to work with schools to provide healthy alternatives and enhance opportunities for physical activity. Most importantly, parents will find great recipes, information on healthy eating and active living in Spanish, Tongan, Samoan and other lan

continued on page 13

Community Viewpoints

Have you decided who you are voting for? Why?

Opiniones de la Comunidad

As decidido por quien vas aj votar? y porque?



Stephanie Velednitsky

Barack Obama
"Im voting for him because he seems to have a better understanding of people. McCain seems to be too wealthy to understand the average citizen and Obama seems like a better guy."



Joe and Audrey Guillory

Barack Obama
"I like his views. I think America is ready for a change and I think he'll be a good spokesperson for America."



Navi Kaur

Barack Obama
"I'm voting for Obama because I want a Democrat and he seems OK. He'll do better than a Republican in the office."



Two Palo Alto Residents

Barack Obama
"We're voting for Barack Obama because he has better economic policies and wants to unify people. He chose a good vice president, and gives the country hope. He's smart and is against the Iraq war."



Sharon Kelly

Barack Obama
"I think he's a better communicator and gives better support for our foreign relations."

"voy aj votar por él porque él parece tener una mejor comprensión de la gente. McCain parece ser demasiado rico para entender el ciudadano medio y Obama me parece una buena persona."

"Me gusta sus ideas.Y creo que los Estados Unidos esta listo para un cambio, y pienso que va a ser un buen presidente."

"Estoy votando por Obama porque quiero un demócrata.Y creo que va aj ser mejor que un republicano el la offecina."

"Estamos votando a favor de Barrack Obama porque él tiene una mejor política económica y quiere unificar aj la jente. Aj escojido un buen vicepresidente, y le da el país esperanza. Es inteligente y está en contra de la guerra de Irak."

"Pienso que esmejor comunicador y apoya mejor a las relaciones exteriores."

Lifecycles

Welcoming a new executive director

By David Tenisi

EPA Today Intern

Before becoming the Executive Director of the Lewis and Joan Platt East Palo Alto Family YMCA, Robert Hughes was the associate executive director at the Palo Alto Family YMCA.

In his new position, Hughes said that he looks forward to leading the East Palo Alto YMCA in fulfilling its role as a vital and important piece of



Robert Hughes

the fabric of the East Palo Alto community.

This would be done by creat-

ing, enhancing and supporting programs that contribute to the overall wellness of the city's residents.

After receiving his bachelor's degree from San Francisco State and his master's degree from Yale University in Health Science/Education, Hughes worked in the healthcare field for eighteen years before transitioning into the nonprofit, community service realm.

When asked what he thought when he was offered

his current position, Hughes responded, "My thoughts on my new position centered on how to implement the best practices I had learned from my previous experiences to best support the community."

Hughes is, obviously, a man with a vision for the community. When he was asked what advice he would give to someone trying to pursue a dream, without any idea of where to start and without the support of others, he replied, "Realizing worthwhile goals is

a marathon not a sprint and nothing worth having is easily attained.

"Very few people achieve success independently. There is always some sort of support from family members, teachers, mentors or from circles of friends.

"The key is to identify those willing to assist and guide you and demonstrate your commitment to being successful."

David Tenisi was a summer intern for the East Palo Alto Today Newspaper.

Improving student performances

After a successful single-school pilot program last year at Menlo Atherton High School, there are now four schools with the Built To Last Collaborative to improve the drop out rate by tutoring students who need the extra assistance.

Carlmont, Woodside, and Sequoia are working with the Built To Last Collaborative..

At the close of the 2007-2008 school year the Spring Recruitment Committee wrapped up it's Academic Coach recruitment effort and expect to



Photo courtesy of Stacey Nitta, BTLC Program Administrator

The above picture is a group picture of the Built To Last C Board Members and 08-09 Academic Coaches that was taken during academic coaches training session which was held at the Sequoia Union High School District offices. First row from left to right: Junior Lolohea, Henry Guttenbeil, Valentino Ramirez, Wanda Smith, Ed Vaughan, JoAn Vaughan, Ruth Cossey. Second row: Kathy Hebert, Maria Chipres, Hugo Rodriguez, Cory Ashford, Alberto Navarrete, Kristina Grandlund-Moyer, Gail Ortega, Larry Moody, Sharifa Wilson, Claudine Luckey, Patty Reyna, Debbie Moore Washington and top row: Pastor Bennett, Taylor Quijana, Alex Tucker, Les DeWitt, Miguel Melendez, Kava Tulua, Ellen Wright, Leif Erickson, Eric Agudelo, Kofi Acquah-Arhin, Fernando Barraza, John Wellbrock, Jose Montesinos, and Lauren Tannous.

train and fill its remaining slots for coaches. The Committee included: Debbie Moore Washington, Assistant Superintendent SUHSD, Joni Gordon, Vice Principal Carlmont HS, Fred Kessler, Vice Principal Menlo Atherton HS, Jacqueline Munchiando-Boyd, Teacher Sequoia HS, Ruben Abrica, 07/08, Site Supervisor BTLC and Alisha Fitzhugh, 07/08 Site Supervisor BTLC

Remembering Lady Wilma Johnson

Last May, the City of East Palo Alto issued a proclamation honoring Wilma Johnson as "one of many unsung heroes of East Palo Alto." The city proclamation said, "Her consistent work on behalf of her family, her church and her community stands as an example of the best of the City of East Palo Alto. Her bright smile was her trademark and it always just made each person feel better.

Therefore it is highly resolved that, in that Wilma Marie Johnson was an outstanding member of this community, we commemorate the life of Wilma M. Johnson and recognized her for her hard work, consistent caring and faithful belief in the City of East Palo Alto;

And that Wednesday, May 28, 2008 is declared "Wilma Marie Johnson Day" in the City of East Palo Alto."

Her daughter Natasha Bob,



Lady Wilma Johnson

submitted this letter as an example of the high esteem in which her mother was held. The letter was written October 1, 1988 to the Chief of Dietic Services. and it stated:

Dear Sir:

There seems to be a policy at the VA that members of the staff who exemplify what the VA stands for be recognized for their outstanding service.

The men of the specialized treatment program for P.T.S.D. [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder] on the Viet Nam Vets Unit would like to ask that you recognize one such employee.

Mrs. Wilma Johnson of the food service department who serves us our meals most days of the week, has brought to her job a love and kindness to veterans and others that not only is nice to see but is of great importance for personal recovery. Most veterans of our era were treated rudely by our countrymen upon our return. Now, some 20 years later, we are loved and offered help for our service to our country.

It is vividly clear that people like Wilma serve a greater purpose than serve us our meals. She shares with us a love of life and a true compassion for peace and harmony on a sometimes mixed up planet. Some of our hope for happiness is a direct result of having had our lives touched by people such as Mrs. Johnson. Sincerely,

The Viet Nam Vets

Affordable financial services
to help you reach your goals



Servicios financieros accesibles
para ayudarle a alcanzar sus metas

- FREE Checking
- FREE Bill Pay
- FREE Co-op ATM Access
- FREE 24 hr. Service Line
- Savings Accounts
- Money Transfers

- Cuenta de Cheques GRATIS
- Pago de Cuentas GRATIS
- Acceso a Cajeros Automáticos de la red Co-op GRATIS
- Línea de Servicio las 24hr GRATIS
- Cuentas de Ahorro
- Envíos de Dinero

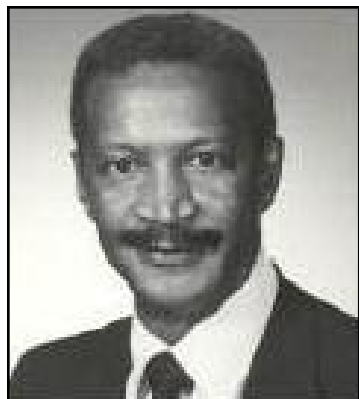
Phone: 650.891.9141
1835 Bay Rd, Suite B
East Palo Alto, CA 94309
www.mycbtci.com

COMMUNITY TRUST
CREDIT UNION

Lifecycles

Charles Jones

A friend of the East Palo Alto Community



Charles A. Jones

As a child, Charles Jones had a dream. It was his desire to serve families during one of the most difficult periods of their lives. After relocating to California from Louisiana, Jones' dream was to build a mortuary and provide quality service to the residents of East Palo Alto and the surrounding communities.

Charles Jones received his State Board of Directors and Embalmers License in 1976. He was awarded his embalmers certificate from the Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers. Jones Mortuary opened for business in March 1976.

Upon opening, Jones developed a policy to help couples who lost their young

babies. He has continued that policy and he currently provides complete funeral services, free of charge, for babies less than one month old.

Through his compassionate and caring nature, he has helped many families with services that were dignified, yet affordable.

Because of his kind and giving spirit, he has received many awards for his community-his involvement and his support in promoting educational literacy among youth. Some of the awards he has received include:

1976 - East Palo Alto awarded a "Resolution of Appreciation."

1982 - Community Service Award from Stanford University Hospital

-San Jose Mercury News award for promoting the education of children

- Lucille Salter Packard Children's Hospital for his gifts of time, energy and resources

-Starlight Baptist Church "Father, Son, Big Brother Community Service Award"

1991 - Awarded Life Membership in the NAACP

1992 - Recognized by the City of EPA for his faithful and unselfish service to its people

1993 - Inducted into NAACP Hall of Fame for outstanding support and community service

Certificate of "Special Congressional Recognition" from Congresswoman Anna G. Esch.

1995 - Jones was accepted for admission into the "National Select Morticians Association" and the "National Funeral Director's Association".

1995 - "South Bay African American Image Award" in "Commerce"

1995 - "Corporate Philanthropy Award" in the small business category by the United Way

1997 - Humanitarian award for distinguished service to the community by the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center.

-100 Black Men of Silicon Valley for his dedication and committed service to the community.

In 2007, Jones was recognized by the Mid Coastal California Pre-Natal Outreach Program and received a 2007 Outstanding Service Award for providing newborn loss assistance to families served by Stanford Hospital and Lucille Packard Children's

Hospital.

In March of this year, Jones was recognized by the San Mateo County Historical Association as one of the "Outstanding African Americans in San Mateo County".

Other organizations honoring him with certificates of appreciation and community service awards for support, leadership, dedication and sensitivity are the Gertrude Wilks Academy, numerous schools in the Ravenswood Unified School District, St. Mark AME Zion Church, Saint John Baptist Church, East Palo Alto Seventh Day Adventist Church, Faith

Baptist Church, the National Child Safety Council, the California Baptist State Convention, the Al Baqi Islamic Center, Martin Luther King, Jr. the Masonic Lodge, Stanford Hospital Family and the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Epsilon Mu Chapter among others.

On May 31, 2008 the RHSA, Inc. honored Charles A. Jones with a plaque of appreciation for his many years of contributing to its scholarship fund which has made a significant impact on the lives of East Palo Alto students.



Charles A. Jones works with his daughter, Sandra Jones Spencer, at Jones Mortuary Incorporated in East Palo Alto.

Summer activities that make a difference

Testing the elements

Students in the U.C Sea Grant Extension program which took place at College Track this summer discovered that East Palo Alto's water is among some of the best in the region.

The discovery about the water was made during a water testing experiment held on the last day of the program.

Visiting parents and guests, including State Assembly Member Ira Ruskin, were shown a mural the students painted and viewed yoga and martial arts displays during the students afternoon presentations.

The students also displayed their experiments with air, earth and fire.

The Sea Grant Extension Program, is an educational



Moniqueka Jackson, Alexia Segura and Rosa Hernandez

outreach program sponsored by the University California's Agriculture and Natural Resources Department. The program focuses on ocean and bay issues and is designed to show students how these issues affect their lives. It also provides the students with information about career opportunities in marine science.

Forty five students from East Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Redwood City participated in the program

Seeing how things work

When you're a fourth or fifth grader taking a class called "How Things Work," it becomes an added experience to actually take a trip to see how things work.

Fourth and fifth grade pupils enrolled in the Bay-shore Christian Ministries' summer program called SAIL got a chance to do just that: see how things work.

Since the class was studying the history of the printing press and paper, one of their teachers got the bright idea to have them take a field trip to see how and where newspapers are printed. Thanks

to the management and the staff at the Southwest Offset Print shop in Menlo Park, the fourth and fifth grade students had the opportunity to see the whole print process behind the actual production of newspapers.

For Pamela Myers, one of the teachers in the program, the field trip was a meaningful experience for the students. "Going on the field trip



Brianna Munoz, Dania Stamper, Aileen Sanchez, Paco Agvilar, Ashley Jack, Onaje Julian, Alejandro Llanes Daniel Martinez study newspapers during their class.



Fourth and fifth graders hear Lloyd Jones during their tour of the Southwest Offset Printing Company in Menlo Park.

to an actual printing press definitely helped them get a better idea of what they were learning in class," she said.

What did the students think of the trip? Alejandro Llanes said, "It was cool. We got to take a lot of newspapers home."

The field trip included eleven students and three chaperones. "The tour really helped the kids grasp all the various ideas we were discussing," Myers said.

Voting rights

continued from page 1

"Laws that directly affect inmates will be decided this November, so please share this information and encourage them to vote," Evans told the women.

"Wait," one woman asked, slowing her pace. "You mean they can vote while they're in jail?"

"Yes they can," said Evans. "It's the law."

While there is a law that allows inmates to vote, it is a law that is hardly clear. After years of disagreement and legal wrangling, authorities at every level still disagree about the voting rights of California's more than 82,000 jail inmates - most of whom are Black or Latino, and have not been convicted of any crime. Less than three months before one of the most historic elections in national history, California is still without a clearly established policy on jail inmate voting - and, depending on whom you ask, the interpretation of "the law" varies.

Ten California counties hold about 70 percent of the state's jail inmates. Calls to the registrars of voters in each of these counties yielded a variety of opinions on whether or not those inmates can vote. Representatives from four counties, including San Diego and Alameda, stated that inmates cannot vote under any circumstances; four other counties, including Fresno and Sacramento, said inmates with felony convictions were disenfranchised; Orange County's Registrar's office said that jail inmates are eligible to vote as long as they are citizens; and in Los Angeles County-- which holds the nation's largest jail population of 19,000-- a registrar employee admitted to not knowing what voting rights jail inmates held, and suggested calling Secretary of State Deborah Bowen.

"The law is the same in all of California. Registrars are supposed to be the authority and people are going to trust what they tell them. Their answers shouldn't vary by where they are, or who picks up the phone," said Dorsey Nunn, co-director of All of Us or None and its parent organization, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children.

However, in spite of Nunn's definitive statement about the voting rights of inmates, uncertainty has surrounded this issue for years.

In June 2004, San Francisco non-profit Legal Services for Prisoners with Children asked then-Secretary of State Kevin Shelley to clarify the voting rights of those in jail and on probation, and learned that both groups were eligible to vote. In November 2005, new Attorney General Bill Lockyer officially denounced Shelley's interpretation, and declared that those on probation and in jail for a felony are legally disenfranchised. All of Us or None, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and several other organizations took the debate to court. In December 2006 the California Court of Appeals Court sided with the activists, ordering the Secretary of State to inform Election Officials that "the only persons disqualified from voting are those who have been imprisoned in state prison, or who are on parole as a result of the conviction of a felony."

Following the 2006 decision, the Secretary of State's office complied by informing county registrars that only those "in prison or on parole for a felony" were ineligible to vote - but did not fully explain what that meant for those held in jail, creating a network of state elections officials who disagree amongst themselves.

According to the Secretary of State's lawyers, individuals serving a jail sentence following a felony conviction cannot vote, while those in jail for a misdemeanor or awaiting trial can. Organizations like the ACLU, All of Us or None and Berkeley-based Voting Rights for All, and even the county of San Francisco, take a different stance, arguing that the 2006 Court of Appeals Court decision enfranchises even those jail inmates who have a felony conviction.

The confusion may ultimately boil down to the precise meaning of "a felony sentence." According to Peter Sheehan, an attorney with the Social Justice Law Project who served as co-counsel in the 2006 appeals case, the decision holds that someone sentenced to jail for a felony is incarcerated as a condition of felony probation, and not technically serving "a felony sentence." That makes the actual number of disenfranchised jail inmates very small. Or it would, if the average citizen-- or public official-- understood that distinction. "If the Secretary of State is simply saying people in jail for a felony cannot vote, that's a misrepresentation unless they follow up with a detailed explanation of the distinction between felony probation and a felony sentence," Sheehan said.

Ultimately, most jail inmates' rights do not hinge on the outcome of that particular disagreement. According to state data, more than two out of three California jail inmates have not yet been convicted of any crime and would qualify as potential voters even under the Secretary of State's own reading of the law -- though four of the ten county registrars polled believed all jail inmates were ineligible to vote. "If most people in jail haven't been convicted, the state already agrees that most people in jail can vote," said Evans. "So why isn't there some kind of institutionalized procedure to make that easier and to make that known?"

According to a legal representative from the Secretary of State's office, the state is only required to inform counties of the law, while each county registrar is responsible for ensuring that employees correctly follow it. Sheehan believes the state has a duty to do more. "Let's say we were talking about women or Catholics or Blacks, instead of people in jail," he said. "We all know these groups can vote under the law. If some counties wouldn't let them, we'd expect the state to take action, whether it involved making phone calls or holding

continued on page 11

Stealing a nation

continued from page 11

voting machines that consistently switched votes for the same one candidate to the other, systematic ballot destruction, and investigative reporters sidelined when attempting to report on such irregularities.

Is it possible, this film asks, that an election can actually be stolen, not with guns or tanks, but vote by vote? If so, what does this mean for our democracy, or lack thereof? And most importantly, if we have in fact been misled in the past, is there any good reason that it wouldn't happen again this coming November?

Initial reactions to this film can easily take the form of despondency and even resentment. With only a month left until the election, how could we possibly begin to address the enormity of electoral insecurity? Why even bother to make that trek to the polls if, in fact, the stickers we wear to proudly announce that we voted on November 4th really deserve a question mark on the end? Yet it is

precisely this type of passivity that has allowed corruption to slip by the wayside in the past.

The reality of it is that each and every one of us gets to decide whether history is doomed to repeat itself. By showing up at the polls in higher numbers than ever before, we demonstrate that we DO want to have a say in the way this country is run and in the direction of its future.

By facing the ugly truth of fraud and misconduct in elections, we'll know how to recognize it if it happens again. Empowering ourselves with awareness of the shadowy side behind the bright and shiny smiles of politics, the media, and our status as the most powerful nation in the world is the surest route to action when the stories don't match up, when our intuition tells us something has gone terribly wrong.

So go and read the newspapers, but read many. Watch the opin-

ions on TV but then formulate your own.

Show up at the polls and tell the world that you do in fact care who will become the next face of the American people. And be prepared to refuse a spoon fed truth should it smell and taste of foul play.

For more information on "Stealing America: Vote by Vote", visit www.stealingamerica-movie.org or call 650-568-4340.

Jessica Weiss is a writer, teacher, and outreach correspondent for progressive organizations and movements in the Bay Area including Concentric Media.

For questions about the film and other related issues, please contact her at jess.concentric@gmail.com.



Goro Mitchell

Endorsado por (lista parcial):

Marcellino Lopez	Pat Foster
Larry Moody	Dr. Omo Satterwhite
David Woods	Rev. Paul Bains
Dr. Faye McNair-Knox	J.T. Turner
Stewart Hyland	William Webster
Julio Garcia	Steve Teu
Rev. John Liotti	Bob Hoover
Patrick Brock	Dr. John Chavez
Cruz Montes	

Vote por Goro Mitchell

Para Concejal de la Ciudad de East Palo Alto

El 4 de Noviembre

Experimentado Innovador

Resident del Distrito por Muchos Años

Juntos Podemos Mejorar a East Palo Alto!

650-814-1644
Goro_mitchell@yahoo.com
[Donate: goromitchell.com](http://Donate.goromitchell.com)

Credenciales	Prioridades
Hijo de Elbert y Dorothy Mitchell (residentes de EPA por 50 años)	Seguridad en las calles
Títulos de Masters en Planeamiento Urbano y Ciencias Políticas	Acceso a la Vivienda
Servicio a la Comunidad: Elegido al Distrito Sanitario de EPA	Espacios para actividades culturales y de recreación para la comunidad
Consejero de San Mateo Comisión de Apoyo a los Ancianos	Empleos para fomentar el desarrollo económico
Comisión de Planeamiento de EPA	Un supermercado de todo servicio
Comisión Metropolitana de Transporte, Comité Asesor	Negocios con propietarios de la comunidad
EPA, Comité Comunitario de Planeamiento del Transporte	Desarrollo de la juventud
Complió un mapa de los lugares con mayor actividad criminal para el Departamento de Policía de EPA para llevar a cabo una reducción efectiva del crimen.	Auténtica contribución de la comunidad al proceso de decisión pública
	Endorsado por:



Stealing a nation vote by vote

By Jessica Weiss
EPA Today Contributor

As one of history's most paramount presidential elections draws near, questions weigh heavy on voters' minds. Which candidate possesses the right combination of experience, intellectual competency, nonpartisan integrity, and trustworthiness to lead this country out of an increasingly bleak economic and environmental future?

Who will provide the right solution to the seemingly endless mess in the Middle East?

How do McCain and Obama fundamentally differ on issues like health care, energy, foreign policy, taxes, and how can we as voters see between the political rhetoric lines to understand which candidate will not only promote, but

stand behind issues most important to us?

Fears of central command falling into the hands of another botched and corrupt regime mean that all eyes are on the debates, the polls, and the campaign mudslinging, breath abated, waiting perhaps for a golden moment of breakthrough when one candidate will rise up and prove himself to be exactly what this country needs right now.

Yet there is another aspect to the upcoming election that is more frightening than one's preferences being severely disappointed. This particular aspect is perhaps the most decisive one, yet it cares nothing for debate victories or poll leads.

It says nothing about the length of McCain's resume or Obama's quick-witted, articulate presence. It doesn't even



Jessica Weiss

give a hoot about who will swing at the last minute. What we're talking about here is an unimaginable threat to our democracy, one that, if founded, could mean the very essence of freedom in America has been taken from our hands; our right to not only vote, but to actually have our vote count in the selection of the next President of the United States of America.

The last two presidential elections came down to such a narrow margin of victory, it

was almost (and still is, in many minds) too close to call. Many eyebrows were raised at hazy messages coming from the media about ballot miscounts, voters standing in line for hours upon hours to cast their ballots, and odd stories from pollworkers who noticed glitches and technical breakdowns in electronic voting machines. It felt to many like one of those horror movies, where the victim can sense an intruder in the house and looks and looks to find his whereabouts, but can't seem to pin down his location until it's too late. The results of the 2000 and 2004 elections provided many with this same sense of shadowy business conducted just out of sight, but the few who even dared to discuss it unfortunately had little more as evidence than a few odd

stories and a bad feeling in their gut.

That's all changed now with the release of a new documentary film, "Stealing America: Vote by Vote." Released on DVD and in screenings across the country this summer, this film shows behind the scenes perspectives on election results since 1996 and sheds light on the mysterious mismatch between votes cast and the votes that were actually counted. "Stealing America" is a frightening revelation of anomalies at every level of the electoral process, from basic voter harassment to senior level complicity on glaring omissions of raw exit poll data. It highlights and weaves together instances of uncounted ballots, technical glitches in electronic

continued on page 10

Local Rapper Makes Good Deal

By Maria Olivares
EPA Today Intern

This September, Kontac aka Stephen Ashford signed a deal with SMC/ Fontana a company that works with over 70 artists to distribute their music. Kontac is a Physical Education teacher at the East Palo Alto Charter School, and he is also a local rapper.

In his music, Kontac is trying to motivate kids to stay in



Kontac aka Stephen Ashford school. He made a song with Bay Area rappers to show that rap isn't just about money, cars, drugs, women, etc. One day a student pointed out to him that his music

had curse words just like the other rappers. He got inspired by that, and now his songs don't have any curse words or talk about bad things.

Kontac and the producers created a video at the East Palo Alto Charter School to motivate the students about the advantages about being in school. They are using the money from the video "Stay in School" and their disc to send to the schools in the Bay Area.

Kontac's main purpose with the idea of creating a disc with the song "Stay in School" and a video was to get more kids to not drop out. He used kids in the video, and the kids got to interact with the rappers. The rappers involved were E-40, Mugzi, Keak Da Sneak, Battle Locco, Dem Hoodstarz, San Quinn, Mac & A.K., the Jacka, Cellski, and Erase-E.

The radio stations Wild 94.9 and 106 Kmel have the song "Stay in School" in their

song rotation. In his promotional material, Kontac said that he had received attention from television shows, Barack Obama, and The U.S Department of Education. To see the video he made at the East Palo Alto Charter School, go to www.myspace.com/beats-bythebay and you tube.

Maria Olivares is a sophomore at East Palo Alto Academy High School.

Voting rights for inmates

continued from page 10

a training. This should be no different."

But it is different. "The misinformation is widespread and goes all the way to the top," said the Co-chair of Voting Rights for All Judy Gerther, who coordinated volunteers to register voters outside of Oakland's county courthouse in 2004. "There were judges we ran into, then, who read our materials on eligibility and said, 'We don't believe you.' This has been the law since 1973, but it's never been publicized or clarified in layperson's language. Lawyers don't know, judges don't know."

Along with this month's Day of Action, grassroots efforts to raise awareness have included a Northern California ACLU billboard campaign and All of Us or None lobbying state officials for better education and enforcement. As in 2004, Voting Rights for All plans to conduct outreach outside several Bay Area courthouses in mid-September. All of Us or None

and the ACLU have sought a meeting with Secretary of State Deborah Bowen for several months, peaking in April when All of Us or None led a protest at the State Capitol. That meeting hasn't happened.

When it comes to inmate voting, jail facilities are no more regulated than county registrars. Don Allen of California's Correctional Standards Authority, the agency responsible for designing state jail and prison policies, admits there are no mandated procedures for providing inmates access to voting information. "We have a broad rule that jails need to have some kind of policy to accommodate inmates' rights to vote," said Allen. "The onus is on the county to design procedures that fulfill that obligation. Some may do the minimum and some may do more."

For some, that minimum is far too low. "Many individuals in jail have no reason to think they can vote, and little chance of receiving accurate



Two women discuss the voting rights of inmates.

information if they ask," said Kathy Kahn, a retired defense attorney and Voting Rights for All co-Chair. "Until we can assure accurate information is available, we don't know how many inmates don't want to vote, and how many are being incorrectly told they can't."

"Even if the law says inmates can vote, they're in jail. They've got bigger problems and priorities," said Michael Robinson, an Alameda resident perplexed by the campaign to secure inmates rights he's not sure they want. "My nephew talks to me about all kinds of stuff when I go see him in jail, but

he's never asked me to help him sign up to vote."

Activists argue that this is not a question of whether or not inmates want to vote, or who they will vote for. "I don't think most people in jail understand the power of their voting. They often think voting won't change anything," said All of Us or None member Elder Freeman. A former Black Panther and state prisoner, Freeman fears many in jail today don't know what voting can accomplish. "Getting them the vote is just the first step," he said. "We need to teach them it's not all about federal elections. State and local elections determine policies in the communities where they live."

Though All of Us or None has sought support for this issue from the state Democratic Party with little success, Nunn emphasizes that defending the voting rights of those in jail is about civil rights, not partisanship.

"Nobody I try to register ever says, 'Oh, I can't vote

because I'm Black," said Nunn, also a former prisoner. "But I get plenty of Black and Brown people who falsely believe they can't vote because they're on probation or have a felony conviction. I know there are plenty of Black and Brown people who are told and believe they can't vote because they're in jail. So the effect is the same."

Whether the question of inmate voting rights will be settled with a conference or require further legal action, organizers and advocates are determined not to see another election pass without a statewide policy protecting incarcerated voters' rights under the law.

"Even with the law on our side, we are being disenfranchised by misinformation," said Nunn. "That is a blow to our communities and to our democracy."

Jennifer Rae Taylor is a journalist and law student originally from Southern California. She can be reached at jraetay@gmail.com.

Brunch leads to awards

At its August brunch, the Mothers for Equal Education gave five hundred dollar scholarship awards and one thousand dollar scholarship awards to 24 local college bound recipients.

The following students seen in the picture to the right were scholarship award recipients. They are:



Alvaro Alvarez- Foothill College
Jammo Amanuel - DeAnza College, Cupertino
Pavlova J. Bigsby- S.J. City College
Shaheerah Bradshaw - CA State Univ., East Bay
Miriam Cruz - Foothill College
Dorian Dawson-Everest College, Hayward, CA
Ashley Donnell - Foothill College
Chiqueena Lee - Chapel Hill University/Law Department
Porchea `Fort- CA State Univ., North Ridge
Le`Creasha Grigsby - Johnson C. Smith University
Jessica Hawkins - Foothill College

Jason Hinckson - Loyola Marymount University
Anthony M. Jones - DeVry University, Fremont
Sysha N. Lewis - Hilltop Beauty School, Daly City
Raymond McElroy - Santa Monica College
Chelsea McLaughlin - Fordham University/Lincoln Center
Lori Patton - Foothill College
Michelle Phinizee - Foothill College
Danny Sparks - California State University, East Bay
Nicholas Spears - San Jose State University
Nigel Spears - San Jose State University

Rodney Josh Thomas - Golden State Baptist College
Justin Tigner - Paine College, Augusta, GA
Kenitha William-Turner - San Jose State University
Gertrude Wilks is the founder and president of Mothers for Equal Education and serves on the organization's board with the following members: David Rages, vice president; Naja Hendrix, secretary; Clarene Watts, treasurer; board members Inez Taylor and Sandra T. Webster and Martha Hanks, a consultant.

Local INCH scholarship winners

By David Tenisi
EPA Today Intern

The Interfaith Network for Community Help (INCH) is a nonprofit organization that has operated since 1983. Its mission is to link the needs of the community with the resources that it obtains.

For the past 17 years, INCH has awarded \$1,000 scholarships to

worthy students. If a scholarship was not claimed in the fall of 2007 or later, then the scholarship award increased to \$2,500 due to the increased cost of education and increasing contributions. INCH scholarships are awarded to qualified eighth graders who attend schools in the Ravenswood City School District. Over 100 INCH

scholars have graduated from high school and entered college. When they are still in high school, scholarship recipients are provided a mentor who oversees their high school career. Students apply for the scholarship in the spring of their eighth grade. If selected for the award, students only receive the actual scholarship when they complete

high school and enroll in college, where the scholarship is used during their freshman year. Lester Ezrati, Senior Vice President Director, Tax of Hewlett-Packard Company in Palo Alto said, "We are also trying to raise funds to extend the scholarship to cover each scholars sophomore year as well."

INCH raises its scholarship money through

various congregations, through an annual spring gospel festival, and through individual contributions. This year's recipients are Marco Ayala and Jose Cruz from Beechwood; Cassandra Morales and Victor Alvarez from Belle Haven; Jessica Torres-Vasquez and Camry Davenport from East Palo Alto Charter

School; Silvia Vasquez and Wendy Vargas from Eastside College Preparatory School; Joanna Maldonado from James Flood, and Laura Ambriz-Magana from San Francisco 49ers Academy.

For more information, see INCH on the web at: <http://www.inch-elp.org/>

David Tenisi was a summer intern at East Palo Alto Today.



Joanna Maldonado

Joanna Maldonado will be a freshman at Carlmont High School in the fall.

She wants to major in psychology with the hope that she can one day help children who have lost their parents as she had at the age of seven.



Victoria Vargas

Victoria Vargas will be a senior at Eastside College Preparatory School in the fall. She wants to give back to the Eastside and East Palo Alto communities in some way.

"I was one of few students in my graduating class that showed an interest in wanting to do well in school."



Laura Nunez

Laura Nunez will be a sophomore at Stanford University in the fall. She is currently working at College Track and wants to help the youth in East Palo Alto after college. When asked why she thinks she was chosen, Laura replied "I have no idea. I wasn't the smartest, but I guess maybe they saw that I had potential."



Luis Torres

Luis Torres will be a junior at MIT in the fall. Sparked by his passion for his family, his Mexican heritage, and the City of East Palo Alto, he is a role model to the youth that wish to take a similar route. Currently majoring in Nuclear Engineering, he wants to work for an energy company to help alleviate the energy crisis in the world.



Francisco Tamayo

Francisco Tamayo will be a senior at Eastside College Preparatory School in the fall. He plans to major in Mechanical Engineering and wants to help others in his community succeed. "The INCH Scholarship Foundation does not award scholarships only to those students who have straight A's or are great athletes, but if you show that you are trying your best, and that your goal is to further your education, then they will consider you."



Silvia Vasquez

Silvia Vasquez will be a freshman at Eastside College Preparatory School in the fall. She wants to major in Engineering and plans on giving back to her parents for all their support. "I just really want to live my own life for who I am and not for what others want me to be. I've chosen my own way to make my family proud of me and even though everyone makes mistakes, I'd like to make as little as possible."

Crossing paths

continued from page 6

who will integrate the newsrooms of America.

Each time I hear of the death of someone I knew from that early period it feels like a personal loss - personal because our paths crossed and we set out together, trained to write and deliver the news to present the truth and also to broaden the public's

perceptions, especially when it came to racial differences.

The goal my colleagues and I were trained and, in some cases, hired to achieve has not been completed, certainly not with the polls showing that many will not vote for Sen. Barack Obama because of his race and the negative images that they have of African

Americans.

While we still have a long way to go, with Sen. Obama's nomination as the presidential candidate elect of the Democratic Party, we've, obviously, come a long way.

Nancy Maynard's passing brings back many personal memories and reminds me of the work that still needs to be

done in the media and by the media.

I've been fortunate to be able to cross paths with some remarkable people. Nancy Hicks Maynard and her husband Robert are in the top-section of that list.

It's so sad to have to say goodbye. But there are times when life gives us no other

choice.

Goodbye Nancy. Many of us will still work to bring about the changes for which we were trained. Your deeds and accomplishments will make you a lasting role model for all who are interested in making a positive difference in the world around us.

Summer Interns make a contribution

About Rubye

By David Tenisi
EPA Today Intern



Ruby Price, 15

Daughter of Jeannie and Deloyd "Jr." Price, Rubye Price is the youngest of five children. Rubye's favorite colors are apple green and lime green. She currently attends Carlmont High School and dances with a group of friends in a dance group called "Get'em Gurlz" in her spare time. She enjoys reading Forged by Fire by Sharon M. Draper and when asked to say three words that would best describe herself, she responds, "Intelligent, confident, and joyful".

Outside of her academics, she likes watching Fresh Prince of Bel-Air and her

favorite movie is Lion King. She loves listening to any song with Chris Brown in it and her favorite dish is her mom's homemade macaroni and cheese.

She plans on attending Harvard or Princeton in order to study to become an OB Technician as well as opening a beauty salon in the near future. She wants to give back to East Palo Alto and admires Sharifa Wilson, Executive Director of East Palo Alto's College Track.

When asked about her most memorable childhood memory, she responded, "The Peace March from Home Depot to Jack Farrell Park because everyone came together as a family." The march was held on February 3, 2007 and consisted of over two thousand people who marched in order to stop the violence in East Palo Alto.

About David

By Rubye Price
EPA Today Intern

Eighteen year old David Tenisi, son of Mele and Aloisio Tenisi, was both born in



David Tenisi, 18

Tonga. David has five sisters and is the third oldest He was born in East Palo Alto.

He attended elementary school at Brentwood and went to middle school at McNair. He is now attending college at UC Merced, majoring in science and engineering.

David loves playing sports, drawing, and sleeping in his spare time. His favorite TV show is George Lopez and his favorite movie is "A Walk to Remember."

His favorite color is regular blue and his favorite shoe brand is Nike. He enjoys listening to any type of love song and has a favorite book called All the Pretty Horses.

David said the most memorable moment in his childhood came when his girl friend said

she'd go out with him.

A goal in life that he would like to achieve is build his future wife the dream house she has always wanted.

As a child and now as a young man his idol has been Robert "Bob" Hoover who use to be his golf coach and who now works at free at last.

A few words to describe David and his Personality would be prideful, patient, and generous.

About Roniesha

By Rubye Price
EPA Today Intern



Roniesha Meacham, 20

Roniesha Meacham is twenty years old and lives in Menlo

Park. She has ten siblings - five brothers and five sisters.

Her mother was born in Louisiana, her father born in L.A. and she was born and raised in East Palo Alto,

Roniesha attended Menlo Oaks Middle school and several high schools, with Redwood being her last high school.

She enjoys Mexican Foods and likes watching reality t.v. Her favorite color is yellow and her favorite shoes are her pointy toed hills.

Her hobbies are shopping, spending time with family, and going out to movies, restaurant, clubs, and malls. She also enjoys reading. Her favorite book is The Crucible. Her favorite childhood memory is going swimming at the pool on hot summer days.

She plans on attending the College of San Mateo and majoring in media. Her major goals in life are to have a stable career, buy a house, travel the world at least once, and get married.

She said that the three words that describe her and her personality the best are: beautiful, smart, and outgoing.

Point, click

continued from page 7

guages, the latest news and information about childhood

These websites are the great work of the Get Healthy San Mateo Task Force. The Task Force's stated mission is "to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to develop strategies that will reduce and prevent obesity and other health risks of unhealthy eating and lack of

physical activity among all children in San Mateo County." It has done a phenomenal job uniting people within our communities to address obesity and health disparities within our County. This is exactly the type of work that I envisioned when I convened the Healthy Communities Summit in 2004, and I urge you to log

on and enjoy the fruit of the Task Force's labor.

I firmly believe that everyone in our community can learn something valuable about nutrition and wellness while visiting these websites.

Visit www.yspacesmc.org with your kids and grandkids, and click on www.gethealthysmc.org yourself. The information will help you and your family grow happier and healthier together.

Rose Jacobs Gibson is a San Mateo County Supervisor who represents Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, Redwood City, and the unincorporated area of North Fair Oaks.



Jones Mortuary, Inc.
FD1298
Charles A. Jones
Funeral Director
FDR 723

660 DONOHUE ST.
E. PALO ALTO, CA 94303

(650) 323-2481
FAX (650) 323-1581

**Commercial and Residential
Permit Expeditor & Outreach Services**

Please Contact

Patrick Brock
of
BROCK & COMPANY
2111B University Avenue
East Palo Alto, CA 94303
650-799-8563 cell
650-326-9972 fax

Esquire Barber Shop



Norman Strong, Linda Roache, Maurice Swearington and Howard Jones

Styles Cuts

Traditional Cuts

by

Norman, Linda, Maurice and Howard

650-853-5954

Tuesday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

830 Newbridge
at Willow Road

Menlo Park, CA 94025

Know the signs of gang involvement

By **Tim Gatto**
EPA Today Contributor

Gangs are in the news everywhere these days, from the world wide headlines reporting on Mara Salvatrucha or some other transnational gang killing witnesses, or taking over a prison, to stories of the growing population of gang members in Colorado now reaching over 12,000.

Stories abound of Crips and Gangster Disciples operating in multiple states to a new gang forming comprised of "drop outs" from the gang life in California.

It's all too easy to hear about gang fights, assaults, armed robberies and murders right here in the Bay Area.

Stories of gang violence and crime which used to be an occasional occurrence are now commonplace in reports

on TV, the radio and the internet.

Our cities and communities are launching gang task forces and using gang injunctions to curtail the illicit activities of gang members.

Yet with all this negative publicity regarding gangs, they continue to grow. San Mateo County has experienced nearly a 50% increase in gang membership over the past dozen years.

Youth are attracted to gangs for a variety of reasons, including: the excitement, (or as one gang member states "the adrenaline rush I get,") money; women; fear protection (due to intimidation from gang members).

Youth are lured into gangs by older gang members who need to fill their ranks as members get locked up for longer terms. Former gang members from right here in our county have shared their

stories about being ordered, upon their release from custody, to set up shop as "recruiters" to bolster the ranks of their respective gangs. What are the signs that one can look for as a parent and as a concerned citizen in the community?

Here are some examples:

SIGNS OF GANG INVOLVEMENT

- Change in attitude about school and hobbies (may include poor school grades and disinterest in school)
- Poor school attendance and grades
- Disrespect of teachers' authority and school rules
- Habitual truancy and cuts classes
- Change in hairstyle/dress (may include special haircuts, eyebrow marking or ball caps)
- New friends with the same hairstyle/dress

- Consistent use of one dominant color (blue, red, black, brown, white etc.)
- Wearing clothing that "represents" a neighborhood, area code, or city (Da Vil; Da Mid; Midtown; Check Mob; G-Town; Menlo-Mid; 650; Rep the Bay
- Wearing altered head wear (gang members often put gang information on the inside of ball caps)
- Use of nicknames, gang terminology or hand signs (unknown jocularly-gangs have many slang words)
- Graffiti writing or doodling on books, papers, personal belongings, folders, desks, walls or buildings
- Having a new nickname
- Unexplained sources of money or property
- Disrespect of parents' authority
- Desire for excessive privacy
- Withdrawal from family

activities

- Acts of violence
- Possession of weapons
- Frequent use of abusive language
- Secretive behavior about friends and activities and stays out late
- Suspected drug use indicated by mood changes
- New fear of the police

* Police, parents, and educators need to be aware that it is a combination of warning signs and high factors that may indicate an individual is involved in a gang.

Obviously some of the signs are, as we well know, simply teenagers being "teenagers," but consistent behavior as indicated and the combination, as noted above, should serve as a warning.

Tim Gatto serves on the Gang Intelligence Unit in the Office of the Sheriff for the County of San Mateo.

EPA policy a model for other cities

continued from page 1

luncheon, Marie McKenzie, the city's redevelopment project manager, told the group that the First Source Hiring program, which was developed by the city in 1998, was a way of addressing the city's double digit unemployment rate, level of violence and drug sales.

Since it was enacted, the First Source Hiring program has resulted in hundreds of jobs for residents at the Four Seasons, IKEA, Home Depot, Circuit City, Best Buy and at other retailers in the city's major commercial sites.

According to McKenzie, the program has also suc-



A graphic on the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy website. ceded as a way of educating developers, since they are informed that their developments must provide benefits to the local residents. "Setting policy standards absolutely improved project based outcomes," McKenzie said.

When asked what she would say to local government officials who say that this isn't the time to create more regulations, McKenzie replied that cities must not let their residents down, that they still need to set the standard, since developers will come, and when they do come, they will come to a city with the expectation that they will have to provide benefits for those who live there.

McKenzie told the luncheon attendees that her biggest challenge and what hurts her the most is that there are not enough jobs for all who apply. She said that 1, 586 people applied to

IKEA when it opened, but there were only 200 positions available. "You can see why people feel frustrated," she said. "If they didn't get the job, if their relative didn't get a job, if their friends weren't hired, then it appears to them that no one got hired," she said.

To see the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy 's report, "Building a Better Bay Area: Community Benefit Tools and Case Studies to Achieve Responsible Development," go to www.workingeastbay.org/article.php?id=620



Logo from the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy website.

Want to make a **Difference** about Bay Area Transportation?

Then Step Up to the Challenge!

Apply to serve on one of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) advisory committees — the Advisory Council or the Minority Citizens Advisory Committee — and participate in making decisions about how transportation impacts communities. To find out more and to apply, contact the MTC Public Information Office at 510.817.5757, or click on MTC's Web site at www.mtc.ca.gov or visit MTC at 101 Eighth Street, Oakland.

METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

M. F. CHESTER PALESOO
FOR CITY COUNCIL

"Diversity Council-United We Succeed!"

Vote for me for the
East Palo Alto City Council

(650) 327-0432

M. F. CHESTER PALESOO

Greetings! I'm a Human Services Advocate and resident of our community for over 25 plus years and thank you for electing me to serve on our school district Board of Education. My leadership style is to promote efficiency in human services and providing opportunities for people, and is prepared with governance leadership experience to create ways and means of supportive policies within our community government. During my tenure on the school board standardized test scores and graduation rates has risen, our schools have been modernized for improvement, our school district consistently maintained a financial solvency rate determined to be a Triple-A accountable rating, and innovative programs in place for academic improvement for all ethnic students as necessary.

I have progressive governance leadership experience, vision, consensus building ability, team player attitude, know-how skills, and expertise helping ALL ethnicities improving their quality of life within our government. I've provided assistance to help many families and children including youth to have a livable life within their means of support to become safe and healthy in our diverse community. "I'm here as a public servant to serve and not to be served!"

Are you a self starter?

Are you interested in working with people?

Are you interested in sales?

If you've answered yes to the above three questions, then consider being an

EPA Today Sales
Associate

Get more information, call
(650)327-5846, ext. 311

Community Calendar

EPA Rock the Vote Concert
Location: Bell Street Park
University Avenue and Bell Street
East Palo Alto, CA 94303
When: 10/18/2008 2:00 PM-5:00 PM PST

EPA Rock the Vote Concert is our creative solution to cultivate local San Francisco Bay Area talents with the use of music and spoken word to engage and incite young people to register to vote. A non-partisan community event sponsored by the City of East Palo Alto's Youth Advisory Council, E-PAY-AC, Peace & Unity, For Youth By Youth, Boys & Girls Club and Job Train's Sassy Youth Advisory Council. BYOP (Bring Your Own Picnic) and Bring a Friend. What Inspires YOU? Check back with us next week for the lists of performers! For more information, contact Marina Latu at eparockthevote@gmail.com.

Senator Joe Simitian's Town Hall Meetings
Palo Alto – State Senator Joe

Simitian (D-Palo Alto) will hold town hall meetings in Campbell, Cupertino and Willow Glen on Wednesday, October 1, Wednesday, October 15 and Thursday, October 16, respectively. He invites residents of the 11th Senate District to bring their questions, comments, and concerns about state government.

Simitian and his staff will also be on-hand after the meetings to meet informally with the community. Light refreshments will be served. For more information, Contact: Hema Sareen Mohan (650)688-6384 or call Simitian's district office at (408) 277-9460 or visit www.senatorsimitian.com.

EPA Beat Meetings
Beat One Meeting
Date: Thursday, October 23rd, 2008
Time: 6:30pm - 8:00pm
Location: YMCA, 550 Bell Street, East Palo Alto, CA 94303
Beat Two Meeting
Date: Tuesday, October 2nd,

2008
Time: 6:30pm - 8:00pm
Location: Ecumenical Hunger Program (2411 Pulgas Avenue, East Palo Alto, CA 94303)
Beat Three Meeting
Date: Thursday, October 9th, 2008
Time: 6:30pm - 8:00pm
Location: Palo Mobile Estates (1885 East Bayshore Road, East Palo Alto, CA 94303)

Beat Four Meeting
Tuesday, October 14, 2008
Time: 6:30pm - 8:00pm
Location: Community Room at City Hall (2415 University Avenue, East Palo Alto, CA 94303)

The Garden's Neighborhood Association Meeting
Saturday, October 1, 2008
Time: 10:00am -noon
Location: COGIC Church, 1108 Pulgas Avenue, East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Public Works E-Cycling Event
Saturday, October 18, 2008
Time: 8:00am - 4:00pm
Location: City Corporation Yard (150 Tara Road, East Palo Alto, CA 94303)

Brentwood Court Neighborhood Association Bus Trip on Saturday, October 18, 2008
Deadline to register is October 4, 2008 - please call Letha Powell at 650-388-8168 for more information

Halloween Social for Seniors Friday, October 31, 2008
Time: 11:30am - 1:00pm
Location: East Palo Alto Senior Center, 560 Bell Street, EPA, CA 94303

Tickets are limited - call Bob at 650-688-1824 to reserve your ticket

Every Sunday there is a **Farmer's Market at St. Francis of Assisi Church** (1425 Bay Road) between 3:00pm and 6:00pm.

Please call 650-324-2769 or e-mail farmersmarket@collective-roots.com <mailto:farmers-market@collectiveroots.com>

Historically Black Colleges and Universities Transfer Day

Wednesday, October 29, 2008
8:30 AM- 3:00 PM
For more information contact: THE AFRICAN AMERICAN SCHOLASTIC PROGRAMS 50 PHELAN AVENUE SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94112 Mrs. Felita Jackson-Clark, Coordinator - 415.239.3057; fclark@ccsf.edu Mr. Edward Tang, Management Assistant – 415.452.5953; ehtang@ccsf.edu

Local election news and coverage

Talking with Henrietta

Another Election to Make a Difference



Saree Mading, Court Skinner, Henrietta J. Burroughs, and Sharifa Wilson on the set of Talking with Henrietta on September 25, 2008.

On this show, Another Election to Make a Difference, three local candidates tell why they think they are the best qualified candidate to serve on the Ravenswood City School District Board of Trustees. Saree Mading, Court Skinner and Sharifa Wilson discuss their qualifications, their experiences and the goals they would like to achieve if elected. This edition of Talking with Henrietta can be seen until October 11 on Channel 27 on Fridays @ noon, Saturdays @1:30 p.m., Sundays @5 p.m., Mondays @8 a.m. and Thursdays @8 p.m. on Channel 27, which airs locally. It can also be seen on the web at the above days and times at: www.communitymediacenter.net.

Upcoming Candidate Interviews and Forums

Discussion with East Palo Alto City Council Candidates on the Talking with Henrietta television show Thursday, October 9 from 7-8 p.m. at The Media Center 900 San Antonio Road, Palo Alto If attending, please call (650) 327-5846, ext. 311 to reserve a seat. Prepare to arrive by 6:45 p.m.

East Palo Alto City Council Candidates Forum Thu, October 16 at 7:30-9:30 pm East Palo Alto City Hall, 2415 University Ave, East Palo Alto

Ravenswood School District Candidates Forum Tue, Oct 14 at 7:30-9:00 pm Ravenswood District Board Room, 2120 Euclid Ave, East Palo Alto

Menlo Park City Council Candidates Forum Wed, October 8 at 7:30-9:00 pm Menlo Park City Council Chamber, 701 Laurel St., Menlo Park

Forum Explaining the State Ballot Propositions (Pros & Cons) Sat, November 1 at 11:00-12:00 noon Menlo Park Main Library, 800 Alma St, Menlo Park

For more information on any of the above events, contact the League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County at 650-325-5780. View the League's website at www.lwvssmc.org.

The candidates forums (first 3 events listed above) will be taped by the Media Center and rebroadcast on channel 27 multiple times, as well as linked to www.smartvoter.org for on-demand viewing.

