



Happy New Year!

East Palo Alto Today is here

East Palo Alto Has a New Newspaper

Staff Writer
East Palo Alto Today

East Palo Alto Today is the first locally produced newspaper the City of East Palo Alto has had in more than 20 years. The free biweekly paper will be distributed throughout East Palo Alto and the neighboring Menlo Park community of Belle Haven.

The public got its first view of East Palo Alto Today at a public unveiling Friday, December 16. The evening event was billed as a launch party to celebrate the paper's publication. The unveiling took place in the East Palo Alto Council Chamber. The adjacent Community Room was opened to accommodate food and beverages.

Speakers included Goro Mitchell, the executive director of the Community Development Institute, and Hema Sareen Mohan, the District Director and Press Representative for Senator Joseph Simitian. East Palo Alto deserves to have a newspaper, Mohan said.

Mohan presented Henrietta Burroughs, the paper's founder and editor, with a Resolution from the California Legislature signed jointly by Senator Simitian and California State Assemblyman Ira Ruskin. The State Resolution commended the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media for launching East Palo Alto Today.

East Palo Alto City Council member Donna Rutherford said she was excited that East Palo Alto had a newspaper once again. Rutherford said that she would assist the paper's staff in finding funding for the paper.

Fifty to sixty people attended the paper's launch event. Attendees included East Palo Alto's City Manager Alvin James and the city's Police Chief, Ronald Davis. Most of those attending were East Palo Alto residents. Others came from Palo Alto

and nearby communities.

"I think the newspaper is long overdue," said Lorraine Holmes, an East Palo Alto resident for 50 years. She said, "The launch party for the newspaper was very good and very informative since it reached out to all aspects of the community."

agency that was formed in 2003 to increase the number of media outlets in East Palo Alto.

Julie Patel, a San Jose Mercury News reporter, who has been volunteering on her own time with the East Palo Alto Center for Community

Media since she was a graduate student in the Communication Department at Stanford University, said that the start of the paper was especially significant given the cutbacks that many of the nation's newspapers are experiencing.

Patel is the Director of the EPA Center's Mentorship Program, which provides journalism training to community residents to encourage them to write for the newspaper. The Mercury News is not affiliated with EPA Today.

Rachel Kinney, the Community/Volunteer Development Coordinator for the East Palo Alto YMCA said, "The energy and excitement around the launch of East Palo Alto Today was absolutely contagious. I believe East Palo Alto Today is going to be an asset to this community in that it will be a reliable, accurate and relevant vehicle of news-worthy information.

I especially admire the fact that key pieces of the paper will be translated into Spanish, which to me signals the paper's commitment to diversity and accessibility."



Georganna Hymes, an East Palo Alto resident since 1959, said, "I think the newspaper is an excellent idea. Every city has one except us. Once people know we have one, they'll put articles in it." Hymes has lived in the Bay Area since 1947.

East Palo Alto Today is published under the sponsorship of the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media, a local nonprofit

A few important milestones along the way

January 2003 Founding of the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media, which will create media outlets for East Palo Alto

The Community Development Institute becomes the EPA Center's fiscal sponsor and provides free office space

The EPA Center receives a \$5,000 Community Grant for equipment from Hewlett Packard. The grant is provided through East Palo Alto's Digital Village.

Spring 2003 The Center's Founding Board and Advisory Boards are created.

August 2003 First Mentorship Workshop to provide journalism skills to East Palo Alto residents. is held. The program graduates



In April 2004, Cable Co-op Board Members Prof. Ted Glasser and Ken Allen present EPA Center for Community Media Director Henrietta J. Burroughs a Cable Co-op Legacy check for \$5,000. Mercury News Reporter Julie Patel, first row extreme right, and some of the EPA Media Center's founding boardmembers and supporters can be seen in the background.

eight students. Through the efforts of the EPA Community Legal Services

agency, the EPA Center secures the assistance of Lan Hang and Christie Branson, two attorneys with the East

Palo Alto law firm Gray Cary Ware & Freidenrich who provide pro bono services to get the EPA Center incorporated. The firm is now known as DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary.

April 2004 The EPA Center is awarded a Legacy Grant from the Cable Co-op Board of Directors

June 2004 The EPA Center becomes incorporated.

The EPA Center Board of Directors is selected.

December 16, 2004 The EPA Center holds a Pre-launch Party in the East Palo Alto Council Chamber to tell the East Palo Alto community about the newspaper

Spring 2005. The newspaper mockup for East Palo

Alto Today is created and tested.

Summer 2005. EPA Center secures interns through the Stanford University's Rebele Program assist in expanding East Palo Alto Today's media kit and the newspaper mock-up, and building the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media web site.

The EPA Center receives a generous financial donation along with needed computer equipment from an East Palo Alto resident.

.The decision is made to launch East Palo Alto Today

December 16, 2005 The EPA Center holds its Launch Party to celebrate East Palo Alto Today's impending publication.



¡Feliz Año Nuevo! East Palo Alto Today está aquí

East Palo Alto Tiene Un Nuevo Periódico

East Palo Alto Today, es el primer periódico local producido en la Ciudad de East Palo Alto en más de 20 años. Esta edición gratuita bisemanal será distribuida en East Palo Alto, los vecindarios de Menlo Park y la comunidad de Belle Haven.

El público tuvo las primeras noticias del East Palo Alto Today, en su presentación el viernes 16 de Diciembre. El evento tuvo lugar en una reunión para celebrar el lanzamiento de la primera edición del periódico. La revelación tuvo lugar en el salón de la Cámara del Concilio de la Ciudad de East Palo Alto. El salón adyacente fue abierto para servir comidas y bebidas para el público asistente.

Los oradores fueron el Director Ejecutivo del CDI (Instituto para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad) Goro Mitchell y la Directora del Distrito Representante de Prensa por el Senador Joseph Simitian, Hema Sareen Mohan. Mohan dijo que East Palo Alto merece tener su

propio periódico, y le presento a Henrietta Burroughs, fundadora y editora del periódico una Resolución de la Legislatura de California, conjuntamente firmada por el Senador Simitian y el Asambleísta por el estado de California Ira Ruskin. La resolución del estado felicita al Centro Comunitario de Comunicación de East Palo Alto por el lanzamiento de su periódico.

Donna Rutherford, Miembro del Consejo de la Ciudad de East Palo Alto dijo que ella estaba muy emocionada de tener un periódico local nuevamente. Ella dijo que asistiría al personal del periódico a encontrar fondos para el periódico.

Entre cincuenta y sesenta personas asistieron al evento. Entre los asistentes al evento se encontraba Alvin James, Manejador de la

Ciudad de East Palo Alto, y Ronald Davis, Jefe de la Policía. La mayoría de los asistentes eran residentes de East Palo Alto. Otros vinieron de las comunidades vecinas.

Lorraine Holmes, residente de East Palo Alto por cincuenta años dijo que "este periódico debió salir hace mucho

tiempo".

Georgana Hymes, residente de East Palo Alto desde el año 1959 dijo que "Un periódico es una excelente idea. Todas las ciudades tienen uno excepto nosotros. Una vez que la gente sepa que lo tenemos, ellos van a participar poniendo sus artículos". Hymes vive en el Área de la Bahía desde 1947.

East Palo Alto Today es publicado bajo el auspicio del Centro Comunitario de Comunicación de East Palo Alto, una organización sin fines de lucro creada en el 2003 para incrementar el numero medios de comunicación en East Palo Alto.

Julie Patel, una reportera del San Jose Mercury News, ha venido haciendo trabajo voluntario para el Centro Comunitario de Comunicación de East Palo Alto desde que se graduara del departamento de Comunicaciones de la Universidad de Stanford, dijo

que el empezar con el periódico era una experiencia especialmente significativa dado a los recortes que están experimentando muchos periódicos en la nación.. Patel es la Directora del Programa del Centro Mentor de EPA, el cual provee entrenamiento periodístico a residentes de la comunidad, para animarlos a contribuir con su periódico.

Rachel Kinney, Voluntaria de la comunidad y Coordinadora de Desarrollo de la YMCA de East Palo Alto dijo, "La energía y entusiasmo alrededor del lanzamiento del East Palo Alto Today fue absolutamente contagioso. Yo creo que el East Palo Alto Today va a ser un acierto en esta comunidad y ese va a ser un vehículo de información honorable, digno de confianza, preciso y relevante.

Yo especialmente admiro el hecho de que los puntos importantes van a ser traducidos al Español lo cual me indica el compromiso del periódico de ser diverso y accesible".



Unos puntos resaltantes a través del camino

Enero 2003 Fundación del Centro de Comunicaciones de la Comunidad, lo que creo una comunicación con el exterior de la comunidad para East Palo Alto

El Instituto para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad (CDI) se convierte en el auspiciador principal y provee espacio libre en sus oficinas.

El Centro de EPA recibe una donación de \$5,000 en equipos de la Hewlett Packard. La donación fue recibida a través de la East Palo Alto's Digital Village.

Primavera del 2003 se crea la Mesa de Directores y el Comité de Consultas para el Centro

Agosto del 2003 Se dicta el Primer taller de destreza periodística a los residentes de East Palo Alto. En el programa se grad-



En Abril 2004, Miembros de la Mesa Directiva del Cable Co-op, Prof. Ted Glasser y Ken Allen. Hacen entrega de un cheque por \$5,000 a la Directora del Centro de Comunicaciones de la Comunidad de EPA, Henrietta J. Burroughs. En la primera fila de la extrema derecha la Reportera del Mercury News Julie Patel, así como también se pueden apreciar en la parte posterior algunos de los Miembros Fundadores de la Mesa Directiva y auspiciadores del EPA Center.

uaron ocho estudiantes.

A través de los esfuerzos de

Servicios Legales para la Comunidad de EPA que cuenta con la asistencia de Lan Hang y Cristie Branson, dos

abogados que trabajan para el estudio de abogados de East Palo Alto Gray Cary Ware & Freidenrich los que proveen el servicio en forma gratuita al Centro de EPA. Dicha firma es conocida ahora como DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary.

Abril 2004 Al Centro de EPA recibe la donación otorgada por la mesa del directorio de Cable Co-op

Junio 2004 el centro de EPA se convierte en corporación y se elige la Mesa Directiva

16 de Diciembre, 2004 Se celebra una reunión en la Cámara del consejo de la Ciudad de East Palo Alto East Palo Alto, para comunicarle a la comunidad sobre la aparición del nuestro diario.

Primavera del 2005. se hace un bosquejo del diario de East Palo Alto, el cual se crea y se aprueba.

Verano del 2005. El Centro de EPA es asesorado por el programa del Stanford University's Rebele : a realizar, crear y mejorar el bosquejo del East Palo Alto Today's y la Pagina Web de East Palo Alto.

El Centro de EPA recibe de un residente su generosa ayuda financiera, así como los equipos de cómputo necesarios.

Se toma la decisión de la publicación del East Palo Alto Today

El 16 de Diciembre, 2005 El Centro de EPA se reúne para festejar la inminente publicación del East Palo Alto Today's

A Report from the Pacific Islander Community Page 11



Ravenswood Family Health Center: Get Fit EPA, Page 18



EPA's MVP Page 24



Special Inaugural Issue

East Palo Alto Today

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical



East Palo Alto and Belle Haven Week of January 22, 2006 Vol. 1 No. 1

GOING WIRELESS

E.P.A. Moving Ahead with Wireless Technology

NEWS BRIEFS

By Stephanie Condon EPA Today Contributor

East Palo Alto is on its way to becoming one of the first cities in the Bay Area to provide citywide wireless Internet access to all of its

"I think we're at the early beginnings of the mobile internet revolution."

residents.

This fall, city leaders voted to accept maintenance responsibilities for light posts throughout town. This would allow the city to build wireless networks on the light posts. The San Mateo County Board of

Supervisors voted in favor of the handover last December thereby finalizing the deal.

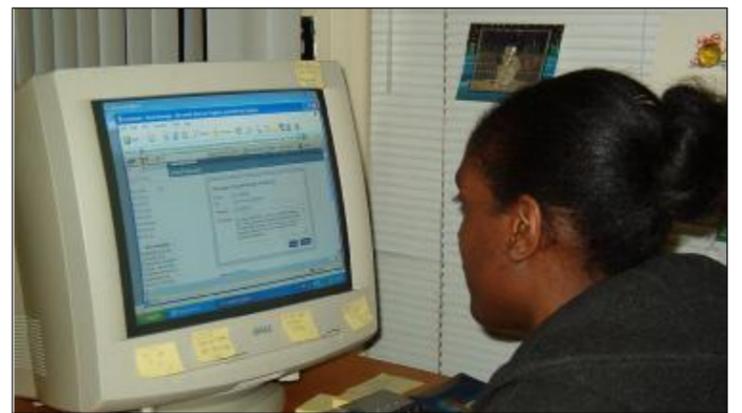
While leaders in cities like San Francisco, Mountain View and Palo Alto are also taking steps to secure city-wide wireless access, the move is particularly significant in East Palo Alto, where access to technology is extremely limited.

Former U.S. President Bill Clinton visited East Palo Alto in 2000 to talk about the digital divide. His speech drew attention to the problem and helped the city secure funding from major technology companies and foundations. But the divide is far from disappearing. Despite increasing housing values and demographic shifts, about 10 percent of the city's residents live below the poverty line.

The city is now preparing

to negotiate with Community Wireless to have the group install wireless transmitters on light posts

Raven 21, said Mark Rogowski, founder and director of Community Wireless.



Public Allies intern Kaara Baptiste searches on the Internet

throughout town.

Community Wireless - a nonprofit organization that was specifically founded to provide East Palo Alto with free or affordable wireless Internet service - proposes to call its wireless network

"I think we're at the early beginnings of the mobile internet revolution," he said.

Rogowski said Raven 21 proposes to offer basic

continued on page 20



Epa.net's content manager Michael Levin said epa.net has raised the money it needs to pay his salary and survive through the first quarter of 2006.

The East Palo Alto Police Dept. reports that East Palo Alto is becoming a safer city with crime and violence going down.

This news is marred by the weekend shooting death of East Palo Alto Police Officer Richard May. Police have captured a suspect

INSIDE

Arts	22
Editorial	7
Guests Opinions.....	8
Youth News.....	17
Obituaries.....	15
Sports.....	23
TV Listings.....	24

Katrina Survivors in East Palo Alto

East Palo Alto's Hurricane Katrina Survivors: Are They Getting the Help They Need?

Community activist Nevada Butler spoke out last week against the Federal Emergency Management Agency for failing to provide adequate resources for victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in East Palo Alto.

"Some have receive nothing from FEMA, nothing but the runaround," said Butler, executive director of the Ecumenical Hunger Program in East Palo Alto.

Butler said some families have been offered loans from FEMA but are concerned about how to pay them back. Of the 20 families the EHP has helped, only eight remain

in the city, Butler said. Some have moved away to stay with families and friends..

As of December 2, 17,305 victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita were registered for FEMA assistance in California, according to the Governors Office of Emergency Services. Santa Clara County is housing 498 storm survivors, and another 229 are currently living in San Mateo County. Some of the families that remain in East Palo Alto are getting ready to give up asking for assistance, Butler said.

"Lots of families are tapped out in terms of giving interviews and not a lot happening after the interview," Butler said.

The lack of government assistance may only intensify other concerns Katrina survivors face. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that about half a million peo-

ple, both survivors and those who assisted them, may need mental health services.

In preparation for those locally who might need counseling, the San Mateo County Health Department prepared a Resource Guide for Hurricane Katrina Evacuees. The guide lists mental health disaster counseling services. The office can be contacted by calling 650-363-4117.

As important as counseling might be to some Katrina and Rita survivors, the surviving families living in East Palo Alto still need of basic necessities.

While EHP is helping some families with their rent, Butler said that they still need supplies of all kinds, including beds and bedding, food, furniture, clothes and other household essentials.

For more information or to assist hurricane victims in East Palo Alto, contact Nevada Butler at (650) 323-7781.

Benefit Raises Hope

Students in the Kiwanis Builders Club at East Palo Alto's Costano Elementary School organized a benefit concert in November that raised approximately \$11,000 for Hurricane Katrina families living in East Palo Alto.

The Nov. 14 concert, "A Musical Benefit for the Katrina Families Recovery Fund," featured renowned folk singer Joan Baez, jazz stars Tuck and Patti, and local East Palo Alto performers including the Pacheco All Stars, the Menlo-Atherton High School Jazz Combo, Isaac Stevenson, Potential and the Wobogo Jazz Ensemble. The East Palo Alto Arts and Cultural Society, the Ecumenical Hunger Program and the California Bank & Trust sponsored the concert.

continued on page 19



We can help you start or grow your business!

Information Sessions First Thursday of each month

(650) 321-2193
6 pm English / 7 pm Español

El Reporte de la comunidad Islandes del Pacifico Pagina 11



Ravenswood Family Health Center: Get Fit EPA Pagina 18



Vistas de la Comunidad Pagina 9

EPA's MVP



Pagina 24

Special Inaugural Issue

East Palo Alto Today

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical



East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

Semana del 22 de enero del 2006

Vol. 1 No. 1

Vamos Wireless

E.P.A. avanzando con la tecnologia in alambica

NOTAS INFORMATIVAS



El Administrador de epa.net, Michael Levin declaró que epa.net ha recaudado el dinero necesario para pagar su salario, y así sobrevivir los primeros cuatro meses del año.

El Departamento de Policías de East Palo Alto reportó que East Palo Alto se está convirtiendo en una ciudad más segura, en donde el crimen y la violencia están disminuyendo. Esta noticia es acerca la muerte del Oficial de Policía Richard May, en un tiroteo el fin de semana. La Policía ha capturado a un sospechoso.

INSIDE

Arts	22
Editorial	7
Guests Opinions.....	8
Youth News.....	17
Obituaries.....	15
Sports.....	23
TV Listings.....	24



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By Stephanie Condon
EPA Today Contributor

East Palo Alto está en camino de ser una de las primeras ciudades en el área de la Bahía en tener acceso al internet wireless (para navegar sin cable) en toda la ciudad. Este otoño, los líderes

"Yo pienso que estamos en el principio de la revolución de Internet móvil."

de la ciudad votaron para aceptar las responsabilidades de mantener los postes de luz en la ciudad. Esto permitiría a la ciudad crear nuevas redes inalámbricas en los postes de luz. En el Condado de San Mateo los Supervisores

Sobrevivientes de Katrina en East Palo Alto

Los Sobrevivientes de Katrina en East Palo Alto - Están recibiendo lo que necesitan?

La activista para la comunidad Nevada Butler habló la semana pasada en contra de La Agencia de Administración Federal para Emergencias (FEMA) por no proveer bastantes recursos a las victimas del Huracán Katrina y Rita en East Palo Alto.

Unos no han recibido nada de FEMA, sólo excusas. Unos ya se movieron para vivir con sus familias y amigos," dijo Butler, la directora ejecutiva para el Programa Ecumenico contra el Hambre en East Palo Alto. Hay solo ocho de las veinte victimas originales que todavía están en la ciudad.

Butler dijo que FEMA ha ofrecido préstamos a unas familias pero las familias

votaron a favor de continuar el martes, por eso finalizaron la negociación.

Mientras los líderes en ciudades como San Francisco, Mountain View, y Palo Alto están tomando los pasos para asegurar el acceso inalámbrico para toda la ciudad, este paso es particularmente significativo en East Palo Alto, donde el acceso a la tecnología es extremadamente limitado.

El anterior Presidente de EEUU, Bill Clinton visitó East Palo Alto en el 2000 para hablar de la división digital. Su discurso puso atención al problema y ayudó a la ciudad a que tuviera los fondos asegurados de parte de la mayoría de las compañías tecnológicas y fundaciones. Pero la división está muy lejos de desaparecer. Además de incrementar el valor de las

están preocupadas de devolver el dinero.

Desde el 2 de diciembre de este año, la Oficina de Servicios para Emergencias del Gobernador indicó que 17,305 víctimas del huracán Katrina y Rita están registradas para asistencia de FEMA en California. Cuatrocientos noventa y ocho sobrevivientes de la tormenta están ubicados en el Condado de Santa Clara y 229 están presentes en el Condado de San Mateo.

Unas familias en East Palo Alto dudan que vayan a recibir asistencia, dijo Butler.

"Muchas familias se cansan de dar entrevistas cuando nada pasa después de la entrevista," dijo Butler.

La falta de asistencia del gobierno podría empeorar las preocupaciones de los sobrevivientes de Katrina. Por causa de los días festivos, el Departamento de Servicios Humanos y Sanitarios de EE.UU. estima que hay mas o menos un medio millón de personas, ambos sobrevivientes y los que se ayudaron, podrían necesitar ser-

casas y la demografía en turno, como 10 por ciento de los residentes de la ciudad viven abajo del nivel de



Public Allies intern Kaara Baptiste searches on the Internet

pobreza.

La ciudad ahora se está preparando para negociar con Community Wireless para tener un grupo instalación de transmisores inalámbricos en los postes de luz de la ciudad.

Community Wireless es una organización sin ánimo de lucro, que fue específicamente fundada para dar a

East Palo Alto servicio de Internet inalámbrico gratis ó accesible. Mark Rogowski, director de Community Wireless propuso llamar a estas redes inalámbricas, Raven 21. El dijo "yo pienso

Continuación de la pag. 20

Esperanza en la Comunidad

Veinticinco estudiantes del Club de los Kiwanis Builders en la Escuela Costaño fueron elogiados por los maestros y por la audiencia en un concierto a beneficio el mes pasado. El concierto en la Escuela Primaria Costaño de East Palo Alto ayudó a las familias de Katrina que viven en East Palo Alto. Los estudiantes de Costaño fueron a otros salones de clase de sus compañeros por dos semanas antes del concierto Nov 14 para solicitar fondos. Recaudaron \$2700 en dos jarras y media, eran enormes y lo presentaron a las familias de Katrina durante el concierto benéfico.

El concierto, que se llama Musical Benefit for the Katrina Families Recovery

continuación de la pag. 21

Could It Happen to the East Palo Alto PD ?

This past December, a video came to light which shows San Francisco police officers poking fun at various ethnic groups within San Francisco. Given all of the events and charges that have occurred since the video was uncovered, East Palo Alto Today asked East Palo Alto Police Chief Ron Davis a series of questions. Here are the questions and his responses.

1) Could the video scandal that hit the San Francisco Police Department happen within the East Palo Alto Police Department?



Chief Ron Davis

Answer
No. I am confident that a similar incident will not happen in East Palo

Alto. Because this incident has garnered so much media and public attention; it provides valuable lessons learned for police officers and managers. As public officers our actions, even when done with good attentions, represents the City and must always reflect an understanding and respect for the community. I would be surprised if any police agency in the nation experiences a similar incident in the future.

2) Do you think San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and the city's Police Chief Heather Fong acted appropriately in making the situation public and suspending 20 police officers from the San Francisco Police force?

Answer
Yes. It is best to expose problems and tackle them head on. When city government; especially the police, try to cover mistakes or fail to take an immediate correction actions, that message only serves to further strain police and community relations and deteriorate public trust and confidence.

The initial suspension of the officers was administrative, not disciplinary, which I believe was the right thing to do until the Police Chief had

a better understanding of the incident and had confidence that the officers return to duty did not pose a further risk to the community and the City.

3) What would you do if a similar situation happened within the East Palo Alto police department?

Answer
I would take similar actions to those of San Francisco Police Chief Heather Fong. I would initiate an administrative investigation; however, I would use an independent investigator because of the nature of the incident, the number of officers involved, and the complexity of the case. I want to ensure the community has confidence that the investigation will not be bias or swayed by internal pressure. The nature of the video would determine whether I placed the involved officers on administrative leave. If the video contained any material that was discriminatory in nature, I would place the officers on administratively leave until the investigation is complete. If it was determined that officers made a video that contained discriminatory actions and/or comments, I would recommend those officers be terminated from their position as police officers with the City of East Palo Alto. If the officers' actions were not discriminatory, but still inappropriate and insensitive, I suspend the officers accordingly. This may seem rather harsh, but an incident of this nature threatens public trust and confidence. The police derive its authority from the commu-

nity. Without community trust and confidence, we become ineffective. Such an incident also provides an opportunity to reinforce the core values of the organization. By taking strong, appropriate action, the message from the chief is clear and extends beyond the involved officers; it carries throughout the police department.

4) Is anything currently taking place within the East Palo Alto Police Department to prevent this type of situation or a similar one from taking place in the department?

Answer.
Yes, we are undergoing an open and comprehensive reform process which involves community members. As part of this process we are revamping the community complaint and internal affairs investigation process; reviewing all policies and procedures to ensure they are current and represent best practices in the industry, increasing and enhancing the level of training for officers. Just in the past seven months, officers have received diversity and language training; ethics and integrity, supervision and leadership, internal investigations, criminal investigations, youth-related training programs, and community policing.

We have also adopted a new mission statement, which states in part: "We will strive for excellence in all we do and maintain the highest level of integrity by holding ourselves and our co-workers to the highest standards of performance and ethics."

I have also identified my five "deadly sins" to all employees of the Department. They are called deadly sins because they will lead to termination

See a special photo tribute to Officer Richard May on pages 14 and 15 in the EPA Today Lifecycles section

from employment. They include: Brutality, Discrimination, Untruthfulness, Fabrication of Evidence, and Retaliation against a Witness. Most importantly, we are implementing a community policing plan that requires officers to work closely with the community to solve problems.

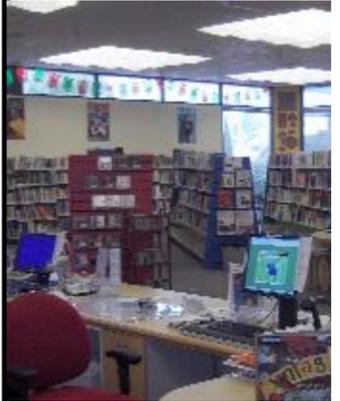
Such a partnership not only reduces crime and violence, it reduces police misconduct and community complaints. The closer officers are to the community, the harder it becomes to violate the trust of that community, and the easier it becomes to see how certain actions by officers - such as the San Francisco video - are insensitive to the community and inappropriate.

5) Would you like to make any additional comments?

Answer,
As the San Francisco Police Department (and the law enforcement industry) review the tape, that review must extend beyond the officers caught on tape and include supervisors and managers, and the culture of the Department. We must learn from our mistakes as industry or we face continued negative incidents that strain police and community relations.

As the new police chief, I look forward to working with the fine men and women of the East Palo Alto Police Department and the members of this great community to create the most professional and responsive police department in the nation.

Support the East Palo Alto Library by adding frequent visits to the library to your list of New Year's resolutions. The library has books-on-tape, books-on-CD and downloadable audio books that can be enjoyed in cars, planes or on personal MP3 players



Its CD collection is a goldmine for jazz lovers as well as others who enjoy pop, hip-hop, reggae, Latin or gospel music. For more information, call 650.321.7712 or go to

www.smcl.org/libraries/epa/

City, County & State Government Meetings & Contacts

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

City Council Members

Ruben Abrica - Mayor
A. Peter Evans - Vice Mayor
Patricia Foster
Donna Rutherford
David E. Woods

Boards, Commissions, Committees

Planning Commission
Second and Fourth Monday
Number of Members: 7
Number of Alternates: 1
Vacancies: 2 regular seats

Rent Stabilization Board

Second and Fourth Wednesday
Number of Members: 7
Number of Alternates: 3
Vacancies: 2

Public Works & Transportation Commission

First and Third Wednesday
Number of Members: 7
Number of Alternates: 1

Youth Advisory Committee

First Thursday of each month
Number of Adult Members: 4
Number of Youth Members: 5

Senior Advisory Committee
meets the 1st Wednesday of each Month - 6:30p.m. - City Hall.

Vacancies: Total of 3 -- 1 Regular-Two year term; 1 Regular- One year term and 1 Alternate - 1 year term

To obtain more information on city meetings or vacancies, contact the East Palo Alto City Clerk at 650.853.3100. The application deadline for listed vacancies was **Tuesday, January 17, 2006 at 5 p.m.**

Applications were available at the City Clerk's Office, City Hall, 2415 University Avenue, East Palo Alto, CA 94303 and on the City's website www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us

San Mateo County Bd. of Supervisors

Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson, Fourth District

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors meets on January 10, 24, 31, 2006 in the County Government Center: Hall of Justice & Records 400 County Center Redwood City, CA 94063 (650) 363-4653 Phone (650) 599-1027 Fax

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

Assembly Member Ira Ruskin
District Address
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Another Office for San Mateo County Supervisor Jacobs Gibson

In its December 2005 election, the Association of Bay Area Governments elected two new officers. San Jose City Council member Dave Cortese was elected President and San Mateo County Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson was seated as vice president.



ABAG is the regional planning agency for the 101 cities and towns and nine counties of the Bay Area. Cortese, who has served on the City Council since 2000, started his two-year term this month. He replaces former president Scott Haggerty, Alameda County Supervisor.

"Assuming a leadership role in ABAG is both an honor and an opportunity. At a time when many of the issues that we face as a community are regional in nature, we must empower cities and counties to look to strategic and effective regional planning for solutions," Cortese wrote in a statement.

"I'm eager to play an

even greater role in the process of creating a more livable and efficient Bay Area."

Cortese is a member of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Board of Directors and served on the East Side Union High School Board of Trustees from for eight years.

Like Cortese, Jacobs Gibson also has experience as a local leader. She has been a San Mateo County Supervisor since 1999 and was a member of the East

Palo Alto City Council from 1992 to 1999.

"As ABAG Vice President," Gibson wrote in a statement. "I am committed to improving the quality of life for all residents and to helping develop innovative, proactive approaches to build a stronger, more vibrant county and region.

What we develop together as ABAG member cities and counties can and does make a regional difference and will create a better Bay Area."

Gibson's Involvements

According to her page on the Board of Supervisors Web Site, she organized four community forums to address parental concerns with the Ravenswood City School District; developed the first service learning program for at-risk youth in San Mateo County community schools; and helped organize meetings to discuss the use and sale of "bidis", tobacco products aimed directly at children.

Mayor in 1995 and 1996, Jacobs Gibson was instrumental in turning the once high crime rate city into a "City on the Move."

Selected "Woman of the Year" by the 21st Assembly District, California State Legislature, she was also the founder of HAGAR, a community-based, nonprofit organization that provided services to women and their families placing a special emphasis on support for single women rearing sons.

Supervisor Jacobs Gibson is a resident of the City of East Palo Alto. She is described as a tireless advocate for community building. Some of her supporters say she has held this vision throughout her career in public service.



The work of ABAG

Founded in 1961, ABAG is the regional planning agency for the 101 cities and towns, and nine counties of the Bay Area and it is recognized

as the first council of governments in California.

The organizations literature says that ABAG is committed to leading the region through advocacy, collaboration, and excellence by providing planning, research, and member services to enhance the Bay Area's quality of life.

Contacts

Information about the recent election and ABAG's history and activities can be found at its web site- <http://www.abag.ca.gov/>

For more information on Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson and the work of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, log onto <http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/smc/county/home> or call the County Government Center: Hall of Justice & Records 400 County Center Redwood City, CA 94063 (650) 363-4653 Phone (650) 599-1027 Fax

YUCA - An Environmental Fight

by Valicia Saucedo
East Palo Alto Today

Many people do not get involved in community organizations because they are convinced that no matter how hard they try, defeat is just around the corner. Yet Youth United for Community Action (YUCA) is successful in accomplishing what few adults have: YUCA is catching the attention of local and state legislators, and the legislators are listening.

According to Assemblyman Ira Ruskin's Chief of Staff, Susan McEntire. YUCA met with Assemblyman Ruskin in his Los Altos district office this past July. YUCA sought a meeting with Ruskin since he is the Chair of the Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee. Also present at the meeting were Assemblyman Ruskin's field representative, Nate Pinkston, and his Chief of Staff, McEntire. YUCA brought Ruskin petitions and presented information opposing Romic, the hazardous waste management plant on Bay Road.

Romic has been operating in East Palo Alto since 1963. The plant is in the process of renewing a California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) permit that expired in 1991 and a United States

Environmental Protection Agency permit that expired in 2002. The facility is allowed to continue operations under the terms of the old permits until the DTSC makes a final decision.

Assemblyman Ruskin's office encouraged YUCA to submit a proposal in the fall, when the office reviews requests for potential legislation. According to McEntire, such a proposal would be discussed for next year's calendar. Francisco Preciado, a 20-year old Stanford student, comments that YUCA intends to

"I commend YUCA for their passion and their commitment..."

propose a time limit on the DTSC decision-making process so that businesses would not be able to operate indefinitely while their expired permits are under review. In the meantime, the Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee is further investigating the situation in East Palo Alto.

Chris Stampolis, the Director of Community Education and Government Relations for Romic Environmental Technologies, said, "Romic applied for the renewal of its permit well before its deadlines to submit the applica-

tion and we continue to seek a cooperative relationship with local residents other businesses and all the government agencies with whom we interact."

Professor Luis R. Fraga of the Stanford University Department of Political Science notes that historically, public officials' response to youth has been largely symbolic. Even so, Fraga notes that public officials have three major incentives to address youth concerns. First, youth are legitimate constituents, and public officials take an oath to serve all of their constituents -

"whether they vote or not is irrelevant." Second, giving attention to youth is potentially good public relations for a political figure. Finally, such attention can be used to impress the youth's parents and other adults with the politician's apparent commitment to the community.

Regardless of the reasons for the attention YUCA has received from policy makers, Fraga points out "what is rare is apparent proof that youth activity has a direct policy impact [in East Palo Alto]."

While some might question how effective young people can be in the political arena, Stampolis said, "I commend YUCA for their passion and their commitment. The ques-

tions their members have raised help the community, the company, and the oversight agencies to communicate better with the residents

Many people would find it daunting to challenge a major corporation and make demands of government officials.

and the other businesses of East Palo Alto.

YUCA has two major campaigns: fighting condo conversion and fighting Romic. Stampolis' praise for YUCA has not stopped the youth group from focusing the bulk of its efforts on the anti-Romic campaign

YUCA has been in East Palo Alto since 1997 with support from The Tides Center, a provider of non-profit infrastructure services. The organization maintains a roster of 50 members of whom 15 are very active.

The group's members range in age from 12 to 19 years old. They participate in YUCA's two main programs, the Fighting Injustice and Regulating Equality (FIRE) Fellowship and the Higher Learning Program. The FIRE Fellowship places young people of color in paid internships with local non-profit organizations that focus on

environmental or social justice. Higher Learning was established by and for high school youth. It has two major campaigns: fighting condo conversion and fighting Romic.

Cynthia Cruz is a 17-year-old senior attending a program at Cañada College. Her involvement with the group began two years ago when she attended a series of workshops on social justice issues. She was hooked from then on. Cruz currently works for YUCA as an Organizing Intern (OI) assisting new members of the group. She also works on YUCA's Romic campaign. Cruz does not worry about her age: "Although you're not old enough to vote, you can still make a difference."

Larissa Marie Flores began to volunteer for YUCA for the first time this summer. In her short time with YUCA, she has already planned and participated in meetings, taken part in rallies, and manned health survey booths. She was even responsible for setting up a meeting here in East Palo Alto between YUCA and the Chief Deputy Director of the DTSC this summer in East Palo Alto. Flores is only 12 years old.

Many people would find it daunting to challenge a major corporation and make

continued on page 17

Housing in East Palo Alto

by Larry Jones
East Palo Alto Today

Former East Palo Alto residents are finding that their new dream houses in other communities are not "home."

In contrast, potential homebuyers seeking homes in East Palo Alto and the neighboring Belle Haven area of Menlo Park find that East Palo Alto is no longer the affordable market that it once was.

Residents are selling their homes...and are using the increased value of their homes to purchase new, often larger homes in Central Valley towns such as Stockton, Merced, or Turlock, if not out of the State completely or in Monterey County communities such as Salinas.

Many longtime residents have found their home values have increased by as much as 10 times. Homes purchased in the 1970's for \$30,000 are almost guaranteed to fetch \$500,000 on East Palo Alto's real estate market.

Residents are using their homes as retirement plans or income during slow economic times. Former Residents find that they can sell their homes in East Palo Alto, and find a newer, larger home in the Central Valley for the same price or less.

But when these residents do move away from East Palo Alto, they move away from the community they called home for decades. They move away from their churches, their barbershops,

and their favorite takeout Fried Fish.

Many come back often, just to attend Sunday church services and to spend time with family and friends. Some residents do regret the move, but take the trade-off of having a larger home that is either brand new, or was recently built (Most homes in East Palo Alto were built in the 1950's.).

"I wanted to have a home that allowed my grandkids to visit, and have room to stay. Plus I just wanted a dream house," said Betty Reeves, 71.

In turn, higher home prices in East Palo Alto have scared away renting residents looking to buy, or those looking for affordable home prices.

Many have given up looking

for homes and have looked into East Bay Communities, such as Richmond, Oakland and San Leandro, where it is still possible to find many homes under \$400,000. It is rare to see a Single Family Home for sale under \$400,000.

People who have looked in other Peninsula communities, such as Menlo Park and San Mateo, have turned to East Palo Alto as the last bastion of "affordable" housing on the Peninsula. East Palo Alto is one of the few communities on the Peninsula where homes still sell for under \$500,000. Daly City still has homes that sell for under \$500,000 but East Palo Alto's climate is considered much Better than Daly City.

This trend has been slowing lately because of the economic turndown, which has affected the Silicon Valley extremely hard. More homes are languishing on the market for 6 months or more.

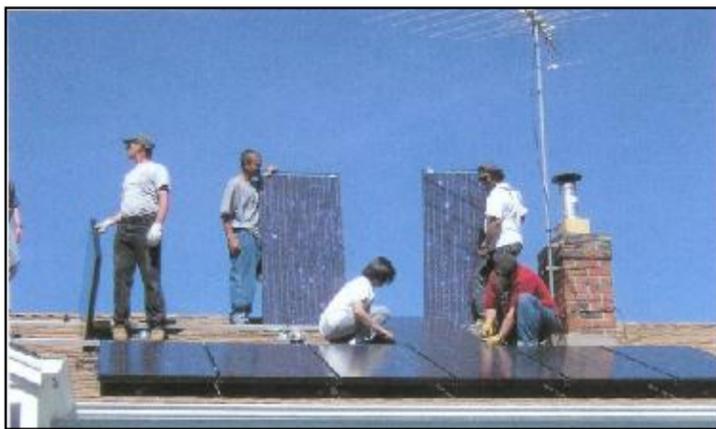
Current sellers are unpleasantly surprised when they don't get the instant sales at their asking price or multiple bids. They are finding they may have to lower their asking price to sell their homes. It gives time for some to reconsider moving away from East Palo Alto, whether the move away is really worthwhile.

Larry Jones is a former East Palo Alto resident who moved to Union City. Larry is a graduate of the EPA Center's Mentorship Training Program.

Saving Money with Solar Power

Erica Mackie
East Palo Alto Today
Contributor

An innovative new program is making solar power affordable for low-income families in San Mateo County. The Solar Affordable Housing Program trains volunteers to install solar electric systems for income qualified homeowners.



Volunteers installing solar panels

GRID
The program is operated by GRID Alternatives, a non-profit organization working to bring the benefits of renewable energy and ener-

gy efficiency to underserved communities.

By combining free installation with rebates and tax credits available from the

State and Federal governments, and by financing the remaining cost with a low interest loan, homeowners can reduce their annual

electric costs by 50% without having to put down any money up front. A typical solar electric system consisting of 12 panels will save approximately \$385 per year.

Savings

As electricity prices continue to rise, these savings add up, and over the 30-40 year life of the system, homeowners can expect to achieve over \$8,000 in net savings.

Besides for savings money, solar is an environmentally friendly power. It is entirely renewable, and it produces no pollution or greenhouse gas emissions.

GRID Alternatives is still

looking for homeowners to participate in the program, particularly in East Palo Alto. To qualify for the program, homeowners must meet income qualifications, and the home must have a roof suitable for solar.

Contact GRID Alternatives at 510-764-1131 or info@gridalternatives.org if you are interested in participating in the program.

Readers can also find more information at the organization's web site <http://www.gridalternatives.org/>

Erica Mackie is a GRID staff member.

Saving the Home

by Rose Bickerstaff
East Palo Alto Today

Recently a client approached me to list her property for sale. Now, I am as happy to list a property as the next real estate agent. But, after listening to her story, I had to tell her to wait. It would be wrong to quickly list and sell her property.

You see, she was receiving public benefits. A widow and senior citizen, with almost no income and erratic health, she relied on her public health care benefits.

She is allowed to own a home and remain eligible for benefits. But a hasty sale of her home would have left her with more than \$2,000, and no health care coverage.

Several weeks at Stanford would then wipe out her small, lifetime's nest egg. At the same time, she was tired of the upkeep required by a home.



Bickerstaff

Working with capable counsel, we were able to help her achieve her real estate goals. She was able to sell her home.

The sales proceeds were held in a unique type of trust. Because of the special drafting involved, the proceeds were not deemed to be hers and, so, did not make her ineligible for benefits.

At the same time, the transaction took account of, and minimized, taxes on the sale. And our client maintained her benefits without interruption.

Buying and selling a home are the biggest financial events in the lives of most of us. Make sure you have all the facts before selling your home.

Rose Bickerstaff has been a Realtor for more than 25 years. She specializes in serving the East Palo Alto community on purchases, sales, and exchanges of residential and commercial property. You can reach her at 650.325.5478.

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