

EPA Adopting Nairobi Name

By DAVID JOHNSTON
Mercury Staff Writer

EAST PALO ALTO — Black businessmen here are renaming their businesses with the word "Nairobi" in an effort to change, through common usage, this community's name.

Already six businesses have "Nairobi" in their name, several new ones will have it when they open and others may be renamed. Businessmen at University Avenue Shopping Center are dickering with the center's owner to change the name to "Nairobi Shopping Center."

"Common usage is what established what it is called," says Mrs. Wilia Gray of the Neighborhood Health Center. "If the common usage changes the name will change," she says.

Last Nov. 5 voters rejected by a 2-1 margin a proposal to rename this unincorporated community's municipal council the Nairobi Municipal Council.

"The old people turned it down. They were told the name change would mean people wouldn't move here and property values would go down," says Patrick Brock, co-owner of the Nairobi Village Cleaners.

Brock was the first to change

his firm's name last spring. He will soon open a record shop. It will be called Nairobi House of Music.

Other businesses with the new name are Oja Nairobi, a dress shop; Nairobi Community Bookstore; Joe's Nairobi Lounge; Nairobi Bailbonds and the "Nairobi Shop" in Chuck Steven's Store for Men.

The dress shop, bookstore and men's store are decked out in Afro-style interiors. Bamboo poles, leopard skins, face masks and thatching on the walls mark the interior of each.

The Black Community Relations Assn. hopes to open a Nairobi Cultural Center in a house at 1590 Bay Rd.

Robert Hoover, a trustee of Ravenswood Elementary School District, has also proposed renaming the district after the Kenya capital. Several businessmen said a movement is also under way to rename Ravenswood High School for either the late Dr. Martin Luther King or Nairobi.

Donald Ried, the technical writer who originally proposed the renaming of East Palo Alto,

says he couldn't be more pleased with the rechristening of businesses.

Ried originally proposed the name Nairobi because of its "fairly common usage in English — in movies about safaris and even an airline commercial."

"Really this isn't East Palo Alto," says bookstore owner Mrs. Ronny Holliday. "It's East of Palo Alto. All the cities around here are oriented around a European accent. We want one that is accented around Africans."

DMV Offices Open Tomorrow

All Department of Motor Vehicles offices will be open to morrow from 8 a.m. to noon for motorists to register their automobiles, trucks and motorcycles for 1969. Deadline for renewals without penalty in Tuesday.

Kane Sworn

REDWOOD CITY — Robert F. Kane, 42, became San Mateo County's 12th superior court judge Thursday.

Kane was sworn into office by Justice Murray Draper in ceremonies late Wednesday in the courtroom of Superior Judge James O'Keefe.



TREND — Nairobi is steadily becoming more popular in names of East Palo Alto busi-

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nesses. Here Melville Hall and Jamison Conley put up sign denoting Nairobi Community Bookstore. In same

building is Oja Nairobi, a women's clothing store. Oja is Swahili for marketing.

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