THE REPROGRE March 1984 Volume 2, Number 2

City Hires New Manager



Frederick A. Howell

By Nick Alexander

rederick A. Howell, the director of community development for the city of Davis, has been named East Palo Alto Manager. The announce-ment, made at the February 7 city council meeting, came after a careful screening of applicants for the post from throughout California, the Midwest, and the East Coast.

"I'm very excited about the opportunity to build my own organization and build my own system," said the 45-year old city planner whose con-tract with the city is for three years. 'Typically, a city manager is hired to replace another one, and a staff is already in place."

Before taking his three year position as top city planner at Davis, How-ell worked for San Mateo, where officials say he established himself as a resourceful and respected senior planner. He was also active in com-munity affairs there, leading the effort to build the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center and heading a coalition of third world organizations called the Community Workers Program

Howell's appointment, which begins March 1, sets the final stage for the city's independence from under San Mateo County's administration of basic municipal services. The city man-ager's office will oversee the hiring of the staff for the Departments of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Public Safety, as well as Budget and Finance, and Planning and Development, and will assume a permanent administrative role over those divisions.

Security Deposits Belong to Renters

By Glenda Jones

Security deposit, cleaning deposit —call it what you will—it belongs to the renter. Many people have lost sight of the purpose for such a deposit. it's to guarantee the property owner some protection from tenants who negligently or irresponsibly damage the property. It cannot be used to cover the routine maintenance and cleaning. That is the owner's responsibility. Too often, the security deposit does just that, and most tenants think they have no recourse

Tenants Can Protect Themselves

There are several things tenants can do to ensure fairness in the refund of their deposit when they leave a place.

One. Be sure to come to an agree-ment with the landlord about the condition of the apartment. Write down the things that may cause disagreement later and be sure both parties sign and have copies.

Two. Find out what is expected for the full refund reimbursement. Make it more specific than "leave it like you found it." Tenants are not responsible for normal wear and aging. That's what the rent money pays for. But some owners want to use your security deposit to help pay for replacing things that just wear out. Three. Have a friend see the place

before you move in and when you leave. A third party can be helpful if disagreements occur. Take snapshots of the place before and after.

Four. Keep copies of rent receipts and rental agreements.

Five. Make clear to the owner that you expect a full refund and are cleaning the apartment with that goal in mind

Six. If all this fails and you feel you have not received a fair amount of your refund and the landlord won't listen to reason, you have recourse to Small Claims Court.

How To Go To Small Claims Court

For residents of East Palo Alto the Small Claims Court office is in the old court house at 750 Middlefield Road, Redwood City (363-4303). The people in the office are helpful in explaining the procedure. Remember, this court is for people who are not lawye

You do need to be prepared to tell your story to a judge. Have all documents relative to your case ready to



Beautiful weather has come early this year affecting us with spring fever.

be submitted into evidence. It's a good idea to practice your case ahead of time. You make a better impression if you are organized and concise. Take your witness, photos, anything else

relevant to your case. It Happened Like This . . . Recently, a tenant moving out of the Manhattan Apartments (Apt. 26) Continued from page 3

Do You Know Who Invented The Real McCoy?

By Carmeleit Oakes An you picture a large city without the safety of traffic signals? When you enjoy the delectable jello desserts, sweet concoctions, and yes, even carbonated drinks, do you

ever wonder how they came about? Do you know of the many uses of the gas mask? (Men trapped in mines or tunnels; fire-trapped victims saved from thick, suffocating gases and smoke; soldiers attacked by poisonous gasses on the battlefield). Indeed, many time-saving, life-saving devices we take for granted are the results of the inquiring, inventive minds of Black Americans whose contributions to science and industry went almost unnoticed due to racial prejudice.

Dig deep into the life of Garrett A. Morgan, a pioneer in industrial safety.

"The REAL McCOY invented automatic lubrication."

This self-educated, creative man was deeply concerned about the welfare of Black people. He forced the city of Cleveland to recognize his invention of the gas mask when an explosion occurred below the city streets. He started his own newspaper to publicize Black achievements. Little did he know he was preparing the groundwork for the success of a Black mayor



(Stokes) years later.

The expression "It's the real McCoy" has become a part of our everyday language, but how many of us know how it came to be used? Elijah McCoy believed there was a better way to oil and lubricate machin-

ery than by shutting down the entire plant. His idea was to make lubrication automatic. He called the device the "lubricating cup." It caused peothe "lubricating cup. It caused peo-ple, when inspecting a piece of new machinery, to ask, "Is it the real McCoy?" Today this expression is used to indicate authenticity.

It was Jan Matzeliger whose shoe-lasting machine led to the mass pro-duction of shoes; Andrew J. Beard whose patented device secured railroad cars by merely bumping them together; Norbert Rillieux who invented the evaporator process used in the sugar industry; Granville Woods who invented the railway communications system; and that great draftsman Lewis Latimer who patented a drawing of the first telephone, as well as the first incandescent electric light bulb

"Patents of Black inventors involved egg beater, folding bed, ironing board . . .'

Many of the patents of Black inventors involved simple household conveniences: the egg beater, folding bed, ice cream mold, ironing board, just to mention a few. Black History Month, the brainchild

of Carter G. Woodson, is a constant reminder to all Americans of a people whose achievements have made the job of many of us easier, have saved countless lives, indeed have altered Continued from page 3

Sanitation Improvements Save Money **By Duane Bay**

s the rainy season began, the East A Palo Alto Sanitary District finished phase two of its modernization pro-gram. Old lines on O'Connor, Pulgas, and Green streets have been replaced with larger new lines. Most of the groundwater leaking into the system has been eliminated. All lines running below sea level and most lines running within five feet of sea level have en sealed.

Last year groundwater accounted for at least 20% of the water the Dis-trict paid to have treated at the Palo Alto treatment plant. Savings due to reduction in groundwater will pay for the sealing costs in three years. The sealing not only saves money, but allows extra capacity. The system is now only using less than 60% of its treatment plant maximum capacity down from nearly 80% a year ago.

In the first phase of the modernization program the District adopted a written operations code for the first time in District history, and introduced connection fees to insure that developers of new buildings would help pay for the installed lines. The District also developed a Master Plan which included projections of sewage treatment and line capacity needs for the next 25 years using the Community Plan as a base. The Master Plan also outlined a workplan for upgrading the system to provide the needed future capacity.

In the final phases of the moderni-zation workplan scheduled for the next two years, the District will finish upgrading lines, complete negotiations for increased treatment plant capacity, and bring full service to the industrial area at the end of Bay Road.

2 The East Palo Alto Progress, March 1984



On April 10 an election will be held that will decide if the "Rent Stabiliza-tion and Just Cause Eviction" ordinance is to be enacted. The referendum was forced by the East Palo Alto Property Rights Committee, a group bankrolled by absentee landlords in the Palo Alto Parks Association. The campaign against rent control is being waged with allegations that the ordinance will bring devastating financial effects to the city. The following was written to the Peninsula Times Tribune by resident Duane Bay, a member of the East Palo Alto Planning Commission, in response to a letter by Edrick Haggans, spokesperson for the Rights committee.

Letter to the Editor:

I wish to refute several misleading notions put forth by Mr. Haggans in his recent letter concerning rent control in East Palo Alto. His conjecture about severe revenue loss due to property tax base erosion is misin-formed. His calculation of "who's got the mandate" overlooks the fact that the margin of victory for the current City Council majority came from cross-over voting by anti-incorporation voters who doubted the quality

Jackson Campaign Not In Jest

Much debate on whether a Black candidate should enter the primaries as the representative of all Blacks turned on whether or not such a strategy would advance Black political interests. It was generally agreed that such a candidacy would be symbolic, in the sense that the candidate would not be likely to win the nomination.

Now that Jesse Jackson has officially entered the race, such considerations are academic. There is a Black candidate running now, and there is agreement that while the candidacy entails high risks, there may be some positives as well.

The risks are familiar such as weakening other candidates with a better chance to win who would favor policies Blacks want, and stimulating an anti-Black backlash. The benefits are

of their own leadership. His identifi-

cation of property rights as a basic issue is on target; his conclusions in this regard are wrong and wrong-headed. Let me explain each of these

three points briefly. Petition Signatures Are as Cheap as Votes Are Dear

About the mandate. Mr. Haggans calls the 2000 referendum signatures a mandate. We all know that petition signatures are as cheap as votes are dear, so lets calculate mandate not from the work of paid petition gatherers, but from actual balloting behavior in the last election.

In a well publicized election that could not have been closer, ten proincorporation candidates faced off against half as many opposition can-didates for five seats. Arithmetic says the "pro" vote should have been split and the opposition slate should have won. Why didn't they win? Because some voters who doubted the wisdom of incorporation nonetheless preferred the leadership of those candidates who are now the Council major-ity. In fact, vote tallies from the twelve East side "homeowner" precincts show the opposition frontrunner, Mrs Wilks, in sixth place. What makes Mr. Haggans think that voters who crossed over despite disagreement with candidates on an issue as important as incorporation would embarass their new City by recalling those they

familiar, most especially sharply increased Black voter registration and political participation.

The Black share of the voting age population that actually votes is smaller than the white one. There is a persistent gap of about 10 percentage points. In the 1980 elections, for example, about half of the eligible Blacks and 60 percent of eligible whites voted.

The growing realization of that unused political strength has led to massive voter education drives. As a result in the 1982 congressional election the gap was down to only 7 percentage points. In 1982 many voters went to the

polls to express their feelings about the change in national policies on civil rights and the economy, raising the question of whether it is necessary to have a Black candidate running to increase Black voter turnout.

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chose?

Letters To The Editor

Property Taxes Account For Only 30% of City's Revenue

About property taxes. The two years of moderate rent control established by the Council to provide some transitional stability for tenants will have little permanent effect on property tax revenue for two reasons.

First, almost all of the tax base increase over the next five years will come from turnover of houses which have not been sold (and therefore have not been reassessed even though their value has at least doubled) since Proposition 13. Most of these houses are single family units which are not affected by rent control.

Second, even if the tax base were affected, property taxes account for only 30 percent of the City's revenue.

Finally, about property rights. Property value derives from exercise of property rights. Particularly, in our current political system, from the right to participate in democratic processes which influence the use and value of one's property. Through incorporation we have regained access to exer-cise of our full powers in this regard.

We Now Have The Means

To Shape The Future Although we may not be able to regain valuable industrial and recreational land lost to surrounding com-munities, and will have to suffer a twice daily partitioning of our town

There can be no doubt that a Black candidate will help get many to the polls who otherwise might opt out of the political process. It will not be enough, however, to simply assume that a Jesse Jackson candidacy will automatically result in higher Black voting.

Grassroots coalitions to register voters must increase their efforts and not trust to chance; for no matter how interested people become in the primaries, it will take a lot of hard work to make sure they vote! All Americans regardless of color

and political persuasion, should welcome Jackson's entry into the presi-dential sweepstakes as an expression of the rights of anyone who meets the constitutional requirements of age and citizenship, to run for office. At the same time, all Blacks must be wary of allowing this candidacy to split the community along partisan political

by the Dumbarton Bridge traffic we sought to divert, and while we must work uphill to battle the "crime in the street legacy of previously ineffectual area management, we now have the

means to shape the future. Thoughtful zoning, crime control, and responsible development of a commercial sector and job-providing light industry will influence property values ever so much more than a temporary moderate rent control. So it is ironic that the very people who now talk "property rights" worked so hard to block Cityhood—worked to block access to the political channel through which those rights are secured!

In retrospect the big hidden issue in the incorporation election may have been rent control; without the nonsensical "save our homes" cam-paign financed by the apartment house owners the election would not have been close at all. But this time the issue isn't really rent control (less than thirty percent East Palo Alto residents own housing covered by rent control).

The issue is self-determination. In a word it is power. The question is whether we will allow ourselves to be fooled by a coalition of well financed non-resident apartment house owners and a few local politicians who chose to jump off the incorporation ship rather than share the helm.

lines. Many leading Black politicians have misgivings about the candidacy and even endorsed others. Their belief that the best strategy for Blacks is to have a strong presence in the camp of each of the serious contenders for the presidency must be respected.

It will be interesting to see how the media will treat this candidacy. The first flush of coverage probably indi-cates media finally having a candidate in the race who promises good copy and colorful quotes. But the real test of media maturity will lie in how it covers the entire campaign. It must give Jackson's candidacy the same coverage and respect it gives to other candidates including many who have far less of a chance to win and a lot less reason to run than Jackson does.

Register To Vote! Maxine Blayburn 663 Moorpark Way, Unit 10 Mountain View, CA

Press Release Jesse Jackson for President Committee

The caucus to recommend delegates pledged to Rev. Jesse Jackson at the Democratic Party National Convention will be held Sunday, March 11 at East Palo Alto City Council Building, 2415 University Avenue, East Palo Alto: California.

Any Democrat registered to vote in the 11th Congressional District, which includes cities from East Palo Alto to South San Francisco, who is willing to sign a card pledging support for Jesse Jackson's candidacy for President is eligible to vote at the caucus. Registration at the caucus will start at 1:00 p.m. and close promptly at 3:00 p.m.

Your 11th Congressional District will have five delegates and two alternates to the Convention. For addi-tional information about the Jackson caucus in your Congressional District, call the Caucus Convenor, Virgil Boyd, Jr. at 323-5861 or 325-8558. For Additional Information:

Glenda Savage at 321-8067 or 364-6104 for press contact; Nobantu Ankoanda at 323-5861 for Congressional District Coordinator for the 11th Con-gressional District.

Mailing Address: Peninsulans for a Rainbow Coalition P.O. Box 51562 East Palo Alto, California 94303

THEM BELLS

by Elmo Malveaux

Them freedom bells were ringing, it rung as brothers and sisters sifted through the sands of racism, poverty and insanity only

to find there lives threatened.

Them bells rung when Jesus spoke of love ringing as a mother looked with tear filled eyes at her son on a cross

Them bells rung as Malcolm X spoke of exploitation and Martin Luther King said, "I have a dream, ringing again as onlookers gathered around the bullet filled bodies of Malcolm X and King

from assassins' shots.

We heard them bells in Mississippi 1964 when three civil rights workers James Chanev. Michael Schewerner and Andrew Goodman was murdered.

Them bells rung for religious freedom and for Black Folks to eat and ride where they pleased and the enactment of civil right.

As I met my brother on the street bruised and battered in a fight from the night before and the smell of wine on his breath, I wonder does he hear them bells.

Have we told our children of RACISM and EXPLOITATION out there, down the street and around the corner, do We hear them bells?

They made it a lot better but we got to listen listen . . listen

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A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To A Friend's Place .

By Ron Drake

recently went to visit an apartment-dwelling friend of mine in East Palo Alto. I walked up to the entrance and tried the intercom but got no answer. I was in the process of trying again when a tenant appeared from the stairwell and let himself out.

"Doggone thing hasn't worked in months," he said. "You'll probably have to call your friend from a phone booth.

The night was foggy and pitchdark. The only illumination was from the lobby light, and seeing no phone and no sign of my friend in his second-story window, I turned up my

"Hey, you!" I've learned not to respond to voices that don't sound familiar, that don't call me by name or address me with some bit of courtesy, but this one was different. It grabbed me like a hand on the scruff of my neck.

Yeah, I'm talking to you!'

I looked back into the apartment building to see if my friend was play-ing a practical joke but that wasn't it. The voice was tinny and metallic like a poor quality transistor radio.

You're that guy that talks to houses, ain'cha?"

"Not when I can help it." (I was now addressing the "broken" intercom box. I was also scanning the upper floors in search of the joker with the weird sense of humor).

"Oh, so you're too good to talk to an apartment building. Is that it? Land-lords and all that. You can talk to a single-family dwelling but not me, you

"Wait a minute! I've had just about enough of you. Now, I've lived in an apartment myself and I happen to think .

"Some of your best friends are apartments, right?" "If you don't lighten up, I'm gonna

take a screwdriver to you and see how you like it. Now just calm down and tell me what your problem is." (The anti-incorporation people have our housing stock in an uproar-first a house on Alberni yelling "save our homes" and now this).

'I got one question: why rent control? It's rough enough getting my owner to keep me up now without rent control. Just what gives you folks the right to take money from his pocket?'

"What gives him the right to take money from our pockets? We're just people trying to make a living and some of us just barely doing that. We agree to live in the building and abide by the rules and pay the rent. The landlord agrees to maintain the building for the good of everybody. As long as everything remains reasonable, nobody's got a beef.

"So?" 'So, before cityhood, landlords had the right to just about whatever they pleased and if it wasn't reasonable, tough stuff'." Sure, you've got county and state codes but who's going to come and defend Selma Citizen and

her three kids after they've been evicted for protesting a thirty percent hike in rent? Who's going to get after your landlord if he lets the garbage pile up? We have private citizens ready and willing to do it but they can only do so much. But you've got fand-lords actually curtailing freedom of speech! What kind of power is that? Somebody in the building says some-thing pro-rent control or is seen readliterature favoring the new city ing and they can get thrown out!" "Oh, come on . . ."

"Don't tell me it can't happen. Don't tell me it can't. We need that balance of power. Some landlords and tenants are good people but a lot of them both bear watching. The landlords have their money and the courts. The tenants need organization and a strong local govern .

The intercom popped, sputtered and coughed. It was suddenly quiet. And standing there in the dim light was a lady with a bag of groceries and a three-year old. She had her hand in her purse and an "I-mean-business, fool" look on her face.

"Er. . . ahhh. . . I was, uhh . . . talk-g to . . errr . . . good night." I had given her a wide berth and ing to . .

was hurrying down the walk when I heard the little girl say: "See, momma. I told you it talks.

The little box can

'Stop that foolishness and go on upstairs

Foolishness, indeed . . .

East Palo Alto Rent Stabilization Board Presents a

Council Names Commission Members

recent weeks the City Council established three important govern-mental bodies: the Planning Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Rent Mediation Board. Selection of commissioners was based on assessments of written applications and interviews

The Planning Commission holds hearings on zoning matters, generates proposals to facilitate the growth and beautification of the city, and will prepare a general master plant to guide East Palo Alto's future development. Appointed to the seven member Commission were Tikisa Anderson, Duane Bay, Onyango Bashir, Midge Dorn, Melvin Harris, Joseph Goodwill, and Hortense Wright.

INVENTIONS

Continued from page 1

the course of history. When we consider the legal and social obstacles thee people encountered, it is little wonder that so few verifiable Black inventions ever surfaced. Read more about these gifted Black inventors who faced overwhelm-ing odds, hostility, and derision. Be inspired! You'll be glad you did.

The East Palo Alto Progress

A non-profit monthly community news paper serving East Palo Alto, California Persons interested in contributing articles, photography, or poetry may do so by submitting them to The East Alto Progress.

Editors: Elena Becks, Glenda Jones, Bob Lowe, Barbara Mouton, Carmeleit Oakes, Carlos Romero Contributors: Ron Drake, Cynthia

Ellwood, Elmo Malveaux, Nick Alexander, Lon Otterby, Catherine Jones, Jawanza Osayimwese, Duane Bay, Maxine Blayburn

P.O. Box 51203 East Palo Alto, CA 94303

The Parks and Recreation Commission, according to the ordinance that established it, "shall review programs and policies relating to recreation, parks, camps and public greenery and shall advise the city council on these matters." Members are Akil Ajamu, Elizabeth Brown-Dean, Richard Craven, Norman Fontaine, Maria Ibarra. and Bradford Stamper

The Rent Mediation Board is charged with upholding rent legisla-tion and working to settle disputes between landlords and tenants. It comprises Roy L. Adger (landlord), Raymond Askew (homeowner), Joseph L. Blakey (renter), David L. Cox (renter), Ruthie Renee Glover (ren-ter), Robert E. Reynolds (landlord), and Carlos Romero (homeowner).

Workshop & Question and **Answer Session**

on

Rent Stabilization Ordinance 17-83

Temporary Rent Stabilization Ordinance 30-83

Friday, March 23, 6:30 p.m.

East Palo Alto Municipal Services Building, 2415 University EPA

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DEPOSITS Continued from page 1

found herself being charged for a broken freezer door that was broken when she move in. She had wirtten it down on her rental agreement, which the manager had signed. Thirty dollars was deducted from

her security deposit to pay for that door. The owner refused to talk to her about it after repeated attempts to settle it with him.

Feeling this was totally unfair, she went to Small Claims Court and was awarded the \$30 plus \$20 court costs.

If tenants make strong claims for the return of **their** money, maybe landlords will be less likely to get away with making unilateral decisions about the refund.



"Power Concedes Nothing Without A Demand" Last of A Six-Part Series on the History of East Palo Alto . . .

While the attainment of cityhood in June 1983 was perhaps the most significant milestone in East Palo Alto's history, the incorporation effort of 1958 had been a milestone of a different sort. Its failure marked how many miles the community had to go

"Failure to incorporate opened East Palo Alto to another land grab."

in order to exercise some control over its future.

As has been noted over the previous two installments of this series, supporters of incorporation in 1958 mainly included Black residents (then less than 25% of East Palo Alto's population) and whites who belonged to civil rights organizations. As in the election of 1983, proponents sought a police force accountable to East Palo Alto; wanted control over zoning, development, and annexations; and desired all the other prerogatives of self-government. Opponents, however, motivated by racism and/or economic self-interest, carried the day and opened up East Palo Alto to another big land grab.

another big land grab. Having already seized East Palo Alto's land west of Willow Road as well as the area between Willow and Menalto during the years 1949-56, Menlo Park now annexed Clarence Kavanaugh's 100 acre industrial park, located just north of Bay Road. The assessed valuation of that parcel was \$200,000 in 1958 even though only four acres has been developed. As corporations found homes there, the tract created a bonanza in tax monies for Menlo Park, leaving residents of East Palo Alto with increased traffic, noise, and pollution. Indeed, the Menlo Business Park (Dumbarton Distribution Center), and its attendant problems, is a legacy of events that transpired in 1958.

In addition to the loss of the Kavanaugh tract, a 100 home area on the west side of the freeway, including some of the most valuable residential property in East Palo Alto, had joined Menlo Park by 1960. And in 1963 the

"Loss of airport, yacht harbor and golf course deprived Ravenswood School District."

Menalto Creek was diverted to change the boundary between East Palo Alto and Palo Alto. As a result East Palo Alto lost the airport, yacht harbor and golf course—thus depriving the Ravenswood Elementary School District of a significant revenue source. Between 1958 and the drive for incorporation that began in 1980, residents of East Palo Alto increasingly strove for educational, economic, and political self-determination. While the particulars of this more recent past will be discussed in future series on the history of East Palo Alto, certain lessons from 1958 and before are applicable to today's situation.

The first lesson is that the failure to acquire self-government results in the inability to use the community's resources for its own benefit. This should be obvious, but over the past thirty years many with racist and some with colonized mentalities have felt that outside interests could better guard and develop these resources than members of the community. The record of county rule discloses no such competence or altruism.

Secondly, efforts in behalf of selfdetermination invariably meet resistance from those with privilege and power. The decisive antagonists to cityhood in 1954 and 1958 were corporation owners who wanted to avoid taxation. Since the enactment of Proposition 13, however, those companies remaining in East Palo Alto have had no such fears. Instead, landlords were the most relentless foes of the latest incorporation drive because they realized that a city government would enact some form of rent control. In all these cases, major antagonists (with only a couple of exceptions) did not live in East Palo Alto and consequently had no motive for being concerned with the quality of residential and civic life. They did have a financial motive for avoiding all forms of regulation.

Finally, to quote Frederick Douglass, "Power concedes nothing without a demand." In years past the "demand" for self-determination was not strong enough to triumph over the "power"

"Antagonists to incorporation had financial motive to avoid regulation."

of those who benefited from the exploitation of the community. With the June 1983 election, "power" was forced to concede.

The achievement of cityhood does not automatically put an end to those forces that would undermine it through legal action and propaganda. The acheivement of cityhood will not instantly, if ever, transform East Palo Alto into a haven of affluence. But looking at this achievement from the vantage point of the past, it becomes an unprecedented victory that provides the structures and releases the energies needed to create a more humanized future.

