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## Palo Alto Online News

Uploaded: Wednesday, February 10, 2010, 9:02 AM

### Closing the 'digital divide' east of Bayshore

One East Palo Alto celebrates 10 years of increasing online community-building

A decade ago East Palo Alto embarked on an effort to "close the digital divide" that was separating less-affluent communities and minority cultures from the Online Age.

Tuesday night about 50 people celebrated the successful launching of a community-wide Wi-Fi and broadband access system -- called "Digital Village" -- for both East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park, with a dinner and presentation at the East Palo Alto City Hall.

The goal was to make disadvantaged communities "totally technology enriched and enabled" under a national technology-stimulus program of the Clinton Administration, with a huge local boost from Palo Alto-based Hewlett Packard Co. and, more recently, Google, the California Emerging Technology Fund and many individuals.

Faye McNair-Knox, Ph.D., of One East Palo Alto outlined the path of what is now becoming "Wi-Fi 101," and recognized those who made the progress possible. [\(See video\)](#)

She said some in the community a decade ago wanted to make the "digital divide" reputation go away.

"Ten years later I'm proud to say that the East Palo Alto Digital Village is still alive and well and cooking," she said.

More needs to be done, but much has been done, she said, adding that one goal is to find better ways to reach out to persons with disabilities to help them link into the Internet in ways to help their lives.

*Video segment produced by Jesus Hernandez and Soli Tuulaupua of [www.epa.net](http://www.epa.net).*

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## Comments

Posted by MENLO, a resident of Menlo Park, on Feb 11, 2010 at 8:29 am

KUDOS to Dr. McNair-Knox, I remember you from 1978 when you came to Belle Haven and we had our first play.

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Posted by JMasonEPA, a resident of East Palo Alto, on Feb 11, 2010 at 8:42 pm

KUDOS to East Palo Alto and the many who made this possible. Wish the dinner had more than 50 people, we get that at the scene of a shooting in the middle of the night-I don't remember it being publicized as much as shootings though..maybe I just missed it.

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Posted by Walter\_E\_Wallis, a resident of the Midtown neighborhood, on Feb 13, 2010 at 7:13 pm  
Walter\_E\_Wallis is a member (registered user) of Palo Alto Online

Had it not been for the Ravenswood diaspora and the Tinsley brain-drain, EPA would have retained the Nerdy nucleus necessary to encourage technical interest.

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