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Los Altos for Racial Equity Newsletter - Issue #4

1 message

LARE via ActionNetwork.org <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>

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Hi Tanya!



April 2022 Issue 4

Los Altos for Racial Equity (LARE) is a group of Los Altos residents who share a commitment to the work of social justice. The mission of **LARE** is to advocate for all people, especially Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) who live, work, and play in Los Altos and surrounding communities, to be treated equitably in all aspects of their lives.

Issue Highlights

April is National Poetry Month and Autism Awareness Month

A young girl, around the age of 7 years old, was taken from her home in Senegal/Gambia, West Africa, and put on a ship set to travel across the Middle Passage to the shores of

Boston. In the month of August, 1761, this young frail girl was purchased as a domestic by the Wheatley family and given her first name, Phillis, after the cargo ship that brought her to Boston. Recognizing the spirit of young Phillis, the Wheatleys decided to allow her how to read and write.

Phillis Wheatley is best known for her poem, "An Elegiac Poem, on the Death of that Celebrated Divine, and Eminent Servant of Jesus Christ, the Reverend and Learned George Whitefield," written in 1770. Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral was circulated in 1773 and was the first published volume of poetry by an African American in modern times. To read more about Phillis Wheatley click [here](#).

Haymarket Books has compiled a diverse [list](#) of books for Poetry Month.

"Poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence." -- Audre Lorde

During Autism Awareness Month (and hereafter):

- Listen to Autistic people's voices
 - Celebrate Neurodiversity
 - Share posts by Autistic People
 - Consider Autism acceptance and not simply Autism awareness
 - Some autistic people prefer to be classed as 'Autistic' or 'Autistic person' rather than 'a person with Autism'. Ask which term is preferred.
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Local Issues

Housing

By now you have probably heard a lot about the housing needs in Los Altos. Hopefully, you have attended informational meetings, popups, and/or participated in the walking tour which identified potential sites for housing, Some factors supporting the need for more housing are:

- Adult children can live near their elder parents
- Starter homes will encourage young families to move in and neighborhood schools can stay open

- City Workers (caregivers, firefighters, police, teachers, retail employees) can live where they work
- Small businesses can thrive
- This will create more walkable and bike-able neighborhoods

For up to date information on housing in Los Altos visit these two websites: [Los Altos Affordable Housing](#) and [Los Altos Housing Element](#). Some LARE members are contributing many hours with these groups to bring affordable housing to Los Altos.



Water in the creek at Redwood Grove!

Arts, Events & Culture

The ACLU of Northern California started a podcast in February called 'Gold Chains Podcast'. This podcast addresses the misnomer that California came into the Union as a free state as part of the Compromise of 1850. Ironically, in 1850 California passed laws that stripped African Americans of their civil rights. The pilot podcast was titled, "California Fugitive Slave Law". Fugitive slave laws allowed white enslavers to recapture the formerly enslaved who traveled to California, a supposed free state. The California legislature also tried to block African American migration to California five times between 1849 and 1858. The second podcast is called, "Black Testimony Matters", which tells the story of George Gordon, a barber in San Francisco, who, because he was Black, was unable to testify in court, vote, or send his child to public school. To listen to the first two podcasts click [here](#).

Ethnic Studies

On March 7th at 7pm the MVLA Board of Trustees received an update on the progress of the Ethnic Studies program scheduled to begin for 9th graders in the 2022-23 school year. From the March edition of the MVLA Magazine, "Ethnic Studies is the interdisciplinary study of race and ethnicity, emphasizing the experiences and contributions of people of color in the United States. As part of the coursework, students will develop a deeper understanding of historical and contemporary movements for social change and ways to challenge racism and discrimination and positively transform their communities." To view this presentation to the MVLA Board click [here](#) and fast forward to approximately 37:50.

Earth Day 2022



[Earth Day](#) this year falls on Friday, April 22nd. The theme for this year's Earth Day is 'Invest in our Planet'. We can all let our local and state representatives know Climate Change is a priority for us with letters and phone calls. We can also reduce our use of single use plastics and plastic bags. [Some facts about plastic pollution](#):

- This year, five trillion plastic bags will be used. That's 160,000 every second!
- The amount of single-use plastics used globally has tripled since the start of the pandemic, with takeout orders driving the increase.
- In the U.S., we throw away more than 50 billion coffee cups every year. These are coated with plastic to laminate the inside and use plastic lids.

[Take a quiz](#) and select one or two things you pledge to do differently to protect our planet.

"Every moment is an organizing opportunity, every person a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world." - Dolores Huerta

Have you read...?

Have you read this poem by [Charlene Carruthers](#) titled, "a poem for you"?

Drag me

call out my shine

sharp corners

soft rounds and niceties.

bring me

awareness

and sonic

riding.

you know.

we both know,

in surrender

more space

exists

more ground

becomes possible

transformation stakes her position

even in chaos, uncertainty and fear

we -- can, bloom.

Important Dates

- Thursday, 4/7: Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson became the first Black woman to be nominated to serve on the United States Supreme Court
- Tuesday, 4/12, 7pm: City Council Meeting ([recording](#))

Upcoming Dates

- Thursday, 4/21, 4pm - 8pm: Opening Day of the 2022 Farmer's Market
- Friday, 4/22: Earth Day 2022 -[52 ways to get involved](#)
- Tuesday, 4/26, 7pm: [City Council Meeting](#)
- Tuesday, 4/26, 4pm: [Joint City Council and Planning Commission Meeting](#)
- Permanent COVID-19 testing Booth, M-F, 7:30am - 3:30pm at the Los Altos Community Center. [Signups](#)

How Can You Help?

Read more about LARE on our [website](#) and follow us on social media (Instagram, Facebook), @losaltosforracialequity. LARE has several Working Groups focused on the following areas: Accountable Governance, Policing & School Resource Officers (SROs), Housing, Education, Environment, Community Support, and Arts and Events. If one or more of these Working Groups resonate with you and you would like to participate in making change happen in our community, reach out to us and let us know how you can help! We are looking forward to hearing from you!



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