

## USCG Trifecta: Crews Interdict Three Vessels

Seize 9,000 pounds of cocaine worth \$156 million

### Sun Staff Reports

Crews aboard Alameda-based Coast Guard cutters *Munro* and *Bertholf* interdicted three suspected drug-smuggling vessels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean between Jan. 26 and Feb. 1. They seized more than 9,000 pounds of cocaine worth an estimated \$156 million.

On Jan. 26, *Munro's* crew boarded a fishing vessel suspected of smuggling illicit narcotics. The boarding teams searched and discovered 1,300 pounds of cocaine concealed within the vessel.

*Munro's* crew then interdicted a second suspected drug-smuggling vessel hours later after a maritime patrol aircraft detected a suspicious vessel and directed *Munro's* crew toward it. *Munro* launched a helicopter aircrew and boarding teams, and together they interdicted a low-profile vessel. The boarding teams discovered 3,439 pounds of cocaine aboard the purpose-built drug smuggling vessel.

On Feb. 1, *Bertholf's* boarding teams also interdicted a

low-profile vessel, seizing more than 4,380 pounds of cocaine. Altogether the Coast Guard took nine suspected traffickers into custody.

*Munro* and *Bertholf* are two of four 418-foot Legend-class national security cutters homeported in Alameda. These cutters have a crew of more than 150 and are among the largest and most technologically sophisticated vessels in the Coast Guard's fleet.

Contact Sun staff at editor@alamedasun.com.



U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf

A boarding team member from the Alameda-based Coast Guard Cutter *Bertholf* stands atop an interdicted low-profile vessel in the Eastern Pacific Ocean on Feb. 1 and seized 3,439 pounds of cocaine. Cartels design low-profile vessels like this one to evade law enforcement and to ferry large quantities of illicit contraband while riding low in the water.



Alison Limoges

The homeowner and Girl Scouts of Troop No. 33373, eighth-graders: Jennifer Proffitt, Meadow Mihok and Alice Onderwater, celebrate the opening of the new seed library at 16 Cove Road on Bay Farm Island.

## Two More Seed Libraries Grace the Island City

### Kristen Smeal

When Girl Scout Leader Jill Proffitt learned of the Alameda Backyard Growers (ABG) Free Seed Library, she saw an opportunity for the Girl Scouts to help. Girl Scout Troop #33373 of Alameda, which includes eighth-graders Jennifer Proffitt, Meadow Mihok and Alice Onderwater, recently built, painted, and installed two additional seed library boxes to earn the Girl Scouts Silver Award. The Silver Award is a community engagement project that asks the Scouts to examine issues within their own neighborhood and think about what they can do to make a difference.

The pandemic has brought many issues to surface, including the lack of food security and resources for many individuals and families. When Alameda Backyard Growers saw a shortage of gardening resources, they addressed it by opening up a seed library to encourage people to grow food. The Girl Scouts have joined the community effort to take action and get seeds out to the community.

Thanks to generous homeowners, Gina Kaler and Maggie Maiers and project advisor Ken Carvalho, the Girl Scouts have installed two additional seed library boxes on opposite ends of the Island. The ABG Free Seed Library can now be found on the West End at 305 Santa Clara Ave., and on Bay Farm Island at 16 Cove Road, in addition to the

original Seed Library at 2829 San Jose Ave.

Similar to the seed library concept at Alameda Free Library and Little Free Book Library, the idea is to get seeds out to those who will use them. Families and individuals are encouraged to take only what they will grow and up to 6 packs of seeds per month. Growing information can be found on the seed packets and on the ABG website: [alamedabackyardgrowers.org](http://alamedabackyardgrowers.org).

Four AgChem giants control 60 percent of the worldwide seed market. The seeds used in the ABG Free Seed Library are purchased from or donated by smaller seed companies, such as Sustainable Seed Company, Botanical Interests, Renee's Gardens, Hudson Valley, Baker Creek, High Mowing and Johnny's. The seeds are also collected from personal and school gardens. ABG plans to spend more time each year educating the public on how to save seeds, to help save money and provide an alternative to corporate control.

The Girl Scouts of Troop #33373 and Rotary Club of Alameda sponsored many of the seeds for the Spring season and ABG is seeking more business and community partnerships to sponsor a seed or a season. Write to [abg.grow.food@gmail.com](mailto:abg.grow.food@gmail.com) for sponsorship information.

ABG is dedicated to teaching Alamedans how to grow food. See [www.alamedabackyardgrowers.org](http://www.alamedabackyardgrowers.org) to learn more.



Birgitt Evans

The scouts also christened the new seed library at 305 Santa Clara Ave. with the homeowner.

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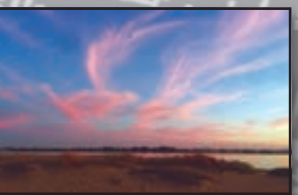
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**Alameda Sun Almanac**

Date	Rise	Set
Today	6:37	18:05
Mar. 5	6:35	18:06
Mar. 6	6:34	18:07
Mar. 7	6:32	18:08
Mar. 8	6:31	18:09
Mar. 9	6:29	18:10
Mar. 10	6:28	18:11

## Agreement Signed on TK-5 Schools Opening

Union, District define safe return to classrooms

### Sun Staff Reports

The Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) and the Alameda Education Association (AEA) signed a tentative agreement Wednesday, Feb. 24, to reopen elementary schools for in-person hybrid instruction.

AUSD and AEA, which represents teachers, nurses, speech and language pathologists, and counselors, have been negotiating the best course to take to reopen school since November 2020, according to a press release from the school district. With this agreement, AUSD is one of the only public school districts in Alameda County that has met the prerequisites for reopening schools.

The plan is for elementary schools to reopen on March 15. Previously, it was expected that in-person sessions would begin

**"Today the goal of reopening our schools feels in reach, and that is incredibly good news."**

— Mialisa Bonta  
 AUSD Board President

March 8, but the decision was delayed a week to ratify the agreement and complete some final operational components. The next step is for AEA members and the Board of Education to vote on ratification of the tentative agreement.

"I would like to thank both the AUSD and AEA teams for their persistent efforts to come to an agreement about both small groups and a general reopening for transitional kindergarten

through fifth grade," said Board President Mialisa Bonta. "We know these long months of distance learning have been hard on many students, families, and staff. Today the goal of reopening our schools feels in reach, and that is incredibly good news."

"In a year of innumerable challenges, this agreement clears the path to the first phases of in-person learning for our elementary students," says Superintendent Pasquale Scuderi, "and I am gratified that the two bargaining teams have come to agreement on opening safely for our elementary students and staff."

The agreement also outlines the safety precautions that need to be taken before staff and students can return to campus, including daily health screenings for all employees and students,

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## PG&E Crews Upgrading Pipelines

### Sun Staff Reports

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) is currently performing a gas-safety-upgrade on its natural-gas pipelines on Bay Farm.

The utility is working along Sea View Parkway from Aughinbaugh Way to Gainsborough Court, as well as on portions of Brunswick Way, Nottingham Drive and Harbor Road.

Contractors with ARB Underground will also be working along portions of Maitland Avenue from Island Drive to Melrose Avenue and sections of Beech and Mecartney roads later this month. PG&E did not announce the start date for the second project.

"During these safety and reliability projects, crews will assess and replace a portion of our gas distribution lines, most of which

are located under the street or on private property," the utility announced in its press release. "This work may also involve upgrading gas meters that serve homes and businesses."

Crews will perform these upgrades Monday through Friday, during normal business hours. PG&E stated it anticipates no detours or impacts on the Harbor Bay Ferry Landing parking lot.



Sal Castaneda

## Fire on Central Avenue

Alameda Fire Department (AFD) responded in force to the report of a house fire at Central Avenue and Grove Street last Monday. Everyone was evacuated safely. There were no reports of injuries. Oakland Fire Department provided mutual aid, both by assisting at the fire and providing backup at Alameda's fire stations. AFD is investigating the cause of the fire.

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