



COVID-19 Testing Comes to Alameda

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft

COVID-19 testing site opened yesterday in Alameda at 300 Wind River Way in the Marina Village Business Park. The site will be operated by City Health Urgent Care of San Leandro (City Health) which also administers COVID-19 tests at its urgent care clinics in San Leandro and Oakland.

The Alameda site will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week until at least Sept. 22. Pre-registration is strongly recommended. You can schedule an appointment at www.bayareacovid-19testing.com.

Sean Parkin, City Health CEO was my guest at a recent Mayor's Town Hall via Zoom and Facebook Live. He reported that the testing site can administer up to 1,000 nasal swab tests per day in an outdoor setting. Special parking spots for those with mobility issues will be provided, as well as priority testing for first responders and healthcare workers.

Swabs will be analyzed on-site utilizing a FDA-approved Quidel COVID-19 antigen analyzer that returns test results in 15 minutes with a 97.9 percent accuracy rate.

If your test result is positive City Health personnel will advise you on follow-up care and precautions to take. You will also be contacted by the Alameda County Public Health Department which will begin contact tracing. For more information

visit <http://www.acphd.org/2019-ncov/contact-tracing.aspx>

City Health staff speak Spanish, Mandarin and Cantonese, and informational pamphlets about COVID-19 will be provided in multiple languages.

Children can also be tested at this facility and Mr. Parkin noted that his staff are experienced with, and sensitive to, working with children, including those on the autism spectrum.

Testing is free for anyone with proof of insurance, and all insurance plans, including Kaiser, are accepted. If you don't have insurance, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will cover the cost of COVID-19 testing. Please bring a valid United States government-issued identification with you to the test site. Undocumented individuals can also be tested, but must pay \$99 to cover the cost of the test and provide some form of ID, for example, an AB 60 California driver's license.

City Health mobile testing units have also been administering COVID-19 tests to residents and staff at local nursing homes and assisted living facilities to help prevent COVID-19 outbreaks in these congregate living facilities.

Wear your mask! According to Parkin, test data shows that 60 percent of individuals who test positive for COVID-19 have no symptoms. This is why it is so important

to wear a mask or face covering whenever you leave your home; you could be a "silent spreader," exposing others to COVID-19 without even knowing you have the disease. He described COVID-19 as an extremely contagious virus whose particles are expelled through the nose and mouth when you cough, sneeze and talk. So be sure to wear your mask properly, covering both your nose and mouth.

Masks are the most effective method of slowing the spread of COVID-19. When we take personal responsibility and wear our masks, we protect each other. Let's work together to reduce the number of COVID-19 cases in our community so children can go back to school, businesses can reopen and people can return to work. We're all in this together.

Support Alameda Strong! You can contribute to a community relief fund that will provide emergency grants to local businesses, non-profit organizations and low-income renters who have experienced financial hardship as a result of COVID-19. Make your tax-deductible donation online at alamedas-strong.org or send a check payable to Alameda Strong Fund to the East Bay Community Foundation; Attn: Alameda Strong Fund; 200 Frank Ogawa Plaza; Oakland CA 94612.

Be smart. Get tested. Wear your mask. Be Alameda Strong!

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft is the Mayor of Alameda.

Missing Alameda Man's Body Found in Oakland

Sun Staff Reports

The Alameda County Coroner's Office positively identified the body of a 21-year-old Alameda man who was reported missing on Thursday, July 16.

The body of Donald Stanifer, 21, was found at Huckleberry Botanical Regional Preserve in Oakland on Sunday, July 12. The regional preserve is property of the East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD). Because Stanifer's body was found on EBRPD property, their police agency has assumed control of the investigation. The body was sent to the coroner's office where they identified the body and notified his family before announcing his death to the public.

Stanifer, an Encinal High School graduate, was reported missing by his mother on Tuesday, July 7, at noon. He had not been seen or heard from since Sunday, July 5, at approximately 10 p.m. Stanifer failed to call in or show up to work on Monday, July 6, at 7 a.m., which was unusual for him. The Alameda Police Department (APD) assumed the investigation into his disappearance. They entered both Stanifer and his vehicle into the Missing and Unidentified Persons Database, according to police reports.

On Wednesday, July 8, at approximately 8 p.m., a deputy with the Alameda County Sheriff's Office located Stanifer's vehicle parked and unoccupied in San Leandro. According to APD, the vehicle contained evidence that a violent crime may have occurred. The vehicle



Courtesy Photo

The body of 21-year-old Donald Stanifer was discovered in Oakland on July 12.

was towed to APD for further investigation. At this point in the investigation, law enforcement view the investigation involving a serious crime committed against Stanifer.

APD's Violent Crimes Unit personnel are assisting EBRPD with their investigation. So far, eight different law enforcement agencies have contributed to the investigation since Stanifer was reported missing.

Stanifer's mother, Greer Adams, has set up a GoFundMe page to pay for funeral expenses. In the description she describes her son as a "special person; a dedicated, responsible, and caring son." To donate to the GoFundMe page, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/i/please-help-find-donald-stanifer>.

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Date	Rise	Set
Today	6:05	20:26
July 24	6:06	20:25
July 25	6:07	20:24
July 26	6:08	20:24
July 27	6:09	20:23
July 28	6:09	20:22
July 29	6:10	20:21

New COVID-19 Cases in Alameda County Drops

Sun Staff Reports

After an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases last week the case number appeared to drop by the weekend.

The Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) reported there were 273 new coronavirus cases on Friday, July 17. It was the most cases since the outbreak began back in

March. However, new confirmed cases did not top 60 for the next three days (52 on July 18, 60 on July 19, and 54 on July 20). Alameda County has had 9,383 confirmed COVID-19 cases as of Monday, July 20, according to the ACPHD dashboard.

Alameda County has had 167 confirmed deaths caused by COVID-19. The city of Alameda

has had 149 confirmed COVID-19 cases total.

Alameda County is currently on the state's "Watch List" and the way to get removed is to have key statistics headed down. Then the county will be allowed to reopen schools, open businesses and more.

To view COVID-19 results, visit www.acphd.org/2019-ncov.

Former St. Joseph Basilica Priest Misses Court Date

Ekene Ikeme

An Alameda County Court judge issued an arrest warrant for a former priest at St. Joseph Basilica after he failed to appear for his arraignment on July 20.

Varghese Alengadan, 67, was charged on July 15 with one count of misdemeanor sexual battery for allegedly inappropriately touching an adult woman on July 24, 2019, according to court documents. His arraignment was scheduled for 9 a.m. at the Wiley Manuel Courthouse in Oakland before Judge Colin Bowen, but Alengadan, known as "Father George," never appeared. Bowen issued the warrant soon after.

Michael Cardoza, Alengadan's attorney, said his client will not turn himself in until the civil case is settled.

"My client wants to fight these specious allegations head on," said Cardoza. "We're not worried about the warrant."

Cardoza believes the accusa-

tions against Alengadan will prove to be baseless.

"It about money," said Cardoza. "One woman said she was hugged for too long."

Cardoza, who runs an East Bay law firm, said he has received hundreds of letters from Father George's parishioners who support him and believe the claims against him are an "absolute fallacy." Cardoza said he knows his client's whereabouts but has no timeline for when or if his client will turn himself into authorities.

The Alameda County District Attorney's Office decided to charge Alengadan with misdemeanor sexual battery after a lengthy investigation by Alameda Police Department (APD) that began in December 2019.

"Father George held a position of trust, authority and power at St. Joseph Basilica in Alameda," wrote Alameda County District Attorney Nancy O'Malley in a statement announcing her decision. "As Pastor

of the Church and the School, there existed a power imbalance over others that compounds the impact of sexual abuse. His position made his actions all the more devastating to the victim. It takes courage for victims and survivors of sexually motivated crimes, especially those crimes committed by a clergy member or other person in power, to report the crimes."

Alengadan was immediately placed on administrative leave from St. Joseph Basilica by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oakland once the investigation became public. He is not allowed to actively work as a priest, according to the Oakland diocese.

Father George had been out of custody on the misdemeanor charge.

O'Malley asked anyone who has been victimized by or who has additional information regarding Father Alengadan to contact APD or the District Attorney's Office at 272-6222.

District Attorney: Watkins Was Exercising His Rights

Ekene Ikeme

The Alameda County District Attorney's Office will not pursue a resisting arrest charge against Mali Watkins, according to a letter sent to Alameda Police Chief Paul Roller on July 10.

In the letter, which was released to the public on July 16, Alameda County District Attorney Nancy O'Malley stated the responding officers "did not have sufficient probable cause to detain him, making the citation null and void." Watkins, 44, was detained and given a citation for resisting arrest by Alameda Police Department (APD) officers after he was dancing on the street in front of his residence on May 23. O'Malley went on to write that Watkins "should have been free to leave if he did not want to engage in a consensual contact" with the responding officers.

O'Malley stated her office also investigated the two responding officers, Harris Smiler and Anthony Buck, to determine if charges should be filed against them for their handling of Watkins' detainment.

"Based on the totality of circumstances, no criminal charges will be filed against Officer [Smiler] and Officer Buck," wrote O'Malley.

However, O'Malley said she believed the officers needed more training, especially regarding consensual contact procedures.

"These officers require training regarding contacts, detentions, citations and arrests of individuals," wrote O'Malley. "I am offering one of my experienced Assistant District Attorneys to provide training to your officers, particularly related to

detentions and consensual contacts to prevent any similar events from occurring in the future."

Buck started on-the-job field training late last year after graduating from Contra Costa County Sheriff's Academy in November 2019, according to the APD Facebook page.

The District Attorney's Office's investigation is separate from the City of Alameda's investigation. The City of Alameda hired Pasadena-based attorney Alfonso Estrada on July 2 to conduct an independent investigation of the incident ("City Hires Independent Investigator" July 7). Estrada is a partner with Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo in Pasadena.

He has conducted investigations for multiple public agencies including the Beverly Hills police and fire departments, the Alhambra Police Department and the Fresno Fire Department. Smiler and Buck have been placed on administrative leave for the duration of the investigation. The investigation, and any report generated from the investigation, remain confidential by California State law.

Watkins was detained by APD officers on May 23 around 7:45 a.m. A woman reported to a APD dispatcher she was concerned about his mental well-being.

Officers approached Watkins who told officers he was exercising across the street from his home. When he tried to walk away the officers physically detained Watkins who was unarmed. During the arrest, five police officers took a handcuffed Watkins to the pavement.



The Japanese in Alameda

Dennis Evanosky

In 1914 members of Alameda's Japanese community were attending Buddhist's service in rented rooms at the former home of William T. S. Ryer at 2325 Pacific Ave., pictured here. Ryer had built the Stick-Eastlake villa. In 1919, the Buddhists purchased Ryer's villa to use as both a temple and a home for their minister and his family. Read more about the Japanese presence in Alameda on Page 3.

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