

## Election: 2014 brings out everyone's opinion

Continued from page 6

That's Florida for you

Editor:

Four years ago I was at the City of Alameda Democratic Club headquarters watching election returns. That was the year Republican Rick Scott, whose healthcare company paid huge fines for Medicare fraud, was elected governor of Florida.

Comments about his election were how could Florida voters vote that crook into office? Well, what do you expect, it's Florida?

Now many of those same people are voting for Stewart Chen, convicted of insurance fraud. If he is elected I guess we can hear, what do you expect? It's Alameda. What a bunch of hypocrites.

— Karen Green

Take a respectful course

Editor:

It seems to me that the mayoral election this year has a lot to do with development. I don't claim to know which way the election will go. But if the people select Trish Spencer over the incumbent Marie Gilmore that suggests that the people would like the City Council's development strategy to take a different direction.

I imagine in that case the city would work it all out. I was curious, though, about the plans for City Council to approve agreements with developers for Alameda Point Sites A and B this November.

Clearly that would be disingenuous if the election gives us a new mayor and councilmembers. But I see on the city's website that the Nov. 5 City Council meeting has been canceled and the agendas for subsequent meetings are not yet set. That's heartening. I can't be sure what to make of it, but I'd like to take it as a sign that you are all willing to delay irrevocable decisions until the City Council has the trust of the voting public. It would be a respectful course of action, and I'd really appreciate it.

— Travis Wilson

Vote 'yes' on I

Editor:

Our wonderful Alameda Unified School District is dealing with schools overflowing with students and running out of the space to educate them. The district is also dealing with aging buildings that desperately need a facelift.

School rooms that were once used for music, art and media technology instruction have been emptied to make room for much-needed classroom space. Students being tutored for reading have to sit out in the hallways because there is no longer space for a private tutoring room in the building. School portables built 25 years ago, badly need upgrading.

Measure I, the facilities bond on the Nov. 4 ballot, would provide \$179.5 million to our community schools. This money would be used to add new classrooms and repair and modernize our schools. It would also make seismic safety improvements to make sure our schools are earthquake safe.

Alameda students deserve the very best education and a safe, nurturing physical environment that supports their learning. As a PTA board member at Otis Elementary

## Act Before It's Too Late

Eugenie Thomson

If serious action isn't taken — soon — Alameda residents will find themselves stuck in hour-long traffic jams when leaving the island.

Alameda will have its moment of truth — a day when there won't be enough money to mitigate all the traffic congestion spawned by out-of-control growth and permit parking costing homeowners over a \$400 per year. Residents will only find buses that are also stuck in traffic. When that day comes, there will be no turning back. Our fragile quality of life will be gone forever.

Plain talk is where truth resides. Yet, the city overwhelms taxpayers with reams of complex documents that stymie the average voters. Why has City Hall refused to consider how much longer it will take residents to leave the island via car or bus? Why hasn't the city been able to explain the effects of all this growth?

Could it be that the city council, staff and consultants don't want the residents to know the true effects of the projects? They do mention mitigations, but those mitigations are only likely to address a tiny percentage of the traffic and parking impacts.

How is it the Del Monte project's traffic report states there are a) No parking problems even though the parking supply is only 1.25 cars per unit and the average car ownership is 2.2 cars per unit in Alameda as per the 2000 Census? and b) When all the developments on the island are built, conclude there will only be 19 more cars than today going through the Posey Tube during the peak morning hour by year 2035

School, I urge a "yes" vote on Measure I.

— Angie Watson-Hajjem

Stop distracting voters

Editor:

I have been delivering Trish Spencer for mayor signs the last several weeks.

In the past week I noticed that some signs I planted in people's yards, which had been there for several weeks, are now missing. Yesterday Spencer informed me that a Gilmore supporter called to complain that "your supporters are taking our signs." Clearly, there are some overexuberant supporters on both sides who are acting inappropriately by taking opposition signs.

Although this is to be expected during a campaign, it is still an inappropriate activity.

I hope those who are doing this stop because it is distracting from the real issues of the campaign: development vs over-development and preserving publicly used land such as the golf course, Crab Cove and the Harbor Bay Club.

This campaign should not be about childish actions and accusations of "he stole my sign, tell him to give it back."

There are significant philosophical and practical differences between the candidates and that should be our focus. I hope we all

### Commentary

and then concluding in no added congestion due to Del Monte and all the development projects combined on the West End?

And it should not take someone like me with a civil engineering license to opine that the city's idea to lower the parking supply at future development projects is simply not workable in Alameda where sufficient parking supply exist around the development sites. The new residents will park in the surrounding neighborhood streets instead. Traffic will not be reduced as the city keeps on saying with reduced parking supply. What will be reduced is the cost for not building the larger garages under the condominium complexes and greatly increasing the developers' profits.

The Del Monte project at 414 residential units along with all the other mega-projects planned by council is a bad idea for our island. Why all these risks with irreversible harm and without the consideration that Alameda is an island?

Alamedans need to speak up to cap the growth at a reasonable level and require developers to supply parking comparable to actual car ownership patterns, not to the new city standards set by the wishful anti-car folks. These unproven and unsustainable standards will result in irreversible harm to our neighborhoods.

The island and its connections to the East Bay need to work for all users, its residents and businesses, pedestrians, bicycles, cars, trucks and buses.

Ignoring the problems and then creating nightmarish con-

gestion and parking problems will ruin what is so great about Alameda. This has been going on continuously since the environmental document process regarding Alameda Point started, through proposed projects like Neptune Point and today with the Del Monte and other northern waterfront projects.

Now is the time to take action. Let us move forward and use our taxpayers' dollars to build a community we can be proud of. That I believe starts with voting for Frank Matarrese for City Council who supports a cap on residential development and for Trish Spencer for mayor who comes with a fresh approach.

And secondly, I urge residents to speak up and let council know they must define the traffic and financial risks and challenges clearly and accurately.

So many have tried, have volunteered many hours, provided written and oral constructive comments, but council ignores them. Sadly, I too have lost total trust in any professional report from the city.

I urge all Alamedans to vote for Matarrese and Spencer for more government transparency, an open debate of the traffic and financial challenges and for capping development to a level that is reasonable for our island. As of now, I will not vote for the other council seat, neither candidate is concerned about the extremely risky financial and development decisions being made by current council.

Act today. Tomorrow it will be too late.

Eugenie Thomson, P.E., lives in Alameda.

get out and vote and let our voices be heard.

— Leland Traiman

Only developers benefit

Editor:

Sue McIntire seems to be missing the message of those protesting Tim Lewis Communities' (TLC) plan to develop the Del Monte building ("Del Monte building development an issue," Oct. 23). I have not read a single comment that opposes the concept of developing the site. Rather, it is the scale of the development (too many units; too much commercial/retail space; too few parking spaces) that has raised serious concerns.

If the developer reduced the number of units and increased the number of parking spaces to levels specified in the 2007-14 City of Alameda Housing Element, wouldn't the development still suit McIntire's desire to "live in a flourishing neighborhood that I could feel proud of?"

A certain reasonable density of development with sufficient parking clearly does benefit Alamedans by removing the blight that McIntire alludes to.

But beyond that reasonable density, cramming in even more units and providing insufficient parking only benefits the developer, not Alamedans! That's the point, and that's why so many Alamedans

are frustrated with the planning board's decisions (and questioning its motives).

Lastly, is McIntire really willing to sit in traffic for an additional 15 minutes each morning commute (and presumably 15 additional minutes each evening) so the developer can maximize his profits?!

Fifteen minutes each way per day?! Is she crazy?! I wouldn't be willing to sit in traffic for even two more minutes.

— Jon Elkin

Quit bashing Frank

Editor:

I just received another mailer from some group which probably no one here has ever heard of (Alameda County Business and Technology Consortium 2014) which claims "we cannot elect someone that was termed out and is now trying to run again!"

Oh, really? First of all, he is not "trying to run," he is running.

Secondly, our governor was termed out, ran again, was elected, will doubtless be re-elected and has turned our state around. Frank Matarrese, like Jerry Brown, has experience, so why wouldn't we want him on the city council again?

— Cathy Conley  
Past president, City of Alameda Democratic Club

## Family: Tale published

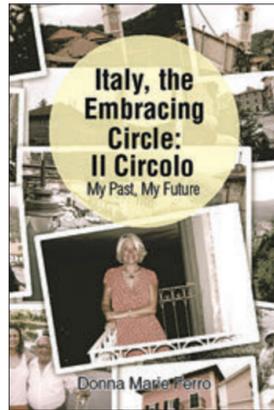
Continued from page 3

on Bay Farm, such as Ferro's maternal grandfather, practiced farming, just as they did back home in Italy. Ferro paints a picture of many of these Italian farmers' homes: built on stilts atop the Bay Farm marshlands familiar to Alamedans today.

Ferro's accounts of her many memories in Italy prove the Alameda is a small town in a small world, with more history than what first meets the eye. In Italy, she builds personal bridges to Alameda in unlikely ways; hearing stories from her family members, even chatting with a jewelry salesperson who has visited family on Park Street.

*Il Circolo* is a story about finding your roots. As an American young woman from the Bay Area, Ferro's quest for identity had a rocky start when visiting her ancestors' humble places of origin in Liguria, Italy.

With time and more travels to Italy, however, she grew to love and accept her Italian roots; humble origins and all. Sweet



Courtesy photo

*Italy, the Embracing Circle* is available at online book sources.

anecdotes about her family and her time spent in Italy give more insight into how she became a part of the embracing circle of her culture.

Fernanda Castro is an Alameda Sun intern. She can be reached via editor@alamedasun.com.

## What's Happening on the West End?

### Spooktacular Fun on the Way!

It's that time of year for Halloween fun, and there's no shortage of it on the West End! So get your costume on and come on down and join us for some fun.

The West Alameda Business Association (WABA) and Webster Street businesses invite all students in grades K

through 8 to attend Halloween activities on Webster Street on Friday, Oct. 31, from 1 to 4 p.m. Kids are invited to trick or treat in their scariest, funniest, coolest and most creative costumes!

Gather at SK Auto, located at the corner of Webster Street and Pacific Avenue, for the Halloween costume parade and contest! Judging will begin at 3:30 p.m.

Winners will be selected in two categories: little kids in grades K-3 and big kids in grades 4-8. Target will provide gift card prizes: 1st Prize — \$50, 2nd Prize — \$25 and 3rd prize — \$20. Treats, games, prizes, balloons, and fun for all who participate!

Costumes, Pinball and Comedy at Pacific Pinball Museum

Come in costume, and celebrate Halloween on Oct. 31 at Pacific Pinball Museum with pinball, comedy and dancing. Come early and play pinball, then watch the show at 8 p.m. with host Mean Dave and comedians, and party until midnight! Comedy show is for adults 18 years and older. Admission is \$20.

Tickets are available at the door or online at www.pacificpinball.org, or call 205-6959 for information. Pacific Pinball Museum is located at 1510 Webster St.

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## Spending: On local campaigns described in detail

Continued from page 1

Lym has raised \$2,050 so far, almost all of it a loan to his campaign, filings show. An earlier filing from the teachers' union shows that it spent \$862.02 to support Lym's candidacy, support that isn't listed on his disclosures (Lym said the union didn't communicate its support to him). A more recent filing from the teachers' union was not available for this story.

The teachers' and the police officers' unions each contrib-

uted \$2,500 to the firefighters union, disclosure records show. A mailer from the police and firefighter unions expressed support for Gilmore, Chen, Oddie, Henneberry, Tam and Bonta, as well as the Measure I school bond and the Measure BB county transportation tax.

School board incumbent Mike McMahon didn't appear to have filed a disclosure form as of Oct. 23; none of the candidates for the Alameda Health Care District board of directors has filed. Candidates who raise and spend

less than \$1,000 are not required to file.

The campaign for Measure I has raised more than \$31,000 to date; opponents of the measure had not filed a disclosure form as of Thursday night.

One big winner in the filings: Sacramento political consultancy Duffy & Capitolo, which earned \$44,000 in consulting fees during the latest round and more than \$54,000 for mailings, postage and other services.

The firm's clients include Gilmore, Chen, Oddie, the fire-

fighters' union and the Yes on I campaign, the disclosure forms show.

Between now and election day, disclosures must be filed on contributions or expenditures of \$1,000 or more within 24 hours. A full accounting of what was contributed and spent won't be available until after the election.

Read more Alameda news at <http://webh.it/alamedasun>. For the latest election results log on to [www.thealamedan.org](http://www.thealamedan.org). Or visit [www.acgov.org](http://www.acgov.org).

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