

Alameda Sun



Locally Owned, Community Oriented

Vol. 14 No. 19
February 5, 2015

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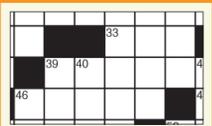
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Five amazing flute players
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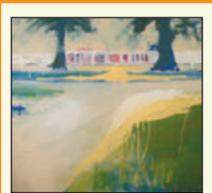
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Alameda Sun
is a publication of
Stellar Media Group, Inc.
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Alameda, CA 94501

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Joan Ann Radu-Sinako

**Alameda Sun
Almanac**

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Today	07:10	17:36
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A view of the former Alameda Beltline right of way looking toward Atlantic Avenue.

Sweeney Open Space Shaping Up

Dennis Evanosky

One woman's dream is becoming reality. Jean Sweeney — "The Little Engine that Could," a fellow journalist called her — is no doubt smiling to see that dream take shape. The city announced last week that Tim Lewis Communities (TLC) would be giving the city \$2 million to help develop Jean Sweeney Open Space Park.

In 1999, a pair of railroad titans — Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe — agreed to sell a small parcel of land in Alameda to Sun Country Beltline LLC, a developer. However, the railroad and the developer, who planned to build 200 homes on the site, did not know at the time that Jean Sweeney would have nothing to do with that sort of idea. She had to stop them.

Sweeney rolled up her sleeves and got to work. She discovered something that delighted her: a clause in a September 1924 contract. "City shall have the right at any time hereafter to purchase said belt line railroad including all extensions thereof, for a sum equal to the original cost, plus the cost of additional investments and extensions, excluding maintenance costs."

Not only could she stop the developer, she could work with the city to buy back the property, and at 1924 prices. The city backed her up, took the titans to court — and won. A thankful city named the prop-

erty for her. The City Council wanted to present her with a resolution doing so and invited Sweeney to its Nov. 3, 2011, meeting. She couldn't make it; she was too ill. Her friends were there, though and gave her a standing ovation in absentia. Three weeks later Sweeney died.

The money the city received from TLC is rooted in an agreement the city reached with the developer in return for the TLC's inability to provide the required amount of open space at its nearby Del Monte warehouse project.

According to Alameda Parks and Recreation Department Director Amy Wooldrige, the city will receive the first installment, \$300,000, sometime this month. "Those funds will be used for detailed design of the (entire) park," she said. She called this payment a "critical spark" to move the park forward. She said that TLC's initial check will not only provide design and construction funding, but act as the required local matching fund when the seek new grants for the park.

Wooldrige said that TLC will pay the remaining \$1.7 million "when the city has completed the design and is ready to start phase-one construction on the most eastern portion of the park. (at Atlantic Avenue and Sherman Street)."

The 22-acre park's master plan includes nature-based playgrounds;

an open lawn area adjacent to a gazebo and a covered picnic pavilion; walking and pedestrian trails throughout; as well as a community garden, urban orchard and demonstration gardens for Bay-Friendly landscape. The center portion of the property will be predominantly open space with meandering pedestrian-only hiking trails.

The city stated in its press release that the total anticipated cost of the park is \$8 to \$10 million. Funding will come solely "through grants, donations, and developer fees."

In 2013, the city received its first money, a \$60,000 "target-site investigation" grant from the California Department of Toxic Substances Control to develop and implement a work plan for environmental investigation.

Last year the Regional Active Transportation Program through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission received 127 applications for grant money. The program only awarded 11 grants. In October the city learned it was among them. It won \$2.23 million to build the portion of the Cross Alameda Trail that will run through the park.

The TLC money brings the total to \$4.29 million, more than half of the money needed to complete the plan.

Contact Dennis Evanosky at editor@alamedasun.com.



Clyde Sunderland

The China Clipper taxis on the waters just off Alameda Airport on Nov. 22, 1935, set to take off on Pan Am's first commercial flight across the Pacific Ocean. The airline initiated passenger service to the Far East on Oct. 21, 1936. The Navy buried Alameda Airport beneath its runways in 1940.

Pan Am's Flying Boats: The Alameda Connection

Dennis Evanosky

Urban legends die hard. The city of Alameda gave one of these new life with the announcement that Wrightspeed had signed a lease to move into Building 41 at Alameda Point. That's the building with the mural that leads naive passers-by to believe that Pan American World Airways and its Martin M-130 aircraft had some connection to the structure.

The language of the ordinance that approved Wrightspeed's lease calls the company's new home at the Point "Building 41." However the city's less official press release about Wrightspeed refers to Building 41 as "Hangar 41." The city chose a spot right under the deceptive mural to officially welcome lan Wright to Alameda Point.

The connection is obvious: a hangar with a Pan Am mural implies that Pan Am and its

News Analysis

Clippers had some connection to the spot. It never did. In fact, by the time Building 41 rose up next to Seaplane Lagoon in 1945, Pan Am had been gone from Alameda for six years. The airline, which was founded in 1927, began operations at Alameda Airport in 1935. This airport was located along the Oakland Estuary at a spot the Navy buried when it built its runways in 1940. By then Pan Am had moved from Alameda Airport to Treasure Island, where the Golden Gate International Exposition was going on. Their airships docked there at Clipper Cove.

Pan Am hoped to take over Treasure Island as an airport when the expo closed in 1940, but the Navy moved in instead. The Dec.

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Report on Sales Tax Shows City with More

Dennis Evanosky

As the second quarter of 2014 drew to a close on June 30, the city's coffers contained almost \$300,000 more in sales-tax revenue than they did on June 30, 2013, the latest figures show. The city's share of sales-tax revenue from April to June 2013 amounted to \$1.67 million; revenue during the same period last year equaled \$1.97 million, a 17.9 percent increase.

The largest increase in the city's sales-tax revenue came in general construction, which rose 38.9 percent from \$55,295 in the second quarter of 2013 to \$76,818 in the same quarter last year. These figures reflect an improving economy and show that building activity was picking up during the second quarter last year.

Increased sales-tax revenue in this category also means that banks are loosening credit and approving more home and home-

improvement loans, as well as more construction loans. It also means that construction jobs and, implicitly, employment were improving from April to June of last year.

Sales-taxes in general consumer spending made the city's coffers ring 37.2 percent louder in the second quarter of 2014, up more than a few decibels from \$271,671 in the second quarter in 2013 to \$372,809 in 2014. The figure reflects an increase in spending at family apparel, specialty and home-furnishing stores.

The category with the third largest increase — business and industry — remains, by far, the city's largest sales-tax generator. This segment rose \$129,172, or 25.4 percent, from \$509,400 in the second quarter of 2013 to \$638,572 last year. This means that the city was attracting, or was continuing to attract — and maintain — larger employers here.

Foundation Taps Tam, Mariani

Sun Staff Reports

Alameda Friends of the Parks Foundation, the nonprofit organization that supports the parks and the programs that utilize the parks, announced the election of Lena Tam to its board of directors and Mario Mariani to its advisory council.

Tam manages water-resource planning for the East Bay Municipal Utility District. She served on the City Council from 2006 to 2014, including a stint as vice-mayor in 2006. Mariani is a Realtor with Gallagher & Lindsey, Inc.

"Lena has been instrumental in funding recreation, parks and open space in Alameda for the past eight years," the foundation stated in a press release that announced the appointments. She was a founding board member of the city's Health Care District.

"Mario will support the effort to expand contacts and to gain greater support from companies and individuals in the East Bay," the press release stated. "(He) has been involved in many different

organizations that support athletics for children and teens. His business development skills have helped every organization he has ever been involved with."

Mariani's roots reach back five generations in Alameda.

The Alameda Friends of the Parks Foundation is managed by volunteers, and 99 percent of all donations go directly to programs, equipment and services related to recreation programs and parks. The foundation helps support activities and programs that include Starlight Movies in the Parks, the Underground Teen Center and scholarships in the Alameda Park and Recreation Department's pre-kindergarten and the recreation after-school programs.

The foundation also helped defray the costs of playground upgrades, outdoor exercise equipment at Washington and Lincoln parks and a passenger van to transport teens to various programs.

Learn more at www.alamedaparks.org or at Friends of the Parks, Alameda, Facebook page.

An Early Valentine: Barefoot in the Park

Review

Julia Park Tracey

Altarena Playhouse's current show, Neil Simon's *Barefoot in the Park*, is an old favorite. You may know it from the Robert Redford-Jane Fonda 1967 film version of the same name, where a young couple take on married life without knowing very much about each other. Simon made his screenwriting debut in this wistful domestic comedy set in Greenwich Village that centers on Paul and Corie Bratter in a fifth-floor walkup. Much of the play's comedy focuses on the apartment's Spartan furnishings, lack of heat and those dreaded five flights of stairs (six, if you count the stoop).

Altarena's version stars Alamedan Becky Doyle and Matt Davis, whom Altarena audiences will remember as Bernard in *Boeing Boeing*. Corie and Paul are an odd couple, with Corie's joie de vivre and Paul's business-first, playtime-later attitude. Both principals are adept in their roles, marking the comedic highs and newlywed angst with sharp timing and much charm.

Opposites attract — and not just between the lovebirds. Corie's laced-tight mother, Ethel (Bonnie DeChant), and the Bratters' upstairs neighbor, Victor Velasco (Randy Anger), a worldly gourmand, also get pulled into the dramatic maelstrom of Corie's unleashed sensuality. She has discovered herself as a woman — and wants Ethel to share in the experience. DeChant and Anger are newcomers to Altarena, and they round the cast with both maturity and a lighthearted philosophy born of wisdom and experi-



Courtesy photo

Matt Davis and Becky Doyle star in Altarena's production of *Barefoot in the Park*.

ence. The two couples mirror each other in fumbling steps, and later, in warmth and confidence.

Although the setting is clearly the 1960s, the play holds up remarkably well. The couple's fumbling naïveté about marriage still rings true; what is more striking is how

exhausting Corie must have been to her 1940s mother (and audiences) when this show debuted. Director Sue Trigg, well known and beloved by Altarena, has plumbed the depths of *Barefoot* and found

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