

# Alameda Sun



Locally Owned, Community Oriented

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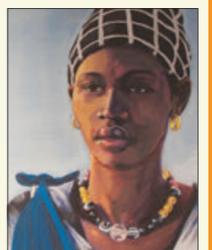
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Art auction at Rhythmix to  
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Sharpen your pencils for that  
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Alamedan James Hahn  
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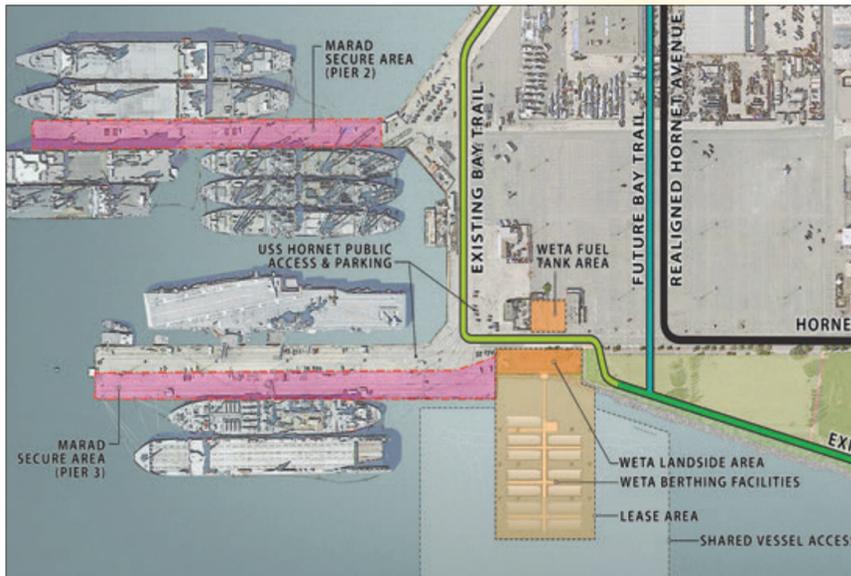
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Ads: (510) 263-1471  
Fax: (510) 263-1473

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**Alameda Sun  
Almanac**

Date	Rise	Set
Today	06:46	17:58
Feb. 27	06:44	18:00
Feb. 28	06:43	18:01
March 1	06:42	18:02
March 2	06:40	18:03
March 3	06:39	18:04
March 4	06:37	18:05



WETA's plans for its maintenance facility at Alameda Point will do away with a harbor seal haul out and place fuel tanks near an existing electric substation. Both are show in orange on this aerial view.

## New WETA Facility Raising Concerns

Dennis Evanosky

The lease for the Water Emergency Transport Authority (WETA) ferry maintenance comes before the City Council on March 3. Readers have expressed concerns about the harbor seal haul-out currently at the site of the facility. Despite lobbying and verbal assurance from WETA that it will build a new harbor seal haul-out, no written memorandum of understanding on the harbor seals exists for the City Council to consider. The lengthy lease agreement does not even mention the seals.

Supporters of the haul out fear that WETA is hoping that the City Council OKs the lease and accepts a "gentleman's agreement" that WETA will do something about the

**No written memo. of understanding on the harbor seals exists for the City Council to consider.**

harbor seals whose habitat it is taking over if such a move is commercially feasible. Supporters also worry that WETA wants to avoid any commitment that might interfere with the authority's plans for the site.

Michael Brune the executive director for the Sierra Club, wrote a letter about the seals to the National Marine Fisheries Office of Protected Resources. The letter is

**News Analysis**

part of the City Council's packet so staff and the City Council members should have read it before the meeting.

In his letter Brune points to the lack of maintenance and lack of human presence on the docks over the years as factors that ultimately attracted the seals that made themselves at home there. He pointed to the calm waters and the absence of boating commotion, as well as the food sources for the harbor seals that are in supply in the channel where WETA wants to build its facility.

In his letter Brune states that the Sierra Club recommends "that

**WETA:** Page 12

## Update on Point Reuse

Sun Staff Reports

The Alameda Point Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) welcomed Mayor Trish Spencer to its Feb. 8 meeting. Spencer has attended RAB meetings in the past, as an interested member of the Alameda community. This visit, however, marked not only her first visit as mayor, but the only visit from any Alameda mayor in at least a decade.

"The board wants to thank not only Mayor Spencer, but Vice-Mayor Frank Matarrese and Councilmen Jim Oddie for their interest in RAB," said board co-chair Richard Bangert.

Susan Galleymore and Richard Bangert will sit as RAB co-chairs in 2015. Jane Sullwold will serve as vice-co-chair. Board members for 2015 include: Carol Gottstein; George Humphreys; Skip McIntosh; Bert Morgan; Kurt Peterson; Bill Smith; Dale Smith; Jim Sweeney;

Michael John Torrey and Victor Quintell.

RAB and the Navy are setting dates for the next public bus tour of Alameda Point. This summer tour is the only opportunity for members of the public to access the work zone. The upcoming tour will show the extent of the restoration on the west along the bay as well as the newly installed Waste Isolation Barrier (WIB) engineered along the north west tip of the former naval base. Interested parties should email Derek Robinson at derek.j.robinson1@navy.mil to ensure a seat on the bus.

RAB was pleased to receive the news that Chief of Naval Operations Jonathan Greenert nominated Alameda Point for an Environmental Restoration Award. The Admiral nominated the work at Alameda Point for its scope and innovation.



Chief of Naval Operations Jonathan Greenert nominated Alameda Point for a restoration award.

RAB meetings are open to the public. Its next meeting will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Thursday, March 12, at City Hall West, 950 West Mall Square at Alameda Point.

## City Manager Calls it Quits

Russo latest administrator heading to new employment in Southern California

Michelle Ellison  
The Alamedan

City Manager John Russo is leaving Alameda for the city manager's job in Riverside, an official with that city has confirmed. Russo has been Alameda's top administrator since 2011.

Russo, a former Oakland City Council member who served as Oakland's elected city attorney for 11 years before coming to the Island, bested 40 other applicants, including five other finalists, for the job. He's expected to start work there on May 4.

Russo said he and his wife had planned to move to Southern California at some point. He said that he considered looking at the opportunity to jump to a bigger city now with a lot of prompting from Girish Balachandran, the former head of Alameda Municipal Power who left to run Riverside's public utilities in 2014.

"This is the biggest city at that area, and it came open, and they came calling," he said.

Russo said that while Mayor Trish Spencer "has different policy ideas" than the prior mayor and council, the two of them have worked well together in their short time collaborating at City Hall.

"My relationship, person to person, in working with Mayor Spencer, has been friendly and professional.



Courtesy The Alamedan

She's been nothing but positive and supportive," Russo said.

Spencer concurred in that assessment, noting that Russo helped her put together a resolution to voice support for the East Bay Regional Park District's efforts to obtain the 3.9-acre Neptune Pointe property from the federal government to expand Crab Cove, which she had listed as one of her first priorities as mayor.

"It shows his professionalism in that we had a change politically on the council, and he seamlessly transitioned from the prior council to working with the new council," she said.

Spencer, who said she thinks Russo is "uniquely qualified" to serve as a city manager because of his experience as Oakland's city attorney, said she's happy for him and his family.

"Riverside is a growing community," she said. "I think it's a really nice opportunity for him professionally. He'll prove to be an asset to Riverside."

Alameda's City Council hired Russo after opting not to retain the city's former interim city manager, and he had a close relationship with former mayor Marie Gilmore, who voters ousted in November. He had been an elected official for 16 years before coming to Alameda to

**CITY:** Page 12

## Ferry Parking Reaches Overflow Status

City seeking solutions for Harbor Bay

Ekene Ikeme

The city of Alameda Public Works Department held a community meeting to discuss staff recommended parking improvements on Adelphian Way and Mecartney Road Tuesday at Bay Farm Elementary School's multipurpose room.

The city and the Water Emergency and Transportation Agency (WETA), the agency that runs the ferry service, have been working together to come up with a solution to provide more parking for ferry riders near the Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal.

The city and WETA propose to remove the two-hour parking restriction and provide 24 unrestricted parking spaces on the landward side of Adelphian Way, between Mecartney Road and the crosswalk by the lagoon, according to a letter from the city to Alameda residents in the area. The letter is dated Feb. 5. The proposed plan also would shift the roadway markings to provide 32 unrestricted parking spaces along the south side of the street; the side closer to the ferry terminal.

The plan has concerned some residents living along Adelphian and Mecartney.

"The city's solution is to further burden the residential neighborhoods," wrote an Alameda resident who lives near the terminal in a letter obtained by the Alameda Sun. "Mecartney and Adelphian are neighborhood streets, not parking lots. The city proposes unrestricted parking along Adelphian. In the long term, this will only encourage overnight parking of vehicles — not something we want at our entryway. The city may say that these proposals are intended to ease the burden directly in the neighborhoods, but it is only a short term band aid, ineffective, and may ultimately have a greater negative impact."

The resident stated that when the terminal was opened, the design was for it to be closed off from the community.

"Our master plan clearly intended to separate the residential neighborhoods from the business park, of which the ferry terminal is a part," said the resident whose name is being withheld. "If you recall, when the ferry terminal first opened, there was an entry gate

that prohibited business traffic from coming into the neighborhoods. In fact, unless you lived in the neighborhood, you had to access the terminal from the Business Park direction. Ferry commuters are now parking throughout the neighborhoods. Neighborhoods should not serve as a commercial parking lot."

The letter asks the city to use all possibilities before they burden residents.

"I believe that before the City allows and, in fact, promotes parking in the residential neighborhoods on a permanent basis, they should exhaust all remedies to find ferry commuter parking in the business park and adjacent vacant land. The city has not done this."

Whether the parking options increase along Adelphian or somewhere else, the problem does not seem it will be going away anytime soon. Ridership at the Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal has nearly doubled since before the BART strike back in 2013.

"I'd say right now were at about 600 riders a day at that site," said Kevin Connolly, planning and development manager for WETA. "Before

**FERRY:** Page 12

## Sunday Morning Fire Burns at Apartments

Sun Staff Reports

At 9:42 a.m. last Sunday Alameda Fire Department (AFD) received the report of a fire at an apartment complex on the 2400 block of Shore Line Drive. Firefighters arrived four minutes later to find a fire burning inside a utility room at the rear of the large, three-story building. The rapid spread of smoke to the second and third floors prompted the call for additional AFD companies; 23 firefighters responded.

Some firefighters pulled hose lines and began attacking the fire, while others evacuated occupants from the building and checked to make certain that the fire had not spread to the upper floors and the roof.

**FIRE:** Page 2



## Your Tax Dollars at Work

Courtesy photo

A truck from Rosas Brothers Construction makes itself at home parked in a handicapped zone on Willow Street and Shore Line Drive. The Oakland company is in town repairing sidewalks, curbs, gutters and driveways on a city contract and is receiving more than \$1 million from the taxpayers of Alameda. On Feb. 3 the city sweetened the company's pot to the tune of \$450,000, making Rosas Brothers total take from the taxpayers \$1,162,732.