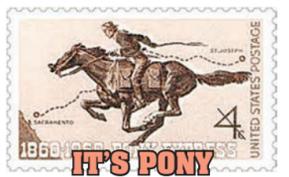


Alameda Sun



Locally Owned, Community Oriented

Vol. 13 No. 27
April 3, 2014

INSIDE

HOMETOWN

Fire Wire
page 2

Police Blotter
page 3

All the doings of
Island safety and
law personnel



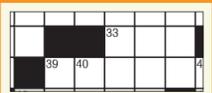
LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Ploughshares Page 4
Nursery offers tomato
workshop and other events.



ISLAND ARTS

Asian Works Page 9
Learn about Yoga through art
and history at the library.



PUZZLES

Crossword Page 9
Sharpen your pencils for that
famed newspaper tradition.



OPINION

Tree Talk Page 8
Writers concerned with city's
recent "trimmings."

CONTENTS

- HOMETOWN NEWS... 2
- LOCAL HAPPENINGS... 4
- NIGHTLIFE... 4
- SPORTS... 5
- CLASSIFIED... 7
- OPINION... 8
- PUZZLES... 9

Alameda Sun
is a publication of
Stellar Media Group, Inc.
3215J Encinal Ave.
Alameda, CA 94501
News: (510) 263-1470
Ads: (510) 263-1471
Fax: (510) 263-1473

Visit us Online at
www.AlamedaSun.com
Like or Friend us
on Facebook
Follow us on Twitter
at Alameda_Sun



**Alameda Sun
Almanac**

Date	Rise	Set
Today	06:52	19:33
April 4	06:51	19:34
April 5	06:49	19:35
April 6	06:48	19:36
April 7	06:46	19:37
April 8	06:45	19:38
April 9	06:43	19:38

APD Conducts Pedestrian-Safety Campaign in Town

Michele Ellison
The Alamedan

Alameda Police Department (APD) Chief Paul Rollerli said he doesn't know whether it's gratifying or horrifying that officers in his department wrote 62 tickets in five hours during February's pedestrian crosswalk sting.

APD is now stepping up its efforts to make sure pedestrians cross Alameda's streets safely. The department wants the public to know that its officers are taking pedestrian safety seriously and are employing periodic stings as one of several strategies. Other efforts will include safety messages on the department's Twitter account and Facebook page, a poster contest for Alameda's students and "May You Arrive Safely," a safety walk scheduled for Saturday, May 3.

"At some point, motorists have to be responsible for what they're doing. But as a public safety agency, we do have a duty to educate people," Rollerli said.

Rollerli said the department's efforts are part of an ongoing effort to raise awareness about pedestrian safety rules in order to combat vehicle pedestrians with collisions. The department has investigated about 40 such collisions over each of the past few years, and eight in just the first month of 2014.

Of the 41 pedestrian collisions the department investigated in 2013, drivers in 36 were found to be at fault, 26 of them for failing to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.

"In a perfect scenario, we wouldn't have pedestrian collisions or crosswalk violations," he said.

The city has engaged in a range of efforts to make its streets safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

Pedestrian safety improvements are in the works for Park Street and at Encinal High School and Will C. Wood Middle School and includes a dedicated cycle track along much of the Island's shore. Even Mayor Marie Gilmore has gotten in on the act, start-

ring in a pedestrian safety public service announcement that's airing at the Alameda Theatre & Cineplex.

Last year APD told *The Alamedan* that it was preparing to add motorcycle officers who could help broaden the department's effort to enforce pedestrian safety laws, as well as some additional crossing guards for schools.

For the stings, police are sending decoys into crosswalks where accidents have occurred as drivers approach. Drivers who stop for the pedestrians "pass," Rollerli said; those who honk at the decoy or drive through as they're crossing "fail" and are ticketed, he said.

So far, the decoys have been sent through crosswalks on Park and Webster streets, he said; data provided by the department show these streets were where many of last year's collisions occurred. More enforcement efforts will also be conducted in some school zones, he said.

While the enforcement effort is focused on schooling drivers, Rollerli said he hopes pedestrians and cyclists will take some lessons away from the department's safety effort, too. (In 2013, *The Alamedan* documented unsafe conditions perpetuated by drivers and pedestrians at Henry Haight Elementary School.) All too often, Rollerli said, he sees pedestrians focused on their cell phones as they cross the street, instead of traffic.

The safety walk will take place from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 3. Participants can start the walk at either of Alameda's two ferry terminals, and it will end at City Hall. Registration for the event is free, and is being conducted online.

Read more Alameda news at <http://webh.it/alamedasun>.



A pedestrian crosses Grand Street while talking on his cell phone. APD Chief Paul Rollerli expressed his concern about pedestrians being too focused on their devices.

Yee Scandal Involves Resident

Sun Staff Reports

The scandal involving California State Senator Leland Yee last week also involves an Alameda resident. Hon Kueng So of Alameda was charged with conspiracy to receive and transport stolen property, according to the 137-page FBI affidavit in connection with Yee's March 24 arrest. So is accused of allegedly purchasing "purportedly stolen liquor from an FBI" undercover agent.

So, 55, is the owner of New Asia Restaurant, in San Francisco, which was frequented by Chee Kung Tong (CKT), a criminal brotherhood organization according to the FBI. CKT held many events at So's restaurant. The FBI says the organization and its leader Raymond Chow had a direct relationship with Yee.

Yee is being investigated for allegedly soliciting political donations and gun trafficking among other charges.



Wet Weather Spins Out Doolittle Driver

Photo and Story
by Dennis Evanosky

An employee of All Ways Towing braved the waters of a mini-lagoon on Monday to hook up an automobile that had hydroplaned into the marsh off Doolittle Drive just south of Harbor Bay Parkway.

Because it traverses the marshland between Alameda and San Leandro, this stretch of Doolittle is especially treacherous when the

roads are wet. If an automobile hydroplanes chances are good that the vehicle can wind up in the soggy marsh as this car did.

Hydroplaning occurs when a tire encounters more water than it can scatter. The extra water separates the tires from the road, causing loss of traction and preventing the driver from being able to properly steer or brake.

The accident attracted the attention of the Port of Oakland

because it affected the marshland on its property. A representative from the port requested that NRC Environmental Services come to the scene to determine whether any fluids had leaked into the water from the automobile. The operation involved a pair of tow trucks and some expert maneuvering to extricate the car from the water. The driver reportedly escaped with no injuries. The automobile was much the worse for wear.

From the Nailhouse to MIT

Olivia Woods

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is a top-ranked university that students dream of attending. Out of the 18,357 students who applied for admission to the 2014 freshman class, the Institute admitted 1,419 students, pegging the admission rate at 7.7 percent. Julian Mendoza, a senior at Encinal High School, is among that 7.7 percent.

Mendoza is the youngest of five children, the first in his family to be born in America, as well as the first to attend college. His parents, Rosa and Nicanor Mendoza, are not that familiar with the American education system. They gave their son the space to succeed and learn at his own pace. Julian describes his environment as "usually silent, which allows for me to have my own thoughts without disruption."

Julian's older brother Rigoberto helped Julian succeed in middle school by keeping track of Julian's grades. However, much of Julian's success is due to his own drive and desire for higher learning. He has been interested in computers since he was seven. He was never satisfied with the old "it works just because" response that so many children are accustomed to hearing. He began taking computers apart and putting them back together, eventually learning the inside workings of a computer

and how it ticks. After that, he eventually moved on to learn software coding and programming.

He uses these self-teaching skills in his academic classes and absorbs the material in a more in depth fashion. This year he is planning on taking six AP Exams, one of which he is studying on his own for: AP Calculus BC.

Over the summer, he was able to utilize and improve these skills in an MIT summer program known as Minority Introduction to Engineering and Science (MITES). This program accepts about 80 juniors from a pool of about 2,000 applicants.

MITES introduces the students to a rigorous course load where they can study subjects like physics or engineering design. This intense program simulated true college life where the teachers' pacing is quick and the students are often left to their own accord to truly grasp and understand the material.

Julian successfully completed MITES and decided to apply to MIT in the middle of a challenging senior year. He has been interested in this school since he was



Olivia Woods

Encinal High School senior Julian Mendoza works at his desk. He will be heading for MIT in the fall, the first member of his family to attend college.

in sixth grade and has strived to reach this goal. This year, he is excelling in all his classes which consists of five AP courses.

He will be graduating in the top 1 percent of his class and will no doubt continue to flourish at MIT.

Olivia Woods is a student at Encinal High School.

Congress Honors WWII Veteran from Alameda

Isabelle Sullivan

Benjamin Jenkins, Alameda resident of 20 years and veteran of the United States Marine Corps and United States Air Force, was awarded a Congressional Gold Medal for his service during World War II on Feb. 21.

The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest civilian award bestowed by the U.S. Congress. In 2011, Congress awarded the medal to the Montford Point Marines, a segregated unit, of which Jenkins was a member.

Out of the 20,000 people who trained at the segregated facility at Montford Point, North Carolina, 500 are alive today and 300 travelled to Washington, D.C. to accept the award. Jenkins received his award in Oakland through the office of Congresswoman Barbara Lee.

"We recognize the Montford Point Marines as brave trailblazers who fought for increased social integration, civil rights, and an end to racial discrimination in the armed services," wrote Lee in a letter regarding Jenkins' award.

The awarding of the medal to the unit helps dispel a negative belief concerning the involvement of black people in the American military. African Americans have fought in every war "starting with the Revolutionary War," said Jenkins.

Even so, many of the Montford Point Marines were held back by military leaders because of the racist belief that black people were not fit for duty.

Jenkins said that it is important to him that people know about his service as well as the service of many other black men. The American military has hidden the contributions of black people and has built and enforced an image about the capabilities of African Americans by hiding their involvement and success in the wars.

Black people were not allowed to serve in the Marine Corps until 1942. Jenkins enlisted that year.

At the Montford Point segregated facility, Jenkins slept in unfinished living quarters. Black marines slept on the ground in low-quality tents while the white Marines slept in clean tents with wooden floors. "We didn't particularly care for that," said Jenkins.

Many of Jenkins' commissioned officers heavily doubted the capabilities of Jenkins and his men.

"We all knew that it was more than serving the country. It was proving something to the country," said Jenkins. "We were determined to prove what the American military didn't believe could happen with African Americans: intelligence, courage, understanding of complications, abstract thinking, and so forth."

Jenkins considers himself a symbol of "progress and attitude changing." He believes that attitude changing is one of the most important factors in conquering racism in the U.S.

VETERAN: Page 6



Tomas Pineda

St. Joe's Takes State

St. Joseph Notre Dame High School's Pilots have done it again. For the fifth time in the school's history, the men's basketball team has been named state champions. Above, Temidayo Yussuf and Lamont Banks congratulate each other while other team members do the same. For the full story, turn to page 5.