



Locally Owned, Community Oriented

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INSIDE

HOMETOWN

Fire Wire
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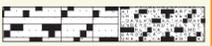
Police Blotter
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All the doings
of Island safety
& law personnel



SPORTS
Blazing victory Page 5

Blaze team wins tournament
title in Tahoe.



CROSSWORD PUZZLE
In the ESSENCE Page E2

Sharpen your pencils for that
newspaper tradition.



ISLAND ARTS
Skulls 'n' Roses Page 6

Famed rock poster, album
cover artist to show here.

*The Essence
of Alameda*



EVENTS CALENDAR

Swim Champs Page E3

City about to hold 59th
annual swim meet.

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**Alameda Sun
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Today	06:18	20:11
August 9	06:19	20:10
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Tenants Struggle with Apartments' Retrofit Deposits have yet to be refunded

Ekene Ikeme

Several former tenants of Marina View Towers have been waiting weeks for their security deposit refunds even though the new owners said former residents would receive their deposits within five days of moving out.

"I haven't received a doggone thing," said Sheila James, who lived in Marina View Towers from Feb. 2012 to July 2013. "When I found a place to live I let the property manager, Charlene, know when I would be moving out. She told me to make sure I write my forwarding address on this form. She said this address is where they would send my security deposit."

James filled out the form on July 7. She moved out of Marina View Towers on July 21. James said her security deposit was \$800, which is the amount the new owners are required to pay her.

Carmel Partners, a San Francisco-based real estate firm, purchased Marina View Towers, 1100 Pacific Ave., from R.W. Zukin Real Estate for \$18 million in May. R.W. Zukin notified tenants of their status with the new ownership after the sale.

"Your security deposit has been transferred to the new owners," wrote R.W. Zukin in a letter dated May 22. "Your existing rental and security deposit agreements remain intact."

Carmel Partners conducted an environmental study of Marina View Towers after they purchased the building. The study revealed the building needed "substantial seismic retrofitting," according to the

termination of tenancy letter sent to tenants on June 27. Carmel Partners elected to terminate all tenancies starting Aug. 31. Carmel Partners assured tenants they would receive their deposits within five days of vacating the building in the letter.

"We have set a special rush process in place and plan to issue all deposit refunds within five days of move out," wrote Carmel Partners.

James is not the only former resident to have not received their deposit within the five-day period Carmel Partners said.

"My family and I moved out on July 8," stated Hubert Nimitanakit in an email on Aug. 1. "On their letter they said that we will have the full refund of our security deposit back within five days of move out. As of today we still have not received any amount of our money back."

In the comment section of the article, "Renters facing eviction seek housing in tight market" in *The Alameda* on July 25, commenter RayRay wrote, "It's been nine days and I have yet to receive anything. They owe me almost \$2,000 on pet deposits, rent and security deposit."

Before the *Alameda Sun* went to press Tuesday, Aug. 6, James said she received her deposit, but still 16 days after her move out. Calls and emails to Carmel Partners were not returned by press time.

Marina View Towers is an 84-unit building with eight stories, making it the tallest apartment building in Alameda.

Contact Ekene Ikeme at eikeme@alamedasun.com

Girls Inc. Celebrates Eureka!

Deanna Der

Girls Inc. of the Island City graduated 15 girls from its three-year science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) Eureka! program last Thursday. Eureka! offers young women hands-on experience and supports their aspirations for higher education. At the same time, Eureka! introduces the young ladies to new friends, instills confidence and showcases the extensive roles women can play in society.

Eureka! encourages personal as well as educational development and empowers young women to pursue their dreams to work in a STEM-based career. Just before they graduated, the girls participated in a four-week paid summer internship opportunity. The internships allowed the students to shadow sponsoring Alameda companies. Job shadowing allowed the girls to engage in hands-on experiences

with prospective future careers as well as meet other female workers in non-traditional and STEM-related fields.

Since being introduced to Eureka! by her seventh-grade science teacher, Courtney Cheung has been on a journey of self-discovery, making lasting friendships along the way. The soon-to-be sophomore at Alameda High School admits she was shy in middle school, but the Eureka! program helped her gain a confidence in herself that she never before possessed.

"We had exercises that helped us become independent and strong. I learned not to let others discourage what I believe in," she said. "I learned not to let people pick on me or bully me; now, I am able to not let people push me around." She encourages all girls who are afraid or embarrassed to express their

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Richard Bangert

Soil from Decker Island is part of the 600,000 cubic feet of dirt that the Navy will lay down on the southwest corner of Alameda Point.

Landscaping Shapes Point's Nature Reserve

Richard Bangert

On Aug. 3, the Navy's annual environmental cleanup tour visited the worksite known as Site 2 on the southwest corner of Alameda Point. Work has been underway at the site since early this year, constructing a 79-acre soil cover atop the old waste disposal area.

The site was closed for waste disposal in the mid-1980s and given a soil cover that did not meet landfill closure standards. For more than a decade after it was added to the Superfund cleanup program, the regulatory agencies and the Navy went back and forth about how best to close the site in an environmentally safe manner.

The slope of the soil cover is so important to the engineering design that the blades on the graders are not even controlled by the driver. Blades on the graders, and even the bulldozer, are controlled by an onboard computer that uses a GPS satellite to maintain a uniform elevation. The engineering concept for this soil cover is to minimize the

slope so as to minimize movement in an earthquake, while at the same time providing for drainage.

Soon the contractor will be laying down a 200-mil-thick HDPE geonetting material to act as a barrier to burrowing animals. Next, they will add two more feet of soil before installing monitoring equipment, drainage features, an access road and seeding the soil with a variety of California native grasses.

The 30-acre wetland area is not contaminated, but it will receive some upgrades with additional wetland. There is both a freshwater wetland area fed by rainwater, and a saltwater wetland area connected to San Francisco Bay via an underground culvert. The culvert will be replaced due to its age.

More than 600,000 cubic yards of soil is required to complete the project. Of that amount, some 110,000 cubic yards have been recycled from the Seaplane Lagoon dredging after it tested clean. The rest is being barged in from Decker

The slope of the soil cover is so important ... that the blades on the graders are not even controlled by the driver.

Island in the Sacramento River near the town of Rio Vista.

This 110-acre project site, featuring the most scenic viewpoint in all of Alameda, will be transferred to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) along with another 400 acres of the Nature Reserve and 112 acres for the VA's clinic and columbarium. A nearby public access area on the western shoreline will be developed when the VA completes its road along the northern perimeter of the columbarium to the western shore. The Bay Trail will eventually run along the shoreline.

Richard Bangert writes the on-line *Alameda Point Environmental Report*.

Whatever Happened to SunCal?

Update on progress of one-time Alameda Point developer

Michele Ellson

The Alameda

SunCal suffered three years of tough luck. The Irvine-based developer lost a slew of California development projects after its financial partner Lehman Brothers tumbled into bankruptcy. A planned 55,000-acre development outside Albuquerque slid into foreclosure, while the Alameda City Council voted SunCal off the Island after voters soundly rejected the company's de-

velopment and business plans for the Point.

But the same economic crisis that shut the door on dozens of the developer's planned projects opened a window for an experienced development company. SunCal could access the capital needed to buy stalled projects from bankrupt builders — for a fraction of what had originally been invested in them. With the reported backing of D.E. Shaw and other financiers, SunCal began buying up these projects; properties in Virginia, Las Vegas, Texas and Chicago are among them.

Potomac Shores is a planned resort community to be built on 1,920 acres of hardwood forest that hug a two-mile stretch of the Potomac River, in Virginia's Prince William County. Once completed, the development is expected to include up to 4,000 homes and 3.7 million square feet of commercial space. This includes a five-star resort, along with a 450-slip marina and an already-

built Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course.

The project's town center has been redesigned to cluster major employers around a new, \$75 million Virginia Rail Express station that will one day ferry passengers to Washington, D.C. — just 30 miles away. Its developer is promising more than 15 athletic fields, and eight-mile trail network.

McLean-based Kettler, Inc. reportedly worked on the project for a decade, until a \$100 million loan from Wachovia Bank went into default. The bank seized the property in 2009. Two years later Potomac Shores was purchased by a new developer, one that suffered similar misfortunes as a result of the economic meltdown but was able to turn them into a promising new business opportunity: Former Alameda Point developer SunCal Companies.

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Local Man Arrested for Tracy Pot Grow

Sun Staff Reports

A SWAT team from the Tracy Police Department (TPD) joined officers from the Alameda Police Department to arrest Loc T. Nguyen, 32, at a home on the 1800 block of Chestnut Street last Thursday, Aug. 1.

The arrest came in connection with a two-month-long investigation into pot-growing operations at homes in the Tracy area, authorities said.

TPD is holding Nguyen on \$110,000 bail. He is charged with marijuana cultivation and theft of utilities. U.S. Border Patrol has also placed a "no bail" hold on Nguyen.

TPD's Special Investigations Unit has served some 15 search warrants at suspected marijuana-grow operations. TPD suspects Nguyen's involvement in four of these locations, police said.

TPD has issued arrest warrants for several other suspects in the case.



Tracy Police Department

The Alameda Police Department joined a SWAT team from Tracy in arresting Loc T. Nguyen on Chestnut Street last Thursday.



Dennis Evanosky

The historic home and property at 617 Taylor Ave. has deteriorated to the point that both the structure and the property have drawn attention from the city's planning and fire departments.

Case of Historic Neglect

Dennis Evanosky

Residents in the 600 block of Taylor Avenue say that they have watched the home at 617 deteriorate for the last 20 years. Neighbors told the *Alameda Sun* that the house, which Alameda founder Gideon Aughinbaugh built in 1879, has sat neglected since the early 1990s.

According to neighbors and a broadening circle of concerned residents, property owner Samuel

Huie has allowed the home's roof and interior to deteriorate. Over the years the neighbors have turned to city hall for help. The Alameda Fire Department recently notified Huie that he must clear the weeds from his property.

Instead of turning to the city, as neighbors say they have so futilely done over the years, they might have recourse to two paragraphs of the state's civil code. The question arises as to whether the courts

would agree that the property and the home on it comprise a public nuisance.

California Civil Code § 3480 defines a public nuisance as "one which affects at the same time an entire community or neighborhood, or any considerable number of persons, although the extent of the annoyance or damage inflicted upon individuals may be unequal."

The California civil code further

NEGLECT: Page 9