



Locally Owned, Community Oriented

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Oakland Sinkhole Forces Closure

Posey Tube Reopened ahead of schedule

Ekene Ikeme

The Posey Tube was entirely closed for repairs Monday, March 19, during the day and reopened at midnight, after causing major traffic problems not seen often in the City of Alameda.

The Oakland Public Works (OPW) Department began working to fix the road Sunday, March 18, after a sinkhole formed in the left lane just outside the Posey Tube on Friday, March 16. Authorities closed the entire tube at 10 a.m. Monday, to allow OPW to work on filling the sinkhole and restoring the pavement. Prior to that time, one lane of the tube remained open to traffic.

The sinkhole formed on the Oakland side of the Posey Tube



City of Alameda

A city of Oakland Public Works crew works to fill the sinkhole and repair the pavement just outside the exit of the Posey Tube Monday.

leaving Alameda at Sixth and Harrison streets. Authorities believe recent rain and a failing storm pipe at the tube's exit caused the sinkhole. The sinkhole caused major traffic problems in Alameda the entire weekend.

"When I went through the tube about 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, no work was being performed," said Alameda resident Paul Berning. "When I went through the tube about 9:45 a.m. Sunday morning, workers were just starting to remove the trench plate over the sinkhole. Traffic was backed up from the tube to Atlantic Avenue and further back on Saturday afternoon. At 11:45 a.m.

on Sunday morning, it already was backed up to Atlantic. The backups affected Webster [Street] and all streets leading to the tube."

The city sent multiple tweets and other alerts cautioning residents to avoid the Posey Tube and prepare for extra travel time, perhaps for the entire week. AC Transit officials rerouted several bus lines due to the repairs. The bicycle path in the Posey Tube remained open.

More serious traffic issues arrived during Monday afternoon's commute. Residents reported gridlock on Park Street as motorists lined up for blocks to attempt to access the Park Street Bridge.

"Every intersection on the east end backed up to Otis [Drive] practically," reported resident David Sayen. "Because one two-lane vulnerable tube was inactive."

The City of Oakland, Caltrans, AC Transit, Water Emergency Transportation Authority and the City of Alameda worked together to minimize impacts, communicate updates and complete the repairs as quickly as possible.

For more information, visit alamedaca.gov/alerts or www.facebook.com/cityofalameda.

Threats Found at Local Schools

Ekene Ikeme

The Alameda Police Department (APD) arrested a suspect who allegedly wrote graffiti on a bathroom wall at Alameda High School (AHS) threatening violence against Muslim students.

The suspect was arrested at 8:34 a.m. on Friday, March 16, the same day the graffiti was first discovered, according to APD reports. Description of the suspect was withheld. The suspect was charged with a hate crime.

The AHS threat said violence would take place Tuesday, March 20. Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) decided not to close the school due to the arrest made Friday. AHS Principal Robert Ithurburn sent an email to parents describing the threat and reached out to the school's Muslim Student Union to give them a chance to talk about the threat, according to AUSD Superintendent Sean McPhetridge.

There was also a similar graffiti threat of violence at Island High School (IHS) the same day. The IHS

threat said violence would take place at noon that day.

"Because the threat seemed imminent and there was not enough time to fully investigate, AUSD placed the students at IHS and Woodstock Child Development Center (WCDC) in a shelter in place," wrote McPhetridge in a letter to the community.

APD and IHS staff are continuing their investigations of that incident.

The threats came on the heels of the National Walkout Day on Wednesday, March 14. Thousands of Alameda students participated in student-led vigils on their campuses to honor the 17 victims in the Parkland, Fla., shooting. Students then marched to Washington Park for a student-run rally. See related story on page 4.

There will be an unrelated Gun Violence Awareness event tomorrow at College of Alameda from 6 to 8 p.m. A discussion will be had about the root causes of gun violence and how it manifests itself through politics and racial inequality.

Local Businesses Save Money, Environment Simultaneously

'ReThink Disposable' catching on

Sun Staff Reports

Five Alameda businesses have now completed their sign-up and audit process with the ReThink Disposable program. They will save thousands of dollars while contributing positively to the environment as part of the city's ambitious program to certify 100 businesses on the Island.

The program, developed in partnership with the City of Alameda and funded by the Ocean Protection Council, has been running for almost a year, with more than 30 businesses signed up, and momentum building fast.

"Our association is proud to be part of this dynamic team of professionals working toward such important goals of creating a model for a disposable-free community," said Janet Magleby, executive director, Downtown Alameda Business Association. "At the same time we're saving our member businesses money and keeping plastic out of the beautiful ocean surrounding our Island."

Little House, a restaurant on Blanding Avenue, has saved \$6,000 a year by switching disposable water and sauce cups to reusable items.

"I'm delighted with the program. When they came in to meet with us, we were right on board with the idea of saving the oceans from mountains of plastic trash," said Little House owner Donna Meadows. "It was so great to have

some experts showing us the way, and the program team has been nothing but supportive the whole way along."

Doggy Style Hot Dog Shop, Lola's Chicken Shack, Taqueria Viva Mexico and Tucker's Ice Cream, all on Park Street, have also completed their certification processes.

ReThink Disposable auditors work with a restaurant's staff to make the necessary changes and tally the total cost savings to the businesses.

"We've switched to reusable straws and our customers love that we're taking the lead for the environment, as well as taking the lead with our great sundaes," said Tucker's Ice Cream founder Kate Pryor. "People shouldn't have to throw anything away if they're eating here."

Star Donuts, in West Alameda, is the first business on the West End to complete the certification process. The business is now saving thousands of dollars.

Owner Kim You Peav said she's proud to be the first West Alameda business to make the switch.

"It's so great that this initiative is taking place across the Island," said Linda Asbury with the West Alameda Business Association. "We're delighted to work in partnership with ReThink and our friends down on Park Street to really bring the whole Island into the future here."



Courtesy photos

Above, Kate Pryor of Tucker's Ice Cream; below, Doggy Style owner Milton Pang



Point Cleanup Meeting Set for this Evening

Presentation will feature history of Navy's efforts at radiological rehab

Richard Bangert

The Navy will discuss the status of its radiological investigation and cleanup at Alameda Point at the Restoration Advisory Board meeting at 6:30 p.m., this evening, Thursday, March 22. The board meets on the second floor of City Hall West, 950 West Mall Square. The confab is open to the public.

Over the years, the Navy contaminated several areas at today's Alameda Point with paint waste that contained radium-226, an element used to make aircraft dials glow in the dark. "The Navy has made significant progress cleaning up environmental contamination," said Cecily Sabedra, the Navy's environmental coordinator. "The environmental program has only one cleanup plan remaining. The public will soon have an opportunity to comment on this plan."

The remaining cleanup plan involves Site 32 on the western reaches of the former runways. The main contaminant of concern at this site, coincidentally, is radium-226. The Navy disposed radium paint waste at the adjacent underground dump in the mid-20th century. The Navy later bulldozed some of this waste onto the nearby soil when it added a new runway.

The entire former Navy property measures 2,807 acres, covering both land and water. Some 91 percent of this property has been transferred out of Navy ownership. Approximately \$560 million have been spent on environmental cleanup. The Navy said

that it will continue to monitor the cleanup remedies to ensure it meets the established environmental, health and safety goals.

"The Navy expects to transfer the remaining property in multiple, small transactions over the next four years," said Sabedra.

One of those land transfers, dubbed Phase 3C, will happen later this year and involve four separate parcels comprising about 15 acres. One of those parcels is Building 41, the aircraft hangar at the corner of Ferry Point Road and West Tower Avenue. Wrightspeed, a maker of electric motor systems for powering vehicles like garbage trucks and buses, now occupies this site.

Cleaning solvent used during aircraft maintenance work contaminated the groundwater under part of Building 41. The groundwater underwent successive cleanup treatments by the Navy, first injecting biodegradable chemicals to neutralize the solvent, and then using bacteria in a process known as bioremediation. The Navy has now achieved contaminant reduction suitable for transfer to the city.

Also included in the Phase 3C land transfer will be Building 400, which is part of the hangar complex facing the southwest corner of the Seaplane Lagoon and the self-storage facility next to Main Street at West Oriskany Drive.

Richard Bangert posts stories and photos about Alameda Point on his blog at <https://alamedapointenviro.com>.



Dennis Evanosky

Alameda public school teachers prepare to march on the school board meeting last Monday. They hoped to make their voices heard at the meeting that discussed next year's budget.

AEA Teachers Lead March to Protest Pay

Dennis Evanosky

On Monday, March 19, teachers at Alameda public schools, who are also members of the teachers' union, Alameda Education Association (AEA), members gathered at the 1400 Bar & Grill. They were preparing for a march down Webster Street and on to Island High School on Pacific Avenue, where the school board was meeting.

On Jan. 23, the teachers' union launched a community outreach campaign called "AEAnchors Away!" "We are pressing the Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) to

bring our pay from the lowest in Alameda County to County average," said AEA president Judith Klinger. The union is striving to make teachers' salaries a top priority in the 2018-19 AUSD budget.

At last Monday's meeting school board member Gary Lym pointed out that school districts that pay higher salaries to teachers than AUSD have fewer facilities than AUSD does. He also told the board and the audience that AUSD's average class size is 18. Districts with higher salaries have larger class sizes — 22 on

average. He said, however, that there's an imperative to raise teachers' salaries.

School board member Anne McKereghan pointed out that the state of California put AUSD in this position by not giving school districts enough money to support salaries and programs that are good for students.

"This campaign is not meant to be adversarial," Klinger said. "We simply want to remind the public of the critical importance that public schools and teachers play in the future of our community."

News in Brief

Sun Staff Reports

An Evening of Hope

Walt and Judy Jacobs invite the community to learn more about cutting-edge stem-cell therapy for multiple sclerosis (MS) and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Their son-in-law Paul Gaspari, who has MS, has benefitted from this therapy, which he received at Hadassah University Medical Center in Ein Kerem, Jerusalem.

Gaspari will speak at the event with his wife, Lauren. They will address the effect this therapy has had on their lives and the promise it holds for their future. The

event will be held from 7 to 9 p.m., next Thursday, March 29, at The Phoenix, 2315 Lincoln Ave.

Clars to Appraise Antiques with Alameda Museum

Clars Auction Gallery is coming to the Alameda Museum. For more than 45 years, Clars has built a strong reputation for knowledge and experience in handling quality estate property and has sold more than \$175 million worth of fine art, furnishings, jewelry, vehicles and collectibles.

Now Alamedans have a chance to get verbal auction estimates from Clars for their valuables. The

Alameda Museum invites the community to bring items to Eagles Hall, 2305 Alameda Ave., Wednesday evening, March 28. Examples of items to bring include Native American, Western and Ethnographic pieces, fine jewelry and timepieces, as well as collectibles like coins, figurines and rare books.

Alameda residents are also welcome to bring paintings, vases, silver and photos of large furniture. Don't forget rare, interesting or unique pieces. Suggestions include a ring that has been in the family for years, or a letter signed by a historical figure.