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Alameda Sun Almanac

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Final Cannabis Vote Scheduled

Council to determine marijuana's future

Dennis Evanosky
 At its April 16 meeting, the City Council will consider the final fate of four cannabis-related ordinances.
 On Jan. 15, the Council conducted a public hearing on these ordinances that would amend the city's Municipal Code involving cannabis-related business ("Council Ponders What to Do with Legal Marijuana," Jan. 17). If the Council passes these four ordinances, the vote would repeal ordinances 3227 and 3228 that involve the regulatory and land-use aspects of marijuana business in the city and create two new ordinances.

Ordinance 3227 involves the regulatory rules of marijuana businesses in Alameda. The new ordinances would amend Alameda Municipal Code Article XVI that deals with cannabis business. This article is found in the Code's Chapter VI that defines businesses, occupations and industry. The first proposed change would remove the cap on the number of testing laboratories in the city. Ordinance 3227 caps the number of testing labs at two.

The new ordinance would also seek to double the number of storefront dispensaries from the two allowed in the current ordinance to four — two east of Grand Street and two west of Grand. If the Council approves, the two new businesses must require delivery service and be open to the public.

The proposed ordinance would permit dispensaries and does not make a distinction between the different types of retail dispensaries. In addition the new ordinances would maintain the 1,000-foot buffer zone between marijuana businesses and public and private schools. However passage would reduce the buffer zone to 600 feet from all other sensitive areas, including youth centers, day cares and tutoring centers.

One of the more controversial changes would change the definition of a youth center. The new definition would not include buildings, locations or facilities where programs, activities or services are offered at private residences; involves physical fitness, martial arts or combat sports, cultural or similar education or are offered less than five hours per day each day the location is open.

A final change to Ordinance 3227 would require any cannabis-related business located outside of the city

to acquire an Alameda business license if that business was delivering cannabis or cannabis-related products to Alameda.

The Council's April 16 vote would also replace Ordinance 3228 that deals with the land-use zoning of potential marijuana businesses. The new ordinance would amend Alameda Municipal Code Section 30-10 for dispensaries to include both neighborhood business (C1) and commercial manufacturing districts (CM). A city memorandum informs the City Council that C1 district's "serve residential areas with convenient shopping and service facilities," while CM districts "could be complementary to the general commercial facilities and light manufacturing uses permitted in that district."

Council's approval of the changes would remove the dispersion requirement that stated dispensaries must be located at least one mile from each other. The Planning Board informed the Council that the dispersion requirement was not a land-use issue, but a regulatory issue.

Contact Dennis Evanosky at editor@alamedasun.com.



The Vote Goes On

Residents decided on Measures A and B Tuesday, April 9

Photo & story by Eric J. Kos

The April 9 election brought some strong emotions out of the Island City's residents. Proponents of Measure A looked to save the less fortunate while Measure B's backers proposed to save local parks for future generations. The vote for the McKay Avenue Wellness Center was expected to take place primarily via mail-in ballots. Just two in-person voting locations were arranged for the special election last Sunday through Tuesday. Voters filled out ballots in person (along with mail-in ballot applications) at a sun-drenched unit at South Shore Center Tuesday, above. Residents could also vote in person at the Registrar of Voters' office in Oakland.

Alameda High Student Named 'Future Engineer'

Sun Staff Reports
 Amazon announced April 2 that a student from Alameda High School will be one of the first recipients of an Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship. The \$40,000 scholarship provides the student with funds to study computer science at a university of their choosing along with a paid internship at Amazon after their freshmen year of college.

The student, Ashley Chu, is one of just 100 high school seniors from underserved communities across the country that will receive this first-ever scholarship.

The 100 high school seniors from 32 states across the country will receive the Amazon Future Engineer scholarships of \$10,000 per year over four years. Recipients were chosen for their academic achievement, demonstrated leadership, participation in school and community activities, work experience, future goals and diversity. All of the recipients demonstrated financial need and more than half of the students are from an underrepresented group in the computer science field.

"This scholarship is very important because it means when I go to college, I won't have to constantly worry about money," said Leo Jean Baptiste, from Orange High School in Orange, N.J. "I have an internship at one of the top companies in the world — I feel relieved knowing that I have the opportunity set up ahead of time."

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that by 2020 there will be 1.4 million computer-science-related jobs available and just 400,000 computer science graduates with the skills to apply for those jobs. Computer science is the fastest-growing profession within the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) field, but just 8 percent of STEM graduates earn a computer science degree. A small number come from underprivileged backgrounds. Students from these backgrounds are eight to 10 times more likely to pursue college degrees in computer science if they have taken Advanced Placement (AP) computer science in high school.

Launched in November 2018, Amazon Future Engineer is a four-

part childhood-to-career program intended to inspire, educate and prepare children and young adults from underrepresented and underserved communities to pursue careers in the fast-growing field of computer science.

Each year, Amazon Future Engineer aims to inspire more than 10 million kids to explore computer science; provide some 100,000 young people in more than 2,000 high schools access to Intro or AP Computer Science courses; award 100 students with four-year \$10,000 scholarships, as well as offer guaranteed and paid Amazon internships to gain work experience. In addition, Amazon Future Engineer has donated more than \$10 million to organizations that promote computer science and STEM education across the country.

Rising high school seniors can apply for the Amazon Future Engineer scholarship starting in November 2019. Requirements include: completion of an AP computer science course in high school, intent to pursue a computer science degree at a four-year college or university and a teacher



Still from courtesy video

Alameda High School senior Ashley Chu overwhelmed with joy shortly after finding out she was one of 100 high school students to win \$40,000 from Amazon.

recommendation. Amazon Future Engineer is currently accepting applications for the high school piece of its program at www.amazonfutureengineer.com.



Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, center, and Alameda County Meals on Wheels Board Member Dave Neumann, right, delivered a delicious meal and spent time with Grace, an Alameda resident, in celebration of Meals on Wheels' 46th anniversary.

Mayor Volunteers to 'March for Meals'

Sun Staff Reports
 Last month's event "March for Meals" recognized federal legislation signed in March 1972 that helped create Meals on Wheels America programs nationwide. Alameda Meals on Wheels began in 1973 and has served hot, nourishing meals to homebound Alameda residents 365 days a year ever since.

In celebration of March for Meals 2019, Alameda Meals on Wheels invited Mayor Marilyn

Ezzy Ashcraft and Alameda County Meals on Wheels Board Member Dave Neumann to help out.

Ashcraft volunteered with Neumann on March 22 to deliver meals to, and visit with, recipients in Alameda. According to Alameda Meals on Wheels Executive Director Rosemary Reilly, Ashcraft is no stranger to volunteering with the program.

"Marilyn volunteered with us for about five years when her twins

were young," Reilly said. "It was very important to her for them to learn about community service."

The recipients were thrilled to visit with the mayor.

"It is kind of exciting to have the mayor deliver your meal," said Reilly.

Volunteers are welcome to join Meals on Wheels throughout the year. Call 865-6131 or visit www.alamedamealsonwheels.org to find out more.

News in Brief

Sun Staff Reports

PUB to Consider Rate Hike

At its regular meeting, Monday, April 15, the Public Utilities Board (PUB) will consider a proposal to increase electric rates for commercial and residential customers. If approved by the board, the average increase of 1.8 to 2.5 percent for commercial customers would go into effect on July 1, 2019.

Alameda Municipal Power's (AMP) commercial rates would still average between 11 and 19 percent below Pacific Gas & Electric Co. commercial energy rates in neighboring communities.

Before the April 15 meeting, the public is invited to an AMP budget workshop at 4 p.m. at the AMP Service Center, 2000 Grand St.

Visit www.alamedamp.com to find more information on AMP's rates and how to manage energy use.

Device Creates Scare, Closes Streets

Workers in West Alameda found a device they feared could explode and contacted the Alameda Police Department (APD). Erring on the side of caution, APD notified the Alameda County Sheriff's Office's (ACSO) bomb squad and closed Hibbard Street and Buena Vista Avenue between Grand and Paru streets.

At 1:56 p.m. the Sheriff's Office tweeted that it had determined the device was not an explosive or a threat to public safety. The bomb squad collected the item and APD reopened the streets to traffic.

Killer Dies in Prison

The gunman who went on a killing spree and was apprehended in

Alameda in April 2012 died in prison last month while serving seven life sentences, plus 271 years, at California State Prison Sacramento.

One Goh, 50, died at the maximum security prison in Folsom on March 20, according to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. The Sacramento County Coroner's office has not released the cause of death.

Goh, a native of South Korea, was sentenced to prison for the rest of his life for the killing rampage that took the lives of seven people — six students and one school employee — at Oikos University in Oakland, near Oakland International Airport, on April 2, 2012.

He killed six people and wounded three others inside the university. He later shot and killed the owner of a blue Honda and stole his car. He drove to the Safeway at Alameda South Shore Center and confessed his crimes to employees. Employees notified the Alameda Police Department (APD). APD officers apprehended him and later contacted OPD.

Goh dropped out of Oikos several months before the shooting and wanted his tuition refunded, according to reports for his motive of the crime. In April 2017, Goh pled no contest to seven counts of first-degree murder, three counts of premeditated murder and to special circumstance allegations of committing a murder during a kidnapping and committing multiple murders ("Killer Charged," May 2, 2017).

Goh was under psychiatric evaluation for almost four years before a judge deemed him fit to stand trial. Goh was sentenced on July 14, 2017.