

Alameda Sun



Locally Owned, Community Oriented

Vol. 15 No. 30
April 21, 2016

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of Island safety
& law personnel



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Sharpen your pencils for that
newspaper tradition.



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Alameda Sun
is a publication of
Stellar Media Group, Inc.
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Alameda, CA 94501
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JoanAnn Radu-Simak

Alameda Sun Almanac

Date	Rise	Set
Today	06:26	19:50
April 22	06:24	19:51
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Busy Weekend for Island City's First Responders

Attempted murder, fireboat water rescue keep police, fire officials active

APD Makes Arrest in Shooting of Two ARCO Employees

Alameda Police Department (APD) announced that its officers arrested Valente Blanco-Garcia, 20, shortly after a double shooting last Saturday at the ARCO gas station, 1260 Park St. On Monday, the Alameda County District Attorney's office charged Blanco-Garcia with two counts of attempted murder.

In a press release APD's public information officer Lt. Hoshmand Durani stated that APD officers responded to the call and found two men suffering from gunshot wounds at the station. "The shooting victims) were hospitalized and are expected to survive their injuries," Durani stated.

Durani also stated that six minutes into the call, APD dispatch received a second call that a suspicious man was in the Redwood Square parking lot in the 1300 block of Park Avenue. The officers

responded to that call and found Blanco-Garcia there. After a brief investigation they arrested him. He is being held in Santa Rita Jail without bail and was scheduled to appear in court Tuesday, April 19.

AFD Rescues Distressed Kite Surfer with District Helicopter

Crewmembers from the Alameda Fire Department (AFD) rescued a distressed kite surfer in the waters off Shore Line Drive last Saturday. A crew in an East Bay Regional Parks District helicopter assisted in the rescue.

AFD dispatch received a report of the distressed kite surfer at 5:23 p.m. When they arrived on scene, AFD firefighters located the surfer about one-half mile from the shore. They deployed Rescue Boat No. 1, and one of the department's rescue swimmers reached the kite surfer and helped her to shore. There were no injuries in the rescue.



Ilana DeBare

People who attended the April 9 symposium looked for nesting peregrine falcons by the Fruitvale Bridge.

Wildlife Symposium Meets on the Island

Ilana DeBare

Least terns, harbor seals and western bluebirds are just part of Alameda's rich variety of wildlife that recently had their day in the sun — or drizzle — as part of Golden Gate Audubon Society's "Wild! In Alameda" symposium, which included trips to viewing stations around the Island City.

Some 100 people, including Mayor Trish Spencer, visited the Main Library on Saturday, April 9, for the two-hour symposium and slide show that featured the species that make Alameda their home for all or part of the year.

Golden Gate Audubon Society (GGAS) Executive Director Cindy Margulis described the nesting colony of egrets on Bay Farm Island. Discovered in 2007, the nests once extended over five or six trees but after several trees were thoughtlessly trimmed, the colony contracted to just a single pine tree with about 29 nests — 12 percent of all great egret nests in the East and South Bay.

Richard Bangert, publisher of the "Alameda Point Environmental Report," recounted the soap-opera-like saga of ospreys trying to nest at Alameda Point. Over the past few years, they've tried nesting in inhospitable places (masts of ships, a light pole directly over a motorcycle class area). One year, breeding was distracted by the arrival of a second, rival female. Another year, common ravens nesting nearby chased the ospreys off.

"There was a certain self-confidence about those ravens," Bangert

said. "It was one of the most in-your-face bird actions. One raven actually picked up the ospreys' nesting materials and took it over to the ravens' nest." Perhaps 2016 will be more auspicious: The osprey pair has chosen a more secure spot and may be sitting on an egg.

Mark Klein, who used to work with the Marine Mammal Research Center, described the harbor seal population that hauls out on a dock at Seaplane Lagoon. When that dock was threatened because of development, seal lovers spoke out and won installation of a new floating dock for the seals, which is scheduled to be installed in about six weeks. December 2015 was a new record for the seal population there, with 38 hauled out at one time.

"They haul out for several reasons," Klein said. "To warm up since they don't have a lot of blubber like elephant seals, to give birth and nurse their young, and to molt and throw off their old skin and grow a new one."

Perhaps Alameda's best-known bird is the California least tern — a tiny, endangered species that has been nesting on the tarmac of the former Naval Air Station for at least 40 years. Susan Euing, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&W) biologist who manages the tern colony, described its breeding cycle: The birds arrive in mid- to late-April from points as far south as Ecuador. Early May sees the first wave of nests. By late May or early June, chicks have hatched. Within three weeks they have started flying, and within another three weeks they

are heading south again.

The terns make airport runways their home because the birds like big open beaches. Euing said. "But there's a lot of competition since people also like big open beaches for their dogs or for condos."

GGAS volunteers have helped USF&W monitor and prepare the terns' nest site for years. These days, Alameda Point is home not just to least terns, but to a breeding colony of Caspian terns, as well as burrowing owls, stilts, avocets and barn swallows.

Diane Bennett, a citizen-scientist and GGAS board member, described the amazing discovery of a wintering snowy plover population on Crown Memorial State Beach several years ago. Decades-old notes by conservation pioneer Elsie Roemer had mentioned plovers, but no one had seen any there in recent memory. When Bennett and some others did a point blue shorebird survey along Crown Beach in 2013, they decided to make a special search for plovers — and found some.

Those who attended the symposium also learned about the presence of western bluebirds, peregrine falcons and California brown pelicans. In the afternoon, GGAS and its partners sponsored viewing stations around the island so people could get real-life glimpses of the birds and animals they'd learned about that morning.

The Wild! in Alameda photography exhibit at the Alameda Main Library will remain up through the end of May.

Become a Friend of the Alameda Wildlife Reserve

Sun Staff Reports

The Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Reserve (FAWR) committee trains and maintains a corps of volunteers committed to protecting and enhancing wildlife at Alameda Point. The committee is dedicated to building public support for the reserve and to ensuring the long-term survival of species that depend upon its habitat, including the endangered California Least Tern and Brown Pelican.

The committee restores habitat for California Least Terns and other shorebirds on more than 500 acres of land that was formerly part of the Alameda Naval Air

Station and since November 2014 has been owned by the U.S. Veterans Administration. The committee organizes monthly work parties to create Least Tern nesting sites and remove invasive weeds.

Members work with biologists to monitor wildlife populations at the refuge, sponsor tern research projects, and build community awareness about the site.

The FAWR committee meets the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at Alameda Point Building 1, Room 140.

For more information, contact Joyce Larrick at jmlarrick@yahoo.com.



Mike Maurice

Commuters Golfers Post First Two Rounds

Sun Staff Reports

The Alameda Commuters 36-hole Medalist Honors for 2016 went to Peter Kuest of Fresno, Calif., above, who fired rounds of 65-64 for a 13-under total 129 at the halfway point in the 72-hole golf tournament, held on Alameda's municipal golf course for the past 89 years. For more results, turn to page 5.

News in Brief

Posey Tube to Close at Night

Each night through Saturday, May 21, from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m., CalTrans contractors will close the Posey Tube to repair the pedestrian guardrail within the tube. The closures started last Sunday, April 17.

Detours will be in place. Motorists are advised to expect delays and are encouraged to take alternate routes if necessary and also that traffic fines are doubled in construction zones.

For more information, contact Marcus Wagner of CalTrans at 622-8758.

Exchange Program Seeks Host Families

A dozen or more host families are needed in Alameda to host exchange students from Spain. The students arrive in late June and depart in late July. In total, some 25 students will visit Alameda this

summer to participate in the EMY Program.

Students range in age from 13 to 17. The students will participate in three excursions each week to places like Great America, Alcatraz and an Oakland A's game, just to name a few.

Admission expenses and ground transportation for the excursions are paid for through the program. Host families are welcome to join any excursion at a discounted rate. The students come with full insurance and their own spending money. Host families are asked to provide the students with their own beds.

For information, or to participate in this cultural experience, call Jan Garcia at 749-7061 or 301-0779.

World Malaria Day

Nearly 438,000 people will die this year from malaria, 75 percent

of them children. Over the past five years, the United Nations Association (UNA) of the East Bay has raised more than \$20,000 to provide some 2,100 bed nets which block disease-carrying mosquitos to refugee families in Africa. The donation supports the "Nothing But Nets" program.

This Sunday, April 25, is World Malaria Day, and defending against the mosquito is especially important given the recent outbreak of the Zika virus. Bed nets protect against the nocturnal malaria mosquito, but the mosquito that carries Zika comes out during the day.

To help further research on how to protect from the Zika mosquito funding is needed. Just \$10 goes a long way. Send checks to United Nations Foundation/Nothing But Nets, P.O. Box 96539, Washington, D.C. 20077 or visit www.nothingbutnets.net for more information.

Rent Ordinance Drama Continues to Unfold

Ekene Ikeme

The city of Alameda's Rent Stabilization and Eviction Limitation Ordinance that went into effect on March 1 has raised concerns from tenants, landlords and local politicians.

The Alameda City Council adopted the new ordinance to give relief to tenants from the increasing cost of rent in the city and create a process that would suppress landlord-

renter tensions. However, the ordinance has created more squabbles between the two sides.

April Squires, an Alameda resident and a member of the Alameda Renters Coalition, said she had numerous problems with the ordinance. Squires, who was at the Starbucks on Webster Street to collect enough signatures to put a new ballot measure for renters' rights on the November ballot, was dismayed with the lack of a rent increase cap. Instead an increase of five percent or more would "trigger" a Rent Review Advisory Committee (RRAC) rent mediation process.

"It's just a suggestion, it's not a cap," said Squires.

According to the ordinance, the "role of the RRAC in examining all rent increases above 5 percent is expected to curb the rapid rise in rental costs."

But Squires is skeptical that this is how the process will play out.

"All the landlords would have to do is talk about how much they spent to fix something," she said. "We feel a rent increase capped at 65 percent of the consumer price index is fair."

Landlords and Realtors have expressed their issues with the ordinance. Two realtors in Alameda, Farhad Matin and Marilyn Schumacher, filed a notice of intent to circulate petition to the City Clerk's office on Monday, April 18, with the purpose of amending the ordinance to enact the Alameda Homeowners and Private Prop-

erty Rights Act. The amendment intends to, among other things, "ensure that property owners can invest in the maintenance and upkeep of their properties."

Another issue landlords have is the relocation fee for "no cause" evictions. Matin and Schumacher wrote in their petition they seek to "prohibit the City of Alameda from requiring property owners to subsidize their tenants."

Councilmen Tony Daysog filed a petition to stop relocation fees for Alameda property owners who live in Alameda and evict a tenant with the purpose of moving in themselves or moving a family member into a property that they own ("Councilman Attempts to Adjust Rent Ordinance" April 14).

"Only 'small mom and pops' landlords who permanently reside in Alameda are exempt from paying relocation fees," said Daysog in an email. "And that exemption is for only one specific instance involving family move-in, meaning all other circumstances that trigger relocation fees still apply."

Matin said another concern was the cost the quick implementation of the ordinance would have on landlords and community.

"Why not wait to enact the ordinance when the costs are solidified and a revenue stream accurately identified?" said Matin. "We need to work together to create long term solutions to our housing issues. This ordinance is not the correct way to accomplish that goal."