



Coronavirus Updates

Pandemic sweeping nation, world

Eric J. Kos

I received the following notices related to the coronavirus pandemic this week.

Ceremony Canceled

Joe LoParo, a former marine and a leader in the veteran community, wrote the *Alameda Sun* with the following message.

"It is with great sadness as chairman of the Alameda Memorial Day ceremony that I must announce, as many expected, the cancellation of this year's event. The event would have been held on Monday, May 25, at Alameda Veterans Memorial Park, sponsored by the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 400, American Legion Posts 647 and 9 and Alameda Elks Lodge No. 1015.

"This year is especially hard on us as just in the last month we have lost some true heroes of the past. In April we lost: Floyd Hunter, a decorated Marine survivor of the Battle of Iwo Jima; Ralph Burtelsen, who served aboard the *USS Moore* during the Battle of Iwo Jima, and Doug Dressler, a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 400.

We also lost Gene Maurice, who served aboard the *USS Saginaw Bay* during the Battle of Iwo Jima. I met Gene, like many others, at the Memorial Day Ceremony. He was the World War II veteran who every year showed up to play *Taps* at the event. Prior to the Navy, Gene was a trumpet player in the band at Alameda High School.

"As chair of this ceremony I have been honored to make friends with so many. Gene, Paul Jones (another World War II vet) and I would enjoy lunch on Wednesdays and Fridays at the Elks. They were regulars and invited me to join them. I am glad I did, the last couple years sharing memories and time with these gentlemen have been an honor.

"I hope we all remember that Memorial Day is a time to honor those that gave all for this great nation. When I personally am thanked for my service, my comment is, 'thank you, but if you truly want to thank a veteran, be the kind of American that is worth dying for.'"

Parade Canceled

Alameda City Council decided last week to cancel the Alameda Fourth of July Parade. As the city expected to host tens of thousands of spectators and many clusters of people marching or riding together, the parade proved impossible to manage during a shelter-in-place order.

While Gov. Gavin Newsom has relaxed some restrictions in California, Alameda County's order remains unchanged. In places

where orders overlap, the stricter order applies. In related news, the county announced last week the Alameda County Fair also will not be held this year.

Stay Home for FAAS Pajama Ball

Friends of the Alameda Animal Shelter (FAAS) invites everyone to relax safely at home in their jammies to raise money for Alameda's homeless pets. For the Saturday, May 30, Pajama Ball, local restaurants will deliver a gourmet meal to "Negligee," "Silk Pajamas" and "Forever Plaid PJs" attendees, including dessert and wine. Others will receive a restaurant gift certificate.

The fundraiser also supports Angela's Kitchen, C'era Una Volta, Donut Petit, Pappo, The Park Street Tavern, Speisekammer Restaurant, Tomatina and Tucker's Ice Cream. Everyone is invited to participate in the Pajama Ball online auction, May 23 to 30, and FAAS Facebook photo contest for Best Pajamas on May 30.

For tickets and full details, visit www.thepajamaball.org.

Remember the caterer

Local entrepreneur David Molenberg wrote in with a unique perspective on the impact of the coronavirus. His Alameda-based business, wowcater.com, until recently had solid business coordinating jobs for caterers.

Molenberg is now working with some of the hardest-hit businesses in the nation: catering kitchens.

"The catering industry is likely the worst hit by COVID-19," stated Molenberg. "While restaurants can still do to-go orders, most catering kitchens are in warehouses, don't have a store front and don't have any business. While restaurants may be able to open soon, catering kitchens will still suffer for a long time to come."

Business with a coronavirus-testing company is helping keep Molenberg afloat during these times but he is not able to spread that out to all his kitchen partners.

Essential businesses, senior homes or other organizations can place meal orders, minimum \$250 at least 72 hours in advance through orders@wowcater.com. The company vets catering kitchens from all over the Bay Area. Drivers pick up, deliver and do a full setup. Staff can also stay on-site, manage meals and clean up.

Photos top to bottom: FAAS Pajama Ball mascot, deer on Crown Beach by Irene Dieter, advice against home solutions, before and after, courtesy Jackson Quinn



Mayoral Message

Face coverings the new normal; maintaining physical distance, while maintaining social connections essential

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft

By March 15, the seven public health officers from Bay Area counties and the City of Berkeley had watched with alarm as COVID-19 spread through Wuhan, China, then devastated Italy where doctors were forced to ration ventilators. They knew they had to act quickly to avoid a similar outcome, so on March 16, they jointly issued the nation's first shelter-in-place (SIP) order.

SIP has been a success because of residents' compliance with this early action, according to Alameda County Public Health Officer Dr. Erica Pan. Initial projections, based on modeling, had predicted 20,000 to 30,000 COVID-related deaths among the Bay Area counties. Instead, there have been fewer than 400 deaths to date.

Last week Gov. Gavin Newsom modified the statewide stay-at-home order, transitioning into Stage 2 where businesses and activities are categorized as "low risk" or "high risk" (of transmitting the coronavirus). Lower-risk workplaces and activities, including retail, manufacturing, and logistics will be phased in, depending on a county's readiness.

Sheltering in place has been a success because of residents' compliance with this early action.

However, Alameda County won't follow the Governor's modified order immediately because the consequences of relaxing the SIP order too soon are steep. Dr. Pan says scientists are beginning to realize it is unlikely COVID-19 will be extinguished, and are instead focusing on suppression.

But even suppression is challenging, because people can have and spread the disease without showing any symptoms. And, as we relax SIP, we must anticipate an increase in cases, even a secondary wave of the pandemic, and must protect our most vulnerable residents and healthcare workers.

For these reasons, Alameda County decisions will be based on five indicators introduced last week. They are: 1) total number of community cases is flat or decreasing; 2) number of hospitalized patients

with COVID-19 is flat or decreasing; 3) 30-day supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) for all health care workers is secured; 4) testing needs are being met, especially for vulnerable populations and those in high-risk settings or occupations; and 5) having the capacity to investigate all COVID-19 cases, trace all contacts, isolate those who test positive and quarantine individuals who may have been exposed.

If you're interested in volunteering to become a contact tracer, which requires a background check, email: log1@acgov.org.

It takes about two weeks to see shifts in the five indicators, so the earliest time lower-risk workplaces such as curbside pick-up from retail stores will reopen is mid to late May. For questions about re-opening or technical assistance, businesses can email: covidrecovery@acgov.org.

Under this phased approach, golf for individual golfers, with or without a golf cart and singles tennis are now allowed. But large sporting events, concerts and activities where big groups congregate will be the last to re-open. As a result, the Alameda City Council

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Health Orders Remain in Effect

Dennis Evanosky

On Monday, May 4, health authorities in the nine-county region that includes Alameda loosened restrictions on construction as well as some outdoor activities and businesses. They announced that the state of California was planning to allow some retailers to reopen with curbside pickup and physical distancing. The state was also allowing any manufacturing and supply chains for those businesses to open. These orders do not permit curbside pickup for all non-essential, brick-and-mortar businesses.

California is continuing to allow restaurants to operate because authorities consider restaurants that "prepare or serve food only for take-out or delivery" essential businesses.

The Bay Area Nine-County order allowed for the following businesses to open:

- Construction projects that follow the Construction Project Safety Protocols authorities have outlined.
- Real estate transactions with restrictions on open houses and tours

■ Childcare, camps, as well as educational and recreational programs that provide care for children of those who are allowed to work outside their homes

■ Outdoor businesses like nurseries, landscaping and agriculture that normally operated outdoors prior to the shelter in place orders

■ Outdoor recreational facilities, such as skate parks and athletic fields. Golf courses are permitted under local orders but remain prohibited under state orders.

On Thursday, May 7, Gov. Gavin Newsom issued orders that spelled out the state of California's expectations for more nonessential businesses to begin to reopen in a limited capacity. This does not mean that the state is allowing all businesses to open. When Newsom's office does allow all non-essential businesses to reopen, a stricter decision at a local level to keep some of these businesses shuttered would take precedence.

Authorities are requiring "all persons entering any business" wear face coverings.

On Tuesday, May 12, as the *Alameda Sun* was going to press Newsom allowed offices in the state that can't telework to reopen with health safety modifications. He was also allowing shopping malls and outlets to offer curbside pickup.

Newsom reminded Californians that "it's still up to local governments to determine whether they're ready to move further into the next step." Health authorities in the nine-county Bay Area region stated that they could amend any health order issued by the state into a stricter one that would not significantly increase illness and death or overwhelm healthcare delivery systems. This would include the order to reopen businesses.

"This global pandemic of COVID-19 is still in its early stages," stated Alameda County Health Care Services Agency authorities in a press release. "The virus spreads easily. If we move too fast to ease restrictions, the potential of exponential spread could have grave impacts to health and wellness of our residents as well as the economy."

Council Subcommittee Exploring Housing Rules

Ekene Ikeme

At a special meeting on Thursday, May 7, the Alameda City Council voted to create a subcommittee to further evaluate community input of a possible amendment to Article 26 of the Alameda City Charter.

Council voted 4-0; Councilmember Malia Vella did not attend. The subcommittee, comprised of Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft and Councilmember Jim Oddie, will address public concerns, including whether it is appropriate to make a ballot proposal while residents are sheltering in place. Oddie and Ashcraft will present their findings at a meeting in June.

Article 26 has three sections. Section 26.1, which stems from the Measure A ordinance passed in 1973, prohibits the construction of multiple-dwelling units in Alameda. Section 26.3 of the article, passed in 1991, states the maximum density for any residential development within the

City of Alameda shall be one housing unit per 2,000 square feet of land.

The issue of Article 26 was brought in front of the Council after Ashcraft asked a subcommittee of Councilmember Tony Daysog and Vice Mayor John Knox White to look at the City Charter and recommend potential items for the Council to consider putting on the November 2020 Ballot. The subcommittee identified several items including Article 26. City staff created a report examining Measure A's impact on the city.

The staff report concluded that despite several ordinances permitting some multi-family dwellings, "Article 26 continues to impede the community's efforts to address local housing, transportation and environmental problems facing the Alameda community in 2020." As a result, staff offered the Council five options to proceed regarding the measure.

First, keep Article 26 in its current form. Second, remove Article

26 entirely from the City Charter. Third, eliminate Section 26.1, but leave section 26.3. Fourth, modify Section 26.1 and 26.3 to recognize state mandates. Option 4B eliminates Section 26.1, but modifies Section 26.3.

Knox White was in favor of eliminating Article 26. "Article 26 reduces our ability to produce affordable housing; produce sustainable climate-friendly housing; and has impacts on the development of lower traffic development," he said.

Daysog said he wants to keep Article 26. "What I fear is overbuilding in a city that is an Island with so few ingress and egresses," he said.

Oddie was open to the idea of an amendment but was concerned with so many residents opposed to having it evaluated while residents are sheltering in place. The Council received several letters urging the Council to delay decisions on the possible ballot measure until the shelter-in-place order is lifted.

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Date	Rise	Set
Today	6:00	20:11
May 15	5:59	20:12
May 16	5:58	20:13
May 17	5:58	20:13
May 18	5:57	20:14
May 19	5:56	20:15
May 20	5:55	20:16



Keepin' it Clean

Photo & story by Maurice Ramirez

Vince Hal, cashier at Alameda Natural Grocery, sprays disinfectant onto shopping baskets and carts. Shoppers enter incrementally after washing hands at the portable sinks or using hand-sanitizing stations provided at the parking lot entrance. They are also required to wear face coverings while inside.

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