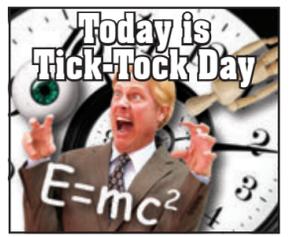


# Alameda Sun



Locally Owned, Community Oriented

Vol. 16 No. 14  
Dec. 29, 2016

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Alameda Sun Almanac

Date	Rise	Set
Today	07:24	16:58
Dec. 30	07:24	16:59
Jan. 1	07:24	17:01
Jan. 2	07:24	17:01
Jan. 3	07:25	17:01
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## New City Council Seated

Dennis Evanosky

Alameda's lame-duck City Council sat for the last time on Tuesday, Dec. 20. Councilmembers took care of the consent calendar and put their final stamp on three ordinances — one dealing with leases, a second with parking and a third with taxes. They wrapped the meeting up with a resolution commending outgoing City Council member Tony Daysog for his 14 years of service on the Council.

Following a brief recess, Judge Delbert Gee administered the oaths of office to incumbent Councilmember Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft and Alameda's newest Councilmember Malia Vella. Both won their seats in the Nov. 8 election. Vella is taking the seat

vacated by Daysog. As their first order of business, councilmembers unanimously selected Vella as vice-mayor. Tradition dictates that the top vote-getter in the Nov. 8 election sit as vice-mayor. Vella had that honor.

In the brief meeting that followed Councilmember Jim Oddie introduced a referral that asked his fellow members to consider directing staff to analyze the ramifications of declaring Alameda a sanctuary city. In addition Oddie hopes the new City Council would adopt policies that refuse any orders of mass arrests or internments and that refuse to participate in any registration of individuals based on religious beliefs.

Oddie also hopes to have a

hand in passing a resolution that reaffirms Alameda's commitment not only to lesbian gay bisexual and transgender rights, but to religious freedoms and to racial, social and economic justice as well.

**Kenney, Kearney Sworn into Office**

Kevin Kennedy and Kevin Kearney took oaths to initiate their new terms of office — Kennedy as City Treasurer and Kearney as City Auditor. Both were reelected. Kearney has served as City Auditor for 25 years; Kennedy has held the office of City Treasurer since 2000.



File photo

In January crews made way for a new condominium complex on ground where a historic company once did business. The property on Clement Avenue between Willow and Mulberry streets was home to one of the six companies that teamed up to build the Hoover Dam.

## Nursing Home Shooter Faces Indictment

Dennis Evanosky

Florentino M. Morata, 85, is sitting in Santa Rita Jail in Dublin accused of trying to murder his wife.

According to police, Morata came into Crown Bay Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 815 Westline Drive, at 10:15 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 22. He entered his wife's room and allegedly shot her twice. He then turned the gun on himself. Not only did security cameras

record the incident, but, according to police, Morata openly admitted that he had shot his wife. Both survived what appeared to be a murder-suicide attempt.

Paramedics transported Morata and his wife to Highland Hospital in Oakland. Authorities waited to complete their investigation before they could arrest him. They booked him into Santa Rita Jail on Sunday, Dec. 18.

The Alameda County District

Attorney's Office arraigned Morata on Wednesday, Dec. 21, on one count of attempted murder and one count inflicting great bodily injury. Court papers identify the victim as "Jane Doe" Morata and state that she had been admitted to the nursing home for medical reasons.

Morata is scheduled to enter a plea in the case at 9 a.m., Wednesday, Jan. 4, in Department 7, Rene C. Davidson Alameda County Courthouse, 1225 Fallon St.

## Project Tree Taking Root

Eric J. Kos

Earlier this year the Alameda Sun presented the Alameda Backyard Growers (ABG) with a specific donation for a specific purpose ("Project Tree Seeded," April 14). The idea was to seed a tree planting program in Alameda that would help restore and maintain the city's urban forest.

Since January, Marla Koss of the ABG, who you might call a fruit tree scientist, has established groundwork for planting 29 trees in various locations around the city as the Project Tree pilot program.

On Dec. 21, the ceremonial launch of Project Tree took place when Koss brought three trees to "Italo's Garden" at the Alameda Boys & Girls Club for the kids to plant. A team of young gardeners asked all the questions they had before planting the trees: an Osborne Prolific Fig, a semi-dwarf Owari Satsuma Mandarin and a semi-dwarf Trovita Orange, all carefully selected as trees the kids can easily maintain (they don't grow too tall). Each will produce delicious fruits the club members can eat as part of their Seed to Table program, and, with care, will very likely survive until the young people who planted them reach age 50 or more. The trees were each purchased from a different local nursery: Encinal Nursery and Ploughshares Nursery in Alameda and Pollinate Farms in Oakland.

The garden is overseen by Gretchen Doehring, the Seed to Table director at the club. She and the kids were thrilled with the new residents of the garden, as well as the promise of three more bare-

**TREE:** Page 8



Kari Barnes

This intrepid group of planters all helped Alameda Sun-funded trees take root in Italo's Garden at the Alameda Boys & Girls Club on Dec. 21.



Eric J. Kos

A young planter from the Alameda Boys & Girls Club gives the Trovita Orange tree its first drink of water at its new home on the West End.

## Sentences Given in Harding Case

Dennis Evanosky

Seventeen-year-old Clay Harding passed away on Nov. 23, 2014. The Alameda County Coroner attributed his death to ingesting prescription drugs and alcohol. A subsequent investigation revealed that the underage Harding had taken the drugs and drunk the alcohol at the Alameda home of Kathleen Perkins, 57. Harding had attended the 18th birthday party for Perkins' son, Matt Arnstein.

At first Perkins claimed that she was at home in her bedroom during the party, according to Alameda Police Department Detective Alex Keden. Perkins told police that she checked on the party four times over the course of the evening. Keden stated that further investigation revealed that Perkins had lied to the police and was not at home.

Harding spent the night at Perkins' home after the party. He was found deceased the next morning.

In November 2015, Perkins and Arnstein were arraigned on 11 counts of child endangerment and two counts of obstructing a police investigation. The pair pleaded "not guilty."

On Dec. 21, the pair were back in court. Perkins learned that she will serve three years' probation and 80 hours of community service. She must also attend a drug rehab program. The court sentenced Arnstein to serve 500 hours of community service over the next two years.

## Alameda Woman Will Stand Trial for 2015 Murder

Ekene Ikeme

Alameda resident Donna Marie Qualls will stand trial on murder and elder abuse charges in 2017. Alameda County Superior Court Judge Larry Goodman ordered Qualls, 55, to return to court for arraignment on Jan. 5, when her trial date will be set.

Qualls is accused of allegedly murdering her boyfriend Emmanuel Lewis Christy, 73, on Dec. 3, 2015, ("Local Murder Case Looms" Dec. 10). Qualls pled not guilty to the charges at a preliminary hearing on

Dec. 7, 2015. Police say the pair argued over money and the argument turned physical when Christy punched Qualls at her apartment on the 700 block of Buena Vista Avenue on the fatal night. Qualls later waited until Christy fell asleep, then shot him. Alameda Police Department (APD) Detective Alex Keden testified that Qualls called 911 after the shooting and told a dispatcher, "I shot him. He's been hurting me and he told me to give him money."

Officers arrived at the residence at 10:19 a.m. and found Christy lying on his right side on the bed with a gunshot wound to his left temple. Christy was pronounced dead at the scene.

"Officers arrested her without incident," said APD Lt. Jill Ottaviano. "She was cooperative and stated what happened."

Qualls' lawyer was seeking a manslaughter charge instead of murder. Qualls is currently being held without bail at Santa Rita Jail in Dublin.

## 2016: Year in Review

Avalon Cassard

With 2016 rapidly coming to a close, the Alameda Sun looks back over the top news stories in Alameda this past year. This week will cover January through June and next week will feature news from July through December.

**January**

The Water Emergency Transportation Authority worked to have a new dock for harbor seals delivered to Alameda Point in April, ahead of the start of construction for the ferry maintenance terminal. The maintenance facility's berthing dock would displace the seals' previous resting spot. A new dock for the seals was a condition for the building of the maintenance facility.

Alameda Point developers submitted a new plan for consideration in regards to Site A at Alameda Point. Developers worked with park planners, design consultants, city staff, and a Planning Board subcommittee to prepare a new plan for development.

The first plans for Site A development became available for public viewing at a Planning Board meeting on Jan. 25. The plan called for 14.8 acres of the 68-acre total to be used for publicly accessible open space, parks and plazas on Block 10. The area also includes an urban park with renovated Navy buildings, across from the existing Waterfront Park.

The City Council approved phase two of the Alameda Point renovation, providing the city with 183.44 more acres of land; nine parcels with 29.83 acres of uplands and two parcels with 153.61 acres of submerged land. The transfer, which was scheduled for March, marks phase two of four phases planned in the overall agreement with the U.S. Navy.

**February**

The body of a missing woman was found floating in the Oakland estuary. The body was that of Diana Gail Hajisaari. Oakland Police Department's Air Support found the body. A witness informed the police that he had seen Hajisaari get into the water at Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline Park. The witness told the police that he thought Hajisaari was going for a swim. The witness came forward a day after seeing her enter the water, prompted to contact authorities after seeing posters of Hajisaari's disappearance.

Plans to make Central Avenue between Main Street-Pacific Avenue and Sherman Street-Encinal Avenue safer were proposed at City Council

meeting for public input. City staff had already created a design proposal and requested the Council's approval. The safety plans were brought up after conducting a study on dangerous intersections. The study found that both intersections had a disproportionate number of injuries caused by collisions compared to other streets in Alameda.

Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) placed emphasis on sustainability efforts in Alameda's public schools. AUSD stepped up with a plan for reducing electricity usage and a possible plan for producing renewable energy to use at all AUSD facilities in the future. The plan's objective was to minimize energy demand as much as possible while also considering the limited financial resources available for the district.

Dannan Developments went before the Planning Board for approval to turn a parking lot at the corner of Webster Street and Taylor Avenue into a three-story multi-use building. Dannan proposed that the building would "consist of nine residential units, including two affordable units; 4,700 square feet of commercial space on Webster Street, and 18 off-set parking spaces behind the building." Staff reviewed the buildings designs and recommended that the city hold public hearings for the plans.

**March**

Alameda resident John Beck was still nowhere to be found after disappearing before his first bankruptcy court date in February. After Beck's failure to appear, he was reportedly seen at the 12th Street BART station in Oakland, at Land's End in San Francisco and on Bodega Avenue in Sebastopol. Beck had filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy and even in his absence, his motion still moved forward. Beck had his appearance rescheduled with bankruptcy attorney Carl Gustafson for the March meeting.

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. (PG&E) identified gas lines tangled with tree roots in the city. Plans were set to remove trees affecting the gas lines in the name of safety. The tree program is part of the Community Pipeline Safety Initiative, an initiative ensuring that first responders have immediate access to PG&E gas transmission lines in the case of an emergency. All re-landscaping done was at PG&E's expense and wouldn't move forward without customer approval.

Recreation and Park Commissioners took tours of five park projects: Jean Sweeney Open

**YEAR:** Page 3



File photo

The Golden Gate Audubon Society held a symposium on Alameda wildlife in June. Conservationists visited a number of viewing locations including the Fruitvale Bridge that Peregrine falcons call home.