



Club founders (left to right)
Martin Geraghty, Rusti
Porter and Megan and
Sanford Marshall.

Bridging the Gap

Alameda Social Club to the Rescue

Alameda has a population of a little more than 72,000 residents. In the evenings, Park Street is filled with them walking to their favorite restaurant or bar to meet friends. Then again, Park Street is also filled with strangers brushing by each other on their way to favorite restaurants or bars. Can we bridge the gap between the people and places we do know and the people and places we don't? The Alameda Social Club thinks so.

Founded by a group of four friends – Rusti Porter, her husband, Martin Geraghty, Sanford Marshall and his wife, Megan Marshall – the Alameda Social Club was born on Christmas 2009 from the idea of bringing together people with similar interests while supporting local businesses and helping the community.

The club has three objectives – “fostering friendships, enhancing community and celebrating the art of living well” – and organizes events to bring Alamedans and friends of Alamedans together. The club

then gives proceeds generated from the social events to local charities.

“You don't have to leave Alameda to have a good time,” says Sanford Marshall, pleased that social club guests discover new venues and support local favorites “without having to leave the Island.”

The production of such events is in the hands of the right people. Sanford Marshall is a seasoned event and wedding planner, and Porter worked in marketing at Diageo, one of the largest producers of spirits. The first event at Pappo brought together a diverse crowd of about 70 people ranging from their 20s to 80s and benefited the Alameda Food Bank. It was so well received that guests were asking about the next one before it was even planned.

These club founders, as it turns out, surely know how to throw a party and understand the art of living well. Visit www.alamedasocialclub.com to learn about their upcoming social club events.

– Aromrak Luangrath

Word on the Street

Alameda Magazine wandered around Park Street on a recent afternoon, asking people, “What kind of new businesses does Alameda need most?” Requests ranged from Wal-Marts to piano bars.

“Consignment stores. We're on our way to Lauren's Closet – the only one left. There used to be really decent ones, and now they're all gone.”

Elizabeth Dandenell, 47, psychotherapist

“There needs to be better movies at the movie theatre. If they could make the empty car lot into a park or something, that would be nice.”

Emmanuel Coup, 53, geometry teacher

“The old naval base – what it needs is a few skyscrapers to get the big money coming in. And a mega-big park – keep it open ... And a small custom motorcycle store.”

Russ Koan, 41, locomotive engineer

“Electronics.”

Bill Roller, 50, boilermaker

“More places where families can hang out with their kids. Super Franks – it's like Chuck E. Cheese's but better. Entertainment places, electronics, where you could buy an iPod.”

Alex Sadie, 34, business owner

“We need less food, less restaurants. More department stores, even a Penney's, a Target or Wal-Mart. Something to draw money.”

Jude Llamas, office manager

“Music.”

Adam Opet, 27, grocery store employee

“More nightclubs. A piano bar, where you can go listen to music. They only have dives and places to just drink. More women's clothing, like a boutique.”

Zena Anderson, 63, semi-retired

What kind of new businesses does you think Alameda needs most? Send us a note at letters@alamedamagazine.com.

– Christopher Danzig