

## **VARIOUS NEWSPAPER ITEMS**

Instructor Ray F. Spencer of Alcatraz was commended by the Warden for outstanding attention to duty relative to an error on the part of the supplier in furnishing gun oil in which he sent, in lieu of oil, a rust cleaning acid which caused the guns to freeze and which would have eventually eaten into the metal. Mr. Spencer discovered this error after using some of the acid and volunteered on his own time to return to the institution and clean the guns thoroughly.

**ITEMS I SHOULDA KEPT TO MYSELF:** John Fixa isn't the only postmaster in S.F. There's also Mrs. Elnora Martin, who has been postmistress at Alcatraz for years. She distributes the mail to the prisoners, which makes her, I guess, one of our greatest living experts on famous pen names. Fixa is, however, the official postmaster for another of our off-shore possessions—the Farallones.

**BAYSIDE TICKER TAPE:** Such neck-twisting at Rickey's Town House few nights back. The gawked-at guests were Warden and Mrs. Swope of Alcatraz and you'd have thought there was a mobster loose in the place

**INSIDE STORY:** Father Joseph Clark of our town travels to Alcatraz every weekend to give spiritual aid and comfort to the prisoners there. . . . Last weekend, he spent a few minutes with one of the Rock's most notorious characters, "Machine Gun" Kelly. . . . As he rose to leave, Father Clark said: "Well, I won't be seeing you for a while. I'm going to Los Angeles for a couple of weeks, and then I'll be in Tucson for quite a long stay. . . ." "Machine Gun," who was assigned to Alcatraz in 1934, scratched his head and stared out the window. "I guess I got in the wrong racket, Father," he sighed. "I shoulda been a priest."

**KIDDIE KORNER:** The Brownie Girl Scouts (they're the itty bitty ones) started their annual cookie drive yesterday, and they're now busy peddling cookies at booths all over town. . . . The most interesting booth of all is being run by Brownies Sharon Roberts, Jean Dolby and Frances Plank, all seven-yr-olds, who commute to school in the Marina each day via launch. The booth is in front of their homes (they're the daughters of guards) on Alcatraz!

**Sightem of the week:** Maybe you happened to see them—a handsome young couple, bidding each other a clinchful adieu at the Alcatraz boat landing. Then, while she stood waving, he leaped into the waiting prison boat and sailed away to Alcatraz. Of course, it's not as

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tear-jerky as it sounds. She's Fran Young, a radio-TV huckster in the J. Walter Thompson agency. He's Frank Austin, a Marine Capt. during the war—and now a guard officer at Alcatraz. They'll wed soon and live happily forever after. On The Rock.

Didja know that the young people who live on Alcatraz—the children of guards and other employees—have organized a theatrical troupe that entertains at hospitals around here? Well, they have, and they're good, and I'm especially intrigued by the name they've tacked on themselves: "The Happy Rock Kids" !

### **From Newspaper Article (5/23/38)**

When told that The Times-Union will soon publish a series of articles on Alcatraz by Capt. A. R. Archer, a former guard, Rychner brightened.

"He was one of my best friends on the island," he said. "I moved into his apartment when he left about a year ago. He's a fine fellow, and was well liked by the other guards."

***"Guarding Alcatraz," a series of three articles by Capt. A. R. Archer, to start soon in The Times-Union, will give thrilling, authentic inside-the-walls pictures of life at the federal penal colony. The Al Capone myths, the reasons convicts hate and fear Alcatraz and other details will be revealed.***

**WE HAVE HERE** a little guessing game. Freeman Pepper, who has held the same job here for 21 yrs., is retiring at the end of the month, and he and his wife are moving to Palm Springs. We'll tell you what Mrs. Pepper has to say—and you guess where they've been living in S.F.:

"We hate to leave our place. The climate is wonderful—very little fog—and beautiful plants and flowers grow nearly everywhere. There are lots of little night-singing birds, and sea gulls, cormorants and a few pelicans. But the best thing is our million-dollar view. From our windows, we can see from the Gate Bridge to the Bay Bridge, and the sunsets are spectacular. And at night, with all the lights aglow, San Francisco is indeed a glamorous city. We shall miss our lovely home very much."

*For the past 21 yrs., Mr. and Mrs. Pepper have been living on Alcatraz, where he is a guard.*

Lieutenant Isaac B. Faulk, Alcatraz, is recovering from a series of operations. When he entered the hospital he thought it was for a minor operation. Before he was released, the number had multiplied to four. His many friends are glad to see him back on the job.

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Captain Ray May has served at Alcatraz, McNeil Island, and Lewisburg. He has been Acting Associate Warden at Lewisburg for several months and has recently been promoted to full—time duty in that position.

Captain Ralph Tashash, who has been at Petersburg for the past several years, also served at Alcatraz and Sandstone. He was one of the charter members of the Lewisburg custodial force and will need no introduction to the old timers there when he arrives to take over the Captain's duties.

Another member of the custodial staff in the early days at Lewisburg, who later served at Alcatraz and for the past few years has been Lieutenant at Lewisburg, who also distinguished himself in the firearms competition, will be promoted to Captain and transferred to Petersburg. Oh yes! you will address him as Captain Ervin F. Chandler, Federal Reformatory, Petersburg, Virginia.

### **Alcatraz League Rolls on 2 Lanes**

**By Carl Reich**

Alcatraz Island houses one of the most unique leagues in bowling. Because the "tight little isle" has only two lanes, its eight team circuit must bowl in shifts, reports Secretary Billie Pepper. Two quintets bowl at 7 p.m. and two at 9 p.m. each Wednesday, and the others follow a similar schedule each Friday.

"You can imagine the rooting and rivalry we have, with members of the six idle teams kibitzing the bowlers," says Mrs. Pepper, a voluntary resident of the island for twenty years. (Her husband is a guard.)

Don Martin, another guard, is president of the league, and Kenneth Blair, custodial officer, serves as treasurer.

**SAD STORY:** Nevada Lodge, running a contest titled "Why I Want a Vacation" (at Nevada Lodge, that is), rec'd this touching letter last wk.: "I need a vacation. I am a resident of Alcatraz, and these stupid people out here are always griping and prisoners are rioting at midnight. I'm desperate! It sure gets horribly monotonous to ride a boat back and forth to school every day. There is nothing to do on this rock. Besides my other problems, I just lost my boy friend. Sincerely, Alcatraz sick, 'Flirty' Linda Davis." Linda, the daughter of an Alcatraz official, is a teenager and ineligible—but there's no doubt of it. She needs a vacation all right.

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**WHAT EVER HAPPENED** to the campaign to *close* Alcatraz as a prison? Warden Paul Madigan says the Rocks population of prisoners is now 260, and that it costs about \$9.50 a day to house them. (This is double the cost per inmate in other Federal prisons.) Also living on Alcatraz are 215 non inmates. the employees and their families. Sixty - couples, their 70 children, and 25 bachelors.

**THAT THE** children (of guards) on Alcatraz can play any games they wish—but they are forbidden to have knives or cap pistols; they can't give swimming lessons to the prisoners, either.

### **Alcatraz Employee Sinks Hole in One**

H. V. Winegar, an instructor at Alcatraz, had a day off yesterday He brightened it by scoring a hole in one on Lincoln Park's temporarily shortened eighth hole. Louis Branchiz and H. Bostick saw Winegar's seven iron shot leave the tee and trickle into the cup 120 yards away.

**We HAVE NOW** *the fascinating case of Martha Lou and Lorelle Swope, two visiting kiddies from Farmington, N'Mexico. They went for a ride on a Powell cable and when the conductor asked for their fares, they said, all wide-eyed and innocent: "But we thought it was free." "Well", well'd the conductor doubtfully, "it's okay this time, but don't let it happen again." That conductor made no mistake. Martha Lou and Lorelle are the grandchildren of Ed Swope—warden of Alcatraz. I figger if you treat the Swopes real nice, they'll do the same for you. I could be wrong?*