

Target Store to Close July 22

THE CHAMBER has learned that the El Cerrito Target store at 11450 San Pablo Avenue will be permanently closed on July 22, 2008. Target's El Cerrito store is being relocated to a larger new facility nearby at 4500 Macdonald Avenue in Richmond.

In a letter to Community Development Director Mitch Oshinsky, Target Corporation real estate director Brad Syverson wrote: "It is important to note that Target is committed to the city of El Cerrito, and we are currently evaluating the opportunities for re-building a new store at the existing location in the near future."

He wrote that it was Target's philosophy not to allow buildings to remain vacant for an extended period and that, when considering building a new store on an existing site, the company would not close the old store until they began construction of the new one.

In explaining why, in this case, the corporation was deviating from its regular policy, Syverson wrote: "Unfortunately, in this particular case, the cost of operating this older store—combined with the compromised ability for the small building to compete in this marketplace—has created a situation where operating the store has become too expensive in the interim period."

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Welcome
NEW MEMBERS

■

Big O Tires
Steve Leung
10733 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530
(510) 526-7877
www.bigotires.com

West County Optometry
Dr. Rahul L. Keswani
11780-B San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530
(510) 234-1730
www.westcountyoptometry.com

New Look on the Web

The screenshot shows a modernized website layout. On the left is a vertical navigation menu with links for Home, Membership, Benefits, Dues & Application, Events, About us, History, Our Mission, Board of Directors, Location, Community, Member Directory, and Links. The main content area features the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce logo and tagline, followed by the address and phone number. Below this are three images: a building, a street view with store signs (Lucky, Longs Drugs, Bed Bath & Beyond, Ross, Barnes & Noble, Trader Joe's, Petco), and a night view of a building. A news section titled 'News & Events' lists upcoming events like a June Luncheon Meeting and Board of Directors Meeting. A 'Welcome to El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce' section includes the organization's mission statement.

A newly-designed Web page is to make its debut during the first week of this month. Up-to-date event information will be posted on the home page and the business directory has been improved. Members should check their listing for accuracy. The site, of course, is at www.elcerritochamber.org.

2008 'Taste' Set for September 28

DIRECTORS OF THE El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce have voted to stage the fourth annual Taste of El Cerrito at the Community Center from 5 to 9 p.m. on Sunday, September 28. Co-sponsored by the Chamber and the city of El Cerrito, this year's event will once again offer the general public the opportunity to sample food specialties prepared by leading local restaurants, collect samples from food stores, bid on sensational silent auction bargains, and participate in drawings for a wide selection of prizes.

Map Ads: Act Now

CHAMBER MEMBERS are advised that they have only a few weeks left to place an ad on the new El Cerrito city map that will be published this October.

To take advantage of this unique opportunity to reach thousands of west county residents for years to come, you must act immediately.

Contact the Chamber office at (510) 233-7040 or e-mail us at info@elcerritochamber.org. You can contact the map publisher's representative, Nancy Whitney, directly at (800) 600-0134, ext. 590.

As in the past, a share of the revenue from the 2008 Taste will be used to finance scholarships for El Cerrito High School seniors who plan to attend college to prepare for a business career.

The Chamber leadership also announced that they have named Judy Pope of D'Jour Floral & Antiques at 7512 Fairmount Avenue to direct plans for this year's Taste. Having grown sensationally since it began in 2005, the upcoming event promises to be one of this year's biggest community celebrations.

Along with starting the search for record-setting restaurant participation and both silent auction items and raffle prizes, the Chamber board issued a call for individuals and businesses interested in becoming financial sponsors of this year's event.

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Marty Kaliski: 'Small Business Owner of Year'

MARTY KALISKI, of Marty's Motors at 10929 San Pablo Avenue, has been named "El Cerrito Small Business Owner of the Year" for 2008. Kaliski, together with representatives from other area chambers of commerce, was honored at the Contra Costa Council's 8th Annual Small Business Awards Luncheon held in conjunction with National Small Business Week on May 9.

In 1975 Kaliski opened a backyard auto repair business in Berkeley. Soon outgrowing this original location, he moved into a garage in Berkeley. In April of 1999 he moved again to his present location in El Cerrito.

Marty's Motors was the first business in El Cerrito to be designated as a "Green Business" by the Contra Costa County green business program. In 2002 the firm was cited as "Best Auto Shop" by the *East Bay Express*, and last year was featured in the business section of the *San Francisco Chronicle* under the headline "Auto Repair Shop Runs Like a Well Oiled Machine."



In addition to running a fast-growing business, Chamber of Commerce member Kaliski plays an important role in local civic affairs. He is on the board of directors of both the Chamber of Commerce and the El Cerrito Rotary Club, is chairman of the city's Economic Development Board, and is a member of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Advisory committee.

Kaliski is a staff writer, speaker, and organizer for "Vocations for Social Change," a tenants' rights organizer, and a fundraiser and organizer for Oxfam America and the Nicaragua Information Center. He also helps raise funds for medical and educational supplies for poor Central American communities.

Born in New York City in 1946, Kaliski contributes to many charities, and is an active donor and member of the Community Partnership for the East Bay Center for the Performing Arts. He is also founder of a limited-income housing cooperative in Berkeley, where he still resides.

Chamber Discount Program Proposed

THE STAFF OF the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce is now seeking opinions on the idea of establishing a member-to-member discount program.

"Before we submit a plan for the discount program to the Board of Directors for their approval," Chamber Manager Sewall Glinternick said, "we want to find out if it is something the general membership would like to have."

To this end, the staff has already sent out a questionnaire to all members who have e-mail, and has inserted a copy of the questionnaire in this copy of the *Byline*.

The questionnaire asks members to give their opinion on whether or not they would participate in such a program, what discount they would consider offering, and their ideas on how a member-to-member discount program should be structured.

All Chamber members are strongly urged to respond immediately to the questionnaire and then mail or bring it to the Chamber office at 10848 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530, fax it to (510) 232-0796, or e-mail it to sewall@elcerritochamber.org.

Reinvestments

SEVEN MORE members have reinvested in the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce and paid their dues for another year. Those who are the latest to show their loyalty to this organization include Connors Overhead Door Co., Miracle Auto Painting, Berndt Landscaping & Garden Maintenance, El Cerrito Art Association, East Bay Mitsubishi, Shields Nursing Centers, and Mira Vista Golf & Country Club.

The leadership of the Chamber thanks them for their support.

Flint Leads Lions

FORMER Chamber of Commerce President Dean L. Flint has been elected head of the El Cerrito Lions Club for the coming year.

Flint, a well-known former San Francisco senior insurance trial attorney, took office in 2003 as president of the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce. As head of the Chamber, he played a key role in making the organization a strong and respected voice for business in this community.

After 25 years of practicing law he took early retirement in 1996, and then teamed with his wife Vena to sell real estate here for the next 12 years. The Flints have been homeowners in El Cerrito since 1975, and raised two daughters here.

TARGET

Continued from Page 1

The present El Cerrito store is approximately 65 percent of the size of the average new Bay Area Target facilities and less than 56 percent of the size of the Target in Albany.

The company, Syverson added, wants to open a new store in El Cerrito "in a timely fashion," and hopes to work together with the city's Redevelopment Agency to accomplish that goal. The construction phase of the new El Cerrito store, he wrote, could be as long as a year.

TASTE OF EL CERRITO

Continued from Page 1

They pointed out there will be extensive public recognition given sponsors and those who contribute to the silent auction and provide prizes for the drawings that will be held throughout the afternoon.

Individuals and firms who wish to become sponsors or prize donors are asked to contact Chamber Manager Sewall Glinternick at (510) 233-7040.



Chamber First Vice President Baylan Megino

Help for Business in New Redevelopment Plan

A NEW FIVE-YEAR Redevelopment Implementation Plan that calls for spending over \$13 million on non-housing projects such as encouraging and expanding commercial activity here went to the City Council in early May. The plan, which deals with the local Redevelopment Agency's activities through the 2011-12 fiscal year, also indicates there could be expenditures of \$8.8 million for very low, low, and moderate housing here in five years.

Prepared by Seifel Consulting Inc., the report declares that the document's goal was to "maximize opportunities for revitalization and expansion of existing commercial enterprises" within the city's redevelopment area. An objective of the new five-year plan is said: "To intensify and diversify the exciting retail service and entertainment area surrounding San Pablo Avenue throughout the length of El Cerrito, and to expand the city's employment base by encouraging new commercial and office development...with special emphasis on developing additional retail sales."

The report calls on the city to create active pedestrian shopping and entertainment districts, to develop strategies to improve the business environment along San Pablo Avenue,

including addressing concerns about crime and safety, and to provide incentives for private-sector investment in underutilized commercial areas.

Also recommended is the continued maintenance of the current Target site as a high performing sales tax generator, leveraging the Cerrito Theater rehabilitation into further economic development opportunities, and completing the parking study for the area surrounding the theater. The plan also calls for continuing and promoting the city's present business recruitment and retention program.

The City Council was told by Seifel Consulting that some \$13 million in tax increment revenue and bond proceeds would be available in the next five years for non-housing redevelopment expenditures. Presently, the El Cerrito Redevelopment Agency has a maximum bond indebtedness limit of \$80 million that can be used to supplement tax increment revenues.

The report goes on to say assessed property values in the redevelopment area are increasing at a level that is likely to support the issuance of another bond of approximately \$9.7 million in two or three years.

'Seeking the Wins' at Chamber Race Day



Jockey Frank Alvarado poses in the Golden Gate Fields winner's circle on Seeking the Wins, winner of the fifth race on opening day, May 14. Shown among a group of race-goers (at left) are Chamber members John Stashik, Sewall Glinternick and Bill Kerber. The race was named for the El Cerrito Chamber.

Martinez Art Exhibit

THE EL CERRITO Art Association has been invited by the Contra Costa County Arts and Culture Commission (AC5) to hang a show in the Board of Supervisors Chambers in Martinez. Sixty paintings and photographs were chosen from the 32nd annual art show held at the community center in April.

The show has won high praise, and represents the broad range of the association's talented membership. The public can view the exhibit on weekdays during regular business hours at 651 Pine Street. It runs through July 25.

License Fees Up

BUSINESS license fees for the coming fiscal year will go up less than one percent in most cases, according to the Master Fee Schedule adopted by the City Council in mid-May.

The size of the increase was limited by the Municipal Code to the .84 percent hike in last year's Bay Area Consumer Price Index.

The new business license tax schedule will go into effect on July 1, 2008.

www.elcerritochamber.org

Water Rationing

EAST BAY Municipal Utility District's newly implemented Drought Management Program calls for a 12 percent cut in commercial water use in an effort to safeguard its shrinking water supply.

Faced with a second consecutive dry year, EBMUD projects its storage will be over 200,000 acre-feet short of volume desired by October 1, the beginning of a new rain year.

In seeking an overall 15 percent reduction in water use, the district has adopted mandatory rationing goals that, in addition to the cut in business use, ask a 19 percent reduction in single-family residential use, an 11 percent cut from multi-family units, 30 percent from irrigators, nine percent from institutional users, and five percent from industries.

At its meeting on July 8 the Board will discuss the implementation of a drought rate plan which calls for a single-family residential increase of 10 percent. Under this proposal customers who use more than 90 percent of their allotted water budget would face a \$2 surcharge for each extra unit of water (748 gallons) they consume.

Surcharges and rate increases for all customer groups will take effect on August 1, if the Board approves the proposed plan.



El Cerrito

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Linking Business and Community Since 1936

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Manager	Sewall Glinternick
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LUNCHEON MEETING

Noon, Tuesday, June 17 (on the *third* Tuesday)

Mira Vista Golf & Country Club
7901 Cutting Blvd., El Cerrito

Guest Speaker: Marty Kaliski

EC CofC Board Member • Owner of Marty's Motors

RSVP by June 13th • (510) 233-7040 • \$20

Calendar of Events

- June 2 City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m., Community Center.
- 4 Board of Directors meets, 8:30 a.m., at Coldwell Banker-Bartels.
- 5 Chamber Mixer and BBQ, 5:30-7:30 p.m., D'Jour Floral & Antiques, 7512 Fairmount Ave.
- 14 Caterpillar Puppets' Itty Bitty Variety Show, 11 a.m., EC Library.
- 16 City Council meeting, 7:30 p.m., Community Center.
- 17 Chamber luncheon meeting; see box above.
- 28 Author Shelly Rivoli presents "Traveling with Babies and Young Children," 11 a.m., EC Library.

Member Bank Wins Honor

THE MECHANICS BANK, a longtime member of the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce, won the 2008 Corporate Partner Award at last month's second annual West County Small Business Award ceremony.

The West Contra Costa Business Development Center, sponsors of the prize, honored the bank as a "prime example of a corporate citizen that values investing in its community and demonstrates its commitment by supporting over 350 organizations."

Founded in 1905 as an independent community bank, Mechanics has become one of the largest financial institutions in the Bay Area, with \$2.5 billion in assets. The bank continues to maintain its independence while serving the community with a unique brand of relationship banking.

Thank you!

Our deep appreciation is extended to Tracy and Brody Giles of B&T Bookkeeping for their support in co-sponsoring the expense of printing and mailing this *Byline*.

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Byline

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Members of the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce

Safety First

THIS IS National Safety Month, and the National Safety Council has available promotional material that you can utilize to promote even greater safety awareness in the workplace in June.

The summer is historically the time for a spike in workplace activities, so this campaign is particularly appropriate at this time.