



Manager's Minute

MARK SCOTT

RECENTLY, I found myself engaged in the oft-repeated ritual of the homeowner: home repair. I was not able to solve my problem at the warehouse up the street.

I was wandering around in our Pastime Ace Hardware store and was pleased to be able to find the part for the faucet that I was repairing. In conversation with the clerk I mentioned that I had an even older faucet at home that needed some attention. Parts were no longer available. I walked away with several suggestions for repair or replacement including a referral to another local business where the antiquated valve was rebuilt for a very reasonable price.

How many times over the past years have I turned to local business for solutions not available from the clueless clerks at the big box stores? Local business solving local problems, meeting local needs, and employing local people. *Duh!* Lesson re-learned. Think global, shop local. Shop El Cerrito!

Plaza Project Halted

THE THREAT OF a \$10 million mortgage default has forced a \$15 million housing project at the El Cerrito Plaza into bankruptcy, according to a report in local newspapers. As reported, plans for construction of the 128-unit residential condominium—a project which drew sharp opposition from neighbors and the City of Albany—came to a halt when the lender, Preferred Bank, cancelled financing of the Plaza project.

William Garlock, principal executive of Garlock and Co., the developer whose affiliate El Cerrito Land owns the site, said that he believes the project was the victim of the current financial maze. When asked if the project was indeed dead, city staff expressed reluctance.

► See Plaza Housing Plan, page 4



Battle on for Former Target Store

John Sushnik photo

TWO BUSINESS TITANS, Safeway and Walmart, are fighting to see who will buy El Cerrito's former Target store at 11450 San Pablo Avenue. The plans of both firms for the old Target building, which has been vacant since July of 2008, were outlined at a special City Council/Redevelopment Agency study session on May 18th.

City staff reported they had been informed that Safeway and Target had entered into a purchase and sale agreement for the site, and that Walmart had made a competing purchase offer of \$20 million for the store. Blocking possible final action on the Safeway-Target deal is a city option to buy the facility which went into effect May 1st and will not end until October 31st.

Economic Incentives

Lori Treviño, city Redevelopment Director and member of the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, reported that, if the city would give up its repurchase option for a right of first refusal, Target would forgive the remaining \$617,161 which the city owned the firm for a loan used for initial land acquisition.

Upon close of the Safeway-Target transaction Target has offered to compensate the Redevelopment Agency with \$1.8 million and Safeway would provide an additional half million dollars.

Walmart, on the other hand, is interested in the Agency exercising its repurchase option and then reselling it to them for \$20 million with the city allowed to keep any money left over after paying off Target. Given that the Redevelopment Agency still owes

► See Aiming for Target, page 2

Award to Tracy Giles

THE BUSINESS Development Center (BDC), serving West County's small businesses, announced that the El Cerrito



Chamber's own Tracy Giles has been awarded a Community Builder Award. Tracy Giles, MBA, is a business profes-

sional with more than 25 years of experience in financial management, marketing, and sales. Tracy and her husband, Brody, started B&T Bookkeeping, Inc. to take the pain out of day-to-day bookkeeping for area business clients. An often

► See Tracy Giles, page 4

Library-a-Go-Go

Tuesday, June 16 • 7 a.m.
Del Norte BART station

A ribbon cutting to dedicate the El Cerrito Public Library's new book lending machine for BART riders.

Aiming for Target

Continued from page 1

Target \$83,000 annually through 2017 for the acquisition loan, Treviño estimated that the value to the city of the current Safeway-Target offer was \$2.8 million and that the proceeds from the Walmart offer would be in the neighborhood of \$2.5 million.

Walmart Proposal

Walmart's proposal calls for the company to renovate and occupy the present 89,862 square foot building and 5.95 acre site. This would not require a new use permit, which means this deal could close faster.



Sale of the property to Walmart would require the city to buy out Target's interest (based on a complicated appraisal process) and would be contingent on the corporation's receipt of all government approvals, issuance of building permits and elimination of any unresolved ongoing litigation.

Should they win the right to buy the vacant store, Walmart's preliminary plans indicate they would install bakery, dairy, cosmetic, garden, paint, houseware and pharmacy sections as well as hardware and electronic departments. The refurbished store would also include a wide variety of sustainable features designed to reduce energy and environmental impacts.

Safeway Proposal

Currently, Safeway is proposing to reuse the existing building for a "Safeway Lifestyle Center" combined with additional retail on the San Pablo Avenue frontage, and construction of additional retail space on the corner of San Pablo Avenue and Hill Street. They also plan to build a gas station on the northeast corner of the site.

Safeway representatives have told the city the company plans to close its store at the corner of Moeser Lane and

San Pablo Avenue, and also possibly shut down their San Pablo Avenue and MacDonald store in Richmond. Treviño added that Safeway would re-tenant the Moeser Lane store, and would retain control of it for the 33 years remaining on its lease so as to preclude another grocery store at that location.

Mixed-Use Rejected

For well over a year during the formation of a San Pablo Avenue development plan there has been a proposal to replace the vacant Target store with a transit oriented mixed-use business and low cost residential development. Treviño reported that Target and the Redevelopment Agency worked with a developer for five months in an attempt to come up with a mixed-use plan for the store site. This project, she said, was never realized due to the financial and real estate crises in November of 2008. She added that a residential-dominated project at the Target site would have been challenging in a good market, and pointed out that a multi-family residential project at the density allowed may not be feasible within the next three to five years.

A Quiet Meeting

Some veteran council-observers expected the May 18th study session to turn out to be a contentious affair with environmentalists, business interests and union officials vigorously lobbying for one of the two offers or continuing the fight for mixed-use development. The study session, however, proved to be quite tame, with just seven speakers from the well-filled council chamber taking the trouble to air their views. Among those who did take the opportunity to speak was El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce Manager, Mark Scott, who urged the Redevelopment Board to carefully study how the expected sales tax revenue of each proposal would impact sales at existing local business.

El Cerrito's Unreinforced Masonry Building List

THE CITY HAS released a list of unreinforced masonry buildings that have agreed to post warning signs after a city-funded study determined that the buildings could be unsafe during or after an earthquake. Warnings posted prominently or visible on the outside inform those entering a building that the building's construction could endanger occupants.

The city council has directed staff to develop an unreinforced masonry building retrofit ordinance for adoption this summer. At the Chamber Board meeting on May 4th, city staff charged with developing the ordinance made a presentation that included the background, legal basis, requirements, and the adoption time table. The information was timely and helpful. City staff assured

the Chamber that at the direction of the council the schedule will allow time for members to analyze the proposed ordinance and to provide input.

The current list includes the following properties.

- 10032 San Pablo Ave.
Perfect Solutions Computer
- 10052 San Pablo Ave.
Turnabout Thrift Store
- 10054 San Pablo Ave.
Grand Barber Shop
- 10324 San Pablo Ave.
Animal Eye Specialist
- 10330 San Pablo Ave.
El Cerrito Lighting
- 10344 San Pablo Ave.
Art Works

- 10368 San Pablo Ave.
Single Cylinder Repair
- 10512 San Pablo Ave.
Star Education Supply
- 10929 San Pablo Ave.
Marty's Motors
- 10931 San Pablo Ave.
Connors Overhead Doors
- 11165 San Pablo Ave.
East Bay Judo
- 11175 San Pablo Ave.
Vacant
- 11382 San Pablo Ave.
Atlas Liquors
- 11820 San Pablo Ave.
former El Cerrito Mitsubishi

Cerrito Theater Closes by the Numbers

HAVING RECEIVED no lease payments since November of 2007, on May 4th the Redevelopment Agency lifted the information blackout about the Cerrito Theater and authorized city staff to begin the process of terminating the current lease and to find a new operator for the movie house. Later in May operators of the Cerrito Theater closed the business indefinitely, reportedly saying they “had run out of cash and that unless people wanted to donate food, movies and work there was nothing they could do.”

The Redevelopment Board also agreed to pay Downey Street Productions, the present operators, a sum not to exceed \$100,000 for its equipment contingent on Downey Street obtaining a dismissal of the Redevelopment Agency and the city from litigation with BBI Construction.

The economic details behind the deterioration of the Cerrito Theater Agreement were made public as the result of actions at the

May 4th meeting of the El Cerrito Redevelopment Agency. The city was prohibited from release of many financial details regarding the Cerrito's business situation and the Cerrito did not make public the dire financial situation that led to the demise of the theater. Since the Cerrito Theater opened on November 1, 2006, a scarcity of public information about the theater and its problems has left a vacuum which has been filled by an awesome amount of public speculation ranging from matters like the real cost of the project to rumors about the movie house's economic future.

What has now emerged is a tale marked by hefty city expenses, serious business problems, and a growing sense of frustration.

Big Money Involved

According to the May 4th Redevelopment Agency meeting agenda, in addition to purchasing the theater building the agency loaned Downey Street Productions \$2.47 million to improve the theater to meet the needs of their business operation, to be repaid over 25 years at



Since the Cerrito Theater opened...a scarcity of public information about the theater and its problems has left a vacuum which has been filled by an awesome amount of public speculation...

\$10,000 per month. The agency also contributed and additional \$2.328 million towards the renovation, which Downey Street was not expected to repay.

The original lease called for Downey Street to pay the property tax, insurance and maintenance. A section of the lease agreement provided that, should the operators of the movie house not be able to pay the taxes, the Redevelopment Agency would pay them and be reimbursed as additional rent.

When it became clear that Downey Street would not be able to pay the tax bill, the Executive Director of the agency authorized the payment for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 in order to avoid incurring penalties. With the authority to cover expenses up to \$25,000, the Director paid both the \$5,572 bill for 2006-2007 and the \$16,768 bill for 2007-2008.

Fischers Request Relief Too Late

Over the years since the construction of the Cerrito Theater, the redevelopment staff has held a series of private meetings to insure the success of

the movie house culminating with a session on April 16 to discuss a plan to restructure Downey Street's lease agreement. This session came after an earlier meeting of city representatives, Downey Street and its accountant. In a April 15th letter to city officials about this earlier parley, Speakeasy Theater chiefs Kyle and Katherine Fischer had this to say:

“Speakeasy was told to be very careful about how they communicated with city administrators, and to never put anything in writing so that the public wouldn't find out.”

Their letter went on to say the city administrators said they wanted to help. They said they had been told by the city and the city's outside accountant that cash flow was a huge issue and it was resulting in increased bank and interest costs.

In their letter the Fischers claimed there was a year long process where city representatives said they wanted to help and had been told all the ways they could and then nothing happened.

Desperate Plea

In early April of this year Kyle Fischer, in an e-mail to Redevelopment Director Lori Treviño, summed up the Cerrito Theater's desperate situation in the following way:

“The good will of the people towards Speakeasy Theaters has never been stronger and the brand has considerable value. Conversely, our reputation with our vendors has never been worse. We are in trouble and they know it. Acquiring films, food and other products is difficult which eventually leads to customer dissatisfaction which leads to decreasing attendance and so on.

“Also, there seems to be an underlying sentiment of some city staff that others could run this theater better. Very well. We propose that Catherine and I sign over our majority interest in Downey Street Productions, Inc. to the City of El Cerrito. In return the city will assume all assets and debts of the company. Catherine and I will make

► See **Cerrito Theater Closure**, page 4

Cerrito Theater Closure

Continued from page 3

ourselves available as consultants and will assist the city in finding or training a new operator.

“This will relieve the concerns of citizens that financial assistance to the theater is being given to a private concern.”

Additional Financial Woes

On July 31, 2008, the Redevelopment Agency hired outside auditors who reported that a review revealed a severe cash shortage, no liquid assets, considerable debt as well as a loss of around \$477,000. The figures for the first nine months of 2008 were more profitable, showing a loss of around \$33,000.

However, more financial trouble came in October of 2008 when BBI Construction sued Downey Street

Productions, Kyle and Catherine Fischer, the El Cerrito Redevelopment Board and the city for payment of an outstanding balance on the construction contract of approximately \$53,000, plus interest, penalties and legal fees.

Contract Restructure Proposal

Downey Street's announcement of its intention to close the Cerrito Theater came just as the Redevelopment Agency board was scheduled to start consideration of a proposed restructuring plan for the movie house's loan and lease agreement.

Among the proposals in the confidential draft of the restructuring agreement were:

- The agency would rebate \$120,000 in lease/loan payments toward the original \$2.47 million loan.

- The loan due from Downey would be increased to \$2.52 million to account for the \$50,000 in funds advanced to Downey Street.

- The agency would be responsible for taxes and insurance and Downey Street would continue to be responsible for building maintenance.

- The rent schedule would be restructured to run from \$0 per month in 2006 to 2009 and would increase gradually to \$12,000 per month in 2026 resulting in elimination of some \$140,000 in rent now owed.

- Revenue sharing would be replaced with profit sharing.

TRACY GILES

Continued from page 1

sought business advisor and consultant, Tracy helps clients understand the big picture in order to make business decisions that improve the bottom line.

BDC describes Tracy as a well known member of our community with a longstanding commitment to the community. Tracy, a past president of the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce, is the President-Elect of the Rotary Club of El Cerrito. She can be seen (and heard) in many business and community groups as a member or volunteer. An active school parent, Tracy takes an active role in the school life of her daughter, Sarah.

The BDC organized the West County Business Awards Ceremony called “Sowing the Seeds of Success” which took place on May 27th. The ceremony is sponsored by a number of west county businesses and organizations including El Cerrito Chamber members Mechanics Bank and the City of El Cerrito. Congratulations, Tracy, on a well deserved award!

PLAZA HOUSING

Continued from page 1

tance to sum up the current situation in such stark terms.

Current economic conditions are dicey at best. One door has closed; others may open. Projects of this scale often hit bumps in the road. Garlock is reported to be seeking alternative lenders to save the project and will look at creative ways to get the project built.

An Editorial

Better Luck Next Time

THE CLOSE MANAGEMENT of information concerning the financial challenges encountered by operators of the Cerrito Theater has been to some extent self-defeating. It is obvious that the sensitive negotiations between the city and Downey Street Productions were best held in private. However, if both parties had been more open about the problems they faced, they might have encouraged the public to provide some serious assistance and may have avoided the necessity of having to hunt down a new operator to run the popular local movie house. We can only hope this is a lesson that will not go unnoticed in the future.



Chamber
Manager
Mark Scott

Chamber Logo Polo Shirts

100% cotton Yellow Sizes M-XXL \$28

*Available at the Chamber office
and at the June 10th meeting*

President's Column

BY BAYLAN MEGINO

THIS YEAR the El Cerrito Small Business of the Year Award went to Tradeway Stores. On May 15th, members of the business community joined the Contra Costa Council in celebrating this prestigious award.

Tradeway Stores has been a family business from its inception 73 years ago.

Joe Conwill has been in the family business most of his life, and his wife, Marsha, has been in it for 44 years. In 1936, Fred Conwill established his El Cerrito business carrying wartime salvage merchandise, making Tradeway one of the early recycling companies.

With the economy gearing up for war, the shipyards were flooding people into the area and living in tents on hillsides. Conwill was able to get mattresses and other household goods from insurance companies and railroads to meet their needs.

After the war he used war surplus materials to expand the store to its final size of 55,000 sq. ft. Tradeway became a very large warehouse operation. He started buying fire stock, and insurance claim stock across the country. He would bring it in, and clean it up to be sold.

They never knew what merchandise they would receive, so all kinds of interesting inventory could be found as a result. For example, after the Seattle World's Fair in 1962, he purchased the exhibit from India, so at that time he had many pieces of gilt, ivory, and other exotic items. When the railroads gave way to the growing trucking industry, the new trucking companies funneled their damaged goods to Tradeway.

In 1968 the family opened the warehouse in Richmond, which started as furniture and carpet, and gradually expanded to carry only carpet. Redevelopment came knocking recently, and the furniture store closed, leaving the

Richmond carpet store open with Joe Conwill at the helm.

Local businesses often give back generously to their community. The Conwills have been very involved in the community for the last 40 years, lending Contra Costa Civic Theatre the furniture and merchandise for play productions. Fred Conwill was a charter member of the Rotary. Joe and Marsha have been active in the 4th of July celebration until very recently, and today continue to be active in Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce. They have given to the schools and churches for raffle prizes, and

provided carpets to kindergarten classes.

Tradeway's customers include several generations of families, and some connections have continued for 44 years. Their customers have become their friends, and some families have worked for them. As Marsha says, "The bottom line is the families. Customers have been our friends. We're concerned when something happens to them. We've been part of a very small community for a very long time."

I asked Marsha to share some thoughts with other business owners, and here is what she said: "It's a very tough thing to have a small business because you're the one doing it all—you have to commit to the six to seven days a week. Save your money; there are bad times and good times. We've certainly seen both. Even when things are going well, save for a rainy day. Everything is a circle. Nothing is always perfect. Especially when things are going well, it's hard to see when business will take a turn."

This is great wisdom to remember in these challenging times, and El Cerrito is grateful to the Conwill family for being such a stalwart and gracious part of our business community.



Marsha Conwill (center) accepts Tradeway's award from Mark Quinn of the Small Business Administration at the Contra Costa Council luncheon on May 15. President Baylan Megino is at left.

Contra Costa Council

Shoestring Marketing

BY PHIL MONTALVO

[Phil Montalvo, of the United States Postal Service, spoke to the membership at last month's meeting. He offers his low-cost marketing tips below.]

1. Test a postcard. Although postcards will rarely pull as well as a direct mail package, they are an ideal way to test an idea, as well as measure the effectiveness of your mailing.

I did a campaign for a high-technology telephone answering service called Wildfire. The client decided that the mailing piece was too expensive. So I recommended we split the list and mail half of them a postcard with the same offer. The result was a significant reduction in costs. Plus the postcard won in terms of cost per response. In addition, first class postcards are also an inexpensive way to clean your list.

2. Use card decks. When available to your target market, card decks can be used as a "secret weapon" for direct marketers. They're very cheap to buy and inexpensive to produce. Most card decks also allow you to split run their deck, so you can test two or more different offers. Once you measure the comparative results, you can then decide to invest in a more expensive program.



Phil Montalvo explains the advantages of using the US Postal Service at the May meeting.

Shoot On Site! Photo Services

3. Try a "cluster bomb." Here your goal is to get more than one response per mailer. You can do a sophisticated program where you ask people to recommend others in their company. Or you can simply include an additional reply card. I did this for a mailing for Interleaf and increased response by almost 20%—for pennies.

► See Shoestring Marketing, page 6

Voters Speak

IN ADVANCE OF the election held on May 19, 2009, Assembly member Nancy Skinner held a series of public meetings in the her district beginning in El Cerrito on May 2nd. She explained the budget process and chronicled this year's State of California budget



Assemblywoman
Nancy Skinner

adoption history. Assembly member Skinner was introduced by El Cerrito Mayor Sandi Potter. Skinner stated that she would try to explain the facts without the

partisanship that could occur at such meetings. Her purpose was to explain ballot propositions 1A-F so that voters would understand the choices before them.

Before the May 19th election Jael Myrick of Nancy Skinner's staff visited local chambers of commerce to get a feel for the state's local business. In an open and honest exchange with the El Cerrito Chamber we urged Myrick to relay our oft stated position that local

(small) business would lead the way out of the current recession just as we have in the past. In order to do that the bailout and recovery plans must reach down to the local level where the economy really lives. We also urged Assembly member Skinner to stay close to the conditions endured by local business and suggested that a *local* business roundtable might be a forum for such a connection.

While in the community preparing for this year's June Business Round-up in the *Contra Costa Marketplace* magazine I heard one theme repeated time and again in reference to coming election. Many expressed anger at the state government, et al., for the failure of the process to produce a timely and workable budget. Even more frustration was directed at the legislature for asking the people to do what is perceived as the Legislature's job.

One would hope that Assembly member Skinner heard the message from her series of local meetings and staff visits to the area chambers. Of course, the message sent by voters should ring loud and clear.

The *SmartMoney* is Here

SmartMoney MAGAZINE lauded Edward Jones for growing the number of financial advisors in a down market. The St. Louis-based firm, with a reputation for excellent client service,

also managed to lead the pack in stock picking, according to the magazine.

Talk to Chamber member Blaine Davis at the El Cerrito office: 11760 San Pablo Avenue; phone (510) 237-3495.

SHOESTRING MARKETING

Continued from page 5

4. **Develop a fulfillment "wrapper."** A software company I worked with had high fulfillment costs. Every time they changed their product or their price, received a favorable product review, or gained a big new customer, they had to reprint their brochure. I created a simple "wrapper" folder for them, and a set of independent elements including a price sheet, product specs, and case-histories. When something changed, they merely replaced that single element. Plus they could add new elements as they went along.

5. **Be creative about buying and using lists.** You don't have to mail to the

entire purchased list. You can mail half and then decide if it pays to mail again. You can also negotiate multiple use. For example, many list companies will sell you unlimited use for one year for about double the cost of a one-time use. However, if it's a good list, you will want to mail to it several times over the next 12 months. Swapping lists is also a money-saver. Try to find a company that makes a complementary product or shares your target market. You might even decide to run a co-promotion. The software and the hardware companies do it all the time.

6. **Use clip art or stock photos.** There is a lot of free clip art available as

EC Library Events

Author Showcase

Join Marta Acosta, author of the Casa Dracula Series, for a reading and discussion of her popular vampire novels. Ms. Acosta is a Bay Area resident and will talk about how this influences her writing as well as introduce her soon to be published works, a romantic comedy titled, "Nancy's Theory of Style" and a gothic book for teens.

Tuesday, June 23rd at 7 pm.

Plan for College

Teens and their parents are invited to attend these free Kaplan Summer Series events:

June 30

Getting Into Your First Choice

July 7

Paying for College

August 11

SAT Essay Workshop

All events are held on these Tuesday evenings from 7 to 8 p.m. at the El Cerrito Public Library.

Space is limited. Visit Kaptest.com/practicetest or call (800) KAP-TEST to register today!

El Cerrito Library
6510 Stockton Avenue
El Cerrito 94530.
(510) 526-7512.

The El Cerrito Public Library is a member of the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce.

well as inexpensive stock photography. Try to negotiate a fee for "testing." You can then agree to pay more if you decide to roll out your program.

7. **Lose the brochure.** If you have to cut out any part of your direct marketing package, this is it—particularly in business-to-business. A powerful letter and an effective reply device can sometimes pull just as well, at greatly reduced costs.

8. **Think of your customers first.** It is five times cheaper to get a sale from an existing customer than to find a new one. (It can cost 100 times as much to win them back.) One of the most important shoestring techniques is to keep your customers satisfied.



El Cerrito
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Linking Business and Community Since 1936

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CHAMBER BUSINESS MIXER

Stimulate your business and meet new clients

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Mechanics Bank

Wednesday, June 24th ▪ 5:30-7:30 p.m.

9996 San Pablo Ave. (at Fairmount)

El Cerrito

**P.S.: Don't forget our luncheon meeting on June 10th
at the Mira Vista Golf & Country Club!**

For more information, contact the Chamber of Commerce:
406 Colusa Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530 ▪ (510) 705-1202



El Cerrito

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Linking Business and Community Since 1936

P.O. Box 538 • El Cerrito, CA 94530

June Business Luncheon

Wednesday, June 10 • 12-1:30 p.m.

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

Prices: \$20 for pre-paid members only
\$25 admission at the door, and for all non-members

Guest Speaker: Lisa Cain, Ph.D.,
PagePoint Web Solutions

Reservations required by June 5th.
RSVP to info@elcerritochamber.org or phone (510) 705-1202

Bruce King Memorial Dog Park

THE CITY OF EL CERRITO is accepting donations in remembrance of Bruce King, a long-term member of city staff. Bruce died recently from injuries he suffered during a home invasion robbery. Bruce was a dog lover who cared for and rescued many dogs. The city is in the process of establishing an El Cerrito dog park.

At the May meeting of the El Cerrito Chamber Board of Directors a motion was enacted to support the effort. Initially, the Board agreed to provide \$100 seed money to support the effort to establish the dog park. The Chamber promised additional support in the future.

Chamber Officers

President	Baylan Megino, White Light Associates
First Vice President	John C. Stashik, Premier Graphics
Second Vice President	Michelle Blackwell, EBMUD
Secretary-Treasurer	Charlie Weaver, Certified Public Accountant
Past President	John C. Stashik, Premier Graphics

Staff

Manager	Mark L. Scott
Secretary	Pat Berndt

Calendar of Events

- June 3** Chamber Board meeting; Coldwell Banker Bartels, 8:30 a.m.
- 6-7** E-waste drop off; DMV parking lot, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- 10** Chamber luncheon meeting; see box above.
- 12** Furniture silent auction to benefit municipal July 4th fair; Tradeway, 10860 San Pablo Ave., 6-8 p.m.
- 13** Furniture sale to benefit municipal July 4th fair; Tradeway, 10860 San Pablo Ave., 8 a.m.-2 p.m.
- 15** City Council meets; City Hall, 7:30 p.m.
- 24** Chamber mixer; Mechanics Bank, 9996 San Pablo Ave., 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 28** Home Improvement Expo; Community Center, 1-5 p.m.
- July 4** Annual El Cerrito Independence Day fair; Cerrito Vista Park, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

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