



## Manager's Minute

MARK SCOTT

THE FIRST KNOWN fundraising drive in the United States was for Harvard University in 1643 and brought in 500 English pounds. About 75% of all private philanthropy in the world comes from donors in the United States. El Cerritans have to be among the most generous people around. The support for Chamber activities always delights me. Parks, schools (both public and private), and churches are often recognized as recipients of citizen largesse. Service clubs seem to be constantly in the fundraising mode.

It is no accident, I'm sure, that the opera chose to locate in El Cerrito. In fact, it took a lot of work which should be applauded by everyone. *Go El Cerrito!* We already boast a fine community theatre in the Contra Costa Civic Theatre. Fundraising is integral to the success of these cultural activities.

Now it looks like the American Cancer Society *Relay for Life* will return to El Cerrito after a six year absence. Your help is needed. Volunteers are needed for the planning efforts now underway. Contact Julie Oshiro at (510) 541-8036. E-mail: [elcerritorelay@gmail.com](mailto:elcerritorelay@gmail.com). The *Relay* is a time to come together and honor friends, neighbors, family cancer survivors, victims and raise funds. Fun, exercise, and fundraising. In El Cerrito, yet. Now there's a recipe for success!

### More Reinvest

- Coldwell Banker Bartels Realty
- DABK Inc.
- Dream World Floral & Gifts
- Foley & Bonny
- Brit Johnson
- Bill Kerber
- Little Caesars
- Minuteman Press
- Super 8 Motel
- West County Optometry
- West County Times

## Join us for the State of the City

MAYOR JANET ABELSON will provide the business community with an update on El Cerrito's budget situation and on overview on how the state's budget woes are impacting the city. She will talk about some exciting new grant money that the city has been awarded and discuss upcoming projects and programs.



*This event is open to everyone*, so please bring a friend. To cover the additional costs for this event, the Chamber is charging \$25 for advance reservations and \$30 at the door.

**Wednesday, March 10th • Noon-1:30 p.m.**

**Treviño's Restaurant**

11795 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito

\$25 for advanced RSVPs by March 3, 2010

\$30 at the door

RSVP via phone (510) 705-1202

or e-mail to [info@elcerritochamber.org](mailto:info@elcerritochamber.org)

## Proposed Ordinance Targets False Alarms

THE EL CERRITO POLICE DEPARTMENT will be asking the City Council to adopt a new alarm ordinance when the Council meets on March 15th. The ordinance is intended to reduce the time that the department now spends responding to and investigating false alarms. ECPD now receives an average of 1600 false alarms annually. Conservatively, about 1200 police hours annually are spent responding to these alarms. This is roughly equivalent to the services of one police officer for a year.

The ordinance will require that alarm owners register their home or business alarms with the police department within 10-days of installation. It will also mandate an alarm fee to the owners of alarms with multiple false activations. The ordinance will not apply in any way to alarms resultant of criminal activity. The license permit fee will be \$26 dollars due initially and every two years upon renewal. The fee for a second false alarm in a year will be \$74.

The ordinance will require alarm companies to give alarm operators written and oral instructions on how to use the alarm. Monitoring companies will also have to make phone calls to the alarm owner prior to calling the police in an effort to prevent a police response to a false alarm.

ECPD Administrative Lieutenant Robert De La Campa is coordinating the program. He can be reached at (510) 215-4415; or by e-mail to: [rdelacampa@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:rdelacampa@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us).

## Bike the Bridges

PLAN AHEAD to join a family-friendly bike ride to benefit Special Olympics on Sunday, June 6th. Two 25-mile loops will take riders across the Al Zampa Memorial Bridge and the new Benicia Bridge. A "sag" wagon roll along the route.

The \$40 registration fee includes a post-ride lunch. The benefit is hosted by the El Cerrito Police Department along with Hercules, Martinez and Benicia police.

For more information call Sgt. Shawn Maples at (510) 215-4414, ext. 26; [smaples@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:smaples@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us).

On the Internet, register at: [www.bikethebridges.kintera.org](http://www.bikethebridges.kintera.org).



The  
**President's  
Palaver**  
JOHN C. STASHIK

**MORE NEWS IS GOOD NEWS.** In the October 2009 issue of the *Byline*, member Dale Mead asked this question: "It's 10:30 p.m. Do you know



where your city council is?" This was his lead in an article noting the lack of local news coverage in our city. With heavy newspaper downsizing, reporters are spread

too thin these days to thoroughly cover local issues or municipal government.

Happily, local news coverage in El Cerrito has *increased* since Mead's article appeared. That's because the *West County Times* hired him to cover city hall and local issues. On some days there are multiple stories written by this new correspondent and they also appear in the *El Cerrito Journal* (all part of the Bay Area News Group).

He's a regular attendee at city council and other government meetings and that's how it should be. Personally, I prefer to read the facts, not just press releases. I'm sure most other people would agree.

Although the newspaper industry is not in any better financial shape than it was last year, I hold out some hope that publishers will find a way to make a buck and pay their bills while keeping the population informed. Meanwhile, here in El Cerrito, we have more local news coverage than we did last October. That's called good news.

**IMPROVING THE AVENUE.** Public Works Director Jerry Bradshaw attended our February meeting bringing a team of engineers to explain the San Pablo Avenue Streetscape Project. When completed, San Pablo Avenue should look much better. Pedestrian safety enhancements will be made to various crosswalks. In addition, landscaping, new signage, news racks and bus stop improvements are part of the project.

The basic plan is to work from south to north along the Avenue's east side,

## Revised Curfew Ordinance Adopted

BY MARK SCOTT

**T**HE CITY OF EL CERRITO has had a curfew ordinance for many years. On January 19th, the City Council adopted a new ordinance entitled "Minors Activities and Places Prohibited" in Chapter 10.70 of the El Cerrito Municipal Code.

The new ordinance establishes uniform nighttime hours regardless of season or day of the week. It also establishes a daytime curfew requiring school attendance and/or parental control. In addition, the ordinance also requires managers of hotels, motels and boarding houses to notify the police department when a suspected minor checks in alone. The new ordinance removes a provision that prohibited proprietors of restaurants, cafes, theaters and other public establishments from serving or accommodating minors.

The nighttime curfew will be enforced during the hours of 10 p.m. through 5 a.m. daily. The daytime curfew, designed to target truancy, will be enforced from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m.

The community as a whole suffers when minors do not attend school. Truant behaviors progress to vandalism, petty theft and then to other crimes. Truants can loiter in and about public places looking for opportunities to misbehave. Both public and private property can become targets for delinquent behavior. Truancy is therefore identified as a gateway behavior requiring intervention at its incipency.

then north to south on the west side; all done as quickly as possible with minimal disruption. In case you have a question about any construction issues adjacent to your business, here is the company and person to contact:

Cole Management and Engineering  
Tom Collins (925) 250-3216

**F**OR OUR CANINE PALS. As El Cerrito's newest recreation facility, the Bruce King Memorial Dog Park, is under construction as this is written. Located along Lexington Ave. (between Potrero and Blake, adjacent to the Ohlone Greenway), the park is scheduled for a grand opening and dedication on Satur-

To address the problem of juvenile crime and to promote the safety and well being of the youngest citizens the West Contra Costa police chiefs and the West Contra Costa Unified School District have proposed the daytime curfew as adopted. To update the nighttime curfew by simplifying enforcement and to comply with current law the entire ordinance needed to be updated.

Any citations issued will be infractions requiring parental notification. Many of the businesses that we spoke to were not aware of the repealed provision of the law barring service to minors during specific hours. The new ordinance should be easier to enforce and produce effective results.

## Artists at The Glenn

**M**EET Jack Anderson, Charlotte Britton, Lila and Sharon Banuelos, Shielaugh Divelbiss, Doug Donaldson, Pam Fingado, Jackie Hicks, Adrianna and Madeline Ibrahim, Joan Keyes, Ed Kinney, Patricia Leslie, Heidi Rand, Rose Stamm, Micheal-Che Swisher, Ben and Jean Witzke and James Wolfman. These local artists will be at The Glenn on Friday, March 12, from 7-9 p.m., located along El Cerrito's "artist row" at 7027 Stockton Ave.

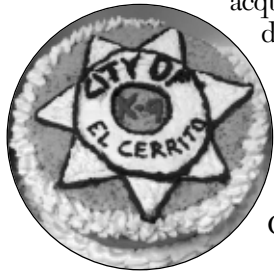
New works include: acrylic and oil paintings, oil pastels, pen and ink with color washes, photography, quilt and fabric painting, gouache with collage illustrations and traditional watercolors.

day, April 17, at 1 p.m. All El Cerrito canines and their humans are encouraged to attend. Local businesses and individuals have contributed funds for this new dog park. Contributions are still solicited. Contact Suzanne Iarla, Community Outreach Specialist, at (510) 215-4318 for a donation form.

**B**EA WILL BE MISSED. Beatrice Doherty-Vincent, a long-time member of our Chamber, passed away last month. Bea served on the Board of Directors at one time and could always be counted on for support. The family business, Doherty's Rentals, opposite City Hall, is a long-time fixture on San Pablo Avenue.

## Successful Crab Feed for K-9 Cop

THE EL CERRITO POLICE Employees Association held a crab feed on January 29th that raised an estimated \$12,000 to help acquire a police dog for the force. Attendance was reported to be 320 people.



Many raffle prizes were donated by local businesses including the ice cream cake pictured at left. That cake was a gift from Loard's Ice Cream, a Chamber member, of El Cerrito Plaza.

Police dogs are expensive to acquire.

The dog, plus officer training and equipment, can top \$100,000. The El Cerrito Police Department is currently evaluating the feasibility of establishing a canine program. To learn more, including how to help, call the ECPD at (510) 215-4414, ext. 4.

## Business Plans: Leaders Lead

A STRONG BUSINESS PLAN can lead you out of this recession. When will this economy turn around? Has it already done so? Now is the time to re-examine your business plan and make sure that your business is poised to take advantage of the pending recovery.

Many business managers have not reviewed their business plans since they first opened the doors or perhaps the last time they needed to secure financing. Your new business plan should be realistic. Adaptation equals advantage. Don't wait for improvement. *Plan for improvement!*

You've already proved you can adapt and survive. Now plan your recovery. Take advantage of your Chamber networking opportunities and stay plugged in to local business.

## Timely Employment Law Tips

BY MARK SCOTT

THE WEST COUNTY chambers of Commerce Breakfast for Business presentation on February 24th was a business law update for 2010. The presentation was sponsored by Wendel, Rosen, Black, and Dean, LLP.

Speaking was Jeanine DeBacker, partner. Her talk included many timely tips for the new employment law year ahead. El Cerrito Chamber members in attendance included Phil Philbrook of InConcert Financial Group and Monique Shields of Shields Nursing Centers.

Participants were advised on wage and hour law changes including alternative work week law changes. Also covered were discrimination and retaliation updates including information on

Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act legislation that took effect in November. Employee privacy changes and COBRA were also covered.

*We've secured a few handouts for those who were not able to attend, so please ask.* Where else can you go for networking, fellowship and timely tips? The cost was \$20 for members of the West County chambers and was well worth it.

**One tip:** The new form I-9 contains a revised list of acceptable documents that an employee must present upon hiring. *These documents must not be expired.* The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency has announced stepped up review of employer documentation in this area.

## Seeking URM Assistance

BY MARK SCOTT

CHAMBER MEMBER Vito Wise, of Granters Jewelry and Loan, has been very helpful in keeping the funding issue for retrofit of unreinforced masonry buildings in the public eye. This issue is critical to the small businesses affected by this ordinance. Most recently Vito sent the following letter to Congressman John Garamendi after meeting with him at a public meeting at El Cerrito City Hall.

Feb. 22, 2010

To Chris Austin and Brian Hooker:

*It was a pleasure to meet Congressman John Garamendi and yourself. It was very encouraging to hear the Congressman state that you could look into finding federal stimulus monies to help the 17 local El Cerrito small businesses with their economic hardship that was brought on by a local retrofitting ordinance.*

*The President of the United States has said that small business is the back bone of this country. The newly adopted unreinforced masonry (URM) ordinance will require 17 small El Cerrito businesses to retrofit their buildings at an approximate cost of \$125,000 each. The ordinance allows three years to comply but has no options to help with funding or financing. The entire financial burden is left up to each individual business owner. During these hard economic times many of the 17 small businesses will not be able to survive this political policy hurdle put in front of them without your help.*

*I applaud Congressman Garamendi for promoting economic development. But if the government can't help these 17 El Cerrito small businesses, then I don't think President Obama or Congressman Garamendi need to worry about promoting new business or economic growth because the system has failed us. We small businesses are the local sales tax collectors and some of these businesses, such as Granters Jewelry and Loan, have been collecting sales taxes in El Cerrito since 1943.*

*Thank you again for your time and any assistance you can offer us will be extremely appreciated.*

Vito Wise

Granters Jewelry & Loan

## Turiaf's Heartfelt Gift

BY MARK SCOTT

GOLDEN STATE Warriors Center Ronnie Turiaf held the first event for his Heart-to-Heart Foundation at the Boys and Girls Club in west Oakland on February 23rd. Turiaf announced that he would donate automatic heart defibrillators along with the cost of training staff and students to four local schools. Among the schools to receive the heart defibrillator packages from the Turiaf Heart-to-Heart Foundation is El Cerrito High School.

The donation demonstrates a real concern for the well being of teen athletes. The Turiaf Foundation joins a list of local charitable and governmental organizations seeking to install automatic heart defibrillators in schools, recreation facilities and other places of public assembly.

**50th Anniversary Gala  
Contra Costa Civic Theatre**

Highlights from five decades of entertainment.  
Friday, March 6 • 7 p.m.  
[www.cctt.org](http://www.cctt.org) for tickets and information



# El Cerrito

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
Linking Business and Community Since 1936

P.O. Box 538 • El Cerrito, CA 94530

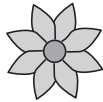
## Champagne Mixer

Welcome the Berkeley Opera to El Cerrito!  
Meet members of the Opera company!  
Feast on sumptuous gourmet appetizers!  
Network with Chamber members!  
Win fabulous raffle prizes!

THIS EVENT IS **FREE** TO EL CERRITO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERS

**Wednesday, March 24 • 4:30-7 p.m.**

**D'Jour**  
Floral & Antiques



7512 Fairmount Ave.  
El Cerrito  
**RSVP**  
**(510) 525-7232**

*Our deep appreciation is extended to the following Chamber member for support in co-sponsoring the expense of printing and mailing this Byline.*



### Seidell Enterprises, Inc.

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## Calendar of Events

- March 1 City Council meets; City Hall, 7:30 p.m.
- 2 El Cerrito's Architectural Heritage. A talk by Dave Weinstein, Vice President of the El Cerrito Historical Society. Free. St. John's Senior Center, 6500 Gladys Ave., El Cerrito; 12:45 p.m. Call (510) 527-2850 for information.
- 3 Chamber Board meets; El Cerrito Royale, 8:30 a.m.
- 10 Chamber luncheon meeting; see page 1.
- 13 Volunteer to help clear scotch broom from the Hillside Natural Area. Schmidt Lane entrance, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Call (510) 215-4354 to register.
- 15 City Council meets; City Hall, 7:30 p.m.
- 24 Chamber event at D'Jour Floral; see box above.
- April 7 Chamber Board meets; El Cerrito Royale, 8:30 a.m.

### Chamber Officers

President	John C. Stashik, Premier Graphics
First Vice President	Michelle Blackwell, EBMUD
Second Vice President	Kent Langston, Honda of El Cerrito
Secretary-Treasurer	Charlie Weaver, Certified Public Accountant

### Staff

Manager	Mark L. Scott
Secretary Emeritus	Pat Berndt

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