As business people most of us have a reservoir of general life and professional experiences that have shaped our thought processes and invariably influence our behavior. I was giving some thought to this very issue and thinking about some of the life shaping experiences that I have had and how they relate to some of my core business principles and the way I relate to people.

My motto is “your attitude determines your altitude the question is how high do you want fly.” The companion line to that is “I want to soar therefore I have the attitude of gratitude.” I am a firm believer that a positive outlook on life combined with a grateful and appreciative attitude are key components to a happy life and successful interactions with other people.

When I think in terms of business and relating to people and drawing from the various “reservoirs” of life experience that I’ve had, it’s not the formal college education that I received as a business major, nor is it the professional seminars on sales training and personal growth and development that resonate with me the loudest on any given day. It’s the “Eddie-isms” that constantly speak to me.

You’re probably wondering exactly what is an “Eddie-isms?” Allow me to explain. My grandfather, Eddie M. Wright Sr. and my father, Eddie M. Wright Jr. often would say things to me that were profound, steeped in wisdom.

See From the President, page 7
Pork chops tonight? Or every night! Fatapple’s just revamped their menus and this entrée is one of many delicious selections on the daily dinner menu, along with N.Y. Strip Steak, Mary’s® Fried Chicken, Salmon, Trout, new waffle fries, plus their great burgers and salads. Eat well at 94530’s favorite gathering place where there is always good food, clean and consistent. Don’t forget dessert.

Speaking of food, the 26th annual Culinary Caper that benefits Soroptimist International of Richmond is scheduled for Sunday, April 28th, at Rockefeller Lodge in San Pablo. Advance tickets are $55; call 707-452-0348 to purchase. Live and silent auctions plus a raffle, along with wine tasting. Noon to 3 p.m.

Dumplings? The Cigar Box Kitchen sign has vanished at 10064 San Pablo. Vacant since it suddenly closed last August after a mere month in business, a new restaurant will be occupying the space next to the Rialto Cinemas Cerrito theater. Word on the street is that it will become a dumpling house.

Up the road at 10172 San Pablo (Peppermint Tree Plaza), Nana opened on March 23rd offering ice cream, juices, smoothies, desserts, coffee and tea. Hamad Alqublani is the proprietor, open seven days a week from 6:30 a.m. until 9 p.m. Hours are long and days off few for enterprising new business owners.

Sharing EC success, Noodles Fresh, the high quality Chinese restaurant and tea house on the “theater block,” is expanding. A second Noodles will open late summer in downtown Berkeley according to owner Tom Petersen. Shattuck Avenue between Haste and Channing will be the site of location #2. But El Cerrito is the original and has much better parking.

Closing. Dollar Tree, next to the Del Norte station Ross store, is shutting down on April 14th. A hand printed sign says “lost our lease” but corporate is closing many stores in the chain. If you want to buy something for a buck, don’t wait.

Gambling walk and talk. Join Chris Horn to learn about El Cerrito’s wild past when gambling and night life thrived. Up until the 1940s our city was wide open for gambling, dog racing, drinking, and vice. Exciting times. The tour will walk past the sites of the Rancho, Hollywood Club, It Club, Wagon Wheel (still there today as the Eagles aerie), and the Pastime Lounge (before it became our hardware store). Sunday, April 14th from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m., free. Meet near Macaroni Grill at the Plaza. David Weinstein has additional information and you can contact him at: davidweinstein@yahoo.com.

Self promo. Our slick, full color brochure titled “An invitation to join the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce” has been revised and reprinted. It highlights the many benefits of membership and includes an application form. If you feel like promoting your chamber of commerce and would like some copies to pass out to colleagues, please contact the office: info@elcerritochamber.org.

West County Forum. After years of receiving email from the WCF I finally joined and attended the March 14th meeting. The speaker that day was none other than our own city manager Karen Pinkos who gave her introduction to the attendees and then discussed development in El Cerrito. The group consists of various public and private sector leaders, active and retired, and is open to anyone for $20 annual dues. Lunch is at La Strada. WCF meets at 11:45 every month, lunch at 12:15, then promptly adjourns at 1:30. If you can break away from your business, I recommend it. Information: westcountyforum.com.
This is the Right Way to Assert Your Importance at Work

BY ART MARKMAN, PH.D.
The guest author is a professor of Psychology and Marketing at the University of Texas at Austin.

There is a genre of entertainment in which a young employee (often a woman) is under-appreciated for her contribution at work until either a more successful person is forced to do without her or she steps up to save the day when everyone else fails. A heartwarming story. It’s one that resonates with so many people precisely because they may feel under-valued at work and wish their movie moment would come.

You don’t have to wait for Hollywood scriptwriters to fashion a way for you to make sure that other people know what you are capable of. Here are three ways to make sure your capacity to contribute at work is known by the people who matter.

Step Up And Serve

Much of your life before entering the workplace is governed by other people. If you play on a team, your coach decides when you get to play. To be in a musical, you audition and the director chooses you. Your teachers may even decide whether you are eligible to take particular classes.

So much of that life is scheduled, that you may forget to seize the moment when you get a job. You don’t have to wait to be asked to participate in every project.

Instead, make sure that you are aware of key organizational priorities. When you adopt the organization’s goals as your own, then your motivational system will help you to notice new opportunities to achieve these aims when they appear. When you do see an opportunity, go for it. Take some initiative. If you need to alert your boss that you have found an opportunity, make a call or pop your head in to ask for permission. But, don’t just wait around. In addition, when the folks higher up the ladder are looking for people to take care of something, volunteer. They are paying attention to who gets the extra mile to ensure that things get done.

Deliver The Results

Of course, with great volunteering comes great responsibility. Once you take on the burden of addressing an issue, you need to get it done—and get it done well. That means that you need to pay attention to the details. It isn’t enough to take care of most of a task. You need to complete it well.

If you’re not a detail-oriented person, then make a checklist of everything that has to be done to ensure that you do a high-quality job. Check over your work a few times. No typos in reports that go to key clients. No mistakes in numbers. No quality job. Check over your work a few times. No typos in things was satisfactory.

That personal touch also makes sure that people above you in the organizational chart know who you are and can recognize you when they see you again. The human brain has specific mechanisms for recognizing faces. So, make sure your face gets a chance to be noticed.

Express Appreciation

It can be uncomfortable to toot your own horn. And there is some good reason for that. It is socially awkward to let other people know what a good job you have done and to highlight your role in a success. Those people who do continually talk about their own accomplishments can develop a bad reputation with their colleagues.

A great alternative is to go out of your way to share credit with everyone who helped complete a project. If you’re part of a team that finishes something big, send out a note to everyone who played a key role. By acknowledging their efforts, you are reinforcing the efforts of the group. In addition, the people who get your note will also acknowledge the role that you played in the project.

When you’re trying to make sure that your supervisors know things you have done, frame your report to them by calling out everyone who played a role. Give specific examples of how other people took on key responsibilities to make sure the project was successful. Your supervisors will also notice that you seem to be in the middle of successful things. Plus, if you help build up your colleagues as well as yourself, you are laying the groundwork for a set of work relationships that will help you to achieve even more in the future.

The views expressed here are the author’s and do not necessarily represent those of the Chamber Board. Email: l.martinengo@elcerritochamber.org; cell: 1-510-778-5883.

Note from a Member

[Last week] we got tagged big time along the Ohlone Greenway:
  - My warehouse,
  - Treatland’s warehouse,
  - Nation’s shop building.

The good news is the city’s graffiti removal cover-up contractor, within two days, painted over the tagging.

I understand the contractor will continue providing cover-up along the entire Ohlone Greenway.

Thank you, City of El Cerrito.

/s/ Jack Freethy

Like the us on Facebook  Follow us on Twitter
By Lisa Martinengo

Imagine growing up in a neighborhood in which the majority of residents had the knowledge, skills, and values to take compassionate care of their local animals, both domestic and wild. Does it sound unusual?

Dr. Syed Naqvi, founder and head veterinarian of El Cerrito Pet Hospital, was raised in a community such as this, in Lahore, Pakistan, and he credits this atmosphere for guiding the way to his career choice to become a veterinarian. Many of these neighbors were connected to the university agricultural departments and were on their way to becoming professional vets. His own family was also animal oriented and fortunately, had enough property to support a small menagerie, including a few goats, ducks, cats, dogs, and a cow.

Coming to the U.S., decades ago, Dr. Naqvi first established his practice in Chicago, and eventually came west in the ’90s. In 2001, he moved to this area and set up practice here in El Cerrito.

El Cerrito Pet Hospital provides a comprehensive suite of general services for dogs, cats, and the occasional rabbit or rodent. A partial list of services and issues addressed include: dental care, laboratory, microchipping, parasite control and prevention, pain management, grooming, full pharmacy, vaccines and much more. If the animal requires a specialized surgery, El Cerrito Pet Hospital works closely in collaboration with specialists, to ensure the animal receives the best possible care.

Along with Dr. Naqvi, there is a compassionate staff including an associate doctor, technicians, and assistants. The practice is very much a family affair; Mrs. Naqvi is the office manager and their adult children help out in many ways. Also, for many years, Dr. Naqvi has provided internship positions in connection with local career colleges, to encourage and nurture young people in the field.

Dr. Naqvi’s generous community work is notable. Once or twice a year, he contributes time, energy, and materials to provide detailed care for the pets of homeless and transient people who normally wouldn’t be able to access this. Last December, in connection with GRIP (Greater Richmond Interfaith Program), he went on site in Richmond to do free exams and vaccines to dozens of animals. He has also provided services for some nearby rescue shelters for low cost spay and neutering procedures.

The office walls are filled with photos and warm testimonials from hundreds of pet owners who have entrusted their pets to Dr. Naqvi and team. Please don’t hesitate to call or visit if your four-legged companion is not feeling well.

El Cerrito Pet Hospital is located at 11800 San Pablo Ave., across the street from The Home Depot. Office hours are Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Website: www.elcerritopet.vetstreet.com. The telephone number is: 510-234-4582.
El Cerrito Marketing Program

Expanded Mailing Coverage
Including East Richmond Heights
Total Circulation: 15,000 Addresses

- Reach every address in El Cerrito
- Select Richmond Annex addresses
- Now including East Richmond Heights

NEXT DEADLINE: April 23
Betty McCain-Ayala, owner of Chop Salon & Spa.

Russ Doi, Jeff Wright, Tony Valadez, Mark Sifling, Glen Shannon, and Heather Thomson.

AnnMarie Baines receives a membership plaque from Chamber manager Lisa Martinengo.

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New Committees

BY JOHN C. STASHIK

Two new standing committees were named by President Jeff Wright at the March board of directors meeting.

The Membership Committee will consist of Aissia Ashoori, Russell Doi, along with manager Lisa Martinengo.

A Strategic Planning Committee was also announced. Members of that committee are: Aissia Ashoori, Mark Figone, Sonja Givens-Thomas, and Jeff Wright.
and memorable. I call them “Eddie-isms” and they make up a large part of who I am today. Even though they have both passed on their words still stand tall. In this column I thought that I’d share a few “Eddie-isms” with you.

I’ll start with my father, Eddie M. Wright Jr. As many of you are aware, I am a real estate broker by profession as was my father. When I obtained my real estate license at the tender age of 18 in February of 1979, I began working as a real estate salesperson in my father’s office, Century 21 Wright Realtors at 11260 San Pablo Avenue in El Cerrito. As part of the grooming process we had lots of conversations and interactions. Sometimes I was less than fully attentive which was often met with the “Eddie-ism” “you hear me but you’re not listening.” He knew that my ears were functioning correctly and that I was receiving the energy of the sound wave, however, I was not listening, tuned in to the extent that I was getting the essence, the substance and important information that he was conveying to me. In business it is critical that we really listen to people and not just hear them. When we really listen to people, we are in a much better position to provide a higher level of service, make more sales, have fewer problems and have happier clients and customers. As business people we are often sought out for advice. One of the “Eddie-isms” that I routinely use with my own 21-year-old son and 19-year-old daughter when they seek advice from me, is one that my father often used. Prior to providing advice to me he would often preface his remarks by saying “I’m going to tell you what you ought to do but you’re going to do what you want to do anyway.” It’s important to seek wise counsel but it’s even more important to follow through on the sound advice that is given. As business people we need to be wise advisers in our chosen field. Confident that we are providing the best advice and knowing when to refer and defer to others who have a superior level of expertise. We also need to know when to take advice. As a very basic example, when the wise and experienced auto mechanic advises us to take care of an auto related issue without delay, it’s usually prudent to follow that advice. I have a 77-year-old client who routinely ask me for advice, and he prefaces his question with “I already know, you’re going to tell me what I ought to do but I’m going to do what I want to do anyway.” We get a good laugh out of it because my father repeatedly told him that over 40 years ago and I’m still telling him that today, and he’s still doing things “his way.”

There are so many stories and situations where “Eddie-isms” were invoked but for the sake of brevity I’ll leave you with just one from my grandfather Eddie M. Wright Sr. My grandfather hails from Lewisville, Arkansas. It was a small town but a bustling community because it was the county seat for Lafayette county. He was born in 1908 so his upbringing was during the time of Jim Crow and segregation. On a personal note, he did well in Lewisville, Arkansas. From about 1923 up until 1943 he worked for the wealthiest people in town, Mack and Martin Lester, the proprietors of Lester Mercantile a large general store. They owned that business as well as other business enterprises. For 20 years he was a delivery person for Lester Mercantile. He had a company truck that he was able to use as his own, had a home on five acres of land, never was in need or want of any goods because his employers had it all. Furthermore he didn’t have to deal with much by way of indignities and/or harassment for two primary reasons, the first being that he was employed by the most powerful and influential people in town and the second being that he had a jovial personality and he knew everyone in town and could relate to the entire community regardless as to which side of the tracks that they lived on.

With that insight, I will leave you with this “Eddie-ism” from the mouth of my grandfather who had a very firm opinion on human relations and his interactions with people, Big D as I called him, which was short for Big Daddy, simply said this, “if you can’t get along with me then there’s something wrong with you.” I have internalized and live by that. It is important to be receptive to all kinds of people and personalities. Be willing to listen to differing points of view, be gracious, and be friendly. We don’t have to agree with everybody about everything, but we can always be receptive, gracious and friendly. That attitude bodes well in business and in life in general and that’s what I subscribe to and live by.
Graffiti and Illegal Dumping

Courtesy of the City of El Cerrito

The city’s maintenance section is experiencing a high number of complaints relating to graffiti and illegal dumping on public property. Maintenance staff respond to these requests for service as soon as possible, to reduce blight and the potential for public health and safety issues.

City resources needed to respond can be significant in terms of time and expense. This is especially the case for illegal dumping, which has been on the rise in the region. As a result, city staff is participating in countywide discussions to increase efforts to reduce illegal dumping, by increasing enforcement and providing more options for the proper disposal of materials.

If members of the public witness any dumping or vandalism taking place, please report it to police dispatch at 510-233-1214. To report illegally dumped materials or graffiti on public property, please contact the City of El Cerrito maintenance section at maintenance@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or 510-215-4369.