I graduated from college back in 1986 and came to work full time for the family business. Prior to that time, I had worked for our company during the summer time, after school, and during the holiday seasons. In those days my duties included some office work at billing time, washing garbage trucks after school, and what I enjoyed most, filling in for vacationing drivers on the routes.

It was a great source of pride for me as an 18-year-old to be able to drive a garbage truck and “pack garbage.” There is something about operating heavy equipment at that age and working alongside other drivers much older than myself that really gave me a sense of importance and accomplishment. The pay was great relative to what many of my friends were making and the hours were fantastic. I was up at 4:30 and off by 1:00 leaving my afternoons free.

After graduation I began to get more involved with other aspects of the business that previously were managed solely by my father. I began to attend city council meetings and sitting in on rate negotiations and union meetings. My father started to introduce me to the community relations aspect of the business.

Our business isn’t just about hauling garbage after all. We are very grateful for having the opportunity to serve the city of El Cerrito for the past 78 years. We take pride in doing whatever we can to support the city whenever we can. Part of that effort includes being involved with service groups and other community organizations. My father was active in both the Cerrito City Club and the Lions Club for many years and I have been a Rotarian since 1992. Additionally, we both have served active roles in the El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce.

Retail businesses should be on the lookout for bogus currency entering the busy holiday season, when volume is heavy and clerks are busy and often less experienced. It can and has happened here, including a chamber member who recently accepted a fake $50 bill.

Counterfeiting is generally a small-stake crime made more commonplace today by the ready availability of scanners, high-quality printers and other technology. Online sources cite estimates that $150 million in bogus bills is in circulation.

But small stakes are costly to small businesses. That coffee paid for with a phony $50 means all that change goes out the door — plus the free beverage.

The latest legitimate currency in circulation was introduced in 2013 and contains numerous anti-counterfeiting safeguards that can be used to determine legitimate greenbacks.

Currency should feel slightly rough to the touch due to the special paper and printing process used.

Other safeguards to check for are visual and a trained eye helps.

Bills $5 and larger have an embedded security thread. “The thread is in a different position for each denomination and glows a different color when held to ultraviolet (UV) light,” according to the Federal Reserve Board.

Color-shifting ink that changes from copper to green when viewed at an angle is used on the lower right corner of bills $10 and higher.

The $100 bill, the U.S. denomination most commonly counterfeited in foreign countries, has a 3-D security ribbon woven into the paper. “It has images of bells and 100s that move from side to side and up and down when you tilt the note.”

Bills $5 and higher also have microprinting in several locations, described as “small printed words (that) corre-
Based on the number of vehicles seen in the parking lot every day, my very unscientific analysis says that our new 24 Hour Fitness Super Sport is a smashing success. Since opening in mid-August the gym has transformed the mostly deserted former Safeway shopping center at Moeser Lane and San Pablo Avenue into a lively destination. Not only is the business a nearby amenity for El Cerrito residents, people are coming from Berkeley, Albany, and Richmond to work out at the 35,000 sq. ft. facility. A real plus for El Cerrito.

Not missing a detail, 24 Hour Fitness had their parking lot repaved; nice! Compare the new side with the beat up pavement in front of the CVS store which will really test your shock absorbers. Is there no pride of ownership on that half of the center? Come on property owner, kick in a few bucks for asphalt. Make the lot smooth again.

Vice patrol. On Sunday, November 11th, from noon until 2 o’clock, the El Cerrito Historical Society will present a walking tour highlighting the city’s gambling past. Until the 1940s, slot machines, dog racing, and nightclubs were El Cerrito’s main businesses. Chris Horn will take the group by the former locations of some of the clubs including the Pastime Lounge (now Pastime Ace Hardware) and the Wagon Wheel (now Bayview Eagles Aerie 2323). Meet in the parking lot near Macaroni Grill.

Election time. I’m referring to our own Chamber voting. We elect a nine person board of directors for two year terms; five of those seats will be on the ballot in December. Become involved; it’s good for you and your business. Email the president if you’d like to serve: m.figone@elcerritochamber.org. This month’s lunch meeting will be at Los Moles Beer Garden on November 20th at noon. That’s when the Nominating Committee makes its report. If nothing else, stop by for a beer and a good lunch.

November Chamber Luncheon
Tuesday, Nov. 20, at noon
6120 Potrero Ave., El Cerrito

Genesis Real Estate Comes to El Cerrito

Marco Rodriguez proudly accepts his member plaque from Chamber manager Lisa Martinengo. Genesis Real Estate is a new member with an El Cerrito office at 11100 San Pablo Avenue, Suite 108, at Bank of the West Plaza. A grand opening celebration will be held on Thursday, November 29th, at noon. Chamber members are invited to attend, tour the new office, and enjoy lunch and beverages.
I am writing this column from the post surgery recovery room at Kaiser Hospital in Santa Clara where my husband just came after a planned heart valve repair. At first, I thought I surely was entitled to send another guest column for Manager’s Musings, but on the drive here from El Cerrito, I reconsidered. My husband is doing very well which is why I decided I could devote the time and effort to write. The big topic hanging over everyone is the upcoming election and it’s been amazing to see how it’s affected the mood and actions of many people I know.

Not for many decades do I recall as intense a campaign effort to get out the vote as there is going on now. Friends and family who are normally content to sit back and watch the political machinery from the sidelines, have been busy for nearly two months, hosting letter writing sessions, getting on the telephone, and more.

One family member, who is a fluent Spanish speaker, drove his car on at least three weekends to church festivals way out in the Central Valley, expressly to engage with residents and be sure they were registered and committed to voting. I, myself, got a packet of “let’s vote” postcards which I intend to personalize, stamp and mail out this weekend. It’s not much, granted, but it’s the most democratic activity other than the act of voting than I’ve done in ages.

I agree with something I read weeks ago; the silver lining from the otherwise dark cloud that’s swept over our country is that millions of people have woken up to the fact that they have collective power to help shape our government and keep it true to its purpose. Let us keep reminding our elected leaders that they are supposed to be representing their constituents and not their corporate donors. It’s a vital and ongoing necessity. Voting is one way to do that, so be sure to make time to learn about the people and issues on this long ballot. If you have relatives in other states, gently remind them to exercise their right to vote, too. It’s one of the wonderful freedoms we cannot take for granted.

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

Our Democracy? Don’t Take it for Granted.

El Cerrito’s Residential Rental Inspection Program is to ensure that rental housing units are in compliance with city’s Municipal Code. Unless exempt, all residential rental units are subject to the code. Property owners with rental units are required to obtain an El Cerrito business license.

An inspection checklist is designed to assist owners in determining whether their properties will pass inspection under the program. Certificates of compliance are in effect for two years. The checklist is available at the El Cerrito City Hall or from the Chamber of Commerce.

Rental Property Inspections Required

ANNUAL HOLIDAY LUNCHEON & FUNDRAISER
with SILENT AUCTION
Tues., December 18 • noon
Berkeley Country Club
$44
BUFFET MENU
Classic Caesar Salad
Herb Roasted Chicken Breast with Chimichurri Sauce
Grilled Pacific Salmon with Lemon Butter Sauce
Herb Roasted Heirloom Potatoes
Seasonal Vegetable Medley
TICKETS: www.elcerritochamber.org
Everybody Welcome!

We are now in El Cerrito!!!
JOIN US FOR OUR
Grand Opening

NOVEMBER 29, 2018
FROM 12:00PM - 2:30PM
11100 SAN PABLO AVE.
SUITE # 108
EL CERRITO, CA 94530
By Lisa Martinengo

If you haven’t yet seen one of the purple colored trucks around town featuring a jovial yellow cat mascot, you will soon. JunkCat, the booming one year old business of El Cerritan, Nick Arzio, is poised to become the premier hauler in our region. Nick’s vision: grow the business to include 10 to 14 trucks serving the entire Bay Area. From the success rate of 2018, he is well on the way to achieving those goals. JunkCat has hardly had a slow day since securing its licenses and LLC status last September.

Nick developed the cute yet scrappy cat logo from looking at ’60s and ’70s cartoon cats. Thanks to the social online platforms and great referrals, the business got off to a quick start and in February of this year, Nick expanded his hauling capacity with a second, bigger truck. The first full time employee came on board in May and by August, business had expanded so much, Nick needed to purchase a third truck! JunkCat is fully licensed and insured to the tune of $1 million. The “Cat” can haul away almost anything (as long as it is non-hazardous) and will likely bring it to the Berkeley transfer station where items may get salvaged for reuse by Urban Ore. Also, JunkCat does recycle, if the customer: (1) presorts and separates all recyclables; (2) purchases the premium green package; or (3) has 35 cubic yards of junk with a significant portion of recyclables.

In addition to home closet or garage cleanouts, other common jobs are clearing apartments when tenants leave stuff, cleaning an estate after a death, and even some construction debris. Now with three hauling vehicles, Nick’s turnaround time is really amazing, from a half-hour to 48 hours after your call, but typically within 24 hours. Many times, your junk will be gone and your mind will be at ease within three hours!

Currently, the service area is El Cerrito, Albany, Berkeley, and Oakland. Read the testimonials on the website: https://www.junkcat.com.

Why not call the Cat now and clear out that nagging clutter?

JunkCat

415-900-HAUL · (415-900-4285)
Email: nick@junkcat.com
www.junkcat.com
Nora Hataye was born on October 28, 1918, in the Irvington district of what is now Fremont, California. The fourth of six daughters, Nora and her family had a small strawberry farm until World War II.

Nora did all her schooling in Irvington and she graduated from high school there. She didn't get the chance to go to college because of the World War II. She became a block warden for two years.

Nora married her childhood sweetheart, Tats, in 1944 in Salt Lake City. After the war, the couple moved to Berkeley, where they raised their son and daughter.

Shortly after moving to Berkeley, Nora found a job as a typist clerk at U.C. Berkeley. In her 30 years working at the university, Nora had risen to Administrative Coordinator and Assistant Purchasing Manager—a first for any woman.

Clara-Rae Genser, who may be familiar to local newspaper readers for her years writing newspaper profiles of local people and programs for the Richmond Independent and El Cerrito Journal, will turn 100 on November 3rd.

Genser, now a resident at the El Cerrito Royale retirement community, is the wife of the late Joseph Genser, a Superior Court judge in West Contra Costa.

Clara-Rae Goldberg was born and raised in Los Angeles, attended community college there and then worked at a business office before joining the Women's Army Corps (WAC) at the outset of World War II. “Being Jewish and being an American, I realized it was my war, too,” she says.

During her training in Des Moines, Iowa, she met and thanked First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt for her effort to combat the poor treatment accorded the women who enlisted to serve their country.

Clara-Rae met her future husband while both were serving at an Army air base in Fresno during World War II and moved to Richmond near the end of the war, where Joseph began his legal practice. The couple was one of the founding families of Temple Beth Hillel, founded in 1946 and the only synagogue in West Contra Costa. They also raised three children, Sandi, Mori and Joshua.

The couple became “very, very active turning Richmond into a city,” from what to then had been largely a company town swollen with a new population during the war. “We jumped into politics with both feet,” Clara-Rae said, recalling meeting George Miller Jr. (father of longtime Congressman George Miller III) at the outset of his political career. “It was a very exciting time.”

Joe Genser was appointed as a juvenile court judge by Gov. Pat Brown in 1963 and ultimately advanced to a Superior Court judge. He died in 1972, “five months before he would have been vested.”

Clara-Rae worked for many years in the district office of Richmond Assemblyman Jack Knox until both retired in 1980 and she moved to Albany.

When she wasn’t writing her column, Genser spent much of her time supporting local organizations such as the Friends of the Albany Library, the Albany Senior Center, the Temple Beth Hillel choir and Berkeley Women’s chorus, which she directed for more than a decade.

Looking back on 100 years, “It was a very exciting century,” she says. “I was active in all of it. Some of it was so ugly, some of it was so beautiful and some of it was both.”
believe that there is no substitute for digital marketing efforts. I continue to
businesses that bombard me with their marketing has become such an annoyance for
ages. And at least for me, digital marketing has become such an annoyance for
interaction, not just among millennials and social media is diminishing our growing dependence on digital media
several times recently about how a business credit. Business owners can refer to the Tax Reform Provisions that Affect Businesses page on the IRS website (www.irs.gov/newsroom/businesses) for updates and resources on these topics and other business-related changes.

The IRS is highlighting these changes and more as part of its ongoing initiative to help small businesses and self-employed individuals understand and meet their tax responsibilities. Pass-through businesses, small C-Corporations, Schedule C filers (independent contractors and gig economy workers), and farmers are all affected by the new law.

The IRS has issued a number of resources to help small businesses navigate the new tax law, and more of these products are on the way. Tax tips are written in plain language and people can subscribe to them by using the IRS’s Tax Tips email subscription program. A variety of additional products and resources can be found on the Tax Reform Resources Web page.

Business owners are encouraged to check the Tax Reform home page (www.irs.gov/tax-reform) for the latest guidance on the tax law provisions that may affect them. Partner groups are also encouraged to share this important information with their members.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I can remember helping my father tend bar at Chamber mixers back in the late ‘80s. In those days, if my memory serves me, mixers routinely were attended by 30 or 40 people. It seemed to me at the time that these events were an important opportunity for members of our business community to gather and discuss the nature of business in our community.

But my current sense is that the same kind of enthusiasm for networking that Chamber events afforded has dissipated. I’m puzzled as to why. Is it because business owners are working harder and have less time to gather socially? Do they perceive less value these days in such events? Or is it that the digital age has ushered in a perceived new way for business leaders to stay connected?

If it is the latter I have to say I think we are missing the boat. I have read several times recently about how a growing dependence on digital media and social media is diminishing our ability to manage face to face interaction, not just among millennials and younger generations but across all ages. And at least for me, digital marketing has become such an annoyance that I usually tend not to patronize businesses that bombard me with their digital marketing efforts. I continue to believe that there is no substitute for the personal relationships and face to face social interaction that Chamber events provide.

I guess what I’m getting to is what I’ve said in this column many times before. Our Chamber is only as valuable as the level of active participation of our members. In conjunction with that, it is time once again to form a nominating committee for the election of next year’s board of directors. We need your help.

Please consider running for a board seat. If you have any questions about what the position entails, please give me a call. Through the great efforts of our manager, Lisa Martinengo, our Chamber membership is growing. But with that growth comes a growing need for new leadership as well. I encourage all of you to contact one of our board members and let us know that you’re interested in joining the board.

I’ll close with an apology for missing last month’s lunch because I was out of town. But I’d like to thank our speaker Traci Young of Rubicon Programs, our food provider El Mono, and Lisa Martinengo, for putting it all together and filling in for me. I’ll see you all next time.
El Cerrito Marketing Program

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

- Reach every address in El Cerrito
- Over 2000 Richmond Annex addresses
- Now including East Richmond Heights

NEXT DEADLINE: November 7
NOVEMBER MEMBER MEETING & ELECTION NOTICE

The Nominating Committee was announced at the October meeting. It consists of director Sil Addiego and vice president Bill Kuhlman.

At the member meeting on Tuesday, November 20th, the report of that committee will be presented per Article IX, Section 2, of the Bylaws. Further nominations may be made from the floor. The meeting will be held at 12 noon at the Los Moles Beer Garden, 6120 Potrero Avenue. The committee report and nominations, if any, is the sole business item on the agenda. When nominations are closed ballots will be mailed to all regular members if necessary.

Participation is encouraged on our Board of Directors by all members that can do so. It takes about 90 minutes each month and the work is important to the organization and, of course, member businesses. Consider becoming active.

Tuesday, November 20 • 12 noon
Los Moles Beer Garden
6120 Potrero Ave., El Cerrito

REAL OR FAKE?

Continued from page 1

Respond to the denomination or are phrases such as ‘THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,’ ‘USA,’ or ‘E PLURIBUS UNUM.’”

Genuine U.S. currency paper also has red and blue security fibers embedded throughout the bill.

While many merchants employ a special pen to mark and detect counterfeits, officials advise that the markers are not reliable and can give false results.


A complete directory of Chamber members can be printed from the website: www.elcerritochamber.org