



El Cerrito Democratic Club

April 2024 Newsletter

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ECDC
PO Box 192
El Cerrito CA 94530

Newsletter Editor: William Ktsanes

1. El Cerrito Democratic Club General Information

The El Cerrito Democratic Club (“ECDC”) provides a forum for area residents to discuss and take action on issues and campaigns of local, national, and international importance. Our General Membership Meetings are open to all and held on the fourth Tuesday of each month except October and December, when we typically have our annual dinner and holiday party.

Our monthly General Membership Meetings are generally in a hybrid format accessible both in person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remotely via Zoom (<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>).

For those of us who’ve been able to come to Hana Gardens, it’s been wonderful to be in community and gather in person. Whether you join us in person or by Zoom, I encourage you to come a few minutes early to mix-and-mingle with fellow ECDC members.

The El Cerrito Democratic Club and its activities are supported by volunteers and the annual dues of its members. Please see the “Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions” section towards the end of this newsletter for directions on how to join the ECDC or renew your membership.

El Cerrito Democratic Club executive board officer elections occur annually each January. Special thanks to our 2024 volunteer officers:

El Cerrito Democratic Club Officers (2024)

- President – Champagne Brown
- Past President – Greg Lyman
- Executive Vice President – Carolyn Wysinger
- VP Media – Madeline Kronenberg
- VP Membership – Neil Tsutsui
- VP Programs – Ruthie Abelson Olivas
- VP Publications – William Ktsanes
- VP Records – Leslie Reckler
- VP Treasurer – Ed Crowley

The specific duties of officer positions are described in section “VII. Officers” of the Bylaws posted on the ECDC website at <https://ecdclub.org/club-documents/>.

If you’re interested in participating more actively in the ECDC, please consider volunteering with the Club and joining the Executive Board.

Help is always greatly appreciated!

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

2. Information and Zoom Link for the Tuesday, April 23rd General Membership Meeting

Our General Membership Meetings are generally in a hybrid format, accessible both in person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and via Zoom (<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>).

For monthly calendar invites and reminders for ECDC's General Membership Meetings, you are invited to download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system:

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/tZUpCOCvqDkpEtH10GiVZ7NcegZqDI_tJeMI/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGpqjwjHdKXsxGCRpwcBo_CXe3wpnpej7d1zU_CChZpNS31M-V4I5ZWL8z6

To join the monthly ECDC General Membership Meetings via Zoom, please use this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

Zoom Meeting ID: 814 7976 2385; Zoom Passcode: c5fQKR

Dial In by Phone: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 408 638 0968

Meeting ID: 814 7976 2385; Phone Passcode: 920761

Please note that the Passcode is different if you dial in by phone rather than join the meeting through the Zoom link.

April Meeting Agenda (Tentative)

6:20 pm – Assemble and Mingle

6:30 pm – Call to Order

6:31 pm – Approve April 2024 Agenda (**Action Item**)

6:33 pm – Approve Minutes from the March 2024 Membership Meeting (Action Item)

6:35 pm – Officer Reports: Membership (Neil Tsutsui), Finance (Ed Crowley)

Website (Madeline Kronenberg), Publications (William Ktsanes)

Records (Leslie Reckler)

6:40 pm – Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC) Report

6:45 pm – April Program: John Gioia, Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

(30-minute Presentation/15-minute Q&A)

7:30 pm – Announcements (**please limit to 2 minutes**)

7:40 pm – Good of the Order

8:75 pm – Adjourn

** Please send calendar events to the Executive Board in advance for possible discussion at the General Membership Meeting and publication in the monthly newsletter.*

- Champagne Brown, ECDC President

3. Minutes from the March 26th General Membership Meeting

El Cerrito Democratic Club
General Membership Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2024

(in person at Hana Gardens, 10860 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito; and via Zoom)

Call to Order

President Brown called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Approve of February 2024 Agenda

On the motion of Lyman and the second of Merrill, the agenda was approved as presented with no nays nor abstentions.

Approve of Minutes: February 2024 General Membership Meeting

On the motion of Tsutsui and the second of Akacic, the February 2024 Membership Meeting minutes were approved with no nays nor abstentions.

Officer Reports:

- Membership (Neil Tsutsui) membership = 94 members.
- Finance (Ed Crowley) = Finance report tabled; Crowley absent.
- Website (Madeline Kronenberg) - Website up to date.
- Publications (William Ktsanes) - The last newsletter was 21 pages due to the valued contributions of three members. Others are encouraged to hand in articles.
- Records (Lesie Reckler) No report.

Charitable Donations

On the motion of Merrill second by William the donations were divided equally with every organization receiving \$750. The motion was approved unanimously with no nays nor abstentions.

- 350 Contra Costa
- Ryse
- East Bay Center for the Performing Arts
- West Contra Costa Ed Fund Richmond Rapid Relief Fund (R3F)

President's Report

Central Committee Report – No Report

District 1 Report (Nye) – No Report

SD 7 Candidate Endorsement Voting Process

Online Voting Instructions (OpaVote)

Members must be in Good Standing as of Saturday Feb 10, 2024 to vote.

Ballots will be delivered via OpaVote and will arrive by email.

As long as the club has a valid email, a ballot will arrive.

If a ballot does not arrive in the regular "Inbox," members are encouraged to check spam boxes and in Gmail, check the "Promotions" tab.

Ballots will be released March 26, 2024 after 7:00 p.m.

Ballots are due March 27, 2024 7:00 p.m.

Contact Greg Lyman to troubleshoot.

Candidates must receive 60% of the votes received to earn the endorsement.

SD 7 Candidate Endorsement Forum

Jovanka Beckles

Jesse Arreguin was represented by his field director.

Both Candidates gave statements

Websites:

<https://jovanka4casenate.com/>

<https://www.jesse.vote/>

Announcements

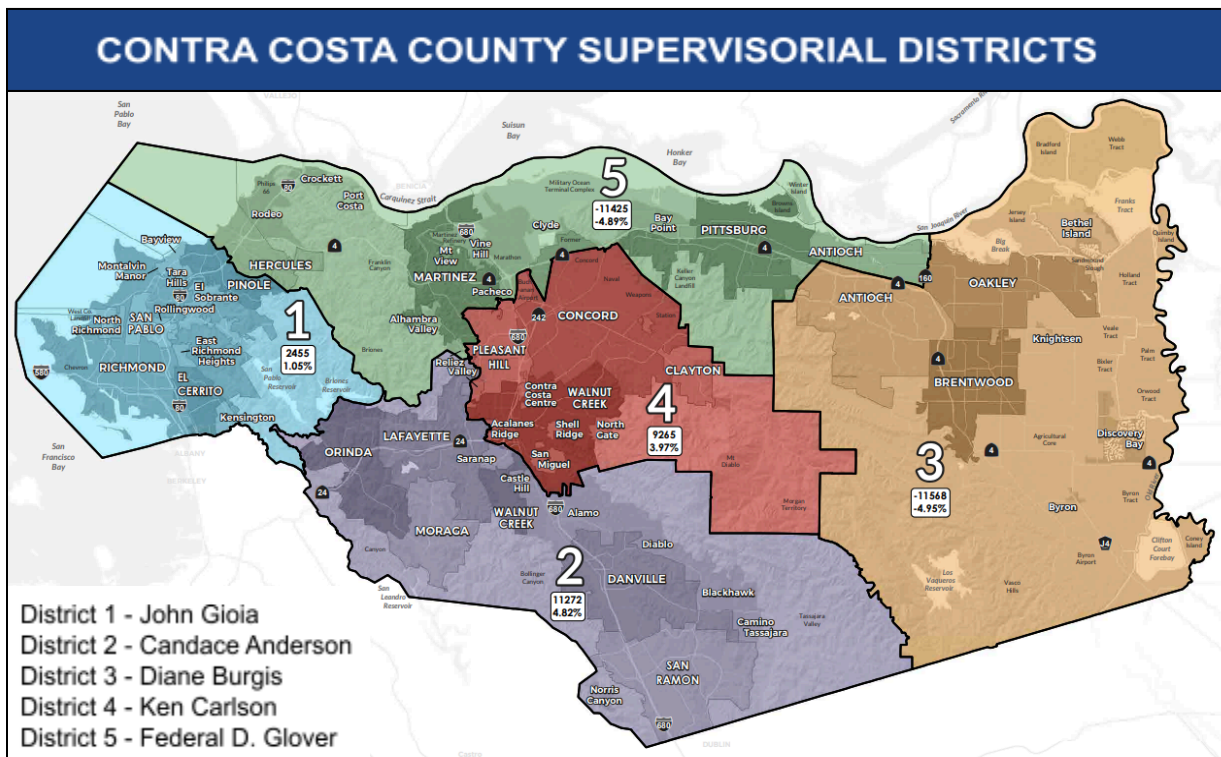
- Brown: Gabe Quinto and Carolyn Wysinger are DPCCC Elected members come January 2025.
- Quinto: West Contra Costa is organizing a fundraiser for Fiona Ma for Lt. Governor.
Would be nice to get support from our local clubs.
- Wysinger: Will represent at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

President Brown adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

– Leslie Reckler, VP Records

4. April Program: John Gioia, Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

Please join us in welcoming Supervisor John Gioia (pronounced “joy-a”) as our guest and program speaker for the April 23rd El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meeting. John represents District 1 on the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, a district which includes the West Contra Costa County cities of El Cerrito, Richmond, San Pablo, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood.



Supervisor John Gioia

John Gioia is Chair of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. First elected in 1998, John has been overwhelmingly re-elected six times and represents 220,000 residents in the western most urban and diverse area of the county. He previously served for 10 years on the East Bay Municipal Utility District Board, serving as President in 1995 and 1996.

John is a recognized leader in Bay Area regional government and air quality and climate change issues. He served as Governor Brown's appointee on the California Air Resources Board from 2013 to 2020 and has been on the Bay Area Air Quality Management District Board since 2006, serving as Chair in 2012.

John has served as President of the California State Association of Counties. He is an environmental justice leader and serves on the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) and as Vice-Chair of the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority where he helped lead an effort to pass an historic measure to raise \$500 million for San Francisco Bay.

John grew up in Richmond, graduated from El Cerrito High School and the University of California, Berkeley with a B.A. in Political Science and earned his law degree at U.C. Berkeley. He completed the Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. John practiced law until his election to the Board of Supervisors.

John's public service was inspired by his father, who was a popular civics and history teacher for 20 years at Kennedy High School in Richmond. He is the proud parent of Emilia and Christopher who attended local public schools.

John has successfully built coalitions to address issues such as affordable housing, homelessness, violence prevention, environmental justice, equity, immigrant rights, access to healthcare, air and water quality, San Francisco Bay restoration, and expanding opportunities for our youth.

John helped found the RYSE Center, an innovative and popular youth center in Richmond, which is grounded on principles of social justice and youth development. He is currently working with non-profit Urban Tilth to develop a community farm in North Richmond.

- John Gioia's biography above is from the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors website at <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/604/John-Gioia-Biography>

5. Call to Action – *Participate in Your Local Government!*

Supervisor John Gioia invites and joins the El Cerrito Democratic Club in encouraging Contra Costa County residents to be engaged in local governance by volunteering to serve on one of the County's advisory boards or commissions. A few of the many opportunities are listed below; many others are on the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors' website at <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/6408/Boards-and-Commissions-Database>.

Seeking Residents for County Advisory Boards

Government works best when there is strong and diverse community participation.

Public advisory boards, commissions and councils serve as excellent institutions for empowering resident involvement, training grounds for ascending leaders, and great opportunities for people wanting to serve.

I'm looking for you to join me in serving our County!

County Board openings: Information & applications for all boards [here](#).



Assessment Appeals Board – District 1 seat & District Alternate Seat. The Assessment Appeals Board is established to assess and equalize the valuation of the taxable property in the County for the purpose of taxation; and to perform all duties required by the State Board of Equalization and State law.

- Contact: Jami Morritt or (925) 655-2000

Countywide Bicycle Advisory Committee – District 1 Seat. Established to provide input to the County and the cities of the County on bicycle projects for Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds to construct bicycle/pedestrian projects and also provides advice to cities and the County on bicycle planning matters.

- Contact: Jerry Fahy or (925) 313-2276

Economic Opportunity Council – District 1 Public Sector. The Economic Opportunity Council makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on all program proposals and budgets related to Community Services Block Grant and the Weatherization program, and performs other functions as specified in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

- Contact: Mele Tupou or (925) 681-6311

Equal Employment Opportunity Council – The Advisory Council assists with the implementation of the County's Equal Employment Opportunities and Contracting Programs and serves as an advisory committee to the Board of Supervisors.

- Contact: Antoine Wilson or (925) 335-1455

Family & Children's Trust Committee – District 1 seat. The Family and Children's Trust Committee (FACT) was established in 1985 by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors to make funding recommendations on the allocation of specific funds for the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect and supportive services for families and children. Funding for FACT supported projects derived from federal and state program legislation, and donations to the County's Family and Children's Trust Fund.

- Contact: Laura Malone or (925) 608-4943

First 5 - Contra Costa Children and Families Commission – District 1 alternate. The commission works to support early childhood development through a strategic plan developed pursuant to the California Children and Families First Act of 1998.

- Contact: Ruth Fernandez or (925) 771-7316

Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council – The Council will advise the Board of Supervisors on the development and implementation of a multi-agency juvenile justice plan composed of several critical parts, including, but not limited to an assessment of existing law enforcement, probation, education, mental health, health, social services, drug and alcohol and youth services resources which specifically target at-risk juveniles, juvenile offenders, and their families

- Contact: Deborah Caldwell or (925) 313-4188

Mental Health Commission – District 1 seat. Review and assess the community's mental health needs, services, facilities, and special problems, in order to advise the Board of Supervisors concerning local mental health services and programs.

- Contact: Angela Beck or (925) 313-9553

Treasurer's Oversight Commission – Responsible for reviewing the County's investment policy, monitoring the performance of County investments, and reporting to the Board of Supervisors.

- Contact: Russell Watts and Ronda Boler or (925) 608-9588

Western Contra Costa Transit Authority (JPA) Board of Directors – San Pablo Member. The Western Contra Costa Transit Authority (WestCAT) owns, operates and maintains a public transit system in an effort to meet public transportation needs in Western Contra Costa County.

- Contact: Mica McFadden or (510) 724-3331

You can submit your application online [here](#), or you can fill out an application [here](#) and email the application to clerkoftheboard@cob.cccounty.us

– Spanish / Español –

¡Participa en tu gobierno local!

Buscando Residentes para Juntas Asesoras del Condado

El gobierno funciona mejor cuando hay una participación comunitaria fuerte y diversa.

Las juntas asesoras públicas, comisiones y consejos sirven como excelentes instituciones para potenciar la participación de los residentes, como campos de entrenamiento para líderes ascendentes y como grandes oportunidades para las personas que desean servir.

¡Estoy buscando que te unas a mí para servir a nuestro condado!

Vacantes en la Junta del Condado: información y solicitudes para todas las juntas [aquí](#).



Junta de Apelaciones de Evaluación – Asiento del Distrito 1 y Asiento Alterno del Distrito. La Junta de Apelaciones de Evaluación se establece para evaluar y igualar la valoración de la propiedad sujeta a impuestos en el condado con el fin de la tributación; y para realizar todos los deberes requeridos por la Junta de Igualación Estatal y la ley estatal.

- Contacto: Jami Morritt o (925) 655-2000

Comité Asesor de Bicicletas del Condado – Asiento del Distrito 1. Establecido para proporcionar información al Condado y a las ciudades del Condado sobre proyectos de bicicletas para fondos del Acta de Desarrollo de Transporte (TDA) para construir proyectos de bicicleta/peatón y también proporciona asesoramiento a las ciudades y al Condado sobre asuntos de planificación de bicicletas.

- Contacto: Jerry Fahy o (925) 313-2276

Consejo de Oportunidades Económicas – Sector Público del Distrito 1. El Consejo de Oportunidades Económicas hace recomendaciones a la Junta de Supervisores sobre todas las propuestas de programas y presupuestos relacionados con la Subvención en Bloque de Servicios Comunitarios y el programa de Acondicionamiento Climático, y realiza otras funciones según lo especificado en la Ley de Oportunidades Económicas de 1964.

- Contacto: Mele Tupou o (925) 681-6311

Comité de Confianza Familiar e Infantil – Asiento del Distrito 1. El Comité de Confianza Familiar e Infantil (FACT) fue establecido en 1985 por la Junta de Supervisores del Condado de Contra Costa para hacer recomendaciones de financiamiento sobre la asignación de fondos específicos para la prevención y tratamiento del abuso infantil y negligencia y servicios de apoyo para familias e hijos. El financiamiento para proyectos apoyados por FACT se deriva de la legislación federal y estatal de programas y donaciones al Fondo de Confianza Familiar e Infantil del Condado.

- Contacto: Laura Malone o (925) 608-4943

First 5 - Comisión de Niños y Familias de Contra Costa – Suplente del Distrito 1. La comisión trabaja para apoyar el desarrollo infantil temprano a través de un plan estratégico desarrollado de acuerdo con el Acta de Primeros Niños y Familias de Contra Costa de 1998.

- Contacto: Ruth Fernandez o (925) 771-7316

Consejo Coordinador de Justicia Juvenil – El Consejo asesorará a la Junta de Supervisores sobre el desarrollo e implementación de un plan de justicia juvenil multiagencial compuesto por varias partes críticas, que incluyen, entre otras, una evaluación de los recursos existentes de aplicación de la ley, libertad condicional, educación, salud mental, salud, servicios sociales, drogas y alcohol y servicios juveniles que específicamente se dirigen a jóvenes en riesgo, jóvenes infractores y sus familias.

- Contacto: Deborah Caldwell o (925) 313-4188

Comisión de Salud Mental – Asiento del Distrito 1. Para revisar y evaluar las necesidades de salud mental de la comunidad, los servicios, instalaciones y problemas especiales, con el fin de asesorar a la Junta de Supervisores sobre los servicios y programas de salud mental locales.

- Contacto: Angela Beck o (925) 313-9553

Comisión de Supervisión del Tesorero – Responsable de revisar la política de inversión del condado, monitorear el rendimiento de las inversiones del condado e informar a la Junta de Supervisores.

- Contacto: Russell Watts y Ronda Boler o (925) 608-9588

Junta Directiva de la Autoridad de Tránsito del Oeste de Contra Costa (JPA) – Miembro de San Pablo. La Autoridad de Tránsito del Oeste de Contra Costa (WestCAT) posee, opera y mantiene un sistema de tránsito público en un esfuerzo por satisfacer las necesidades de transporte público en el condado de West Contra Costa.

- Contacto: Mica McFadden o (510) 724-3331

Puedes enviar tu solicitud en línea [aquí](#). O puedes completar una solicitud [aquí](#) y enviarla por correo electrónico a clerkoftheboard@cob.cccounty.us



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Contra Costa County
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El Cerrito, CA 94530
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Email: John_Gioia@bos.cccounty.us
Website: contracosta.ca.gov/gioia

6. In Memoriam of Elizabeth (“Betty”) Brown (January 3, 1927 - January 12, 2024)

It is with a heavy heart and deep sadness that I share news of Elizabeth (“Betty”) Brown’s passing in January. Betty was a longtime member, strong supporter and dear friend of the El Cerrito Democratic Club.

One of the joys of being part of the ECDC are the amazing and wonderful people you meet – compassionate, loving, caring people steadfastly committed to social justice and building a better world. Betty absolutely exemplified these qualities. She was given ECDC’s Nancy Gans Award in recognition of her service to our community. It was an honor to get to know and work with Betty. She will be greatly missed.



The El Cerrito Democratic Club extends our deepest sympathy to Betty’s daughters Paula Brown-Williams and Janice Brown-Silveira, and to all of Betty’s friends and family.

The obituary below was shared by her daughter Paula.

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

Elizabeth “Betty” Brown died peacefully in her home on Friday, January 12, 2024. She was 97 years old. Betty was born on January 3, 1927 to her parents Kate and Henry Blake on the family homestead in Firesteel, South Dakota, land that Betty would later in life recognize as stolen from the Cheyenne River Sioux.

The family left South Dakota during the dust bowl era and relocated to Oregon, then moved to Richmond, California to find work in the shipyards during World War II. Betty attended Richmond High School where she began her lifelong activism for peace, and social and environmental justice. Throughout her life, she carried on the humanist traditions of her parents, who were founding members of the Richmond NAACP.

Betty met her husband Wallace Donald Brown while attending Richmond High. They would marry upon his return from WWII. Betty graduated from the University of California, San Francisco with a degree in nursing, which was followed by a year-long course of study in public health at the University of California, Berkeley.

Betty worked as a school nurse for the Richmond Unified School District (West Contra Costa County Unified School District) for 30 years, identifying children with special needs and referring them to specialists who could help them achieve success as school students.

Wally and Betty had two children and enjoyed the out-of-doors in a variety of forms including building cabins, hiking, camping, and traveling throughout the western U.S.

Following Wally's death in 1972, Betty redoubled her devotion to a variety of progressive causes including peace through diplomacy and the intertwined causes of environmental and social justice. She continued as the co-Chairperson of East Bay Peace Action through 2023, living out her desire to remain an activist all her life. She was also a passionate advocate for health care for all people.

Betty is survived by daughters Janice Brown-Silveira and her husband Mitchell of Reno, Nevada; Paula Brown-Williams, and her husband Theodore Williams of Bishop; grandchildren Erin and Nathan Brown-Silveira of Reno, Nevada; and numerous cousins and their children and grandchildren.

A celebration of Betty's life will be held later in the year. In lieu of flowers, those who would like to remember her may make contributions to [Peace Action](#), [Healthcare for All](#) or the [Sierra Club](#), or simply speak out for a more just and peaceful world.

7. Future Events – *Mark Your Calendar!*

El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meetings and Events

ECDC April General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, April 23rd

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link <http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

ECDC May General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, May 28th

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link <http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

ECDC June General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, June 25th

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

ECDC July General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, July 23rd

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

ECDC Candidates Forum – Time and Location TBD; Saturday, August 17th

ECDC August General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, August 27th

(4th Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link

<http://tinyurl.com/ECDCMonthlyMembershipMeeting>

ECDC Annual Dinner – 72nd Annual Dinner; Time and Location TBD; Saturday, October 12th

ECDC Holiday Party – Time and Location TBD; Friday, December 6th

Other Community Events

El Cerrito Earth Day Work Parties – 9:00 am - 12:00 noon, Saturday, April 20th; for more

information and to sign up for El Cerrito Earth Day celebrations and work parties,

please visit <https://www.el-cerrito.org/645/Earth-Day-Celebration>

Earth Day – Annually on April 22nd since 1970; first proposed

in 1969 at a UNESCO Conference in San Francisco as a day to

honor the Earth and promote peace; for resources and events

around the world, please visit <https://www.earthday.org/>

2024 General Election – Tuesday, November 5, 2024

Earth Day Fun Fact: Earlier in this newsletter I mentioned that Betty Brown had been a recipient of ECDC's Nancy Gans Award.

As a "newbie" who didn't know much about the award and its history, I did a bit of research. Among Nancy Gans' many accomplishments, she was the founder and longtime organizer of El Cerrito's Earth Day celebration.



- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

8. Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions

REMINDER! – ECDC memberships expired on September 30, 2023. If you have not already renewed for 2024, **now is the time to renew!**

You can do so online at: <https://ecdclub.org/join/>

Or by mailing a check to: ECDC Membership
PO Box 192
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Dues are \$5 for students, \$20 for individual members, and \$30 for two adults at the same address. The newsletter comes with membership and is delivered electronically by email. The added cost for a printed, hard-copy, postal mailed newsletter is \$18 (in addition to dues). Please make checks payable to “El Cerrito Democratic Club” and provide an email address for all individual members.

If you have questions, please email Neil Tsutsui at membership.ecdc@gmail.com.

Thank you!

- Neil Tsutsui, VP Membership

9. Call for Newsletter Submissions

The El Cerrito Democratic Club Newsletter is published eleven months a year (each month with the exception of a combined December-January issue) and in advance of the General Membership meetings. ECDC members, friends and supporters are invited to submit articles and announcements regarding local issues and events of interest. Submissions should be emailed to William Ktsanes at wktsanes@gmail.com for review and editing.

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

10. Link to the ECDC Website and Bylaws

Periodically the Club updates our Bylaws. The bylaws were changed in October 2018 to meet DPCCC requirements; revisions were proposed and adopted during the January 2021, August 2022 and March 2023 ECDC meetings. The ECDC Bylaws are posted on the ECDC website at <https://ecdclub.org/club-documents/>.