



El Cerrito Democratic Club

Newsletter – June 2022

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ECDC
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1. El Cerrito Democratic Club – General Information

(General Membership Meetings – 4th Tuesday of the Month)

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.

In light of health and safety concerns around COVID-19, meetings are currently held via Zoom, with the agenda and Zoom link (<http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>) published in each month’s newsletter. The Zoom link is the same each month. If you would like, you may download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to save the monthly ECDC Membership Meetings and Zoom link in your electronic calendar: [ECDC Monthly General Membership Meetings Calendar](#)

We recognize that there is a strong desire to return to “normal,” be in community and once again gather in person. While precaution discourages us from meeting in person, we encourage you to join the Zoom call a few minutes early to mix-and-mingle with fellow ECDC members. (See “Minutes from the May 24, 2022 General Membership Meeting” on page 4 of this newsletter for a recap of a last month’s discussion of meeting formats.)

The El Cerrito Democratic Club and its activities are supported by 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.

Officer elections for the El Cerrito Democratic Club occur annually and were last held during the ECDC General Membership Meeting on Tuesday, January 25th. Special thanks to our volunteer officers:

El Cerrito Democratic Club Officers (2022)

- President – Greg Lyman
- VP Programs – Carolyn Wysinger
- Executive Vice President–
Champagne Brown
- Past President – Janet Abelson
- VP Media – Madeline Kronenberg
- VP Membership – Neil Tsutsui
- VP Publications – William Ktsanes
- VP Records – Jonee Grassi
- 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. Tasks and projects arise throughout the year; help is always greatly appreciated.

For a list of upcoming volunteer opportunities, please see Greg Lyman's two articles "ECDC Thrives Because of Volunteers" and "El Cerrito's Fourth of July Celebration Returns – *Volunteers Needed!*" on pages 11-13.

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

2. Agenda and Zoom Link for the Tuesday, June 28th ECDC General Membership Meeting

Zoom Link to Join the ECDC Meeting: <http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87570578180?pwd=MWN0T2hVY0VXeEhubHN0aE9xZGpKUT09>)

Zoom Meeting ID: 875 7057 8180; Passcode: c5fQKR

Dial in by phone: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 408 638 0968

Meeting ID: 875 7057 8180; Phone Passcode: 468602

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

Agenda

6:20 pm – Assemble and Mingle

6:30 pm – Call to Order

6:35 pm – Approve Minutes from the April 2022 and May 2022 Meetings (**Action Items**)

6:39 pm – Officer Reports: Treasurer, Membership, Programs, Publications, Media, Records

6:45 pm – Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC) Report

6:50 pm – ECDC Diversity Committee Report

7:00 pm – Program: Tiffany Woods, CADEM LGBTQ Caucus Co-Chair

7:50 pm – Good of the Order

8:00 pm – Adjourn

- Greg Lyman, ECDC President

3. Minutes from the May 24, 2022 General Membership Meeting

6:20 pm – ECDC General Membership Meeting assembled and mingled.

6:31 pm – President Greg Lyman called the meeting to Order.

Present on Zoom: Attendees numbered ten at the start of the meeting. Recording of the meeting started.

Minutes

Review of the April 26, 2022 minutes was carried to the June agenda.

DPCCC Report

Champagne Brown reported that the DPCCC is working on changes to its bylaws regarding the endorsement process. The changes will need to be approved by the State Democratic Party. Categories like “no endorsement” and “no consensus” are being clarified.

Michael Nye reported on focusing campaign efforts for the primary in areas where Governor Newsom did well during the recall vote. According to Champagne, redistricting that has occurred since then makes relying on these areas difficult.

Discussion Regarding In-Person, Hybrid, and Virtual Meeting Formats

Greg Lyman reported on the logistical problems with having hybrid (combination of in-person and virtual) meetings. He is working with the City of El Cerrito regarding rates for renting Hana Gardens and having the technology to host hybrid meetings there. The Executive Committee suggests going to hybrid meetings in September. The club meetings will remain virtual until hybrid meetings can be done well.

October Annual Dinner

The possible dates for the ECDC annual dinner are October 1st, 8th, or 15th. It will be in person with virtual participation allowed for the speaker portion of the event. Possible locations are Noodle Fresh or Los Moles.

Diversity Committee

Y’anad Burrell will be setting a date for a meeting of the committee’s Book Club at a local coffee shop, possibly Well Grounded in El Cerrito. Several members expressed interest in attending.

Officer Reports

Treasurer: Ed Crowley (VP Treasurer) is travelling. Greg reported that Ed now has access to the bank accounts and is reviewing the books. The bank account balance is still approximately \$10,000.

Membership: Neil Tsutsui (VP Membership) reported a total of 131 members. June 14th is the deadline for joining ECDC to be able to vote for the endorsements. Anyone who joins after August 1 has membership through 2023.

Programs: Carolyn Wysinger (VP Programs) is absent due to illness. Greg reported that the June meeting will have a program of LGBTQ clubs and July will have the ballot endorsements. The August meeting for candidate endorsements will be on a Saturday.

Publications: William Ktsanes (VP Publications) was absent due to attendance at a City of El Cerrito Financial Advisory Board ("FAB") meeting.

Media: Madeline Kronenberg (VP Media) reported that Facebook is up and running. She is posting items pertaining to those candidates that ECDC has endorsed.

Records: Jonee Grassi (ECDC Secretary and VP Records) was present; had nothing new to report.

Program

Unfortunately, the planned program for the West Contra Costa School District was cancelled because the intended speakers, Superintendent Dr. Hurst and School Board Member Leslie Reckler, cancelled.

Maps for Distribution of Campaign Materials for June Primary

Greg thanked members who have helped distribute 2,500 door hangers, including Al Miller, Dwight and Gloria Merrill, Vanessa Warheit, Ed Crowley, Buddy Akacic, Rochelle Okimoto, and others. Greg is still walking and delivering the door hangers. More help is needed.

Call for Volunteers

El Cerrito Fourth of July "World One" Festival Booth:

Greg and Champagne will set up the booth around 8:30 am. Volunteers are needed from 10 am to 4 pm. Jonee and Buddy will staff the booth from 10 am to noon.

Ballot Measures:

Help is needed with OpaVote. Carl Mason has volunteered to be the “PDI person” to help define areas for door hanger distribution for the fall. Walkers are needed to distribute to 7,000 households.

Annual Dinner Coordinator: A coordinator is needed. Greg expressed appreciation for Gloria’s beautiful center pieces for past dinners.

In-person Meetings: An audio-visual person is needed for the in-person meetings.

Good of the Order

Neil Tsutsui has extra signs for Ben Therriault for Sheriff. There are extra signs at Janet Abelson’s house, too. Rita Xavier reported that many Becton signs in San Pablo have been destroyed. Cheryl Sudduth raised the issue of the recent mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas citing political will, the love of power and guns, which allow these events to continue to occur. Buddy Akacic and Jonee Grassi expressed agreement with Cheryl. Everyone was reminded to vote in the upcoming primary of June 7th.

7:20 pm – The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

- Jonee Grassi, VP Records

4. Minutes from the April 26, 2022 General Membership Meeting

6:20 pm – ECDC General Membership Meeting assembled and mingled; discussion was held about meetings being held in person or on Zoom. President Lyman agreed to put the issue on next month’s agenda.

6:40 pm – President Greg Lyman called the meeting to Order

Present on Zoom: Attendees numbered fifteen at the start of the meeting and a quorum was confirmed. Recording of the meeting started.

Minutes

March 22, 2022 General Membership Meeting Minutes presented; motion to approve presented by Neil Tsutsui; seconded by William Ktsanes; motion passed unanimously.

Officer Reports

Treasurer: Ed Crowley (VP Treasurer) has the ECDC financial records now. He requested an invoice from Greg Lyman for the 4th of July event for El Cerrito to which the club is donating funds.

Membership: Neil Tsutsui (VP Membership) reported the ECDC now has a total of 130 members.

Events: Carolyn Wysinger (VP Programs) announced that Superintendent of West Contra Costa Unified School District Dr. Hurst, who was unable to be our speaker tonight as planned, may be able to speak next month at the May 24th ECDC General Membership Meeting. Carolyn also suggested that we may need to focus on discussion of issues during primary season rather than have candidates do presentations.

Publications: William Ktsanes (VP Publications) apologized for not delivering paper copies of the April ECDC newsletter before the April membership meeting to the four households who receive hand-delivered rather than electronic copies. Due to the last-minute changes to the April agenda and newsletter, he was not able to deliver the four in time. He also encouraged ECDC members to submit articles regarding local issues and announcements of events for the monthly newsletter. Submissions can be emailed to William Ktsanes at wktsanes@gmail.com.

Secretary: Jonee Grassi (ECDC Secretary and VP Records) was present; had nothing new to report.

Democratic Party of Contra Costa County Report (DPCCC)

Michael Nye reported that the DPCCC has door hangers in English and Spanish ready for the primary. Kudos to Chuck Carpenter who is doing an excellent job getting those who were endorsed to help deliver the door hangers. DPCCC needs help from everyone to get the door hangers delivered, especially for the District Attorney and Sheriff's races. These two races will end with the primary in June because each race has only two contestants.

ECDC Diversity Committee Report

ECDC Diversity Committee: Jonee reported that she has not had any contact with Y'Anad Burrell, Chair of the Diversity Committee. Buddy Akacic reported that he is reading the Elijah Cummings book that was recommended for the committee. He looks forward to discussing it when Y'anad is back.

Good of the Order

Vanessa Warheit requested more information about volunteering for delivering door hangers. Vicki Gordon put the link in the Chat box to be used to sign up for delivering door hangers. Champagne Brown encouraged all to sign up as this work is essential. If one cannot do the deliveries, please consider donating money. William Ktsanes announced that Janet Abelson is better and will be returning home soon. Jonee invited all to a meet and greet house party for District Attorney Diana Becton on May 6th. Hari Lambda is working on California legislation for the ecosystem and misses our ECDC Environmental Committee.

Program

Endorsement Forum for County Supervisor (Action Item):

Greg presented the format of allowing each candidate a three-minute opening statement, followed by three questions which each candidate would have two minutes to answer, and then a two-minute closing statement. Carolyn Wysinger introduced John Gioia, current Supervisor, first, and then Candidate Hulan Barnett. Each candidate made his opening statement, followed by answering the questions presented, and a closing statement. The candidates were then placed in the Zoom “waiting room” while the club voted on endorsement. Eighteen members were present for the vote. The vote was thirteen for John Gioia and two for Hulan Barnett. The votes for Gioia exceed the 60% requirement for a club endorsement. John Gioia is endorsed by ECDC for County Supervisor.

Program

El Cerrito Climate Action Recommendations:

Neil Tsutsui, former chair of the El Cerrito Environmental Quality Committee (EQC), presented a slide show about climate change. In August 2019, the El Cerrito City Council passed a declaration of climate emergency and a guide of actions to be taken. The EQC developed recommendations for the control of greenhouse gas emissions for the City Council.

Many of these recommendations have to do with the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan: electric-only construction, onsite solar production, electric vehicle charging capacity, etc. He will put the specific details on the ECDC website. Currently Councilmembers Janet Abelson and Tessa Rudnick are on the climate change subcommittee. The issue of new construction using only electric power will be on the City Council agenda soon.

Volunteers Needed:

DPCCC – Farmer’s Markets and/or Literature Walking: Michael Nye discussed coverage for Congressional District 8; the DPCCC has signup sheets for CD10. Votes are critical for the primary and infrastructure needs to be built for the November elections. Greg reviewed the way ECDC has divided the area in the past using paper lists of addresses for each volunteer to cover. DPCCC is using an electronic “on the go” software program from Political Data Inc (PDI). The club has been given about 1,500 door hangers to deliver. Betty Brown volunteered to deliver these in her neighborhood. Vanessa Warheit, Buddy Akacic, and Jonee Grassi volunteered to help call other ECDC members to help distribute the door hangers.

8:35 pm – The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

- Jonee Grassi, VP Records

5. June Program – Tiffany Woods, CADEM LGBTQ Caucus Co-Chair

In recognition of Pride month, we are honored to host Tiffany Woods (pronouns she/her/hers) as our guest presenter for the Tuesday, June 28th ECDC General Membership Meeting. Tiffany currently serves as a member of the California Democratic Party (CDP) Executive Board and Co-Chair of the LGBTQ Caucus.

Tiffany is a wife, mother of three, trans woman, activist, and recognized LGBTQ+ leader. She is a California Democratic Party Delegate, having been appointed three times (for three terms) by US Representative Barbara Lee, and the first trans woman to be elected a California Democratic Party Caucus Chair. After serving as Secretary of the LGBT Caucus between 2017-2019, Tiffany was first elected as Co-Chair of the LGBTQ Caucus in 2019 and then re-elected in 2021. She is also an appointed member of the CDP Credentials Standing Committee. Additionally, in 2020 Tiffany was recognized by Speaker Pro-Tem Toni Atkins as one of eight Californians selected as a CA LGBTQ Legislative Caucus Pride Honoree.



As an At-Large Hillary Clinton Delegate to the Democratic National Convention (“DNC”) in 2016, Tiffany was one of the first three trans delegates from California to ever attend a DNC and a member of the historic first ever DNC Transgender Caucus. She is also an Emerge CA 2017 and Equality California Leadership Institute alumna.

Tiffany has worked in HIV Prevention and Trans Health for more than 20 years creating and implementing innovative, nationally and internationally recognized, inclusive health care programs for those who are transgender and/or gender nonbinary. She has trained medical providers and Police Academy recruits on trans identity and community relations. She has also provided technical assistance to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Central America Regional (CAR) office for their National Trans Health Service Strategy in Guatemala and Panama. She currently works at the California Department of Public Health’s Office of AIDS as the first State Transgender Health Manager and state Co-Chair for the California HIV Planning Group.

Tiffany is also an award-winning filmmaker and actress. She was the Associate Producer of and featured in the award-winning documentary “Trans Francisco,” which premiered at the prestigious Frameline International Film festival in 2010 and screened both domestically and internationally. She’s participated in the production of numerous other film projects as well, including as the casting director for eight feature films and two short films.

Please join us in welcoming Tiffany Woods as our guest presenter for the Tuesday, June 28th ECDC General Membership Meeting!

- Carolyn Wysinger, VP Programs and William Ktsanes, VP Publications

6. June is Pride Month – *The Parade is Back!*

With over 300 parade contingents and exhibitors, and more than twenty community-run stages and venues, the San Francisco Pride Celebration is the largest gathering of the LGBTQ+ community and allies in the nation.

The first events resembling the modern San Francisco Pride parade and celebration were held in June 1970.

Organized by the San Francisco Gay Liberation Front, a "Gay Liberation March" of about 20-30 people walked from Aquatic Park down Polk Street to the Civic Center on Saturday, June 27, 1970. The following Sunday afternoon approximately 200 people attended a "Christopher Street Liberation Day Gay-In" picnic in Golden Gate Park commemorating the



first anniversary of the Stonewall riots (where patrons fought back against a police raid on the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City) and protesting continued police harassment in San Francisco. The Golden Gate Park gathering was raided by San Francisco Police Department officers on horseback. Seven people were taken into custody but ultimately released without charges.

What we now know as the San Francisco Pride Festival was held annually on the last weekend in June from 1972 until 2019, with the name changing and attendance growing over the years. In 2019, an estimated 1.7 million people attended the festival and parade, which has evolved from a local act of resistance into an international celebration.

After a two-year COVID-necessitated hiatus in 2020 and 2021, San Francisco's world-renown Pride Parade is back! On Sunday, June 26th the parade will again flow down Market Street, beginning at 10:30 am on Steuart Street near the Embarcadero and wrapping up around 4:00 pm at 8th Street near the Civic Center.

*Special thanks to ECDC Board Member **Carolyn Wysinger** for all the social justice, advocacy and community work she does as SF Pride's Board President!*

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

7. ECDC Thrives Because of Volunteers

ECDC is run by volunteers. In addition to the Executive Board, we need volunteers for special activities. In years ending with an even number, those activities expand with endorsement activities. In addition to the endorsement tasks, we have other recurring activities that require volunteers, such as the City of El Cerrito's "WorldOne 4th of July Festival" at Cerrito Vista Park and our El Cerrito Democratic Club Annual Dinner in October.

Here are volunteer opportunities in 2022:

- Help at El Cerrito's "WorldOne 4th of July Festival": For a list of our July 4th volunteer opportunities, please see "El Cerrito Fourth of July Celebration Returns – *Volunteers Needed*" on the next page.
- Represent a Position on a Ballot Measure for the July Ballot Measure Endorsement Forum at 7 pm on July 26, 2022: Volunteers are needed to research the ballot arguments (pro and con) and provide a short (less than 3-minute) presentation on the "Yes" or "No" position of a ballot measure.
- Be an Election Official and Assist with OpaVote: A volunteer is needed to oversee the election and advise on matters regarding eligibility of members to vote, receive ballots, etc.

- Organize Endorsement Walks in September: A volunteer is needed to lead the walk effort, which involves working with the printer, getting walk lists or teaching walkers how to use the PDI On-The-Go program, counting and bundling literature, and coordinating walk volunteers.
- Endorsement Walkers: Volunteers are needed to walk El Cerrito and drop literature.
- Annual Dinner Coordinator: A volunteer is needed to coordinate the venue, caterer and audio-visual equipment.
- Set-up and Staff the Annual Dinner in October: Multiple volunteers are needed to set up tables and chairs (5-6 pm), set up the buffet table and decorate (5-6 pm), and clean up after the event (8-8:45 pm). *Many hands make light work!*
- Monthly General Membership Audio Visual Coordinator: Two volunteers are needed who can make most of the monthly ECDC General Membership Meetings, deliver and set up the audio-visual system, and connect it to the Wi-Fi system (6:15-8:30 pm on the fourth Tuesday of most months).

If you are interested in any of these tasks, please contact me at ECDC.Pres@gmail.com.

On behalf of the Board, I thank everyone who plans to volunteer.

- Greg Lyman, ECDC President

8. El Cerrito's Fourth of July Celebration Returns – *Volunteers Needed!*

On Monday, July 4th, the City of El Cerrito will celebrate the Declaration of Independence with music, food and fun. The El Cerrito Democratic Club will have a booth on Pomona Street at the City's "WorldOne 4th of July Festival" and needs your help!

We have volunteers to set up our booth in the morning and to remove it in the afternoon. We also have volunteers for the first shift. What we still need are volunteers to help staff the booth, hand out literature and recruit members for an hour or so between 11:30 am and 4:30 pm.

Any and all help is appreciated!



There will be shade, chairs and a table. All you need to bring is your beautiful smile and positive attitude. 😊

If you're able to help, please contact me, Greg Lyman, at ECDC.Pres@gmail.com.

Thank you!

- Greg Lyman, ECDC President

9. Future Events – *Mark Your Calendar!*

ECDC June General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, June 28th (4th Tuesday of the month); remote via Zoom link <http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

ECDC July General Membership Meeting – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, July 26th (4th Tuesday of the month); Ballot Measure Endorsement Forum; remote via Zoom link <http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

ECDC August General Membership Meeting – Tentatively planned for 6:30 pm, Tuesday, August 23rd (4th Tuesday of the month); remote via Zoom link <http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

(August General Membership Meeting is “tentative” as there will be an ECDC Run-Off and Local Elections Endorsement Forum on either Saturday, August 20th or Saturday, August 27th, with the exact date and scheduling still to be determined.)

ECDC Endorsement Forums

- **Ballot Measures** – Tuesday, July 26th; remote via Zoom link <http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>
- **Run-Off and Local Elections** – Tentatively planned for Saturday, August 20th or August 27th; exact date to be determined; remote via Zoom link <http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

City of El Cerrito's WorldOne 4th of July Festival – 11:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday, July 4th; Cerrito Vista Park, 950 Pomona Avenue, El Cerrito CA 94530; <http://www.el-cerrito.org/702/July-4th-Festival>

ECDC Annual Dinner – Tentatively planned for Saturday, October 1st, 8th or 15th; exact date to be determined

Election Day – Tuesday, November 8th; Run-Off Races, Local Elections and Ballot Initiatives

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

10. Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions

Welcome to our new members and thanks again to all those who have renewed their memberships.

You can join or, if you have not yet done so, renew online at <https://ecdclub.org/join/> or by mailing a check to:

ECDC Membership
PO Box 192
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Dues are just \$5 for students, \$20 for single members, and \$30 for two adults at the same address. 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, ECDC’s Vice President for Membership, at membership.ecdc@gmail.com.

Thank you!

- Neil Tsutsui, VP Membership

11. Call for Newsletter Submissions

The El Cerrito Democratic Club Newsletter is published monthly 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, ECDC’s Vice President for Publications, at wktsanes@gmail.com for review and editing.

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

12. 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 ECDC meeting. The ECDC Bylaws are posted on the ECDC website at <https://ecdclub.org/>.