



# El Cerrito Democratic Club

## Newsletter – June 2023

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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 in a hybrid format generally accessible both in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Ave, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remotely via Zoom. 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.

Due to schedule conflicts, our June monthly General Membership Meeting will be on Zoom only. We will meet virtually at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup>. We encourage you to join the Zoom call 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.

Officer elections for the El Cerrito Democratic Club occur annually and were last held during the General Membership Meeting in January. Special thanks to our volunteer officers:

### El Cerrito Democratic Club Officers (2023)

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| ● President – Champagne Brown                    | ● VP Membership – Neil Tsutsui       |
| ● Past President – Greg Lyman                    | ● VP Programs – <b><i>vacant</i></b> |
| ● Executive Vice President –<br>Carolyn Wysinger | ● VP Publications – William Ktsanes  |
| ● VP Media – Madeline Kronenberg                 | ● 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. **The ECDC Executive Board has an opening for a Vice President of Programs who will help arrange guest presentations for our monthly membership meetings.** Please reach out to Champagne Brown or Carolyn Wysinger if you’re interested in joining.

**We also need volunteers for tasks and projects that arise throughout the year, one of which is the City of El Cerrito’s “WorldOne 4th of July Festival.”**

*Help is always greatly appreciated!*

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

## 2. Information and Zoom Link for the General Membership Meeting on Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> – **Virtual Meeting Only (via Zoom)**

Our General Membership Meetings are generally held in a hybrid format, accessible both in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Ave, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and via Zoom.

However, due to scheduling conflicts, our June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting will be via Zoom only.



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

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87570578180?pwd=MWN0T2hVY0VXeEhubHNoaE9xZGpKUT09>)

Zoom Meeting ID: 875 7057 8180; Zoom 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.

### Agenda (Tentative)

6:20 pm – Assemble and Mingle

6:30 pm – Call to Order

6:35 pm – Approve Minutes from the May 2023 General Membership Meeting (**Action Item**)

6:38 pm – Officer Reports: Treasurer, Membership, Programs, Publications, Media, Records

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

6:50 pm – Program: “The American Way: Gun Violence in America.” Vanessa Smart, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America (20-Minute Presentation Followed by a 15-minute Q&A Session)

7:25 pm – Democratic Party of Contra Costa County Roosevelt Dinner on Thursday, August 24th – ECDC Budget Allocation and Sponsorship Proposals (**Action Items**)

7:28 pm – Call to Action: City of El Cerrito’s “WorldOne 4th of July Festival” (**Volunteers Needed**)  
Volunteer Shifts: 10 am-12 pm (Setup); 12-2 pm, 2-4 pm, 4-6 pm (Tear Down)

7:35 pm – Announcements (Please Limit Announcements to Two Minutes Each)

7:45 pm – Good of the Order

7:50 pm – Adjourn

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

- Champagne Brown, ECDC President

### 3. Minutes from the May 23<sup>rd</sup> ECDC General Membership Meeting

El Cerrito Democratic Club  
General Membership Meeting Minutes  
May 23, 2023  
Via Zoom and In-Person at Hana Gardens Senior Center

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President Brown called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Approval Minutes from the April 2023 Meeting** On the motion of Merrill and Second of Kronenberg, the minutes are unanimously approved with no nays nor abstentions.

#### **Nominations: Preconference Delegates**

Not finalized, but possible for ECDC to get seven delegates. Historically the club has been awarded five or six. President Brown would like nominations for up to seven people in the event that seven are awarded. Pre-conference is a way to have the club's voice heard for endorsement for congressional members, state assembly and senate members. Pre-conference is held in the Bay Area. Not sure if there is proxy voting. The dates are believed to be October 21 and 22. The June meeting will select the nominees.

#### **Nominations**

Gloria Merrill  
Dwight Merrill  
William Ktsanes

Paul Fadelli  
Leslie Reckler  
Madeline Kronenberg

Al Miller  
Greg Lyman

#### **Program: "Where Are We Going?" - Transportation after COVID**

##### **BART Director Rebecca Saltzman, District 3**

Transit is in crisis because of the Pandemic. Ridership has climbed back to 42% of pre-pandemic levels. Downtown San Francisco office occupancy mirrors BART ridership. San Francisco has some of the lowest return-to-office rates of any major metropolitan area. Huge deficit for BART. -\$350 million less since 2019. Three separate federal packages passed have helped to this point. However BART is different because it has very high fixed costs compared to other transit systems. 29% of costs are fixed. 35% semi-variable. Can't achieve the same savings by cutting service. In March 2025, federal funds will expire. The shortfall will rise to \$340 million. It is a big problem.

There is no other funding. Possibilities to solve fiscal issues could be:

One train an hour. Open stations later and close earlier. Shutting stations. End weekend service. Alter lines. Mass layoffs.

Fewer trains will result in:

Increased road congestion. Impact climate and equity goals.

One BART train moves 1500 people. Approx. five miles of traffic is eliminated with each train.

Looking to CA State assistance as all transit in the state is affected. Looking to a regional transportation measure. Still seeking federal assistance but not looking promising with the current divide in Washington.

### **Plans to Grow Ridership**

- Addressing staffing. There were a lot of vacancies caused by hiring freezes and early retirements to get a hold on costs early in the pandemic.
- Working on safety, homelessness, cleanliness, service.
- 20 minutes is the max you will wait for a train.
- Deploying ambassadors and crisis counselors to handle issues. Reassigning police to the inside of the trains.
- Replacing fare gates to limit fare evasion. Will finish up in 2024-2025
- 20% discount for qualifying incomes. Thinking of offering more 50% discounts

Del Norte Bart station remodel. Art, restrooms, well maintained, pigeon solution, Hawk comes 2-3 days a week.

El Cerrito Plaza station will be a big development.

Measure RR \$3.5B bond measure for reinvestment in infrastructure.

Install the BART Watch app on your phone. You can contact BART Police with issues.

### **AC Transit Director H. E. Christian (“Chris”) Peeples, At-Large**

- Mr. Peeples gives a brief history of Bay Area transportation.
- AC Transit’s revenue stream is diverse, but still needs federal funds to make up a gap in ridership. All federal funds will expire in FY 24-25
- AC Transit Demographic 65% low-income, 75% of color, 29% limited English proficiency, 27% riding/commuting to work. Riders during pandemic: 40% traveling an essential trip, 15% essential worker, 43% without access to a car.
- Fares are growing slowly, but are only back to 50% pre-pandemic. Many costs are fixed and substantial capital requirements are needed to be 100% zero emission by 2040.
- Proactively looking for funding through a “Financial Cliff Working Group,” Careful budget development, managing remaining federal funds, ongoing advocacy to find funding and more.
- Rail gets most funding through fares because it tends to carry higher income people.
- Transbay ridership went down, but most AC Transit ridership is local so they fared better, but the ridership is nowhere what it used to be.

- 2024 elections/propositions, etc. will be housing. Everyone has told the transit agencies to back off for the 2024 election. AC Transit is considering some kind of a regional measure in 2026.
- Bay Area Council/Silicon Valley Leadership Group (Mega chamber of commerce) suggested a minimal sales tax increase (\$.01) and came under heavy criticism.

AC Transit has workforce challenges, but is not alone. There are challenges across the country. These are well compensated, family-supporting union jobs with healthcare. Struggling to fill because they are jobs that require work with the public. Recent hiring fair made conditional offers to 120 people conditional offers. Would like to hire 200.

AC transit has been running zero emission buses for 20 years and is an innovator and leader in this work. Supposed to be a zero emission fleet by 2040. This may be difficult because buses have gone up 40% in price. Parts, labor, manufacturing, chips, etc. "Realigning the system" survey to figure out how people are moving and realigning the system/routes to new patterns.

### **Q&A Session**

Comments about recent observed behavior/safety/fare evasion/cleanliness/unhoused on BART

Funding measures

Thanks for the work. Very challenging right now.

Glazer and Borenstein: Why do they hate Bart?

Length of trains

Belief that state funding is the answer. All are encouraged to call local state and assembly members and the governor about future funding.

### **Call to Action: City of El Cerrito's "worldOne 4th of July Festival" (Volunteers Needed)**

There will be four shifts. President Brown will ask for names to staff those shifts in June.

### **Announcements**

No Announcements

### **Good of the Order**

The June 2023 meeting will be ZOOM ONLY.

There will be no meeting at Hana Gardens.

### **Adjourn**

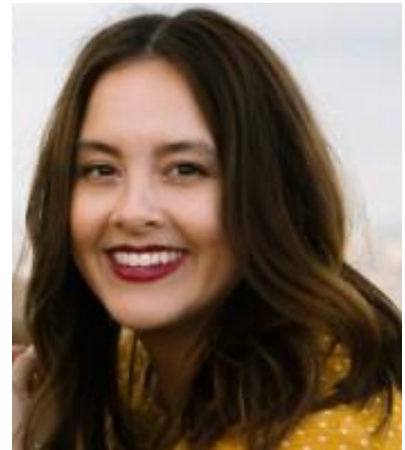
President Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

— Leslie Reckler, VP Records

#### **4. June Program: Vanessa Smart, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, “The American Way: Gun Violence in America”**

Due to scheduling conflicts, our June 27th El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meeting is via Zoom only and will not have an in-person component.

**MOMS  DEMAND ACTION FOR GUN SENSE IN AMERICA**



Please join us in welcoming Vanessa Smart from “Moms Demand Action” as our guest and program speaker at the June 27th El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meeting. Join us in recognizing June as National Gun Violence Awareness month.

Vanessa is a local parent, artist and activist living in Oakland. Born and raised in the Bay Area, she has a deep sense of community that has navigated her work in advocacy. She’s been a volunteer for Moms Demand Action For Gun Sense in America since 2018 and now leads the local East Bay chapter. Utilizing an extensive understanding of nonprofit management to facilitate meaningful social progress, Vanessa strives to connect engagement practices to meet equitable community needs.

- William Ktsanes, ECDC Vice President; and Champagne Brown, ECDC President

#### **5. 2023 Pre-Endorsement Conference Delegates Nominations**

Every two years (odd years), the El Cerrito Democratic Club participates in the California Democratic Party’s (CDP) Pre-Endorsement Conference. Hosted by a CDP Region(s), the Conference considers CDP endorsement recommendations for US House (CD), State Senate (SD), and State Assembly (AD) elections. ECDC participation ensures our voices are heard during the endorsement process for candidates.

The exact number will not be determined until July, however, based on our membership numbers, we expect the El Cerrito Democratic Club will be represented by five to seven delegates at the CDP Pre-Endorsement Conference. To ensure that we have full representation when the Pre-Endorsement Conference is held the weekend of October 21-22, in our May General Membership Meeting we nominated the following eight members to represent ECDC:

- Paul Fadelli
- Madeline Kronenberg
- William Ktsanes
- Greg Lyman
- Dwight Merill
- Gloria Merrill
- Al Miller
- Leslie Reckler

We originally expected to choose our ECDC delegates in June, however we've postponed the vote until our July 2023 General Membership Meeting. The California Democratic Party moved the deadline to submit delegates to September 1st to allow affiliate clubs time to "match" club members in their club registries. "Matching" ensures the club member names submitted match the information found in the Political Data Intelligence ("PDI") voter files and are registered as Democrats.

During the July General Membership Meeting, the ECDC members will be asked vote for a slate of Pre-Endorsement delegates, after which names will be forwarded to the CDP Regional Director.

- Champagne Brown, ECDC President; and William Ktsanes, VP Publications

## **6. El Cerrito OneWorld 4th of July Festival - Tuesday, July 4th**

*You're invited to join the ECDC and others in the El Cerrito community at the City of El Cerrito's OneWorld 4th of July Festival on Tuesday, July 4 from 11am-5pm at Cerrito Vista Park! (950 Pomona Avenue, El Cerrito)*

The El Cerrito Democratic Club will have a booth at the park. Please stop by to say "hello" and meet fellow Club members. Please, too, consider volunteering to help staff the ECDC booth and introduce the Club to festival attendees. With the 2024 elections approaching, volunteering at the 4th of July Festival is a great way to help bring visibility to our Club and the work we do, be engaged in the community, and meet new friends.

We are seeking at least two volunteers to help staff our ECDC booth during each of four shifts: 10 am-12 pm (set up), 12pm-2pm, 2 pm-4 pm, and 4 pm-6 pm (tear down). If you're able to volunteer, please let us know at the June General Membership Meeting or reach out to ECDC President Champagne Brown. *Your help is needed!*

The City of El Cerrito's Recreation Department hosted the first co-sponsored 4th of July Festival with WorldOne in 1998. Since then, the festival has grown into a world-class hometown institution featuring high quality musical performances, family entertainment such as rides and bounce houses, nonprofits and civic organization booths, vendors, and food booths and trucks offering a wide variety of cuisines.

After a two-year hiatus during the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Festival returned in summer 2022 thanks to the generous support of sponsors and individual donors.

**FREE!**  
July 3 & 4, 2023

City of El Cerrito Presents

CERRITO VISTA PARK,  
EL CERRITO, CA

25th **WorldOne** Festival

88.1 keCg 97.7

worldOneradio.org  
Volunteer online today!

**MON, JULY 3**  
5-7pm **U.S. ALL**

*Shake Your Beauty* worldOne~a~Go~Go!  
DJ WORLDONELOVE

**Tuesday, July 4** from 11am-5pm

*Musical Ensembles*

- RAYE ZARAGOZA~Vibrant Singer~Songwriter
- RAHITI~Te pehe e te ori no Polynesia
- RUSTY ZINN~Lovers Rock & Roots
- BULULÚ~ Sabor Tropical Latino

*Field Performers*

ROKAPELLAS + FLOETRIES

*DJs*

GREGG MCVICAR~ UNDERCURRENTS  
JOSÉ RUÍZ~ MUNDOMUZIK  
MC WORLDONELOVE

Festival Director Corey Mason - 510.243.5796 **worldOneradio.org**

worldOneradio+27+years daily+streaming via **TUNE IN** search "kecg" or "worldoneradio"

88.1 keCg 97.7: on-air since 1978, presents eclectic music, global talk, affiliate Native Voice One, UnderCurrents, Radio EdSoft Films, Youth Crew, Respect! More Public Radio.

front side design: MARIA-TINAVISION & CORAZON

Logos: City of El Cerrito, El Cerrito Public Library, MARIA-TINAVISION, SIERRA NEVADA

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

## 7. El Cerrito Democratic Club Monthly Programs

Below is a list of remaining programs tentatively scheduled for the El Cerrito Democratic Club's remaining 2023 monthly general membership meetings. Thank you to all our members who provided input and suggestions. *We have exciting months ahead with many interesting and informative programs planned!*

June: Gun Violence Awareness Month  
July: Affordable Housing in El Cerrito  
August: Development and the Proposed Library at the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station  
September: Business Roundtable (with discussion of an expected 2024 ballot measure sponsored by various Chambers of Commerce and corporations seeking to make it more difficult for California cities and school districts to pass bond measures)  
October: Annual ECDC Dinner  
November: Election Outlook (in advance of the March 2024 Primary)  
December: Annual ECDC Holiday Celebration

## 8. Future Events – *Mark Your Calendar!*

### *El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meetings and Events*

**ECDC June General Membership Meeting** – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup>

(4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month); **Zoom only with no in-person option this month**, via Zoom link <http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

**ECDC July General Membership Meeting** – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, July 25<sup>th</sup>

(4<sup>th</sup> 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://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

**ECDC August General Membership Meeting** – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>

(4<sup>th</sup> 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://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

**ECDC September General Membership Meeting** – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>

(4<sup>th</sup> 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://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

**ECDC Annual Dinner** – Date, time and guest speaker TBD; most likely October 14th or 21st with an in-person catered dinner at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and a non-dinner Zoom option for those unable to attend in-person but still wanting to hear the guest speaker’s presentation; no General Membership Meeting in October

**ECDC Holiday Party** – in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall); date and time TBD; no General Membership Meeting in December

### **Other Community Events**

**City of El Cerrito WorldOne 4th of July Festival** – 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup>; Cerrito Vista Park, 950 Pomona Avenue, El Cerrito; ECDC needs volunteers to help staff our booth over four shifts: 10 am-12 pm (set up); 12 pm-2pm; 2 pm-4 pm; and 4 pm-6 pm (tear down); ***Please consider volunteering!***

**Democratic Party of Contra Costa County Roosevelt Dinner Annual Fundraiser** – 6:00 pm, Thursday, August 24th; more details to come

**Contra Costa County Labor Council’s 25th Annual “Labor-to-Labor” Fundraising Dinner** – 5:30-8:30 pm, Friday, October 6th; St. Mary’s College, Chapel Lawn, Morago; tickets and registration through Eventbrite:  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/25th-annual-labor-to-labor-dinner-unionize-contra-co-sta-tickets-616124062657>

**California Democratic Party Region 3 Meetings** –  
Summer Pre-eBoard Meeting: 10 am-2 pm, Saturday, July 8th  
Fall Pre-Convention Meeting: 10 am-2 pm, Saturday, October 7th

**California Democratic Party Pre-Endorsement Conference** – Saturday and Sunday, October 21st-22nd

**California Democratic Party State Endorsing Convention, Northern California** – Friday-Sunday, November 17th-19th; Sacramento Convention Center

**2024 California Presidential Primary** – Tuesday, March 5, 2024

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications



## 9. Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions

Big thanks to all who have renewed their membership this year. If you have not yet done so, then your membership lapsed on December 31, 2022.

Now is a great time to renew online at: <https://ecdclub.org/join/>

Or by mailing a check to:

ECDC Membership  
PO Box 192  
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Please note that our new dues are \$5 for students, \$15 for individual members, and \$23 for two adults at the same address. The added cost for a printed hard-copy 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](mailto:membership.ecdc@gmail.com).

Thank you!

- Neil Tsutsui, VP Membership

## **10. 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 at [wktsanes@gmail.com](mailto:wktsanes@gmail.com) for review and editing.

## **11. 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/>.