

  
**THE CONNECTION**  
 of California

**WEST CONTRA COSTA BRANCH**

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN**

Advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy  
[westcontracosta-ca.aauw.net](http://westcontracosta-ca.aauw.net)

**VOLUME XXXIX**

**NEWSLETTER 4**

**APRIL-MAY 2023**

**MEET BRIANNA BANKS-MCLEAN,**  
**AAUW FUND SELECTED PROFESSIONS FELLOW**



**Saturday, April 15, 2023**

Christ Lutheran Church  
 780 Ashbury (at Stockton), El Cerrito  
 10:00 a.m. meeting gathering  
 10:30 a.m. Talk

**\*\*\*the wearing of masks is required\*\*\***

**Brianna Banks-McLean** is an AAUW Fund Selected Professions Fellow in the MA program at UC Berkeley's School of Architecture. She hopes to develop and implement new techniques in sustainable urban planning. Learn about future designs to improve our cities.

Hello! My name is **Brianna Banks-McLean** and I am a Sustainable Designer and graduate student working towards my Masters of Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley. My interest in sustainability and design began as a young adult. I had a grandfather who inspired me to think critically and inventively about the function and design of the structures we live in. I wanted to create spaces that were equally equitable and alluring. The intersections of sustainability within equitable design have influenced my aspirations towards finding the architectural design equilibrium that responds to and benefits the future state of its environment and inhabitants as equally as it does its present. I aspire towards a final architectural practice that generates an accepted social understanding as ethical architects to be intentional in our push to design beyond traditional design frameworks

**Gloria Merrill, Program Co-Chair**

<b>President</b> Roberta Montgomery (510) 237-5293 <a href="mailto:rjm2343@sbcglobal.net">rjm2343@sbcglobal.net</a>	<b>Co-Membership VPs</b> Mimi Fruehan 527-7178 <a href="mailto:mimifru@aol.com">mimifru@aol.com</a> Judy Sam 527-1661 <a href="mailto:jssam47@yahoo.com">jssam47@yahoo.com</a> Christine Hills 734-6505 <a href="mailto:chills627@gmail.com">chills627@gmail.com</a>	<b>Tech Trek Co-Chairs</b> Roberta Montgomery 237-5293 <a href="mailto:rjm2343@sbcglobal.net">rjm2343@sbcglobal.net</a> Marsha Weintraub, 644-0320 <a href="mailto:marsha.weintraub@gmail.com">marsha.weintraub@gmail.com</a>	<b>Co-Program VPs</b> Maria LaForge 527-4378 <a href="mailto:d.laforge@sbcglobal.net">d.laforge@sbcglobal.net</a> Gloria Merrill 527-2681 <a href="mailto:cudaviol@yahoo.com">cudaviol@yahoo.com</a>
<b>AAUW Fund VP</b> Barbara Vaughan 548-1942 <a href="mailto:barbvaughan@mac.com">barbvaughan@mac.com</a>	<b>Secretary</b> Marilynn Bracelin 223-4057 <a href="mailto:bracelins14@gmail.com">bracelins14@gmail.com</a>	<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	<b>Sunshine Chair</b> Sally Dunham, 758-4094 <a href="mailto:sallydunham1@gmail.com">sallydunham1@gmail.com</a>
<b>Hospitality Chair</b> Sally Dunham, 758-4094 <a href="mailto:sallydunham1@gmail.com">sallydunham1@gmail.com</a>	<b>Website Manager</b> Barbara Vaughan 548-1942 <a href="mailto:barbvaughan@mac.com">barbvaughan@mac.com</a>	<b>Treasurer</b> Christine Hills 734-6505 <a href="mailto:chills627@gmail.com">chills627@gmail.com</a> Roberta Montgomery <a href="mailto:rjm2343@sbcglobal.net">rjm2343@sbcglobal.net</a>	<b>Bylaws, Policies &amp; Procedures</b> Marilynn Bracelin, 223-4057 <a href="mailto:bracelins14@gmail.com">bracelins14@gmail.com</a>
<b>Community/Cultural Chair</b> Barbara Miller 526-4874 <a href="mailto:bmil@mac.com">bmil@mac.com</a>	<b>Contra Costa College Relations</b>	<b>Publicity Chair</b> Maria LaForge, 527-4378 <a href="mailto:d.laforge@sbcglobal.net">d.laforge@sbcglobal.net</a>	<b>Public Policy</b> Marianne Selph 526-6631 <a href="mailto:Mselp2@cs.com">Mselp2@cs.com</a>
<b>Newsletter Circulation</b>	<b>Read Aloud Chair</b> Judy Sam, 527-1661 <a href="mailto:jssam47@yahoo.com">jssam47@yahoo.com</a>	<b>Zoom Host</b> Christine Hills 734-6505 <a href="mailto:chills627@gmail.com">chills627@gmail.com</a>	<b>Facebook Monitor</b> Christine Hills 734-6505 <a href="mailto:chills627@gmail.com">chills627@gmail.com</a>



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Things are getting more normal. We continue to be cautious, evaluating options including speaker requirements and will have in person gatherings when it is safe to do so. Note that some meetings like the AAUW CA Annual Event and our Board meetings will remain via Zoom. The last Board meeting before the summer break is **Tuesday, May 23, at 2:00 pm**. All members are invited to attend.

**2022-2023 Programs:** We continue to have excellent Programs. On **Saturday, March 18**, on Zoom we had a lively Women's History Month discussion with Sisters in Crime authors Michelle Chouinard and Thena MacArthur. See write-up Page 3.

On **Saturday, April 15**, we had a very informative in-person meeting with AAUW FUND Selected Professions Fellow, Brianna Banks-McLean, who is in the MA program at UC Berkeley's School of Architecture hoping to develop and implement new techniques in sustainable urban planning. See write-up Page 1,

**Membership Annual Renewal:** Note it is time to pay your dues for next year (**July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024**). With the \$5 National dues increase, the dues for regular members is now \$108 (National \$72, State \$20, Branch \$16). Consider giving an extra contribution to Adopt-A-Fund. Our regular expenses far exceed our dues income. Thanks for last year's extra contributions. Without them, we would not have been able to continue our many worthwhile activities. Forms are on pages 5 and 6.

Looking for something to do? Check out Barbara Miller's **Spring and Summer 2023 Culture Corner**. See pages 8 to 12.

Thanks for your support. I enjoy working with such special women. Hope to see you Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, at our end-of-year luncheon (first one in three years)

**Roberta Montgomery, President**

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Our **2023 Tech Trek Program** was successful. Despite challenges which included a new online application, six girls were selected and will attend the Tech Trek residential camp at Sonoma State University, July 23-29. They are all from Korematsu. Of the 11 nominated students, these six completed the Camper Application which included writing an essay and were interviewed with their parents. We had three nominations from Mira Vista, but no responses. We contacted Steward, but didn't get any nominations. The girls will come to our September 16 meeting to talk about their camp experiences. There will also be a reception/orientation for them on June 17.

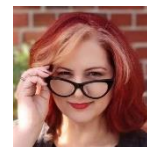
**Roberta Montgomery and Marsha Weintraub, Tech Trek Co-Coordiators**

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## ***COME MEET SISTERS IN CRIME MYSTERY WRITERS MICHELLE CHOUINARD AND THENA MACARTHUR***



**Virtual Meeting**  
**Saturday, March 18, 2023**  
**10:00 a.m. Zoom Check-in**  
**10:30 a.m. Discussion**



Join in the Women's History Month discussion with authors **Michelle Chouinard** and **Thena MacArthur**. Learn about them, their latest mysteries and their female lead characters.

**Michelle Chouinard** is author of the standalone psychological thriller "The Vacation". Her most recent release, "What They Saw", is the sixth book in the Detective Jo Fournier series. In addition to writing mysteries, she is a founding faculty member and Professor at UC Merced specializing in cognitive development.

**Thena MacArthur** is an author, artist and historian. Her work ventures into many areas including the Noir-Punk mystery "A Place of Fog and Murder". Her Volcano Lady series features Lettie Gantry, a mold-breaking Victorian female volcanologist, in adventures touched by Jules Verne. Her newest release, "The Skin Thief", embraces the paranormal.

For this virtual meeting, Christine will send all members with email addresses the Zoom invitation. Family and friends are welcome to attend. For them to get the Zoom invitation, they need to send an email to [aauw.wcc.94530@gmail.com](mailto:aauw.wcc.94530@gmail.com). The meeting opens at 10:00 a.m. so attendees can check-in (and informally chat) before the discussion begins at 10:30 a.m.

**Maria LaForge, Program Co-Chair**



**AAUW National Election - voting began on April 4th and ends on May 15th at 2 pm PT**

Each member sent email with ID and password.

- Candidates for the Board of Directors
- Bylaws Revision
- Public Policy Priorities Additions

**AAUW California Election - voting began on April 22nd and ends on May 13th at midnight PT**

Each member with an email address on file received an email on April 22nd with a link to their ballot.

- Public Policy Priorities

## **AAUW California ANNUAL EVENT**

**Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 9 to 4**

**CAN YOU FEEL THE EXCITEMENT? MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND THE ACADEMY AAUWARDS  
COMING ON APRIL 22nd ON YOUR ZOOM SCREEN!**

In addition to our two amazing keynote speakers, AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell and Puerto Rico's Secretary of the Department of Transportation and Public Works, Eileen M. Velez Vega, we will have presentations of awards. Come see who the winners are in categories such as Named Gift, BAY (Branch Activity of the Year) Award, Equity Champion, Speech Trek top three finalists and winner, Gov Trek team winner, and the Fund categories of Top Branch Contributions and Per Capita Contributions. There will be Red Carpet interviews, exciting videos, and glittering after-parties! It will be a festive time to celebrate AAUW branches in California!



## **ONLINE CALENDAR – MONTHLY EVENTS**

### **MARCH 2023:**

**Virtual Meeting:** using Zoom **Saturday, March 18, at 10:30 am.** Sisters in Crime authors Michelle Chouinard, who writes psychological thrillers, and Thena MacArthur, author of paranormal mystery and alternate history books. See write-up Page 3.

**Board Meeting:** using Zoom **Tuesday, March 28, at 2:00 pm.** All members are invited to attend.

### **APRIL 2023:**

**Meeting:** **Saturday, April 15, 10:00 am.** Speaker at 10:30 am will be AAUW FUND Selected Professions Fellow, Brianna Banks-McLean, who is in the MA program at UC Berkeley's School of Architecture. She hopes to develop and implement new techniques in sustainable urban planning. See write-up Page 1

**AAUW California Annual Event:** using Zoom **Saturday, April 22, from 9-4** (See Page 3)

**Board Meeting:** using Zoom **Tuesday, April 25, at 2:00 pm.** All members are invited to attend.

### **MAY 2023:**

**Luncheon:** **Saturday, May 20, 11:30 am** at Romano's Macaroni Grill - El Cerrito Plaza

**Board Meeting:** using Zoom **Tuesday, May 23, at 2:00 pm.** All members are invited to attend.

**\*\*\*\*\* SAVE THE DATE \*\*\*\*\***

**End-of-Year Luncheon**

**Saturday, May 20th, 2023, 11:30 am**

**Romano's Macaroni Grill - El Cerrito Plaza**

**\*\*\*\*\***

**\$**

## **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2023-2024**

**National dues has increased \$5 this year.**

Regular members: **\$108** (AAUW National **\$72\***, State \$20, Branch \$16);

DUAL members: **\$16** (Branch only)

50-year members pay **NO** dues

**\*Note \$69 of National Dues is tax deductible**

### **THANKS FOR THE CONTRIBUTION!**

Thanks to all members who made an extra contribution to supplement our Branch dues for 2022-2023. These contributions helped us meet our regular expenses (including meeting room rental, newsletter printing, insurance, post office box rental, and website support) that are not covered by our branch dues. **Note: contributions to operating expenses are NOT tax deductible.**

### **HOW TO PAY:**

Make your **check** payable to **AAUW WCC**, and mail it to: AAUW WCC, PO BOX 501, El Cerrito, CA 94530, with the form below. (You can also renew your membership **online** through the AAUW Community Hub (my.aauw.org). Note: Branch contributions cannot be made online.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street/Apt \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone/Home \_\_\_\_\_ /Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **I have CHANGES to personal information above.**

**All members with email addresses will receive the newsletter via email.**

☐ **Check here if you wish to receive a hard copy of the newsletter by US mail**

☐ **In addition to my dues, I am enclosing a contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to help us meet the expenses our annual dues no longer cover and further the good work of our Branch. Please see the list of "adopt-a-fund" choices to pick your favorite!**

### **ADOPT– A–FUND FUNDRAISER**

In lieu of holding a garage sale, which is time consuming and produces small rewards, the Board, decided again this year to ask the members to make a donation to their favorite Fund (Budget item). Feel free to donate to an Entire Fund or partial Fund or no Fund at all, as you are able. **The funds go to support Branch operating expenses, and these additional contributions are not tax deductible. Please note, if the budget item you select is over-subscribed, your donation will go to the Most-Needed bucket.**

<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Your Contribution</b>
Insurance Assessment – Required for all AAUW chapters	\$144	
Printing, Postage Labels – printing and mailing newsletters and chapter business	\$300	
Directory Printing	\$125	
Hospitality – Coffee, creamer, napkins, etc.	\$ 75	
Rental – Christ Lutheran Church monthly rental @ \$80	\$560	
PO Box Rental – 1 year	\$216	
Website fee paid yearly	\$120	
Speakers' Honorariums – monthly speakers' fees @ \$100 per speaker.	\$600	
Tech Trek Recruitment, Reception, Printing & Postage	\$300	
<b>Most Needed</b>		

## Science interest continues in 2022 Tech Trekker, Claire Connallon

In 2022, the WCC Branch sent three students to Tech Trek at Sonoma State University for one week of science-based activities. One was Korematsu seventh grader, Claire Connallon, who was nominated by her science teacher. She enjoyed her Tech Trek experience and reported on it at one of our 2022 meetings.

By chance, one of our members, Elaine Yamaguchi, met Claire again at the West Contra Costa Science Fair, held on February 14 at Pinole Valley High School. By volunteering as a judge, Elaine was assigned to several 6th and 8th graders' projects in the category of physical science. Claire's project, "EMF Readings from High Voltage Power Lines", was assigned to her, and Claire described the project, including hypothesis, data gathering, results and conclusions. This was the first in-person science fair since the pandemic, and big changes were noticed. First of all, gone were the triptych-like cardboard displays, and all the student entrants were present with their school-issued computers, so the judges were able to interview the students in person. Several judges talked to the same student, and the scores were averaged.

Claire won an award at this fair, just missing qualification for the Golden Gate STEM Fair. Claire's interest in science is moving forward, inch by inch.

## AAUW Member Data Verification and Oral History Project

We are excited to announce that AAUW has partnered with PCI (Publishing Concepts) to conduct a comprehensive member data verification project. **Please be aware that PCI will contact AAUW members directly through POSTCARDS and emails, addressed to you from me, Katrina Sun Breese (Senior Director of Institutional Advancement), to encourage participation.**

This project will allow you to make important revisions to your member record and ensure that you receive all the latest information crucial to your AAUW membership. In addition to verifying member data, PCI will also be asking AAUW members to participate in the Oral History Project. The project's goal is to collect stories from our members to memorialize the history of AAUW through the years. This is an opportunity for you to share your personal experiences with AAUW and how the organization helped shape your life.

**We want to assure you that participation in this project is purely voluntary and you are NOT obligated to purchase any products to share your story and be a part of the Oral History Project.** Choosing not to participate in the program will have no impact on your AAUW membership.

Emails from PCI will come from noreply@publishingconcepts.com and the phone number you may be asked to call is 1-855-454-0718. These communications are in partnership with AAUW for the purpose of this project. **If you receive any emails or postcards from PCI, please know that they are a legitimate part of our member data verification and oral history project.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at [connect@aauw.org](mailto:connect@aauw.org). For FAQs surrounding this project [please visit our website.](#)

**Katrina Sun Breese, AAUW Senior Director of Institutional Advancement**

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### MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY UPDATES

The Board decided that we would not print a new Directory. We will continue to use the **2019-2020 Directory with gold cover** that Ellen Mills and her husband Paul printed. Member information updates will be published in the Newsletter. I have extra copies of the 2019-2020 Directory. Let me know if you need one. **\*\*\*\*NOTE Meigan Dadzie has a new address and email. See below.**

All changes to date:

CORBIN, ROSEMARY **474 Western Drive, Richmond 94801, (510) 520-0404**

DADZIE, MEIGAN **PO Box 7273, Berkeley 94707, [greenledger@gmail.com](mailto:greenledger@gmail.com)**

PLAYER, PATRICIA **(707) 603-8518** (new landline phone number)

SOUTO-MARTINEZ, MARTHA (Marty) **[martysoutomartinez@gmail.com](mailto:martysoutomartinez@gmail.com)**

WALENTA, SUSAN (Art) **Sunrise Senior Living (510) 531-7190  
11889 Skyline Blvd, Apt 215  
Oakland, CA 94619**

WEINTRAUB, MARSHA **[marsha.weintraub@gmail.com](mailto:marsha.weintraub@gmail.com)** (email in the directory has an extra "e" at the end of her last name)

**Roberta Montgomery, President**

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## CULTURE CORNER SPRING AND SUMMER 2023

By Barbara Miller



*El Cerrito July 4th Celebration, Cerrito Vista Park, 2017*

**City of El Cerrito.** 10890 San Pablo Ave. 510-215-4300. <https://www.el-cerrito.org/> Some public events are again being held in person; others use Zoom. Tours of El Cerrito's LEED Platinum Certified Recycling Center are once again offered, at 3:00pm on the first Wednesday of each month.

Check the city calendar to see when committee meetings are being held: <https://www.el-cerrito.org/Calendar.aspx> For copies of the minutes, agendas, and other information about meetings of city boards and commissions, click here: <https://www.el-cerrito.org/698/Agendas-Minutes>

- Tuesday, July 4, 11:00am-5:00pm: **Fourth of July and World One Festival.** Cerrito Vista Park. <https://el-cerrito.org/702/July-4th-Festival>. Our famous local annual celebration of Independence Day includes a car show, games, food, live music, crafts, and a chance to learn about local non-profit and civic organizations. It is El Cerrito's largest event and draws people from all over the East Bay.
- Wednesdays, May 3, 10, and 17, 1:00-2:00pm: **3-Part Series on Dementia.** Presented by the Alzheimer's Association. Enter #155204 on this page of El Cerrito WebTrac Activities. <https://web2.myvscloud.com/wbwsc/caelcerritowt.wsc/splash.html?InterfaceParameter=WebTrac>
- Various Dates and Times: **Classes and Activities.** El Cerrito offers a wide variety of activities, as well as occasional trips. This website gives you access to information on senior activities: <https://el-cerrito.org/1324/Adult-Programs-Age-18>. Another useful website is listed below; click on "Adult & Senior" to find out what is offered and how to register. You will need a login. Registration begins on May 2. <https://web2.myvscloud.com/wbwsc/caelcerritowt.wsc/splash.html?InterfaceParameter=WebTrac>

These are a few of the activities offered:

- Tassajara Pottery Studio. Tassajara Park, 2575 Tassajara Ave. Make sculptures, hand-built pieces and wheel-thrown pots. Choose your class here: [www.el-cerrito.org/online/reg](http://www.el-cerrito.org/online/reg)
- Ikebana, Wednesday, May 17, 12:30-2:30pm. Learn the art of Japanese flower arranging in this class, held in the patio room of the El Cerrito Community Center.
- Online courses: El Cerrito offers courses in many arts and design categories, including interior design, digital photography, and the fundamentals of music theory. Find details here: <https://www.ed2go.com/elcerritocomsvc/SearchResults.aspx?CategoryId=1376%2c1377%2c1378%2c1380%2c1375&CurrPage=1>
- Writing and Editing Courses: El Cerrito also offers online courses to help you improve your writing or train for a job in editing, screenwriting, or technical writing. <https://www.ed2go.com/elcerritocomsvc/SearchResults.aspx?Sort=Relevance&MaxResultCount=10&CategoryId=1432>
- Trip. Tuesday, May 23, 10:00am-3:00pm. Presidio Tunnel Tops and Palace of Fine Arts. The trip leaves from the parking lot of the Contra Costa Civic Theater, across Moeser Lane from the Community Center. 951 Pomona Ave.
- Tuesdays, 7:00pm: **City Council Meeting.** Via Zoom. City council meetings are usually held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month and are open to the public. For instructions on streaming the meeting, submitting comments, and other information, go to: <https://el-cerrito.org/DocumentCenter/View/13983/Instructions-for-Public-Comments>.
- Various times: **Committee and Commission Meetings.** These meetings are open to the public. Unless otherwise stated, they meet in El Cerrito City Hall. Check the city calendar.
- Third Saturday of each month: **Compost Giveaway** for El Cerrito residents only, at the upper Cerrito Vista Park, on the Avis Drive side of the park near the tennis courts. All day.

**El Cerrito Art Association.** The ECAA is a non-profit organization, co-sponsored by the City of El Cerrito, that supports artists with its programs and activities. The membership meeting is open to the public and is held at 7pm on the second Monday of every month in the Garden room of the El Cerrito Community Center at 7007 Moeser Lane. Meeting topics are posted on the ECAA website about a week or so before the meetings. <https://elcerritoart.org/meeting-news/>

- Monday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-8:30pm: Membership Meeting—Watercolor Demo. David Savellano will demonstrate his watercolor techniques. David is an Alameda resident who prefers to paint outdoors. A few years ago, he won the Best Watercolor Artist award in Plein Air Salon's December/January competition. You can read about him and link to his works here: <https://davidsavellano.com/about>
- Anytime: Exhibits of local artists' work can always be seen at the Community Center (main hallway), the El Cerrito Library, and the DMV. Currently at the Community Center Lobby you can see Five Photos by Bill Helsel: Photographing Invisible Light, infrared photography. The current show at the DMV, on display through July 19, is by Robert Aramayo, Susan Beauchamp, Alan Krakauer and Joshua Wait.

**El Cerrito Historical Society.** This group works to preserve and record the city's history and make that information available to the public. Learn about El Cerrito's history from the collection of printed and electronic information available at the Dorothy and Sundar Shadi History Room in City Hall. Take a walking tour through El Cerrito's history along San Pablo Ave. using brochures available online (see below). Or go to the society's well-maintained and extensive website to learn about the aspects of El Cerrito's history that most interest you, such as a list of notable people who have come from El Cerrito or the story of El Cerrito's Tepco Ceramic Factory. The website also features a documentary about Sundar Shadi. <http://www.elcerritohistoricalsociety.org/index.html>

- Anytime. Print out a brochure to guide you on a historical walking tour of the commercial El Cerrito. <http://www.elcerritohistoricalsociety.org/ecprintfiles/walkingtourbrochure.pdf> For a map of the tour, click here: <http://www.elcerritohistoricalsociety.org/ecprintfiles/walkingtourmap.pdf>
- Anytime. Read the book *El Cerrito*, part of the *Images of America* series. You can borrow this book from the Contra Costa Library or purchase it at the website.
- Anytime. Read the El Cerrito Historic Content Statement draft online to learn about the fascinating history of our city. <http://www.elcerritohistoricalsociety.org/ecprintfiles/historicalcontext.pdf>
- Anytime. March was Women's History Month. This is a good time to check out the page on the history of women in El Cerrito, including the first female council member, Sally Rand, and her El Cerrito Night Club, as well as Violet Wong, an early El Cerrito entrepreneur and film star, at: <http://www.elcerritohistoricalsociety.org/womenshistoryelcerrito.html>

**El Cerrito Trail Trekkers.** The ECTT was formed to build, maintain, use, and publicize the little-known urban trails of El Cerrito. ECTT produces a map of the trails in El Cerrito that you can buy at Jenny K's or Pegasus books. Members get a copy for free. <http://www.ectrailtrekkers.org/>

- Saturday, May 6 and Sunday May 7: Hillside Festival. This yearly event in the Hillside Natural Area includes an insect hike, a bird walk, tree walk, history walk, medicinal plant walk, a senior stroll, and many other activities. At the festival, awards will be presented to the winners of the annual haiku contest, who will read their poems about experiences in the Hillside Natural Area. El Cerrito's poet laureate, Evelyn Mitchell, will read an original poem written for the festival. Click here for the full schedule: [https://www.ectrailtrekkers.org/uploads/1/4/2/8/142875193/hillside\\_festival\\_trifold\\_2023.pdf](https://www.ectrailtrekkers.org/uploads/1/4/2/8/142875193/hillside_festival_trifold_2023.pdf)
- Anytime: Discover Hidden Poems in El Cerrito. The El Cerrito Arts and Culture Commission has worked with the Trail Trekkers to hide 26 poems, along with short biographies of the poets, in containers all around El Cerrito. Our local version of geocaching. Go to the Trekkers website, click on PLACES along the top row and select "Geocaching in El Cerrito". There are three hikes, the first of which features California poets laureate, the second U.S. poets laureate, and the third local poets. The clues on the website for each poem's location are GPS coordinates, so you will need a way to locate these. When you find them read the poem and then sign and date the logs.
- Anytime: Rotary Signs Virtual Hike. Take a YouTube hike in the local parks and trails here: <https://www.ectrailtrekkers.org/virtual-hikes.html>

**El Cerrito and Kensington Libraries.** El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. (510) 526-7512.

Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., Kensington. (510) 524-3043. The libraries are now open Tuesday through Saturday. For hours and updates on COVID protocols and a list of upcoming online events, check their websites: <https://ccclib.org/locations/11/> and <https://ccclib.org/locations/13/>.

- **Tuesdays and Thursdays: One-on-One Tech Help.** Kensington Library. Times vary. Sign up for a one-on-one appointment with a Tech Docent at the Kensington Library to get help with the Contra Costa Library website, e-books, e-readers, Kanopy, and other electronic library sources.
- **Sunday, May 21, 10:00am-4:00pm. Friends of the Kensington Library Book Sale.**
- **Every day.** Our libraries offer the following services: <https://ccclib.org/digital-resources/>
  - **Kanopy.** Get free access to thousands of movies with your library card. You can stream these movies to your TV, your computer, or your mobile phone. <https://ccclib.kanopy.com/>
  - **Newspapers.** Using your library card, you can read entire newspapers online, including the *East Bay Times* and the *New York Times*.
  - **Genealogy.** Use *AncestryLibrary*, a genealogy database, to research your family tree.
  - **Research.** *Explora* offers the full text of high-quality research articles.

**NIAD Art Center.** 551 23rd Ave., Richmond. Open Monday-Friday, 10:00am-4:00pm and the first Saturday of each month from 1:00-4:00pm. 510-620-0290. <http://niadart.org> NIAD is a progressive art studio for adult artists with developmental disabilities. Listed here are a few of the current exhibitions. See what else is available at the NIAD website. Older exhibitions are still available for viewing online.

<https://niadartstore.org/collections>

- **Through May 20: A Clearing.** Main Gallery. Organized by Mel Priest. "Works in a clearing beckon, inviting you to enter. Each artist composes forms evolving from intuitive rather than predetermined thinking...Overlapping and unpredictable shapes and colors create conversations, inviting viewers to come closer, soften their gaze, release expectations." For a preview go to: [https://niadartstore.org/collections/a-clearing-organized-by-mel-press?mc\\_cid=40cdeb7821&mc\\_eid=6ce61b3921](https://niadartstore.org/collections/a-clearing-organized-by-mel-press?mc_cid=40cdeb7821&mc_eid=6ce61b3921)
- **Rotating Exhibitions:** At the Richmond mayor's office, 450 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond. Current collection: **What a Wonderful World** will be on view through April 30. It features works from several NIAD artists, "from Jeremy Burleson's rolled paper hanging objects that seem related to geodes or other mineral shapes to Halisi Noel-Johnson's patterned visions of flower forms and Saul Alegria's animal studies, the natural world." Check this website for future exhibitions: <https://www.mayoreduardo.com/art-in-the-mayor-s-office>
- **New Online Exhibition: Puzzles in Print.** Organized by Delilah Ponton. The uniqueness of the phrases makes the viewer think about the artists and what is important to them. See these art works here: <https://niadartstore.org/collections/puzzles-in-print>
- **Online Exhibitions:**
  - **Waking, Breathing, Making.** Organized by Laura Kamian McDermott. "This exhibit highlights the joy communicated by NIAD artists in their process of making and living creative lives. The works chosen for this exhibition celebrate our domestic lives and the natural world with bold uses of materials, color, and imagination." <https://niadartstore.org/collections/waking-breathing-making-organized-by-laura-kamian-mcdermott>
  - **Animal, Animal, Vegetable, Vegetable, Mineral, Mineral.** Organized by Nick Schutzenhofer. [https://niadartstore.org/collections/animal-animal-vegetable-mineral-mineral-organized-by-nick-schutzenhofer?mc\\_cid=36f26da5e4&mc\\_eid=6ce61b3921](https://niadartstore.org/collections/animal-animal-vegetable-mineral-mineral-organized-by-nick-schutzenhofer?mc_cid=36f26da5e4&mc_eid=6ce61b3921)

**Richmond Art Center.** 2540 Barrett Ave., Richmond. 510-620-6772. Gallery hours: Wednesday through Saturday from 10am to 4pm. The largest visual arts center in the East Bay. In addition to the exhibitions described below, the art center holds classes for all ages and sponsors a summer arts camp.

<https://richmondartcenter.org/>. Masks are required indoors; they may be removed in the courtyard.

- **Through May 13: 57<sup>th</sup> Annual WCCUSD Student Art Show.** Community Gallery. Art created by students in WCCUSD middle and high schools. <https://richmondartcenter.org/exhibitions/57th-annual-wccusd-student-art-show/>
- **Saturday, May 27, 12:00-1:30pm:** Photographer Ruth Morgan in conversation with Berkeley-based artist, curator and writer Robin Légère Henderson
- **Saturday, June 3, 2:00-4:00pm:** Closing Reception for current exhibitions.

▪ **Current Exhibitions.**

- Through June 3: South Gallery. ***Requiem: The Remains of the Day, August 4, 2021.*** “A series of evocative photographs that document the devastation of Greenville, CA after it was burnt down by the Dixie Wildfire on August 4, 2021... The exhibition and portfolios are a requiem to Greenville and a warning for us all to meet the challenge of climate change and ensuing global warming.”  
<https://richmondartcenter.org/exhibitions/requiem/>
- Through June 3: Main Gallery. ***Fencelines: A Collective Monument to Resilience.*** “a community-based participatory art project that invites local folks to reflect on the circumstances of environmental injustice in Richmond. This exhibition presents messages by individual community members responding to the refinery landscape in Richmond. Central to the *Fencelines* project is a public art installation along a city-owned fence bordering the Chevron refinery and the North Richmond residential neighborhood immediately downwind of it.”  
<https://richmondartcenter.org/exhibitions/fencelines/>
  - Saturday, April 29, 12:00-3:00pm: Courtyard. ***Spring Family Day: Clean Air in the Wind.*** “Spend your Saturday afternoon with us making art and celebrating the community-voices that demand Richmond residents’ right to clean air.” Features Art-making activities, UC Master Garden Sunflower Giveaway, Music, Caricatures, Healthy Snacks and Drinks and more.
  - Saturday, June 3, 12:00-1:30pm: Artist Talk. 2:00-4:00pm: Closing Reception.
- Through Saturday, June 3: West Gallery. ***Tanja Geis: Recompose.*** “In the first exhibition of The Greenhouse Series, *Recompose*, artist Tanja Geis displays mesmerizing cyanotypes of painted decomposing common murrelets, a bird species that experienced historic die-offs along local coasts in the summer of 2015 as a direct result of global warming.”
  - Thursday, May 11, 5:30-6:30pm: Gallery Walkthrough. Walk through the exhibition with the artist. Then see Jed Lee’s *The Greenway* at 6:30, followed by a Q&A with the filmmaker. Both of these events are part of “*The Greenhouse*”, an exhibition and speaker series focused on the climate crisis and environmental justice movements in Richmond, CA.
- Through June 19, 2023: West Gallery Entrance. ***Who Decides? S.P.O.T.S. The Game.*** An interactive mural that asks guests to play. Players choose from 10 different characters and follow prompts. The game was devised by students in the SPOTS youth public arts program as a way to present contemporary issues, such as war, education, and choice. SPOTS is an acronym for Supporting Peoples Outlooks, Talents and Speech. For more information, see the description at: <https://richmondartcenter.org/exhibitions/spots-the-game/>

**Cerrito Theater (Rialto Cinemas).** 10070 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito. 510-273-9102. El Cerrito’s own restored art deco movie theater. Food and drink are available before and during movies: wine, beer, pizza, burgers, hot dogs, salads, nachos, etc. Masks are strongly recommended but are not required in all lobby and auditorium areas. To see a list of current and upcoming offerings, visit: <https://rialtocinemas.com/cerrito/>

- **Free Movies!** The Cerrito Theater is offering some movies this spring and summer at no cost. One monthly kid-friendly movie and one monthly classic. The family matinees will be offered on Saturdays and Sundays at 10:00am; the classics on Thursdays at 1:00pm. Check the website under “Coming Soon” to learn what free movies will be available later in the summer. The only time to get tickets is at the box office the Friday before the screening.
  - May 6-7: *The Never-Ending Story* (family). Tickets available on May 5.
  - May 11: *To Catch a Thief* (classic). Tickets available on May 5.
  - June 3-4: *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* (family). Tickets available on June 2.
  - June 8: *Victor/Victoria* (classic). Tickets available on June 2.
  - July 1-2: *Race for Your Life, Charlie Brown* (family). Tickets available on June 30.
- **National Theatre Live.** London plays filmed during a live performance. You can purchase tickets here: <https://www.tix.com/ticket-sales/rialtocinemascerrito/2629>
  - Mon, May 1 and Wed, May 10 at 7:00pm; Wed, May 17 at 1:00pm: *Othello* by William Shakespeare. Directed by Clint Dyer.
  - Mon, June 5 and Wed, June 14 at 7:00pm; Wed, June 21 at 1:00pm: *Best of Enemies* by James Graham, directed by Jeremy Herrin. Two famous 20th century political commentators, neoconservative William F. Buckley Jr., founder of the *National Review*, and Gore Vidal, leftist essayist and novelist, debate the moral landscape of 1960s America. Starring David Harewood and Zachary Quinto. This play won the British Critics’ Circle Theatre Award for Best New Play in 2022.
  - Mon, July 17 and Mon, July 26 at 7:00pm; Wed, Aug 2 at 1:00pm: *Good* by C. P. Taylor, directed by

Dominic Cooke. "An examination of how a 'good' man is corrupted," starring David Tennant.

- **Cerrito Classics.** The classics will take a new form this year. Instead of one classic a month, you will be able to see any of six classic movies that will be shown over the course of a week. When the schedule for the next classic week is available, it will be published at this website: <https://rialtocinemas.com/coming-soon-cer/cerrito-classics-cer/>

**Youth Musical Theater Company.** This company provides an opportunity for young artists in the area (7<sup>th</sup> grade through university) to produce musicals for an audience; it also holds workshops for artists in 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. All shows are accompanied by a live orchestra. Directors, designers, choreographers, etc. are professionals, and the quality of the work is high. This summer's show can be seen at El Cerrito High School Performing Arts Theater. <https://ymtcbayarea.org/>

- **July 14-23: *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.** Music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, book by Peter Parnell, directed by Jennifer Boesing. Based on the novel by Victor Hugo and the Disney film of the same name. "*Hunchback*...is a haunting story of isolation, racism, belonging, and the true nature of faith."

**Kensington Symphony Orchestra.** All concerts are held at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Road, Kensington. <https://www.kensingtonsymphonyorchestra.org/>

- **Saturday, June 10, 7:30pm: *Intimate Connections & Grand Finale*.** Pieces include: *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage Overture Op. 27* by Felix Mendelssohn; *Concerto for Viola & Clarinet Op 88 in E minor* by Max Bruch; *Enigma Variations Op. 36* by Sir Edward Elgar.

**West County Winds.** Hilltop Community Church, 3118 Shane Drive, Richmond, CA. West County Winds is a non-profit wind ensemble that performs music in a variety of styles from classical to pop. Concerts are free. WCW requests that all audience members be up to date on vaccines and wear masks.

<https://www.westcountywinds.org/concerts>

- **Sunday, May 7, 3:00pm:** To be announced. The previous show was "WCW Goes to the American Musical Theater."

**Bay Area Book Festival.** Saturday, May 6, 7:30pm at Freight and Salvage, 2020 Addison Street, Berkeley.

***An Evening with Joan Baez.*** General admission: \$15.00. Part of the Bay Area Book Festival, May 6 and 7 in downtown Berkeley. We don't generally include events in Berkeley in the culture corner—there are too many—but this is a very special event that I thought many of you might be interested in. It is probably sold out, but not too late to get on the waiting list. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/an-evening-with-joan-baez-trailblazing-musician-artist-and-activist-tickets-591847310237?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>