

Sparks January 2022

Tour El Cerrito's Greatest Historic Neighborhoods at the society's annual meeting – via Zoom. From bungalow clusters to charming Storybook villages, from streets filled with grand Tudors and Spanish Colonial homes to mid-century modern tracts, our city boasts some of the best-looking, well-preserved residential districts in the East Bay.



The neighborhood around Poinsett Park in El Cerrito includes a small but lovely subdivision of Storybook homes, including this gem, complete with a turret and even battlements to fight off invaders armed with long swords and battering rams. Photo by Dave Weinstein

Dave Weinstein leads a virtual tour through some of these neighborhoods, providing history, architectural context, and even some local lore. Will your house be on the tour?

This is the El Cerrito Historical Society's annual meeting. We will discuss our achievements in 2021 and our goals for 2022, followed by a public discussion and questions, then election for officers. The business meeting will take about 15 minutes.

The meeting will be held in remembrance of Chris Treadway.

Sunday, January 30, 2022. Business meeting, 5:45 p.m. Program, 6 p.m. to roughly 7 p.m., which will include time for questions.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81668871229?pwd=dUhRL1NHcGtQZWFsVS8yZjRVMktodz09>

Meeting ID: 816 6887 1229

Passcode: 438908

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,81668871229#,,,*438908# US (San Jose)

The society presents a slate of officers. At the moment of this writing, this is the slate of officers we will put forward for a vote by our members. We hope to add to this slate. Note that the position of vice president lacks a candidate.

Dave Weinstein, president
Vice president: open
Dianne Brenner, secretary
Pat Shaw, treasurer,
John Falconer, member at large, website
Tom Panas, member at large
Pat Durham, member at large

Anyone interested in considering service on the board please contact Dave Weinstein, davidsweinstein@yahoo.com.



Chris Treadway when he was a young reporter. Courtesy of Diana Treadway

We all remember Chris Treadway. The society's vice president [Chris Treadway](#) passed away of pancreatic cancer on November 11 at age 66. One of the most accomplished local historians we have ever met, Chris was an incredible asset to the city of El Cerrito.

As a journalist for more than three decades, he covered local news with true depth and commitment to the community. So many local people and local organizations benefited from his caring coverage.

As a historian Chris ran a popular Facebook page about local history, handled the society's Facebook page, and did in-depth research into many aspects of El Cerrito and East Bay history. Chris also edited our publication The Forge. Whenever there was a question about local history, Chris was a person to turn to.

Left incomplete at his death was a book he has been working on for several years about the history of gambling, night life and vice in El Cerrito, and about the successful efforts to clean up the town. The society is committed to seeing this work completed and published, and will work with Chris's widow, Diana, on this project.

El Cerrito's 33rd Annual Martin Luther King Day Celebration is Monday, January 17. Please join this event, which is produced by the El Cerrito branch of the NAACP and St. Peter C.M.E. Church. Drive your car to the Del Norte BART Station starting at 9 a.m. The Car Parade gets underway at 10 a.m., ending at the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station. A program and festivities will follow at 11. The historic society will take part in the parade.

Organizer Pat Durham, who is also a board member of the historical society, discussed the history of the celebration as part of a [panel and documentary film](#), at a society program in 2020. This is one of the longest running such events in the Bay Area. For information on the event, call Pat: 510-234-2518.



Back in 1968 Pastime consisted of a hardware store to the south and a smaller Pastime club to the north. Notice the neon martini sign for the club. Both buildings still exist, but they were hidden two years later when a Berkeley architect combined several existing buildings into the Pastime store we know today, adding a new front. Courtesy of David Pryde/Pastime

Pastime Hardware profiled in the Chamber of Commerce Byline. The historical society contributed a history of one of the city's oldest and certainly most admired businesses, Pastime, to the Chamber's [January newsletter](#). We thank David Pryde, the store's CEO and a member of the second of three generations of Prydes to operate the store, for taking part in an extended interview, and for contributing photos and other materials to the society.

A longer version of the David Pryde interview will run in an upcoming edition of the society's print publication, *The Forge*.

Please attend board meetings of the Historical Society. The board meets on the second Thursday of each month. Meetings last up to 90 minutes, often less. These days they are via Zoom. Soon we will return to live meetings. Members are welcome to attend; so are people from the general public. Find out what we are up to; make a suggestion or two; consider if you would like to become more involved. Contact our president for more information or to get an agenda, davidsweinstein@yahoo.com.

Help us document and reserve the city's history by becoming a member of the El Cerrito Historical Society.
Membership, a bargain at \$30 a year, is open to everyone and includes this newsletter, our email updates and meeting notices. More importantly, it assists our mission to locate, preserve and educate people about local history. A membership form is online under "How you can help" at www.elcerritohistoricalsociety.org . We also offer memberships at the sponsor level for \$75 and life memberships for \$400. We accept donations of any amount.

Please note that we have increased membership rates modestly, for the first time in many years.

The El Cerrito Historical Society produces two publications, the Forge, which is a print publication, which we aim to produce four times a year, and Sparks (from the Anvil), an email publication which we aim to produce monthly. Both hark back to one of El Cerrito's original settlers, William Rust, a blacksmith who worked at his anvil producing, among other things, sparks.

