



EL CERRITO HIGH SCHOOL ARCHIVING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

March 2021 Volume LXIV

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President's Message

Dear El Cerrito High Alumni and Friends,

We are marking one full year of an historic event. It has been a time that none of us could have imagined a few years ago. I hope each of you has come this far to realize the value of family, friends and your health.

Students everywhere have learned how important school, friends and teachers are in their lives. Teachers have been amazing. They switched to on-line learning overnight, overcoming many challenges in the process. Our highest praise and admiration go to the ECHS staff for their outstanding work in adjusting to the many issues that go with on-line learning.

The ECHS Archiving Project group is still hoping to hear from alumni, teachers and parents who have a special spot in their hearts for El Cerrito High and would like to join our group. It's fun, and new ideas and input are always welcome.

Call or email me – (510) 232-9149 or j_fonken@hotmail.com
Please stay safe and healthy,

Jackie Fleming Fonken “56”
President, ECHS Archiving Project

Notes from ECHS Pandemic Students

Logan, Wyatt and Dylan are students at El Cerrito High School. They have been learning virtually (remotely, on-line) for over a year.

The Archiving Project wanted to know from current ECHS students' perspectives what it was REALLY like to be learning virtually. They were asked to be honest with their answers.

School Life During Quarantine

At the beginning of my junior year, I could never have guessed that I was going to finish

it online. On March 13, 2020, my distance learning experience began. Many teachers had technology issues at the start and, as students, it was hard to transition to an environment in which you didn't have a partner sitting next to you to interact with. It wouldn't be until I started AP Calculus my senior year that I began to get used to distance learning. Mr. Pang, my calculus teacher, started hosting nightly zoom meetings in which students could study with one another in breakout rooms. It was these study sessions that allowed me to maintain a social life with my peers. Although I miss seeing them in person, I have gotten quite used to studying with my friends on zoom.

Most school-affiliated sports are happening. However, club sports have been forced to find practice space elsewhere. I play Ultimate Frisbee, which is a club sport, and we haven't been able to play or practice for over a year. Unfortunately, senior activities are not happening due to safety issues.

I think schools should start up again when every teacher and staff member has been vaccinated and when there are procedures in place requiring frequent hand washing and sanitizing. Once schools have set up these stations and teachers and staff members feel safe enough, students should be able to attend school in person with masks.

I have had difficulty learning math online, but have managed to maintain good grades overall. I haven't faced too many challenges because I have been able to adjust my study habits and discipline to meet the needs of my classes and account for the help I would receive from my peers if we were physically in school. Numerous times, however, my internet has gone out during a zoom class and even during a test. My teachers are very understanding so it hasn't become an unresolved issue for me but I'm sure others have experienced the same thing more frequently than I have.

For me, to be a Gaucho during the COVID-19 pandemic means being able to persevere through unfortunate circumstances and maintain the mindset of an independent and disciplined learner.

Wyatt Dew 2021

It's hard. I have to say. I am lucky to be in a stable household but regardless I think that things like motivation are escaping. I miss my friends. I miss people. At least the teachers are trying.

Logan Shrem-Fischer
Year 2024

Hello my name is Dylan Richardson, class of 2022, and like many others I have been learning virtually for close to one year now. The whole process has been pretty rough especially at the beginning however it is starting to look better. From the start, I knew it would be harder to learn online rather than in person and the first semester only made that clearer for me. There were zooms, or online lectures, maybe once a week, if that and for the majority of the time we were simply doing worksheets. Myself and many others felt that we were barely learning anything at all this way, for the most part it was simply busy work so we could get a grade. It continued like this until summer break in June.

When coming back in the Fall I was expecting something similar to the previous semester, however I was pleasantly surprised by how the new semester was looking. We had zooms every day and for the most part it felt better; however, it was not without its faults. When learning online it takes much more time and effort to fully absorb information, this normally would be ok, taking more time to learn something, but this is a school, and we have a curriculum to meet. Often, we would find ourselves needing to rush through subjects, not being given enough time to understand and process them.

As we all know school isn't entirely a place for learning but also a place for being social. This aspect was taken from not only students but the world as a whole during the pandemic. For us here at ECHS there has not been much effort made for us to feel connected, for most classes the only person with their cameras on is the teacher and few people will speak. This makes the class much harder to enjoy as I can remember some of my favorite class being my favorites because I was surrounded by friends. Similarly, school sports teams and clubs have for the most part been canceled. I personally played on the varsity tennis team, about mid-way through our season we got shut down and understandably so. We would occasionally be able to go back and start practice again but as the covid numbers go up we continue to shut down.

Online school has been a significant obstacle, but even then, things do seem to be getting better. In the current semester the teachers are beginning to get used to an online environment, making interesting and engaging assignments for us. It appears the teachers are getting a good grip of how to navigate virtual learning. Also, us students have started adapting and it is getting easier to learn from online lectures and work.

Dylan Richardson 2021

CURRENT REUNION INFORMATION

ECHS Alumni Website

Updated 3/15/21

People who went to El Cerrito <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2224192800/?ref=bookmarks>

The 70's

- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/119897442221977/>

Class of 1973, 1974, 1975,

- Someone is thinking about it. More information to follow...dialogue in the facebook pages above.

Class of 1993 Click here for more information

Class of 1970-50 Year Reunion--Corona Virus upate. Class of 1971 and 1970 Combo...50 year Reunion

- Save the Date – October 16, 2021
- Due to an issue at Richmond Country Club, the committee has moved the Reunion to the Turf Club at Golden Gate Fields in Berkeley on October 16, 2021. (originally 10/2, now changed)
- Come and renew old friendships and share memories as El Cerrito High School Classes of 1970 and 1971 combine to celebrate our 50th reunions. We will get together to eat, drink and dance the night away at the Turf Club at Golden Gates Fields in Berkeley on Saturday, October 16, 2021 from 5 to 11 pm.
- Please reserve your spot as early as possible by completing the registration form which will be emailed to you shortly.
- We need your help in finding classmates! If you are still in touch with any classmates, please send or have them send their contact info to Donna Marsicano at 71ech50reunion@gmail.com, as soon as possible. Since the majority of contact will be made via email, email addresses are needed so the flyer can be sent and any updates be shared.
- This will be our best reunion ever, but it won't be the same if you aren't there.
- Please let me know that you received this email. This will be our main form of communication to you about the reunion.
- Look forward to seeing you October 16, 2021!
- Go Gauchos !!
 - Class of '71 Reunion Committee
 - Donna Marsicano - 71ech50reunion@gmail.com
 - Gene Staus - 510-526-3192 - ech51971@sbcglobal.net
 - Janet (Morrison) Damm
 - Julius Chiang
- Class of 1970 Contact : Charlene Slemmons grandmchar2008@hotmail.com

Class of 1981

- Something is happening <https://www.facebook.com/groups/3021936597828867/>

