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News

Patch Picks: 5 Local Non-Profits Making a Difference

Every week we pull together five of our favorite picks based on a theme of the week.

By [Kyrsten Bean](#) | [Email the author](#) | February 19, 2011

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This week's theme for Patch Picks is "5 Great non-profits making a difference." There are too many notable local non-profits to do justice to in this list of five, but some we find worthy of appreciation include:

- [El Cerrito High School Archiving Project](#). This project collects, preserves and celebrates the history of El Cerrito High School as well as develops connections to current students and the El Cerrito community. All historical displays throughout the high school and the high school's museum are sponsored by the El Cerrito High School Archiving committee. The museum is believed to be the only high school history museum located inside a currently operating high school in the nation.
- [The Arhoolie Foundation](#). The El Cerrito-based [Arhoolie Foundation](#) is a non-profit affiliated with the 50-year-old [Arhoolie Records](#) and Arhoolie guiding light [Chris Strachwitz](#). Created in 1995, the foundation's mission is to "document, preserve and disseminate traditional and regional vernacular music." It works with Arhoolie Records to preserve traditional music so that it is not destroyed by mass popular culture. One project includes maintaining and preserving the large Strachwitz Frontera collection of Mexican-American Archives and Vernacular. The organization also acquires artifacts and donations of artifacts related to the mission of preserving such contributions.
- [Friends of the El Cerrito Library](#). Many of El Cerrito's citizens love to read. With recent budget cuts, library systems have been struggling. This local non-profit has dedicated itself to supporting library services in El Cerrito. The organization provides the library with books, tapes, magazines and compact discs through membership dues and book sales revenue. The organization also provides matching grants for special collections and helps support the library's cultural and educational programs for children and adults.
- [El Cerrito Historical Society](#). Much of what is interesting about El Cerrito involves its colorful past. The El Cerrito Historical Society is a non-political, non-profit organization with only one agenda: to locate and preserve local history of El Cerrito. Contributions of photographs, records and oral history are always welcomed by the organization. The Historical Society acquired its own room at city hall last year, the Shadi Historical Room.
- [The Ed. Fund](#). Located in Richmond, this organization was founded in 1983 by a group of altruistic parents. A primary activity is giving mini-grants to teachers each year for special classroom or school-wide projects. Grants go directly to teachers. The organization partners with the West Contra Costa Unified School District but is its own separate entity. The Ed. Fund has contributed to many El Cerrito schools.

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