

Berkeley's PATHS

Vol. 15 No. 1 Berkeley Path Wanderers Association Spring 2012

BPWA Improves Its Classic Path Map — Sandy Friedland

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association will release the most significant revision yet of our popular *Berkeley's Pathways* map at our Spring Program on April 19th. The 6th edition is far easier to read and includes public restrooms and four recently-completed paths.

Other major improvements include updated details of the Berkeley Marina, the San Francisco Bay Trail, and both sections of the East Shore State Park; a better depiction of the Clark Kerr Campus; the location of Memorial Stadium; and the recently changed names of paths in Kensington.

Another new addition is check boxes in the index so walkers can record the paths they complete. "We hope that this new index will inspire people to try every path on the map," said Keith Skinner, BPWA president.

Water-resistant and rip-proof, the map is still \$6.95. It remains the only comprehensive, large-scale guide to Berkeley's public lanes and stairways.

The cover of the 6th edition has new artwork, a monochrome version of a watercolor of rustic Covert Path by Oakland artist Kathy Goss. "I really enjoyed painting this path, especially the stone steps, and hope to do others," she said.

BPWA's map also serves as an easy-to-read street map. Bolder lines now distinguish main arteries from other streets. And, as the last edition did, the 6th shows BART stations, traffic barriers, and the

BPWA SPRING MEETING
April 19, 7 pm. St. John's Presbyterian Church 2727 College Ave.
See page 2 for details



seven specially-designated Bicycle Boulevards, the safest streets for cyclists to use.

The four new paths added since the 5th edition of the map was issued in 2009 are all in northeast Berkeley and took hundreds of volunteer hours to complete. La

Loma Path (#85 on the map) joins Campus Dr. and Glendale Ave; Miller Path East (#44) runs between Grizzly Peak Blvd. and Creston Road; Northgate Path (#101) connects Quail Ave and Shasta Road; and Wildcat Path (#80) goes from Hillview Road to Wildcat Canyon Road. A grant from the Park Hills Home Association helped pay for improvements to Wildcat Path, which lies on Park Hills property.

Since 1997, BPWA path builders have cleared and improved thirty unfinished paths that were part of the original layout of the city's path network but never built. Twenty

more remain overgrown and impassable.

One historic path, Great Stoneface Path (#140) also has been added to the new map. Baird Barton, of the Berkeley Public Works Department, discovered that this walkway, which runs through the park of the same name, was an official path but had never appeared on the BPWA map.

BPWA has sold almost 27,000 copies of *Berkeley's Pathways* since 2002. It is available at local bookstores and other retail outlets. A complete list of vendors can be found on our website.

The map also is sold at BPWA events, including walks, and through www.berkeleypaths.org.

BPWA Walks

Walks take place rain or shine and last 2-3 hours unless otherwise noted. They are free and open to all.

We have revised walk descriptions to indicate the difficulty of terrain and the pace of the walk:

DIFFICULTY

EASY: Smooth trail or pavement.

MEDIUM EASY: Some uneven surface, moderate hills.

MEDIUM: Some difficult terrain such as hills or stairs.

MEDIUM DIFFICULT: Rough surface and/or steep inclines.

DIFFICULT: Rough trail, steep hills, strenuous stretches. Only for those in good physical condition.

PACE

FAST: a vigorous pace of at least 3 mph

MODERATELY FAST: 2-3 mph

MODERATE: 1-2 mph

LEISURELY: 1 mph or less

Questions about the walks? Write to walks@berkeleypaths.org. Please plan ahead since last-minute questions may be missed.

April 4, Wednesday – Coffee Constitutional – 10 a.m.

Leader: Jacque Ensign. Meeting Place:

Peet's Coffee & Tea, 1776 4th Street.

Transit: AC #51B bus

Join us for a morning stroll. We'll start at Peet's on 4th with coffee and a snack before we set off. Sights include 4th Street shopping district, Aquatic Park and the pedestrian bridge over the freeway.

RAIN CANCELS. Well-behaved dogs on leashes permitted.

Level: EASY • Pace: LEISURELY

April 22, Sunday, EARTH DAY – West Contra Costa Landfill Loop – 4 p.m.

Leader: Keith Skinner. Meeting Place: Bay

Trail staging area. I-580 West to Richmond

Pkwy exit. North on Richmond Pkwy, left onto Parr Blvd, bear left and cross the small bridge, left into trailhead parking area just beyond solar panels. Public transit not available.

To complement our Spring Meeting program, we will tour the newest part of the San Francisco Bay Trail that contains the West County Resource Recovery operation as well as an active solar power plant and a lively tidal wetland. Last time we visited, we saw numerous birds and a red fox. Binoculars or scope recommended.

RAIN CANCELS. Dogs not allowed.

Level: EASY • Pace: LEISURELY

(Walks are continued on page 2)

CLIP AND SAVE

(Walks continued)

May 5, Saturday – Cinco de Mayo Walk – 3 p.m.

Leader: Barbara Robben. Meeting Place: Great Stone Face Park, 1930 Thousand Oaks Boulevard at San Fernando Avenue. Transit: AC #7 bus.

Join us on a visit to El Paseo Path and its environs on a Cinco de Mayo path walk before heading back to Great Stone Face Park for a piñata celebration. For all ages. **HEAVY RAIN CANCELS. Well-behaved dogs on leashes permitted.**

Level: MEDIUM EASY • Pace: LEISURELY

May 22nd, Tuesday – Spring Power Walk – 10 a.m.

Leader: Colleen Neff. Meeting Place: Live Oak Park, corner of Shattuck Avenue and Berryman Street. Transit: AC #18, #7 buses

Celebrate spring on this trip through Thousand Oaks and Kensington. This fast-paced, hilly walk will visit rock parks, all three urns and the new path signs in Kensington. **HEAVY RAIN CANCELS. Well-behaved dogs on leashes permitted.**

Level: DIFFICULT • Pace: FAST

June 2, Saturday – Campus High-lights Walk – 10 a.m.

Leader: Ron Sipherd. Meeting Place: Fountain, north side of Bancroft Way at top of College Avenue. Transit: AC buses #51B, 52

Select sights and oddities on the UC campus, among them a former archaeological dig beside old College Ave., a mine entrance, numerous statues including Pappy Waldorf and a "scandalous" Calder, a giant mobile, an outdoor library of rocks, astronomical ruins, a flower clock, a WPA mosaic mural, and more. Details at <http://sonic.net/~ronks/pix/walks/campus/> **RAIN CANCELS. No dogs, please.**

Level: MEDIUM EASY • Pace: MODERATE

June 18th, Monday – Pooches on the Paths – 6 p.m.

Leaders: Skillet and Bronte. Meeting Place: Glendale La Loma Park, upper parking lot off Glendale Avenue.

Transit: AC bus #65

All well-behaved, sociable four- and two-footed friends are welcome on this evening stroll. Meet dogs, their owners and fellow dog lovers on this hike which promises new dog-friendly locales in Berkeley. Be sure to save room for the biscuit and cookie break half-way through. Everyone is welcome, and you do not need a dog to attend. **RAIN CANCELS.**

Level: MEDIUM DIFFICULT • Pace: MODERATE

Spring Meeting: How Green Is My Garbage? Expert insights into recycling and waste reduction

April 19, 7 p.m., St. John's Presbyterian Church 2727 College Ave

— Keith Skinner

On a sunny morning in late October, about 20 people gathered in a tight circle on North Richmond's West Contra Costa Landfill Loop trail. At the

center of the scrum was Peter Nuti, who oversees the Contra Costa's recycling and waste management program. The group peppered him with questions: "Are biodegradable plastic bags good to use?" "How long does it take for cardboard to break down?" "How do you separate metal and plastic from the compost?" "What happens with the stuff you can't compost?"

Peter matched their pace, shooting back answers quickly and authoritatively. The walk leader, who waited patiently at the edge of the circle for ten minutes, finally broke in and said, "Folks, we need to move on. Maybe we can have Peter answer more questions later." The group then slowly and reluctantly dispersed, resuming the walk around the landfill. Nearly two hours later, Peter was still encircled by a handful of inquisitive walkers, all moving in tandem like a brace of ducks as they made their way to the end of the trail.

Garbage, landfills and recycling are important issues for all urban communities as waste levels continue to grow and disposal becomes increasingly complicated. At the turn of the 21st century, Berkeley residents generated an average of 6.5 pounds of garbage per person, per day. Waste management operations nationwide struggled to craft strategies to reduce disposal rates, citing zero waste as the holy grail to which they aspired. Nearly a decade later, after aggressive efforts to raise community awareness and bolster individual recycling practices, Berkeley had whittled its waste disposal rate down to 3.7 pounds per person per day – admirable but still painfully short of the zero waste goal.

At BPWA's Spring Meeting Peter will give us the inside scoop on gar-

bage: what helps and what hinders efforts to reduce the amount of material going into landfills. Peter will provide an overview of his operation then an-



View from the Landfill Loop Trail: Garbage to Nature

Photo by Colleen Neff

swer your questions about what you should and shouldn't do at home.

Prior to Peter's talk, BPWA path building co-chair Steve Glaeser will present a photographic tour of path improvements.

This event will be your first chance to buy the 6th edition of our map along with our new BPWA caps and shirts. Also on sale will be our notecards, the Path Wanderers poster by David Lance Goines and Charles Fleming's book *Secret Stairs: East Bay*. Light refreshments will be served after the presentations.

This all takes place Thursday, April 19, 7 p. m. at St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727 College Ave. The program is free and open to the public.

WANT TO BE OUR EDITOR?

We're looking for someone computer savvy or familiar with page layout to assume the quarterly newsletter duties at the end of 2012.

Write to info@berkeleypaths.org

Contacting BPWA

Walks: walks@berkeleypaths.org
General: info@berkeleypaths.org

BPWA Board Meetings

The BPWA Board meets on the third Thursday of each month, except April, Oct, and Dec. Meetings are at 7 p.m. at Live Oak Community Center in Live Oak Park. Board meetings are open to all.

Facts About Berkeley Paths

Berkeley's paths, steps, and lanes are historic treasures as well as convenient short cuts and lovely extensions of the city's green space. They also provide critical escape routes and emergency access during disasters, as they did during the 1991 Berkeley-Oakland fire.

Here are some other path facts you may not know:

- All the Berkeley paths identified on our Berkeley's Pathways map are public property, just as streets, sidewalks, and parks are.
- Public utilities run over, under, and across some paths, but nevertheless they are public rights of way belonging to the city, not easements.
- Most paths are ten feet wide, but some are 30-40 feet, including Keeler Path, LeRoy Steps and Oak St. Path.
- Most paths date back to the early 1900s and appear on the original maps filed with the County. We still use those maps for locating and surveying paths.
- Developers of the Berkeley Hills built paths at the same time as streets and utilities and then deeded them to the city. Berkeley accepted ownership of the paths, unlike unincorporated Kensington, where the county accepted the roads and parks but not the paths.
- About 50 designated pathways never were completed, possibly because the increased use of cars lessened the demand for them. They typically were in neighborhoods that also lacked sidewalks. Some became overgrown or were blocked; nevertheless, they remain city property.
- BPWA works closely with the City of Berkeley when improving paths, and all our path building is pre-approved and monitored by city staff.



Installing stairs on an especially steep section of path

Photo by Mary Ross Lynch

Tax-deductible household memberships in the BPWA are \$5.00 and cover one calendar year. Benefits include a newsletter and other BPWA mailings and emails. If you can give more, please consider a donation. You can join or donate online at www.berkeleypaths.org or by sending this form and a check, payable to our fiscal parent BPPF (Berkeley Partners for Parks) to:

*BPWA
1442-A Walnut Street - #269
Berkeley, CA 94709*

BPWA

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Telephone Number (optional) _____

- I am enclosing \$5 for membership new renewal
- I am also enclosing a donation of _____
- I am interested in volunteering

Please make checks payable to our fiscal parent, Berkeley Partners for Parks (BPPF)

BAHA House Tour, Sunday, May 6

Visit our booth at the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA) Spring House Tour on Sunday, May 6th, from 1-5 p.m. This year's tour, "The Knoll: Where Claremont and Elmwood Meet" will feature houses on the Garber Street Hill. Go to BAHA's web site <http://berkeleyheritage.com> for more information. The new 6th edition Berkeley Pathways map and other BPWA merchandise will be on sale at our booth. If you would like to volunteer in our booth for an hour that afternoon, please email etranter@comcast.net

Kensington Paths Update

Kensington has a special problem: the paths belong to no one. When Kensington (an unincorporated town) was developed, the county accepted ownership of streets and parks from the developers but declined the paths and stairs. The developer is long gone, and the paths are in legal limbo.

After years of wrangling, the Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District voted 5 to 0 on Jan. 12 to investigate acquiring path #8 (Kenyon/Highland). The county had refused to fix the damaged drainage pipe under the path because of the ownership issues. The recent action should finally allow proper repairs. A separate process will determine what to do with the land.

If this cautious first step proceeds smoothly, then the York/Arlington path segment will probably be acquired for the same reason: an underground county facility that is in need of attention. Another attractive acquisition would be the Arlington/Amherst path segment. Its proximity to transit and shopping makes it a good candidate for outside funding to create a showcase improvement.

Another recent development is the marking of the paths with street signs. Funded by the Kensington Improvement Club and the Kensington Property Owners Association, KIC volunteers installed the signs last summer. These developments help make Kensington a friendlier place for walking.



This makeshift drainage pipe currently runs down path #8



Please print clearly

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association *Spring 2012*

Dedicated to the creation, preservation, and restoration of public paths, steps, and walkways in Berkeley for the use and enjoyment of all.

The Berkeley Path Wanderers Association, an affiliate of Berkeley Partners for Parks, is a volunteer group of community members who have come together to increase public awareness of the city of Berkeley's pathways. Our activities include guided path walks, the mapping of Berkeley's path network, the building of paths that are proposed, and the restoration of those that need maintenance.



*These photos are all from BPWA's Feb. 18th walk Southeast Berkeley Yard Art led by Sandy Friedland.
Photos by Nancy Rubin.*

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www.berkeleypaths.org

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Membership expires on December 31. Please renew for 2012 if you don't see "Mem 12" (or "Mem 13") with your address. You can renew online or return the form on page 3