

Berkeley's PATHS

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Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Winter 2013

Building Something Exceptional Together

— BPWA President Keith Skinner

George Bernard Shaw once said, "I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as I live it is my privilege — my privilege to do for it whatever I can."

I've always felt that working together with other people in the community is one of the most rewarding things a person can do. Whether it's planning projects in a board meeting, working on a path, talking to people at the Solano Stroll, or leading a walk, I feel a deep sense of gratitude for the experience, gratitude for having the opportunity to build something lasting and meaningful and gratitude for the chance to connect in such a positive way with so many people. That sentiment has been driven home several times in the past few months.

While attending the kickoff of the Madera Open Space campaign (see the story on page 2), I was greeted with unexpected geniality when everyone learned I was connected with BPWA. I didn't know how to respond to the attention since I felt my efforts were, at best, no more notable than those of any other volunteer.

I've had the good fortune to work with true heroes, people who have made a profound difference in our daily lives and I am grateful whenever I can be a part of their work. The reception I received is indicative of people who contribute to a community. They dwell less on what they've done and more on what others have done. It's an incredible dynamic to observe.

In August, I received an email from two young men who had just walked every path in Berkeley (see the story on page 3). As I read their missive, I was astonished by their accomplishment. They showed an uncommon level of enthusiasm for walking and affection for the paths. It was truly inspiring.

I've received other communications throughout the year: letters to City Council members supporting our work or defending public rights-of-way, people thanking us for a new path or for our work in general, people returning from their first guided walk saying how they wished they had done it sooner.

All of these experiences illustrate an energized community savoring something remarkable, something accomplished by many hands. One person helping another place a railroad tie. One person sharing a favorite route with others. People pooling their money and other resources to improve their neighborhood.

This year has been a busy one for BPWA. We invested heavily in the rehabilitation of our older rustic paths. We've learned a lot over the years and have realized that redwood isn't as durable as we imagined and that we need more steps on many paths. So we replaced and added steps made of longer lasting eucalyptus.

We also completed three new paths. Halkin, our newest path, was one of the most challenging we've ever built due to the steepness of the terrain. For that reason, it requires handrails and can't be opened until we receive additional funding. The new Twain Path has just officially been

renamed Betty Olds Path (see the story on page 3) after the former Council member and longtime path supporter. We've also sponsored an amazing variety of walks this year and two very different but well-received public meetings.

We can only stay healthy as an organization and continue our work with your help. We constantly face the challenge of

having too few people and too little money to do the things we believe worth doing. We have maintained our membership fee at \$5 per household so anyone can join us. But those fees cover just a fraction of the work and outreach BPWA does each year. We rely instead on merchandise sales and your donations to continue our path building and update and produce our map. Please take a moment before the year ends to reflect on what you can do to help, be it a donation of time or money. As Shaw said, just do whatever you can. And remember, nothing equals that feeling of building something together. ■



Photo: Steve Glaeser
UC students at work on Halkin Path during Berkeley Day



BPWA Walks
Walks last 2-3 hours unless otherwise noted and are free and open to all.

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: walks@berkeleypaths.org

Jan. 1, Wed. – Stepping into the New Year – 1 p.m.

Leader: Glen Lindwall. Meeting Place: SW corner of The Arlington & Coventry Rd., Kensington (at bus stop). Transit: AC bus #7. Welcome the New Year with BPWA as we once again walk the neighborhoods of the Berkeley/Kensington border on the first afternoon of the year. There will be many stairs. **RAIN CANCELS. Well-behaved dogs on leash permitted. Level: MEDIUM DIFFICULT • Pace: MODERATE**

Jan. 4, Sat. – Berkeley Hills Architecture and History – 10 a.m.

Leader: Bob Gomez. Meeting place: Rose Garden, 1200 Euclid Ave. Transit: AC bus #65 This hike will include early Berkeley lore and many architectural treasures. We'll explore Greenwood Common, Rose St., Tamalpais Ave. and nearby paths. **RAIN CANCELS. Well-behaved dogs on leash permitted. Level: MEDIUM • Pace: MODERATE**

Jan. 26, Sunday – Whole Berkeley Walk Series: Part 1 – 11:30 a.m.

Leaders: Zeke Gerwein & Jacob Lehmann Duke. Meeting place: SW corner of Rose & Spruce. Transit: AC buses #18, 67, or 7 1st in a series to walk every path in Berkeley, this part will be 5.5 miles and about 2.5 hours long. Bring water & snacks. **RAIN CANCELS. No dogs please. Level: MEDIUM DIFFICULT • Pace: MODERATELY FAST**

Feb. 9, Sunday – Quirky Berkeley: Northeast Hills – 10 a.m.

Leaders: Tom Dalzell. Meeting place: Live Oak Park, 1301 Shattuck at Berryman. Transit: AC buses #18, 67, or 7

We'll discover the quirky side of NE Berkeley and Berkeleyans expressing their individuality through art, architecture, topiary and much more. 4 miles long. We'll take a break midway at Dorothy Bolte Park. **CANCELS. No dogs please. Level: MEDIUM EASY • Pace: MODERATE**

(Continued on Page 2)

CLIP AND SAVE

(Walks continued)

Feb. 23, Sun. – Whole Berkeley Walk Series: Part 2 – 4:30 p.m.

Leaders: Zeke Gerwein & Jacob Lehmann Duke. **Meeting place:** Live Oak Park, 1301 Shattuck at Berryman. **Transit:** AC buses #18, 67, or 7

2nd in a series to walk every path in Berkeley, this part will be 6.1 miles and about 3 hours long. Bring water & snacks. RAIN CANCELS. **No dogs, please. Level:** MEDIUM DIFFICULT • **Pace:** MODERATELY FAST

Mar. 9, Sun. – Power Walk – 10 a.m. Leader: Colleen Neff. **Meeting place:** John Hinkel Park at the end of Somerset Place. **Transit:** AC bus #7

Get ready for stairs on this tour of North Berkeley paths that will take us all the way up and over the hill. Once at the top, we'll head into Park Hills and explore the Lutheran Seminary property and Crescent Park, then return. Expect lots of stairs, some trails and steep sections. HEAVY RAIN CANCELS. **No dogs, please. Level:** MEDIUM DIFFICULT • **Pace:** MODERATELY FAST

Mar. 15, Sat. – Whole Berkeley Walk Series: Part 3 – 2 p.m.

Leaders: Zeke Gerwein & Jacob Lehmann Duke. **Meeting place:** SW corner of Euclid & Unice. **Transit:** AC bus #65 or 67

3rd in a series to walk every path in Berkeley, this part will be 6.2 miles and about 3 hours long. Bring water & snacks. RAIN CANCELS. **No dogs, please. Level:** MEDIUM DIFFICULT • **Pace:** MODERATE

Mar. 26, Wed. – Art, Nature, and History in Jingtowntown & the Oakland Estuary – 10 a.m.

Leader: Susan Schwartz. **Meeting place:** 333 Lancaster Street at Glascock, Oakland Museum White Elephant Sale site. **Transit:** AC bus #51A, 51B or 20

There will be something unique around every corner on this tour. Join us on a history-rich walk in an ever-changing blue-collar area with a thriving arts community. We'll explore history, murals, mosaics, and the new Bay Trail — with city-adapted wildlife including a chance of peregrine falcons. Optional no-host Mexican lunch in the Fruitvale district after the walk. RAIN CANCELS. **Well-behaved dogs on leash permitted. Level:** EASY • **Pace:** MODERATE

Memberships Expire Dec. 31!

If the mailing label on this newsletter does **NOT** have MEM14 next to your name, your membership will expire. You can renew online, by mail, or on walks.

\$5 per household

El Cerrito's Madera Hillside Open Space — The Missing Link

We recently spoke to David Weinstein of the El Cerrito Trail Trekkers about his organization's efforts to convert a parcel of previously private land to public open space.

BPWA: What is the Madera Hillside Open Space and why is it important?

DW: It's an 8-acre parcel with a meadow, woodland, and three creeks that sits between the two otherwise disconnected sections of El Cerrito's Hillside Natural Area. It provides a natural connection between these two sections of a 90-or-so-acre open space preserve right in the heart of town. Once the city owns the property and can build and improve trails on it, people will be able to walk easily from the southern portion to the northern section without having to leave wild land and detour for several blocks along sidewalks.

BPWA: What role are the Trail Trekkers playing in the campaign and who else is involved?

DW: We've had our eye on the property since we were founded four years ago. We led hikes on it, even when it was still owned by a developer, in order to generate interest. We spoke to members of the City Council and to the Trust for Public Land (TFPL). The El Cerrito High School mountain biking team has also played a major role. Gary Hill, coach of the team, is the one who learned the property was for sale. Friends of Five Creeks, which has done restoration work in the Hillside Area for years, quickly joined the effort too. Our three groups formed the El Cerrito Open Space Campaign to raise funds from the community for this purchase.

BPWA: How much money is involved and how will the acquisition be funded?

DW: The land costs \$475,000. Another \$100,000 will cover acquisition, legal, staffing and other costs incurred by TFPL, the nonprofit that negotiated this amazing deal and is helping raise funds. More will be raised as well to cover habitat and other improvements; the exact amount depends on which grants we receive. Funding will come from the city's share of regional Park Bond funds. TFPL believes they will raise at least \$250,000

in federal and state grants. We in the community have promised to raise \$100,000. The land was acquired this fall by TFPL, which had to buy it because the owner needed to sell in calendar 2013 for tax reasons and the city didn't have enough money. TFPL never buys land to hold. The City Council promised that the city would buy the land from TFPL in 2014 after extracting a promise from the community that we would raise \$100,000.

BPWA: How can people help?

DW: We have raised \$20,000 so far and need \$80,000 more. The Hillside Natural Area is of regional importance. Berkeley-ans and others who treasure open space are invited to visit the site, either on their own or on a Trekker-guided, on-demand hike. Contact me to arrange. We need funds, and we need volunteers to lead hikes, call potential donors, and help put on events. We also need people to spread the word among their friends. For information or to donate, go to: www.ectrailtrekkers.org ■



Photo: Michael Gray

Crowd outside the First Church of Christ Scientist during Jacque Ensign's People's Park Era Revisited Walk on Nov. 3.

City of Berkeley Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan Released

Our path system is most frequently used for convenient pedestrian travel and general recreation. However, it also provides an important escape route during emergencies like fires, landslides, and earthquakes. The City of Berkeley has included the paths in the recently released draft of the 2014 *Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*. For instance, the plan notes that Upper Covert Path provides an escape route that is nearly a half mile shorter than streets and sidewalks.

You can read the entire plan on the City's website at: www.cityofberkeley.info/mitigation/ ■



Photo: Colleen Neff

Sneak peak of the one of the sights you'll see on the Feb. 9 Quirky Berkeley walk.

All Over the Map — Keith Skinner

“Every good hike brings you eventually back home.” — Edward Abbey

At 7 a.m. on a Wednesday morning in early August, Jacob Lehmann Duke and his longtime friend, Zeke Gerwein, set out on an adventure they had been planning for more than a month. By the time they returned home that evening, they had accomplished something remarkable. Epic. Perhaps even a little crazy. They had walked every path in Berkeley in a single day.

“We walked between all the paths and never got on a bus, in a car, or on BART,” Jacob said proudly.

Thirty-six miles in 13 hours. Their route ranged from a nadir of 72 feet in the flatlands to a zenith of 1,297 feet at the crest of Summit Road: 5,405 feet of total elevation gain and 4,727 feet of total elevation loss. It was an incredible feat, especially for such young men: Zeke is 12; Jacob 11.

“After 15 miles, we were exhausted but somehow kept going,” Jacob said of their experience. “After 25 miles, we rested at my grandma’s house and were barely able to move on.”

Zeke and Jacob, buddies since preschool, are big fans of Berkeley’s paths, using them

regularly for both utilitarian and recreational purposes. Prior to the big day, the two had covered all the paths during numerous individual walks. Jacob is a math whiz who also runs cross-country, studies the piano and enjoys playing games with his family. Zeke came up with the idea for the mega-hike. He’s a self-confessed cycling freak who completed a month-long bike tour from Mexico to Seattle this past summer. But like his friend, he also enjoys a life of the mind: reading, writing, algebra, history and science. Both boys are preparing for their bar mitzvahs.

The two friends covered most of the alphabet, traveling paths from Acacia to Yosemite. They rambled from Vistamonte Trail in the northeastern corner of town to the Kensington border, then crossed the southern tip of Albany to West Berkeley. There they picked up the Ohlone Greenway into South Berkeley, crossed town to The Crossways, then doubled back and headed into the Claremont Hills, in and out of Oakland to Panoramic Hill. Then they sliced through campus into the central hills, up to Atlas Path, and through Park Hills to Wildcat Path at the Contra Costa County border. Then, finally, home again.

“I limped all the next day and wouldn’t want to go that far again at least for another few months — and possibly ever,” Jacob reported.

While the young men may have crossed extreme path wandering off of their personal bucket lists, they have agreed to lead a series of walks for BPWA that will include all of Berkeley’s paths. Zeke and Jacob have divided their colossal route into several smaller excursions averaging roughly six miles in length.

The series will begin early in 2014, with the walks usually scheduled at monthly intervals. For some time, BPWA has wanted to devise a way to formally recognize people who walk all the paths. For the duration of this series, we’ll keep a log of the people who start and finish each walk. After the last walk, those who have covered the entire route will be presented with a pin or patch.

Given the length of each route — triple that of our average walks — participants should be able to tolerate numerous hills and maintain a 2- to 2 ½-mph pace. The average

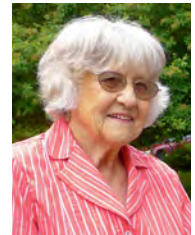
duration of each walk will be roughly three hours. Participants should bring sufficient water and wear suitable clothes and shoes. Snacks, walking sticks and/or a camera may also come in handy. Once the series has concluded, we’ll publish the route of each segment in the Self-Guided Walks section of our website.

As for Jacob and Zeke, they have since led a MeetUp walk — a “warm-up” for the upcoming series — and organized other walks for their friends and classmates. When asked about their favorite paths, Zeke names Covert Path. Jacob seconds Covert, but also lists Vistamonte, Indian Trail, Acacia Walk, Wildcat and Fred Herbert. Who says it has to be just one?

It’s encouraging and inspiring to watch a new generation of path wanderers emerge, to watch them fall in love with our city’s paths as have many of us before them. They are BPWA’s future. They offer hope that the legacy we treasure will be preserved for years to come and that generations of people will continue to enjoy the benefits of the paths in health, happiness and the buoyant spirit of youth. ■

Twain Path Becomes Betty Olds Path

On November 19, 2013, the Berkeley City Council passed a resolution renaming the recently completed Twain Path (#68) to Betty Olds Path after the former Council member and path supporter.



BPWA will commemorate the new name in a celebration on Saturday, January 11, 2014 at 1 p.m.

We’ll gather at the bottom of the path near the intersection of Twain and Sterling. Light refreshments will be served. ■

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

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 Membership/Donation

Please print clearly

 Name

 Address

 E-mail Telephone Number (optional)

I am enclosing \$5 for membership new renewal

I am also enclosing a donation of _____ Please make checks payable to our fiscal parent, Berkeley Partners for Parks (BPPF)

I am interested in volunteering

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association
1442-A Walnut St. #269
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Berkeley Path Wanderers Association *Winter 2013*

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.



Photo: Michael Gray

Inside the First Church of Christ Scientist during Jacque Ensign's People's Park Era Revisited Walk on Nov. 3.



Photo: Colleen Neff

Do you know where this is? Find out on the Quirky Berkeley Walk – Northeast Hills on Feb. 9, 2014.