

## BPWA Guided Walks

Walks take place rain or shine and last 2-3 hours unless otherwise noted. They are free and open to all. Please check online a few days before each walk for any changes. Walks are divided into three types, identified by these icons:

 Theme  Friendly  Power

Please read the article on this page that explains changes to our walk program as well as our new walk categories.

### Weekend Walks

 **April 18, Saturday - Improved and Impassible Paths - 10:00 AM**

Charlie Bowen - [charlie\\_paths@comcast.net](mailto:charlie_paths@comcast.net)

Meet: Fountain across from New Hills Fire Station #7 - 3000 Shasta Rd. (1/2 block from Grizzly Peak Blvd.) Transit: AC #65 bus

Our path-building leader will cover many of the paths we've improved in recent years. We will also examine several not-yet-improved paths to show how much is involved in building the new paths. This walk is moderately strenuous.

 **May 9, Saturday - Claremont Heights, Grand View, and Hiller Highlands - 10:00AM**

Sandy Friedland - [ssf@comcast.net](mailto:ssf@comcast.net)

Meet: Peet's, 2912 Domingo Ave

Transit: Rockridge BART or AC #7,#9 buses

Walk the old paths behind the Claremont Hotel that once helped commuters reach the Key Route trains, and look for traces of paths that are no more. Learn about historic Smith Lane and the family that built it. (See article on page 2.) Finally, explore newer paths and streets in neighborhoods rebuilt after the 1991 Oakland-Berkeley firestorm. This route has long, steep hills and stairways, some with uneven footing.

 **June 21, Sunday - Daley's Scenic Park and Beyond - 6:00 PM**

Keith Skinner -

[keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510 528-3246

Meet: Hillside School, 1581 Le Roy Ave.

Transit: AC #65 bus.

Wind down your weekend with a moderately paced excursion through the original stomping grounds of the Hillside Club. Although this first-ever weekend evening walk will not have a formal program, we'll stop and enjoy the architectural treasures and panoramic views on our way up to La Verada Rd. and back. Some steep climbs will be included.

*Weekday Walks - Page 2*

# Berkeley's PATHS

Vol. 12 No. 1

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Spring 2009

## BPWA Updates Walk Program


We have received valuable feedback from regular participants of our tremendously popular Wednesday and Saturday guided walks as well as from those of you who have had trouble making the dates and times. In response to your suggestions, we are pleased to announce that we have restructured our walk program so that the schedule is more flexible.


Each month we still plan to offer a weekday and weekend walk, but we will vary both the day of the week and the start time. Because our sunset walks were so popular last summer, we will try to include more of those on weekdays this summer. During the shorter days of winter, weekday walks will continue to be in mornings.


Because many of you noted that both our Wednesday and Saturday walks were often slated for the beginning of a month, we will try to ensure that we leave more time between them.

This changing walk schedule will take some getting used to. Please be sure to check the date and time of each walk, either in our newsletter or on our web site ([www.berkeleypaths.org](http://www.berkeleypaths.org)). The date and time will be clearly marked at the top of each walk description.

We also have decided to set up these three general categories of walks:

**Theme Walks**  Walks focusing on local history, art, architecture, the environment, and cultural heritage or other areas of special interest.

**Friendly Walks**  Casual walks led by someone familiar with the paths but without a formal theme or narration.

**Power Walks**  Energetic, fast-paced walks with a focus on exercise and no commentary along the way.

Every walk write-up will include the category of the walk; a description of the topography; and suggestions, when relevant, for useful equipment, like walking sticks, flashlights, or field glasses.

As always, our walks will be free of charge and open to BPWA members and nonmembers alike. BPWA maps and note cards will be available for purchase, and we will happily accept your \$5 membership dues.

We are eager to hear how you like these changes. You can comment, make suggestions, or even offer to lead a walk by contacting our walk coordinator, Keith Skinner, at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) or 510 528-3246.

### BPWA Map



*This attractive and accurate map shows all the 135+ paths of Berkeley as well as all the streets. It is printed on sturdy, water-resistant paper and is only \$6.95. To order, see our web site.*

*The map is a wonderful gift for anyone who drives, bikes, or hikes in Berkeley.*

## Weekday Walks

Theme 🍀 Friendly 🧡 Power 🏃

**April 1, Wednesday - Holy Hill - 10:00 AM**

**Barbara Robben**  
keithskinner.public@gmail.com - 510 528-3246

Meet: Scenic Ave. at the intersection of LeConte & Ridge Rd. Transit: AC #52L or #65 buses.

As a thematic companion to her fascinating tour of churches in central Berkeley, Barbara will lead this exploration of the paths and institutions of Holy Hill.

**May 26, Tuesday - Evening Cardio-Workout - 6:00 PM**

**Colleen Neff** - colleenneff@earthlink.net - 510 882-4295

Meet: Berkeley Rose Garden (near sign), 1200 Euclid Ave. near Eunice.

Transit: AC #65 bus

Join Colleen for another fast-paced, up-hill, carb-burning walk up Easter Way to Cragmont Rock Park, Pinnacle and Poppy Paths to Muir Path and back down as the sun is setting

**June 1, Monday - Albany Hill At Dusk - 7:00 PM**

**Susan Schwartz** - f5creeks@aol.com - 510 848-9358

Meet: El Cerrito's Creekside Park, S. end of Santa Clara Ave. Transit: BART or AC #72 bus

The president of Friends of Five Creeks leads this annual evening walk co-sponsored by BPWA and F5C. We will cross Cerrito Creek on stepping stones, note Native American grinding stones, and climb Albany Hill on a narrow, fairly steep trail, gaining 300 ft. We'll enjoy snacks and sunset views and return via a gentler route. Wear shoes with good traction and long pants and sleeves to avoid poison oak. Bring flashlights and walking sticks if you use them.

### Volunteer

**Work in Booth** - lbrad5501@sbcglobal.net,

**Build Paths** - charlie\_paths@comcast.net,

**Spruce up a Path** - colleenneff@earthlink.net

**Lead a Walk** - keithskinner.public@gmail.com

### BPWA Board Meetings

The BPWA Board meets on the third Thursday of each month (except Feb, Sept, and Dec) at Music Sources, 1000 The Alameda (at Marin). Observers are welcome. Please enter via the side door at 1842 Marin Ave.

## Old Paths Lead to Historic Smith Lane

— Sandy Friedland

Two rustic, unmarked paths and the private Smith Lane, which do not appear on any modern maps, are all that remain of the original Claremont Heights, a neighborhood of small, wood-clad houses and a thriving dairy farm above the Claremont Hotel. In 1991, the Berkeley-Oakland Hills Firestorm destroyed the subdivision.

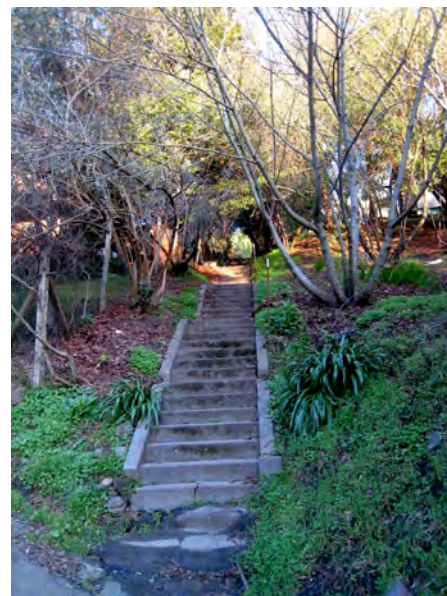
BPWA's May 9 walk will focus on the old paths and Smith Lane, a short dead end that runs between Vicente Place and West View Road.

Although Claremont Heights has a Berkeley zip code and children of the early residents attended Berkeley schools, it lies just over the Oakland border. A 1910 plat map shows five paths as well as residential lots lining parts of Grand View, West View and Gravatt Drives, and Vicente Road and Vicente Place. Part of the neighborhood appears in the lower right corner of the BPWA *Berkeley's Pathways* map, near the numeral 18.

The footpaths helped hikers to reach trails in the hills and adults and children bound for shops, schools, and the Key Route E-line train that stopped just below the hotel. Most of the paths gradually disappeared as they fell into disrepair, new houses went up after the fire, and residents removed the remaining steps.

A century ago, the hillside lots with panoramic views of the Bay attracted a young lawyer named L. Dee Smith. The 1906 San Francisco earthquake had ruined his office and his legal business, so he was working for the Claremont Heights Realty Office in Oakland. Smith picked three "choice villa sites" in the subdivision and built a large house of his own and eventually three smaller ones for his two sons and a daughter. Smith Lane was added to make it possible to build the houses.

In a 1960 article in the *Berkeley Gazette*, L. Dee's son Leroy wrote that his father, an Iowa native, bought a cow to supply milk to his growing family. One cow led to another, and soon a small herd grazed in the hills. The Smith Claremont Guernsey Dairy became known



*Lower Vicente Path has no sign*

for its rich milk, and the Smith children delivered it to neighbors, the Claremont Hotel, and Star Grocery.

The two surviving footpaths comprise what locals call Vicente Path. The lower half begins on Vicente Place, a short street linking Vicente Road and West View, just west of where Grand View and Vicente Road meet. From the Tunnel Road end of Vicente Road, Vicente Place is on the right, just before the sharp dogleg in Vicente Road. The path is 50 feet from the intersection on the right.

The steps lead to Smith Lane. At the top, the house to the left of the path looks like a 100-old original but was rebuilt after the fire. For years, Ellen Smith Caples lived on the site. L. Dee's farmhouse stood at the opposite end of Smith Lane, where an ornate gate now marks a grand new house.

The second part of the path, just above the first, ends at the aptly named West View. Half way down the block to the right is Elmo Park, a garden named for a dog that lives in the vaulted house beyond it. A path to Vicente Road once ran through what is now the garden. Continue down West View, turning left at the T to reach the new unnamed path that descends to North Hill Court, which goes to Hiller Drive.

## Paths, Gorge, and Creek Beckon in Kensington — Glen Lindwall

From Colusa Ave. to The Arlington, an open segment of Cerrito Creek separates Berkeley and its neighbor to the north, Kensington. The cut of the creek and the hills it passes through create a landscape perfect for walking, and several paths on the Kensington side of the creek appear on the BPWA *Berkeley's Pathways* map.

Kensington's small shopping district on The Arlington, reachable by the #7 bus., is your starting point. Locate Ardmore Path by the sign near the parking lot, just off the lower level of The Arlington. Twenty-nine steps take you to a divided pathway with a median strip of exuberant plantings. A charming classic "path house" at #2 Ardmore Path directly faces the walkway. At Ardmore Rd., you may be tempted to stray to view some of its lovely homes, but don't wander too far because Ardmore Path continues straight downhill another block. Note the towering cypress trees that dwarf #7 Ardmore Path.

At the bottom, turn left and walk up Coventry Road, passing Ardmore Rd. on the left and Edgcroft on the right, to reach Eagle Hill, a narrow road on the right, with only a small sign, that resembles a driveway. Walk up Eagle Hill. Near the six-foot Santa at #1 (J. Robert Oppenheimer's former home), enjoy one

**Watch for BPWA at the BAHA Maybeck Country House Tour May 3, 1 to 5.**  
[http://berkeleyheritage.com/housetours/2009\\_spring\\_house\\_tour.html](http://berkeleyheritage.com/housetours/2009_spring_house_tour.html)

of the most spectacular panoramic views you will ever see from the middle of a street. Though the narrow dirt path along the wall at #1 ends near the top of a stairway leading down to Edgcroft Rd., you might prefer to go back down Eagle Hill, turn right on Coventry, and right again on Edgcroft. This more scenic route circles around to the classic stone cottage at #7 and past houses further down perched precariously over the gorge of Cerrito Creek. Daunting stairs drop at least 50 feet down the hillside to #33 and #35.

Continue around Edgcroft back to Coventry Rd. Between #744 and #748, is steep Coventry Path. At the bottom, turn right, and where the street forms a Y, you have two choices:

To return quickly to The Arlington, take the lower fork. A few houses down, between #69 and #73 Stratford Rd., head up Stratford Path. Go left on Coventry, and veer left onto Lenox. Follow Lenox until you reach the stairs on the right (labeled #9) that lead to the residential Beverly Court. Look for the palm garden at #17. Continue up to Ardmore and turn right. Ardmore Path, a block away, leads back to the start.

To extend your adventure, take the upper fork of the Y at the bottom of Coventry Path, go down Stratford Path between #673 and #679 Coventry, and turn right on Stratford Rd. If you continue more or less straight, you will reach Berkeley Park Blvd., which will take you past the reservoir and down to

Kensington Circle, where you can reward yourself with a visit to the original Semifreddi's or, if it's after 5 PM, the family-friendly Kensington Circus Pub. If it's Sunday between 10-2, visit the Kensington Farmer's Market. You can return to Berkeley on the #79 bus. Better yet, walk south on Colusa Ave, turn left on Visalia Ave, and then take every left until you reach The Arlington. You will see Cerrito Creek from the other side of the chasm and can climb a bonus path, the gnarled and scenic Vincente Walk set among the rocks.



*The walk starts with the 29 steps of Ardmore Path.*

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

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

### BPWA Membership/Donation Form

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 \_\_\_\_\_

# Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Spring 2009

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.*

*Our last winner was Frank Rubinfeld, one of six Path Wanderers who identified the nearly life-sized rhinoceros clay sculpture located on Keith Ave. just east (uphill) from Euclid Ave.*



*Recognize this raised-arm Buddha? Tell us where it is, and win a BPWA map and a mention in our next newsletter. Email your answer to ColleenNeff@earthlink.net, or send it to the address below, Attn: Colleen Neff. We will choose at random from the correct answers*

**Berkeley Path Wanderers Association**  
1442-A Walnut St. #269  
Berkeley, CA 94709

[www.berkeleypaths.org](http://www.berkeleypaths.org)





## Board Members

LORI KOHLSTAEDT, president  
COLLEEN NEFF, vice president  
CHARLIE BOWEN, path building  
LINDA BRADFORD, external events coordinator  
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ANNE HENNY, treasurer  
GLEN LINDWALL, membership/administration  
DALE MILLER, newsletter editor  
KEITH SKINNER, walk coordinator  
JAZ ZAITLIN, internal events coordinator, e-newsletter

**If you don't see "Mem. 09" after your name above, renew now so you can continue to receive the newsletter. You can renew online or by sending in the form on page three.**

## BPWA Walks

Guided walks take place rain or shine and last 2-3 hours unless otherwise noted. Self-guided walks have no leader, just a starting location and a suggested route. Check [www.berkeleypaths.org](http://www.berkeleypaths.org) for these routes and/or any last minute changes for any walk. People without internet access can call 510 520-3876. Walks are divided into four types:

-  Theme
-  Friendly
-  Power
-  Self Guided

### **July 1, Wednesday - Walk with a Founder - 10:00 AM**

**Jacque Ensign - Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) - 510-520-3876**  
**Meet: In front of Live Oak Park Recreation Center - 1301 Shattuck Ave**  
**Transit: AC #7, #9 #18**

Join BPWA co-founder Jacque for a convivial and relaxed morning walk on the paths around Live Oak Park culminating in an optional lunch in the Gourmet Ghetto.

### **July 6, Monday - Waterfront Sunset/Moonrise Walk - 6:00 PM**

**Susan Schwartz - President, Friends of Five Creeks - [5creeks@aol.com](mailto:5creeks@aol.com) - 510-848-9358**  
**Meet: Sea Breeze Delicatessen, 598 University Ave. @ Frontage Rd**  
**Transit: AC #9**

Enjoy refreshments as we watch the sunset and nearly full moonrise at the solar calendar at the top of Cesar Chavez Park. This is an easy walk but not wheelchair accessible. Sorry, no dogs.

### **July 26, Sunday - Three Summer Path-a-Thon Walks - different times & types**

**Details on page 2 - Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) - 510-520-3876**  
**Meet: John Muir School - Entrance at 2955 Claremont Ave. near Ashby - Transit: AC #51**  
9:45 - Sandy Friedland / 10:15 - Jen English / 11:00 - Colleen Neff

### **August 5, Wednesday - Thousand Oaks - 10:00 AM**

**Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) - 510-520-3876**  
**Meet: Indian Rock Park, 950 Indian Rock Ave. - Transit: AC #7 bus**  
Recommended route - Pat Devito's August 2000 walk. Route and other info can be found here: [www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk\\_ThousandOaks.htm](http://www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk_ThousandOaks.htm).

*Continued - Page 2*

## Self-Guided Walks

This quarter BPWA is adding self guided walks to its schedule. They are on the first Wednesday of the month. Please let us know how you like this idea. We will designate a meeting place and a suggested route via a link on our web site.

# Berkeley's PATHS

Vol. 12 No. 2

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Summer 2009

## New BPWA Map Adds Bicycle Boulevards

— Colleen Neff

BPWA is pleased to announce the publication of the fifth edition of our indispensable Berkeley's Pathways map, a passport to the public lanes and stairways that comprise the city's treasured path system. Also useful as a street map, the new edition features the city's seven officially-designated bicycle boulevards, the safest routes for pedaling through Berkeley.

The map also includes the three latest paths that BPWA's volunteer path builders have completed since the fourth-edition map was issued in 2007.

BPWA has sold nearly 22,000 maps since we produced the first one in 2002.

As with previous editions, the new map shows more than 136 numbered and named paths, including 27 unfinished paths on city-owned rights of way that remain impassable. The easy-to-read new map also has a street index, shows the course of existing and historic creeks, and is printed on tough, water-resistant paper. The price of the map remains \$6.95.

The bicycle boulevards were completed in 2003. Also called bicycle priority streets, the boulevards are quiet streets that allow cars but have been engineered to accommodate a bicycle lane. Purple signs mark the boule-

wards, including some that show distances to city attractions. Thirty-foot high painted symbols of a bike rider

appear at regular intervals on the pavement. Named after the streets they cover, either entirely or in large part, the boulevards generally parallel the main traffic arteries. The four that run north-south are 9th Ave, California, Milvia, and Benvenue-Hillegass; the three that run east-west are Virginia, Channing, and Russell.

The three latest paths to be added to the map are all in the North Berkeley hills. Volunteers devoted hundreds of hours to clearing hillsides and installing wooden steps, often on tricky terrain. El Mirador (#50) is the upper of two paths that connect Euclid and Cragmont Aves. Bret

Harte Lane (#72) provides a handy link between Grizzly Peak Blvd. and Miller Lane. Our newest path, the lower section of Covert Path (#53), was the most challenging one that BPWA has built. Heavy overgrowth had to be removed from a steep slope to accommodate the switchback trail. Volunteers also installed redwood disks as steppingstones across a seasonal stream.

The new map is available in local stores, at BPWA events, and on [www.berkeleypaths.org](http://www.berkeleypaths.org).



## Walks Continued

### **August 8, Saturday - Campus, Holy Hill and Northside - 10:00 AM**

**David Weinstein - Contact Keith Skinner at keithskinner.public@gmail.com - 510-520-3876**  
**Meet: Founders Rock, Galey Rd. at Hearst**  
**Transit: AC #52L, #65**

Learn about Berkeley's famous characters, its deep ties to nature and spirituality, and its fondness for the good life from the author of *It Came from Berkeley*. This walk has some steep hills.

### **August 18, Tuesday - Stretching on the Paths - 6:00 PM**

**Karen Libby - Contact Keith Skinner at keithskinner.public@gmail.com - 510-520-3876**  
**Meet: In front of Thousand Oaks School, Colusa at Catalina.**  
**Transit: AC #18**

Enjoy a picturesque walk with stops at scenic spots to learn and practice stretching techniques to relieve muscular tension and avoid injuries.

### **September 2, Wednesday - Thousand Oaks - 10:00 AM**

**Contact Keith Skinner at keithskinner.public@gmail.com - 510-520-3876**  
**Meet: North Berkeley BART station.**  
**Transit: AC #19, #88**

Recommended route - Jen English's 2007 Fall Harvest walk. Route and other info can be found here:  
[www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/FallHarvestWalk.htm](http://www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/FallHarvestWalk.htm)

### **September 5, Saturday - Paths of Mill Valley - 11:00 AM**

**Glen Lindwall - Contact Keith Skinner at keithskinner.public@gmail.com - 510-520-3876**  
**By Reservation only. RSVP by contacting Keith Skinner as listed above**

Walk the rustic paths of Mill Valley and see both the varied ways they were built and the unusual terrain of this picturesque town beneath Mount Tamalpais. The route includes many stairs, but the pace will be moderate. Please contact Keith Skinner as listed above.

### **September 15, Tuesday - Marin Circle Neighborhood - 10:00 AM**

**Dale Miller - millbush@pacbell.net - 510 524-4758**  
**Meet: Marin Circle at Fountain Walk.**  
**Transit: AC #7, #9, #18**

Dale and his mutt Giorgio, who live in this neighborhood, will combine a couple of their regular walks and share local knowledge and gossip. Well behaved dogs on a leash are welcome.

## Annual Path-a-Thon Sunday, July 26th, To Feature Southside Paths


Come spend a morning exploring the paths and back roads of South Berkeley at Berkeley Path Wanderers Association's sixth summer Path-a-Thon on Sunday, July 26th. The event is free and open to the public. Participants can choose from three distinct walks that will vary in length, difficulty, and pace. The three groups will leave at staggered times from the south side of John Muir School on Claremont Ave. just south of





*John Muir School will be the starting point this year's walks*

Ashby. Three BPWA board members will lead the walks and ensure that they return everyone to John Muir by 12:15 for a bring-your-own picnic. BPWA will provide cake and lemonade.

Leaders with their routes and departure times are as follows:

 Sandy Friedland, BPWA past president and veteran walk leader, will leave at 9:45 for the most difficult route. Her challenging, fast-paced walk will start with the Short Cut behind the Claremont Hotel and head up stair paths and hilly streets toward Grizzly Peak Blvd. Along the way, walkers will climb about 1,400 feet and cover parts of the Claremont, Grandview, and Claremont Heights neighborhoods as well as some of Hiller Highlands. Sandy also will point out the trailheads of Garber Park and Gwin Canyon along the way.

 Jen English, who has walked every street and path in Berkeley, will lead a more moderate walk that will depart at 10:15. Jen will head out with her group toward Oakridge Path and explore the beautiful Claremont-Uplands neighborhood that lies east of Claremont Avenue and south of Tunnel Road. The route includes stairs and some uneven footing, but the pace will be moderate, allowing participants to enjoy the views and the stunning architecture and landscaping of many of the homes along the way.

 Colleen Neff, who has walked every path in town and leads Path Wanderers'

quarterly power walks, will slow down long enough to take her group on the easiest, shortest route. She will leave at 11:00 and head north of Ashby Ave. to visit the paths off Russell, Stuart, and Garber Streets. Colleen will point out a few special houses as well as many neighborhood landmarks. The route has some stairs as well as hilly sections, but the pace will be slow enough for conversation. This walk will be suitable for families but not for strollers.

All walkers should arrive ten minutes ahead of schedule and gather at the Claremont entrance to the John Muir School to ensure a prompt departure. (Peet's is nearby on Domingo St. for those who want a pre-walk coffee.)

BPWA launched the summer Path-a-Thons in 2004 — the first few were called Pick-a-Path Picnics — to lure more walkers onto the paths and to demonstrate how they could be woven into urban hikes.

Send questions about the 2009 event to: [colleenneff@earthlink.net](mailto:colleenneff@earthlink.net).

### **BPWA Board Meetings**

The BPWA Board meets on the third Thursday of each month (except Feb, Sept, and Dec) at Music Sources, 1000 The Alameda (at Marin). Observers are welcome. Please enter via the side door at 1842 Marin Ave.

# Six Miles of Paths Await Wanderers in Mill Valley — Glen Lindwall

Nestled at the foot of Mount Tamalpais, Mill Valley has more than six miles of steps, lanes, and trails. This network connects the city's sidewalks to the woodsy hillside neighborhoods and beyond, to mountain trails and Muir Woods. Paths range from 50-foot-long lanes to mile-long trails to rustic stairways with hundreds of steps.

In addition to offering walking routes where conventional sidewalks would be impractical, the city's paths also provide emergency egress and access in an area where fire is always a concern. The local fire department, with particular contributions from Battalion Chief Greg Moore, has worked with residents and groups like the Rotary Club and Boy Scouts to improve accessibility to the paths. At each end of a path, a prominent blue arrow points the way to the safety of the town center, a necessity given Mill Valley's sometimes confusing narrow, winding roads. "Safe evacuation routes complement fire prevention efforts," says Chief Moore.

Wanderers will quickly notice how the paths vary in style and in how much effort went into building them. One of the most charming is the Madrona Steps (#49). Clearly visible in an 1891 photo, the stairs were rebuilt with salvaged bricks about twenty years ago. A brick stamped "Carnegie" near the bottom is a reminder that a nearby house once was the library, built with a grant from Andrew Carnegie. Many other stairways and paths date back to the turn of the 20th Century. They provided convenient

shortcuts compared to the long, circuitous roads and enabled residents to reach downtown and the trains that led to San Francisco ferries in Sausalito. In the last decade, emergency planning and environmental concerns rekindled interest in the paths as residents once again recognized the value of pedestrian routes.

As in Berkeley, civic organizations, city agencies, and neighbors have joined forces to maintain and extend Mill Valley's system. The town has a Steps, Lanes and Paths Volunteers group, which holds regular work parties. Eucalyptus, pressure treated fir, concrete, milled redwood, recycled plastic, railroad ties, and more have gone into new paths. The Rotary club recently installed heavy, prefabricated steps of recycled plastic on a steep path above Marion St. (#35), precisely drilling and assembling them to conform to the slope. The backbreaking labor yielded a solid, attractive, and durable stairway. Equal attention to detail in a very different style characterizes the wooden bridge that scouts built to span Old Mill Creek on Marion Lane (#33). Lumber was carefully precut and milled before it was brought to the site so that the boys could put the bridge together in a single afternoon. Volunteers also installed an impressive course of steps fashioned from heavy duty, pressure-treated fir on Eugene Way (#46), above Throckmorton Avenue. This path also features a welded railing in the steep upper section.

Thanks to the advocacy of Parks Superintendent Rick Misuraca, the city has



**Bridge over Old Mill Creek**

installed concrete steps and walkways in areas that were too challenging for volunteers to tackle, such as path #34, with a graceful, steep stairway at the top. Less daunting paths have been built using railroad ties and volunteer-friendly construction methods. Six paths were completed last year, according to Victoria Talkington, who organizes volunteer efforts. "We hope the town will maintain that pace," she says, adding that one of the many benefits of opening more paths is that they give children safe and easy walking routes to school.

A map of Mill Valley's paths, similar to the BPWA map, costs \$5 at City Hall (6 Corte Madera Ave), the Mill Valley Community Center (180 Camino Alto), and the Mill Valley Library (375 Throckmorton Ave).

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

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

## BPWA Membership/Donation Form

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 \_\_\_\_\_

# Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Summer 2009

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

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*Recognize this giraffe? Tell us where it is, and win a BPWA map and a mention in our next newsletter. Email your answer to ColleenNeff@earthlink.net, or send it to the address below, Attn: Colleen Neff. We will choose at random from the correct answers.*



*Last issue's raised-arm Buddha is located near the top of Oakridge Path in south Berkeley, east of Domingo Ave. Across the path are many chickens and ducks to enjoy as well. There were no correct answers to our location quiz so we will give away a map to two winners who can locate the giraffe.*

**Berkeley Path Wanderers Association**  
1442-A Walnut St. #269  
Berkeley, CA 94709

[www.berkeleypaths.org](http://www.berkeleypaths.org)

## Board Members





LORI KOHLSTAEDT, president  
COLLEEN NEFF, vice president  
CHARLIE BOWEN, path building  
LINDA BRADFORD, external events coordinator  
MARTY CAMPBELL, membership  
JEN ENGLISH, secretary  
SANDY FRIEDLAND, sales committee chair  
STEVE GLAESER, path building  
ANNE HENNY, treasurer  
GLEN LINDWALL, membership/administration  
DALE MILLER, newsletter editor  
KEITH SKINNER, walk coordinator  
JAZ ZAITLIN, internal events coordinator, e-newsletter

**If you see "Mem 09" after your name, you are currently paid through this year. If you see "Renew Req" after your name, you will not receive the Fall newsletter unless you renew your membership. You can renew online or send in the form on page three with a check made out to our fiscal parent BPPF.**



## BPWA Walks

Guided walks take place rain or shine and last 2-3 hours unless otherwise noted. Self-guided walks have no leader, just a starting location and a suggested route. Check [www.berkeleypaths.org](http://www.berkeleypaths.org) for these routes and/or any last minute changes for any walk. People without internet access can call 510 520-3876. Walks are divided into four types:

-  Theme
-  Friendly
-  Power
-  Self Guided

### **October 4, Sunday - 1:30 PM - Informal**

Colleen Neff will lead a one-way walk from the Path Wanderers booth at the Spice of Life Festival on Shattuck Ave in North Berkeley to Cragmont Rock Park for the dance and poetry performances (2:30 to 4 pm by PACES, a dance/poetry collaborative performing company).

### **🔍 October 7, Wednesday - Paths, Creeks & History-10:00 AM [No Leader]**

Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) - 510-520-3876  
**Meeting Place:** In front of Live Oak Park Recreation Center - 1301 Shattuck Ave  
**Transit:** AC #18 bus

A walk in the Upper Codornices and Schoolhouse watersheds. Read Susan Schwartz's excellent summary of the history of this area and follow her route. [www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk\\_Codornices.htm](http://www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk_Codornices.htm)

### **📍 October 17, Saturday - Panoramic Hill Walk - 10:00 AM**

Ron Sipherd. Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876  
**Meeting Place:** Foot of Panoramic at south end of the football stadium. Transit: AC #52L, #7 & #51 buses

An insider's look at this unusual neighborhood with steep steps and hills. Moderate pace. Allow ten minutes to park. Rain cancels. Preview this walk at: [www.well.com/~ronks/pix/panowalk/](http://www.well.com/~ronks/pix/panowalk/)

### **😊 October 22, Thursday - Founder's Walk - 10:00 AM**

Pat DeVito. Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876  
**Meeting Place:** Berkeley Rose Garden - near sign. Transit: AC #67 & #65 buses

Join a BPWA co-founder on a brisk tour of her favorite paths. Includes some steep uphill and brief rest stops. Walk starts promptly at 10 and lasts 2.5 hours, so avoid two-hour parking spots around the park.

## **9/11 National Day of Service**

Service on the paths, September 11, 10 AM-noon. Meet at Virginia Gardens, at the corner of Virginia and West Street for a morning of weeding the Santa Fe Right of Way. Bring-weeding tools, gloves, and drinks. Contact Lori Kohlstaedt at [info@berkeleypaths.org](mailto:info@berkeleypaths.org)  
**Transit:** Short walk from North Berkeley BART, AC #19 & #72 buses

# Berkeley's PATHS

Vol. 12 No. 3

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Autumn 2009

## *Wild Cats at BPWA Annual Meeting! — Jaz Zaitlin*

Do wildcats roam Wildcat Canyon? Are the mountain-lion warning signs at trailheads of some East Bay Regional Parks for real? Can big cats actually turn up in suburbia?

Zara McDonald, founder and director of the Felidae Conservation Fund, will have the answers at BPWA's Annual Meeting on Thursday, October 1, at the Berkeley Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar St. A brief business meeting and election of board members will precede the keynote talk. It all begins at 7 p.m.

Ms. McDonald will introduce the Bay Area Puma Project (BAPP), the first comprehensive study of pumas in this part of California. Also known as mountain lions or cougars, pumas are secretive and elusive animals that usually avoid humans. But rapid land development that fragments their habitat and closes off their movement corridors brings them increasingly into conflict with humans. Researchers hope to learn where these cats live, what their range and dietary needs are, and how to minimize their conflicts with humans.

BAPP is monitoring seven adults and three kittens in the Santa Cruz Mountains and plans to expand to the East Bay and North Bay. Special GPS/accelerometer collars provide detailed information on the cats' movements. New data on the pumas' physiology and activities are revealing how environmental stresses alter their normal behavior.

Ms. McDonald first saw tigers in the wild while studying yoga in India, but her interest in wild cats was piqued after she encountered mountain lions twice while running in the Marin Headlands. She started the first company to produce wrist-

mounted GPS devices and co-founded a venture capital firm that focuses on "green" startups.

In 2006, Ms. McDonald founded the Felidae Conservation Fund. (Felidae is the biological family that includes felids, ranging from house



cats to tigers.) The Tiburon-based nonprofit is dedicated to preserving wild cats and their habitats world wide. The organization works on research and conservation projects, collaborates with scientists and other environmental organizations, and develops outreach and education programs.

BPWA's Annual Meeting is free and open to the public, and light refreshments will be served. Berkeley's Pathways map, which now includes specially designated bicycle boulevards, will be on sale, as will BPWA note cards featuring watercolors of four picturesque paths. Local artist Marlina Rinzen will display her paintings of Berkeley paths.

## Walks Continued

### **November 4, Wednesday - Emeryville Public Art - 10:00 AM [No Leader]**

Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) - 510-520-3876  
Meeting Place: Ruby's Cafe - Hollis & 63rd  
Transit: Emery-Go-Round Shuttle from MacArthur BART or AC #18 bus  
Discover the wealth of public art in Emeryville by following this route: [www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk\\_Emeryvilleart.htm](http://www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk_Emeryvilleart.htm) This walk is flat.

### **November 7, Saturday - Fruitvale Walk - 10:00 AM**

Susan Schwartz, Friends of Five Creeks at [f5creeks@aol.com](mailto:f5creeks@aol.com) 520 848 9358

Meeting Place: Fruitvale BART station  
Transit: Richmond/Fremont BART line

Discover a bit of Central America in this neighborhood of colorful shops, charming streets with early 1900's houses, and small parks. Get a glimpse of Peralta Creek and the historic Peralta mansion.

Optional lunch at local Latin restaurant.

### **November 18, Wednesday - Savoring the Moment - 10:00 AM**

Barbara Robben. Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876  
Meeting Place: Live Oak Park Arts Center  
Transit: AC buses #67, #7, #9, and #18

The focus of this low-impact walk is to take time to smell the roses, observe the small things around you, and enjoy each other's company. Short distance and leisurely pace.

### **December 2, Wednesday - Northbrae Paths & Rock Parks - 10:00 AM [No Leader]**

Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876  
Meeting Place: Corner Santa Barbara and Spruce  
Transit: AC buses #67, #19, #9, and #18  
Follow Pat DeVito's May 1999 walk and enjoy her short history of the Northbrae neighborhood. You'll find the route here: [www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk\\_Northbrae.htm](http://www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk_Northbrae.htm).

### **December 6, Sunday - Ft. Winfield Scott and the Presidio - 11:00 AM**

Keith Skinner. Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876  
Meeting Place: Barnard Hall, 1330 Kobbe Ave., San Francisco (email/call for directions)  
Transit: BART, Muni #28 and #29, and PresidioGo Shuttle (email/call for details)  
Follow Adah Bakalinsky's route from *Stairway Walks in San Francisco* to explore this lovely historic part of the Presidio. Many interesting side trips are nearby, so come prepared to spend the day.

### **December 17, Thursday - StairMaster™ Without the Gym - 10:00 AM**

Collen Neff. Contact Keith Skinner at [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876  
Meeting Place: Walnut St. adjacent to the Berryman Path

A vigorous pre-holiday calorie burner. Fast paced with a lot of steps and great views. Includes the newly opened Northgate Path.

## Path Parties: A Change of Pace — Sandy Friedland

Berkeley's paths provide handy short-cuts, stunning vistas, heart-pumping exercise, and a way to reduce your carbon footprint. And one more thing: You can party on them. BPWA has learned of path lovers who have used the paths to celebrate events, raise money, and entertain children.

For example, when Deb Trillia hit fifty in 2007, she marked the occasion by inviting 25 friends and relatives to take a path walk on a Sunday afternoon. She gave out copies of a route that started at her house on Yolo Ave, just off The Alameda, and included five paths and lots of scenic streets. To make the afternoon more interesting, she incorporated a scavenger-hunt-like quiz. Her questions ranged from "What is above the mail box at #3 Oak Path?" to "How many steps run between Scenic Ave. and Hawthorn Terrace?"

"I told everyone to have fun, be careful crossing streets, and enjoy the views," said Deb, who moved to Berkeley from walker-friendly England in 1983. "People were thrilled with the walk. Many of them called it eye opening."

At the end of the walk, Deb went over the answers with pictures she had taken before the party. While people were enjoying sushi, tea, and cookies, she gave out another quiz with questions about the year she was born and some local history, including "Where was Maybeck's first house?" and "For whom is the city of Berkeley named?" She gave BPWA's Berkeley's Pathways map as prizes.

Last spring, BPWA Vice President Colleen Neff found a clever way to raise money for the Berkeley Montessori School, where her younger son was a student. She sold ten tickets for \$30 each to what she billed as a Path Picnic. When the day arrived, she greeted participants with goody bags filled with a BPWA map, trail mix, bottled water, and a Band-Aid. Starting at her house on Shattuck, her route featured 12 paths, which varied in length from three-part Easter Path to the aptly named Short Cut.

Colleen planned frequent eating stops featuring food from some of Berkeley's notable restaurants and bakeries. At Cragmont Rock Park, for instance, she



*Deb Trillia and mailbox at #3 Oak St. Path*

served cupcakes from Love at First Bite and cider from the North Berkeley Farmer's market. At Codornices Park, she served crackers and Cheeseboard cheese. When the group descended back to Shattuck, they enjoyed French macarons at Masse's and crispy potato puffs from Gregoire.

Even before BPWA formed and published Berkeley's first path map, residents recognized the potential of using the paths for events. The Berkwood Hedge School, a private elementary school, held annual fundraisers called "400 Steps" from 1994-1996. Local architects, historians, and horticulturists led groups of 15-20 participants along a carefully planned route, leaving at staggered times. Everyone got a detailed guidebook that noted significant houses and other points of interest. Each year focused on a different neighborhood.

This writer has developed a children's scavenger hunt in the Claremont-Uplands neighborhood that features a flight of stairs that go nowhere next to the lower part of the Footway, a serpent doorbell on a house on Park Path, a green door with no house just above Claremont Path, and whimsical art near upper Oakridge Path.

BPWA would like to post information on our website about the ways people have used the paths for parties. E-mail your ideas to [info@berkeleypaths.org](mailto:info@berkeleypaths.org).

### **BPWA Board Meetings**

The BPWA Board meets on the third Thursday of each month (except Feb, Oct, and Dec) at Music Sources, 1000 The Alameda (at Marin). Observers are welcome. Please enter via the side door at 1842 Marin Ave.

Meet the Paths:

# Steep Northgate is a Work in Progress

— Colleen Neff

Forget about the StairMaster™ at the gym. Soon you'll be able to work out on the 200+ steps of Northgate Path. BPWA volunteers have been hard at work on it since April. It is by far the steepest, most technically challenging path we have tackled. When completed, Northgate will connect Shasta Road with Northgate Ave near Glendale-LaLoma Park.

Charlie Bowen, BPWA path-building leader, got more requests for Northgate Path to be developed than for any other unfinished path. Neighbors wanted a shortcut down to Rose Walk and to shops and buses. Fitness walkers wanted a connection from Tamalpais Path to the three-part Glendale Path stairs, so they could head up to Atlas Path and onto the Selby Trail in Tilden.

Charlie and her second-in-command, Steve Glaeser, pondered how to tackle Northgate. The just-completed lower section of Covert Path gave their crew a chance to hone their skills on steep terrain. However, the slope was not their only problem. Two fences cut across the path, and a guardrail blocked access to its top.

When the time was right, BPWA paid a surveyor to mark the boundaries of the ten-foot wide, city-owned right of way. Because the steps BPWA uses are only three feet wide, Charlie and Steve had some leeway in designing the path. They carefully planned Northgate's course, avoiding some landscaping near the top. Neighbors cooperated with BPWA to remove the fences. We will work with the city to open the guardrail.

With its 100-foot elevation gain, Northgate leaves no room for error. Every fifty-pound step must be placed perfectly. The top of each is 6" higher than the last (the rise), and its leading edge must be 13" from the front of the next (the run). Charlie checks to make sure every step is level and in the right spot before volunteers fix it with rebar.

Thanks to late rains, the soil on Northgate was perfect for construction to start in April. By June, neighbors provided water so work could continue. Two Boy Scouts, Rob Loebel and Huntly Morrison, also have been invaluable on Northgate Path. Both boys came to work parties on the path and consulted with Charlie as they planned their projects, so they were prepared for problems that



*Delivering new steps is no easy task!*

can arise when installing steps. They trained their peers to help install 25 steps each for the community service and leadership requirements for their Eagle Scout rank.

Proceeds from BPWA dues, maps, and donations will cover the \$3,800 cost of supplies and the survey for Northgate Path. But only our volunteers' hard work is making this dream come true for everyone who loves to climb high into the Berkeley Hills. Northgate Path should be done in November.

\*\*\*\*\*

If you want to help complete Northgate Path or any others, e-mail Charlie Bowen ([charlie\\_paths@comcast.net](mailto:charlie_paths@comcast.net)).



*Charlie Bowen (left) checks the position of a new step.*

*Tax-deductible household memberships in the BPWA are \$5.00 and cover one calendar year. If you can give more, please consider a donation. Benefits include a newsletter and other BPWA mailings and emails. You can join or donate online at [www.berkeleypaths.org](http://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

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 to BPPF)

# Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Autumn 2009

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.*

*Do you know where in Berkeley you can find this cool skeleton playing his saxophone? Tell us where it is and win a BPWA map and a mention in our newsletter. Email your answer to [ColleenNeff@earthlink.net](mailto:ColleenNeff@earthlink.net) or send it to the Path Wanderers address below, Attn: Colleen Neff*



*We will choose a winner at random from the correct answers.*

*The metal sculpture of a giraffe that was pictured in our last issue stands on the north side of Russell St. near the bottom of Oak Knoll Path.*

Look for the BPWA booth at the The Solano Stroll, Sept. 13 on Solano Avenue in Berkeley/Albany and at the Spice of Life festival, Oct. 4 on Shattuck Ave. in North Berkeley.

**Berkeley Path Wanderers Association**  
1442-A Walnut St. #269  
Berkeley, CA 94709

[www.berkeleypaths.org](http://www.berkeleypaths.org)

## Board Members





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ANNE HENNY, treasurer  
GLEN LINDWALL, newsletter editor  
DALE MILLER, newsletter editor emeritus  
KEITH SKINNER, walk coordinator  
JAZ ZAITLIN, internal events coordinator, e-newsletter

## Attention '09 Members:

**Avoid the year-end crunch and renew your membership now for 2010! You can renew online or send in the form on page three with a check made out to our fiscal parent BPPF.**

## BPWA Walks

Guided walks take place rain or shine and last 2-3 hours unless otherwise noted. Self-guided walks have no leader, just a starting location and a suggested route. Check [www.berkeleypaths.org](http://www.berkeleypaths.org) for these routes and/or any last minute changes for any walk. People without internet access can call 510 520-3876. Walks are divided into four types:

-  Theme
-  No Theme (Friendly)
-  Power
-  Self Guided

### **January 2, Saturday - Aquatic Park Renaissance - 10 a.m. [THEME]**

**Leader: Susan Schwartz, Friends of Five Creeks at [f5creeks@aol.com](mailto:f5creeks@aol.com). 510 848 9358. Meeting Place: Addison St. at Bolivar Dr. Transit: AC #51 bus**  
A level loop walk around Aquatic Park. Discover the original Bay shoreline, WPA improvements from the Great Depression, and new community efforts helping to revive Berkeley's largest park. Rough but OK for wheelchairs and strollers. Rain or shine. No dogs please.

### **January 6, Wednesday - Park Hills Walk - 10 a.m. [SELF-GUIDED]**

**No Leader. Print directions below and bring with you. Walk alone or with others. Questions: Keith Skinner - [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876. Meeting Place: Park Gate and Shasta Rd. Transit: AC #65 bus**

Read Paul Grundland's history of the Park Hills annexation, and retrace his April 2000 walk. [http://www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk\\_ParkHills.htm](http://www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/walk_ParkHills.htm)

### **January 22, Friday - SFROW/Ohlone Greenway Stroll - 10 a.m. [NO-THEME]**

**Leader: Keith Skinner. [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510 520 3276 . Meeting Place: University at West St. (between Acton and Chestnut). Transit: AC #51 bus or BART (North Berkeley Station).**

See recent changes to the semi-developed Santa Fe Right-of-way, and travel north beyond the Berkeley city limits. Option to BART back. Well-behaved dogs on leash permitted.

### **February 3, Wednesday - Panoramic Hill Walk - 10 a.m. [SELF-GUIDED]**

**No Leader. Print directions below and bring with you. Walk alone or with others. Questions: Keith Skinner - [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876. Meeting Place: Panoramic Way and Orchard Lane. Transit: AC #7, #51 or #52L**

Read Ron Sipherd's in-depth history of Panoramic Hill, and retrace his October 2009 walk. <http://www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/091017Panoramic.pdf>

## HOLIDAYS ARE COMING!

*BPWA maps and notecards make great holiday gifts. They can be ordered through our web site:*

[www.berkeleypaths.org](http://www.berkeleypaths.org)

*Maps are also available in many local book (and other) stores. Mrs. Dalloway's on College Ave. sells the notecards.*

# Berkeley's PATHS

Vol. 12 No. 4

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Winter 2009/10

## Another Great Year for Berkeley Pathwanderers

— Lori Kohlstaedt

Back in 2004, I contacted BPWA hoping to volunteer. The biotech startup I worked for had died, leaving me jobless. I wanted to spend some of my involuntary spare time in a useful way. During the next year, I did some path building and worked at the booth at street fairs. Then, in the fall of 2005, I was asked to join the Board of Directors. I was working again and no longer had ample leisure, but I was hooked by my interest in Berkeley's paths and the people who give time and talent to promote them.

Now as 2009 ends, I am finishing a second term on the Board and a second year as president. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with the exceptional people who volunteer for BPWA, a part of the extraordinary community that flourishes in Berkeley. Everything at BPWA is done with volunteer labor, from the dedicated workers of all ages and backgrounds who show up for path building to the able folks on the Board. As former Board member Barbara West says "the people on the Path Wanderers Board are grown-ups," meaning everyone pulls their weight and decisions are reached in an astonishingly amicable spirit of cooperation.

In the last four years, BPWA has opened ten additional paths. The easy paths are finished, those we tackle now present real engineering challenges. If you haven't already done so, I invite you to take a walk to see what I mean. Try Covert Path with its meandering course that crosses a small stream, or the nearly-completed Northgate Path with its steep slopes and retaining walls.

In the current hard times, the paths are more important than ever. There is a renaissance in their use as commuter routes as more of us turn to walking for economic



*Outgoing president Lori Kohlstaedt (left) welcomes new president Colleen Neff*

and environmental reasons. The paths are also a free alternative to a gym membership. Finally, as we walk our paths we enjoy beautiful scenery, breathtaking vistas and points of human interest. The paths are an inexhaustible source of pleasure.

You, our members, have remained loyal supporters. Although donations are down, as they are to all nonprofits this year, our membership numbers are unchanged. Consider making a year end donation to BPWA. Although our overhead is very low, we need cash to continue our work. Each wood tie step on a path costs more than \$16. A professional survey, required before we can start on a new path, averages \$2000.

I invite you to become a more active member. Take advantage of the many fascinating guided walks Keith Skinner, our walk coordinator, plans for you. Consider volunteering for path building or for one of the several committees that handle tasks like map updates, sales or events. Although term limits prevent me from continuing on the BPWA Board this year, I'll be around. I hope to see you.

## Walks Continued

### February 11, Thursday - **Winter Power Walk - 10 a.m. [POWER WALK]**

**Leader:** Colleen Neff. **Contact Keith Skinner at** [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876

**Meeting Place:** Great Stoneface Park, Thousand Oaks & San Fernando, at picnic table. **Transit:** AC #7 bus

A vigorous walk to Kensington Circle, around some of the Kensington paths and return via Visalia. A fast-paced walk with some steep hills. No dogs please.

### February 20, Saturday - **Pooches On The Paths - 10 a.m. [THEME]**

**Leader:** Lynn Deregowski. **Contact Keith Skinner at** [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876

**Meeting Place:** Rose Garden by the main sign **Transit:** AC buses #67 & #65

Share a pleasant walk with your best friend. There is a limit of 10 dogs, one dog per person. All dogs must be on a leash, under constant control, well-behaved and sociable. RSVP to Keith Skinner with your dog's name. Some steep inclines but pace will be moderate and there will be a lengthy stop at La Loma Park.

### March 3, Wednesday - **Southeast Campus Architecture - 10 a.m. [THEME]**

**Leader:** Alan Kaplan. **Contact Keith Skinner at** [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876.

**Meeting Place:** Sather Gate, UC Campus **Transit:** AC buses #51 and #1R

Alan will cover the architectural treasures on the southeast campus, including Barrows Hall, Hearst Gym, Wurster Hall and the UC Music Library. Relatively flat, moderate pace. No dogs please.

### March 17, Wednesday - **Grizzly Peak Walk - 10 a.m. [SELF-GUIDED]**

**No Leader. Print directions below and bring with you. Walk alone or with others. Questions:** Keith Skinner - [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876. **Meeting Place:** Rose Garden by sign. **Transit:** AC #65 or #67 bus

Retrace cofounder Pat DeVito's walk from the Rose Garden to Grizzly Peak and back. <http://www.berkeleypaths.org/walkhandouts/091022Founders.pdf>

### March 27, Saturday - **El Cerrito's Hidden Paths, Urban Paths & Mid-Century Marvels - 10 a.m. [THEME] - Co-Sponsored by the El Cerrito Historical Society**

**Leader:** Dave Weinstein. **Contact Keith Skinner at** [keithskinner.public@gmail.com](mailto:keithskinner.public@gmail.com) 510-520-3876

**Meeting Place:** Moeser Lane & Shevlin Drive, NW corner (parking on Shevlin). **Transit:** BART, AC #7, or BART to El Cerrito Del Norte and AC #7

Dave Weinstein, El Cerrito Historical Society board member and author of *It Came from Berkeley, Signature Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area and Berkeley Rocks*, leads a tour along El Cerrito's unmarked paths, through its wilderness park, and past some of its significant architecture. Portions of the walk are steep. Well-behaved dogs on leash welcomed.

## Volunteer Spotlight

# Barbara Robben: Artist's Eye, Athlete's Heart

—Keith Skinner

You may have seen her point out some small detail in one of Berkeley's older churches, or perhaps you found yourself trying to follow her lead in coaxing music out of a metal handrail or an old stump. Or you may have looked over her shoulder to catch a glimpse of one of her colorful sketches. Barbara Robben not only brings lively enthusiasm to the walks she leads, she also brings an artist's careful attention to detail - the hidden treasures in plain view that often go unnoticed in our work-a-day world.

A dedicated athlete, Barbara has been competing in triathlons, half marathons, and swim meets for 50 years. "I love competition," she says. "Athletes give everything they can, do the best they can, and then it's over, and we can all be friends."

Now in her 70's, Barbara usually takes the honors for her age group. "It's really the golden age of running now," she explains, adding that she plans to complete 100 races this year.

An avid swimmer, Barbara began as a lifeguard in high school, progressed through the life saving program, and eventually found herself in an aquatic school receiving instruction from Navy Seals. She has swum in such daring events as the Alcatraz Island Loop that require excellent physical conditioning, sound strategy, and sheer grit.

Athletics wasn't the only thing that fired young Barbara's determination. In her student days at UC Berkeley, Barbara was an aspiring clarinetist, although female musicians had few opportunities. Rather than chasing one of the two clarinet seats in the orchestra, she tried to join the marching band. When she learned women weren't allowed, she began living a double life: studying geology at Cal but spending the football season in schools that did permit women in the marching band. All was forgiven when she became the first woman in the UC Concert Band.

After graduation, she stayed in town, becoming an archetypal Berkeleyan. "I liked the freedom of Berkeley. There was no prejudice, no social recriminations."



Barbara Robben (center) and walkers

Her love of nature is also a lifelong passion. She relishes fresh air and moving at her own pace. She once worked for the East Bay Regional Park District at Coyote Hills Regional Park in Fremont. She spent five years working with her mentor Norm Kidder, the Park District's renowned expert in the Stone Age and primitive technology. She even learned to build and sail the type of boats the Ohlone Indians built from tule rushes.

Barbara is a great fan of the BPWA. "I like the fact that Path Wanderers doesn't charge for its walks or require reservations." And she loves the Berkeley Pathways map, buying 25 at a time, marking them up for special walks or giving them as gifts.

Luckily for BPWA, this warm and intriguing woman with all her skills keeps coming up with new themes for walks. "I really enjoy the preparation and sharing new ideas with people. Sometimes the walks work, and sometimes they don't. But I don't like to repeat; I like innovation."

Barbara prefers to walk or take the bus whenever possible. "I feel sorry for people in cars," she says. "They miss out on all the adventure."



Image courtesy Brightroom.com

## BPWA Board Meetings

The BPWA Board meets on the third Thursday of each month (except Feb, Sept, and Dec) at Music Sources, 1000 The Alameda at Marin. Observers are welcome. Please enter via the side door at 1842 Marin Ave.

Thursday, February 18:

# BPWA Winter Meeting To Focus on City's Pedestrian Master Plan

--Steve Glaeser and Sandy Friedland

With nearly 400 miles of sidewalks, 150 public paths, and many scenic vistas, Berkeley ought to be a walkers' delight. But city officials and advocates for pedestrians and the disabled believe that walking in the city needs to be easier for the elderly and disabled as well as safer and more enjoyable for all pedestrians. To that end, they have been working with citizen groups to produce a long-range Pedestrian Master Plan. The plan also suggests ways to reduce the number of private vehicles on the roads.

Eric Anderson, Association Planner - Bicycle and Pedestrian for the city of Berkeley, will discuss the current draft of the plan at BPWA's winter meeting Thursday February 18th at 7:00 p.m. at the North Berkeley Senior Center. The center is on the northeast corner of Hearst and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, with street parking available. The program is free and open to the public, and light refreshments will be served.

Steve Glaeser, BPWA's co-chair of path building, will also report on our recent progress in expanding and improving the path system.

The goal of the Pedestrian Master Plan is to "create a model bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly city where bicycling and walking are safe, attractive, easy, and convenient forms of transportation and recreation for people of all ages and abilities.

"I think it is really important for those of us who love walking around Berkeley to learn more about the Pedestrian Plan," says Charlie Bowen, who leads BPWA's path building volunteers and has been

monitoring the development of the plan. "It's even more important for the city transportation staff to hear our concerns and interests. This will be a wonderful opportunity to show support for the paths, and I hope we will have a strong turnout of BPWA members."

The long-awaited Master Plan identifies a number of high- priority projects that would enhance pedestrian safety at the city's busiest intersections. Suggested improvements include adding countdown pedestrian signals at intersections with stoplights, making crosswalks more visible, and installing ADA-compliant curb ramps. The plan also recommends curb extensions, or "bulb-outs," where practical. These extensions usually reach about six feet into the street to align with the edge of parked cars.

The plan also recommends that the city continue work with residents who live adjacent to pathways and with

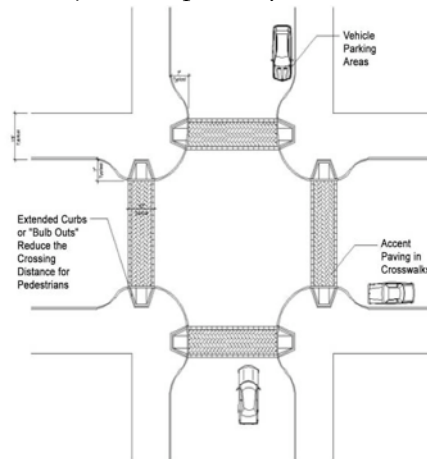


BPWA "to protect, maintain, and expand residential connections, including easements and historically used pedestrian short cuts, that reduce walking distances and encourage walking."

To that end, the plan also recommends the city continue to make repairs and safety improvements on public paths and restore unimproved paths, as well as identify incentives for developers and architects to provide public pathways within new developments.

In 2000, Berkeley adopted a master Bicycle Plan to make cycling safer and more efficient. The seven specially designated Bicycle Boulevards are an outgrowth of that plan.

The full text of the Pedestrian Master Plan and Index is available at: [http://www.altaprojects.net/berkeleypedestrianplan/index\\_files/Documents.htm](http://www.altaprojects.net/berkeleypedestrianplan/index_files/Documents.htm)



*Tax-deductible household memberships in the BPWA are \$5.00 and cover one calendar year. If you can give more, please consider a donation. Benefits include a newsletter and other BPWA mailings and emails. You can join or donate online at [www.berkeleypaths.org](http://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

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 to BPPF)

# Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Winter 2009/10

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.*

*Do you know where in Berkeley you can find this big-mouthed guardian of the goldfish? Tell us where it is and win a BPWA map and a mention in our newsletter. Email your answer to [ColleenNeff@earthlink.net](mailto:ColleenNeff@earthlink.net) or send it to the Path Wanderers address below, Attn: Colleen Neff. We will choose a winner at random from the correct answers.*



*The metal sculpture of a saxophonist that was pictured in our last issue is located on Marin Avenue just up the hill from the Marin Circle fountain. Eve Lednicky of Berkeley was selected from those who submitted correct answers to win a free BPWA map.*

*Photo: Ron Sipherd*

**Berkeley Path Wanderers Association**  
1442-A Walnut St. #269  
Berkeley, CA 94709

[www.berkeleypaths.org](http://www.berkeleypaths.org)

## Board Members

LORI KOHLSTAEDT, president  
COLLEEN NEFF, vice president  
CHARLIE BOWEN, path building  
LINDA BRADFORD, external events coordinator  
MARTY CAMPBELL, membership  
JEN ENGLISH, secretary  
SANDY FRIEDLAND, sales committee chair  
STEVE GLAESER, path building  
ANNE HENNY, treasurer  
GLEN LINDWALL, newsletter editor  
DALE MILLER, newsletter editor emeritus  
KEITH SKINNER, walk coordinator  
JAZ ZAITLIN, internal events coordinator, e-newsletter

Lawrence "Buzz" Cardoza, Mary Ross Lynch, Emma Morris and Kuniko Weltin-Wu will join the board in January

## Attention '09 Members:

**Your '09 Membership expires on 12/31/09. Please renew now if you don't see "Mem 10" after your name. You can renew online or send in the form on page three with a check made out to our fiscal parent BPPF.**