BPWA’s 13th Annual Path-a-thon is Sunday, July 10th: Celebrating Southside Paths With Three Walks, One Picnic

Mark your calendars for our lucky 13th Annual Path-a-thon on Sunday, July 10. We will offer three guided walks that leave at staggered times and vary in distance and difficulty.

Each walk starts in front of John Muir School (2955 Claremont Avenue) and will return there by 11:45.

Unfortunately, the grounds of the school are closed during a major construction project, so our traditional BYO picnic will be at nearby Monkey Island Park, located at Garber St. and Claremont Blvd., a short walk or drive from the school.

We will provide lemonade and our always-delicious carrot cake.

Throughout the morning, our pop-up store will be open for business in front of John Muir, featuring BPWA tee shirts, caps, tote bags, walking guidebooks, notecards, posters, and — of course — our best-selling map, Berkeley and Its Pathways.

Sandy Friedland will lead the most challenging walk, starting at 9:45. This 5-mile route passes behind the Clark Kerr campus and by the new steps, installed by BPWA path builders, at the top of Dwight Way. Walkers will continue to Orchard Lane to start climbing Panoramic Hill. Be prepared for steep stairs and streets, architectural gems, and wide-angle views. You’ll return via the lower Jordan Fire Trail and a hidden path with some uneven footing through a redwood forest.

The moderate walk will leave at 10:15 led by Elsa Tranter. Her route wends through the hilly streets and paths below the Claremont Hotel. You’ll see noteworthy homes, colorful gardens, and Bay views. To finish with some heart-pumping aerobics, Elsa will head up some of the Stonewall-Panoramic Trail in the Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve.

Those who prefer an easy, family-friendly stroll, should meet Kay Englund at 10:45. She’ll lead you along some lovely streets, let you smell the roses at St. Clements Church, and show you some yard art and interesting gates. Grand mansions abound, including one with stone lions that houses a renowned Feng Shui master. The route includes Oak Knoll Path, which is steep but has no stairs.

So pick your walk, pack your lunch, and bring your family and friends to this fun event.
Pooches-On-The-Paths Walks Delight Dogs and Their People

Pooches on the Paths began in 2007. When the walk’s coordinator Keith Skinner wanted to try offering some walks geared to dogs and dog lovers. He asked Lynda Derevanski and her dog Bronte to help lead them. Keith assured her he would help with logistics.

“We thought we have to twist the paw of my Lab mix to say yes!” recalls Lynda, who soon joined the BPWA board.

The first few walks attracted a great mix of friendly people and dogs, so BPWA continued to schedule them. When Bronte began to slow down, Lynda’s younger dog Figgy took over.

In 2013, former BPWA board member Betsy Mueller and her dog Wally, regulars on the pooches walks, began helping Lynn plan and lead the walks. Their successful every-park-in-Berkeley series, always cleverly described with lots of pet puns, launched last September.

“Help us spread the word.”

Coffee Constitutional in Northbrae Sunday, September 25 @ 10:00 a.m.

Lynn Derevanski and Figgy (left) and Betsy Mueller and Wally take a break in Glendale-LaLoma Park.

Sophie and Diane Schwartz take the air in Crescent Park.

Photo by by Heather Scholder

(Parks Continued)

First of its kind for BPWA! Help us spread the word.

Teens and Tweens Take to the Trails Sunday, August 21/1:00 p.m.

Leaders: Celia Lehmann Duke and Devon Luce

Start: SE corner of Vine and Shattuck

If you are ten- to sixteen-years old, this is the perfect walk for you! Celia’s and Devon’s 3.5 mile loop will cover several of our favorite paths in the North Berkeley hills, including some with steep steps and uneven terrain. We will visit Remillard Park and explore other hidden treasures in the area. We will finish the walk at Lush Gelato, just a few steps from our start, for a celebratory post-hike treat. Bring a friend and money for a cup of cone.

Pooches on the Paths: Celebrating Our Seniors Saturday, September 17 @ 10:00 a.m.

Leaders: Figgy & Wally

Start: Northwest corner of Russell Street and Claremont Avenue

Is your canine companion a card-carrying member of AA-ARF-P? If so, this will be your lucky day! The Pooches on the Paths crew is dedicating this installment of their All-the-Parks-in-Berkeley series to the sensational Celia Lehmann Duke and Devon Luce Leaders:

Saturday, September 17 @ 10:00 a.m.

Celebrating Our Seniors

See the details in the walk column on this page.

“Do Wally and Figgy enjoy the walks?”

Lynda: “No. All the dogs on our walks are friendly, well-behaved, and enjoy together. Most of the time, the dogs are on leash, and they do very well on the stair paths. We do try to have at least one off-leash stop so the dogs can run free.

Are you involved with other organizations dedicated to dogs?”

Lynn: “Rescue dogs are close to both Betsy’s and my heart. I spend a lot of time with rescue animals as a dog walker and bio writer for Berkeley Animal Care Services (BACS), our municipal shelter. I’m on the board of Friends of BACS and have raised service dogs for people with disabilities. Figgy is one of those dogs but didn’t make the cut. She’s known as a change-of-career dog.

Betsy: Wally comes from ARF (Animal Rescue Foundation) in Walnut Creek. It was love at first sight. I was supposed to “interview” five dogs at ARF, and Wally was the first. She was so loving and adorable, I just said, “I’ll take this one!”

Our next Pooches-on-the-Paths walk is on Saturday, September 17. See the details in the walk column on this page.

Remembering Eleanor Gibson, BPWA Co-Founder

Eleanor Gibson, one of the four co-founders of the Berkeley Path Wanderers Association, died on May 18. She was 96.

In late 1997, Eleanor, a retired special education teacher, along with Jacquie Ensign, a retired social worker; Pat DeVito, a lawyer who had worked for the Berkeley Parks Department; and Ruth Armstrong (nee Moskovitz), an artist and longtime advocate for Berkeley parks, began talking about how to ensure the survival of Berkeley’s parks.

“Our backgrounds were different,” recalled Pat, “but we were all avid path walkers.”

One of the first tasks they tackled was surveying the condition of the paths and updating an inventory that the city had done in 1977.

“Eleanor broadened the scope of our evaluation to include the aesthetics, like the views, which were important to her,” said Pat.

Among many other findings, they discovered that 111 paths were missing signs.

Eleanor also made an important change to the BPWA mission statement that Pat had drafted. The original read: “Dedicated to the creation, preservation, and restoration of public paths, steps, and walkways in Berkeley for the use and enjoyment of all citizens.”

“She wanted it to be more inclusive,” said Pat, “so she cut the word citizens.”

The women held their first open meeting May 25, 1998. To their delight, more than 100 people turned out, and BPWA was born. “Eleanor was very smart, pleasant to work with, and assumed the thankless job of taking minutes at all our meetings,” Jacque said.

Born in Duluth, MN, Eleanor raised her family in South Nyack, NY, but she moved to Berkeley in 1989 to be closer to her children and grandchildren. She lived in a tiny, beautifully appointed cottage behind the house of her daughter Austene Hall.

She immersed herself in Berkeley civic life, serving on the Shade Tree Commission and the Commission on Aging, working for the Democratic Party, and joining the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.

Austene describes her mother as an independent thinker and lifelong learner who loved history, geography, and English grammar and read five books a week. She also was a master gardener.

“She was a woman of varied talents,” Austene said, “who made her mark on the world in so many ways. We were never bored around her.”
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Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Summer 2016

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association, an affiliate of Berkeley Partners for Parks, is dedicated to the creation, preservation, and restoration of public paths and stairways for the use and enjoyment of all. We are a community of volunteers who work to increase awareness of Berkeley's pathways. Our activities include guided walks, mapping Berkeley's path network, and building and maintaining paths on previously inaccessible city-owned rights-of-way.

Pick up a copy of the 7th edition of Berkeley and Its Pathways at these vendors:
Berkeley Ace Hardware
Berkeley Architectural Heritage Assoc.
Berkeley City Club
Berkeley Historical Society
Berkeley Hort Books, Inc. (new location on Shattuck)
Builders Booksource
The Campus Store
East Bay Nursery
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Oakland Museum gift shop
Payn’s Stationery
Pegasus Books, Solano & Shattuck
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UC Berkeley Botanical Garden

Having walked 16 + miles through five parks on June 5, these tired but happy hikers await the #18 bus for a welcome ride back to Berkeley. Leading our Sixth Annual Long Walk were the terrific teens, Zeke Gerwein and Jacob Lehmanna Duke (2nd and 4th from the left in back row). Thanks boys, and congratulations to all the finishers!

Photo by Colleen Neff