BPWA's Annual Long Walk, June 5th: Five East Bay Parks in a Single Day

You may have hiked the hills of Tilden or the scenic trails in Redwood but never contemplated going from one of these East Bay Regional Parks to another on foot. It's actually possible to walk from Wildcat to Chabot, some thirty miles, entirely on trails.

On BPWA's 6th annual Long Walk, Sunday, June 5th, you'll get a taste of how many of these special parks you can explore in a single day.

Led by our good friends Jacob Lehmann Duke and Zeke Gerwein, this 15.5-mile adventure is for those who like a challenging hike with good company. We'll walk on wide trails with incredible views and narrow ones that snake through canyons. We'll pass fern-covered hillsides, follow streams, and traverse stands of towering redwoods.

Be prepared for 3,000' of elevation gain, many hours of walking, and great conversations — starting on many topics and narrowing to just one: our aching feet.

Jacob and Zeke rose to path-wandering fame when they led BPWA's walk-every-path series in 2014. Since then, we've been lucky to count the teens as regular hike leaders. Like their other walks, this one will be brisk and full of surprises.

We'll start at the intersection of Shattuck and Virginia at 8:45 a.m., proceed through campus, and then go up some steep stairways on Panoramic Hill. From there, we'll climb the north side of Claremont Canyon to Grizzly Peak Blvd. and then descend on the East Bay Skyline National Recreation Trail.

After we cross EBMUD land, we'll reach Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve and then Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve, where we'll stop for a BYO picnic.

Then we'll head up winding tree-lined paths and into Redwood to pick up the Stream Trail. A final ascent on the switchbacks of the Fern Trail will put us on the West Ridge. The extensive trails in Joaquin Miller Park then will take us down to Mountain Blvd.

We'll go through the pedestrian tunnel under Highway 13 and walk a short way on sidewalks to an AC Transit bus stop on Park Blvd. Our final steps will put us aboard the #18 bus for a very welcome ride back to our start.

[See more walks on page 2]
BPWA Path Builders Replace Dangerous Steps on Panoramic Hill

By Sandy Friedland

Some sure-footed folks who love to climb hills and build paths have made it safer and easier to get to the top of Panoramic Hill.

Under the auspices of a new group called Take to the Hills, BPWA's woodcarving and landscaping volunteers recently finished installing 18 wood steps at the bottom of the Clark Kerr Trail. It starts from the bottom of Dwight Way and ends at Panoramic Way.

Of course, easier is relative. Above the new steps, hikers still face a narrow, steep path with more forested and wetland habitat. The Cal Recreational Sports website calls this trail "a real gut buster."

"The steps are a great improvement," Jim says, adding that many students head up the hill to relax and enjoy the view, often in flip-flops or sandals. BPWA recently finished installing 18 wood steps at the bottom of Panoramic Hill.

The group consists of many volunteers who have already started removing Scotch broom from Panoramic Hill.

"Steve's and Charlie's expertise and willingness to pitch in made the first stage a breeze," Jim says. "We're getting enthusiastic feedback from neighbors and hikers each time we are out there."

Panoramic Hill Offers Stuning Vistas and More

This article is adapted from a Richard M. White, wrote for the Claremont Canyon Conservancy newsletter.

Panoramic Hill is well named as it offers great views of San Francisco and the Bay. To the south is Claremont Reservoir, and to the north lies Strawberry Canyon, both forested and scenic. On the hill itself is a neighborhood of architectural gems designed by landmarks like Bernard Maybeck, Julia Morgan, and even Frank Lloyd Wright.

"Your BPWA map is a good guide to the stairs and winding streets on the hill and the trail to nearby hiking trails. Claremont Canyon Conservancy has an up-to-date list of the trails at claremontcanyon.org/maps.php."

An easy way to reach Panoramic Hill is from Bancroft Steps, east of campus. At the top go straight onto Prospect St. to Panoramic Way. To this top of Panoramic Way.

To find your way down, watch for small, blue and gold signs on trees, fences, utility poles, and even a garage. Designed and installed by residents, these signs show the start of Panoramic Trail, a broad, linear-access dirt road that heads north 2.5 miles to Glendora Peak Rd. This sign also points toward the fountain on the top of Panoramic Trail.

The fountain, on the other side of the street, is the landmarked Orchard Lane. Halfway up Orchard, turn left onto Orchard Way. At the next intersection, turn right onto Scoutwood Lane, noting the Wright house on the right, and take Orchard Way to Panoramic Hill.

For more information, contact the Claremont Canyon Conservancy at (510) 639-3600 or ccc@claremontcanyon.org. 

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If “Mem ‘15” appears by your name, this will be your last newsletter unless you renew your membership by returning the form on p. 3 or visiting: berkeleypaths.org/joinrenew/

Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Spring, 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 community volunteers who work to increase awareness of Berkeley’s pathways. Our activities include offering guided walks, mapping Berkeley’s path network, and building and maintaining the paths with wood-tie steps on previously inaccessible city-owned rights-of-way.

Special Thanks To Our Generous Supporters

Since its founding 18 years ago, BPWA has kept dues at just $5. The good news is we have more members than ever, but their dues cover only a fraction of our expenses. To fulfill our mission, we depend on the generosity of our members, our map and merchandise sales, and occasional grants. We sincerely thank the following donors who, since last March, gave at least $25 in addition to their dues.

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