



Working Together in 2012

Berkeley Partners for Parks is a citywide nonprofit supporting parks and open spaces in Berkeley through encouraging citizen involvement.

For 18 years, Berkeley Partners for Parks' volunteer citizen groups have worked to create a green and friendly city by increasing and enhancing recreation and open spaces. BPPF provides (a) nonprofit status so our partner groups can accept tax-deductible contributions, (b) back-office necessities including accounting and insurance, and (c) collegiality, inspiration, a wide range of experience, advice on grants and funding sources, and valuable partnerships.

Here is a sampler from 2012:

Berkeley Garden Club, Aquatic Park: Tending the garden



Civic beautification projects have important to the Berkeley Garden Club throughout its 80-year history. An example is the Dreamland Butterfly-Hummingbird Ecology Garden, next to the popular Aquatic Park Dreamland for Kids playground (built by Berkeley Partners for Parks volunteers over a decade ago) .

In this joint project, a group of 4-6 Berkeley Garden Club volunteers tends the colorful plantings on Friday mornings. The City of Berkeley provides mulch, fence repairs and a water hook-up.

The garden spotlights native and drought-tolerant plants that attract birds, butterflies and beneficial insects. A variety of Australian plants provide winter color and interest. Because of the unfortunate reality of vandalism in a public garden, another focus is larger plants that can withstand occasional rough treatment. Visit to enjoy ceonothus, coffeeberry, toyon, myrtle, leptospermum, correa, twinberry, gooseberry, native heucheras, butterfly bushes, buckwheats, and a large variety of salvias!

Berkeley Rose Garden 75th Anniversary and ivy removal

The Berkeley Rose Garden, built by the WPA during the Great Depression, celebrated its 75th anniversary in September 2012. BPPF worked with the Parks Department and Councilmember Wengraf's office to put together a delightful day of music and dance, food and wine, and

entertainment and games for kids. Hundreds of people enjoyed just strolling in the sunshine, admiring the view and the late-season roses.

A great group of volunteers led by Gary Soto comes out every Sunday 9-11am to help tend the roses. UC students from the Berkeley Project and other service groups, also have been removing the ivy that has choked the neglected southern end.



Berkeley Path Wanderers: New map edition, new pathways , and a hero



Berkeley Path Wanderers Association kicked off the year with the release of the sixth edition of its ever-popular Berkeley Pathways map, adding newly developed paths, public-restroom locations, and a path checklist for avid walkers. BPWA's walk program provided tantalizing variety, from yard-art walks to a literary walk and a hugely popular New Year's Day outing.

Volunteers completed La Loma Path (with a handrail. above) and Twain Path, both in the Northeast Berkeley hills. With the group's earliest path-building projects now more than 15 years old, volunteers replaced aging railroad ties and made many older paths more stable and enjoyable. In a much-deserved honor, path building lead Charlie Bowen was named as the Northern California Cox Conserves Hero of 2012, earning BPWA a \$10,000 grant.

East Bay GPA: Loosening ivy's stranglehold on Codornices Park

Volunteers from grade-schoolers to retirees put in more than 200 hours at Codornices Park with East Bay Green Parks Association in 2012. Working out from redwood-lined Codornices Creek, they continued to remove smothering ivy and planted more than \$1000 worth of native plants. Years of effort are paying off – almost no ivy came back this spring, and natives planted in previous years are flourishing – including survivors of 1970s plantings by Los Amigos de Codornices. Enjoy the changes in Codornices, especially around the creek and historic fireplace!



Friends of Five Creeks: More volunteers, more projects



While continuing to maintain and improve maturing Berkeley projects at Codornices Creek, Mortar Rock Park, Shorebird Park, and the mouths of Strawberry and Schoolhouse Creeks on the Bay, Friends of Five Creeks' growing numbers of volunteers have expanded into Tilden Park. They are removing invasive, fire-prone French broom as well as smothering Cape ivy in the busy park just east of the city.

F5C also continued its major efforts in Albany and El Cerrito, continued its popular walks and talks, and again managed volunteer recruitment for the annual Sudden Oak Death survey.

Halcyon Commons: A volunteer-built park builds community

Friends of Halcyon Commons/Halcyon Neighborhood Association continued the tradition of taking care of Halcyon Commons, the beautiful, art-filled park created from a neglected fragment that had become a parking lot. Five work parties a year tend the space, three with help from UC student volunteers.



The neighborhood association celebrated its 20th anniversary with live music, a bouncy castle for kids, and over 100 attendees. A successful earthquake exercise in the park drew 49 neighbors. The group looks forward to another well attended Ice Cream Social in the park for National Night Out Against Crime!



Hillside Club: New garden lives up to historic heritage

Founded in the late 19th century to promote good design practices in the Berkeley Hills, the historic Hillside Club, at 2286 Cedar St. , has lived up to its heritage with its nearly completed landscaping project.

The front garden is filled with thriving drought-tolerant native plants. A brick pathway, with spaces for runoff to soak into soil, leads to the new redwood-and-concrete bench, which follows a Julia Morgan design also used in Berkeley City Center Plaza.

Berkeley Partners for Parks sponsorship made possible grants from the LEF Foundation; support from former president Jeff Ubois matched 3:1 by his employer, the MacArthur Foundation; and a Buy-a-Brick fundraiser for the brick path. Information on the club and fundraiser is at <http://hillsideclub.org/>.

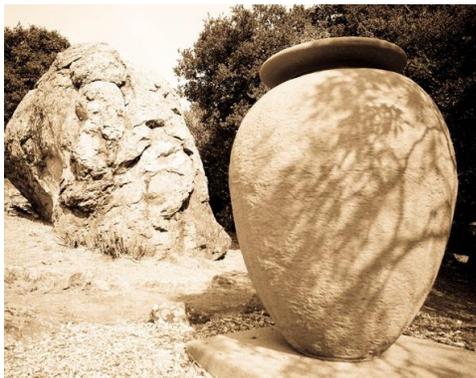
Schoolhouse Creek Common: All grown up at the Adult School

Schoolhouse Creek Common, the neighborhood-built park at Curtis and Virginia Streets, adjoining the Berkeley Adult School, entered its seventh full year with many of its native plants just reaching their mature size. The different areas -- the swing and sand pit, benches, and tables -- are nicely nestled among the plants. After several unsettling incidents nearby, 2012 brought some judicious pruning that created better security through sightlines.



UC student volunteers continue to be crucial in keeping everything neat and inviting. Meanwhile, neighbor and designer Jamie Day has taken on a new project: advising young volunteers at the native-plant garden at Shorebird Park.

TONA Urn Project: Honors, looking to the future



The Thousand Oaks Neighborhood Association's Urn Project was awarded a 2012 Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association Preservation Award for replicating and restoring the huge concrete urns that graced the subdivision's opening in 1910.

The two new urns (located in Stoneface Park and in the triangle at Alameda and Yosemite) and the restored original urn (on the Alameda at the base of Indian Trail) also continue to receive enthusiastic compliments, as well as donations to continue the project. Generous neighbors also have offered a \$2000 loan to the Urn Project. As a result, the project hopes to install two more urns in 2013, with site plans coming for two of the original sites: on The Arlington and The Alameda at Tacoma.