

# Berkeley Partners For Parks

Spring 1997

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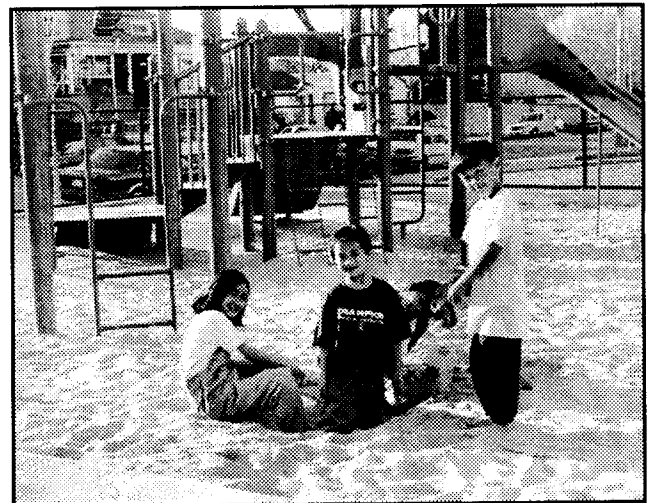
## Save Berkeley's Parks: Yes on Measure A!

### *Funding for Parks & Landscaping in Peril*

Funding for our parks and landscaping is in jeopardy. Last November, State voters passed Jarvis-Gann inspired Proposition 218, which requires a two-thirds majority to continue some taxes we already pay. Although Berkeley citizens voted 72.4% against 218, Berkeley parks will lose 95% of all existing funding unless two-thirds of Berkeley voters approve Measure A, a replacement tax measure on the ballot this May (mail-in ballots arrive in April). **Measure A is *not* a new tax!** It replaces the Landscape Assessment District funds we already pay. It continues an exemption for low-income households, and properties are taxed at exactly the same rate we have been paying for years.

**Measure A continues funding for parks and for maintenance of 306 acres, including over 50 parks, 80 landscaped medians, 100 pathways, and 35,000 City trees.** If Measure A fails, \$5.5 million will be lost to our parks and open space. With less overall revenue, the City will have to make cuts not only in maintenance of our parks and landscaping but also in other basic services, including police, fire, youth, and senior programs. We simply cannot let this happen!

Berkeley's parks and open spaces are currently undergoing a renaissance through the partnership of the City and thousands of citizen volunteers involved in dozens of adopt-a-park groups. Joint projects have included a new tot lot at Willard, a restored creek at Codornices, Mutt Mitt dispensers at César Chávez Park, the restoration of the historic



Photograph by Brad Ricards

*Children Enjoying One of Berkeley's Play Areas*

fountain at Marin Circle, and a new park in south Berkeley, Halcyon Commons. Partners for Parks is now engaged in raising matching funds to restore the City's deteriorating tot lots. For our efforts to continue to bear fruit, Measure A needs your vote to continue basic funding for parks and landscaping. **If Measure A fails, every one of our parks will lose, and our efforts to renovate our aging tot lots and improve our open space will be severely hampered.**

Help support Measure A. Contributions are needed to PARCS (Parks, Recreation, and Community Services, the Committee for Measures A & B) and may be sent c/o Gordon Wozniak, Treasurer, 141 Parkside, Berkeley, CA 94705. Call campaign manager Calvin Fong at 548-7580 to arrange delivery of a yard or window sign and to find out other ways you can help. **Remember to return your mail-in ballot by May 6, marked *Yes on A* for Berkeley's parks!** ■

## About Berkeley Partners for Parks

Berkeley Partners for Parks (BPPF) is a citywide non-profit devoted to supporting parks and open spaces in Berkeley through encouraging citizen involvement. Since its incorporation as a nonprofit in 1994, BPPF has played an instrumental role in bringing additional funding and thousands of hours of volunteer labor ("sweat equity") to bear on improving Berkeley's parks, community gardens, and open space. The participation of adopt-a-park groups working in partnership with the City and local businesses has led to improvements in dozens of parks and community gardens throughout Berkeley. BPPF is currently engaged in raising matching funds for renovating tot lots, serving as a nonprofit sponsor for the City's mini-grant program, and advocating for continued funding of Berkeley's parks, landscaping, and City trees in the spring election. ■

## Restoring Berkeley's Tot Lots

Most of Berkeley's tot lots were built before current guidelines for safety and accessibility came into being. The deterioration posed by passing time and the need to meet new standards to keep our children safe while they play mean that massive effort is required to renovate our tot lots. As a start, the City Council recently approved \$125,000 in matching funds for tot lot restoration. As a nonprofit, Berkeley Partners for Parks is committed to raising the other \$125,000 from concerned citizens, local businesses, and foundations. The agreement between the City and BPPF allows for design-build, user-development projects that will stretch these funds for maximum impact.

BPPF's Play Area Working Group is spearheading the fund-raising. Renowned architectural critic Allan Temko is participating in this effort in memory of his wife, Becky Temko, who served fifteen years on the Parks and Recreation Commission, including time as its Chair, and who devoted boundless energy and resources to supporting Berkeley's parks. He has already raised thousands of dollars to make much-needed improvements in the former Roosevelt Mini-Park, recently renamed in honor of Becky Temko.

To make a tax-deductible contribution to the tot lot matching fund, send your check with the form at the end of this newsletter, or call BPPF Board member Sarah Butler at 845-8323 for more information. ■

## Grassroots Greening Tour

Berkeley Partners for Parks is cosponsoring the Berkeley Grassroots Greening Tour on June 7, Berkeley's contribution to the third annual Bay Area Open Garden Weekend. The tour will showcase community projects throughout the City. For more information, call John Steere at 849-1969. ■

*This newsletter is published by  
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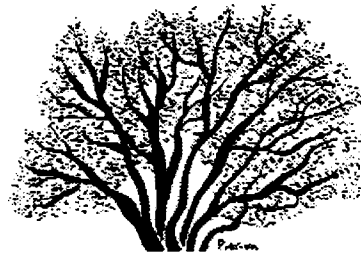
*BPPF is a nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation  
(I.D. # 94-3228356) founded in 1994 to  
support parks and open spaces in Berkeley. For  
more information, contact Mark Liolios  
(549-0818), William Clark (644-1912), or  
Bill Lipsky (525-7532).*

## The President's Corner

The new year started off with a bang for Berkeley Partners for Parks. In addition to our already-ambitious goals for the year of raising matching funds for restoring Berkeley's tot lots and expanding our citywide presence on behalf of Berkeley's parks and gardens, we found ourselves faced with a tough campaign just to maintain basic funding for our parks. We are fortunate to have a strong Board of Directors to help see us through the year: Prior Board members William Clark, Mark Liolios, and Nancy Carleton were reelected at our Annual Meeting in January, along with

new Board members Sarah G. Butler and Claudia Kawczynska. Officers elected by the Board were Nancy G. Carleton (President), Sarah Butler (Chair), Mark Liolios (Secretary), and Louise Francis (Treasurer). In addition,

William Clark holds an officer position as Immediate Past President. Much appreciation is due outgoing Board members Gail Keleman (who devoted countless hours as our Treasurer over several years), John Steere, and Bill Roberts (former BPPF Chair, now serving as a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission).

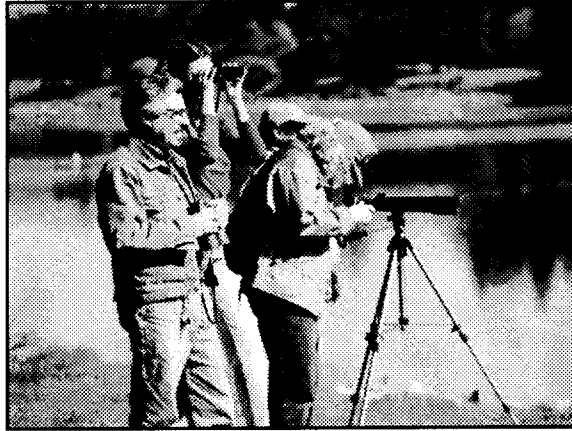


We're looking forward to a big victory for parks with the passage of Measure A in May and to a successful year as we forge ahead with the important projects set in motion by last year's president, William Clark, who continues to help guide our organization with his vision and hard work. We hope you'll join with us! ■

*Nancy Carleton, BPPF President*

# Adopt-a-Park Group News

Exciting things are happening for the twenty-six adopt-a-park group that are currently members of Berkeley Partners for Parks. **Friends of Shorebird Park** recently learned that their application for a grant for an innovative straw-bale visitor's center was successful. They will receive a \$40,000 grant from the Alameda County Waste Management Authority and are under review for an additional \$10,000. They are also seeking \$12,500 from the Lawrence Berkeley Labs to be matched by \$12,500 from the Department of Energy for a total of \$25,000. Approximately \$25,000 more is needed to fully fund what will be a regional showcase of environmental design, incorporating recycled products and unique straw-bale construction.



*Bird-watchers at Aquatic Park (Photo by Brad Ricards)*

**Friends of Willard Park** are enjoying the completion of the new tot lot and hope to celebrate its dedication sometime in May. The group is working actively on park maintenance and is exploring further improvements to the park, such as the possibility of additional resources for older children.

**Friends of Aquatic Park** are thrilled to have reached the final rounds of competition for a federal block grant for a tot lot and playground at Aquatic Park. Final awards will be made by the City Council later this spring.

**The Thousand Oaks Park Society (TOPS)** is continuing fund-raising for the park's new tot lot. They have already raised over \$40,000 in actual and in-kind donations toward their goal of \$68,400. In December TOPS received a grant of \$2,500 from the Ronald McDonald House Charities of

the Bay Area. They are currently presenting additional funding applications to local merchants and foundations.

**Friends of Live Oak Park (FOLO)** looks forward to beginning construction of a totally remodeled tot lot and a new wheelchair accessible ramp, in addition to renovations of the irrigation system.

**Friends of César Chávez Park** plan to continue providing Mutt Mitts to dog owners in the park, hopefully with matching funds from the City. The first issue of their newsletter, *The Berkeley Bark*, was published to rave reviews, receiving mention in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. A citywide Task Force has been meeting to consider guidelines for off-leash dog use in City parks and will be making recommendations to the City Council sometime this summer.

**Friends of Berkeley's Rose Garden** have completed the first phase of a major remodel of the entryway, making it wheelchair accessible and adding new flagstone and banisters. The City Council recently approved PERS funding for the installation of a deer fence to protect the garden's roses.

**Friends of Columbus School Park** are working to protect the park from development by the school district and to ensure park maintenance. **Friends of Totland**, **Friends of 63rd Street Mini-Park**, **Los Chicos de Codornices**, and **Friends of La Loma Park** are working on tot lot improvements. **Los Amigos de Codornices** recently had volunteers out to plant shrubs at the park's entrance. **HopPer Association** is exploring greening of nearby BART property. ■

## Mini-Grant Funds Available

Over the last two years, nearly \$63,000 has been allocated in two rounds of mini-grants for community-sponsored improvements in Berkeley's parks and open spaces. Grants have been given to twenty-eight projects, including the installation of Mutt Mitt dispensers for picking up after dogs in César Chávez Park; identification markers for the Rose Garden; native tree planting in Parkside; native planting in People's Park; enhancement of the play water table, benches, and bulletin board in Totland; swing and table replacements at Codornices and Live Oak Parks; and landscaping of road barriers on Woolsey and Webster streets in South Berkeley. Approximately \$72,000 remains in the mini-grant fund.

The third round of mini-grants will be awarded this summer. A public meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 5 (7:30 p.m. at the City of Berkeley's Corporation Yard, 1326 Allston Way), to inform interested groups about the grant application process. Grant applications will be due a month later, on June 6, and grant recipients will be selected in July. Grants of up to \$3,500 will be awarded. Berkeley Partners for Parks is available to serve as the nonprofit sponsor for newly formed groups. To be added to the mailing list for receiving notice of meetings and mini-grant application packets, contact Lisa Caronna, Landscape Architect, Parks & Waterfront Department, City of Berkeley (644-8526). ■