

FALL/WINTER 2013

COMPASS

Healthy Parks Healthy People



Nature's Classroom

Camp Arroyo kids learn priceless lessons
of life—thanks to your donations



WELCOME



The rich variety in the growing ranks of East Bay Regional Parks enthusiasts is matched by the variety in reasons we all love the parks. Some of us seek relaxation and respite from urban living, others look to boost their health, still others take pleasure in outings with loved ones and building memories. Many of us simply revel in the opportunity to greet Mother Nature at her finest, up front and personal.

What unites us is our common aspiration and responsibility: to be responsible stewards of this invaluable resource. EBRPD's 65 parks are not only ours to visit and enjoy, but also ours to value and enhance. That's why the Regional Parks Foundation exists and why we launched *Compass* magazine—to share your stories about the parks' treasures, to keep you abreast of important news and to inspire your continuing support of our efforts to broaden access for all. Thank you for your volunteering, donations and Park District memberships. We couldn't do what we do without you—don't forget to spread the word and encourage others to join us too!

Carol Johnson
Executive Director
Regional Parks Foundation

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**REGIONAL PARKS
Foundation**

Supporting East Bay Regional Parks

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DID YOU KNOW?

Fun facts about EBRPD



MORE THAN
13,000

Total number of kids in the past five years sent to camp thanks to the Foundation



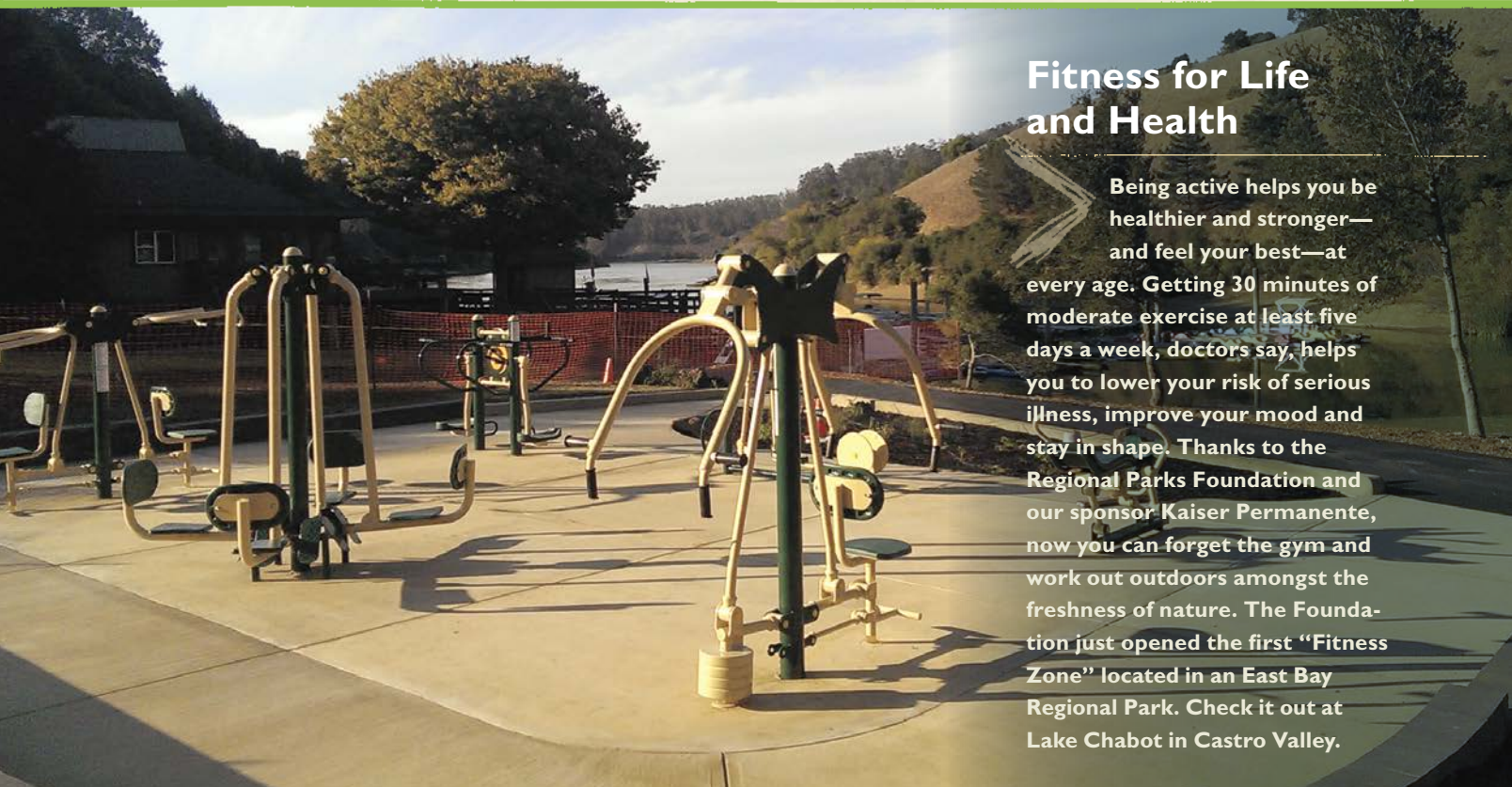
\$4,336,843

Total amount raised in the past five years to support the Park District



TREES FROM SPACE?

During the 1971 Apollo 14 mission, astronaut Stuart Roosa brought tree seeds with him. After circling the moon and returning to Earth, the seeds were planted in various U.S. Forest Service nurseries. One Moon Tree is now located at the entrance to Tilden's Environmental Education Center; another is in the Regional Parks Botanic Garden.



Fitness for Life and Health

Being active helps you be healthier and stronger—and feel your best—at every age. Getting 30 minutes of moderate exercise at least five days a week, doctors say, helps you to lower your risk of serious illness, improve your mood and stay in shape. Thanks to the Regional Parks Foundation and our sponsor Kaiser Permanente, now you can forget the gym and work out outdoors amongst the freshness of nature. The Foundation just opened the first “Fitness Zone” located in an East Bay Regional Park. Check it out at Lake Chabot in Castro Valley.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT!



Pictured above: Some of the participants of Solo Sierrans, an activity section of the Sierra Club. For years, Foundation Member Dolores Gruenewald has led this group of parks enthusiasts on weekly hikes at Lake Chabot. Each time out, they traverse more than three miles, and the good times are contagious. The ranks of hikers have grown recently—now as many as 12 to 15 join the fun.

Find out how some of our members enjoy EBRPD and why they joined the Regional Parks Foundation:

These parks are such wonderful places for me and my friends to get away from the busy hubbub of everyday life. I am now 71 and hope to continue to enjoy these wonderful parks for many more years.

—HELENE CAVIOR, WALNUT CREEK

We see something new every time we go to an East Bay Regional Park. The parks vary in terrain, so I can take my pick of walking along a shoreline, climbing up and down hills, or walking in a dense forest. I never worry about parking, since parking is free [with] a yearly membership. Thanks for offering so many parks to visit!

—PATTY LUCCHESI, FREMONT

I have been hiking at Lake Chabot almost every Tuesday since 1991. I'm proud to be a long-term member of the Regional Parks Foundation and have hiked many trails throughout the district.

—DOLORES GRUENEWALD, SAN LEANDRO.

Give the Gift of Regional Park Membership!

Visit www.RegionalParksFoundation.org for more information.

TOP: JAKE WATLING; BOTTOM: COURTESY OF DOLORES GRUENEWALD

KIDS ZONE

THE GIVING TREES

With the redwood trees he planted, a Castro Valley Eagle Scout enriches an East Bay regional park—and future generations



At the tender age of 14, Ryan Davis imagined someday earning the rank of Eagle Scout by planting redwood trees where they'd

once reigned supreme. And at the ripe old age of 17, Davis did just that.

The site of Davis' project was Bort Meadow, gorgeous grasslands in Anthony Chabot Regional Park, which reportedly were clear-cut for timber in the Gold Rush era and again after San Francisco's 1906 earthquake. "I did a lot of research, checked out where the redwoods used to be," explains Davis, who was advised by local history buffs, including his dad. "When I showed the ranger at the park what I'd done, she said, 'This is awesome research.' "

In June, Davis and his crew (family, friends, fellow Scouts, etc.) cleaned out invasive overgrowth and planted 38 redwood saplings donated by a family friend—plus six buckeyes supplied by the East Bay Regional Park District.

Some inspiration for the effort must be in Davis' genes: His older brother, Dakotah, spearheaded the building of a 50-plus-seat amphitheater in a Hayward park for his Eagle Scout project. What's more, Davis' entire family has long treasured its many outings in EBRPD.

"The best part of the project was when we were done and realizing that these redwoods are going to be around for a million years," Davis says. "Trees just keep giving back."



Volunteer Ryan Davis plants a redwood sapling at Anthony Chabot Regional Park as part of his project to earn his Eagle Scout rank. The Castro Valley High School graduate recently entered the University of Wyoming to study energy resources.

You, too, can volunteer for EBRPD restoration projects. Just visit www.ebparks.org/getinvolved.



Festive Family Outings

Park activities that get you and yours into the holiday spirit

Give your kids an experience to remember: Travel back to Victorian times at Ardenwood Historic Farm (wassailing in the apple orchard, anyone?) or take a magical carousel ride surrounded by spectacularly decorated trees at Tilden Regional Park.

CHRISTMAS AT ARDENWOOD

34600 Ardenwood Blvd., Fremont
Dec. 7–8, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
\$5–\$8; free for ages 3 and under.
For more info, call 510-544-2797.

CHRISTMAS FANTASY

Tilden Regional Park
Nov. 29–Dec. 23, 5:30–8:30 p.m. (Santa visits 6–8 p.m., except Wednesdays).
\$2 per ride or \$10 for seven rides.
For more info, call 510-524-6773.

▶ See page 19 for more info on family-friendly holiday happenings in EBRPD.

HIDDEN TREASURE

Regional Parks Botanic Garden

The roots of Tilden Regional Park's historic garden were set down in the 1930s and 1940s by some of California's pioneering botanists and horticulturalists. Here, get the scoop on current attractions.

What makes this a must-see garden?

It's by far the best collection of California native plants anywhere and one of the most beautiful gardens in North America. Best of all, we do it for the public—free admission and parking—it's a little paradise for us all.

When's the best time to visit?

Every season is a great season to visit. The first plants to bloom do so around mid-December and early January; successive new flowering continues for seven months. For a blooming calendar, visit www.ebparcs.org/page156.aspx. A tip for winter visitors: Come after or during a big rain. Wildcat Creek flows through the middle of the garden—its side streams and waterfalls make this place intoxicating.

Have leads for hands-on home gardeners?

We've collected wild plants that nobody else has grown before and that you can't buy at a nursery. We have weekly plant sales from May to December; seeds are sold on most Sundays and Mondays—a lot are rare and hard to get. Free garden tours take place most nonrainy weekends—no reservations needed. It's a great time to dig in and get your questions answered.

Visit www.nativeplants.org for the garden's newsletter, resource guide, volunteering info and more.

ESTATE PLANNING 101

Sign up for a free workshop—attendees may schedule free, individual consultations

Be prepared: Learn the basics of estate planning at our free workshop. Topics include wills, powers of attorney, health care directives, life insurance, retirement plans and trusts (estate, charitable, revocable or irrevocable). After the workshop, attendees may schedule a follow-up meeting with a professional to address specific, individual questions. Space is limited; act now to reserve yours.

3–5 p.m., light refreshments, accessible for people with disabilities

FRIDAY, MARCH 7:

Trudeau Training Center, Redwood Regional Park, Oakland

FRIDAY, APRIL 11:

Big Break Visitor Center, Big Break Regional Shoreline, Oakley

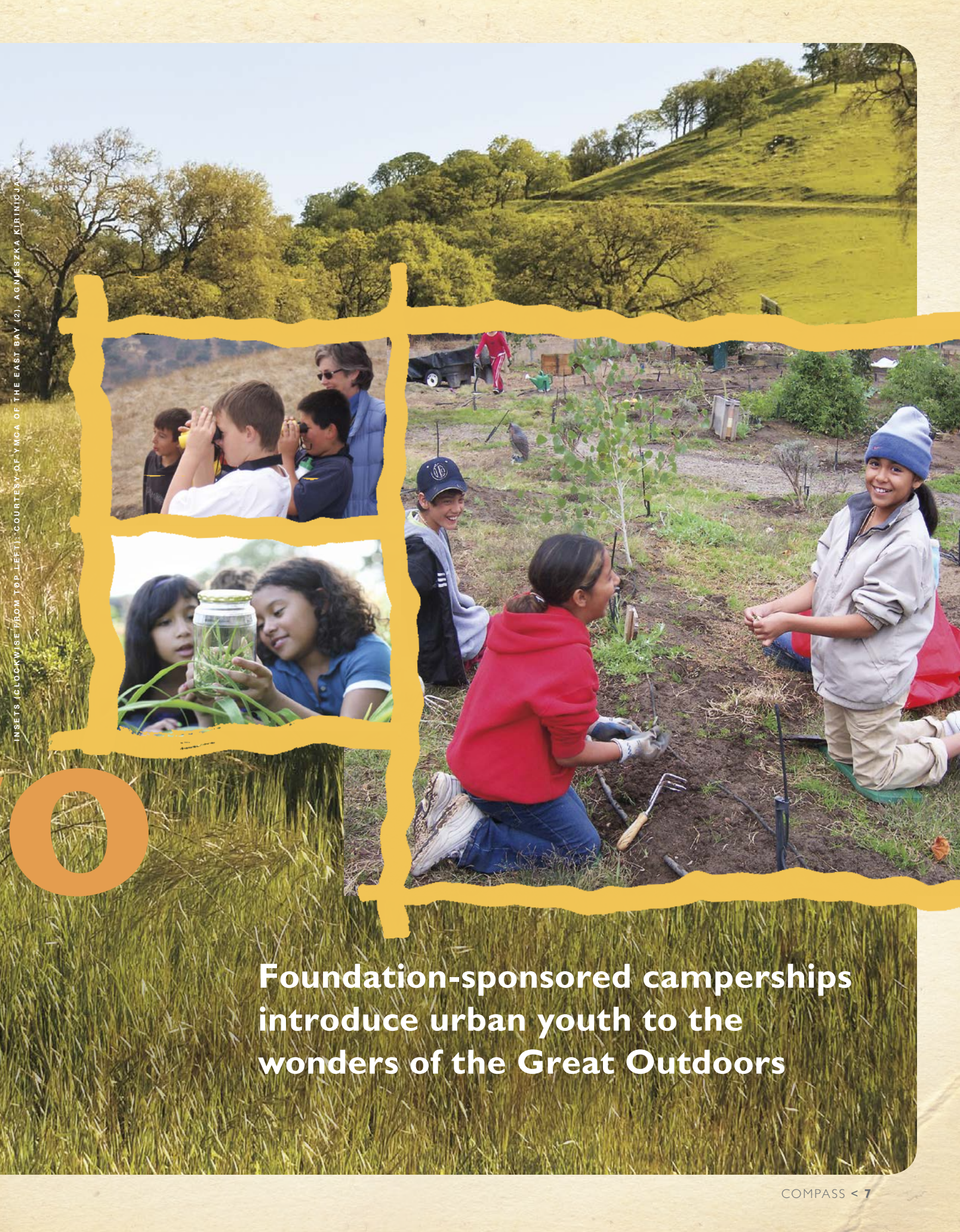
For info or to register: Please contact help@regionalparksfoundation.org or 510-544-2202, or visit www.RegionalParksFoundation.org (click "Events"). Give your name, home address, phone number and email address.



BOUND FOR Camp Arroyo

BACKGROUND: SHUTTERSTOCK

INSETS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): COURTESY OF YMCA OF THE EAST BAY (2), AGNIESZKA KUBINIOWICZ



Foundation-sponsored camperships introduce urban youth to the wonders of the Great Outdoors



osita Young estimates that 90 percent of her fourth-grade students at Lincoln Elementary School, set amid the steel and concrete of downtown Oakland, have never been camping. Most have never seen a wild animal, and many are unaware of the wide-open spaces that exist just beyond the Bay Area's urban core.

But that all changes each year when Young takes her class on its annual field trip to Camp Arroyo, a residential outdoor education camp in Livermore managed by the East Bay Regional Park District.

"When you take them out at night and tell them to look at the sky, many of them are just awestruck," Young says of her students. "They've never seen so many stars in their life; it's like, 'this is so awesome.' "

Opened in 2011, Camp Arroyo now hosts visiting groups of up to 120 children throughout the school year and summer months. The mission? To give Bay Area kids—including those from some of the region's most inner-city neighborhoods—exposure to nature and the outdoors while teaching them about sustainable living and the local ecosystem. Schools from wealthier areas visit on their own dime, while classes such as Young's are funded largely through the Regional Parks Foundation (see "How You Can Help").

SCHOOLED ON MOTHER NATURE

When kids arrive at Camp Arroyo, they find a natural wonderland boasting some of the East Bay's most beautiful hiking trails. The camp's green design scheme underscores its theme of environmental stewardship; most notable are modern buildings built upon preexisting foundations and a dining hall featuring 10,000 pounds of shredded newspapers repurposed as insulation. An organic garden provides hands-on experience with agriculture and cooking, and a variety of lessons and activities educate students about Bay Area flora and fauna.

Angie Swank is Camp Arroyo's senior program director, overseeing many of the activities that classes such as Young's participate in at the site. Over the years, she has collected written reflections from visiting students. The kids' writing makes a powerful statement about Camp Arroyo's impact on its young visitors.

"My experience at Camp Arroyo taught me to take care of the Earth. I will share what I learned with my family so that we can enjoy the Earth," writes Estelle, a student from Searles Elementary School in Union City.



CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: COURTESY OF THE TAYLOR FAMILY FOUNDATION. COURTESY OF YMCA OF THE EAST BAY. COURTESY OF THE TAYLOR FAMILY FOUNDATION



Above and below at left: Kids of all abilities participate in learning activities at Camp Arroyo, a residential education camp supported by the Regional Parks Foundation. Above, far right: The green design of the camp's buildings reflects its emphasis on stewardship.



LASTING IMPRESSIONS

But what happens at Camp Arroyo doesn't stay at Camp Arroyo—it returns with students to their urban classrooms as well. Young says the annual trip is a "perfect springboard" into her class's larger science curriculum and for kids' reflections on Camp Arroyo moments, lessons and naturalists.

The long-lasting impressions Camp Arroyo leaves on her city-dwelling students is why Young says she'll continue to bring her class back as long as there remains funding to do so. "Here at Lincoln, we've received over \$100,000 in campership money over the years—thanks to the Regional Parks Foundation," she says. "We're a low-income school, and that's what enables us to go."

She has fond memories of students eating carrots out of the ground for the first time and being fascinated by the textures of a giant pinecone. But perhaps one moment from the past several years stands out most.

It had been raining incessantly this particular trip, until finally the clouds parted one morning. Kids and chaperones awoke to find that a massive field of mushrooms had sprouted overnight, immediately turning Young's students into a passionate bunch of budding naturalists. "They'd never seen anything like it," she says. "It was amazing to see all of them in their colorful ponchos, squatting down to look at the mushrooms. If they don't get that kind of opportunity through this, most of them never get it at all."



Camp Arroyo is owned and maintained by East Bay Regional Park District and is managed in partnership with The Taylor Family Foundation and YMCA of the East Bay.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Camp Arroyo's outdoor environmental education opportunities are made possible by a unique multipronged partnership. The East Bay Regional Park District owns the Camp Arroyo land and maintains its facilities, while the Regional Parks Foundation funds class visits during the academic school year for underserved schools. The YMCA of the East Bay runs the school-year education programs. The Taylor Family Foundation funds and operates summer camps for children with life-threatening illnesses. For more info about donating to camperships, visit www.RegionalParksFoundation.org or call 510-544-2202.

→ TAKE THE

2014

TRAILS



CHALLENGE



Ready to discover a new world of park trails, get fit—and have fun while you're at it? If thousands of others can do it, so can you. Here's an exclusive preview of what's in store.



“The Trails Challenge has been [my family’s] incentive to see other parts of the East Bay Regional Park system. We had already made physical activity a part of our lives, but that our community is picking up the challenge toward a healthier lifestyle is a benefit to us all.”

RANDY DIXON, OAKLAND



L

INDA PON HAD ALREADY TRAVERSED THE TRAILS of Tilden Regional Park “a thousand times” before she’d ever heard of the Trails Challenge. Tilden was her standby for a quick escape to nature from her Albany home. She got her heart pumping and stayed in shape with a run through the lush foliage along Wildcat Gorge or a hike straight up Curran Trail for a ridge-top view.

Then, in 2011, she joined nearly 10,000 other people of all ages and fitness levels in taking the Trails Challenge, and her perspective changed dramatically. “I didn’t realize that there were so many other parks in the East Bay that I hadn’t yet explored,” she says.

Pon’s experience exemplifies the aim of the Trails Challenge, which is made possible through a partnership of the Park District, the Regional Parks Foundation and Kaiser Permanente. “We want people to see the Park District as a resource for exercise and being healthy and exploring nature,” says Anne Kassebaum, recreation services manager at the Park District.

The “challenge” is simple: Each year, the Park District staff selects 20 different parks and trails to explore. Over the course of the year, you complete at least five trails or 26.2 miles, at your own pace and schedule, and record your progress in a trail log. You’ll have plenty of support. When you sign up, you’ll get a free Trails Challenge Guidebook filled with hiking tips, detailed trail descriptions and maps to guide you to your next adventure (also available via a free smartphone app). Trails come in three categories—easy, moderate and challenging—so you can find the right adventure whether you’re alone or with friends, family or kids.

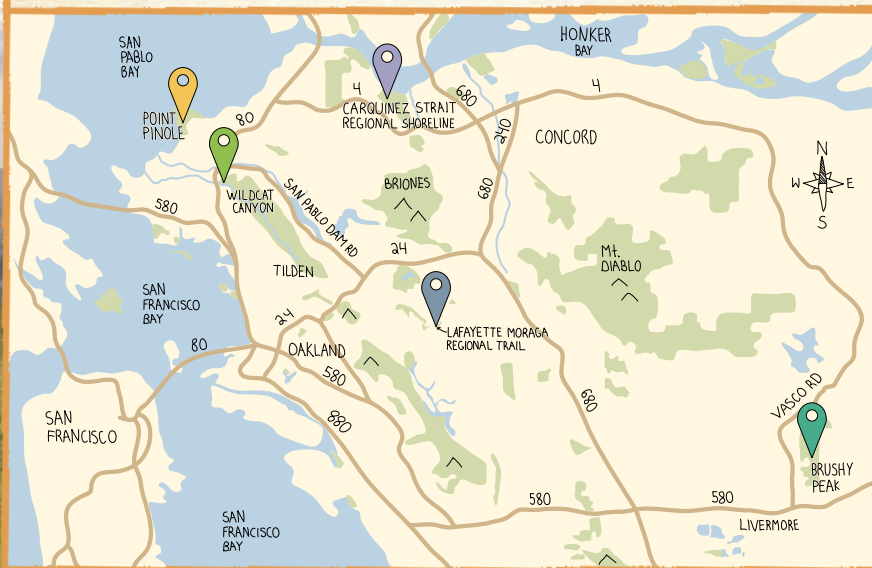
“People see the guidebook and say, ‘Oh my goodness, I can do this!’ ” says Nancy Baglietto, director of operations, programs and development at the Regional Parks Foundation. “They can start with the easy trails and work toward the more challenging ones.”

If you’re considering the 2014 Trails Challenge, talk to family or friends about doing it together. For further inspiration, here’s a preview of five of the 20 trails selected for the coming year.

SIGN UP FOR THE TRAILS CHALLENGE TODAY

Getting fit outdoors has never been easier than participating in the Regional Parks annual Trails Challenge. Sign up for the 2014 program by registering online at www.RegionalParksFoundation.org. Program features (guidebook and commemorative T-shirt) will be available by mid-January 2014.





-  CARQUINEZ STRAIT REGIONAL SHORELINE
-  WILDCAT CANYON REGIONAL PARK
-  POINT PINOLE REGIONAL SHORELINE
-  BRUSHY PEAK REGIONAL PRESERVE
-  LAFAYETTE MORAGA REGIONAL TRAIL

1

→ **URBAN GEM**

CARQUINEZ STRAIT REGIONAL SHORELINE

INTENSITY: **MODERATE**

Nestled beside Martinez's industrial landscape and the North Bay's busy shipping lanes lies this shoreline park that can help you escape from urban life—and bring you a unique view of it. From the Nejedly Staging Area, hike through rolling grasslands and oak woodlands to reach the steep, 750-foot-high coastal bluffs that overlook Benicia and the river delta region along the northern edge of Contra Costa County.

HOW TO ENJOY IT: Bring a hat and sunscreen, your dog (off-leash is allowed) and some lunch, and put in the moderate effort to ascend the Franklin Ridge Loop Trail. Then, atop the bluff, enjoy the cool breeze and expansive views of Mount Tamalpais and Mount Diablo—and the waterways, cities and open space in between. Listen and watch as busy tugboats push freighters across the bay.



→ **SPECTACULAR SUNSETS**

WILDCAT CANYON REGIONAL PARK

INTENSITY: **CHALLENGING**

2

Could this be the Bay Area's most perfect late-afternoon hike? Wildcat Canyon Regional Park is an urban backyard for thousands, and this hike will reward your patience and effort with some of the best views in the East Bay. The park encompasses 2,430 acres along the Wildcat Creek watershed and the surrounding grasslands, hills and ridges adjacent to the city of Richmond and Tilden Regional Park.

HOW TO ENJOY IT: From the Wildcat Canyon Staging Area, start on a fire road and turn into secluded Harvey Canyon to experience its native woodlands and shaded creek beds. Then, emerge on a golden hillside for a final ascent to the fire road, Nimitz Way. When you reach the San Pablo Ridge Trail, enjoy sweeping views of San Francisco, the Golden Gate and Bay bridges, and Marin to the west; Point Pinole at San Pablo Bay to the north; and Mount Diablo, San Pablo Reservoir, Briones and other East Bay parks to the east. The setting sun may take your breath away.

3

 WILDLIFE ON THE WATER

POINT PINOLE REGIONAL SHORELINE

INTENSITY: **EASY**

This peaceful parcel of land—a former industrial site that included a dynamite factory—juts into the bay for incredible views of San Pablo Bay. A thriving wildlife population includes deer, hawks, owls, monarch butterflies and a birders' paradise of more than 100 diverse species along the sandy shores, marshlands, eucalyptus groves and freshwater ponds. The park attracts fishermen, too, who reel in sturgeon, striped bass, bay rays, leopard sharks, perch, kingfish and flounders.

HOW TO ENJOY IT: Walk or bike the flat trails all the way out to the point and take a break at the picnic tables, or hop on the free shuttle bus for an effortless journey. Along the way, watch for birds on the ground and overhead, from hawks and ospreys to herons, egrets, kingfishers and hummingbirds.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Regional Parks Foundation has worked tirelessly to make the Trails Challenge more successful each year. We especially appreciate our partnership with Kaiser Permanente, whose sponsorship has made the Trails Challenge a free undertaking. Thanks to Kaiser's support, participants can get a free Trails Challenge organic cotton T-shirt, e-guidebook, smartphone app and commemorative pin (received after mailing in your completed trail log).

The Foundation also plays a critical role in promoting and processing online sign-ups for the Trails Challenge, which furthers our mission of expanding access to the parks. When you donate to the Foundation, you're helping thousands of new people enjoy our regional park system treasures.

 **To make a Foundation donation today, visit www.RegionalParksFoundation.org.**



HEALTHY STEPS

If the idea of walking a treadmill in a gym isn't inspiring, then the Trails Challenge could be your ticket to better health and emotional well-being.

"When you exercise outdoors in a beautiful setting, you're reaping so many health benefits," says Dr. Todd Weitzenberg, chief of sports medicine at Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa. "Not only are you reducing your risk of chronic conditions like heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes, but you're benefiting emotionally through relaxation and stress reduction. Exercise really improves your mood and reduces depression.

"It's scientifically proven without a doubt," Dr. Weitzenberg adds, "that people who exercise live longer, healthier, happier lives."



TO STAY SAFE AS YOU GET FIT ON THE TRAILS, DR. WEITZENBERG SUGGESTS FOLLOWING THESE TIPS:

- > Bring sunscreen even on foggy days.
- > Bring plenty of water, and drink regularly and eat snacks.
- > Don't push it to start; avoid injuries by beginning with easy trails.
- > Consider using hiking poles to get an upper-body workout as you walk.

4

→ OPEN-SPACE SOLITUDE

BRUSHY PEAK REGIONAL PRESERVE

INTENSITY: MODERATE TO CHALLENGING

Escape to this park's isolated 1,702-foot-high landmark near Livermore, named Brushy Peak, which features quiet expanses of rolling grasslands and otherworldly sandstone outcroppings along the way to the top. The park has been recognized as sacred by generations of native Californians and lies at the center of a network of ancient trade routes that linked Bay Area Ohlones, Bay Miwoks and Northern Valley Yokuts tribes.

HOW TO ENJOY IT: Bring plenty of water and aim for a fall, winter or early spring hike to avoid scorching summer temps. Definitely take time to explore the beautiful, hollowed-out rock caves and boulders, and watch for wildlife, including hawks, eagles, coyotes and jackrabbits.



→ FAMILY-STYLE STROLL

LAFAYETTE MORAGA REGIONAL TRAIL

INTENSITY:

EASY TO MODERATE

Bring the entire family—including young children—on this delightful paved path that winds through wooded and suburban landscapes. It requires no more time than you have to commit: The 7.65-mile linear park parallels St. Mary's Road through Lafayette and Moraga and was once used by mule trains to carry redwood from Oakland to Sacramento, and was later a steam-train route.

HOW TO ENJOY IT: This trail is popular with families and bicyclists—and families on bicycles. The mostly gentle terrain makes for a great weekend afternoon excursion. Go as far as you like and turn back. Take a break on one of the many nearby benches, or push on to explore other trails that intersect the path.

TOP: GEORGE DRAPER; BOTTOM: BILL KNOWLAND



5



[Some of] REI's Greatest Hits

Supercool stuff to maximize your outdoor excursions

A single item, whether it's a pair of good boots or waterproof binoculars, can make the difference between an annoying outdoor excursion and one that's rewarding. That's why the long-running partnership between outdoor retailer REI and the East Bay Regional Park District and Regional Parks Foundation is such a natural fit. Here, Kazu Ishidera, store manager at REI's Fremont store, recommends gear for getting the most from your parks experiences.

1 BIKING:

Topeak Deluxe Kit — \$29.95

This compact kit packs all the basic tools for fixing a flat or making minor adjustments to your bike, including a powerful multivalve pump, plastic tire levers, patch and multiuse tool.

2 BIRD-WATCHING:

REI XR 8 x 42 Waterproof Binoculars — \$185.95

Ishidera says these compact and lightweight binoculars are mobile enough to take just about anywhere (including the water), while the multicoated, anti-reflective lenses provide great viewing even in low light.

3 CAMPING:

REI Base Camp 4 Tent — \$369

The compact, geodesic dome design makes this tent extra strong and storm-worthy. It's also simple to set up and roomy enough for a family of four.

4 HIKING:

Merrell Moab Ventilator Cross-Training Shoes — \$90

According to Ishidera, these are the most popular light hiking boots for both men and women and are ideal for cross-training in the East Bay. The waterproof version (Merrell Moab Waterproof) goes for \$110.

5 HIKING:

UCO Clarus LED Lantern/Flashlight — \$19.95

Don't be fooled by the price and small size, says Ishidera. This collapsible lantern-flashlight hybrid provides up to 150 lumens of diffused white light and projects a beam up to 50 meters.

6 KAYAKING:

LifeProof Case — \$79.95

This see-through case is waterproof, not to mention dirt- and shockproof, allowing you to confidently bring—and actually use—your phone wherever you paddle.

7 STARGAZING:

Night Sky Star Dial — \$7.50

The Big Dipper's easy. This miniature, simple-to-use planisphere will help you spot the more challenging star constellations such as Ursa Major, Orion and Cassiopeia—all without the use of cellular coverage.

8 NAVIGATING:

REI Mini Compass — \$9

Not dependent on a GPS signal or batteries, a simple magnetic compass is still a must-have outdoor tool. This tiny version attaches to a zipper pull on packs, jackets and key rings.

➤ For more information on REI gear, go to www.rei.com. For a list of REI-sponsored outdoor classes and outings in the Bay Area, visit www.rei.com/outdoorschool/160.

➤ REI's generous donations and staff volunteers annually help to maintain several of the Park District's 1,200 miles of trails.



Dishing With ‘Doc Quack’

If you want to know where the wild things are in EBRPD and how you can help protect them, he’s your guy

For the past 25 years, wildlife biologist Dave “Doc Quack” Riensche has been instrumental in spearheading and mobilizing volunteers for habitat restoration projects throughout the East Bay Regional Park District. Here, he shares some trade secrets.

How did you get the nickname ‘Doc Quack’?

Oh, I got that a long time ago for fowl behavior.

Ha, right. So what does your job entail?

My responsibilities are to conserve, manage and enhance the wildlife resources that the Park District is responsible for in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

That must be challenging in such an urban area.

It can be a daunting task at times. We’re living in the heart of the nation’s fourth-largest metropolitan area, and much of our resources are being swamped by urban sprawl, so it’s hard to carve out space. And we have 80 special-status wildlife species, meaning they’re endangered, threatened or of special concern.

Do you rely a lot on volunteers?

They’re the cornerstone of the District’s wildlife conservation program. We have a wide variety of

projects, and we try to recruit everyday people and give them the training, tools and inspiration to get involved. It’s a huge crew: Each year, we have between 650 and 1,200 volunteers, donating 3,500 to 5,000 hours of service.

What’s an example of one of your projects?

We developed the first artificial floating grebe platform to help protect the birds from water level drawdown. A grebe is one of the most graceful water birds we have. During courtship, a pair will look at each other with a twinkle in their eye and then race across the water standing on their tiptoes like ballerinas and plunge into the water in unison. We have ongoing events that involve all things wild: birds, reptiles, mammals, the whole gamut.

Why is this work so important?

First of all, wildlife is a barometer of the world around us: healthy parks, healthy people. But really our work is about more than just enhancing the lives of a few animals. It’s a measure of our humanity, a measure of what we cherish and what we want to leave behind for the next generation.

For more information on the District’s wildlife projects and volunteering, go to www.ebparks.org/docquack.



A grebe relaxes at Quarry Lakes, courtesy of a human-made floating platform.

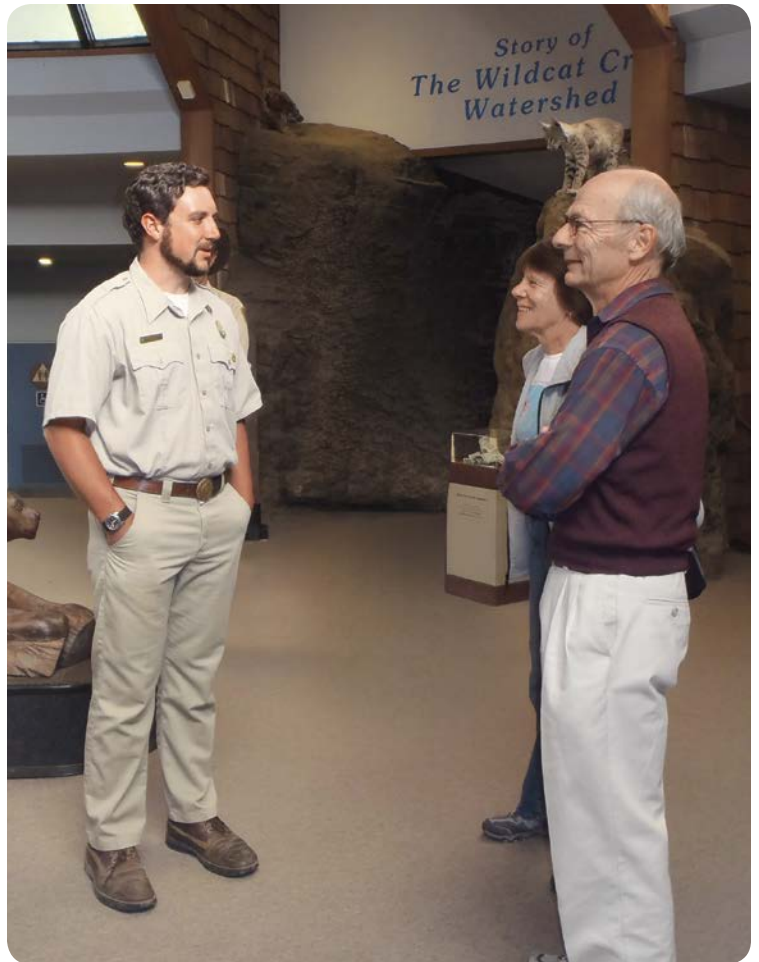
ILLUSTRATION: JON STICKY, PHOTO: PAUL DILEANIS

FOUNDATION FUN!

Foundation Members and Donors always make their presence known—and very much appreciated—at our various events across the East Bay. Join us soon.



Assemblymember Jim Frazier (D-Antioch) volunteers at the annual Kids Fishing Derby to help a youngster catch his first fish.



Regional Parks Foundation Donors Carlo and Margareta Séquin talk with naturalist James Wilson at Tilden Environmental Education Center at a Donor Recognition event.



Jay Gilson, Regional Park Foundation Board Member, shown with wife Julie, hosts a special Donor Recognition twilight paddle at Martin Luther King, Jr., Shoreline in Oakland.

HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES

Outdoor Discoveries

Children, ages 3 to 6, and a parent make playful and scientific discoveries in outdoor classrooms—rain or shine. Fee: \$6 (nonresidents: \$8). For more info, call 510-544-3249.

Jingle Bells

Del Valle Regional Park
Dec. 12, 10–11:30 a.m.
Make your own musical instruments to play along with holiday songs.

New Year's Eve Sunset Stroll with Siblings

Dublin Hills Regional Park
Dec. 31, 4–6 p.m.

Holiday Decorations Naturally

Tilden Nature Area
Dec. 15 and 22, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.
Fee: \$15–\$30 (nonresidents: \$29–\$34)
Create wreaths, garlands and more using trimmings from the park's fir, laurel and eucalyptus trees. Bring a sack lunch. Ages 8 and up.

➤ See Kids Zone, page 4, for more kid-friendly holiday activities.

YOUR PARKS, YOUR WAY

From holiday crafts and guided hikes to butterfly strolls, there are lots of ways to get busy—join in! To view complete listings of EBRPD events, visit www.ebparks.org/activities.

ONGOING

Wednesday Walks

Nov. 20 and 27; Dec. 4 and 18, 9:30 a.m.
Explore parklands on a fast-paced hike—rain or shine. Free, except for occasional parking fees. For details, call 510-544-3282.

Saturday and Sunday Strolls

Nov. 16 and 24; Dec. 1, 8, 15 and 22;
10 a.m.–noon
Wake up and walk into nature (1–5 miles). Great for families. Free, except for occasional parking fees. For details, call 510-544-3187.

Women on Common Ground

Nov. 17, 10 a.m.–2:30 p.m.; Dec. 21,
9 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
A fun series of naturalist-led programs for women who love the outdoors. For details, call 510-544-3243.

Pole-Walking for Mobility and Fitness

Nov. 16, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.; Dec. 6, 12:30–
4:15 p.m.; Dec. 12, 9:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m.;
Dec. 14, 9:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Using poles can improve your power, endurance, balance, posture and confidence. Poles provided. Ages 18 and up. For details, call 1-888-EBPARKS. Fee: \$26–\$45 (nonresidents: \$30–\$51).



WALK AMONG THE MONARCHS

Take a guided walk to see the monarch butterflies, which migrate hundreds of miles each winter to the temperate forest groves along the Pacific coast. Programs at Ardenwood Historic Farm include:

Return of the Monarchs

Nov. 24, 29 and 30, 1–2:30 p.m.

Marvelous Monarchs

Dec. 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 and 29, 11 a.m. (with monarch life-cycle presentation); 1:30 p.m. (no presentation)

Bilingual Monarch Program (Spanish/English)

Dec. 22, 2 p.m.

New Year's Day Butterfly Walks

Jan. 1, 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

January and February program dates TBA. Fee: \$2–\$6; free for children 3 and under. For details, call 510-544-3290.

Regional Parks Foundation
P.O. Box 21074, Crestmont Station
Oakland, CA 94620
www.RegionalParksFoundation.org

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—ROBERT DOYLE, GENERAL MANAGER,
EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

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