New year, new parks, new opportunities

We have amazing news: Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation and the Oakland Parks Coalition have joined forces to form Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation. This unites park advocates under one banner creating a stronger voice for Oakland’s parks and their recreation programs. The Foundation now addresses all components of park needs: raising funds for capital improvements, volunteer opportunities, recreation programs, and park maintenance. Our latest project is partnering with the community and Levi Strauss & Co in getting a “new skate park” built at West Oakland’s deFremery Park.

Susan Montauk, who led the Oakland Parks Coalition offers this:

I am proud to have led Oakland Parks Coalition (OPC) through many years of productive work on behalf of Oakland parks. I am equally proud to escort our OPC board and volunteers to the newly formed Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation OPC’s mission has been to bring together community members and organizations, public agencies and businesses to implement standards of excellence for the maintenance of parkland in Oakland. Now, as members of Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation, we will accomplish our goals by continuing to recruit and support park steward volunteers to help keep their parks clean and safe. We will also continue to ask our stewards to survey their parks once a year, providing us with the information we need to report on park conditions to City Council and advocate for improved maintenance.

With the creation of this new organization the circle is complete. OPC activities will continue under the banner of Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation. This new partnership marries the former Friends objectives of funding programming and park improvements with OPC’s support for the maintenance of park landscaping and infrastructure. It’s a happy marriage, indeed, and one that we feel will build a stronger voice for better parks in Oakland. Here’s to many years of collaboration for better parks in Oakland. Here’s to many years of collaboration for healthier, better equipped, and more attractive parks which will contribute to Oakland’s realizing its true place as the shining city on the sunny side of the Bay.

We hosted our 11th annual A Taste of Spring fundraiser last May. Proceeds supported youth scholarships as well as other special projects to support and enhance Oakland’s parks and their recreation programs and services. The “Business People Award” was given to PG&E’s East Bay Government Relations Team. Pete May accepted an award in honor of his late father, Lewis P. May, an early and key board member of the organization, and the establishment of the Lewis P. May Fund.

Other named funds include the Thompson-Bliss Family Gift Fund and the new Tom and Joy Guarino Charitable Fund. Please contact us to establish a fund in your name or that of someone special.

The future is bright. We have an outstanding board and have added several stellar board members from the Oakland community, including business representatives and grassroots organizers. Thank you to our Advisory Board and Foundation Board members for helping us recruit these individuals. Additionally, we salute the non-board members who assist the Foundation by serving on various committees.

New opportunities are everywhere. Your donations will help us renovate athletic fields and parks, fund a scholarship or support a specific facility or program. You can volunteer at our Annual Work Day, our annual park survey, “Love Your Parks Day” or become a Park Steward.

Things are happening in Oakland. People and businesses are moving in. One of the things that attracts all of them is Oakland’s parks. Parks make life better for everyone in Oakland. Join us in keeping Oakland great.
**Town Park redefines a West Oakland park space for the better**

In 2014 Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation’s predecessor organization — Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation — managed a $300,000 grant from Levi Strauss and Co. to build phase 1 of Town Park. The grant funds were used to replace well-worn wooden ramps and jumps with state-of-the-art concrete ramps, jumps, and ski-style moguls.

Located at West Oakland’s deFremery Park, Town Park has served as a hub for Oakland’s skateboard community since its establishment in 2007. Under the guidance of Keith “K-Dub” Williams, Town Park has become a destination skatepark for local youth of all skill levels, and backgrounds, serving as a local hub where children, teens, and young adults can come together to learn and showcase their skills.

Attending the ribbon cutting ceremony for Phase 1 on November 1, 2014, were James Curleigh, President, Levi Strauss & Co.; Audree Jones-Taylor, Director Oakland Parks and Recreation; Ken Lupoff, Executive Director; Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation; Barry Weiss, President of the Board, Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation; Keith Williams; and dozens of happy, skateboarding youth!

A second $300,000 grant from Levi Strauss and Co. was secured by the Foundation in early 2015, and Town Park phase 2 is scheduled to be completed in May, 2015.

Our thanks goes out to Oakland Parks and Recreation, Oakland Public Works, Levi Strauss and Co., and most of all to K-Dub, who transformed an empty concrete lot into a vital living part of Oakland’s diverse communities!

**If you love your parks, why not pitch in to keep them viable?**

Attractive and clean parks help create safe, healthy neighborhoods. The Foundation offers a few ways to take an active part in making a positive difference in your neighborhood and in our city:

- **Our Park Stewardship** program provides support to neighbors who are working to keep their parks, medians, and creeks safe and beautiful.

- **Our Annual Workday,** usually in August, offers opportunities for a half-day of hands-on work for a cleanup or planting project at a selected park.

- **Our Annual Survey** called Love Your Parks Day convenes volunteers on a Saturday morning in the Fall to work in teams to assess conditions at 3-5 parks. The survey results are used to report to City Council on the state of maintenance of Oakland parks and advocate for improvements.

If you sign up for the Park Stewardship program, you can find out about other volunteers in your park and share ideas with other Park Stewards from around the city. If you wish, the Foundation will provide a “tool kit” of resources to assist you in forming a neighborhood park group and can help you find the right city employee to talk to about a question or problem in your park.

It’s easy to participate, just complete the Stewardship Pledge and check off the level of action you’re comfortable with. We hope you’ll also commit to taking the annual survey of a park in the fall of each year. Surveys are used to report to the city on conditions and problems in the park system and help us advocate for park maintenance funding. Check out the Stewardship Pledge on our website and sign-up today!

Are you ready to be part of the solution? Email Oakland.parkstewards@gmail.com and we will help you decide the best fit for your time, your skills and interests. Be a partner with the Foundation and take an active role in cleaning, greening, and maintaining your neighborhood parks, medians, and creeks.
Friends’ eleventh annual A Taste of Spring was held on the evening of May 8, 2014 at the historic Rotunda Building. Lewis P. May was honored posthumously with our Community Award. Lew’s son Pete spoke passionately about the need for Oakland’s residents to invest their philanthropic dollars in the town they live in. The PG&E East Bay Government Relations team was also honored with our Business Peoples’ Award for their long-time support of the Foundation.

The proceeds from A Taste of Spring were used to support the Foundation’s work in the community, and attendees also generously donated directly to our Youth Scholarship Fund.

This year’s Taste of Spring will be better than ever! It’s being held at the Impact Hub Oakland, on Thursday, May 7th, at 6:30 pm. We’ve lined up a great caterer, exclusive fine wines, and some really exciting auction items. We will be honoring Keith “K-Dub” Williams, and Donahue Fitzgerald LLP (formerly Donahue Gallagher Woods LLP). To purchase tickets, go to our website at Oaklandparks.org.

A special thank you to the 2014 A Taste of Spring sponsors

Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc.
Donahue Gallagher Woods LLP
Torrey Pines Bank
Corrigan Sports/Oakland Running Festival
Kazan, McClain, Satterley & Greenwood
McGuire & Hester
Oakland A’s Community Fund
Schnitzer Steel Industries
Warriors Community Foundation
Community partners

40th St. Median Project
Ace Arts
Adams Point Neighborhood Group
Alameda Co. – Oakland Comm. Action Partnership
Artemis Rowing
Brett Park Fund
Burnham Bench Fund
Coach Fardella Fund
Dimond Improvement Assoc - Keep Dimond Clean
Dimond Improvement Assoc - Oaktoberfest
Eastlake Music Festival
Friends of Cleveland Cascade
Friends of Glen Echo Creek
Friends of Joaquin Miller Park
Friends of Lake Merritt Japanese Garden
Friends of Maxwell Park
Friends of Oak Glen Park
Friends of the Gardens at Lake Merritt
Friends of the Grove – Dimond Park
Garber Park Stewards
Glenview Median Strip
Greening of Oakland / PG&E
I Heart Mama
Joaquin Miller Cascade Maintenance Fund
Joaquin Miller Community Center Fund
Jobs and Housing Coalition
Keep Oakland Beautiful
John and Mittie Phillips Scholarship Fund
Lake Merritt Pollinator Posse
Lakeshore Homes Association
Morcom Rose Garden Fund
NEWT (Native Environment Watershed Transformation Project)
Oakland Landscape Committee
Oakland Civic Orchestra
Oakland Community Orchestra
ODEG (Oakland Dog Owners Group)
Pan-African Family Reunion
Shepherd Canyon Homeowners
Splash Pad Neighborhood Forum

OAKLAND PARKS & RECREATION:

SPORTS AND AQUATICS

ACE Kids Golf Program
Adult Sports
Davie Tennis
Girls’ Sports
Young American Little League
Oakland Pools
Castlemont Swim Team
Today’s Future Sound
Town Park
Trailhead: Dimond Park
Umoja Festival
Wonderarium

MEMORIALS

Kristin Anderson Bench
Delores M. Duffy Memorial Fund
John and Mittie Phillips Scholarship Fund
Shirley Green Memorial Fund
Dr. Sabra Jones Memorial Fund
Betty Price Recreation Center Fund
Simon Richardson Bench
Marcelle Weed Memorial Fund
City Of Oakland Pools
City Swim Team
Fremont Pool
Gator Sharks (Fremont/Castlemount)
Lion’s Swim Team
Live Oaks Swim Team
Temescal Tidal Waves
West Side Swim Team

Income and assets

Assets and Liabilities as of December 31, 2014

Financial Assets of the Foundation
Cash and Investments  501,360.16
Receivables (Thompson Bliss Family Gift Grant)  60,000.00
Total Financial Assets 561,360.16

Financial Liabilities and Custodial Funds
Accounts Payable  599.13
Custodial Funds  426,836.48
Total Liabilities and Custodial 427,435.61

Net Assets of the Foundation
Unrestricted  57,936.89
Temporarily Restricted
Thompson Bliss Family Gift  70,513.69
Youth Scholarship  5,473.97
Total Net Assets 133,924.55

SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDS FOR 2014

Sources of Funds
Youth Scholarship  19,551.25
Events  1,088.00
Other Income  26,450.00
Sponsors  20,585.00
Ticket Sales  14,325.00
Event Expenses -39,081.81
Net Event Income  23,366.19
Custodial Fees  35,023.33
Grant Fees  3,642.92
Memberships  19,220.32
Donations  8,759.81
Other Income  459.52
Total Sources of Funds 110,023.34

Uses of Funds
Payroll, Taxes, Benefits  108,158.45
Insurance  5,110.07
Office  17,453.06
IT, Tax Prep, Other  2,008.77
Total Uses of Funds 132,730.35

Total Sources Less Uses of Funds -22,707.01
$10,000 and Over
Thompson - Bliss Family Gift

$5,000 and $9,999
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan
Kirby Foundation - East Bay Community Foundation
Pacific Gas and Electric Co

$1,000 ~ $4,999
Claremont Creek Mgmt, LLC

$250 ~ $499
Anonymous (3)

Sandra Venning
Gordon Vnther
Lisa & Jeff Violet
Liz Westbrook
Craig Wollaston

$20~$249
Anonymous (5)

Barbara Schaaf & Robert Schock

SCf Consulting Group
Douglas Sovar & Sara Newmann
Ellie & John Sutter
Paul Vidican
Don & Bonnie Wallis

$1,000 ~ $4,999
Claremont Creek Mgmt, LLC

$5,000 and $9,999
Thompson - Bliss Family Gift

$10,000 and Over
(Corrigan Sports Ent Inc)
Gifting opportunities

Cash Donations
Most gifts to the Foundation take this form, and it is as easy as writing a check or using your MasterCard, Visa or American Express. Checks should be made payable to the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation.

Gifts of Appreciated Property
With careful planning, charitable gifts of long-term appreciated securities or real estate can create very favorable tax benefits, such as the elimination of paying long-term capital gains tax and receiving an income tax charitable deduction.

Bequests
Gifts through wills and bequests can provide you with the opportunity to honor and sustain your family name in conjunction with the Foundation’s name recognition program. The Foundation will work with you and your attorney to provide you with the language necessary to insure that your intentions are clearly expressed.

Life Income/Charitable Trusts
Charitable Trusts and charitable gift annuities offer an opportunity to make a substantial gift to the Foundation without forfeiting the annual income produced by these assets. You can retain income for your life and the life of your spouse. This gift can also be structured to create a substantial tax benefit over a period of years.

Matching Gifts
Many companies will match your contribution to the Foundation. Submit your company’s matching gift form with your contribution and it can significantly increase your support and associated giving level.

Life Insurance
Many, if not most people, own some form of life insurance. Life insurance can play a very important part in planned charitable giving. Life insurance for charitable purposes can be accomplished by 1) the transfer of ownership of an existing policy to the Foundation, or 2) the purchase of life insurance which names the Foundation as the beneficiary and/or owner.

Gifts-in-Kind
Gifts of goods or services can be of great financial assistance to the Foundation, while offering the donor a tax deduction for the fair market value of the gift. Please consult your tax advisor or contact the Foundation for further information.