

SPRING 2008

# AT THE PRESIDIO

A SEASONAL GUIDE TO THE PARK

*Lovers' Lane:  
One of San Francisco's Oldest Footpaths  
(see p. 2)*

# LOVERS' LANE



## One of San Francisco's Oldest Travel Corridors

In the 18th century as the original Spanish Presidio took shape at the windswept Golden Gate, the shortest distance from the fort to the pious - and passionate - options of nearby Yerba Buena was a footpath that later came to be known as "Lovers' Lane."

This earliest Presidio trail journeyed directly from humble El Presidio three miles southeast to Misión San Francisco de Asís (Mission Dolores), founded by Father Junipero Serra in 1776 at the same time as the Presidio. Thus, Spanish soldiers and Franciscan missionaries were the first to use the corridor. During the 1800s, it became the main route used by off-duty American soldiers making the trip into town to meet their sweethearts.

Lovers' Lane journeys through what we now call the Tennessee Hollow watershed, named for the 1st Tennessee Volunteer Regiment, which briefly camped at the post in 1898 before embarking for the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. Lovers' Lane includes a red brick pedestrian bridge over the area where the watershed's three tributaries converge. The bridge is still a popular landmark today.

The original trail surface was most likely beaten earth. In 1902 a proposal from the Presidio's mounted patrol to ride along the trail was denied based on the fact that the trail was intended for use by pedestrians, many of whom were

women, and the hooves would cut up the path and make walking along it more difficult. In 1905 estimates were done for a boardwalk along the trail's alignment. The boardwalk eventually appears in a survey dated 1909, and a dramatic photo of a soldier standing at attention on the beautiful pathway is frequently used today to capture the spirit of Lovers' Lane.

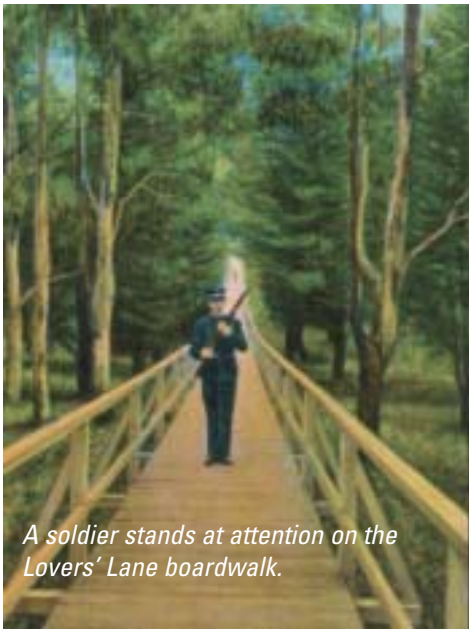
Though the post grew dramatically from its early foundations, its historic core, now called the Main Post, at the base of Lovers' Lane remains the vital "heart of the Presidio." In 1886, 3,000 trees were planted at the bottom of Lovers' Lane by school children celebrating California's first Arbor Day. Today, raptors like the Red-shouldered hawk nest in the these Blue-gum Eucalyptus trees. In 1939, nine brick duplexes were built in the Georgian Revival architectural style directly alongside the path. As vehicles overtook foot traffic, nearby Presidio Boulevard became a major automobile route through the park.

In late 2007, the surface of Lovers' Lane was improved as the first step in a series of trail improvements that may also include lighting upgrades, visitor benches, and improved interpretation along the trail. A portion of the historic boardwalk may also be recreated. Lovers' Lane is among a dozen major trail corridors connecting the Presidio's neighborhoods and open spaces (see p. 6).

“

The surface of Lovers' Lane was improved as the first step in a series of trail improvements that may also include lighting upgrades, visitor benches, and improved interpretation.

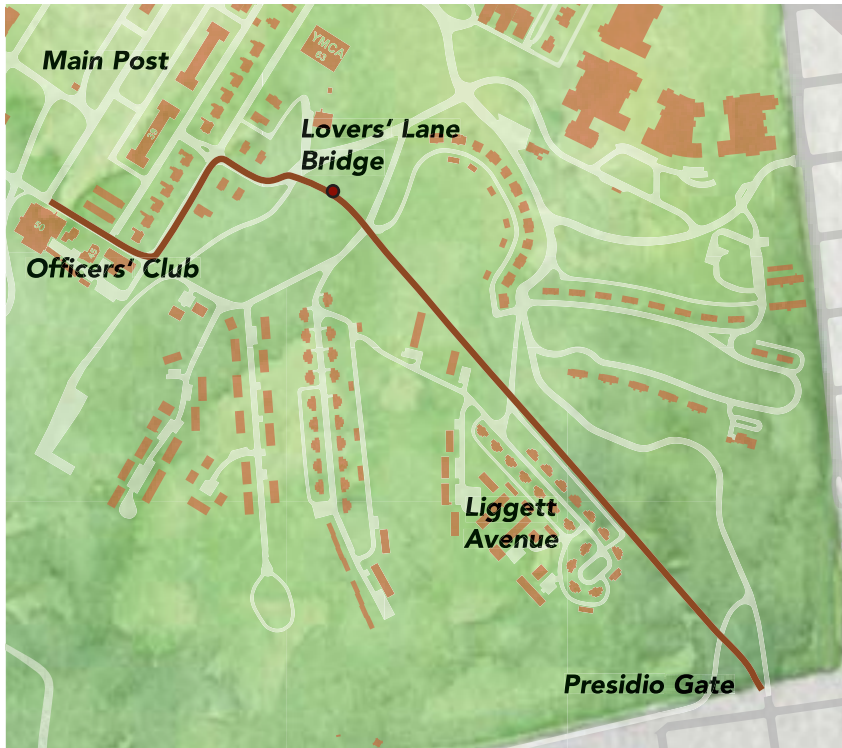
”



*A soldier stands at attention on the Lovers' Lane boardwalk.*



*Lovers' Lane is a popular route to and from the Main Post.*



*Historic homes on Liggett Avenue.*



*The waters of Tennessee Hollow flow under Lovers' Lane Bridge (c. 1885).*

*New native landscaping at Baker Beach Apartments.*

# Nature Watch: reports from the field

## Baker Beach

### An Ancient San Francisco Landscape Returns

Every Presidio neighborhood has a singular natural and cultural history that continues to unfold. The Presidio's largest residential community is now undergoing a dynamic transformation. The dunes enveloping the Baker Beach Apartments, built in 1951 to house military personnel, are being restored with the same palette of flora that flourished on this land for millennia.

The Baker Beach Apartments are located in the western Presidio in the "wildest" part of the park, immersed in an ancient indigenous landscape. Surrounded on all sides by open space, this neighborhood is above one of San Francisco's most popular beaches. If you walk to the south end of Baker Beach, you will find Lobos Creek, the last free-flowing creek in the City. In earlier times, most San Franciscans drank water supplied from this creek. Lobos Creek still provides most of the Presidio's water, which is purified at the brick water treatment plant built by the Army in 1912 near the creek's outlet.

The natural areas and residential landscaping are gradually being restored to maximize habitat for flora and fauna that represent the living heritage of San Francisco. Weedy, windswept dunes are greening with myriad wildflowers and fragrant shrubs. Their return harkens the reappearance of wildlife like American lady butterflies and Anna's hummingbirds. This spring, check out the colorful blooms while honing your wildlife-watching skills.

*American lady in the residential landscape.*



*Great Blue Heron at Fort Scott.*



## A Wildlife Moment

*"A Great Blue Heron was hunting gophers (as usual) in the landscape when a hawk landed on the wire above and began scoping out the same gopher. It was a bit of a stand-off and test of patience (a few neighbors stopped to watch) when a huge Raven came hopping along the grass to check out the excitement. Apparently it scared the gopher deep into the hole, because the hawk began squawking loudly, circled a couple times, and then flew off (in a huff-as personified by me). The raven got bored and flew away too, leaving the Heron (Zen-master) standing in silent stillness... the Heron was still there when I left... I imagine it has a full-belly by now!"*

*~ from Aimee Vincent, Presidio Trust employee and park resident*



{CALENDAR FEATURE}

# EARTH STROLL

## A Family Earth Day Extravaganza



**Saturday, April 19**  
**11 am to 3 pm**  
**Begin at Crissy Field Center**  
**603 Mason Street**

Get active and have fun this Earth Day! Bring the whole family on an interactive fitness walk around Crissy Field guided by your very own Eco-Passport. Play games, visit with live animals, and make strides for a healthy planet and a healthy you at the many activity stations designed to help you connect with this little corner of the planet. The event also features toddler-friendly activities.

Small charges apply for some activities and goodies.

[www.crissyfield.org](http://www.crissyfield.org)



### Kids...It's a DRAW! Big Year Endangered Species Poster Contest

Get out the paints and crayons! Make a poster featuring one of 33 local endangered species in the Golden Gate National Parks to be displayed at Earth Day events at Crissy Field, McLaren Park, and other public places. All submissions receive a free eco-passport to the April 19 Earth Stroll adventure at Crissy Field. Grand prizes of \$50 program certificates to the Crissy Field Center for each of the four age classes: 5 years and under, age 6 - 8, age 9 - 12, and age 13 -18.

[www.ggnrbigyear.org](http://www.ggnrbigyear.org)



# PRESIDIO TRAILS

## Grab Your Hiking Shoes and Take a Journey Through the Presidio

The warmer and drier days of spring bring new opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors at the Presidio. Now there are more ways than ever to experience park pathways.

A year ago, a landmark gift from the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund accelerated planned improvements to park trails, bikeways, overlooks, and Rob Hill Campground, with the goal of creating greater community access to the Presidio's open spaces. The park's already extensive trail and bikeway system is now expanding; new vista points are popping up, brining the total scenic hot spots to eight; and the only overnight group camping facility within San Francisco is doubling in size, with new amenities added to make the experience more comfortable and fulfilling.

Improvements are being made to the dozen major trail corridors that cross the Presidio, linking the bay to the coastal bluffs and the Pacific Ocean to historic parade grounds and forest groves. Each route reveals a different aspect of the Presidio's character and history.

### SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

#### Batteries to Bluffs

A dramatic new trail, which loops through cypress groves from Battery Godfrey to Battery Crosby, allows visitors to experience the wild western bluffs as never before, including new access to the beach. The project is part of the Trails Forever initiative and was led by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, in partnership with the National Park Service and the Presidio Trust.

#### Lovers' Lane

The trail surface along this historic footpath was repaired as the first step in an upgrade that will eventually include many other enhancements (see p. 2).

#### Bay Area Ridge Trail

A new section of the Bay Area Ridge Trail now winds peacefully through the historic forest behind the Washington Boulevard neighborhoods, and connects to both the Anza trail and the Immigrant Point Overlook and picnic area.

### COMING SOON

#### Crissy Field Overlook

The vista point on Lincoln Boulevard above the northern shoreline will feature a stone plaza, benches, an ornamental railing, interpretive panels, and visitor parking. Crissy Field Overlook will offer spectacular views of San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz and Angel Island, the marsh and historic grass airfield, and the city skyline. It opens in mid-2008.

#### Rob Hill Campground

Plans call for doubling the number of group campsites, creating restrooms, and adding a large stone fire circle and gateway. With the planned renovations and expanded services, the campsite could eventually serve around 20,000 people each year, including underserved youth through the Camping at the Presidio program. Rob Hill will reopen for the 2009 season.

{ NATURE IN THE CITY }



## Taking Toxins to the Mat

### Presidio Hosts Environmental Experiment

The Presidio Compost and Regeneration Center is the backdrop for an exciting experiment that uses human hair and mushrooms to keep petroleum waste from damaging our environment. The project is the brainchild of Phil McCrory, a barber who invented "hairmats" as a means to soak up oily deposits; Paul Stamets, who designed the experiment and donated mushroom spawn from his company, FungiPerfect; and Lisa Gautier, head of Matter of Trust, a local non-profit that promotes sustainable ideas and products. The team approached the Presidio in the wake of the Cosco-Busan oil spill.

"You shampoo your hair because it gets greasy. Hair is very efficient at collecting oil out of the air, off surfaces like your skin and out of the water, even petroleum oil," said McCrory. "There are over 300,000 hair salons in America and each collects about a pound of hair a day. Right now, most of that goes into the waste stream, but it should all be made into hairmats."

In the Presidio experiment, mats made of hair are soaking up bunker fuel and used motor oil. Oyster mushrooms are then grown on the mats; the mushroom enzymes break down the oil and hair into compost that can be used as a landscape-grade fertilizer or for freeway landscaping. Traditionally, oil waste would be incinerated, which releases toxins into the air.

If such experiments prove fruitful, this method could be available to respond to future oil spills, as well

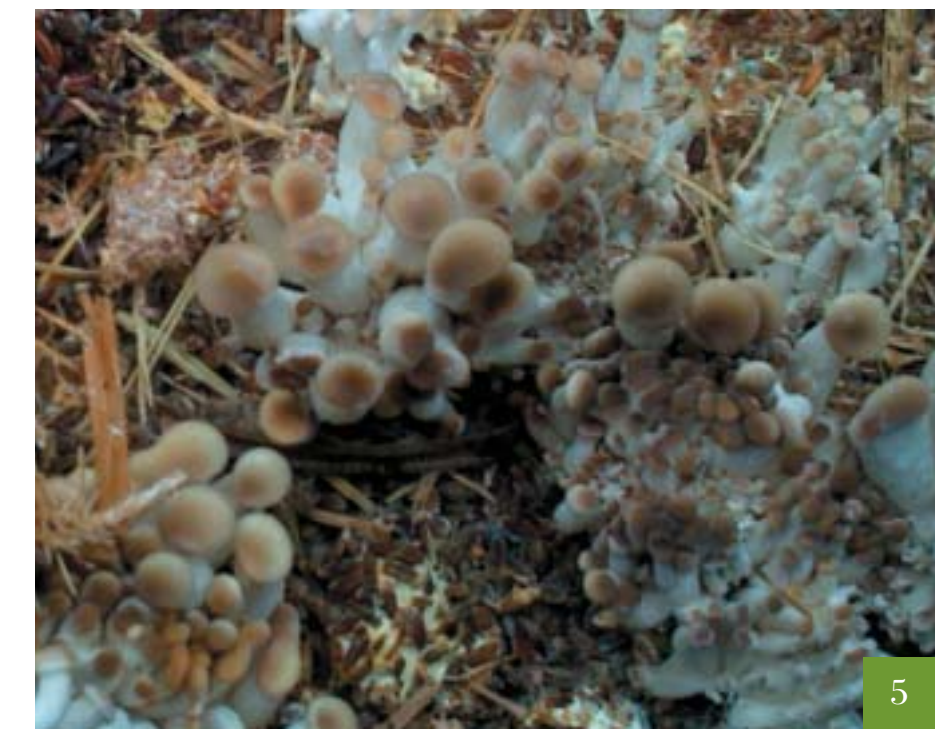
as to safely rid the environment of used petroleum products.

"This type of green entrepreneurship is in line with many of the programs we are already doing; it's a perfect fit for the Presidio," said Craig Middleton, executive director of the Presidio Trust. The Presidio Compost Facility already transforms grass clippings, wood chips, manure, and brush into a replenishing soil amendment that nurtures park landscapes. In 2007, the program diverted 2,300 cubic yards of organic debris in an effort to retain and reuse as much material as possible within the park.

The Presidio hair and mushroom experiment will conclude this spring, and the resulting byproduct will be tested to determine if it is indeed suitable for use as landscape compost. For more on the process, visit [www.matteroftrust.org](http://www.matteroftrust.org).



The Presidio Trust Compost Facility already transforms grass clippings, wood chips, manure and brush into a replenishing soil amendment that nurtures park landscapes.



# PARK CALENDAR

## VOLUNTEER!

### Introducing NEW Trails Forever Volunteer Programming in the Presidio

**Presidio Trail Keeper Volunteer Orientation**  
Saturday, March 15  
9 am to 4 pm  
Volunteer with the Trails Forever program by becoming a Presidio Trail Keeper! By monitoring trails, Trail Keepers collect important information for Presidio Trust and National Park Service staff. It's a great opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and get to know the Presidio, while making a valuable contribution. This orientation will equip you with the gear and info you need to start "trailkeeping" on your own schedule.  
RSVP by March 13.  
**415/ 561 3068**

**Trail Stewardship**  
Every 2nd Tuesday of the month, beginning in April Help Presidio Trust and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy staff maintain Presidio trails by participating in this new monthly volunteer drop-in program. Time and meeting locations TBD.  
**415/ 561 3068**



**Natural Heritage Volunteerism**  
Help make a place for nature in the city. Hands-on, fun and educational!  
Wednesdays & Saturdays  
9am - Noon: Habitat Restoration programs in the field  
1 - 4 pm: Native Plant Nursery programs  
**415/ 561 5333**

**To learn more about volunteer opportunities in the Presidio contact the Presidio Trust Volunteer Coordinator at 415/ 561 5333 or volunteer@presidio.gov.**

**www.presidio.gov/experiences/volunteer**

## ONGOING EVENTS

**Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Public Meeting**  
Second Tuesdays, 7 pm  
Presidio Officers' Club, 50 Moraga Avenue  
RAB is a citizen's group that works with the Trust's environmental cleanup program.  
**415/ 561 4255**

**Tours of Arion Press**  
Thursdays, 3 pm  
See the historic typefoundry, pressroom and composing room, and bookbindery. Reservations required, \$7. Visit the gallery weekdays 9am - 5pm, free.  
**www.arionpress.com 415/ 668 2548**

## MARCH

**thru May 4**  
**TRANSFORMING ART EXHIBITION - Featuring Chris Hardman of Antenna Theater**  
Wednesdays to Sundays  
11 am to 5 pm  
Presidio Officers' Club, 50 Moraga Avenue  
Sound, image, and moving art reveal how our minds transform visual and aural information to create our view of the world. Get immersed in a 3-D experience! Don't miss the audio tour, \$5.  
**www.presidio.gov/calendar 415/ 561 5500**



## 1, 8, & 15

**MUSIC AND MOVIES**  
**At the Exploratorium**  
Saturdays, March 1, 8 & 15  
2 pm  
Exploratorium, 3601 Lyon Street  
Meet local musicians and filmmakers in a special series of "live cinema" programs for all ages. Each highlights different artists performing original tunes to homemade movies. Free with admission.  
**www.exploratorium.edu 415/ 561 0363**

## 8

**GGNRA BIG YEAR**  
**Presidio Manzanita Trip**  
Saturday, March 8  
10 am - 11 am  
Presidio Nursery, 1244 Appleton Street  
See Presidio Manzanita seeds and find out about recent attempts to make this endangered plant viable. Maximum 20 participants. RSVP required.  
**www.ggnrbigyear.org 415/ 652 7651**

## 8

**YMCA SUMMER CAMP Sign Up Day**  
Saturday, March 8  
8 am to 5 pm  
Presidio Community YMCA, Letterman Gym  
The YMCA offers a multitude of day camps. From sports to arts, your child will have an awesome time discovering all that San Francisco has to offer. To request a time to register, contact Kelly Meehan at **kmeehan@ymcasf.org 415/ 557 9692.**

## 20

**OPENING RECEPTION**  
**Seed Gallery of Photographic Art At the Thoreau Center**  
Thursday, March 20  
5 pm to 7 pm  
Exhibition:  
March 20 to May 16  
Monday through Friday  
9 am to 5 pm  
Visit "Myca of Twin Peaks, " a photographic essay by Janet Kessler documenting the life of a wild coyote who has chosen Twin Peaks as his habitat.  
**www.thoreau.org 415/ 561 7823**

## 23

**EASTER SUNDAY**  
**At Presidio Café**  
Sunday, March 23  
Presidio Golf Course, 300 Finley Road  
Enjoy brunch buffet and a visit from the Easter Bunny.  
**www.presidiogolf.com 415/ 561 GOLF**

## 24 - 28

**SPRING CAMP**  
**With Presidio Community YMCA and Crissy Field Center**  
Monday, March 24 - Friday, March 28  
Traditional Day Camp: Grades K-8.  
Specialty Camp: Presidio Explorers, Grades 2-3.  
The Presidio is the backdrop for fun and learning.  
**www.ymcasf.org/presidio 415/ 447 9643**

## 26

**TRANSFORMING ART EXHIBIT PROGRAM**  
**The Eye and the Brain: The Latest Science**  
Wednesday, March 26  
7 pm  
Presidio Officers' Club  
50 Moraga Avenue  
Join us for this Wednesday evening lecture featuring Dr. Julie Schnapf, UCSF, Department of Ophthalmology.  
**www.presidio.gov/calendar 415/ 561 5500**

## APRIL

## 12

**HEALTH KID'S DAY**  
Saturday, April 12  
10 am to 1 pm  
Presidio Community YMCA Main Post  
Come for a fun-filled day of healthy activities. Bounce in an inflatable jump house, enjoy healthy snacks, learn about bike safety, and qualify for give-a-ways. Free.  
Contact Kelly Meehan at **kmeehan@ymcasf.org 415/ 557 9692.**

## 13 & 27

**SUNDAY SUPPER**  
**At Presidio Café**  
Presidio Golf Course, 300 Finley Road  
Sunday, April 13 and 27  
5 pm to 7 pm  
Enjoy prix-fix family style dinner. Adults \$20, 12 and under \$12. All bottles of wine 50% off.  
**www.presidiogolf.com 415/ 561 GOLF**

## 17 & 18

**Pacific Union Presents: CONCERTS AT THE PRESIDIO**  
Thursday and Friday, April 17 & 18  
7:30 pm  
Golden Gate Club  
135 Fisher Loop  
**www.presidio.gov/calendar 415/ 447 6274**

## 22

**BENEFIT DINNER**  
**At Arion Press**  
Tuesday, April 22  
6 pm to 10 pm  
Artist William T. Wiley is the honored guest at the Annual Spring Benefit Dinner, sponsored by the Presidio's non-profit Grabhorn Institute.  
**www.arionpress.com 415/ 668 2548**

## 29

**PRESIDIO DANCE THEATRE 10th Anniversary Gala**  
Tuesday, April 29  
Celebrate the Theatre as it moves into the next decade of "bringing the world of dance into the lives of children."  
**www.presididance.org**



## MAY

## 5

**PRESIDIO DANCE THEATRE Cinco De Mayo performance**  
Monday, May 5  
San Francisco War Memorial Opera House  
**www.presididance.org**

## 10

**8TH ANNUAL COMMUNITY HEROES AWARDS CEREMONY**  
Saturday, May 10  
2 pm - 4 pm  
Crissy Field Center  
Each year, Crissy Field Center honors those whose actions have made a positive impact on the environment.  
**www.crissyfield.org 415/ 561 7690**

## 11

**MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH**  
**At Presidio Café**  
Sunday, May 11  
Presidio Golf Course  
300 Finley Road  
Enjoy a brunch buffet and live music.  
**www.presidiogolf.com 415/ 561 GOLF**

## 15

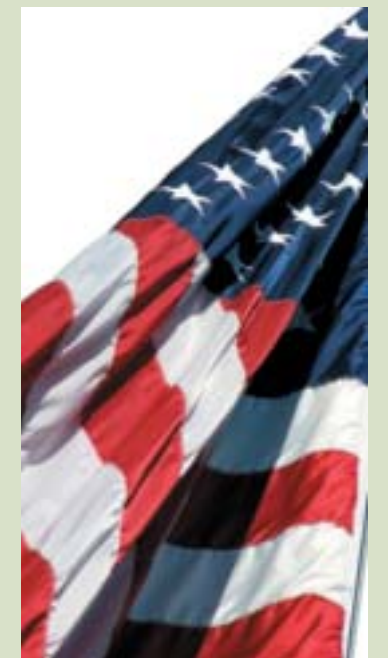
**PUBLIC MEETING**  
**Presidio Trust Board of Directors**  
Thursday, May 15  
6:30 pm  
Presidio Officers' Club  
50 Moraga Avenue  
**www.presidio.gov/calendar 415/ 561 5418**

## 23

**PRESIDIO DANCE THEATRE 2008 "Dancing Across Cultures"**  
Friday, May 23  
Palace of Fine Arts  
Showcase performance of Presidio Dance Theatre, Presidio Dance Theatre Junior Company, Presidio Dance Theatre Academy, DANCE OUT!, and guest artists.  
**www.presididance.org 415/ 561 3959**

## 26

**MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY**  
Monday, May 26  
10:30 am - noon  
Parade begins in the Main Post. Formal program 11 am - noon at the National Cemetery. Ceremony includes live music by the 91st Division Band.  
**www.presidio.gov/calendar 415/ 561 5500**





### SUPPORT PRESIDIO TRAILS!

The lead gift from the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund included a challenge grant inviting the community to make a special contribution for Presidio trails. To support the challenge, call (415) 561-3000 or contact at [kmorelli@parksconservancy.org](mailto:kmorelli@parksconservancy.org).

To volunteer on park trails, contact the Presidio Trust at 415/ 561 5333.



# CRISSY FIELD CENTER

{ KIDS IN THE PARK }



## Connecting Kids with the Outdoors

Crissy Field Center offers a variety of programs that connect Bay Area residents – especially kids – to the environment. Since its opening in 2001, the Center has served more than 400,000 people through school field trips, public workshops, after school programs, summer camps, and more.

Housed in a historic and sustainably renovated building, Crissy Field Center includes a media lab, resource library, arts workshop, science lab, and gathering room. Additionally, the facility hosts a bookstore and café serving kid-friendly fare, savory soups, sandwiches, salads and snacks made with organic seasonal ingredients. All proceeds from these retail operations support the Center's scholarship programs for youth.

Recent studies show that many young people in urban areas become isolated in their own neighborhoods and feel disconnected from the natural world. The Center's programs and activities positively impact the lives of children by helping them spend time learning and playing in nature, by encouraging them to bring their family and friends back to the park, and by helping them understand the natural, cultural, physical and biological significance of the park resources in urban communities. Youth learn the parks belong to them too by sharing basic environmental principles and skills needed to improve and protect the environment, by demonstrating healthy eating and exercise habits, and by encouraging a sense of stewardship by participating in park projects.

Youth and families can choose from a variety of integrated art, media, ecology and cultural activities and workshops, as well as moonlight hikes and campfires.

- Sign-up for Summer Camp! One to two week-long day camps give kids entering kindergarten through 8th grade offer a combination of outdoor investigation, field outings, and fun hands-on projects. Financial assistance is available.
- Mystery Trail Challenge. This self-guided booklet is filled with clues to find hidden plaques along a one-mile waterfront trail leading from the Warming Hut to Crissy Field Center where a special surprise awaits.
- Group Programs designed for after-school clubs, day care centers, community and church groups, provides a series of on and off-site activities led by a National Park Service Ranger.
- Exhibits on view in the Gathering Room feature ecologically themed art, photography and multi-media displays that rotate quarterly, September through June.
- School Programs offer students in grades K-12 a unique "living" classroom setting.
- Special Events for all ages—whether it be sustainable seasonal events like Season's Greenings, Eco Career Day's high school student job fair, Earth Stroll's interactive family fitness festival or Community Heroes annual celebration honoring local environmental heroes—there's something fun for everyone.

### Crissy Field Center

603 Mason Street  
(across the street from the marsh, at the corner of Mason & Halleck Streets)

Open daily from  
9 am to 5 pm

Office  
415/ 561 7690  
Bookstore  
415/ 561 7761  
Café  
415/ 561 7756

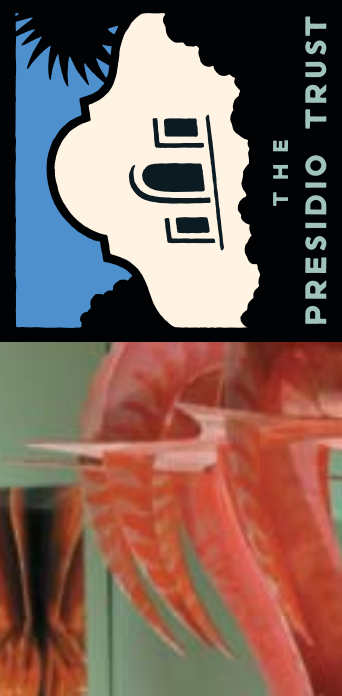
[www.crisseyfield.org](http://www.crisseyfield.org)

The Center is operated by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy and National Park Service.

*Photos by Tung Chee*







# CONTENT

**H** HISTORY NOTES 2  
Walking Lovers' Lane

**W** EXPERIENCES 6  
Presidio Trails:  
Get out and hike!

**N** NATURE IN THE CITY 4  
Reports from the Field

**K** KIDS IN THE PARK 8  
Discover Crissy Field Center

**C** CALENDAR *Full Out Insert*  
A Full Calendar of Events and Activities

**AT THE PRESIDIO** is published by the Presidio Trust. Your questions and comments are welcome. Please contact us at **415/ 561 5418** or **presidio@presidiotrust.gov**.

{Cover}  
**Lovers' Lane**  
Photo by Ric Miller

Layout: Amy Wolff  
Printed on Recycled Paper, with Soybase Inks

**THE PRESIDIO TRUST**  
34 Graham Street  
P.O. Box 29052  
San Francisco, California  
94129-0052

**www.presidio.gov**  
415/ 561 5418



### { DID YOU KNOW? }

In recent years, there have been more coyote sightings in the Lovers' Lane area than on other park trails. Typically coyote are timid animals with a natural fear of people. They are common residents in parklands from Marin to San Mateo.

PRESORTED  
FIRST CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
San Francisco, CA  
Permit No. 925