



EVENT ADVISORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SUNDAY AFTERNOON FENNEL POLLEN COOK-OFF, TASTING AND POTLUCK AT THE MARE ISLAND SHORELINE HERITAGE PRESERVE

[VALLEJO], CA – Sunday, July 24, 2011, 1:00-3:00pm a [Fennel Pollen cook-off, tasting and potluck](#) will take place at the Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve Visitors Center, 1595 Railroad Ave on the southernmost end of the Island. The pollen of fennel, the Mediterranean native that has naturalized throughout California and considered an invasive species by most land managers, is a sought after culinary seasoning. [Pollen Ranch](#) wild-craft harvests the pollen in the Preserve and other northern California locations. “Our volunteers are excited to host this first-ever fennel pollen event. We hope to grow it into our version of the popular “sagras” or festivals of Italy focused on a single food and often served as fundraisers for charity”, said Myrna Hayes, Volunteer Preserve Manager. Following the event at 3:30pm, Myrna Hayes will lead an afternoon wildflower, nature and history walk along the main trail about 1.5 miles leaving from the Visitors Center.

[Guided hike at the Preserve July 22](#)

Friday July 22, Preserve volunteers continue their weekly Friday evening ***Wine and Walks in the Preserve*** 5:00-7pm. Share good company, appetizers and wine supplied by Preserve volunteers or bring your own at the Visitors Center, followed by a docent led Preserve walk to view sunsets and visit sites such as the naval cemetery, Rowser Garden and former ammunition bunkers.

[Guided hike at the Preserve Sunday, July 24](#)

Sunday, Volunteer Preserve manager and long-time Mare Island volunteer Myrna Hayes, leads an afternoon wildflower, nature and history walk along a portion of the main trail, including a visit to the Bill and Alma Rowser Legacy Gardens to learn about progress on the discovery and plans for rehabilitation of the more than 80 year-old garden. This leisurely walk is about 1.5 miles and leaves from the Preserve Visitors Center at 3:30pm. Meet at the Preserve Visitors Center through the gate at the south end of Railroad Ave. on Mare Island. Wear comfortable shoes and a hat and bring water and snacks, sunscreen, binoculars and cameras.

Public access at the Preserve

The Preserve is open three days a week every Friday through Sunday 10am-sunset staffed by volunteers of the Mare Island Heritage Trust. The public is welcome to visit the Preserve free of charge. The Preserve is located at 1595 Railroad Ave. at the southern end of Railroad Ave. south of Touro University and the Army Reserve on Mare Island.

During the open days the public can walk or ride bicycles on a self-guided paved roadway trail with 14 interpretive stops along the 3-mile roundtrip route to the top of the hill and beyond. At this time of year, Preserve users will have the opportunity to view nesting osprey on their walk on the paved road trail leading to the oldest U.S. Naval cemetery in the Pacific and winding through portions of the Naval Ammunition Depot National Register Historic District to the scenic lookout at the top of Mare Island Hill with panoramic views of seven counties, Mt. Tamalpais, Mt. Diablo and the Napa and Sonoma Valleys. The Preserve is open rain or shine. Dress in layers. Picnic grounds are located on a former tennis court adjacent to the Naval Cemetery with nearby ammunition bunkers to explore. Refreshments are available at the Visitors Center. Dogs are allowed on leash.

Although entrance to the Preserve is free, donations help to keep the Preserve open regularly. Donations make possible Preserve volunteer's ability to increase the number of open days in the future and provide funds for purchase of tools and supplies for work parties, nature club activities, historic preservation, native plant restoration and special events.

Key features of the Preserve are spectacular scenic vistas encompassing seven Bay Area counties, Mt. Diablo, Mt. Tamalpais and Mt. St. Helena, the Carquinez Strait and Sonoma and Napa Valleys and the U.S. Navy's first cemetery in the Pacific, founded in 1858. Visitors may also view interpretive displays and an art show by members of the Benicia Plein Air Group and other artists portraying the Preserve at the Visitors Center in a former munitions storage magazine, Building A-167. Visit www.mareislandpreserve.org for directions to the Preserve, located at 1595 Railroad Ave. on Mare Island.

The first parcels of the Preserve were transferred to the City of Vallejo in a grant from the legislature through the California State Lands Commission in 2002 for public trust uses such as a park, for all Californians. Additional parcels were transferred in the fall of 2010. The remainder of the 215-acre site is still undergoing environmental cleanup by the U.S. Navy. Volunteers have hosted free public access on the second Saturday of each month since April 2008 with expanded hours to every weekend Fri-Sun beginning in October 2010 through a use agreement with the City of Vallejo.

Upcoming Events at the Preserve:

July 24 Sunday Fennel and Dill Pollen Sagra Cook-off Tasting and Potluck 1pm-3pm at the Visitors Center. Join Preserve volunteers for a first ever and first of its kind "sagra" cook-off using wild fennel pollen and blends and wild dill pollen. Timed to coincide with the wild-craft harvesting of fennel pollen on the Preserve by [Pollen Ranch](#), the supplier and creator of Pollen Ranch fennel and dill pollen and seasoning blends, which can be purchased at the Preserve Visitors Center Magazine Marketplace.

July 30 Saturday Mare Island Heritage Trust volunteers will host [two free tours](#) with no pre-registration required, as part of the [18th Annual Laborfest 2011](#). Participants in the first tour

starting at 11:30am at the corner of 8th St. and Railroad Ave. will learn about some of the labor issues that influenced work life at the shipyard and walk through the central shipyard with some of the workers who built and repaired Navy vessels up until the base closure in 1996. Following an optional brown bag lunch where complementary drinks will be served at the Shoreline Heritage Preserve picnic grounds, a second narrated walking and driving tour is scheduled to begin at 2pm with retired ILWU member Jeff Bonneville, Cal Berkeley Ph.D. candidate Javier Arbona and Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve manager Myrna Hayes. "A 'Mutiny' that Changed History" will describe what became known as the Port Chicago Mutiny that took place at the Mare Island Naval Ammunition Depot August 9, 1944, 3 weeks after the Port Chicago Explosion that resulted in the greatest loss of life on home soil during WWII.

August 12-14 4th Annual Mare Faire 10:00am-8:00pm. Naturalist and docent-led hikes throughout the Island, exhibits, music, food and a silent auction at the Preserve Visitors Center. The event is free and features, guided hikes and tours of a range of Preserve features including munitions bunkers and the Naval Cemetery, historical and nature oriented presentations and displays.

Info. Call 707-249-9633.

Visit our website: www.mareislandpreserve.org

Please note: High resolution photos of the Historic Shoreline available. Tours of The Preserve are available to any reporter or photographer covering these events. Call Myrna Hayes, 707-557-9816 or 707-249-9633 (cell) to schedule.

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