



Weekend Adventure: Children's Fairyland, in Oakland

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY **CAROLE TERWILLIGER MEYERS, RESIDENT**

Designed especially for children age eight and under, this non-profit facility was the country's first educational storybook theme park when it opened in 1950. In fact, Disneyland is patterned after it. Mother Goose rhymes and fairy tales come to life in more than 30 fantasy sets, some of which hold live domesticated animals, and a "magic key" unlocks stories and songs (buy a key when you purchase tickets).

As soon as children pass through the Old Lady in the Shoe entrance, they run and skip this way and that, not sure what to do first. A yellow brick road path helps give direction. I found myself just following a child's lead. Among the attractions are an Alice in Wonderland card maze and a variety of slides – including one down a dragon's back. I like that rides on the Jolly Trolley and on two mini-carousels (the hands-down favorite with my grandkids) and a mini-Ferris wheel are included with admission.

All ages can view a puppet show at the oldest continuously operating puppet theater in the U.S. Gardens are well tended, and there are plenty of places for adults to sit. Mature trees provide shade, and a picnic area, fast-food stand, and packaged birthday party are also available.

No adult is admitted without a child, and no child is admitted without an adult. Note that the entrance is located near the parking kiosk.

Helpful hint: A great enticement to leave is the promise to head to another Oakland institution – Fentons Creamery for ice cream.

Children's Fairyland

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More description and images, plus things to do in Lakeside Park:

berkeleyandbeyond.com/Northern-California/S-F-Bay-Area/Oakland/Attractions/Lake-Merritt/lake-merritt.html

More things to do in Oakland:

berkeleyandbeyond.com/Northern-California/S-F-Bay-Area/Oakland/Attractions/attractions.html

Fentons Creamery:

berkeleyandbeyond.com/Northern-California/S-F-Bay-Area/Oakland/Restaurants/Fentons-Creamery/fentons-creamery.html



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