

THE LAKE MERRITT INSTITUTE

(Lake Trash Removal, Fountains, Education, Lake Expertise)

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VOLUNTEER LETTER

January Trash Talk: The rains slowed, but we kept picking up trash that had washed in as it drifted around the Lake. As of January 26, only 2.93 inches of rain had fallen during the month. But by then we already had take 8,380 pounds to the transfer station. Some of it was bark chips that washed off of the street medians when rain flooded the streets. We also had large quantities of wood, including a 9 foot tall tree trunk (see February member newsletter for details). Number of participants: 129. Number of bags filled: 216. Note; all numbers are as of January 26th.



Workers lower a section of the new storm drain filter into an 18 foot hole at Bellevue and Staten by outfall # 4. First of the measure DD projects, it will remove trash from 26 acres of Grand Avenue and nearby streets. The 24 inch storm drain to which it will connect is on the right.

If all storm drain flows were filtered, trash levels could drop to as low as 1,000 - 2,000 pounds per month as opposed to the 8,000 pounds plus levels we have experienced in the last three months.

If You Can't Volunteer ... pick up at least one piece of trash every day. I know we (the non-litterbugs) outnumber them (the jerks who litter) probably by more than 10:1. So, if we each picked up one piece of their leavings every day, I suspect the problem would be solved (unless they toss more than 10 pieces per day).

New Bathymetry Survey Completed: An updated underwater map of the Lake has been printed, the first since 1985. The data will be used in computer models run by URS Corporation as part of their channel studies to determine if the flood control station should be moved. Most of the Lake is flat and 8-10 feet deep, but about a dozen small areas are a foot deeper, and the entrance to the Glen Echo arm is two feet less deep. Shoreline areas are 0-4 feet, and at low tide you could walk and keep your head above water at the Nature Center islands. A previous survey was done in '71.

Lake Turns Green: A few days after the big rains of late December, a curious green ring could be seen around the aeration fountain. Later it could be seen in the wake of boats and probably also in the microscopes of Oakland High students. It was plankton and it grows in response to the fresh water and fertilizer washed in from the watershed. Later, the water turned a murky bronze, typical of winter conditions after heavy rains.