

The Lake Merritt Institute

LAKE TRASH REMOVAL, FOUNTAINS, EDUCATION, LAKE MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE

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THE GONDOLA BRUNCH: Presenting the first ever (annual?) joint event sponsored by three premier Lake Merritt establishments:

● The Lake Merritt Institute

● Gondola Servizio

● The Lake Merritt Breakfast Club

Come one, come all. Enjoy spring on the Lake and hob nob with other Lake lovers. Discuss Measure DD projects. Watch goslings and baby ducks. To be held from 10 am to 1 pm on the "point" above the Sailboat House, overlooking Lake Merritt. Featuring:

1. Relaxing rides on Venetian Gondolas, with live music and scenery - usually \$45/couple.
2. Brunch / Lunch with barbecued chicken, hot dogs, burgers etc. All the trimmings.
3. Beverages for all ages.
4. Bring your musical instruments for a jam session.
5. Games - Pin the trash on the trash can.
6. Environmental videos in the Boating Center Classroom, including "The Synthetic Sea". Lake Clean-Up Demos.



Celebrate Mother's Day: This is Mother's Day weekend! Has your mother been aboard an authentic gondola? This is your chance. Drawings every half hour for carnation corsages.

You must RSVP by Tuesday, May 4. Tickets are \$20, and *must be sold **only in advance** in accordance with regulations governing events in City Parks.* No cash will be taken at the event, and no one will be admitted without pre-payment. Mail to the Institute at the address listed above. Limited to 49 people.

FUNDING NEEDED FOR WATER QUALITY MONITORING: Our poor little Lake. No body knows exactly what is going on out there with respect to oxygen and salinity. At times, oxygen levels drop for unknown reasons. But Oakland has only two recording water quality monitors, and no funds to maintain them. Desperately needed are funds for a maintenance contract, and for four more monitors (two for each arm of the Lake) to work along with the existing City monitors.

A recent ruling by the City Attorney's office stated that Measure DD funds cannot be used to purchase (or maintain) water quality monitors. A limited amount of DD funds (3.5%) can be used for such contracts, but that amount is already committed and the City can find no other funds.

So, when Lake improvements are put in place, potentially including devices to improve circulation, aeration, better tidal flushing and storm drain filters, how will we know if they are working? Without monitors, we won't. If we don't know if oxygen levels have improved, how will the Lake ever be taken off of the list of impaired bodies of water? Without funds to maintain the monitors, we won't.

Costs: An article in “LakeLine” the journal of The North American Lake Management Society, states that typical, annual sampling, water analysis and management plan development costs are \$25,000 - \$100,000. It is worth it? It is when you consider that inadequate data leading to inaccurate management and restoration decisions is a recipe for failure.

Can Your Business or Group Help? Needed are three \$10,000 grants; \$20,000 to buy the four, continuously recording monitors, and \$10,000 for an annual contract to cover weekly maintenance. If you want to make a big difference in improving Lake Merritt, this is your chance. Contact Dr. Bailey at 238-2290 or lmi@netwiz.net for details. Donations are tax deductible.

DD UPDATE: The April meeting of the Citizen’s Coalition will be held on Monday the 19th at a location to be announced. To receive minutes of the March meeting by Email, contact us at lmi@netwiz.net.

WORKER’S COMPENSATION INSURANCE COSTS SKYROCKET: In 1998, the Institute’s worker’s insurance premium was \$3,706. Four years later it was \$13,466! Despite never filing a claim, our rate (the percentage of gross salary paid to the insurance company) has jumped from 6.56% to 15.87%. Unfortunately, the \$1,034 per month we pay will never be used to help the Lake, so we are seeking a different insurance company and a different classification code, which is currently “amusement park maintenance.”

WAPMS: Lakekeeper Dr. Richard Bailey presented a paper entitled “Plant Variations in Lake Merritt, An Urban Tidal Lagoon (The Big Switch)” at the annual meeting of the Western Aquatic Plant Management Society in Seattle last month. The Society focuses on management and control of aquatic plants, sponsors research and provides a forum for discussion of issues and alternatives relating to harvesting, herbicide application, mechanical and biological control and related topics.



Lake Merritt lost some of the sediment capacity obtained in the last million dollar dredging job when somebody dumped a whole lot of mud down a storm drain leading to outfall 6, 7 or 8 on March 12th or 13th. This may have been related to recent construction along Lakeshore Avenue.

The Lake Merritt Institute is sponsored and supported by the Oakland Public Works Agency and members like you.