

THE LAKE MERRITT INSTITUTE

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

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VOLUNTEER LETTER

APRIL TRASH TALK: Wow: 3.79 inches of rain last month: No wonder 7,440 pounds of trash washed into the Lake. Averages for April 1998-2001 are only 1.44 inches and 3,615 pounds. Trash came out in 283 bags loaded up by 232 people, and included:

A shopping cart, a city cardboard trash box, several waterfowl, one raccoon, a fire extinguisher, a squirrel, lots of leaves and a wallet. But mostly it was plastic bags, bottles, Styrofoam, candy wrappers, cigarettes, fast food containers etc.

Groups that cleaned the Lake included 6th grade classes from St. Paul's School and the Lighthouse Charter school, Redwood Day School, Kaiser School, Holy Names College and Jewish Community Services. People really love to clean Lake Merritt!



Students from St. Paul's School team up to remove a very long plastic pipe from Glen Echo Creek. How it got there we haven't a clue, but it had to be cut up into three pieces to fit into the truck.

The Institute maintains a ladder near the mouth of the creek for access by St. Paul's School, which provides the class with their own gloves and boots.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS ORDERED: The Institute has ordered copies of the videos entitled The Trash Troll and Synthetic Sea (all about plastics in the ocean) for use in our educational presentations, which are provided to civic groups, schools and volunteers. For a free showing, stop by the office!

SPRING COMES TO LAKE MERRITT: Spawning, nesting and goslings have all returned to our downtown tidal lagoon. The winter birds have gone, terns are back and algae pervades the shorelines. Meanwhile, out in the middle of the Lake, widgeon grass is already about a foot long on the bottom, and growing fast. Volunteer and enjoy it now because summer will be here soon.

NEED COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS? If your school (or traffic court judge) requires community service hours, come on down to the Lake and earn them by removing trash from the shoreline. Its good exercise and complete strangers will say "Thank you!" Work with the regular groups on Tuesdays at 10:30 and Saturdays at 10, or work alone by using one of the four "U-Clean-It" stations. Just dial 1-3-1-4 to open the box and access gloves, nets, trash bags and a barrel inside. Instructions and a sign up sheet are inside the box.

The Lake Merritt Institute is supported and sponsored by the Oakland Public Works Agency