

# THE LAKE MERRITT INSTITUTE

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

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## VOLUNTEER LETTER

**AUGUST TRASH TALK: Rainfall / Trash Levels:** Zero rainfall of course, and only 800 pounds of trash. This is one of our lower totals – are people littering less? Among the more interesting items in the litter were: A CD player, an MP3 player, pager, pornographic magazine and disc, 4 inch high heel shoe, traffic cone, numerous turtles and a scooter.

**LAKE ALGAE:** Our late summer crop of algae is here. Its not the floating Enteromorpha or Cladophora that we get in the spring, or the usual summer widgeon grass (which failed to dominate this year) but Ulva that we see in September. This “sea lettuce” is a submerged, dark green seaweed which co-exists with several varieties of red algae. In some areas there is so much red and green that it looks like Christmas underwater.

**WHO CLEANS UP:** The good folk. People like Bill and Hilary (no, not the Clintons), John (the Mayer) and Jason the photographer continue to be regulars. Sharon and Dave also help out and Susan recently out-collected three people on her own. Sometimes people walking around the Lake grab a net for a while, and when he’s not promoting bio-diesel our Indian friend Zachary scoops out trash. Some, like Tom come more often when it rains and there is more trash and some come only a few times a year. We have Tuesday regulars and Saturday regulars. Every Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade from St. Paul’s volunteers. Others use the “U-Clean-It” boxes whenever the spirit moves them. They are the good guys and gals. Some times even the tin man shows up!



**WHO LITTERS:** Litterbugs. Actually they’re more like litterheads (bugs are cute, people who litter are not). They are people (sort of ) who think the whole world is their own private garbage can. They don’t care about property values, what it costs to clean up their mess, pollution and probably not about much else either. Are they your friend? No.

They are selfish; too lazy to carry a simple piece of trash to a trash container. They think they are too important for that. Somebody else can clean up after them. They know they can get away with it, because most of us are too embarrassed to talk to them and cops are too busy elsewhere. But if you see one doing it, give ‘em a big frown and a thumbs down.

**CREEK TO BAY DAY-COME ON OUT:** This Saturday, the 18th, join with friends and neighbors to celebrate what is now an international event, Coastal Clean-Up Day. Ninety one countries participate, so why shouldn’t you? In the Philippines, it’s a national holiday! Our version in Oakland is appropriately called Creek-to-Bay Day when volunteers clean up everything from the upper hills to San Francisco Bay. Just follow the water and clean up. At Lake Merritt, we will start at 9 am in the courtyard of the Sail Boat House, 568 Bellevue Avenue in Lakeside Park, and clean the shoreline until noon, at which time pizza will be available. T-shirts available 1<sup>st</sup> come 1<sup>st</sup> served.

**DANCE/MUSIC:** At 1 pm dancer/performer Patricia Bulitt and vocal artists David Worm and Sunshine Becker will perform original improvisation in honor of Lake Merritt’s birds on a floating platform by the Nature Center. There will also be an art exhibit with big cut-out birds and music.

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