

The Lake Merritt Institute

LAKE TRASH REMOVAL, FOUNTAINS, EDUCATION, LAKE MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE
568 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland, CA 94610; 510/238-2290; lmi@netwiz.net; www.lakemerrittinstitute.org

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MEET THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS Shown below are members of the Institute's Board of Directors, which meet monthly on the second floor of the Boating Center at 568 Bellevue Avenue. Meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month from 6 to 7:30 pm and are open to the public. Board members do not receive any compensation or expense allowance, but serve based on their love of Lake Merritt and their compelling interest in improving the jewel of Oakland.

Chairperson - Stana Hearne: A recent director of the Citizens for the East Shore State Park, Stana now spends her time busily attending a variety of environmental meetings including those of the interagency Water Quality Technical Committee, Measure DD Citizens Coalition, the Waterfront Coalition and others. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from UC Riverside and resides in Oakland.

Vice Chairperson – Andy Young: After 10 years as an environmental planning consultant, Andy has more recently been employed in the Alameda County Planning Department. He holds a B.A. in Political Science and a Master of Planning and Community Development from the University of Colorado. A 15 year resident of Adams Point, he commutes to Hayward by bike and BART, and also serves on the Alameda County Transportation Authority's Citizen Advisory Committee.



Treasurer – John Ryzanych: Mr. Ryzanych is a market development manager and specialist in angling and sport fishing tackle. A world traveler, he has extensive knowledge of the channel environment that exists between the Lake and Oakland Inner Harbor. When not continent hopping and fishing, he resides in Castro Valley and volunteers for County supervisor Nate Miley.

Secretary – Susan Porter: Recipient of an Environmental award from EPA for her work in watershed education and cleaning Lake Merritt, Susan holds a B.A. in education from UC Berkeley. A teacher of mathematics and science at St. Paul's School, she also received a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from Barbara Lee. When not cleaning the Lake, Susan resides in Novato.

John Bowers: An attorney with the California Coastal Commission, John holds a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree. He also serves on the conservation committee of the Golden Gate Audubon Society and is a member of the San Francisco Chapter of the Sierra Club. He leads hiking and biking trips and kayaks the state's magnificent whitewater rivers when not at home in Oakland.

Elizabeth Borowiec: As a professional environmental planner, (Liz) works for the US Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco and lives near Glen Echo creek in Oakland. She holds a M.S. degree in environmental planning and serves on the interagency Water Quality Technical Committee and Measure DD Citizens Coalition. As an inter-agency exchange employee, she worked with the Oakland Public Works Environmental Section for 18 months.

Pamela D. Addison: Our resident architect, Pamela holds a B.S. in architecture and is a certified Project and Construction Manager by the University of California-Berkeley and a Feng Shui/Sacred Geometry Practitioner. She works for the East Bay Municipal Utility District, was a construction chairperson of the Allen Temple Baptist Church Family Life Center and Presiding Partner of the Sisters Progressive Investment Club. Pamela lives in Oakland but was unable to attend the photo session and is not pictured here.

Immature Black Crowned Night Heron:

These popular birds can often be seen along the shoreline in the evening where they space themselves out along the bulk-head walls and wait for fish. During the day they rest in trees by the Boating Center.



LAKE MERRITT TRASH SOLD ON EBAY: Want to see a used softball from Lake Merritt that was sold on ebay? Then go to www.cockeyed.com/ebay/softball/real_ebay.html where you will find a photo of Sue Cockerham, a volunteer who runs around the Lake, hates litter, and helps clean it up. Thanks Sue! In addition to the tennis balls she gives to her dog owner friends, there was this softball, which her brother decided to auction off last year. So they cleaned it up, Sue signed it, and it sold for \$18.95!



Of course those who engage in such pursuits will find lots of balls (the Institute has a whole box full – see photo on left). The sale ended on May 28, 2003 but there will be many more balls every time it rains a lot. So come on down to one of our four “U-Clean-It” stations, get a net and find one for yourself - if Sue doesn’t get them first!

Hmmm, what else from the Lake can we auction on ebay? Want a porcelain mask, a coke bottle with a clam inside, or a magic wand?



WATER QUALITY MONITORING – WHO DOES WHAT? From time to time, the questions arises: Who is monitoring water quality in Lake Merritt? The answer:

- Oakland High School – Environmental Academy; Evaluates temperature, salinity, oxygen, transparency, plankton, and other parameters at numerous stations on most weeks when classes are in session during the school year (not during the summer).
- Regional Water Quality Control Board; Installed salinity, temperature and oxygen monitors near the surface and bottom at three stations for two weeks in the spring and two weeks in the fall of 2004.

- City of Oakland; Contracted for maintenance of surface and bottom monitors for oxygen, temperature and salinity at one station from June, 2002 to June, 2003. The monitors are now in storage due to a lack of funds for their maintenance. An evaluation report was prepared in 2004.
- County of Alameda: Sponsored weekly bacterial monitoring at several stations, but discontinued it in June, 2004 due to budget problems despite the fact that parts of the Lake exceed health standards for body contact. The county began a formal water quality monitoring program in 1989, but discontinued it in 1996.
- The Lake Merritt Institute; Takes occasional samples of oxygen, ammonia and salinity, but has no formal monitoring program.
- Engineers For A Sustainable World – Berkeley; This year, EFASW began a year long project to measure nitrate levels in Lake Merritt and its creeks. Results are pending.
- The Lighthouse Charter School; In 2002, the sixth grade measured surface oxygen levels at eight stations in Lake from October through December.

Unfortunately, there is not a continuous, multi-station program to measure water quality in Lake Merritt. Things as oxygen and salinity change hourly, daily and seasonally due to continuous changes in tidal flow, rainfall, daylight, plant growth and other factors. There is no “baseline” for such factors. Because there is no continuous monitoring program, we don't have the information needed to evaluate such questions as: How much will Measure DD projects improve water quality or why does widgeon grass grow extensively in some years and not in others?

RECORD TRASH LEVELS IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER: Mother Nature flushed our 7 square mile watershed for the first time in several months with a surprisingly intense storm on September 19th. It rained so hard and fast that runoff from Glen Echo creek overtopped the barrier at Grand & Harrison streets, pushing trash out into the Lake. This was also probably the case at other, smaller barriers at outfalls 27, 51, 54 and 56. The intense rain mobilized 4,060 pounds of trash, far greater than our September average of 1,300 pounds. Unfortunately, the rain occurred the day after Creek to Bay Day, when the entire shoreline was cleaned.

Then, in October, 3.47 inches of rain fell, more than double the 1981 - 1990 average of 1.56 inches for this month. The results were predictable. Instead of the average 2,593 pounds of trash, we hauled a

record 6,880 pounds, more like what we usually get in November, December, January or February. How much trash will wash in during the next few months? It depends partially on you. Please - keep trash, leaves et cetera away from storm drains; don't litter; and pick up at least one piece of litter daily.

A recent study in Los Angeles indicated that only about 9% of county residents were litterbugs. So if we are the other 91%, we ought to be able to keep the streets and sidewalks clean.

ERASE THE WASTE: Want to see an action kit used to empower Los Angeles residents to take back their neighborhoods from pollution? Then go to www.erasethewaste.com. There you will find information on storm water pollution prevention in English, Spanish Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean. The kits include: Background; How to get involved; Speaking out; Working with media; Informational materials and additional resources. The program is sponsored by the California State Water Resources Control Board, and also includes information for radio, television and newspapers.

PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY PREPARES FOR STORMS: Between October 1 and 19, the City's Public Works crews have cleaned more than 1,500 of Oakland's 10,000 storm drain inlets and more than 100 cross culverts, cleared 10 weirs, cleaned and flushed 200 linear feet of storm lines, repaired 2 storm lines and installed 593 feet of berm. Crews are being deployed daily to clean the remaining drains.

You Can Help: 1) Do not place leaves, debris or lawn clippings near storm drains. Place them in your recycling can or call 434-5139 for pick up of bagged leaves in excess of your can's capacity. 2) Join the "Maintain-a-Drain Campaign. In so doing you agree to keep a storm drain in your neighborhood free of debris, and will receive a free set of rain gear, a rake and debris bags. Call 434-5139 to join. 3) Report flooding problems to the Infrastructure and Operations Department at 615-5566. 4) Pick up free sandbags at local fire stations (limit 5 per household or 20 per household business).

This news release was supplied by Jeanette B. Edgerly of the Public Works Agency. For more information, call her at 238-2966.



CAROLING ON THE LAKE ??? Remember the good old days when the Boating Center would sponsor late afternoon and evening boat tours on Lake Merritt for Christmas caroling? It was a very popular program and reservations filled up weeks in advance. Well, the Boating Center is considering a revival of the program (pending approval by the Office of Parks and Recreation of course). Details, such as decorating the boat, cost, amplifying the sound and including a musician have yet to be decided. But, if you have a group of six or more, call and leave your name and telephone number with the Institute (238-2290). As for the floating Christmas tree which the Institute did in years past, the City Electrical Services Department will probably insist on a permit first, which somehow doesn't seem to fit the spirit of the season.

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