

THE TIDINGS



LAKE MERRITT INSTITUTE

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A community based, non-profit corporation, established 1995; IRS Code 501(c)(3); EIN 94-3214160

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"The Tidings" is an editorial newsletter. Posted opinions are not necessarily those of the City of Oakland

Come celebrate Earth Day with us at beautiful Lake Merritt!

The Lake Merritt Institute will host its annual lake clean-up on Earth Day April 21st under the direction of Director James Robinson with Clean Lake Supervisor Emmanuel & LMI staff and other Volunteers.

SCHEDULE:

9:00 a.m. Sign in at the Lake Merritt Boating Center at 568 Bellevue Ave in Lakeshore Park

Review safety rules.

Enjoy coffee and breakfast snacks.

Join a work part and get the right tools –

****RETURN WHEN YOU'RE DONE!**

9:00-12:00 Pile trash in plastic bags and leave by path so it can be picked up by LMI and counted.

12:00 noon Wrap Up and help LMI put things away.

*****RETURN GLOVES, TOOLS AND NETS!**

Send a photo of your group to LMI (lmi@wiznet.net)



LMI Executive Director
James Robinson



NEW VENUE: ROTARY NATURE CENTER MEETING TO BE HELD AT STUDIO ONE



Oakland Parks, Recreation & Youth Development Supervisor Karis Griffin announced Friday that the public meeting about Rotary Nature Center scheduled for **Saturday April 7th at 9 a.m.** at the Garden Center in Lakeside Park has been moved to **Studio One Art Center at 365 45th Street, Oakland, CA 94609.** Community members are welcome. RSVP to parksandrec@oaklandnet.com

At the 9 a.m. meeting, OPR&YD will present 1) a framework for a shared vision of the RNC and 2) initial priorities and criteria for proposals for the RNC, and 3) provide an opportunity for discussion between community supporters and OPR&YD about the future of the RNC.

LMI IN APRIL: 3,720 lbs. of trash were removed from the lake in March totaling 8,420 pounds total so far in 2018! LMI Director James Robinson and LMI Staff hosted 172 volunteers, made 5 educational presentations. (3.42" rain recorded by LMI rain gauge)

LAKE MERRITT ADVOCATES FOCUS ON HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS

The coalition of Lakeside Park groups, the LM Advocates, placed the problem of homelessness front and center at their second meeting on March 20th (since the group's founding last fall). According to one Advocate, there are more homeless encamped at the lake now than Canada geese! What can be done?

Speaker Joe DeVries, representing the Mayor's Office, explained that homelessness is a county-wide crisis. The City simply lacks funds to house its unsheltered homeless population, DeVries said. A January survey counted 2,761 homeless in Oakland, 1,902 of them living "unsheltered". 82% were residents of Alameda County prior to becoming homeless. He noted that up to 15% of Laney College students are homeless. A map (in photo at right) prepared by LM Advocates showed more than 60 active homeless camps in Lakeside Park and along the Channel (see also photos at lakemerritt.org).



Speaker Joe DeVries with map of homeless camps at Lake Merritt

Camping by Lake Merritt is an infraction, but one that is nearly impossible to enforce effectively. Cited individuals will not pay fines and will move back or elsewhere in Oakland. A proposal to install Tuff Sheds on the Kaiser Auditorium parking lot like the ones at 6th and Castro-- reminiscent of Dr. Bailey's suggested RV camp on an A's new stadium parking lot--has stalled for lack of funding. Mr. DeVries added that Alameda County needs to contribute more to Oakland, based on our share of the county homeless population.

City and County efforts include 1) routine clean-ups around encampments and provide health and hygiene services in place, 2) acquisition of a new navigation-center style transitional housing facility 3) building and preserving affordable housing, and 4) fighting displacement that leads to homelessness.

LMI: Homeless encampments are a public health crisis. They interfere with the people's enjoyment of the lake. Birders can't hear birds. The Weed Warriors can no longer restore native vegetation in the tidal marsh out of concern for the safety of volunteers. The input of trash, bicycles, shopping carts and human waste threatens to overwhelm LMI's valiant effort to Clean the Lake.

And what about the historic wildlife refuge? The noise, commotion and pollution threaten sensitive wildlife that depends on Lake Merritt. You can address your concerns about homeless encampments to Mayor and City Council, and Alameda County Board of Supervisors. Links are provided in email edition of The Tidings.....🌐



Trash at tidal marsh creates unsanitary conditions for homeless and volunteers.

BioBlitz at Lake Merritt – Sat. April 28th – Starts 10 a.m. at Oakland Museum.



Lake Merritt in the heart of Oakland is the jewel of the city and teeming with life! During this event come learn about the thousands of organisms that call this place home and help document them as part of the California Academy of Sciences' **City Nature Challenge**. Local naturalists will be on hand to help you find and identify organisms. Bring your smart phone pre-loaded with the iNaturalist app, food for lunch, and any tools that you think will help you find organisms. There will be stations around the lake focusing on different habitats and some guided walks.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS! Volunteer groups in March included Clark Construction, Piedmont Boy Scouts Troop 4, Leadership Academy, AmeriCorps, Oakland Zoo, Chinese Christian School, Upward Roots, We Lead Ours., St. Paul's Episcopal Middle School, U-Clean-It self-organized teams, and LMI A-TEAM regulars. **Special thanks to John Mayer for donating six heavy-duty trash pickers and twelve handy bag rings to the LMI Clean Lake Program.** We appreciate your efforts and community spirit. Great Job!

Party Boat Leaving Lake Merritt Soon

By Hilary Powers – Golden Gate Audubon Society



Eared grebe. Photo by John Kirkmire

But before it goes - before the Eared and Horned Grebes head off to their breeding grounds - now's the time to see some truly spectacular avian dress-up wear. (Well, the 4th-Wednesday Golden Gate Audubon group missed out on Horned Grebe, but the Tuesday4BirdsFriends bunch saw a beauty the preceding morning, so they're there.) Both species are flat out gorgeous, with body plumage that looks like polished copper and steel and head decorations (fans behind the eyes for Eared Grebe and curved plates for Horned) like beaten gold. In addition, a lot of the Ruddy Duck drakes have fully auburn backs to set off their black and white heads and their brilliant blue bills.

They'll all be leaving in the next few weeks, along with the Greater and Lesser Scaup (which are showing off plumage that looks like their regular winter wear but much brighter and shinier overall) and the last of the Canvasbacks and Bufflehead. The Double-crested Cormorants will stay... but if you want a hope of seeing their crests, get down to the lake before the end of April; they all, males and females alike, put on black or sometimes white bunny-ear party hats for the pairing-up season but then drop them whether or not they snag a nesting spot. Birds will be raising broods in the trees on the islands till September, but the second and third tenants of the nests will have smooth heads while they work. (Some birds have been looking over the tree by the playground where they nested last year, but none have picked spots there yet - good news for the cleanup crew if that situation continues.)



Horned grebe. Photo –Wikipedia.

Some Violet-green Swallows were patrolling for bugs (making this only the second year we've seen them in March), and the Northern Rough-winged Swallows have returned to their nesting holes in the rock wall of the lake below the playground. A few people on the walk had the delight of seeing a pair swoop past mating in mid-air, and all of us got to watch one perch on the Necklace-of-Lights wire, neat and brown and looking like 200 mph sitting still. We also saw two active Black Phoebe nests (and doubtless missed a dozen more), and stayed a while near the Bushtit nest first observed in February but couldn't tell if it was still busy or not. Bushtits take about two and a half weeks to hatch eggs and as long again to fledge youngsters, so it could have been in use, but the parents didn't show up while we watched.

The total species count was 40, moderately low for the month, despite picking up a rarely seen Red-breasted Merganser and an Allen's-or-Rufous Hummingbird (the orange ones, which defy precise identification when they buzz past at speed), along with the Western Bluebirds (out of sight last month) and the first Lesser Goldfinch of the year. We missed out on Chestnut-backed Chickadee and House Finch, both almost always seen in Lakeside Park, and also failed to see the Northern Flicker, Cedar Waxwing, Townsend's Warbler, and Golden-crowned Sparrow that had turned up on Tuesday morning. Nonetheless, it was sunny... and warm... and altogether pleasant for a change, and even though we could use more rain this year, we were happy not to be getting any on this, yet another good day at Lake Merritt.🕒

AUDUBON BIRDWALKS AT THE LAKE: Join bird expert Hilary Powers any fourth Wednesday of the month for a free "Birdwalk" at the lake. Muster at the geodesic bird cage near the Nature Center at 9:30 a.m. for what are always fascinating introductions to lake birdlife.***

CLIMATE CORNER - THE YEARS PROJECT: THREE SHORT VIDEOS

A Guest editorial by Dr. Richard Bailey

Warning: These videos may raise your blood pressure.

The Terminator has a new target.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wE1QfRvwX5g>

Arnold Schwarzenegger is suing big oil companies. “Every car should have a warning label” he said. Is this radical? Other nations apparently agree with him. India said it would sell only hybrid and electric cars by 2030. France has said it will *ban* the sale of *gas* and diesel *cars* by 2040. China, the world's largest car market, is [working on a plan to ban](#) the production and sale of vehicles powered only by fossil fuels. The U.K. said in July that it would ban sales of new gasoline and diesel cars starting in 2040 as part of a bid to clean up the country's air. Oil companies knew their product would create climate change. It is now time to exert our independence from them.



Who Trump nominated to represent the United States.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwvFJnKMIYY&feature=youtu.be>

Trump's choice for Secretary of State is Mike Pompeo, who called climate change action the work of radical environmentalists. When the Pentagon called climate change a major national security threat, he said that was ignorant, dangerous, and absolutely unbelievable! He voted against the Clean Power Plan, and opposes the Paris Climate Resolution. Congressional approval of his appointment would be a

sad day for American diplomacy.

Is climate change spawning new Nazicism?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxCrpZciWFs&feature=youtu.be>

The newly elected Italian leader has called for a “mass cleansing” of African climate refugees. Matteo Salvini says he'll round them up and send them back to countries where the climate can no longer support them. This is not the solution; slowing climate change is. Does that remind you of Italian fascism against Jews in WWII? P.S. Salvini also is opposed to gay marriage and supported Trump.



For longer videos from “The Years Project” go to <http://yearsoflivingdangerously.com/>

What is the common message we see here? What can we do about it? The answers are not denial, despair, or defeat. For the common good, in your own way, help to put a price on carbon emissions. Please share widely with family, across the United States, and with friends in other nations. Think locally (Lake Merritt); act globally (the planet).

To find out the best way to slow climate disruption, go to <http://yearsoflivingdangerously.com/story/price-on-carbon/>

***Links for March Climate Corner are in References below.

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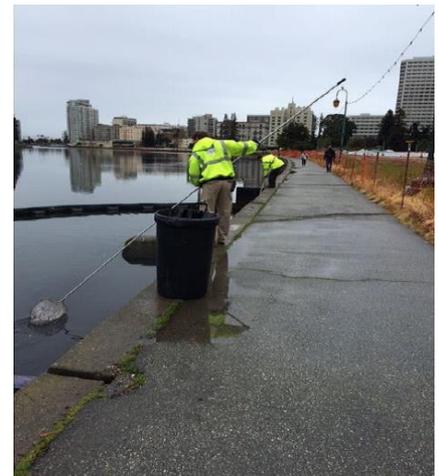
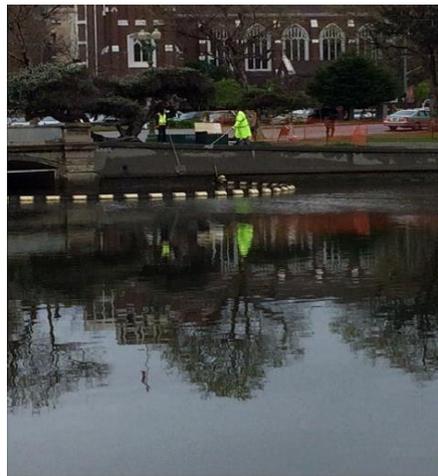
THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS! Volunteer groups in March included Clark Construction, Piedmont Boy Scouts Troop 4, Leadership Academy, AmeriCorps, Oakland Zoo, Chinese Christian School, Upward Roots, We Lead Ours., St. Paul's Episcopal Middle School, U-Clean-It self-organized teams, and LMI A-TEAM regulars. We appreciate your efforts and community spirit. Great Job!

Piedmont Boy Scout Troop 4



Asst. Scout Master Paul Blodgett brought 17 scouts down to clean the lake they got **24 bags of trash!!**

Clark Construction



Hayward Leadership Academy



AmeriCorps



Chinese Christian School



Upward Roots



Upward Roots



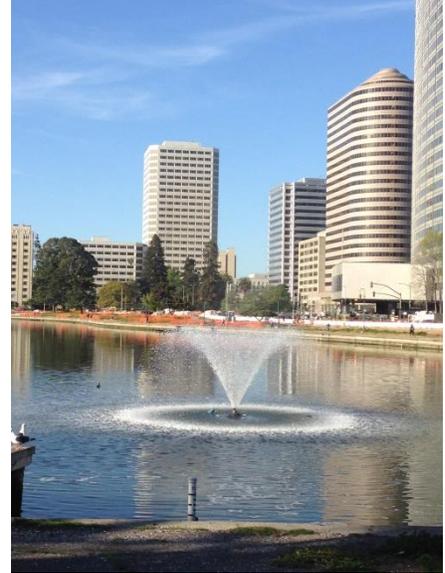
Oakland Street Academy and E.P.A. Citizen *E. coli* Monitors

Formal report on wet season sampling will be out soon – Results in next issue of The Tidings.



Ray* of Hope – Aeration Fountains Both Up and Sparkling in the Spring Sunshine!

...in honor of late Tidings Editor. Ray* Perman



Fountains at Trestle Glen (left) and Glen Echo (right) are back up and delivering oxygen to lake organisms at the bottom of a salinity stratified lake

THANK YOU, LMI!

Someone should write an ode.....

REFERENCES in the Newsletter articles:

Rotary Nature Center

OPYRD requests an RSVP to parksandrec@oaklandnet.com if you plan to attend. More info at: <https://communityforlakemerritt.org/>

Online Petition to Re-Open the Rotary Nature Center is still collecting signatures. <https://www.thepetitionsite.com/374/189/581/reopen-the-rotary-nature-center/>

Homeless

Lake Merritt Advocates meeting March 20, 2018. Joe De Vries from City of Oakland discusses the increased homeless population at the lake.

<https://www.lakemerritt.org/lm-advocates.html>

“Let’s Get Radical” by Richard Bailey-proposes RVs on A’s parking lot

http://www.lakemerrittinstitute.org/newsletters/2017_10_Newsletter.pdf

Tuff Sheds - <http://abc7news.com/society/oakland-tuff-sheds-make-dent-in-homeless-problem/2863136/>

Alameda County website to see services offered by the county

<http://www.acgov.org/>

Links to Government Officials:

Oakland City Council

<http://www2.oaklandnet.com/government/o/CityCouncil/index.htm>

Board of Supervisors including a map of the district boundaries

<http://www.acgov.org/board/>

BioBlitz

<http://citynaturechallenge.org/>

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2018-san-francisco-bay-area>

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lake-merritt-bioblitz-tickets-44493747998>

Climate Corner

Terminator

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wE1QfRvwx5g>

New Secretary of State

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwwFJnKMIYY&feature=youtu.be>

Climate change and Nazicism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxCrpZciWFs&feature=youtu.be>

The Years Project

<http://yearsoflivingdangerously.com/>

<http://yearsoflivingdangerously.com/story/price-on-carbon/>

Links for March Climate Corner

Permafrost

<https://www.yaleclimateconnections.org/2018/02/the-permafrost-bomb-is-ticking/>

What our ancestors accomplished

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=BpeXeZ9h9Vg