

THE TIDINGS



LAKE MERRITT INSTITUTE

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



LMI Director James Robinson



Join LMI for CREEK-to-BAY DAY at Lake Merritt!

The Lake Merritt Institute will host its annual lake clean-up on Creek to Bay Day, September 16th under the direction of Director James Robinson, Clean Lake Supervisor Emmanuel, LMI staff and Volunteers. This event is part of California and International Coastal Cleanup Day, the largest volunteer day in California and the world. In 2014, worldwide 560,000 volunteers in 91 countries removed over 16 million pounds of trash along 13,000 miles of beaches and inland waterways.

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 party 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 IN AUGUST: 1600 lbs. of trash were removed from the lake totaling 19,260 lbs. removed year-to-date.

James Robinson and LMI Staff hosted 85 volunteers and made three educational presentations. (0" rain)

Why bother? by Miriam Valesco, LMI A-Team

Recently a group of regular Tuesday volunteers got together before cleaning the Lake. I asked each one "What does it mean to you to clean the Lake?" At first a variety of quips and sarcastic comments came out but then it got more serious. "I give and I get back so much from the Lake", "Most big cities have a body of water, and we have one and I like to see it clean", "It's good exercise, with good people and we want the Lake to look clean".

We keep coming back, week after week, year after year knowing there will be something to clean up, or some interesting life form to observe, or something too big for our nets like a tire that needs a truck or boat to haul it out. Often people stop to thank us or ask how they can join in the effort. Perhaps seeing someone cleaning trash plants the seed in some people's minds that the lake needs our help. One gentleman, an immigrant, learning that we were volunteers, remarked to me, "This is what makes this country great."

I would like to eliminate this job and not need to clean out styrofoam, bicycle wheels, plastic bags, newspapers, pillows, food wrappers, shoes, beer bottles, needles, shopping carts, tennis balls, blankets, bike racks, construction cones, plastic bottle caps, dead birds, dead fish and dead turtles, ropes, fish traps, wine bottles, cell phones, cigarettes, lighters, sleeping bagsyou name it. Almost 150 years ago this body of water was declared a wildlife refuge making it the oldest wildlife refuge in the nation. Please help to keep the lake healthy and clean.

Love Your Lake! 



Seals in Lake Merritt? Yes! A marine mammal was sighted swimming in the Glen



Echo finger of the lake on August 11th by Kat Ferreira. It was subsequently identified as a Harbor Seal by Mark Klein of the Alameda Point Harbor Seal Monitors. The sighting was reported by KTVU¹ and the San Francisco Chronicle², both celebrating it, along with sightings of river otters in Lake Temescal, as evidence of improved water quality in the watershed. Thank you to Kat and the many local citizens who keep a sharp eye out for the Lake's wildlife.

As noted by Klein, it would be difficult for a harbor seal to enter Lake Merritt. Harbor seals are true seals. True seals have small flippers and must move on land by flopping along on their bellies. "A harbor seal would have to crawl on the ground part of the way, going through a tunnel. But seals are curious animals and it could happen." Measure DD projects have made major improvements to the flow of water into the lake proper by removing the culverts at 12th St. and 10th St. (in 2016). However, the removal of obstructions at 7th Street under the Measure DD plan, for boaters and seals, has not yet begun.

The LM harbor seal seems to be doing just fine. Since Kat reported it, the seal has been seen again twice on August 31st by Al Chase of the Lake Merritt Rowing Club and by a fellow rower on September 5th. Please let LMI know if you see it again at ktnoon@aol.com. You can follow the Alameda Point Harbor Seal Monitors at <https://www.facebook.com/alamedaseals1/>.

If you see a marine mammal stranded on land, in obvious distress, do not touch it or try to rescue it yourself. Call **The Marine Mammal Center at (415) 289-7325**.

SALUTE OUR AUGUST VOLUNTEERS! Kaiser Permanente National Provider Contracting & Data Management Employees, the Fremont High School Key Club, and LMI A-TEAM regulars. We appreciate their efforts and community spirit immensely! Photos of the groups are below in the email edition, which is linked online at lakemerritt.org.

Submarine Grebe at Lake Merritt—Hilary Powers –Golden Gate Audubon

Reporting from the third Tuesday instead of the fourth Wednesday, plans to see the eclipse and dig for dinosaur bones the week of the 20th having interfered with the usual program....

August is one of the quietest months at Lake Merritt, and the third week may be quieter than the fourth, but Ruth Tobey – the other regular trip leader – and I walked the traditional course to see what we could see. And one of our first sights was something we always promise but basically never deliver: a Pied-billed Grebe dropping straight down from the surface of the water like a diving submarine, rather than looping over in a head-first plunge.



Pied-billed Grebe; Photo by John Kirkmire

“Look at that!” says Ruth.

“He did it! He submarined!” says I. He surfaced a dozen or fifteen feet away. “Keep watching! Maybe he’ll do it again!” But he didn’t; he went beak over for his next hunting dive. Ah well.

The queenfisher – the female Belted Kingfisher – was working the islands, using exposed roots to perch close to the water. In the trees, the only bird in a cormorant nest was a Western Gull, but the branches still held a couple of dozen Double-crested Cormorants (many but surprisingly not all the pale bronze and cream of this year’s youngsters). A Green Heron perched beside a Black-crowned Night-Heron, close enough together for both to be in the same scope view, and catching the sun exactly right to show a green flash from its back – another rare sight, “Green Heron” being one of the least descriptive bird names out there.

We prowled through the trees in the hope of finding early migrant warblers, but saw none. Lots of long-tailed gray Bushtits like flying mice confronting an irritatedly buzzing Bewick’s Wren, assorted Chestnut-backed Chickadees and House Finches, and bunches of American Robins – some of the latter so young and spotted that they looked like a different species entirely. And not one but two families of Western Bluebirds were working the Bellevue side of the lawn bowling club, drab mama, brilliant papa, uncountable barely blue fledglings. That was where we saw the first pair back in 2013, so it was a special treat to spot them there this time in such numbers.

Only 27 species all told, but – as always, always, always at Lake Merritt – much of interest to reward a morning’s walk. 🐾

Ray* of Hope—Eclipse Reveals Rise of Solar Power

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

On August 21st a solar eclipse affected solar panels over a wide swath of the U.S. It was predicted that more than 9,000 megawatts of solar power might go down, the equivalent of about nine nuclear reactors!³

California Independent System Operator (CISO), reported “We predicted the loss of about 4,200 megawatts of utility-scale solar but the actual reduction in solar appears to be closer to 3,500 megawatts.”⁴ The loss testifies to the ninefold increase in clean solar generators installed and producing electricity every day in the U.S. since 2012. -- **That’s our ray of hope!** 🐾



Total eclipse; Photo by Lee Aurich
More photos and Lee’s commentary below.

CLIMATE CORNER**Climate Movies, Books, and More - Reviews by Dr. Richard Bailey

An Inconvenient Sequel – Truth to Power is Al Gore’s update to his 2006 blockbuster documentary which won Academy and Oscar awards, and created a new generation of climate activists. The website is at <https://www.climaterealityproject.org/initiative/inconvenient-sequel-truth-power> Shorter on the bad news, and longer on hope for the future, *Sequel* is an inspiring, sometimes funny, and always educational film. In example after example, the film shows that we have the technology to reduce the impacts of climate change, that doing so makes economic sense, and that despite Trump, millions of people, dozens of state and nations, and thousands of businesses are doing so by supporting the Paris Accord. Watch the movie, then add your voice.

Chasing Coral is a wonderful documentary available on Netflix (<http://www.chasingcoral.com/>) that explains why 39% of world coral reefs died in 2016. The photography is fantastic, with colors you may never have seen. Did you know that corals secrete a type of fluorescent sunscreen in an attempt to survive the warming oceans? Predictions are dire: Even with our best efforts to reduce emissions, it is likely that the major coral ecosystems will be essentially gone by 2050, or sooner. The culprit is warming oceans which are, let’s face it, impossible to cool. Someday (perhaps a century or more from now) if carbon levels return to a pre-industrial range, the earth may begin to cool and the oceans will begin to give up their heat. So if you want your grandchildren to see corals in other than aquariums, do all you can now to put a price on carbon emissions. That will use the power of the economy, which is the most effective way we can save the reefs.



Fluorescing Coral: Credit Netflix.jpg

Status of the Effort: The Climate Action Tracker website (<http://climateactiontracker.org/>) is an independent science-based assessment, which tracks the emission commitments and actions of countries. The website provides an up-to-date assessment of individual national pledges, targets, intended nationally determined contributions, and currently implemented policy to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. USA efforts, as you might expect, are currently rated as inadequate. But, here are two books that can turn that around.

Climate of Hope is a 264 page book (<https://www.climateofhope.com/>) packed with fascinating details of what cities are doing to fight climate change. Written by Michael Bloomberg (former mayor of NY City) and Carl Pope (former executive director of the Sierra Club), they “turn the usual way of thinking about climate change on its head: From top down to bottom up, from partisan to pragmatic, from costs to benefits, from tomorrow to today, and from fear to hope.” A quote from the preface reads: “Instead of debating long-term consequences, let’s talk about immediate threats. Instead of arguing about making sacrifices, let’s talk about

how we can make money. Instead of pitting the environment versus the economy, let's consider market principles and economic growth. Instead of focusing on polar bears, let's focus on asthmatic children. And instead of putting all hope in the federal government, let's empower cities, regions, businesses, and citizens to accelerate the progress they are already making on their own." Who can argue with that?

An Inconvenient Sequel – Truth to Power (the book) is a superb, 320 page paperback for the layman, and indeed, any climate hero. In it, Mr. Gore asks "Must we change? Can we change? Will we change?" The answers are yes, yes, and "I have never been more hopeful." The message is a gripping, narrative journey that leaves you filled with hope, and the urge to take action immediately. Approximately 200 photographs and illustrations visually articulate the subject matter. Personal anecdotes and observations document the fast pace and wide scope of global warming. This book is a must-have for everyone who cares deeply about our planet.

To access the links, cut and paste them into your browser address bar.

DON'T MISS OUT!!

National Public Lands Day - September 30th, 2017⁹

Did you know that 30% of land in the United States is YOURS? Public lands include national and state parks as well as local holdings and are managed for "multiple use" by the government. National Public Lands Day is a day to enjoy and give back to our public lands. **NPLD is a fee-free day** in national parks and many state parks. Service projects are organized in some – check with specific site.

NEW Climate Information Center on Angel Island¹⁰ -- "Bravo!" says Dr. Bailey!

Be sure to see the new climate exhibit at Angel Island State Park Visitor Center.

Call for information (415) 435-5390

PHOTOS OF LMI VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION ON NEXT PAGE!

THANK YOU TO OUR AUGUST-SEPTEMBER VOLUNTEERS!
We appreciate their efforts and community spirit immensely!

Fremont High School Key Club



Kaiser NPCDM Department



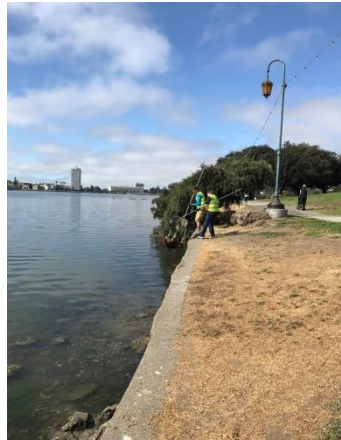
Kaiser NPCDM Cathedral Team



Kaiser NPCDM Pergola Team



Kaiser NPCDM Cone Zone



Kaiser NPCDM Grill



Kaiser NPCDM

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Solar Eclipse Photos Shared by Lee Aurich



Professional Photographer and LMI member Lee Aurich and his wife Helen Hutchison traveled to Oregon to enjoy and photograph the total solar eclipse on August 21st. Here are photos and commentary generously shared with LMI by Lee.

“Helen & I started planning over a year ago to drive slowly to central Oregon, an hour north of Bend, to view the total eclipse.

It was awesome. As the moon's shadow slowly covered the sun, the temperature dropped. Just before totality, we pulled on jackets. The world became strangely silent. Mt Bachelor, to our west, turned dark as the moon's shadow prevented any direct sunlight on it a minute or two before us. We felt a strange connection to the thousands of generations of humans over the millennia who have witnessed eclipses with awe and fear.



There was bright, last flare of the sun as final edge of the moon covered it -- the *Diamond Ring* effect.

And then, the face of the sun was completely blocked, leaving the corona -- the gases streaming away from the sun -- visible. The corona has a huge range of brightness that exceeds the dynamic range of any camera. I made a very wide series of images which I blended together to produce the image (at right).

Totality photo at right: This image was an experiment, processed from a single image, coaxing information out of the depths of the image.

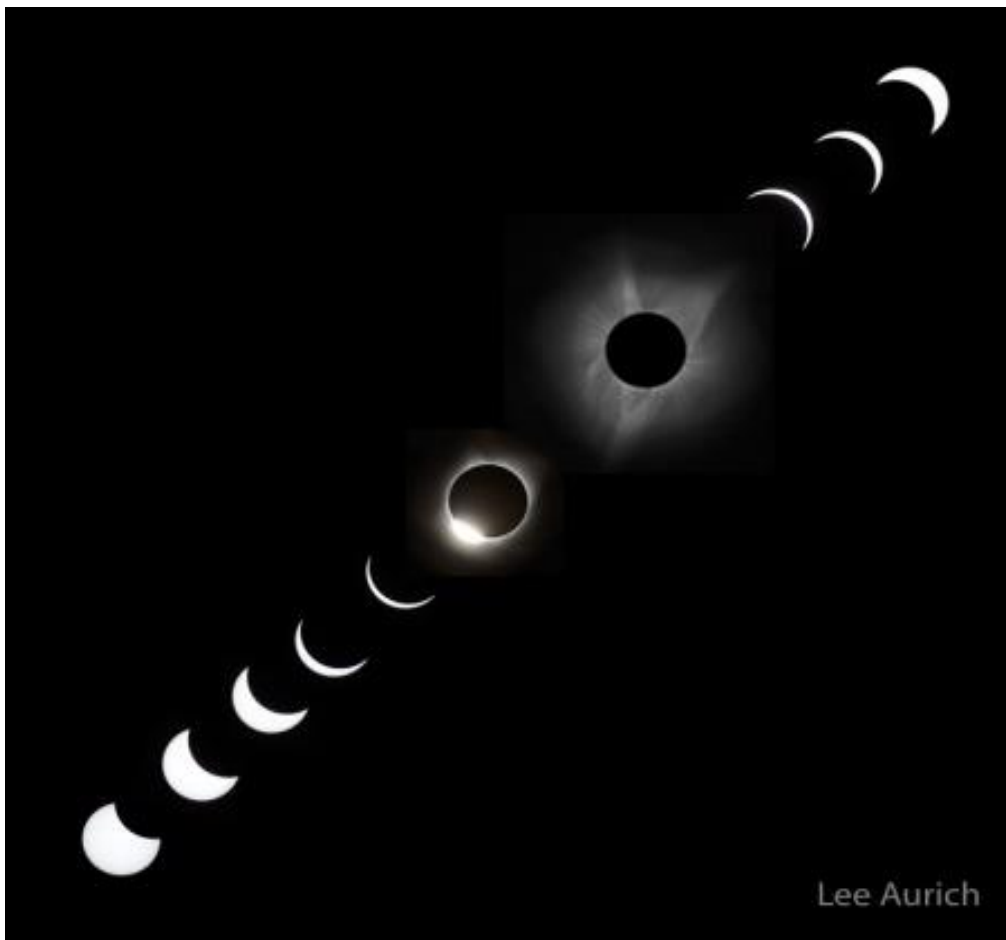


As the moon continued to move on its path relative to the sun, after 123 seconds the sun began to emerge from the shadow, showing very briefly the red *Baily's Beads* as sunlight begins to emerge between the mountains and craters on the moon.



Finally we then watched as the moon's shadow retreated from the sun over the next 80 minutes. In appreciation of the power of nature..."

-----Lee Aurich



Composite sequence of images taken during the eclipse; all photos by Lee Aurich 2017

To subscribe to Lee's occasional newsletters, contact lee@aurich.com

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Comments and contributed articles are welcome. Please feel free to contact me directly: "ktnoon@gmail.com" 