

# THE TIDINGS



**LAKE MERRITT INSTITUTE**

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## JOIN THE BATTLE FOR THE BAY – SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>

The **Lake Merritt Institute** will host its annual lake clean-up on September 21<sup>st</sup> under the direction of Director James Robinson, LMI staff and volunteers. This event is part of the 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. This year our effort will help Oakland win the **Battle for the Bay** between Oakland and San Francisco. The battle was kicked off by Mayors Libby Schaaf and London Breed on Treasure Island on September 5<sup>th</sup>.

Support our City and our Lake! Be a part of it! **LOVE YOUR LAKE!**..... 

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

\*Orientation & Review safety rules.\*

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 clearly identified photo of your group to The Tidings Editor ([ktnoon@aol.com](mailto:ktnoon@aol.com))

**SEA LEVEL RISE: FACT AND FICTION** - The Lake Merritt Institute sponsors a presentation by climate expert John Englander on October 5<sup>th</sup> at the Laney College Forum at 900 Fallon St. at 7 p.m. Eventbrite tickets at [sea-level-rise Lake-Merritt-Institute-Oct-5](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sea-level-rise-lake-merritt-institute-oct-5) (free or small door charge).

Have you ever wondered how sea level rise will impact Lake Merritt, and all of Oakland? Do you want to know more about sea level rise, and how we can prepare for it? **JOIN THE LAKE MERRITT INSTITUTE** and cosponsor, the **Frederick E. Hart Foundation for Educational Opportunity**, for a rousing presentation by John Englander, an expert on sea level rise and its societal and financial impacts.

**LMI in AUGUST: 2820 lbs.** of trash were removed from the lake in August and **17,920 lbs.** so far in 2019. LMI Director James Robinson and Staff hosted **182 volunteers**, made 3 educational presentations and attended 3 meetings. **0.00”** inches rain were recorded by LMI rain gauge.

(continued from page 1) A considerable range of estimates have been made regarding how high the tides will rise and when. These projections are based on periods of rise in the geological past, current measurements, and projections based on computer models incorporating our growing knowledge of how fast the Greenland and Antarctic ice caps are melting. Unfortunately, most model projections have greatly underestimated the rate of melting. Even though we cannot predict how much and how fast the waters will rise, we can, and must begin to plan for the future. To not do so is to subject our children, and theirs, to unconscionable expense, loss of property, and questions about why we did this to them.



Flatlands Threatened by Sewage: To learn about how sea level rise impacts sewage overflows, read this report by Climate Central: <https://www.climatecentral.org/news/sea-level-rise-oakland-sewer-17567>

Poorest Communities most Threatened: <https://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/oaklands-poorest-neighborhoods-will-the-most-susceptible-to-flooding-due-to-climate-change-and-sea-level-rise/Content?oid=6401808>

To hear John Englander's TED talk, go to <https://www.johnenglander.net/>

**\*\*Sea Level Rise: Fact and Fiction - By John Englander**

**\*\*The Forum, Laney College, 900 Fallon St. Oakland**

**\*\*Parking at Laney College lot on East 8<sup>th</sup> Street; \$2 all day.**

**\*\*Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup> Doors open at 7 pm. Presentation at 7:30.**

**\*\*No charge to most students with an ID. Possible charge at the door for non-students**

**\*\*Eventbrite tickets at <https://sea-level-rise-englander-lakemerrittinstitute.eventbrite.com>  
or RSVP to [ktnoon@aol.com](mailto:ktnoon@aol.com)**

## FOUNTAIN DOWN

You may have noticed that the Glen Echo aeration fountain at Grand Avenue and Harrison has been off for several weeks. Not a matter of inattention by LMI's tireless staff, this is a casualty of the harsh chemical environment of the lake in late summer. Evaporation and lack of rain have increased the salinity in the lake which is nearly as salty as seawater now. The problem is electrical, brought on by corrosion of wires and motor parts. Parts of the Glen Echo fountain were moved to the Embarcadero fountain which continues to play and provide oxygen to the aquatic community.

Meanwhile, the replacement motor parts have been on backorder for several weeks according to the vendor. Apparently, they must be imported from Italy! As soon as they arrive, James and the LMI staff will have the Glen Echo fountain back up and running too. And there will soon be a new petrobarrier at the Glen Echo creek inlet provided by Measure DD funds.



Fountain Missing at Glen Echo Inlet

**THANK YOU TO OUR AUGUST VOLUNTEERS!** Volunteer groups: **Mix Panel Inc**, **Montclair Elementary**, and **Piedmont High School**, our U-Clean-It self-organized teams, and the LMI A-TEAM regulars. We appreciate your efforts and community spirit. Great Job! See photos in the email version of The Tidings. **YOU** can support the Lake Merritt Institute's important work. **YOU** can support the Lake Merritt Institute's important work. Go to our [website](#) to find out how. **LOVE YOUR LAKE!** ..... 🌊

## AUGUST VOLUNTEERS



Holy Names University



Mixpanel Marketing Team

Special thank you to team leader, Alia Le Cam.

**MIXPANEL**, a user behavior analytics company headquartered in San Francisco, offers employees yearly VTO (volunteer time off) time to be able to give back to their community or an organization of choice.

At right: The Marketing team visited Oakland to help clean up Lake Merritt (and do some team bonding).

"Volunteering gave our team a stronger sense of appreciation for the place we call home as we worked together to beautify iconic Lake Merritt." - participant Doree Speidel



**LMI IN THE NEWS: “This is the weird stuff being found in Lake Merritt. And (LMI) is the group that has to deal with it.”**

Thank you to San Francisco Chronicle writer Diane de Guzman for highlighting the impact of dumping on our beautiful lake and the heroic efforts of the Clean Lake Team. Here is some of the weird stuff that was pulled out of the lake this year.



eScooter policy discussed at City Meeting

## Too Late for the Phalarope at Lake Merritt-by Hilary Powers – Golden Gate Audubon



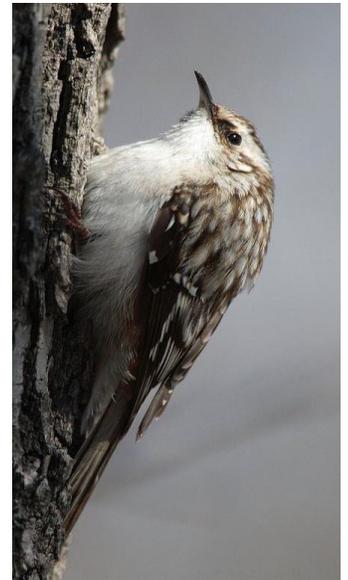
Red-necked Phalarope;  
photo by Ted Llovet, Wikipedia CC-02

The August 4th-Wednesday Golden Gate Audubon walkers eagerly scanned the water for a glimpse of the Red-necked Phalarope seen there the preceding Friday, but couldn't find it. A pity, that – it's a handsome bird, white-necked and gray-backed at this season and otherwise very difficult to describe but unmistakable on the surface, swimming like a fat banana and feeding like a sewing machine (really; check out pics online!), and it would have been our first-ever sighting at the lake.

We had plenty to see anyway – both White and Brown Pelicans (lots of them) and all five of the expected herons, including more Great Egrets than have appeared at the same time in years, plus respectable numbers of Snowy Egrets (smaller and with black beaks instead of gold) and Black-crowned Night-Herons of all ages, one Great Blue Heron, and two tiny Green Herons, one adult and one juvenile. The female Belted Kingfisher announced herself with her clattering call (with no juvenile to answer this time), and some Forster's Terns visited the floats for the first August since 2011.

On the near island, a mama raccoon led three kits – all normal coon-colored this time, no blondes – in a search for muscles or barnacles or anything else eatable. Charming as long as they stay on the rocks, but we had to worry about all the bird-based protein the creatures might find among the bushes or in the freshwater pond hidden back there. (A pond? On the island? Yup – you could see it by standing on a bench right after the DD restoration work finished, but the bushes have since grown too high. Its water is piped in to provide a sheltered alternative to the brackish lake.)

Over in the park, the biggest treat was offered by the Brown Creepers working the oaks near the garden compost station – demurely elegant little streaky brown birds with long curved bills, working their way straight up the trunks or out along the undersides of branches. Otherwise, it was mainly the quiet-season regulars: Titmice and Chestnut-backed Chickadees and California Towhees and American Robins. (Why specify *American* Robin? We wouldn't see anything else here, after all, but it's still worth noting that it isn't at all the same bird Shakespeare wrote about. The European Robin is a red-faced and red-breasted gray flycatcher with a white belly rather like a Black Phoebe's; ours has breast plumage roughly the same shade, but it's a thrush and twice the size.)



Brown creeper; Wikipedia

The day was overcast and cool, making for a lovely silvery light on the lake but probably reducing activity in the park, where sun would bring out the bugs and the birds to chase them. All told, we saw 32 species – down from last year's 38 but well up from the high 20s of the two preceding years – and it was as ever a very good day to spend 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:** Carbon taxes and Federal Climate Policy

- A Guest Editorial by Dr. Richard Bailey

Right now, there is no federal climate policy. Well, there is, but current policy is to deny it, increase subsidies to fossil fuel companies, and weaken environmental regulations. However, many people are hopeful that 2020 will provide opportunities to enact federal legislation that can reduce carbon emissions, which would be a start to slowing the on-going and increasing destruction from wild fires, sea level rise, flooding, storms etc.

Assuming America can right the ship, what should these regulations/laws look like? One answer comes from a study by Massachusetts Institute of Technology that calculates the carbon tax on fossil fuels required to replace: The Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards on vehicles; the Clean Power Plan, which would have (it was never put into effect) reduced carbon emissions from generating electricity; and the Renewable Fuel Standard (which requires renewable fuel like ethanol to be blended into transportation fuel). These were the major federal climate policies in 2016. [ceepr.mit.edu/files/papers/2019-013.pdf](http://ceepr.mit.edu/files/papers/2019-013.pdf)

The MIT study used the Regulatory Impact analyses of each policy to estimate their greenhouse gas emission reductions in 2020, 2025, and 2030. It then used MIT's model to simulate the carbon tax needed to achieve the same reductions. The results suggest that a tax of only \$36 per ton of carbon emissions (levied on fossil fuel companies, not directly on you) would replace the effectiveness of these three policies combined. This shows the economic power of a carbon tax, relative to the current, inefficient approach we have had.

As of this writing, there are six proposed bills in Congress that include a carbon tax, ranging from a starting point of \$10 to \$52 / ton, and increasing at variable rates. Many presidential candidates are also offering plans that include a carbon tax, and almost all economists agree that this is the best way forward toward a renewable energy system. Old ways die hard though, and many seem to prefer the regulatory approach found to be less effective by the MIT study. Given that current Greenland melting is proceeding much faster than was predicted by the models, it is obvious that we need both regulations, and a carbon tax.

### Sea Level Rise is Political?

A recent request by the Institute to hold a presentation on sea level rise at a local venue (name withheld to protect the uninformed) was rejected, because the topic is too political!

Logical people conclude that the recent, current, and future rise is physical, not political; the oceans don't care. One wonders what the members of this organization think about such a statement. If anyone wishes to support such a position, they will have to figure out a political way to cool the entire ocean, and re-freeze the Arctic, Greenland and Antarctic ice caps. That will not happen, and the oceans will rise.

<https://oaklandgeology.com/2018/01/08/walk-around-lake-merritt-after-sea-level-rise/> shows what Lake Merritt would look like after about 6 feet of sea level rise, NASA's worst case scenario by 2100, when people born this year will be 82 years old. You may think the worst will not happen, but we are on track for worse than the worst. Note: Raising the channel barrier 6 ft. would also require installing tall barriers elsewhere, at a cost of....? For a discussion of how to prepare, attend the LMI sea level rise presentation in October.

### Where are there more electric vehicle charging stations than gas stations?

In Britain! According to Nissan UK, there are about 9,300 public charging stations, as opposed to 8,400 gas stations, and the electric vehicle tally does not include home chargers. Not only that, the number of fast chargers is rapidly growing, so it won't take more time than a bathroom break and/or cup of coffee before you are back on the road. In the U.S., gas stations remain far, far ahead: We have some infrastructure-building to do.

[https://www.greencarreports.com/news/1124595\\_charging-stations-now-outnumber-gas-stations-in-britain](https://www.greencarreports.com/news/1124595_charging-stations-now-outnumber-gas-stations-in-britain)

## **YOUTH WATER QUALITY REPORT- August 8<sup>th</sup> 2019**

near the bird islands with TEAM OAKLAND and LAKE MERRITT OBSERVATORY.

Dissolved Oxygen 5 ppm top /6 ppm bottom (MARGINAL/NORMAL)

pH 8 (NORMAL)

Salinity 30 ppt (NORMAL)

Water Temperature 23 degrees Celsius

Water Clarity (Secchi) 1.30 meters in 3 meters of water. (CLEAR!)

AT RIGHT: Students display final results whiteboard on the Lake Merritt Boating Center pontoon boat.



## **...AND MORE LATE SUMMER AND FALL EVENTS AT THE LAKE**

SAT 9/14 and SAT 10/5 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.



**POP-UP TABLES AT THE ROTARY NATURE CENTER:** There will be Pop-up tables featuring interactive nature activities at the Rotary Nature Center at 600 Bellevue Ave. in Lakeside Park on SAT 9/14 and SAT 10/5 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Interactive activities planned include bird watching, water quality testing, viewing insects, aquatic life and plankton. (all ages)

Photo at left by John Kirkmire

SAT 9/14 and SAT 10/5, 1-3 p.m.

**“CRITTER WALKS”:** Marine biologist Andrew Cohen from the San Francisco Estuary Institute will lead walks to explore native and exotic invertebrates in the lake on SAT 9/14 and SAT 10/5. The walks start from the nature center at **1 p.m. on 9/14** and at **2 p.m. on 10/5**.

Eventbrite free tickets:

<https://critter-walk-1-at-lake-merritt-sept-14.eventbrite.com>

<https://critter-walk-2-at-lake-merritt-oct-5.eventbrite.com>.



TH 10/17- SAT 10/19

## **AUTUMN LIGHTS FESTIVAL - Lake Merritt Gardens**

The **Oakland Autumn Lights Festival** spans three nights every October with illuminated art installations. The 8th Annual fundraiser for the Gardens at Lake Merritt will be on. October 17 - 19, 6 – 11 pm nightly.

Eventbrite tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/8th-annual-autumn-lights-festival-tickets-68182440515>



20 advance/\$25 event day for adults

\$7 advance/\$10 event day for youth (ages 6-17)

Children ages 5 and younger enter for free

## REFERENCES - August 2019 Tidings:

### Battle for the Bay:

<https://www.sfgate.com/news/bayarea/article/Sf-Oakland-Mayors-Solicit-Residents-To-Join-14273259.php>  
[https://lakemerrittinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2017\\_10\\_Newsletter.pdf](https://lakemerrittinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2017_10_Newsletter.pdf)

### John Englander Talk:

Poorest Communities Threatened: <https://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/oaklands-poorest-neighborhoods-will-the-most-susceptible-to-flooding-due-to-climate-change-and-sea-level-rise/Content?oid=6401808>

Flatlands Threatened by Sewage: To learn about how sea level rise impacts sewage overflows, read this report by Climate Central: <https://www.climatecentral.org/news/sea-level-rise-oakland-sewer-17567>

### Sea Level Rise discussion in The Tidings Oct. 2017

[https://lakemerrittinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2017\\_10\\_Newsletter.pdf](https://lakemerrittinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2017_10_Newsletter.pdf)

#### Flooding, earthquakes and sea level rise

6 - oak058455.pdf - City of Oakland Hazard Mitigation Plan 2016-2021, pp 51-101, Fig 7.1 revises 100 year flood plane to include Laney site; Figs 9 and 9.1 put Laney site in area of inundation with 48" SLR projected to be reached by 2050; Figs on pp 160-161 show Laney site within liquefaction zone likely to experience violent shaking and heavy damage in a major earthquake. p. 32 outlines resilience measures including hardening and moving inland.

7 - <http://data.pointblue.org/apps/ocof/cms/index.php?page=flood-map> This tool allows you to vary amount of sea-level rise, storm event annual to 100 year, etc. Given predicted 33-66" SLR in 21st century, the new Laney site would experience serious flooding issues.

8 - <http://www.fivecreeks.org/info/GlobalWarming.shtml>

9 - An Introduction to the San Francisco Bay Estuary (2000), Andrew Cohen with drawings by Jack Laws, Save The Bay • San Francisco Estuary Project • San Francisco Estuary Institute Third Edition, December 2000

### Diane de Guzman , S.F. Chronicle Article about the Clean Lake Team:

<https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Oakland-Lake-Merritt-Institute-trash-dumping-14291192.php>

**Please direct questions and comments to The Tidings Editor, Katie Noonan, at [ktnoon@aol.com](mailto:ktnoon@aol.com).**

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