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Earth Day in Lafayette

A family-friendly event

By Sophie Braccini



Lafayette Earth Day 2012 Photo provided

Last month in Lafayette, the Lamorinda Democratic Club invited Dr. Andrew Gunther, the executive coordinator of the Bay Area Ecosystems Climate Change Consortium, to talk about the impact of climate change on our area.

"We are entering a period of consequences," said Gunther, using a phrase by Winston Churchill to describe what is happening as a result of increasing greenhouse gas emissions.

The first local consequences, noted Gunther, involve water: less snow in the Sierras means less reserve for us, and increased pressure from southern California to get Delta water. Gunther says that people on both sides of the aisle are looking for solutions and he highlighted areas where progress would have the most impact: fuel efficiency, solar panels and eating less red meat.

The main message? "Change starts at home."

For those interested in making a change, the April 21 Earth Day Festival in Lafayette will be a good starting point. The 8th annual festivities will focus on helping Lafayette become one of the most sustainable cities in the Bay Area, with special attention this year on recycling.

Activities include: the 'self-propelled' parade, which starts at Stanley Middle School at 10:45 a.m.; interactive activities from the Lawrence Hall of Science and Lindsay Wildlife Museum will be offered from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; the one-hour family friendly screening of the movie "Garbage Revolution" from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the Arts and Science Room of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center; and for the first time this year kids can expend energy in a bounce house. Food and music will be available from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the LLLC piazza.

Residents interested in reducing their carbon footprint can do so along Golden Gate Way; information will be available about gardening, how to raise chickens, and how to drive less, and visitors will be able to learn about environmentally-safe home cleaning products, land, creeks and open spaces around Lafayette and more. Solar panel installers will also have the latest on costs and incentives.

A big focus this year will be on reaching a 75 percent diversion rate in Lafayette. The current rates are in the 60s and the state's objective is 75 percent by 2020. Lafayette wants to be a leader on the road to zero waste.

"The patio area of the library will feature a 'No-Waste Zone,' which will display educational material and information on how residents can help Lafayette reach its goal of 75 percent waste diversion," says Sustainable Lafayette spokesperson Tina Goodfriend. "Residents can declare a pledge on ways they will help to reduce and eliminate waste in Lafayette by making a commitment on the Pledge Wall. We are also going to have a display of 365 water bottles so people can see what a year's worth of water bottles look like."

Girl Scout troops will present waste diversion ideas and will earn badges for participating in the festival. FRG Waste will be at the Stanley parking lot on School Street from 10:45 a.m. to 3 p.m. collecting electronic waste. They will be collecting all electronic waste that has a plug - items such as outdated/non-compliant goods, computers, PDA's, monitors, phones and more (no microwaves or large appliances will be accepted).

The Earth Day Festival is a widely supported Lafayette event, organized and hosted by four different entities: Sustainable Lafayette, the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Lafayette. The City of Lafayette Green Award winners for 2012 will be announced at noon during the festival, recognizing citizen and business environmental contributions to the Lafayette community.

For more information, visit www.sustainablelafayette.org. Lamorinda Weekly is a proud sponsor of this event.

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