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Earth Day in Lafayette - Come Celebrate!

By Sophie Braccini



Photo Andy Scheck

For its 5th anniversary, Lafayette's Earth Day event will set a new tone, focusing on celebration, expressions of gratitude toward the community, and fun on Sunday, April 25th from 11:30 to 4:00 p.m. The festivities will start with a community picnic at the Plaza Park (at the corner of Moraga Road and Mount Diablo Boulevard), then fun and educational, eco-friendly activities will take place at the nearby Library and Learning Center.

"This celebration will focus on thanking the many groups and individuals in town that are making Lafayette a more sustainable place to live," says Sustainable Lafayette co-founder Steve Richard, "and of course it will engage the community in all kinds of fun ways." The day is hosted by Sustainable Lafayette, the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, and the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Sponsors include the City of Lafayette and Diablo Foods.

The picnic is a first. "We are preparing a very diverse and appetizing vegetarian buffet, based on local and seasonal ingredients," says Sustainable Lafayette's Rebecca Callahan Klein, "we will offer it for \$5 per person and \$3 for children and seniors. Of course people can bring their own food instead, if they want." Among the many dishes that will be offered, picnickers will find roasted Beet and Goat Cheese Salad, Curried Rice Salad, Pita Sandwich with Roasted Vegetables

and Goat Cheese, Baked Spinach Frittata, Pasta Salad, Green Salad with Seasonal Vegetables, Mandarin Orange Sherbet and ice tea and lemonade. "The purpose is to invite people to taste the delicious homemade dishes that can be prepared with seasonal, mostly local food, and celebrate local farmers," adds Callahan Klein.

Sustainable Lafayette has sent hundreds of invitations to the many groups and individuals that have been working toward the same "green" goal these past years. "The recognition part of Earth Day is very important to us," says Richard, "we'd like members of green groups in schools, friends of the creeks, members of the Environmental Task Force, the Chamber of Commerce and many more to get together at the picnic and feel part of a big team." On the Plaza, a wall display will list many of these groups and individuals who have effected change in Lafayette.

The Chamber of Commerce is working with Sustainable Lafayette to produce a "green guide" of local businesses, which will be available at the Earth Day event. Several Lafayette merchants will be at Plaza Park offering "Equip Your Life for Sustainability" products for under \$20, such as reusable bags, reusable lunch kits and cleaning products.

Starting at 1 p.m. the partnership with the Lafayette Library and Learning Center will kick in with the Rossmoor Big Band playing in the outdoor theater. At 1:30 and 3:00 p.m. the Movie "What's On Your Plate?" will be showing in the Teen Center room. Oliver Taylor, a 7th grader at Stanley Middle School, initiated this activity. Ongoing from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. children's crafts with recycled materials will be available in the Arts and Sciences room, the Lorax Club will be reading books to children in the reading corner inside the library, and ten non-profit environmental organizations will be educating people on ecological issues.

"Most everything at the Library starts at 1:00 p.m., so we're hoping people finish their picnics and come join our fun day," says Michael Dawson, who's been coordinating the activities there for Sustainable Lafayette, "there's an event or activity for everyone, and we expect this to be a memorable day in Lafayette."

For more information regarding the celebration, go to SustainableLafayette.net.

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