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Earth Day Festival organizers and local naturalist focus on ways to affect change

By Jennifer Wake



Photo J. Wake

Hundreds gathered at Lafayette Plaza Park during the April 23 Lafayette Earth Day Festival, hosted by Sustainable Lafayette, to learn how to live sustainably and take part in protecting our planet, while having fun in the process. Attendees listened to live music, participated in arts and crafts, and learned about bee keeping and other environmental issues.

Orinda Nature Area naturalist Toris Jaeger believes Earth Day should be a time of reflection, "putting our minds, hearts and skills together to heal the Earth and ourselves.

"Our Indigenous People celebrate Earth Day each day and give thanks to the Earth for all the gifts that it gives us. Perhaps it is a custom we should adopt," she says. "We all know we are challenged with the issues of Climate Change. But it is not too late!"

Jaeger recommends the book, "Not Too Late," edited by Rebecca Solnit and Thelma Young Lulunatabua that features a series of writers that give solutions to consider.

"Give thanks to the Earth by walking more and driving less, saving all our precious water, allowing no food to go into the landfill to create methane gas, change your diet from meat eating to a more plant-based diet," Jaeger says. "Create a compost system at home or make sure your food waste is placed in your green bin. Our major challenges are the use of fossil fuels for transportation and energy, the methane gas issue and the plastics that end up in our water ways and oceans. There are solutions!"

Everyone can recycle, reuse and consume less, she says. "Learn to live with less, not more. Help save all our remaining open spaces. We need them and so do all the flora and fauna. Stop using pesticides, herbicides and poisons. There are sustainable methods for controlling 'weeds' and 'pests.' We must give our youth hope for the present and future."

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