

Earth Day focuses on planet's survival

Earth Week events will direct attention to the many environmental problems that threaten the earth and the ways in which we can stop or at the very least slow down the destruction process.

Campus and community groups have spent months preparing for the 20th anniversary of Earth Day and have a schedule of events that covers almost every issue concerning today's environment.

While many people are deeply involved in the celebration and getting the word out, others are still skeptical.

Environmental issues impact everyone, whether directly or indirectly. The quality of life is something we are all interested in, and problems such as global warming, depletion of the ozone layer, overflowing landfills, depletion of fossil fuels and destruction of the rainforests have a definite effect on the quality of our lives.

With issues of such magnitude confronting the human race, it is imperative that we force our politicians to make tough new environmental laws.

The first Earth Day in 1970 was observed by over 20 million Americans. Their efforts prompted the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency and passage of such national legislation as the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act. This was just the beginning.

Twenty years later we recognize that the laws need strengthening and the agencies need stiffer rules and stricter enforcement. We realize that many of the problems our environment now faces are due to individual overconsumption.

We are called the "throwaway society" by other countries. Back in 1970, we Americans made up only 6 percent of the world's population but consumed more than half of the world's raw materials. Things have not changed much in the last 20 years.

So what can we do as individuals to ensure better care of our planet? Consume less, reuse more and recycle what we can't use. It's not very difficult.

Most if not all garbage companies in Eugene now have curbside recycling programs. Many of them even recycle plastics. Although most curbside recycling programs don't pick up white or colored ledger paper, there are many bins on campus where you can recycle it.

Take old clothes to a second hand store or a donation center. Eat at home more often and eat low on the food chain (grains and vegetables take less water to produce). Support political candidates that stand for environmental issues. Buy products from companies that support the environment.

The point of Earth Day is to celebrate life on this planet. But it's a celebration we should partake in every day of our lives. By making some simple but important changes in our daily lives, we can help ensure the quality of life for all people, now and for years to come.



Letters

Hysteria

This is in response to Nicole Bourcier's letter (ODE, April 5): Speaking of narrow-mindedness, I think the people who run around screaming torture are the ones who are narrow-minded.

I work with the University's lab animals every day and they are not being tortured. In truth, I can proudly attest to the fact that they are very well cared for, well-fed and happy. I'm sick and tired of hysterical people running around making false claims when in fact they don't know what goes on.

Without animal research, cures for many ailments and diseases would not have been discovered. If you or your pets ever had a vaccine or prescription medication, it's been thanks to medical research.

As an asthmatic, I'm glad the medications I depend on are improving. Without animal research, this wouldn't be.

If I didn't love and care for animals, I wouldn't be working here. It is a shame some people refuse to believe we are caring, concerned people and instead portray us as nasty people who torture animals. I realize not everyone will be convinced and that is their loss. My hope is that some people are able to look beyond the hysteria and see the truth for a change.

Yvonne Hall
Eugene

Anorexia

Spring term once again. Time for people to shed the wool sweaters of winter, opting for the cotton T-shirts and tanks that mark spring and summer.

As this transformation takes place, I've noticed a sight that has disturbed and saddened me enough to crawl from under my rock of complacency and voice my opinion.

The sight is the amount of anorexic and bulimic women on this campus — women who should be enjoying one of life's truly selfish epochs of age, where authority is found only in your own temperance and

self-indulgence is a warranted and accepted trait.

Yet these women are suppressed by an overriding guilt that society won't accept them in the form they are, and they must reduce themselves to a mere carcass of skin and bone.

Who's to blame? In my shortsightedness, I felt it was a personal problem. Then I realized the problem was far more universal, not just contained in merely a woman's personal problems.

This is a premium that society has instilled in each of our minds, through our first teenybop T-and-A movie at 13 years to our present deluge of "Silver Bullet" advertising. This quest for a thin society is now exacting its toll and the young women of our society are paying the largest share.

The answers aren't easy. A start would be education; realizing that this is a major problem just as self-destructive as any other societal problem.

Stephen Chenoweth
Journalism

For Hughes

Tim Hughes was an advocate of all students while serving on the Incidental Fee Committee in the 1988-89 school year. He sought to represent all student groups and their interests in a fair and open manner while calling to question those groups which were violating state rules as well as their own goals statement.

After the difficulties the IFC has experienced this year, it is very important that some stability and experience be sitting on that body next year to ensure that we as students hold on to this power over our fees.

As half of the most experienced and most qualified ticket in the ASUO elections last year, he and his running mate sought a coalition-type student government to bring all groups and individuals into the process. One cannot begin to describe the differences that would have occurred if the results of that nasty election were to have gone the other way.

Clearly, we all have paid the price of inexperience and personal interests that have made the ASUO so ineffective and confrontational and the IFC so late in its process.

Vote for Tim Hughes for IFC as one who had the experience and the correct perspective to guide out student funding process.

Phil Nebergall
Student

Climb a tree

An interesting thing happened to me concerning life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness near the University library. Enjoying all three of these assured rights, I proceeded to consume a sub-sandwich after ascending a wonderfully inviting tree of substantial stature.

To my dismay, a security guard arrived on the scene and informed us that we could not feast in the foliage. Not wanting to contribute to recent student/authority fiascos, I consented and descended to the level of our guard. Following this incident I engaged in careful thought, numerous consultations and several comparisons to similarly bizarre situations, and we decided that it was well within my rights to climb that tree.

I am a tuition-paying student and was denied the opportunity to appreciate a beautiful taste of Mother Nature. Even in this modern hell of liability wars, I see no reason why a sober, able-bodied student of good character and peaceful nature was denied this opportunity of seeing the world from the branches above.

Is my right to climb and enjoy a tree not real enough to be of value? Do I have to own a tree to climb it?

Before you answer these questions with any degree of finality, climb a tree and consider the benefits and freedom gained from a new perspective.

George Campbell
Student
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