

PLANET PATROL

Get your hands dirty during Cannon Beach's 12 Days of Earth Day

By **NICOLE BALES**
FOR COAST WEEKEND

Local and not-so-local environmentalists are flocking to Cannon Beach from Thursday, April 11, through Monday, April 22, for the 10th annual 12 Days of Earth Day. The celebration has become a city tradition and a way for committed local environmentalists to care for the Earth in community.

Organizers bring in different lecturers every year but maintain popular events like the Earth Day Street Fair and the Gaylord Nelson community potluck, where every year a citizen of Cannon Beach is honored with the Gaylord Nelson Award and leads the Earth Day Parade the following day. Nelson founded Earth Day in 1970.

"There's a little bit of something for everyone, and there are chances to get your hands dirty with our an ivy pull, micro-plastic removal and tree planting," said Barb Knop, chair of the 12 Days of Earth Committee. "I'm a retired school teacher, so I love the tree planting event we do. We have some trees that were planted by kids who are now juniors and seniors in high school and their trees are full size now, and so are they."

A new event added to this year's schedule is organized by Champions for Cetaceans, which Ed Johnson and his step-daughter Kirsten Massebeau founded. They have invited guest speaker Era Horton from the American Cetacean Society's Oregon Chapter to discuss cetacean species and whale watching on the Oregon Coast, and threats to cetaceans worldwide.

Massebeau said one of the threats facing cetacean, which includes whales and dolphins, is Navy sonar and seismic testing to search for offshore oil and gas. They use seismic air guns that set off recurring



ERICK BENGEL PHOTOS

Hand-in-hand before Haystack Rock, Stacy Benefield, left, and Mindy Hardwick show solidarity with other supporters (not pictured) of Cannon Beach's coastal environmental. This picture was taken in 2015 during Hands Across the Sand, part of the city's 12 Days of Earth Day celebration.



At the 2014 Earth and Arbor Day parade in Cannon Beach, Bob Lundy, center, that year's Gaylord Nelson Award recipient, and then-mayor Mike Morgan carry the banner down North Hemlock Street. They are trailed closely by the Haystack Rock Awareness Program.

loud blasts to identify buried oil and gas deposits. However, the loud noise harms and can even kill marine life.

"I'm grateful to say that we live on

a coastline where there will not be seismic testing," she said. "When the Navy came down here to talk to us we had a huge turnout in Astoria. It wasn't just dol-



In 2014, then-12-year-old Sarah Gentry, of Tigard, gets her face painted by volunteer Libby Pattison during the 12 Days of Earth Day street fair.

phin activists, but fishermen that are trying to protect their livelihood and jobs. We live in a pretty powerful ocean community here, and I'm really grateful for that."

Massebeau and Johnson are enthusiastic to include an event about cetaceans this year, but they're equally excited for all the events.

"The thing that makes it so wonderful is the interplay between people that have their hearts in this stuff," said Johnson, a former science teacher and longtime environmental activist.