

# GOT EARTH DAY PLANS?

## County has special connection, so plant a tree, pull some ivy or pick up litter

**W**hat are *you* doing for Earth Day? It's Saturday and there are plenty of opportunities locally. Besides, we have a special place in the history of the annual event as the home of the director of the world's first Earth Day, Denis Hayes of Camas, a Clark College graduate.

Now 36 years old, Earth Day is not as big a deal as Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day or Easter. If Earth Day were an event for giving gifts, having a party or buying new clothes, we'd have been seeing Earth Day sales in the stores and public service announcements:

"Get 'em here while they last: Birkenstocks and backpacks!"

"Give that special someone in your life a composting how-to-do-it book."

"Bicycle to work and starve a sheik."

In the late 1960s, when U.S. Sen. Gaylord Nelson, D-Wis., suggested the idea of Earth Day and tapped Hayes to be its hands-on director, air and water pollution were finally being taken seriously by average Americans. Earth Day gave the environmental movement considerable momentum, leading to major anti-pollution legislation approved by President Richard Nixon, for whom appreciation of nature had never been a natural inclination.

At our request, Linda McLain of the local Sierra Club has suggested a few recent environmental success stories and a few challenges.

Success stories:

■ Election in 2004 of Craig Pridemore, D-Vancouver, as a state senator. Pridemore unseated Don Carlson, R-Hazel Dell, who was more sensitive to environmental concerns than most GOP lawmakers in this county and state. But Pridemore's election

gave Democrats control of the Senate, which Republicans had held 25-24. Pridemore's committees include Environment, Energy & Water.

■ Election of fellow Sierra Club member Brian Wolfe to the Port of Vancouver Board of Commissioners, who have plenty to say about protection of the Vancouver lake Lowlands.

■ Legislative approval this year of tougher auto-emission standards.

McLain's priorities:

■ Oppose Initiative 933, an Oregon-style measure aimed at allowing

property owners to do what they want with their land, despite regulations and ordinances, or ensure they would be compensated with public funds. "This would change the landscape of Washington," she says.

■ Monitor work at former military Camp Bonneville "to make sure it is totally cleaned up."

■ Focus on an energy initiative "to require large utilities to operate with 15 percent renewable energy by 2020."

And now, ways we all can celebrate:

■ Turn in worn athletic shoes for recycling, Clark College Gaiser Hall until 9 p.m. today.

■ Join "ivy pull" at Vancouver's Waterworks Park. Meet at 1:30 p.m. Friday at Clark College Security office in Gaiser Hall.

■ Volunteer for ivy pull at 9 a.m. Saturday at Vancouver's David Douglas Park. Call 360-619-1224.

■ Hazardous waste collection, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, Clark College parking lot. Call 360-992-2251.

■ Plant trees along Salmon Creek with Clark Public Utilities, 8:45 a.m. Saturday. Call 360-992-8585 or e-mail [volunteercoordinator@clarkpud.com](mailto:volunteercoordinator@clarkpud.com)

And, of course, you don't need to call or e-mail anyone to pick up litter along the roadside near your house.

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*Saturday will  
be a great time  
to spend 15  
minutes  
picking up litter  
along the road.*

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