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Numerous Earth Day events planned

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A march for Earth Day embarked down Newcastle Street in 2021.

The Brunswick News/File

Glynn Environmental Coalition and numerous partners will come together this week to celebrate Earth Day with a variety of events.

Earth Day, celebrated annually on April 22, aims to raise awareness of needed environmental protections and to honor the planet's natural resources.

Rachael Thompson, executive director of GEC, said this year's local events will provide tangible ways to promote this cause. Opportunities to celebrate Earth Day will include an Eat For A Cause fundraiser at Broomelli Boys Pizzeria, a parade, a film screening, a picnic at Twitty Park and the first official Earth Day Brunswick event.



GEC has also partnered with America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia to organize a canned food drive that will run through Friday.

Food insecurity is closely tied with environmental concerns, Thompson said. Those who are food insecure, which means they cannot afford to reliably purchase healthy food options, are also among the groups who suffer most greatly when natural disasters like hurricanes and pandemics occur.

"When we start talking about climate change and hurricanes and sea level rise, food insecurity is something that is going to continue to persist," Thompson said. "For the folks that are experiencing it, they could experience it at a higher level when we have those local natural disasters like a hurricane."

The food drive offers an opportunity to discuss these connections and concerns that affect families in Glynn County.

Collection bins are set up around the community, including at the Ritz Theatre in downtown Brunswick and at Broomelli Boys Pizzeria.

"With America's Second Harvest, this is a direct service program," Thompson said. "So the food that gets donated to this canned food drive will directly help local families that are struggling."

Community cleanups are planned to start the Earth Day celebrations Friday. These are an easy way for anyone to volunteer and participate in neighborhood beautification, Thompson said.

"You can spend 20 minutes, a very short period of time, and pick up some trash and your environment is immediately improved," she said. "We're thinking about those tangible ways that you can take action and you can walk away feeling like you've done something good for the environment that day."

The Eat For a Cause Fundraiser will take place Friday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Broomelli Boys will donate 10% of its proceeds to GEC's mission.

GEC will host later on Friday an Earth Day parade in downtown Brunswick in partnership with the city.

The parade begin at Queen's Square East, 1300 Newcastle Street. The pedestrian parade will go down Newcastle for less than half a mile and conclude at 1609 Newcastle Street, across from Reid's Apothecary.

Participants are asked to line up at 5:30 p.m., and the parade will set off at 6 p.m.

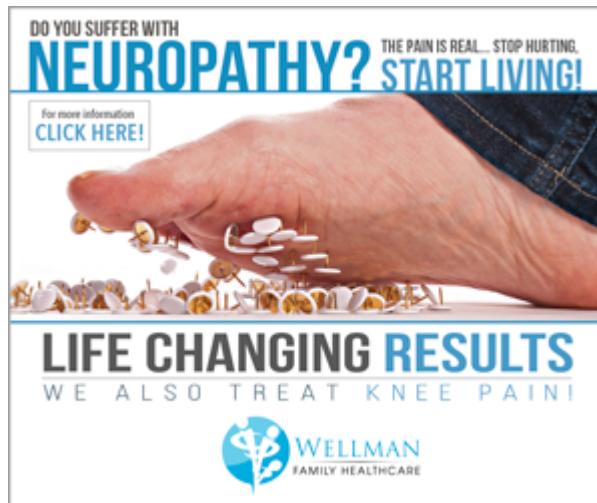
"People can decorate their bikes, create a banner or just have their own sign," Thompson said. "You don't really have to be a part of group. You can just be yourself and have an Earth Day sign and come and celebrate the Earth."

Civic groups and businesses are invited to participate.

The parade is envisioned less as a call for action and more as a community celebration of Earth's natural resources, Thompson said.

"We're really looking at these Earth Day celebrations as a way to bring some positive energy to our organization and our community around the environment, inspire some hope and inspire change," she said.

The parade will end at about 6:30 p.m., and participants are then invited to head down to the Ritz for a brief interlude with food and refreshments before a 7 p.m. film screening of "Sacred Waters: The Okefenokee in Peril."



The celebration will continue Saturday with an Earth Day Brunswick event from 2-5 p.m. at Mary Ross Park. GEC will host this event in partnership with Golden Isles Arts and Humanities and Core Dance in Atlanta.

Organizations will set up booths at the event, including America's Second Harvest, local business vendors and environmental groups.

Story time at the playground will take place from 2-3 p.m., when volunteer readers will share books with children. The Phil Morrison Trio is set to perform from 3-4 p.m.

The event will conclude with a National Water Dance performance, which has taken place twice before in Brunswick. Core Dance in Atlanta will perform and invites the public to participate in some aspects of the dance.

Core Dance has worked with the Brunswick Labyrinth Project to create this performance.

The National Water Dance takes place every other year and was first hosted in Brunswick in 2018. Dancers will perform at the same time across the country, starting at 4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, said Sue Schroeder, artistic director and co-founder for Core Dance.

"We've created a performance that has a lot of images for how water flows, how you feel about water," she said. "It's a trio, it's for three dancers."

The performance will integrate local sentiment about Coastal Georgia's waters through a spoken performance of poetry written by Burroughs-Molette Elementary students, who were asked to share their thoughts about water in their world.

The Brunswick Labyrinth Project will work with Core to build a labyrinth space for the dance performance.

"We want to support Sue and the idea of the creativity and the power of healing through these spaces where people gather and find renewal and energy in cross cultural spaces," said Bonnie Springer, one of the Brunswick Labyrinth Project's founders.

The Brunswick Labyrinth Project has created a permanent space for mindfulness in Goodyear Park in Brunswick and aims to inspire and promote peace and personal wellness through the use of a labyrinth and the power of civic engagement.

Keep Golden Isles Beautiful will also host a recycling event for electronics and more from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday at Glynn Place Mall.

Earth Day celebrations will end Sunday with a picnic at Twitty Park on St. Simons hosted from 5:30-7:30 p.m. by GEC.

Food and beverages will be provided, and guests are asked to bring their own chairs.

Local businessman T.L. Cain dedicated land for a park as a gift to Glynn County in 1924, and for 98 years Twitty Park has served as a scenic icon in the Golden Isles.

"Twitty Park is a 98 year old park that was deeded to the citizens and visitors of Glynn County," Thompson said.

The picnic will be a celebration of this local gem, which Thompson said GEC has worked nearly a decade to protect and conserve.

"We'll just spend some time enjoying and appreciating the maritime canopy, the Spanish moss," she said. "The park has this essence of Coastal Georgia scenery and landscape."

To learn more about this year's Earth Day events, visit www.glynnenvironmental.org/earthday.



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