

Earth Day Is Sunday

BY HENRIK JONES

Earth Day is finally here. Having spent the last three months sending Earthsteps* to you through this column, it's time to pause and reflect on the environmental movement sweeping the world. It seems like everyone has become an environmentalist. It's hard to separate the diamonds from the glass. It's easy to get cynical. The recent controversy surrounding biodegradable plastic is the best example of this confusion. Consumers were led to believe that biodegradable plastic was good for the environment. Many of us flocked out and with the best of intentions demanded biodegradable bags, even paying more. Now it is fairly clear that biodegradable bags cannot degrade in landfills as presently designed and may well be worse than normal plastic bags. As a result, it's no wonder we look at new "environmentally safe products" with a great deal of skepticism.

To alleviate this problem, the founders of Earth Day are trying to develop a system for designating which products are environmentally sound. Products that are deemed safe would carry a green seal. This process will be extremely difficult and controversial. The founders of Earth Day have already been criticized for excluding the business community.

Over the last three months, the Harvard Environmental Network has tried to present thoughtful, sound recommendations. In February, we focused on cutting back on energy use. Remember, fluorescent light bulbs use less energy than incandescent light bulbs. In March, we focused on reducing solid waste. For instance, buy in bulk. In April, we are emphasizing nature.

The Harvard Environmental Network invites you to take care of the outdoors this week. The attached schedule lists a number of events. We encourage you to join in the clean-up of Cambridge parks on April 21st. And by all means, participate in Earth Day. See you there!

Harvard Earth Week 1990

Friday, April 20

5 pm David Brower, former leader of the Sierra Club is speaking at Harvard Law School in Austin Hall. An avid rock climber, Brower was the first to scale Shiprock in New Mexico. He now leads Earth Island Institute, a preservationist group with a global outlook.

7:30 to 1am Harvard Earth Day party in the Harkness Pub at Harvard Law School. Live music, cheap beer and special guest.

Saturday, April 22

9pm to 1am Harvard cleans up Cambridge Parks. Any one from the Harvard community is invited to join in cleaning up parks in Cambridge. For details, call Michael Skelly at 629-2328 or Henrik Jones at 493-8664 from the Environmental Action Club.

Sunday, April 22

Earthday! Earthday! Earthday! Earthday!

10am Earth Day Road Race in Cambridge. 5 miles starting at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education on Brattle Street. To register, call 547-6789.

10am to 2pm Cambridge Earth Day Celebration on Memorial Drive at Weeks Bridge. Artists, Dancers, Solar Powered Music, Environmental Displays, ECO-VIDEOS, and folk musicians. Speech by author Bill McKibben. Come rain or shine.

11am Student March. Join thousands of students in walking "Pollution Freedom Trail" from Kenmore Square to Boston Earth Day at Hatch Shell. Use creative alternative transportation like bicycles or rollerblades. Wear Green For more info, call Chris Fox at 542-6333.

1:30 to 6pm Boston Earth Day Concert and Rally. Starts with an inter-faith environmental covenant service. National and local musicians, creation of world's longest environmental mural, information booths, food and entertainment for all ages. US Senator John Kerry. Performances by Arlo Guthrie, Livingston Taylor, Phoebe Snow, Tom Rush, and Treat Her Right.

Monday, April 23

7:30pm "The Environmental Movement: A 20-Year Retrospective" Doug Scott, Associate Director of Sierra Club, Jason Clay of Cultural Survival at THE KENNEDY SCHOOL FORUM.