



COASTAL
BEND
BAYS
FOUNDATION

Dedicated to protecting our bays and estuaries

Earth Day-Bay Day! **Free Family Fun!**



Protecting Our Bays and Estuaries

News Release

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Corpus Christi, April 18, 2008 – The count down to **Earth Day-Bay Day** is on! This important Texas Coastal Bend outdoor education and outreach festival is **Saturday, April 19th**, from **10 AM to 5 PM at Cole Park** in Corpus Christi, Texas. The Coastal Bend Bays Foundation has organized this exciting event for nine years to encourage citizens to learn more about our bays and estuaries, wetlands, native plants and animals, recycling, conservation and other important environmental issues. Back again this year, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) will provide free bus service between the First United Methodist Church North Parking Lot and Cole Park throughout the day. The whole family will have loads of action-packed fun - **and best of all, it's FREE!**

While exhibitors are setting up, the Gulf Coast Indian Confederation will walk the grounds and perform an *Indian Ground Blessing* and *Indian Prayer* that will be followed by a *Welcoming Drum Ceremony* from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Opening Ceremonies begin at 10:00 a.m. with a performance by the award-winning Flour Bluff High School NJROTC under the direction of Commander Solis. The *National Anthem* will be performed by Emilio Casiano from Flour Bluff Middle School and an *Invocation* by Father Eduardo Montemayor from the Diocese of Corpus Christi. Mr. Buddy Stanley, Coastal Bend Bays Foundation Board President will welcome visitors and officially open the event by introducing the 2008 Honorary Chair, Reverend Rachel Whitefield Wilken, a well-known Master Teacher and past Corpus Christi Caller Times "Coastal Bend Educator of the Year". Reverend Whitefield Wilken is more notably known as the "founding mother" of the St. Francis Bird Rehabilitation Center.

Earth Day-Bay Day offers the opportunity for people to visit with many "Earth-Friendly" partners which include over 100 exhibitors, vendors, entertainers, and sponsors. Guests can pick up a copy of this year's colorful and educational poster by local artist and retired Corpus Christi firefighter, Mr. Ron Stephenson. The poster features a vibrantly-colored juvenile Red-tailed Hawk which is a native species to this area. The original acrylic on canvas artwork is on the market for \$2,500. As part of Mr. Stephenson's contribution to the Earth Day-Bay Day celebration, he will donate 20% of the proceeds from the sale of the artwork. Mr. Stephenson will be on-hand Saturday to autograph this collectors' poster.

Challenge yourself on the *Climbing Walls*; experience the *G-Force*, *Dance-Dance*, and *High Strikers*; check out "*Living Off the Grid*" and *Sustainable Energy!* Learn about recycling, composting, mulching, tree-planting, freshwater and waste water, gardening for birds and so much more! The best part is - It's **FREE, FUN, and EDUCATIONAL!**

Earth Day-Bay Day goals are:

1. **Education** – Educate the public about bays, estuaries, other native habitats, and the importance of clean air, clean water, and a clean environment.
2. **Conservation** – Urge citizens to become pro-active in their day-to-day lives by recycling, composting, and conserving energy, water, and other resources.
3. **Habitat Protection** – Encourage protection of native habitats (such as seagrasses) by encouraging low- to no-impact outdoor activities such as kayaking, windsurfing, birding, fly-fishing, gardening, and hiking.
4. **Participation** – Encourage our visitors to become active in local groups, such as the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, Beautify Corpus Christi, Coastal Bend Bays Foundation, Sierra Club, and the Surfrider Foundation.

The **Earth Day-Bay Day** committee graciously acknowledges and appreciates the 2008 sponsors which includes: Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (top sponsor), Valero Bill Greehey Refinery, Saltwater-Fisheries Enhancement Association, Cheniere LNG, Inc., City of Corpus Christi Storm Water Department, Flint Hills Resources, HEB – Gulf Coast Region, LyondellBasell, Port of Corpus Christi Authority, PPM Energy, City of Corpus Christi Water Department, Coastal Bend Sierra Club, Corrigan Benefits, LLP., San Patricio Municipal Water District, and University of Texas Marine Science Institute-Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve. T-shirt sponsors are Corpus Christi Sharks, and Citgo. Individual sponsors are CP&L Retail Energy, Commissioner Jerry Patterson, John Adams, State Representative Abel Herrero and Woody's Sports Center. In-kind sponsors are City of Corpus Christi-Parks & Recreation Department, Everest Water Company, First United Methodist Church, Mathieu Electric Company, Naismith Engineering, Pro Fire Company, Regional Transit Authority, Ridgeway's, Ron & Aurora Stephenson (*2008 EDBD Artist*), and Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

Earth Day-Bay Day is presented by the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation and the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program.

Earth Day-Bay Day! – Enjoying Our Bays & Habitats Now and Forever!