

# EARTH DAY

**ON SUNDAY, APRIL 18, LAKE METROPARKS JOINS THE WORLD** in celebrating the 40th anniversary of Earth Day. The first Earth Day was held in 1970, and was the result of many social, political and ecological events that shaped the world's attitude about the environment.

The concept of Earth Day was developed by Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson when he proposed a national grassroots demonstration on behalf of the environment. The time was right. Rachel Carlson's *Silent Spring* was being widely read and grass roots organizing and teach-ins had been developed by many of the 1960s "movements." Cleveland, unwittingly, played a role when, in 1969, the Cuyahoga River caught fire. The fire spurred action because it was featured in one of the most widely read issues of *Time Magazine* in history. Nelson wanted "to shake up the political establishment and force this issue onto the national agenda. It was a gamble," he recalls, "but it worked."

On April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans took to the streets, parks, and auditoriums to demonstrate for a healthy, sustainable environment. Thousands of colleges and universities organized protests against the deterioration of the environment. Groups that had been fighting against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness, and the extinction of wildlife suddenly realized they shared common values. The protests were loud and clear and change occurred. Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, tycoons and labor leaders. The first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species acts. Sen. Nelson was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom—the highest honor given to civilians in the United States—for his role as Earth Day founder.

In 1990, Denis Hayes, a major organizer of the first Earth Day, launched a campaign for new Earth Day celebrations. This time, Earth Day went global. Two hundred million people, 141 nations and nearly 5,000 environmental groups from around

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the world celebrated Earth Day that year, lifting the status of environmental issues onto the world stage. Lake Metroparks became involved by hosting an Earth Day celebration for nearly 2,000 people at Penitentiary Glen Reservation. The Earth Day Coalition formed and environmental awareness was alive and growing. Earth Day 1990 gave a huge boost to recycling efforts worldwide and helped pave the way for the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

In the years that followed, Earth Day continued to grow. Earth Day 2000 focused on global warming and clean energy and employed the Internet to help link activists around the world. More than 5,000 environmental groups in 184 countries rallied to send the message that the public wanted swift and decisive action on clean energy.

Lake Metroparks expanded its Earth Day events in 2002 with activities at both Penitentiary Glen Reservation and Farmpark, each offering its own perspective. Today, Farmpark highlights land management issues, farmland preservation and renewable energy sources while Penitentiary Glen focuses on wildlife and habitat preservation. Both offer family games and science activities. Farmpark has also partnered with bicycling and running clubs in hopes of getting people outdoors and developing an understanding of how we are all connected to the earth.

The impact of Earth Day can be measured by the progress we make to conserve earth and its resources. The value of the day is the attitude it fosters in our hearts. As Baba Dioum, a West African conservationist, stated at the 1968 general assembly of the International Union for Conservation of Nature...

*"In the end we will conserve only what we love;  
we will love only what we understand;  
and we will understand only what we are taught."*

Now, the fight for a clean environment continues. We invite you to be a part of history and a part of Earth Day. Discover energy you didn't even know you had. Channel it into building a clean, healthy, diverse world for generations to come.

Source: Earth Day Network



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LAKE METROPARKS CELEBRATES

# EARTH DAY

# 2010

**SUNDAY  
APRIL 18  
NOON TO 4 PM**

PENITENTIARY GLEN  
RESERVATION  
&  
LAKE METROPARKS  
FARMPARK