

REDDING

Activities scheduled for expansion of Earth Day

By Katrina Koerting

REDDING — Forget Earth Day. The town is celebrating Earth Month.

Residents are being encouraged to honor the environment all month, not just on April 22. Alice Smith, the organizer of the town's annual Earth Day celebration, has suggested a variety of ways to do so.

"We're trying to get more people to become more conscious about it," Smith said. "We haven't forgotten about keeping Redding clean and green."

A tip will be posted to the town's website every day in April, offering suggestions on how to celebrate and protect the environment. They include hiking, using cloth bags when grocery shopping and drinking from a reuseable water bottle. Some of the ideas are Redding-specific, including using the new textile recycling program at the transfer center or taking a walk at Huntington, Topstone or Putnam parks.

Town Hall is already decorated with displays dedicated to Earth Day, and banners will go up around the green soon.

Residents are also encouraged to share on social media how they're reducing, reusing and recycling. Earth Day T-shirts are on sale at Town Hall for \$5, with proceeds going to support a cleanup and the Earth Day celebration. A Redding Book of Trails is on sale for \$5 at Town Hall, New Pond Farm and the Mark Twain Library. Proceeds will benefit the Redding Land Trust.

Smith said Earth Day is especially important for Redding, which has more than 7,000 acres of open space — most of it in a watershed.

"If we don't take care of it, we're going to lose it," she said.

The annual Earth Day celebration and litter cleanup will be separated this year.

"I really wanted to do something new and different, and recognize Earth Day for Earth Day," Smith said.

An Earth Day observance will be from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on April 22 on the town green. It will include making kites out of plastic bags and flying them, a cleanup of the garden around the perimeter of the green and planting summer bulbs. There will also be music, and attendees are encouraged to bring picnic lunches.

The Redding Garden Club will plant a native oak tree at the Redding Historical Society as part of the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut's initiative to plant more native trees.

Redding Rid Litter Day will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on April 23 on the green. Volunteers will pick up trash along assigned roads and bring it back to create Mount Trashmore on the Green, which has been built annually for about a decade.

Vests, gloves and trash bags will be provided. Volunteers will get a free Popsicle or Fudgsicle once trash is dropped off.

The activities include a variety of Redding organizations.

"We're all connected," Smith said. "We want people to go and enjoy nature."
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Alice Smith, the organizer of Redding's annual Earth Day celebration