

April 14, 2008

Sarasota County and City of Sarasota celebrate Earth Week April 21-25

Sarasota County is partnering with the City of Sarasota and several community organizations to present a series of events during the week of Earth Day. From April 21-25, city and county staff will join representatives from Mote Marine Research Laboratory, Sarasota Bay Estuary Program, Sarasota Network for Climate Action and the University of Florida to present free, public workshops on everything from watershed management to the social and economic impact of trees. The workshops will take place at City of Sarasota Commission Chambers, Bay Haven School of Basics Plus, Selby Public Library and Marie Selby Botanical Gardens.

Earth Week is an annual worldwide effort to achieve a healthy environment and a sustainable world through environmental campaigns, events and public education. It is coordinated by the Earth Day Network, a non-profit organization of more than 15,000 partners in 174 countries. Although Sarasota County is an annual participant at individual Earth Day celebrations, this is the first time it has partnered with other leading community organizations for a weeklong series of events.

"By working together, we can broaden the scope of environmental issues covered and the number of people who will be able to take advantage of the tremendous local knowledge on these subjects," said Lee Hayes Byron, sustainability manager for Sarasota County. "Sustainability is clearly a priority for this community, and Earth Week is an important opportunity to build upon community interest and engagement."

On April 21, Byron will join Michele Mician, City of Sarasota Neighborhoods and Environmental coordinator, to present environmental initiatives of local governments at the City of Sarasota Commission Chambers. The ceremony will include raffle prizes, refreshments and gift bags for those who attend, and the first 50 guests will receive a free compact fluorescent light bulb. Other activities will take place at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Selby Public Library and Bay Haven School of Basics Plus.

"Earth Week, Earth Day and Earth Hour have inspired us to collaborate on a local level to create a community movement," said Mician. "It is exciting to work with so many great agencies that are eager to make a difference, to educate the public and to 'green' their organizations from the inside out. This will definitely help us to engage more people and encourage them to do their best to make every day Earth Day in our hometown."

For more information about how Sarasota County is participating in Earth Week, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask for Natural Resources.