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Earth Day 2013: The Faces of Climate Change

APRIL 21ST 2013 BY BETH FARRAH

Earth Day 2013: The Faces of Climate Change

Written by

Beth Farrah, SMT Writer

Monday, April 22nd, is the world's celebration of Earth Day. Although the recent Earth Day campaigns included "Go Green" or "Save Energy", the 2013 theme for tomorrow is: "The Face of Climate Change". We usually associate the changing climate with the polar bears in Antarctica but there are many climate changes happening right before our eyes that we might not notice so easily. Floods, droughts, large storms, and hurricanes have affected the local areas, along with the rest of the United States and other parts of the world. Not only do climate changes affect the animals and their habitats, like we usually see on television, but they affect society and lifestyles as well.

Since many people believe that the changing climate will not affect their generation, it is a topic that has been overlooked and pushed aside over time. As the world changes and goes through different phases and shifts, weather patterns, wind patterns, and temperatures will eventually change for all of us.

So what does this have to do with Earth Day?

Tomorrow, many people will be spreading awareness by campaigning for a greener economy. Many companies, engineers, and entrepreneurs have already started creating new technology and gadgets that help the planet instead of hurt it. People all over the world will be celebrating the 43rd anniversary of Earth Day and they will be standing up and facing the climate change so others in their community can join them.

All of the world, different people of all different cultures will be doing things to help their environment. The students in the school systems will most likely be studying more about Earth Day and the large effect that their small acts of turning off the faucet while brushing their teeth or remembering to turn off the light switch when they leave their room can do for their environment.

Many activists will celebrate Earth Day with marches in big cities or campaigns spread far and wide to get the attention of government leaders so they can create a “Green Economy” for everyone. Others may celebrate by planting a garden or young saplings on their front yard. Whatever you may be doing in celebration of Earth Day, remember the importance that these small acts have on our community and our world.

For more information on Earth Day 2013, you can visit www.earthday.org to see pictures, read articles, find activities, search programs, and view the impact that Earth Day has on people from all over the globe.

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Upcoming AARP Driver Safety Classes

APRIL 21ST 2013 BY BETH FARRAH

Upcoming AARP Driver Safety Classes

Submitted by

Beth Farrah, SMT Writer

Sikeston, Missouri - The Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety is offering a free AARP Driver Safety class, designed for older, experienced drivers. The class will be held Thursday, May 9 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., with a break for lunch. It will be located at the Missouri Department of Transportation's Southeast District Office at 2675 North Main St. in Sikeston.

The class will consist of video presentations, lecture and discussion. There are no tests and will be a number of breaks. The Southeast Coalition is covering the regular class fees of \$12 for AARP members and \$14 for nonmembers. Advanced registration is requested. To register, please contact Regional Coalition Contact Sandra Taurone at (573) 388-1259 or via email at sandra.taurone@modot.mo.gov.

The AARP Driver Safety Program is the nation's first and largest classroom refresher course.

"It is a very informative class, which could help a driver save his/her life or the life of a loved one. While older drivers have fewer crashes than younger drivers, they are more likely to be involved in a fatal crash," said Jim Stricker, a volunteer instructor for the course.

For older drivers, risks to safe driving may arise from health changes affecting vision, hearing or reaction time.

"Safe driving is a challenge for all drivers. Within the class, we will discuss factors that particularly impact older drivers," said Stricker.

He explained during the class, attendees will discuss driving strategies that take into account the effects of aging, common crash situations and ways to reduce the likelihood of a crash. In addition, today's highway system and traffic laws will be reviewed.

"Besides serving as a great refresher course, many insurance companies give a premium discount to individuals for completing a driver safety course," he said.

For more information, please contact Taurone at (573) 388-1259 or via email at sandra.taurone@modot.mo.gov.

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Missouri Voted "Best Trails State in America"

APRIL 19TH 2013 BY BETH FARRAH

[Missouri Voted](#)

Submitted by

Beth Farrah, SMT Writer

Jefferson City, Missouri – Missouri has been named the “Best Trails State” by American Trails, a national, nonprofit organization working on behalf of the nation’s hiking, biking and riding trails. The award was announced today at the International Trails Symposium in Arizona. The national award is presented every two years to the state that has made

tremendous contributions to promote and improve their trails system.

“Missouri has an outstanding system of trails that can accommodate a wide variety of activities ranging from a short walk to a hike through the wilderness,” said Gov. Jay Nixon. “This award is a great honor for our state, and I encourage all Missouri families to get out there and take advantage of this incredible resource found right here in the Show-Me State.

Missouri State Parks offers almost 1,000 miles of managed trails and the state claims more than 500 miles of National Recreation Trails designated by the U.S. Department of Interior. The state lives up to its reputation as “Gateway to the West” with significant trails including the Lewis and Clark, Trail of Tears, Santa Fe National Historic Trails passing through the state and the Pony Express, California, and Oregon National Historic Trails beginning on the western border. Missouri is also the home of the Katy Trail, the longest developed rail-trail in the nation.

“Missourians can walk, hike or bicycle on 230 incredibly diverse trails throughout the state park system,” said Sara Parker Pauley, director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. “Spending time outdoors exploring our trail system not only provides us with a great adventure, it also provides us with an opportunity to improve our overall health and well-being.”

“The contributions of staff, volunteers, and support groups have made Missouri’s state park trails stand out as the best in the nation,” said Bill Bryan, director of Missouri State Parks, a division of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. “We are proud of these efforts and look forward to continuing work to build on our network so even more families can enjoy trails in our state,” added Bryan while accepting the award on behalf of Missouri State Parks.

The award also recognized Missouri State Parks for a project that began in 2008 to inventory and manage trails, which is being used in a statewide effort to consolidate and coordinate trail data. Missouri State Parks recently released Trails of Missouri State Parks, a publication that provides detailed information on 230 Missouri State Parks trails.

Earlier this year, Gov. Nixon announced that attendance at Missouri’s State Parks increased in 2012, another sign of Missouri’s economic recovery. More than 18 million guests visited Missouri’s State Parks in 2012, the fourth consecutive increase in attendance since Gov. Nixon took office, reversing a 10-year decline in parks attendance.

Increased attendance at Missouri State Parks is also an important factor in the state's economic growth. An economic impact study for the Missouri state park system released in 2012 reported that the total annual expenditure of state parks visitors in 2011 was approximately \$778 million. The overall economic impact of these expenditures is estimated at \$1.02 billion in sales, \$307 million in payroll and related income, and \$123 million in federal, state, and local taxes. Also, visitors' expenditures support 14,535 jobs in Missouri.

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Missouri Department of Natural Resources Hosts Earth Day Event

APRIL 18TH 2013 BY BETH FARRAH

[Missouri Department of Natural Resources Hosts Earth Day Event](#)

Jefferson City, Missouri — The Missouri Department of Natural Resources will welcome more than 1,200 fifth graders from all over Missouri to Earth Day 2013, Friday, April 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., on the South Lawn of the Capitol. Capitol Circle Drive and a portion of Broadway Street will close temporarily to accommodate the event.

The Department of Natural Resources sponsors the event and is being joined by 12 other local and state agencies with booths, exhibits, interactive displays and stage shows on the grounds. Stage shows will include Environmental Survivor, a game show based on the popular television series and hosted by KAT Country 94.3 morning show hosts Kevin Hilley and Erin Hart; a presentation from the World Bird Sanctuary; and the Department of Natural Resources' own Science Guys, Nick Newport and Chatchai Pinthuprapa, who will entertain students with feats of science.

Nearly 1,200 students, representing 66 classes from 25 schools, have registered to attend Earth Day 2013. Registered classes include schools from St. Louis and 11 counties: Boone, Callaway, Camden, Chariton, Cole, Gasconade, Lincoln, Maries, Moniteau, Montgomery, Osage, Randolph and Scott.

This year marks the department's 19th annual recognition of Earth Day. Earth Day is targeted toward students, but the event is free and open to the public, as well.

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Severe Storms in the Forecast

APRIL 18TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Severe Storms in the Forecast

*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Writer*

Dexter, Missouri – The National Weather Service in Paducah, KY has advised us that a line of strong to severe storms will move east across Missouri and western Illinois this morning, possibly intensifying as it crosses our region later today. Isolated storms may develop ahead of the line this morning, especially over southeast Missouri and southern Illinois.

Any storms today could be severe. The forecast for the Dexter area is windy with scattered thunderstorms this morning, then strong thunderstorms becoming likely during the afternoon hours. Storms may produce large hail and high winds. High this afternoon with temperatures increasing to 78 degrees with a cold front coming in later. Temperatures will drop in the mid 30's tonight.

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