

Martinez News-Gazette

2,000 expected at John Muir Birthday celebration

April 18 event to coincide with Earth Day.

By

[Greta Mart](#)

Staff Reporter

April 6, 2009



April is a busy time in Martinez, and one of the month's highlights is the John Muir Birthday—Earth Day Celebration from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the 18th.

Last year, this free, one-day regional event, held at the John Muir National Historic Site at 4202 Alhambra Avenue attracted 1,800 visitors, and organizers expect up to 2,000 this year.

“The Celebration features environmental exhibits and fun activities for all ages. Michael Muir, great grandson of John Muir, will have his magnificent horses and carriage on hand to greet guests. Participants will also enjoy live entertainment, National Park Service Ranger-guided tours of the historic home and grounds, self-guided tours of the California Native Plant Garden, and much more,” said Sherida Bush of the John Muir Association. “Live music is by the Piedmont Highlanders Pipe Band, Extended Roots, Spinning Wheel, Cal Revels and Patty Helling at the piano of the Muir Home. A popular Recycled Fashion Show will be presented by local school children and two silent auctions offer fun items to bid on, with the proceeds benefiting the John Muir Association, which presents the Celebration along with the National Park Service (NPS).”

Bush said the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council is sponsoring both a bike ride and a hike, beginning at 10:30 and 10:45, respectively and said that interested participants for these two events may meet at the back gate at the south end of Canyon Way.

“People who want to learn more about being ‘green,’ and people who just want to have fun are welcome,” said Steve Pardieck, the event Coordinator and John Muir Association board member.

Pardieck said there will be over 50 exhibits by local and regional organizations, particularly by the several other national parks in the Bay Area, and that the 24 Environmental Studies Academy students will be “there in force and have their own exhibit.”

“This year the theme is Scottish, with bag pipes,” said Pardieck. “It’s a day when families and friends get together; anyone who comes will get inspiration, awareness and appreciation for the environment. Towards the end of the day we’ll serve a birthday cake big enough for 1000 people.”

Money raised from the silent auction will go towards the summer day camp hosted at the Historical Site in July and August.

Popular local columnist Gary Bogue is the featured guest this year, and at 2 p.m., he will give a talk on “Wildlife in the Urban Wilderness,” and NPS Ranger Frank Helling assumes the role and costume of Muir to recite pithy sayings and tales.

“John Muir’s writings—many of them originating from his ‘scribble den’ in his Martinez home—changed the nation’s views on our relationship with planet Earth.

Muir believed the health of each of us depended on the health of the planet, that it was a ‘fountain of life,’” said John Muir NHS Superintendent Martha Lee.

For more information, visit www.johnmuirassociation.org or call 925-229-3857.