

NEWS



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March 20, 2008

NATURE PARK INTERPRETIVE CENTER TO CELEBRATE 10TH ANNIVERSARY WITH FREE ACTIVITIES

The Tualatin Hills Nature Park's annual Earth Day celebration and Spring Native Plant Sale will take on added significance this year: The day will also mark the 10th anniversary of the opening of the park's popular Interpretive Center.

The event will happen April 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Nature Park, which is owned and operated by the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District. Admission to all activities will be free. The address is 15655 SW Millikan Way, Beaverton.

THPRD opened the interpretive center in 1998 following taxpayer approval of a bond measure in 1994. The center features educational displays, hands-on activities and other opportunities to observe nature and wildlife artifacts up close. An array of classes and programs are offered each season for individuals, families, school groups and clubs.

Public use of the 222-acre Nature Park has soared in the years since the center opened. Annual visitors now number about 250,000 per year, compared to about 40,000 in 1998.

To highlight the 10-year anniversary, Nature Park staff will unveil a new exhibit detailing the history of the park.

This year's Earth Day Celebration at the Nature Park is titled "Wildflowers: Backyard and Beyond." Exhibits will educate visitors about great places to view wildflowers, best wildflowers for gardens, and wildflower conservation methods. Among the activities for children will be flower-inspired crafts and games such as a wildflower memory challenge. Families will also be encouraged to take a self-guided wildflower hike in the Nature Park.

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At the Spring Native Plant Sale, visitors will be able to select trees, shrubs and flowering plants in a variety of price ranges. All proceeds from the sale will help fund future improvements in the Nature Park. A free bag of potting soil will be provided with every purchase of \$25 or more.

The event will feature 119 species of native plants. For the full list, go online to www.thprd.org/parks/thnp_plantsales.cfm. Additional information about the event is available by calling the Nature Park at 503/629-6350.

Formed in 1955, THPRD is the largest special park district in Oregon, spanning about 50 square miles and serving more than 200,000 residents in the greater Beaverton area. The district provides year-round recreational opportunities for people of all ages. Offerings include a wide variety of classes and more than 200 park sites, 35 miles of trails, eight swim centers, three recreation centers, and 1,100 acres of nature preserve. For more information, visit www.thprd.org.

The Tualatin Hills Nature Park is a wildlife reserve in the heart of Beaverton with trails and an interpretive center. Employees present education and recreation programs for children, adults and families throughout the year to inspire a sense of wonder and stewardship of the natural world.

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