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Earth Day events to educate, beautify JBLM community

By Julie Smith
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Joint Base Lewis-McChord will set aside an entire week later this month to support Earth Day, a worldwide celebration demonstrating support for environmental protection.

Several events will be part of the installation tradition that helps educate and beautify the JBLM community, offering opportunities to individuals who want to volunteer their time.

For a number of years, JBLM's Directorate of Public Works and Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation have partnered to share the message and purpose of Earth Day with the community.

"It's a chance to let people know what we're doing here on JBLM regarding our sustainability program," Sheila Martin, DPW environmental division recycling outreach coordinator, said.

According to Martin, JBLM's Earth Day events are organized thanks in part to proceeds from the recycling efforts of JBLM service members and their families.

"It's a good way to get people involved in sustaining the community, knowing that what you recycle comes back to you in a different way," she said. "The more we can sustain our community, the better we can carry on with our (Earth Day) mission."

The events begin April 15 with free movie screenings at Carey Theater on Lewis Main and McChord Theater on McChord Field of the Disney film "Wall-E," a story about a recycling robot.

Show times are 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. at Carey Theater and 1 p.m. at McChord Theater.

A work party will take place at the community garden on Lewis North April 16 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Volunteers will build new garden boxes and cleaning out old ones in preparation for the growing season. Community members can rent the garden plots through the Northwest Adventure Center.

There will be tree planting parties April 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Lewis Main — and for the first time in honor of Earth Day — on McChord Field.

For more information or to volunteer for the community garden work party or the tree planting parties, call 967-5776. Lunch is provided during both activities.

The Solo Point Beach cleanup happens April 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. near Lewis North. A shuttle from the McChord Club and Community Center and lunch will be provided for all volunteers.

This unfamiliar beach off the DuPont-Steilacoom Road seems to collect large amounts of garbage from winter storms and fishing gear, Colin Brooks, McChord Club and Community Center activities specialist, said.

"It's a nice opportunity to get out on the beach," he said. "It's a place many people have never seen." For more information or to volunteer for the Solo Point Beach cleanup, call 982-0718.

The week's events culminate in a Reuse Fair April 19 from 2 to 7 p.m. at the FMWR Fest Tent on Lewis Main. There will be music, information and activity booths, food and giveaways.

The 602nd Battlefield Surveillance Brigade will participate in a thrift shop fashion show, modeling second-hand finds from stores like the McChord Thrift Shop, said MWR special events director Kate Laverents.

For more information about the Reuse Fair, call 477-4299.

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