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earth day 2001

How long can we support the planet with our current lifestyles? PAGE 14

News This Week

► Housing penalties

Menlo Park's City Council opposes a state bill that would penalize cities for failing to meet goals to build more housing.

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► Delivering the goods

Concerned that it may lose its delivery and loading dock, Draeger's market is asking the city to let it create curbside loading zones. /

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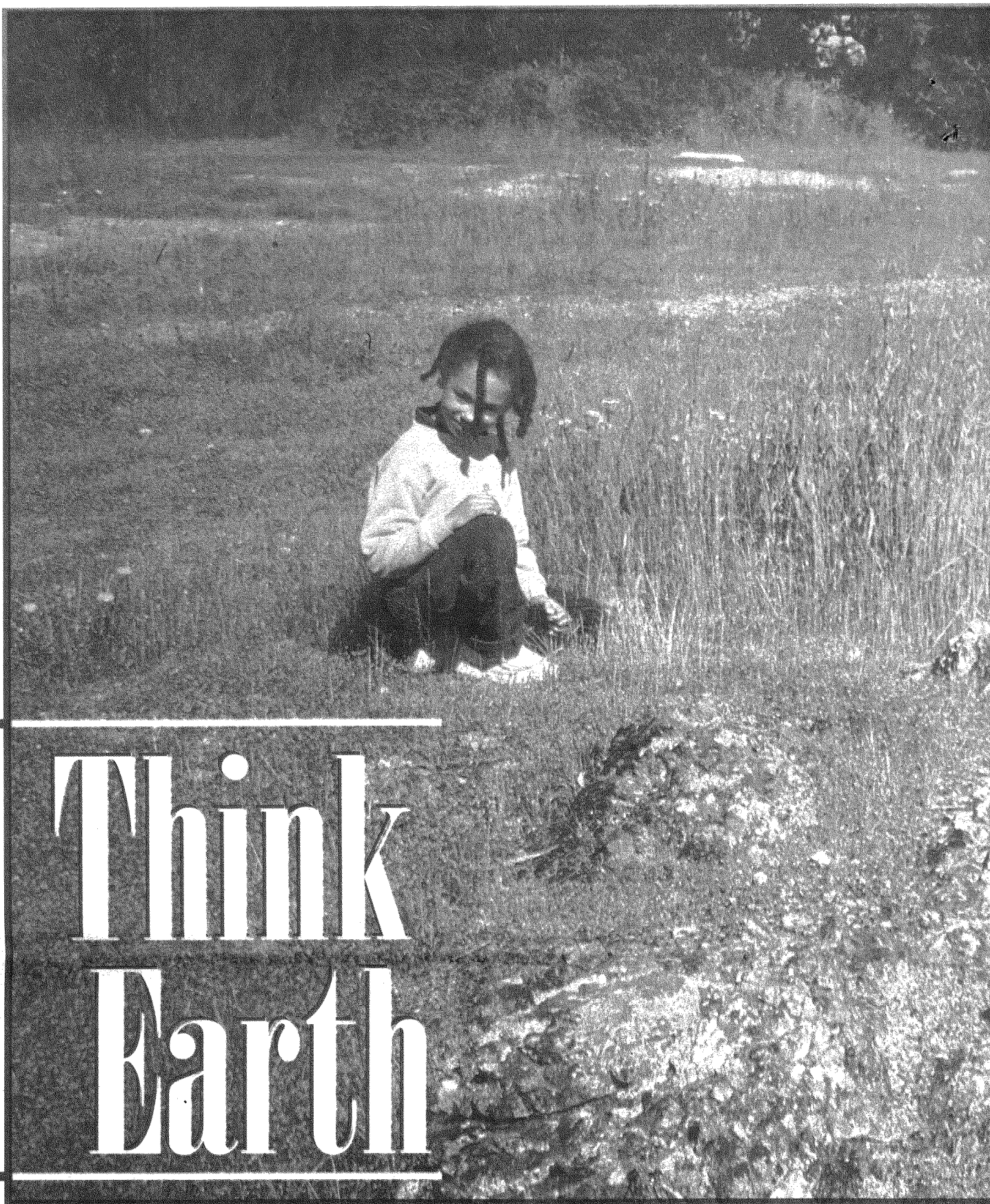
SECTION 2



► Health & Fitness

Minding the body: Menlo Park's Johanna Putnoi writes the book on the practice of "living in your body."

What better way to celebrate Earth Day than to delight in California's native wildflowers? Here, Sophia Softky of Menlo Park revels in Woodside's wildflower preserve, where poppies and tidy tips and owl's clover soak up the spring sun.



Earth Day events focus on sustainability: How can we sustain our communities so our grandkids can enjoy the quality of life we do? And their grandkids?

Think Earth

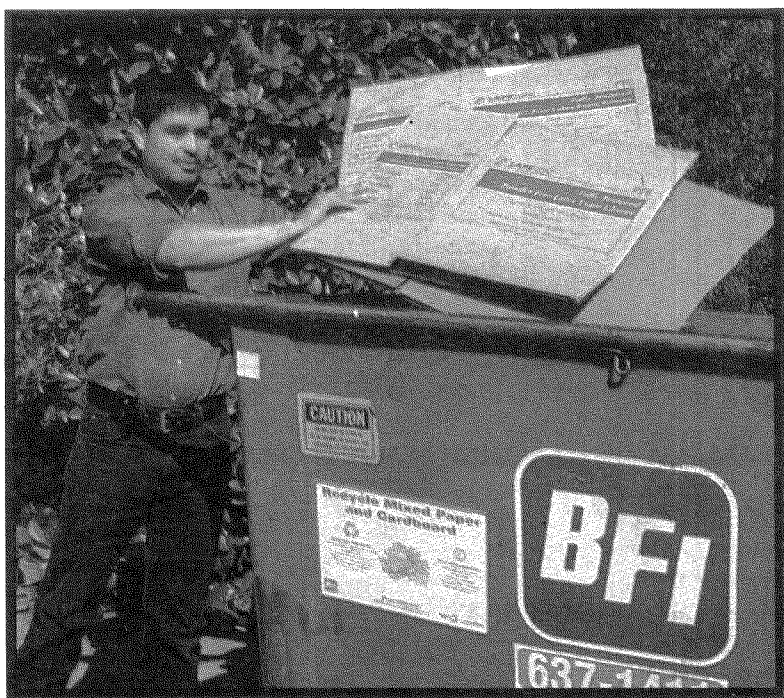


Photo by Carol Ivie

Felipe Viera throws cardboard into the recycle bin at Menlo Medical Clinic. By participating in the city's free recycling program for businesses, the clinic substantially reduces its trash — and its garbage bills. It only fills three bins, instead of five, each garbage day, says Linda Lind, director of clinical services.

At the least, Earth Day is a time to celebrate the glorious Peninsula spring, and possibly contribute to a project that will make our environment a wee bit better. More profoundly, Earth Day provides an occasion to take stock of where we've come and where we're going, planet-wise.

Earth Day 2001 offers ample opportunity for all of the above.

On Sunday, April 22, and the weeks leading up to it, organizations all over the Peninsula are sponsoring activities celebrating and helping the earth. There are school poster contests, cleanup days, tree plantings, festivals, educational events, a sunrise ceremony, and a "Sustainable Supper," where guests can eat guiltily but still be organic.

Earth Day events are also focusing on a common theme: "Creating Sustainable Communities." In one way or another, they all speak to what we have to do — singly and collectively — to make it possible for our grandchildren and their grandchildren to have the same or better opportunities for a good life that we do.

Over the last decade, sustainability has become a kind of mantra that is gaining

wide acceptance, not just among conservationists and nature lovers, but among many involved in business and government as well. Increasingly they recognize that a lot of ways will have to change if communities and cities and countries are to thrive over the next decade, let alone the next century or millennium.

New and old organizations have sprung up like mushrooms after a rain to measure how sustainable we are, and to recommend ways of using resources more efficiently.

Sustainable San Mateo County, for example, is sponsoring a Town Hall meeting Thursday, April 19, to present its fifth annual report on "Indicators for a Sustainable San Mateo County."

This report card on the county's quality of life follows more than 50 indicators, ranging from child care, poverty, and housing affordability, to the Christmas Bird Count, water and energy consumption, employment, solid-waste generation, volunteerism, and support for the arts.

"We are a long, long way from true sustainability," says San Mateo County

Story by Marion Softky



Photo by Marion Softky

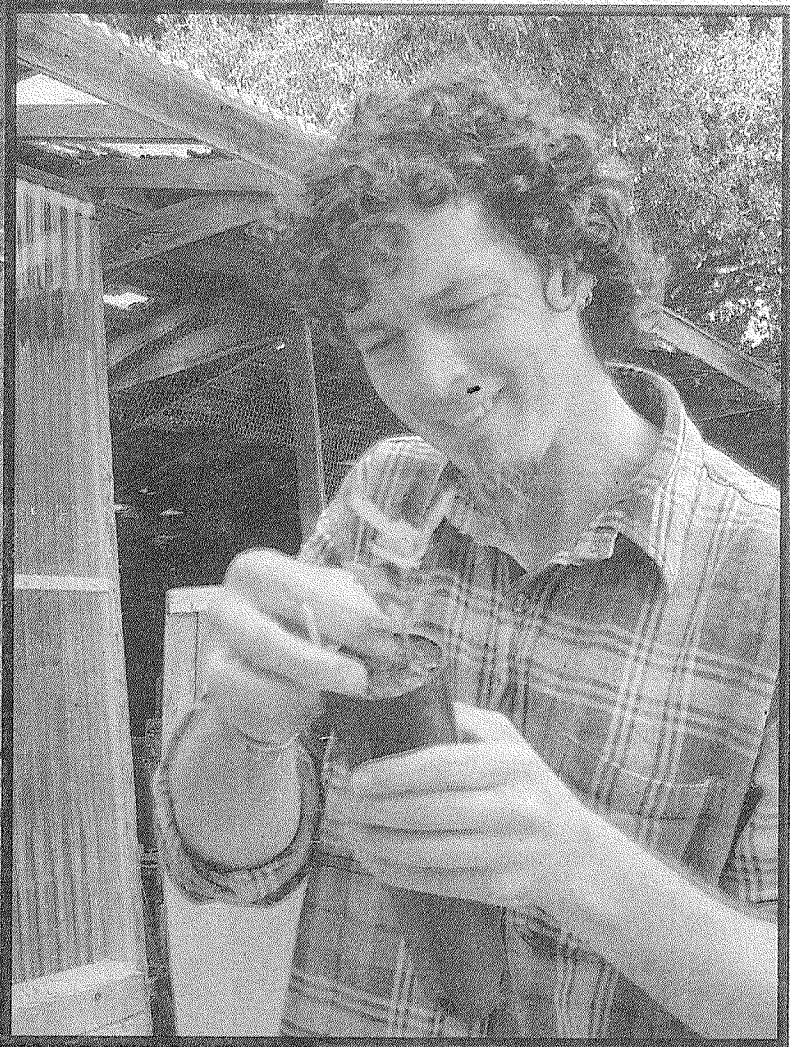


Photo by Carol Ivie

Mike Hogan of Menlo Park shows off a baby blue-oak tree he is growing from a seed gathered in the San Francisquito Creek watershed. Mr. Hogan and Streamkeeper Jim Johnson operate a native plant nursery in a local back yard. They grow native plants from seeds collected in the watershed for replanting to restore the creek and watershed.

Supervisor Rich Gordon. “That’s why Sustainable San Mateo County is so important. They continue to point the direction we need to go.”

Walt Hays, a longtime Palo Alto leader in environmental causes, agrees. “Right now we’re not sustainable. We’re heading for a crash,” he says. “And the U.S. is the worst offender. We have to look every place we can to turn the juggernaut of consumption around.”

Celebrating Earth

One of the best ways to celebrate Earth Day could be to visit some of the magnificent open space areas that have been preserved on the Peninsula. Thanks to San Francisco Bay, the Pacific Ocean, and the open space lands between them, which have been saved by the efforts of many agencies, local residents have an unparalleled opportunity to enjoy nature and scenery.

Especially beautiful at this season are the native wildflowers that carpet the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The poppies, goldfield, tidy tips, sun cups, larkspur, lupine, and brodiaea that still grow on the special grasslands of Edgewood Park and Stanford’s

Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve can delight the eye and the soul.

The fortunate visitor may hear the song of a meadowlark, or glimpse the flash of a western bluebird, or the flutter of an endangered Bay checkerspot butterfly.

For those who want to give back to the earth, there are work projects galore, from building trails to cleaning creeks and beaches, and removing exotic plants.

On Earth Day weekend, volunteers will be cleaning up San Francisquito Creek and several county parks and coastal beaches. Others will be removing non-native plants from Edgewood County Park, Half Moon Bay State Beach and Ano Nuevo State Reserve, winter home of the elephant seals.

At Palo Alto’s Arastradero Preserve, still more volunteers will be building trails on land saved from housing a generation ago.

‘Think globally, live sustainably’

Life on earth has come a long way since Senator Gaylord Nelson and local Congressman Paul McCloskey launched the first

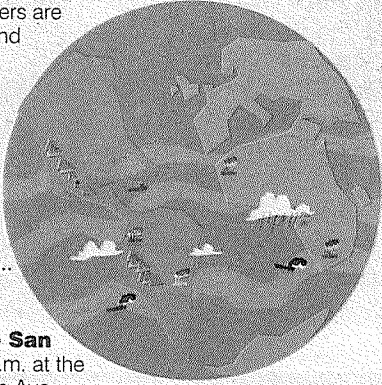
See **THINK EARTH**, next page ►

Activities for Earth Day

Here is a partial list of activities focused on Earth Day, which is Sunday, April 22.

Thursday, April 12

► **“Creating Sustainable Communities,”** a panel discussion of local solutions to global problems moderated by former Assemblyman Ted Lempert, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Palo Alto City Council Chambers, 250 Hamilton Ave. Speakers are Don Aitken, former Skyline resident and energy expert with the Union of Concerned Scientists; Nancy Skinner with the Climate Protection Campaign; Ken Perkins with the Shaklee Corp.; and Cecile Andrews, author of “The Circle of Simplicity: Return to the Good Life.” For information call 962-9876, ext. 302.



Thursday, April 19

► **Town Hall for a Sustainable San Mateo County,** from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the College of Notre Dame, 1500 Ralston Ave..

See **ACTIVITIES FOR EARTH DAY**, next page ►