

## **News Release**

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### **Earth Day Founder John McConnell to be honored at Vernal Equinox Celebrations in Laguna Beach March 20~21, 2007**

LAGUNA BEACH, CA — A series of unique environmental and educational events are scheduled for **John McConnell**, the 91-year-old founder of **Earth Day**, when he and his wife **Anna** visit Laguna Beach in March to be honored by the City Council on the Vernal Equinox, March 20. The day following this “Earth Day” celebration, McConnell will participate in a panel discussion with a number of other noted environmentalists.

On March 20 at 6:00 p.m., at the Laguna Beach City Hall, McConnell and Endangered Planet Gallery will present a proclamation to the Mayor and City Council that designates the City of Laguna Beach as an “**Earth Trustee City**,” a concept developed by McConnell during the decades since he and United Nations Secretary General **U Thant** first established International Earth Day in 1971.

On March 21, at 6:30 p.m. in the Forum Theater at Laguna Beach’s Festival of Arts, a panel discussion will focus on “Earth Trustee City” goals and future actions. In addition to John McConnell, the panel will include **Joanne Tawfilis**, executive director of the United Nations Association of the USA, San Diego chapter; **Greg O’Loughlin**, Environmental Committee of Laguna Beach; and **Charles A. White, P.E.**, Director of Regulatory Affairs for the Western Area of Waste Management. The panel will be introduced by Laguna Beach Mayor **Toni Iseman**. The panel moderator will be **Harry Huggins**, VP Director of Endangered Planet Foundation.

An environmental film and an appearance by flute prodigy **Evren Ozan** are also scheduled. The event is free and open to the public, but seating is limited and

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tickets are required.

Other activities of the week will include a public gathering on Main Beach at 4:45 p.m. on Tuesday, March 20, to mark the official time of celebration of the Vernal Equinox, which this year is at 5:07 PM PDT. Prior to this event, a reception for the McConnells will be hosted at Endangered Planet Gallery from 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Presenting sponsors of Laguna Beach's "Earth Day '07" activities and panel discussion are Endangered Planet Foundation and Waste Management of Orange County. Participating sponsors include The Inn at Laguna Beach, The Art Miles Mural Project, Marion Meyer Contemporary Art, First Thursdays Art Walk, Super Color Digital, The Showpros and imago digital.

Tickets for the "Earth Trustee City" panel discussion on March 21 are available free at Endangered Planet Gallery and Marion Meyer Contemporary Art. A maximum of four tickets will be available per individual request. Ticketed attendees need to be present by 6:20 p.m. at The Forum Theater - Festival of Arts grounds. Stand-by, non-ticketed attendees may enter after 6:25 p.m., based on seating availability. The event starts promptly at 6:30 p.m.

Endangered Planet Gallery and Foundation are located at 384 Forest Ave., #13, in the Laguna Lumber Yard Mall; telephone (949) 497-5690 for information or go to [EndangeredPlanet.org](http://EndangeredPlanet.org). Marion Meyer Contemporary Art is located at 354 N. Coast Highway; call (949) 497-5442 or visit [MarionMeyerGallery.com](http://MarionMeyerGallery.com).

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