

Artists & Youth Create Community Together

Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership (HOBY) Mural Project

By Jim Embry

One hundred fifty youth from across the state of Kentucky are coming to Lexington June 5-7 to participate in the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Seminar (HOBY) being held on the Transylvania University campus.

Part of their leadership development program while in Lexington will be the experience of creating a hands-on public art project.

The HOBY youth will be divided into 15 groups (11-13 kids per group) with 15 local artists to help—one local artist per group. Each group will be painting a vision of community on plywood that will be attached to the outside of buildings on N. Limestone upon completion.

The HOBY groups will be encouraged to come up with creative/design concepts during the weekend, and there will also be the opportunity for the artists to talk with them about design concepts during lunch at Gratz Park.

This is a collaborative project of Kentucky Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Seminar, Leadership Lexington, and Sustainable Communities Network.

Local artists involved include George Moorman, Diane Kahlo, Joann Strunk, Robert Gundy Jr, Roxane Poskin, Sundiata Rashid, Katherine Shaw, and Chris Huestis.

It's an interesting concept: Local artists working with high school leaders on a public art project, where both groups will have something to learn from one another and there's an opportunity for everyone involved to experience art, and realize its impact on the community.



Artists and youth will be creating their mural 1 pm to 5 pm onsite at 756 N. Limestone. This mural project will be a festive experience and will include other graffiti artists, break dancers, music, spoken word and more. ■

Reach Jim Embry at the Sustainable Communities Network, Sustainlex.org and 859.312.7024.

Red. White. Blue. And Green.

Join the Parade

By Bruce Burris

Complain all you want to about Lexington's annual Fourth of July parade, I do and I do it because this parade really does stink every single year! Truly! I am not kidding! I wish anyone only the best in his or her attempt to change it for the better, for this parade will resist you and ultimately crush your spirit. I know this because I have tried.

That said, I have to admit that I really look forward to it every year and it is fun as heck, especially I think as a participant.

This year we are encouraging those who support the notion of community gardening to join in and help us to spread the message of the importance of creating community gardens.

Be in Lexington's Fourth of July Parade and Celebrate Community Gardening!

Calling all Community Gardeners (and friends of community

gardening and parades). We want you to participate with us in Lexington's Fourth of July Parade.

Parade Info

The Theme: Celebrate Community Gardening!

Parade ideas

Please create and bring anything that communicates the idea

of community gardening...plants in a decorated wagon...plants in flower pots in a decorated wheelbarrow...a colorful sign or poster with the name of your community garden on it (don't be shy)...painted bikes with a basket of flowers...whatever...anything goes except...please no gas-line powered vehicles.



Times

The parade begins at 2pm. We ask that those marching with us assemble at Third Street Stuff Coffee (open on July 4th) 257 N. Limestone between 12pm and 1pm. Free grilled soy burgers, nasty hot dogs and other refreshments. At about 1pm we will make our way to our appointed space in the parade line.

A word about walking in Lexington's parade:

Remember this is generally not a pedestrian/walker friendly parade dress comfortably; bring plenty of water and feel free to exit at anytime before conclusion of parade.

Contact

Please notify Bruce Burris, latitudearts@yahoo.com by July 1st of your intention to participate—you get two points for your artistic temperament and maybe a free cup of coffee!

Sponsors include

Latitude Artist Community, Southland Community Garden, Third Street Stuff, Burris-Pease Family, Sustainable Communities Network, Ace Weekly ■

ROLL OUT THE BARRELS

Bluegrass Pride Greens up the Bluegrass with Annual Rainbarrel Auction

By Michael Porter

Getting sued by the EPA isn't a bright spot in any city's green status, but Lexington is slowly making environmental eco-friendly inroads.

Even in the face of some pretty grim local statistics (the Brookings Institution just last week released a study, finding that Lexington had the biggest carbon footprint of any of the 100 largest metro areas in the country), Franklin County substitute teacher Carla Phillips remains upbeat about the direction of local green awareness, saying that "there is a consciousness building."

To participate in that building process, she is contributing her artistic rendering of a rainbarrel will be included in Bluegrass PRIDE's annual Rainbarrel Reception and Auction this Saturday.

Going green is an incremental process for most of us—switching out lightbulbs; reduce-reuse-recycle; increasing walking and cycling and decreasing the reliance on gas at \$4 bucks a gallon; or adding a rainbarrel to the family yard.

That last one just became an easier—and considerably more aesthetic option—thanks to Bluegrass PRIDE'S Saturday auction AND reception.

Rainbarrels have long been an eco-friendly addition to the landscape (storing rainwater and preventing runoff), but that addition has often been a little unsightly (institutional orange and hospital blue come to mind).

This is where green-minded homeowners need an artist's touch.

Local artists are going green with their renderings and interpretations of rainbarrels, and those will be showcased at the Lexington Green reception this Saturday.

Let it Grow

Although she's relatively new to the area, Phillips hasn't let any grass grow under her feet (so to speak) when it comes to greening the bluegrass. She participated in the Art Bus Shelter design competition last year [profiled in a Kim Thomas Ace coverstory last summer], and says "it was a green design that won-featuring recycled Ale-8-One bottles...I love that!"

Describing her barrel, she says, "My message is 'borrowed' from Eric Clapton's lyrics on the chorus of 'Let it Grow.' I visually depicted the cycle of a bulb being planted by hand, rooting, sprouting, growing, and blossoming in sun, rain, and snow as the lyric says...I believe Love is like a seed/bulb that needs to be planted, watered, and tended—'let it grow' in any season of life. Plant your love and let it grow."

She thinks that Bluegrass PRIDE is the perfect organization to showcase her rain barrel: "I appreciate what Bluegrass Pride does to increase awareness of environmen-

tal issues in positive and imaginative ways."

A grad of the Art Institute of Chicago, Phillips just received a Lincoln Bi-Centennial Grant Award with the Bluegrass Railroad Museum in Versailles where she volunteers as a design and display artist.

In addition to the Rainbarrel reception, this weekend she has a booth at the Capital Expo Festival in Frankfort. She'll be doing a Mural Demonstration of a Lincoln Family Portrait and will have paintings for sale in the Capital Area Arts Guild Tent. In July, she'll be doing another Lincoln Mural Project with Jennifer Zingg Studio and Gallery in Frankfort that will involve local children. And in the fall, she'll begin a Lincoln Mural depicting his train connections at The Bluegrass Railroad Museum in Versailles.

Artist LaNora Long has a rainbarrel in this year's auction and says, "my commitment to Bluegrass Pride is to provide a way to help our environment through the arts." She has a degree in both music and art and is an elementary art teacher in the Fayette County school system.

Describing her rainbarrel, she says, "I wanted to convey... a sense of peace in a sometimes crazy hectic world.

On part one of the barrel you find a young lady taking advantage of her serene surroundings, enjoying a good book. On part 2 you find a still life."

She adds, "I find nothing more beautiful than a vase full of freshly cut flowers and having a garden to cut them from...flowers appeal to all of our senses, even though it is only temporary."

As for Lexington's sustainability, she says, "I feel it could be greener! I think we have lost sense of the beautiful land that we have in Kentucky," adding, "One thing that really bugs me is when the countryside is torn to pieces only to construct massive pieces of cold steel for buildings and ESPECIALLY parking lots. There just seems to be a lack of respect for land. One of my goals is to Recycle more, and try to use ego friendly products."

Another featured rain barrel artist, graphic designer Ashley Davis, agrees, adding, "the purpose of Bluegrass PRIDE is to make central Kentucky the best living environment that is possible for all citizens. I think that being involved in projects such as the rain barrel are great additions to making our environment send positive messages about our heritage."

Locally, Davis thinks that Lexington is starting to make big strides in going green, but the effort is not nearly enough. "The recycling program established by the city is very progressive but as we build new buildings we need to use new and innovative ways to use alternate sources for heat and electricity, put gardens on rooftops to generate

more oxygen in the air" among other things, she said.

On a personal level, featured rain barrel artist Niah Soult (photographed on this week's cover) is trying to come to "clarity in heart and mind regarding climate transformation and access to clean water" and wants to convey with her rain barrel that "we need to think about more than ourselves."

Meadowthorpe Elementary School art teacher and featured rain barrel artist Miles Johnson last year even went so far as to paint a handful of the city's mini recycle bins with the goal of bringing art and environmental awareness together on a local level.

It's this desire to bring green to the Bluegrass that some of the featured rain barrel artists are turning to our most distinctive appeal, horses. One of the recurring themes in the featured rain barrels is Kentucky's horse culture, and the need to preserve it. Johnson's barrel was inspired by horses and Davis thinks that "as a horse driven community we need to be proactive or we'll lose our states biggest appeal: our horses and horse farms."

Rainbarrels are one step among many. As Phillips puts it, "commitment to local sustainability manifests itself in a variety of ways." She adds, "I simply try to do my part to be a good, albeit not perfect example. I think I can affect my sphere of influence that way. Sermons we see speak louder than sermons we hear." ■

Bluegrass PRIDE's Rain Barrel Reception will be held on Saturday, June 7th in the lower atrium of Lexington Green on Nicholasville Road. You can see all of the 2008 artistic rain barrels for free from 5pm -7:30pm. View the barrels and vote for your favorite at www.bluegrassPRIDE.com



Take PRIDE

Bluegrass PRIDE (Personal Responsibility In a Desirable Environment), founded in 2002, provides environmental resources and information to schools, community groups, local governments and citizens residing in 18 central Kentucky counties. Bluegrass PRIDE's most recent campaigns have focused on, among other things, water quality and sewage issues in the area and environmental education in K-12 schools.

Rainbarrels, according to Bluegrass PRIDE, "connect to your downspout, decreasing the amount of rain that runs off your property. Reduced runoff helps prevent water pollution and flooding. Every time it rains, unabsorbed water rushes to storm drains and directly to local waterways. This water carries with it pollutants such as pet waste, automotive fluids and fertilizer.")

Bluegrass PRIDE is a sponsor of the WasteBuster program for apartments, schools and businesses, which help start or expand their recycling programs and help educate students on the importance of recycling and waste management. They also have a Lawn Care Audit on their website, www.bluegrassPRIDE.com, so you can take stock of your water management. You can also view tips on how to reduce waste in your own home.

PRIDE also sponsors a yearly Kentucky and Licking River Sweep. The next one in Lexington will be held on June 21 from 8:30am. to 2pm. More information is available by calling LexCall at 311.

Fayette County, Clays Ferry Boat Dock
June 21st, 8:30am - 2pm
Breakfast and Lunch provided
Contact LexCall, 311 (425.2255)