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Action-packed Earth Festival

by Karim Mukhida

Entertainment and education await environmental enthusiasts and the general public alike at the Atlantic Earth Festival being held at the Halifax Commons on September 10th. The sixth annual event, an all-day venue, will feature environmental education booths and workshops, international cuisine, local crafts, as well as music by Maritime bands.

The Atlantic Earth Festival is hosted by the Atlantic Earth Foundation as "A gathering in order to share and learn". A non-profit organization founded in 1989, the Atlantic Earth Foundation is dedicated to preserving the environment through education and community effort.

The Earth Festival originated as a networking opportunity for communication between the business community, environmental organizations, government departments, researchers, educators and the general public. The festival is essentially a forum for sharing information and solutions to meet the environmental challenges of the future.

The aim of the festival is to raise money for the creation of the "Atlantic Centre for Environmental Education". This centre will be an educational facility providing hands-on learning to foster a practical appreciation for the environment. As well, the festival hopes to encourage

learning about the environment in an informal atmosphere, mixed with entertaining distractions such as music and food.

The Earth Festival will showcase a myriad of environmental booths and displays set up by local businesses and environmental organizations.

The workshop portion of the festival will provide a forum where members of the public can interact in an educational setting to learn about and develop a commitment to work towards an environmentally

"...to share and learn."

sustainable future. This year's keynote speaker will be Dr. Gerald Ross, a specialist in the area of environmental sensitivities.

Ross' discussion on environmental illnesses will be accompanied by the Ecology Action Centre's session on pesticides, and an update on the proposed sewage treatment plant for the Metro area by Mr. Howard Epstein, a representative for the Ecology Action Centre at the Halifax Harbour public assessment hearings.

In addition, the topic of waste reduction will be tackled by the Clean Nova Scotia Foundation, while the

Sustainable Communities Network will be giving demonstrations of their new database.

With almost ten bands playing at this year's festival, practically all types of musical taste buds will be satisfied. Local and maritime bands dominate the diverse music program with rock groups such as Avacost, Stonechild, Big Ethel, and Albert Fayth, who opened for Def Leppard and Bon Jovi. Folk artists Adrian's Lunch and David Carmichael & Friends will also be present, as will be Mark MacMillan, Lead Better and King, Resin and, for those who prefer Caribbean rhythms, New Brunswick's Tropical Waves.

To attract the public, the Earth Festival will have a backdrop of family-oriented entertainment. Children's workshops, environmental games, and puppet shows highlight this year's Children's Program.

The Green Machine, Metro Transit's large, green bus employed to promote the bus as an environmentally-friendly means of transportation, will also be parked at the site.

Close to 7,000 people attended last year's event, and Earthfesters are looking forward to an even more concentrated crowd on Saturday since this year's festival will be a one-day event. Admission is free, and with plenty of music, food, and environmental education, the Atlantic Earth Festival aims to both entertain and educate.

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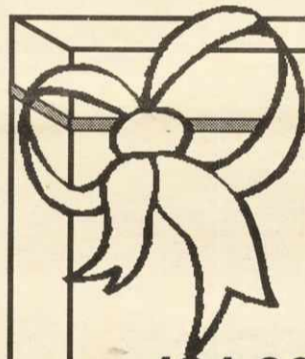
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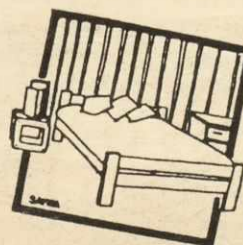
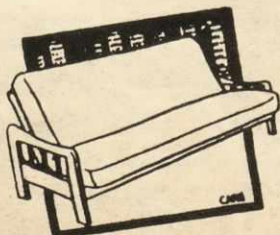
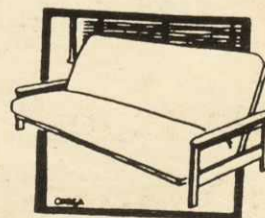
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