

~EARTHBOUND~PRODUCTION~

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*The intent of the Procession is to elevate the dignity of the human spirit
by enhancing the cultural exchange that we have with each other and with the natural world
and to do that through imagination, creation, and sharing.*

Thank you. Truly, thank you, to you, the Thurston County Commissioners, for this recognition, for this honor, and for the work that you do on behalf of our community, on behalf of our natural heritage, and on behalf of the cultural heritage that makes our region a place that we are proud to name as our home.

The Procession of the Species was founded on the 25th anniversary of Earth Day to celebrate and affirm the essential role of the Endangered Species Act in protecting wild life and the critical habitats upon which they depend.

As an environmental pageant, the Procession engages our hearts and minds with the delight and beauty of the natural world. By giving the natural world a greater presence in the streets, the Procession reminds us that we as a community have a shared stake in protecting the natural world for everyone.

Environmental action is at the heart of the Procession. From our emphasis on recycled materials in creating Procession art to our registration fee of two cans of food for the Thurston County Food Bank, the Procession integrates ecological and social expressions of sustainability. The Procession cares about community. Since its inception in 1995, the Procession has never swayed from the conviction that there is no separation between a healthy environment and a healthy community in which people have nourishing food on their tables.

Creating cultural connections between communities and the natural world

Produced in tandem with the City of Olympia's Arts Walk - an event that showcases the creative talents of residents throughout Thurston County – the Procession, with its 30,000 viewers and participants, anchors one of the most successful economic weekends of the year for downtown businesses.

These are among the reasons that the Procession chooses to address environmental concerns from a cultural perspective.

Current conversations about the environment are often contentious debates solely about regulations that leave us in brittle relationships in which we are either for or against each other. Understanding that artistic expression is a viable and essential element of a full life, the Procession lifts us out of this narrow discourse by engaging the languages of art, music, and dance to refresh our understandings about why the natural world matters to us as a community.

Whether from the sidewalks or the streets, we are all participants in the Procession's cultural expressions of the undeniable truth that life on Earth matters.

Please come visit the Procession Community Art Studio, open every day from 2:00 until 10:00. And please join us for the Procession of the Species 2012: the Luminary Procession is on Friday, April 27, 9:00, and the Procession of the Species is on Saturday, April 28, at 4:30.

And please join us on Sunday, for a presentation by renowned biologist, writer, and butterfly expert, Robert Michael Pyle. In honor of Samba Olywa's display of monarch migration in this year's Procession, Bob Pyle will speak about monarchs, their continent-spanning migration, the evolution among monarchs, milkweeds, and their predators, and the future of monarchs in a changing world. His presentation is on Sunday, April 22 at 7:00 pm at the Eagles Ballroom.

Eli Sterling
Director
Earthbound Productions
Procession of the Species Celebration

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