



### Observances Dovetail, Fun Doubles Take Your Child to Earth Day

By Belle Waring

On Apr. 27, under a vivid spring sky, NIH celebrated Earth Day, dovetailing it with Take Your Child to Work Day, an annual event designed to introduce employees' children to science and biomedical research. Strolling through tented booths on the lawn of Bldg. 1, employees along with their kids explored displays on creek protection and restoration, energy conservation, alternative fuel vehicles, radiation safety, waste management, the NIH Bicycle Commuter Club, the Mercury-Free NIH campaign and other environmental protectives. The synergy of the two spring festivals expanded the biomedical focus to include environmental education for kids—and their grownups.

It was a blast.

Dressed in blue scrubs, stethoscope looped around his neck, Kevin Cole accompanied 8-year-old Briahna to the events. A respiratory therapist in critical care, Cole explained why he brought his daughter along: "Other than her begging me to take her? She counted down the days!" he said. She



#### Top left:

Stream restoration project tours were standing room only.

#### Top right:

Connor (l) and Evan Granrud learn how some bugs are used as water-quality indicators.

#### Bottom:

Briahna Cole (l), Chanel Allen (c) and Shakia Day make new friends, including toads, tadpoles, mayflies and other pals from the pond.

PHOTOS: BILL BRANSON

looks up to dad in his work, of course; but his patients in the CC don't include the toads and other critters Briahna examined in the Urban Forest Conservation Plan display, which segued into a tour of the NIH watershed and stream. It's all part of a proactive environmental management system designed to make the agency more Earth-friendly, said Kenny Floyd, director, Division of Environmental Protection, ORF.

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### Earth Day Contest Results: What 'IT' Is

On Apr. 7, the *NIH Record* published a strange-looking picture and asked readers to identify what "IT" was and explain how IT related to NIH's mission and Earth Day.

Stacey L. Brown, a research assistant in the unit on sensory coding and neural ensembles, NICHD, gave the first correct and complete answer: "This is a close-up picture of a Hoodia flower that attracts flesh flies, which the plant uses as pollinators. This plant is a succulent found in Namibia and South Africa and is well known for being a natural appetite suppressant. The San tribesmen have used this plant to stop hunger and thirst. This plant is very rare and highly protected. It is very important to save as this plant may be a key to helping fight the world's rising obesity problem. This alone makes a huge statement about the importance of protecting the environment and saving species of plants (and animals) that may hold other secrets to help fight disease."

The only contest entrant to give the correct species name—*Hoodia jutatae*—was Merel Schollnberger, supervisory metabolic dietitian at the Clinical Center.

Additional winners who gave complete and correct answers are: Keith Ball, ORS; Jennifer Dickey, NCI; Christine Enders, ORS; Lissette Capri, Columbia University; Lisa Harper, ORS; Star Kline, OD; Alexander Peterson, NCI; Weston Ricks, OD; Kelvin Wilson, ORF; Shantadurga Rajaram, NINDS; Charlie Wainscott, NLM; and Xiuli Xi, NHLBI.—Ed Rau





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NIAID's Tom McCarty brought daughter Hannah, age 9, to tour the booths, which included Geiger counters, kids' artwork made from discarded objects, and tips on recycling. "We're going to a presentation, and then I'm taking her up to my lab," he said, noting that while the lab may not always be the safest place for kids, the lawn offered a great place for them to hang out and learn.

Meanwhile, Ben Franklin, celebrating his 300th birthday, fielded kids' questions on electricity, while the Mad Hatter, desperately seeking mercury as part of NIH's Hg elimination campaign, paused to offer a cool sticker to 9-year-old Raiquon Coates. His mom, Regina Coates, an administrative assistant in the CC, said:

"Raiquon was interested in seeing what I do, what other people do and what methods he could use to deal with pollution, to take care of Earth. And I wanted to give him some insight for a career that he might choose."

High noon saw the presentation of awards to those who had ID'd the mysterious plant "IT" and why IT makes an important statement about protecting our environment (see sidebar). "I want to know how anyone knew [the contest answer]," joked NIH deputy director Dr. Raynard Kington. He then turned to accept an honor on behalf of the entire NIH community as Emily Pickren of Montgomery County's Office of Recycling presented an award for outstanding achievement in recycling.

**Top left:**  
Using Geiger counters, kids listen to the pigments in vintage-'50s dinnerware.

**Top middle:**  
A youngster learns how mom can get to work in ways that are Earth-friendly.

**Top right:**  
The Mad Hatter (a.k.a. Capt. Ed Rau) presents a sticker for NIH's mercury elimination campaign to Raiquon Coates and mom Regina.

**Above:**  
Katie Williams and dad Richard show off sculpture she created from recycled materials.



Enjoying Earth Day at NIH are (from l) Kenny Floyd with "IT" contest winners Stacey L. Brown, Kelvin Wilson and Charlie Wainscott; "Mad Hatter" Rau and "IT" (a.k.a. the hoodia) with NIH deputy director Dr. Raynard Kington; NIH Deputy Director for Management Colleen Barros; Juanita Mildenberg, acting director of the Office of Research Facilities; and Ben Franklin (a.k.a. Barry Stevens).