

## PENNSYLVANIA

# Rain-forest group to ensure awareness with parade in city

By Karl Blankenship  
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A year ago, the Rainforest Action Committee of Harrisburg staged a rally at the Capitol and was scantily noticed.

Wednesday, their rally will be hard to miss.

It starts with a parade through downtown, escorted by fire engines, equestrian clubs, and a man who is on a cross-country horseback ride.

The parade will conclude at the Capitol for a noontime rally.

"I'm looking most for people to become aware of this issue, and people realizing they have to do something," said Char Magaro, who heads the Harrisburg committee.

At the center of the event is Lucian Spataro, an Arizona native who is riding across the nation on an Arabian horse, "Sweet William," to promote awareness of rainforest destruction.

Spataro, who may set a world's record for the longest ride by one man and one horse, is aiming at raising \$1 million to fight rainforest destruction.

If he gets into the record book, it won't be the first time. He and several other certified scuba divers pedaled a tricycle on the bottom of a swimming pool for 60 hours and 64.96 miles, which earned them a place in the Guinness Book of World Records and raised \$30,000 for a Tucson charity for battered children.

The 3,000-mile ride began in Los Angeles May 19 and will end later this fall in New York City.

In this effort, Spataro has teamed up the the San Francisco-based environmental group, the Rainforest Action Committee, to draw attention to the problem to the rapid destruction of the world's rainforests.

Rainforests contain 70 percent of the world's plants, and two-thirds of the world's birds migrate to rainforests.

Also, destruction of the rainforests can contribute to a global warming known as the greenhouse effect because the trees — when alive — remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. But when cut down and burned, they release carbon dioxide.

At the Capitol, the committee will have an information booth to distribute information.

"I think once people realize the extent of the problem, it will be much easier to get them motivated," Magaro said.

Speakers at the rally will include Chris Lewis, Gov. Robert P. Casey's designate as secretary of state; Rep. John H. Broujos, D-Carlisle; Brazilian native Alberto Aguas who will speak about effects of rainforest destruction on Indians in the Amazon region; and Randy Hayes, executive director of the Rainforest Action Committee.

The parade leading to the Capitol will feature two bands, environmental groups, equestrian groups, students from St. Stephen's Episcopal School; and equipment from the Harrisburg Fire Bureau.

Also, Magaro is inviting anyone who is interested to join at the end of the parade in the march through downtown.

"If people feel that the environment is an important issue, please join in," she said.

The parade organizes at 10:30 a.m. on City Island. It leaves the island at 11:30 a.m. It goes up Market Street to Fourth Street to Walnut Street to Third Street to the Capitol steps.

Also, Mayor Stephen R. Reed has issued a proclamation declaring Wednesday "Harrisburg Rainforest Awareness Day."