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Earth Tire Foundation Showcases New Ways to Use Old Tires

By: mforbes

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Highland Park Mayor Michael Belsky receives a custom podium from Earth Tire Foundation Directors Rita and Mars Lans

Every used tire deserves another turn®—that’s the motto of The Earth Tire Foundation, a new nonprofit organization that is dedicated to finding unique ways to use old tires. From corporate advertising to art projects, tires can be spared from the landfill and enhance local landscapes. The Earth Tire Foundation

officially launched at a kick-off event on Earth Day, April 22, 2009, in Port Clinton Square in downtown Highland Park, Ill. The event was free and open to the public. Highland Park City Council Members Steven Mandel and Terri Olian attended.

Mayor Michael Belsky accepted a custom podium with the city seal, created from a used tire, earlier in the week.

The kick-off event had an impressive exhibit on display, showcasing the work of The Earth Tire Foundation including sculptures, planters, clocks, bicycle racks, benches and more, all made out of used tires.

“The average discarded passenger car tire will occupy almost three cubic feet

of landfill space, but not if we can help it,” said Dr. Mars Lans, founder and director of The Earth Tire Foundation. “We began this foundation to find an alternative to tire disposal. Our inspiration and motivation is creative intelligence, aesthetic function and, above all, fairness. Fairness will always be the impetus that defeats disrespect, apathy and corruption towards our environment.”

Dr. Lans, along with his wife Margarita Lans, are co-founders of The Earth Tire Foundation. Dr. Lans, a graduate of Howard University College of Dentistry, Washington, D.C., is no stranger to philanthropy. He spent most of his 20-plus years as a practicing dentist doing discounted and pro bono work for homebound and handicapped senior citizens. He was also an active participant in a Boston-based project called Fair Foods-Fair Exchange, New England’s largest provider of surplus perishable food. As an individual with a passion for helping others, Dr. Lans decided to begin The Earth Tire Foundation as a way to help the global community through environmental conscientiousness.

The Earth Tire Foundation implements several methods of fundraising, including the unique Advertire® program which builds corporate advertising displays; Earthy Attire, a clothing line; and the Foot the Bill Campaign, a project creating colorful high-quality sandals out of used tires. For every pair of sandals purchased, a pair will be donated.

The Earth Tire Foundation has already secured corporate sponsors, including two major benefactors—Highland Park-based EgoWheelZ® Corporation, a soon-to-launch company that manufactures adhesive appliqués to customize tires, and Jack Kulas of Northbrook-based Kulas Maids. Additional local businesses have also offered enthusiastic responses to sponsoring The Earth Tire Foundation and participating in the Advertire program.

“We invite businesses small and large to consider that a nominal donation for a particular piece can bring you the attention of your customers, as well as show your support and respect for the recycling of what is otherwise essentially indestructible waste,” said Dr. Lans.

“All of our designs are meticulously handcrafted labors of love, and were meant to instill a light hearted spirit into everyone that sees them,” added Margarita Lans, co-founder of The Earth Tire Foundation. “From large-scale projects implementing many tires to a small pair of sandals, every effort makes a big difference in our environment.”

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About The Earth Tire® Foundation

The Earth Tire Foundation, an Illinois nonprofit organization, promotes the use of used tires in artistic ways in order to reduce the amount of landfill waste tires create. The Foundation works to increase individual, community and corporate environmental responsibility through its tire projects as well as its clothing line Earthy Attire®, Foot the Bill sandal collection and Advertire® corporate advertising program. For more information, visit www.earthtire.org.