



## 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Day Celebration

On Saturday, April 17, 2010, the City's Waste Reduction & Recycling Division hosted the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Day Celebration. Events included a parade hosted by KU Environs down Massachusetts Street from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> Streets ending at a celebration in South Park. The Lawrence Transit System offered free rides all day, providing the experience and benefits of public transportation on all fixed routes.

### **Parade**

The parade began at 11 a.m., and traveled from Watson Park east to Massachusetts Street, then south on Massachusetts Street from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> Streets. The parade utilized only the southbound lane of Massachusetts Street. It was a beautiful day and many people came outside of shops and gathered on street corners to watch and wave as the parade proceeded to the celebration in South Park. Approximately 200 people from 30 different groups participated in the parade.

### **Celebration**

The Celebration began at 11:30 a.m. with the arrival of the parade participants and many parade watchers. South Park activities were for all ages and included live music, informational booths, food vendors and, for the sixth consecutive year, the celebration featured April Showers to Water Towers: a Water Festival for Douglas County with activities focused on water quality and pollution prevention organized by the City's Stormwater Division. Water Festival participants included the City of Lawrence Stormwater Division, the Kansas Geological Survey, the Douglas County Farm Bureau Association, and the Kansas Biological Survey.

There were 63 informational tables at the celebration, with topics ranging from native plant education to electronics recycling to wetland preservation, as well as a caricature artist, the Recycle Cycle and a life-sized Elmo the kids could get pictures taken with. The City's Parks and Recreation Department lead two butterfly garden demonstrations and South Park tree identification tours throughout the afternoon. All activities were free and open to the public. An estimated 1,000 people passed through the celebration throughout the afternoon, peaking between 12 and 2 p.m. KLZR provided music and a live remote from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The 2 live music performances, *Random Rain* and *Big Stack Daddy*, began at 12:45 p.m. and kept the crowd entertained until the celebration ended at 4:00 p.m. Food vendors were a great benefit to the Celebration and included PJ's Concessions and Just Chillin Concessions.

Two other environmental events joined in the Celebration at South Park: Animal Outreach of Kansas hosted their "Great American Meat-Out" vegan cook-out at the park and "Read Out, Speak Out, Sing Out, Dance Out, Act Out for Earth Care" took place from 8 am to 8 pm in South Park. Both were well attended and enjoyed. In addition to the planned festivities, a juggler, a magician and The Balloon Man joined the Celebration to entertain the crowd.



**Left: The Parade participants gather to await their start down Massachusetts, led by Eileen Horn with the Sustainability Advisory Board. Right: Jack Leipzig with the Living Green at the First Baptist Church group.**



**Left: Parks & Recreation staff distributes trees to citizens after a tour. Right: Celebration participants paint wooden bird houses at the South Mass Art Guild table.**



**Left: Members of KU Environs make recycled notebooks for kids, along with free face-painting. Right: Westar Energy staff and mascot entertaining a young Lawrence resident.**







**Left: Presenter entertains crowd at the Oread Friends Meeting's "Read Out, Speak Out, Sing Out, Dance Out, Act Out for Earth Care." Right: Participants of the Water Festival learn about watersheds and runoff at the Douglas County Farm Bureau Association's table.**



**Left: Children decorate their own cardboard bird house at the Jayhawk Audubon Society table. Right: Citizens learn about seed cultivation at the Kaw Valley Seeds Project exhibit.**



**Left: Random Rain performs. Right: 940 Dance Company performs an interpretive dance representing environmental ideas in South Park.**



## **Conclusion**

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Day Parade and Celebration was a great success! With the attendance estimated at 1000 people, this Earth Day Celebration drew a great crowd. Each year there is an increase in participation in the event as more people become environmentally-minded. With the down-turn in the economy, many people came out to find new ways to save money and reduce waste. With each successful environmental event, we create a more educated citizenry, and increase the environmental awareness within the Lawrence community.

