



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

On Saturday, April 16, 2011, the City's Waste Reduction and Recycling Division hosted the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Day Celebration. Events included a parade hosted by KU Environs, a Water Festival, and a Sustainability Trailblazers awards ceremony. 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. 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 450 people from 40 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, and food vendors. 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.

There were 70 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 City's Parks and Recreation Department led participants on South Park tree identification tours and city garden strolls throughout the afternoon. All activities were free and open to the public. An estimated 1,200 people passed through the celebration throughout the afternoon. KLZR provided music and a live remote from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. At 1 p.m. Mayor Aron Cromwell and Eileen Horn, the County/City Sustainability Coordinator, presented local businesses with Sustainability Trailblazer award honors. Live music performances by *Jazz Cigarettes*, and *Byron James and Friends*, began at 2 p.m. and kept the crowd entertained until the Celebration ended at 4 p.m. Food vendors were a great benefit to the Celebration and included Crazy 8 Concessions and Taco's 4 U.

Two other environmental events joined in the Celebration at South Park: Animal Outreach of Kansas hosted their "Great American Meat-Out" vegan cook-out and "Read Out, Speak Out, Sing Out, Dance Out, Act Out for Earthcare" took place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Both were well attended and enjoyed.



**Left:** Members of the University of Kansas student group, KU Environs, who organized the Earth Day Parade, lead participants down Massachusetts Street. **Right:** A plastic bag dragon created by The Community Mercantile makes its way down Massachusetts Street.



**Left:** Mark Graves, City's Parks & Recreation Department Senior Arborist, distributes trees to citizens after a South Park tree identification tour. **Right:** Celebration attendees decorate reusable shopping bags at The Community Mercantile table.



**Left:** Volunteers for Lawrence Complete Streets provide bike valet service to Celebration attendees while they visit other exhibits. **Right:** Animal Outreach of Kansas provides free vegan food at the Earth Day Celebration.



**Left:** Presenter entertains crowd at the Oread Friends Meeting's "Read Out, Speak Out, Sing Out, Dance Out, Act Out for Earthcare." **Right:** Participants of the Water Festival learn about water safety from Sammy the Otter near the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary table.



**Left:** Children decorate their own cardboard bird house at the Jayhawk Audubon Society table. **Right:** Caricaturist John Rasmussen draws a crowd as well.



**Left:** The band Jazz Cigarettes performs. **Right:** Mayor Aron Cromwell, Eileen Horn, the County/City Sustainability Coordinator, and Jonathan Kealing from The World Company announce the winners of the 2011 Sustainability Trailblazer awards.



***'April Showers to Water Towers' a Water Festival for Douglas County*** was held in conjunction with other Earth Day activities April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011 in South Park. Information regarding watersheds, stormwater pollution, erosion, ground water and other water quality issues were presented using fun, educational activities. The festival, sponsored by the City's Stormwater Division, is held each year to help meet the Public Education and Outreach requirement for the City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. Other agencies participating in the Water Festival included Central Plains Center for BioAssessment, Kansas Biological Survey, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, K-State Research and Extension, and the Kansas Geological Survey. Over 400 people attended the festival, with over 75 citizens receiving a rain poncho for visiting all seven activities.



Water Festival 2011



Kansas Biological Survey



Kansas Geological Survey



Sammy the Otter, U.S. Coast Guard