

## 2010 SWANA Public Education Excellence Award

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** The *Live Green Expo (LGE)* is the premiere regional green living event in North Texas. The *LGE* is a fun, family event helping North Texans make better decisions leading to healthier lives with less impact on the environment. **Over 15,000** North Texans enjoyed and participated in the 2009 *LGE*, which highlighted ways to reduce environmental impact by adopting a greener lifestyle and making eco-friendly consumer choices. A one-day annual event with a regional target audience, the 2009 *Expo* featured **Ed Begley, Jr.** (actor/ environmentalist) as the **keynote speaker** and **green building panelist**. The *LGE* included **presentations** on yard & garden, green building and green living topics; an **environmental art exhibit; local foods** with cooking demonstrations; **hybrid ride & drive; Eco-Fashion Event; “green-it-yourself” demonstrations; 186 exhibitors** offering a wide selection of green products, services and information; and **children’s activities**. New for 2009 was the **Recycling Collection “One Stop” Drop-Off**. A **plastic bag exchange** and reusable bag pledge were also included. Implementation and staffing involved over **605 volunteers contributing 3,041 hours**. **Free** admission and shuttle service from the light rail station made the event accessible for everyone. Funding for the *LGE* comes from several sources: grants, sponsors, exhibitor fees and departmental budget.

**1. STATEMENT OF INTENT:** I am nominating the *Live Green Expo* for the Public Education Excellence award because it has been a very successful public education outreach event right from its inaugural launch in 2007. The event has three years of history behind it now, and participation by both exhibitors and the public has grown dramatically over the last three years. It has proven to be an effective outreach and education tool for disseminating information to a regional audience about practical ways to lead a greener lifestyle with less environmental impact. Each year the event includes several ways that people can take immediate positive behavior-change actions or pledge to make lifestyle changes while at the venue. The feedback of visitors to the event has been exceptionally positive, and the quality and effectiveness of the event has created a loyal following resulting in both word of mouth and viral marketing. I am applying because I believe the Live Green Expo fits the award category criteria and is worthy of recognition at this point in time.

**2. RESEARCH/PLANNING: Need:** The *Live Green Expo* was developed in conjunction with the *Live Green in Plano* public awareness campaign in 2007. At that time, the City of Plano’s (COP) Sustainability & Environmental Services (SES) department was addressing the need to consolidate all environmental programs under one over-arching brand to reduce confusion among residents and to establish department identity with environmental programs. SES also wanted to build support and increase participation in green practices among residents. A public relations/social marketing firm was hired to develop the brand and guide the resulting campaign. The public awareness campaign – *The Year of Living Green in Plano* included a year’s worth of eco-friendly “green” activities. The *Live Green Expo (LGE)* was the largest effort and flagship event for the *Year of*

*Living Green*. The LGE was originally targeted to Plano residents, but in the following years has focused on becoming a regional event drawing residents, homeowners, business owners, builders, contractors, professionals and educators from throughout the North Texas area. Grant funding was secured to cover costs for the initial market research and analysis and development and implementation of the public awareness campaign, as well as covering some of the start-up costs for the *Live Green Expo*. Phone surveys and focus groups were conducted to gather input and identify the following: residential waste diversion and recycling practices, participation rates, other green living behaviors, barriers to residential participation, and best media outlets for reaching and influencing residential behavior changes. Focus groups also gathered resident responses to brand and logo designs and most effective media and outreach tools for the public awareness campaign. A significant outcome from the surveys and focus groups was verifying that our residents have little understanding of the term “sustainability”. Beyond mentioning “recycling”, participants had difficulty defining any other sustainable practices. **Previous programs:** Prior to this event, the SES department held several smaller, specifically-focused special events each year. These included the Texas Smartscape Lawn & Garden Showcase, Texas Recycles Day event, Kids in the Garden Fallfest, the Great American Clean-up, and a variety of workshops and classes focused on composting, waste diversion, gardening and landscaping topics. These events attracted 500 – 1500 people and were generally about 4 hours in duration. Though these other events included different components such as educational presentations, children’s activities and exhibitors, none were as comprehensive in scope as the *Live Green Expo*. The Great American Clean-up was the largest (1,500) of our previous events, as it involved groups of residents conducting clean-ups all over the city on one day during designated hours, and then returning to a central location for food and festivities and drop-off of their collected trash. **Target audience:** The target audience for the *LGE* is primarily community residents – originally Plano residents, but now the entire North Texas region. Due to high energy costs and the need for nearly year-round air conditioning, there is high interest in the North Texas region for information related to home energy efficiency. We also reside in a non-attainment area for air quality, so there is high interest in hybrids, fuel-efficient vehicles and green building technology. The recent drought conditions have also put high priority on water conservation techniques. Although there is much new construction occurring in the region, many people are looking to retrofit older homes for energy efficiency. The popularity of the “green” movement in recent years has also put more emphasis on healthier living and eating ideas. All in all, people in the area are primed, ready and eager to learn more about how to live a simpler, healthier life.

The LGE is attractive to them for many reasons, and because it is free, it makes it easy for community members to participate and learn. One of the strengths of the *LGE* is the practical nature of the exhibits and the consistent call to action evidenced throughout all aspects of the event. The *LGE* has provided the COP with a method of reaching large numbers of our target audience at one time. The variety of features offered appeals to a wide range of interests, helping to ensure the success of the event. We have seen from the results of the *Expo* that we are being successful in educating and engaging North Texans in making positive environmental improvements

within our community. **Goals:** The goals of the *LGE* are to build a sustainable community by educating people about the environmental considerations of day-to-day living; connecting people with environmentally preferable products, businesses, services and resources; building the base of North Texans who adopt “green living” practices resulting in greater public acceptance and participation. The *LGE* focuses on nine key sustainability topic areas: Transportation, Energy, Green Building & Remodeling, Food & Agriculture, Yard & Garden, Indoor Air Quality, Waste Reduction, Water, Lifestyles & Recreation.

**Specific goals include:**

- Increasing participation in green practices including recycling, composting, water and energy conservation and air quality by offering specific Expo activities for visitors to engage in onsite:
  - Learning to build a compost pile before taking home a free compost bin
  - Turning in plastic bags, cell phones, eyeglasses, textiles and electronics for recycling
  - Making a public pledge with photograph posted on City web site to use reusable bags for shopping before being given a bag
  - Making a pledge to change bulbs out to CFL’s before being given free CFLs
  - Learning to use a programmable thermostat before being given a free one
  - Trading in a gas-powered lawn mower for a voucher for an electric lawnmower
  - Learning how to make rain barrel to use for landscape water conservation
- Bringing about changes in environmental culture within Plano and North Texas communities through participation in sharing ideas at roundtable exchanges at the Expo
- Achieving an attendance level of over 14,000 people
- Recruiting at least 150 exhibitors representative of all nine categories the Expo is organized around
- Recruiting at least 500 volunteers to help implement the day-long event
- Soliciting sponsor dollars needed to meet Expo budget requirements
- Organize, market and conduct the *LGE* as a zero waste event

In order to accomplish 2009 *LGE* goals, the Expo planning team gained the support and involvement of three area cities committed to supporting the mission of the *LGE*. Through the *LGE*, the COP has led the way in implementing sustainability initiatives and opportunities that impact personal lives and communities throughout North Texas. **Obstacles/opportunities:** We have faced several obstacles in achieving our goals for the *LGE*. Foremost has been the impact of the poor economy on our ability to raise sponsorship dollars. In addition, the site used for the Expo has presented its own set of challenges. This has caused us to look for the extra value that we can offer sponsors to make their investment in our event as attractive as possible. Sponsorship levels have been adjusted each year based on benchmarking other similar events around the country. The *LGE* has been held at the Plano Centre Visitor and Convention Centre all three years. This location offers both an indoor and outdoor venue and parking. The growing success of the Expo has caused us to max out the Plano Centre facilities. More exhibitors and educational presentations have been moved outdoors taking up one whole parking

lot of the Centre. This has put pressure on the event for offsite parking and weather contingency plans. The directive from upper COP management has been to keep the Expo in Plano, so we continue to try and be creative with the use of space even as the size of the event continues to grow. We met the parking challenge through partnership with DART for shuttle service and the local community college for additional parking space. Achieving the zero waste goals has also proven challenging, as we work to educate exhibitors, participants and Plano Centre staff on adhering to the guidelines. This has led to us establishing pre-event zero waste guidelines to share with our exhibitors to get them in the proper mind-set for participation in our event. We have also incorporated very visible waste stations staffed with green ambassadors helping and educating people about proper sorting and disposal of their items to ensure recycling and composting. Another challenge has been working within the guidelines of the Plano Centre concerning food concessions. One focus area of the *LGE* is Food & Agriculture and our desire to feature locally grown fresh foods served in compostable or recyclable serving ware. These ideas don't fall in line with Plano Centre offerings, causing us to be creative in our approach to working with the Plano Centre to bring healthier options to our participants. Finally, the weather always presents a challenge since the many outdoor components of the event are dependent upon fair weather.

### **3. IMPLEMENTATION/EXECUTION:**

**Timeline of tasks:** Included below is the timeline of tasks associated with developing the public awareness campaign that the first *Live Green Expo* was initially a key component of.

<b><u>1. Market Research and Focus Groups</u></b>	<b><u>April – June 2006</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and hire research firm to conduct focus groups and survey (Supervisor)</li> <li>• Develop survey instrument (Supervisor and Project Team)</li> <li>• Develop focus group questions (Supervisor and Project Team)</li> <li>• Administer survey (Research Firm)</li> <li>• Analyze and interpret survey results (Research Firm)</li> <li>• Conduct focus groups (Research Firm)</li> <li>• Compile and interpret results of focus groups (Research Firm)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 2006</li> <li>April 2006</li> <li>May 2006</li> <li>May/June 2006</li> <li>June 2006</li> <li>June 2006</li> <li>June 2006</li> </ul>
<b><u>2. Identify Public Relations Consultant</u></b>	<b><u>April-May 2006</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify PR firms (Supervisor)</li> <li>• Prepare and invite request for proposals for creative work and public awareness campaign strategy (Supervisor)</li> <li>• Evaluate proposals and hire PR firm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 2006</li> <li>April 2006</li> <li>May 2006</li> </ul>
<b><u>3. Creative Design and Public Awareness Campaign Strategy</u></b>	<b><u>June – Sept.2006</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with PR firm to share objectives, vision and desired outcome (Supervisor and Project Team)</li> <li>• Develop concepts for creative work (logo, artwork, mascot, media messages) (PR Firm)</li> <li>• Present creative concepts for input and approval (PR Firm, Project Team, Supervisor)</li> <li>• Present strategy for public awareness campaign (PR Firm, Project Team, Supervisor)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 2006</li> <li>July 2006</li> <li>August 2006</li> <li>Sept 2006</li> </ul>
<b><u>4. Implementation of Public Awareness Strategy</u></b>	<b><u>Sept. 2006-May 2007</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop 4 messages and promote on rotating basis via utility bill insert,</li> </ul>	

- movie theater ads, truck panels, radio spots, newspaper ads Sept 2006 – May 2007
- Develop and mail 4 postcards over a 8-month period (Project Team, Supervisor) Nov 2006-July 2007
- Develop and run movie theater ads over a 3-month period targeting the holiday season. (Project Team and Supervisor) Oct – December 2006
- Produce and mount truck panels (Project Team, Supervisor) Oct – November 2006
- Develop and air radio spots (Project Team and Supervisor) November 2006
- Develop utility bill insert (Education Coordinator) March 2007

#### **5. Live Green Expo**

**November 2006 – May 2007**

- Conceptualize and develop ideas and format for event (Supervisor, Project Team) Nov 2006
- Assign areas of responsibility to team Nov 2006
- Reserve location (Administrative Assistant) Jan 2007
- Identify and contract entertainers and speakers (Supervisor, Project Team) Nov 2006
- Research and compile list of appropriate vendors and educational organizations (Project team) Nov 2006
- Develop invitation and send to vendors (Education Coordinator, Adm Asst) Oct 2006
- Identify, order promo items, compost bins, recycle tote bags, spray bottles (Education Coordinator) Jan 2007
- Prepare ads, press releases and send out to promote event (Educ Coord) Oct 2006-April 2007
- Recruit volunteer help, schedule and train (Education Coordinator) Nov 2006 – April 2007
- Develop hands-on session ideas and contests for Green Living Expo (Project Team, Supervisor) Jan 2007
- Promote contest participation (Project Team, Administrative Assistant) Feb- April 2007
- Implement event (Project Team, Supervisor) May 2007

#### **8. Signage and Banners**

**Feb –May 2007**

- Identify company to make signs and banners (Educ Coord) Feb 2007
- Identify content for banners and signs (Project Team, Supervisor) March 2007
- Produce signs and banners (Sign Company) April 2007

Planning for the *Expo* involves a team of several members who meet on a regular basis over the course of several months. Responsibilities for seeking sponsors, exhibitors and presenters were delegated among this group and other SES staff members through assignments to one of the nine key topic areas. Other responsibilities were delegated in areas of zero waste, signage, children’s activities, volunteer management, entertainment, publicity and promotion, and logistics. Different elements of *Expo* organization were targeted for discussion at designated meetings to ensure all components were slowly and systematically worked through over the course of the planning period. Since the *Expo* was developed from the ground up, the 2007 planning process was very detailed and time consuming. That year, all exhibitor and sponsor documents, flier, ads, news and feature articles, signs, banners, website, etc., had to be developed for the first time.

The success of the first year event and the overwhelmingly positive public response ensured the event should be repeated in future years. An assessment of the time involved in development, planning and oversight of the *Expo* led to the decision to contract out an Event Coordinator for the following years.

In 2008 the *Expo*’s focus shifted to becoming a regional event and partnerships with surrounding communities were solicited. Three additional cities agreed to participate as financial sponsors of the event and two others promoted it through other means. Since the first *LGE* that occurred on May 5, 2007, the *LGE* has been moved

to the month of April, so it could be the leading environmental event in the area introducing Earth Week activities. The table below summarizes key components of the LGE and depicts growth and changes over the last three years.

**Live Green Expo Components**

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Participants</b>	7,500	12,000	15,000
<b>Exhibitors</b>	98	156	196
<b>Presentations</b>	28	22	20
<b>Keynotes</b>	3	4	3
<b>Volunteers</b>	200	350	600

**Budget:** As detailed below, the budget for the *Expo* has increased as the size of the event has grown. Funding to support the budget comes from four main sources– SES department funds, grants, sponsors and exhibit fees. 2007 grant funds paid for advertising and marketing fees and creative development of message and logos. 2008 grant funds paid for the compost bin distribution and for the development of the Recycle Alley exhibits and their promotion at the Expo through billboards. 2009 grant funds paid for costs associated with the recycling collection event, Compost Fair and Lawnmower Exchange, and Energy Efficiency exhibits and giveaways. Expenditures for the *Expo* include facility, tent and equipment rentals, signs, banners and advertising, supplies and materials for different activities such as the Compost Fair and Children’s activities, food for volunteers and exhibitors, generators for outdoor sound stages and equipment, police officers, entertainment, travel and keynote speaker fees.

**Revenues for Live Green Expo**

<b>Source</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Budget Total	130,017	151,382	165,293
Department	2,623	10,882	16,937
Grants	64,719	45,000	50,206
Sponsors	40,000	55,000	45,450
Exhibit Fees	22,675	40,500	52,700

Based on comparative benchmarking research for “green” events around the country the 2008 exhibitor fees were increased to generate additional revenues.

**Sponsor Levels**

<b>Level</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Presenting</b>	N/A	\$20,000	\$20,000 +
<b>Earth</b>	\$10,000	\$10,000 - \$14,999	\$10,000 - \$14,999
<b>Wind</b>	\$5,000 - \$9,999	\$7,500 - \$9,999	\$7,500 - \$9,999
<b>Air</b>	\$2,500 - \$4,999	\$5,000 - \$7,499	\$5,000 - \$7,499
<b>Fire</b>	\$1,000 - \$2,499	\$1,000 - \$4,999	\$1,000 - \$4,999

**Partnerships:** The establishment of many partnerships has been essential to the success of the event. In 2009, the Recycling Collection “One Stop” Drop-Off benefited from numerous vendors and organizations whose partnerships ultimately supported the event and enabled it to be expanded further. Partnership involvement included cash contributions, in-kind services and products, volunteer support and advertising. The collections

event partnered with the following organizations: *Cintas* and *D/FW Shredding* (on-site paper shredding and collection); *Shoe Bank* (shoe collection); *EcoPhones* (cell phone collection); *Charity Shoes and Clothing* (textile collection); *Allen High Noon Lions Club* (eyeglass collection); *Friends of the Public Library* (book collection); *Erecycler* (electronics and television collections); *The Green Bag Ladies* (reusable bags); and the *Sue Pope Fund, Downwinders at Risk* (lawn mower exchange). In making the event regional in scope, the Cities of Allen and Richardson came on board as partners with both financial support and marketing and promotional efforts to their respective residents. The City of Irving partnered to bring its residents to the event by arranging shuttle buses to transport residents between Irving and the Plano Centre. Several organizations partnered to provide volunteers and support for the Children's activities including the Plano Independent School District, Rover DramaWerks Girl Scout troops and Plano Children's Theatre. Other COP departments lent staff support to ensure success of the event including Parks & Recreation department, Plano Television Network and Public Information Office. Media partners included K-SKY which provided live broadcasts from The Dirt Doctor with Howard Garrett; House Talk with Chris Miles; and The Super Handyman with Al Carrell; as well as pre-Expo promotion on their programs. Television partners included Channel 8 who provided pre-event promotion, day-of coverage and a TV personality as moderator of the Eco-Fashion event.

**Accomplishment of Planning Elements:** Concentrated effort was put into developing and implementing **zero waste guidelines** for the event. Exhibitors were sent information outlining steps they should take in pre-event planning to ensure reduced waste at the *LGE*. Recycling and organic recycling containers were set up throughout the event venue and maintained during the day. Food items provided by the Plano Centre Catering service were carefully selected and serving utensils and containers were either recyclable or organically recyclable. The organic waste was collected and sent to the City's compost operation, and recyclables were sent to the MRF. **Media & Marketing** A major goal of the *Expo* every year is to obtain advance event coverage. We have been very successful in accomplishing each year. *Live Green Expo* coverage has included: live pre-event coverage including interviews on the FOX and NBC affiliates; event day coverage by NBC, ABC and CBAS affiliates; online mentions in the *Dallas Morning News* and *Star Community Papers*. In addition, we have had a print media partnership with *D* magazine, and the suburban *People Papers*. Feature stories and ads run in each of these different magazines that target several different North Dallas communities. A spring issue of the Sustainability Department's *Environmental News* featuring the *Live Green Expo* is direct mailed to 73,000 households in April each year. Utility bill inserts promoting the *Expo* are direct mailed to these same homes. Another promotional feature for the *LGE* is the annual calendar direct mailed to 73,000 homes. The April page features information and an overview of the *Live Green Expo*. A radio media partnership with K-SKY each year has guaranteed us several radio reads daily in the weeks preceding the *Expo*. This combination of wide reach through the radio buy, targeted billboards along major metroplex highways, banners in sponsor locations, blended with media relations efforts and the DART bus posters and LED screen displays have created a campaign that increases awareness of the event, as well as attendance to the *Expo*. Approximately 15,000 people attended in 2009. **Creativity:** Three unique aspects were noteworthy in the 2009 LGE: volunteer

contributions, call to action opportunities, emphasis on the Arts. *Volunteer Contribution:* The LGE was volunteer-powered in almost every aspect, contributing greatly to its success. From directing traffic to staffing the zero-waste recycling containers, volunteers were an integral part of the event. Over **600 people** volunteered for LGE, with 44 volunteers dedicated specifically to the Recycling Collection “One Stop” Drop-Off. Volunteers received extensive training in advance of the event to ensure consistent messaging to the public in their outreach efforts. Communication, training, orientation and instruction about expectations and specific responsibilities were imperative to ensure the smooth implementation of the event. Volunteers actively participated in set-up, staffing booths, exhibits and other stations, and taking down and cleaning up the event. Volunteers were recruited from the *Live Green in Plano* volunteer training program, community members, businesses, community organizations, student and civic groups. Most volunteers worked four hour shifts, though many choose to work the entire day. Volunteers worked in **four shifts covering 44 activities** throughout the Expo, and took the lead in planning and implementing different aspects of the LGE such as the DIY Demo Room, managing Zero Waste stations, Eco-Fashion event, children’s activities, recruiting and organizing local food farm and ranch exhibitors and donors for the cooking demos. *Call to Action:* A comprehensive marketing plan was designed to promote the 2009 LGE as a regional event significantly impacting ways to “Turn Texas Green.” As a new component of an existing event, the **Recycling Collection “One Stop” Drop-Off** was featured in the campaign. Since the success of the collection required people to bring their recycling items to the event, it was essential to communicate the opportunity to recycle during our advertising and promotions. Several features of the Recycling Collection “One Stop” Drop-Off demonstrated innovative and successful examples of how partnerships and grants contribute to the overall impact of an event.

- **Lawn Mower Exchange:** Residents of Plano and Richardson could trade a working, gasoline-powered mower for a \$150 rebate voucher toward the purchase of a clean electric or manually-powered unit from participating area suppliers. Area retailers and lawn mower manufacturers attended the event to educate attendees and sell electric mowers on the spot. The program was limited to the first **250** participants.
- **Plastic Bag Collection:** Plastic bags were collected from attendees who were encouraged to make a pledge to use only reusable bags. Participants photographed with their pledge signs were posted on the event Web site, [www.livegreenexpo.net](http://www.livegreenexpo.net). In addition, the *Green Bag Ladies* offered hand-made cloth bags in exchange for a simple promise to use the bag when shopping.
- **Electronics Collection:** Regional attendees had the opportunity to recycle televisions, computers, stereo equipment, telephones and any other electronic material.

*Arts Emphasis:* An **Environmental Art Exhibit** showcased the work of 13 regional artists featuring 30 pieces of 2-D and 3-D art utilizing sustainable, reused or recycled materials conveying environmental messages through different mediums. The **Eco-fashion Event** had models strutting the catwalk in organic cotton, bamboo, water bottle fleece wear and redesigned vintage clothing with a green sizzle. Local designers and high school and college fashion design students competed to design outfits and accessories featuring recycled, reused, reclaimed and organic materials.

**4. RESULTS/EVALUATION Target audience participation:** Participants appreciated the “one stop” drop recycling event for its convenience and ultimate impact on the environment. Participants were able to drop off shoes, electronics, textiles, eyeglasses, cell phones and participate in document shredding all in one stop. While at the recycling event, most people were compelled to stay and enjoy the *LGE* and its many opportunities for continued education about green living. In addition to One Stop Recycling event, the *LGE* featured a Compost Fair where participants learned how to build a compost pile to recycle organic waste with **200** compost bins given on first-come, first serve basis to those completing learning stations. Food Waste composting workshops also aided over **250** people in constructing worm bins and bio-digesters; Recycle Alley composed of 8 professionally designed educational exhibits highlighting individual recycling processes and items made of recycled content, local recycling programs throughout the region and the many reasons why recycling is important for the environment, the economy and a consumer’s household budget. Three cities were on-hand to answer recycling questions and offer detailed information about their respective programs. Ed Begley, Jr. was interviewed twice during the event, where he focused on the importance of recycling and how simple it is to participate; COP recycling truck tours; Zero Waste event initiatives (composting and recycling containers, exhibitor guidelines for waste reduction). Volunteers received extensive training in advance of the event to ensure consistent messaging in waste management education. Other activities concentrated on high interest topics providing maximum community impact and personal enjoyment including: Yard & Garden presentations attended by 450 people on sustainable landscape design, plant selection for North Texas, compost, rainwater harvesting and low impact pest control; Plant sales offering heat and drought tolerant choices in perennials, shrubs, trees and roses; Compost sales; Energy Efficiency upgrades with over 300 people attending the Green Building panel; and over 15,000 people visiting related exhibitor booths. The *LGE* was an environmental education extravaganza! All aspects of the event were focused on educating participants about different aspects of environmental stewardship. Keynote speaker **Ed Begley** spoke to a standing room only audience of over **800 people**, offering many practical tips for green living. The **DIY Demo Room** offered hands-on experience and practice in many energy and water efficiency upgrades, make it yourself household cleaning and beauty products and more. Comments and feedback from evaluation cards, vendors, speakers and exhibitors were all extremely positive. The consensus from all parties was that the *LGE* was a tremendous event, fully addressing its objectives. Participants are happy that the COP is taking the lead in environmental initiatives and proud to be a part of it.

**Success Measures:** Environmental Outcomes: Organic waste from the *LGE* was collected and sent to the City’s compost operation, and recyclables were sent to the MRF. In addition: **over 1,000 CFL bulbs were distributed**; reusable bag campaign generated **over 50 pounds of plastic bags for recycling and distribution of over 1,500 reusable shopping bags**; CO2 emissions generated by the event were offset with **trees planted** in Texas and beyond; **recycled materials** were used for all *LGE* collateral promotions; 1000 reduced **Carbon Footprint commitments** were made. Recycling Collection results: Document Shredding – 6.81tons; Shoes –

165 pairs; Cell Phones – 90; Clothing- 1,197 lbs; Eyeglasses – 373 pairs; Books and Magazines – 957; Electronics – 8.9 tons; Plastic Bags – 50 lbs. 1,168 households participating, LGE participant count – 15,000.

**Program Improvements:** Food sold at concessions should offer healthier options including vegetarian meals and local foods. Use of reusable water bottles with refillable water stations should be added in the future. More frequent shuttles between Plano Centre and parking lot at nearby community college should be scheduled. Onsite parking should be limited to volunteers, staff and exhibitors. Better advance marketing of parking and shuttle situation should occur. Additional short educational presentations should be added to the large exhibit hall. Fair Trade Market should be added to Expo offerings. Fewer exhibitors should be placed in main hallways to help with traffic flow patterns. More exhibitors and activities should be added to West Parking Lot area.

**Program replicability:** This event has proven very successful in reaching the community concerning ways to reduce environmental impact and in changing behaviors through adoption of a greener lifestyle. The LGE is an event that is very replicable in other communities. A strong organizing committee made up of people with different event planning skills is essential. The following would be essential – those skilled at securing sponsor donations, communication and marketing, volunteer coordination, organization and planning skills, logistical coordination and vision for the scope and identify of the event. A large suitable site with ample parking is also essential. Volunteer and staff help are critical to the success of this event. Communication, training, orientation and instruction about expectations and specific responsibilities are imperative to ensure the smooth implementation of the event. In 2009, over 650 volunteers actively participated in set-up, staffing booths, exhibits and other stations, and taking down and cleaning up the event. Approximately half of these volunteers attended the pre-event orientation the night before the event. Volunteers were recruited from the community, student and civic groups. Most volunteers worked four hour shifts, though many choose to work the entire day. Over 50 staff from SES were actively engaged in Expo responsibilities the day of the event. I believe this type of event is of interest to members of communities all over the country and can be implemented anywhere where there are people with the vision and drive to carry it out.

