



04/2004 – April 2004

ZPRAVODAJ

The Earth Celebrated Earth Day. Healthy Cities Celebrated with Her – All Month Long!



Together with millions of others all over the world, the Czech Republic celebrated the Earth Day. For the fourteenth time, the Czechs reminded themselves that the quality of life is not only about good food and luxurious cars, but above all about clean water, fresh air and healthy forests. As in the previous years, members of the Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic joined the campaign. This year, there were 22 of them, each having its way of celebrating the Earth Day. The celebrations of the Blue Planet were not limited to one day only – for a whole month, the general public could choose from a whole gamut of events organised by the Healthy Cities' city halls and their partners (schools, NGOs, etc.). The common denominators were, of course, ecology and the environment, from planting trees and cleaning the city, lectures, discussions and photo exhibitions all the way to contests and games for children as well as adults. In most of the cities, the peak of the environmental campaign was Thursday, April 22; in some, the main program was moved to the following weekend. If you want to know what was going on in the Healthy Cities that day, keep reading!

The following Czech Healthy Cities joined Earth Day celebrations this year:

Boskovice; Brno; Ceske Budejovice; Hodonin; Hradec Kralove; Chrudim; Karvina; Koprivnice; Kromeriz; Letovice; Litomerice; Mlada Boleslav; Moravska Trebova; Orlova; Prostějov; Trebic; Trebon; Valasske Mezirici; Velke Mezirici; Veseli nad Moravou; Vsetin; and Zlin.

Cities amidst Celebrations

Trebic: City Hall Staff and Students Went Picking Up Litter

In Trebic, city hall staff went out to the streets to pick up litter as part of **Let the City Be Green**, a contest organised by the local Student Parliament on April 22. Teams of pupils from Trebic's basic and secondary schools and members of the city hall staff competed in picking up litter in public areas. The city hall had four teams, of which three were the staff and one was the city councillors. Each team were given plastic bags and working gloves and drew lots for the part of the city to clean. These included public areas, parks and wooded areas. The city hall then arranged for the marked bags to be collected at the Charles Square, where the winners were announced in the afternoon. The winners were the staff team of the Administrative and Environmental Departments, with the Secondary Medical School and the Secondary Private Specialised School placing second and third, respectively. All teams received a well-deserved thank-you and diplomas. Altogether, over two hundred people took part in the event, and 363 bags were filled. Mayor Milos Masek was unable to attend due to a visit by a US embassy official. While the students and city hall staff were cleaning the city, celebrations of the Earth Day at the Charles

Square started. Visitors admired and purchased products made of natural materials, took part in various contests and quizzes, and those interested were provided with latest information on ecology. The Earth Day was celebrated by all schools in Trebic, from kindergartens all the way to secondary schools.



Vsetin: A Journey around the World

On Friday, April 23, over 1,000 children, young people and adults came to celebrate the Earth Day at the Lords' Gardens in Vsetin, which were turned into a model of the planet Earth. The event entitled **Living Planet, or Journey around the World** was prepared by the Alcedo Children and Youth Centre together with the Vsetin city hall and other organisations.

At checkpoints symbolizing individual continents, children performed various tasks and learnt about the specifics as well as the most serious problems of the continent. "In Asia, the children were to guess how many people can fit in one gymnastic hoop, which also pointed out to the fact that this area is overpopulated," said Simona Hajdova of Alcedo. Over 500 children and adults took part in the contest. In the Australian section, the children tried out jumping in a bag, imitating the movements of a kangaroo. In Europe, they visited various EU countries. "At this checkpoint, the participants were met by a student from Finland, who teaches English in the Czech Republic. The task was to learn a Finnish song," said Jitka Kretova, an Alcedo staff member. A number of bands were playing during the day, and there was also a performance of young jugglers. It



has become a tradition that the celebrations include a collection of financial contributions "Help Children". In the morning, mostly kindergarten children, basic school pupils and mothers with babies came; in the afternoon, the whole families

showed up. As part of the Earth Day campaign, the Vsetin city hall organised a **conference entitled Vsetin – A City to Live In**. "We have been organising these conferences regularly since 2002. This year, we focused on environmental operations of the city hall and the facilities run by the City of Vsetin," said Jiri Cunek, Mayor and HCP

politician, under whose auspices the conference was held. Vice-Mayor Jaromir Kudlik informed about the Clean Becva River project. In the first stage, launched in 2002, new sewage systems are being built in 15 cities and municipalities with a total investment of approximately CZK 1.5 billion. The city also introduced **Recyclos**, a new waste recycling project.

Mlada Boleslav: Earth Day in a New Healthy City

Although the city has celebrated the Earth Day before, this year it was with an extensive campaign organised by the city hall together with the local Student Parliament and the management of schools. It was the first major event after the city joined the Healthy Cities Project this year. The largest in scale was the traditional all-day **program at the ruin of the Zviretice castle**. Numerous contests tested and expanded children's knowledge about nature and ecology. The people saw a falconer show and a performance by children actors from the Little Theatre; there was also a herbalist and hand-made ceramics. The visitors had an opportunity to voice their opinions in a

questionnaire survey on the environment in Mlada Boleslav. The event was organised by the Czech Association of Conservationists and the Zviretice Centre of Environmental Education. On Saturday, April 24, the Children and Youth Centre organised **St. Wenceslas Roving**. During a walk through the Stepanka forest park, children, as knights, performed various tasks, watched falconers with various birds of prey and owls, and saw a fencing show and theatre performances. On the same day, the Sun Kindergarten organised a **climb to the ruin of Michalovicka Putna**, concluded with a camp fire.

Chrudim: Schools Undergo Environmental Reviews

Prompted by the city hall, **environmental reviews of schools** have been under way in Chrudim since the beginning of April on the occasion of the Earth Day. City hall officials have been visiting schools and school cafeterias and inspecting waste handling, environmental education, or care of green areas in the schools' vicinity. "When determining

the criteria for the audit, we relied on the experience of the Healthy City of Vsetin. We do not want to merely identify problems; we want to start solving them, helping the schools to do so," explained HCP coordinator Sarka Truneckova. "Eight audits have taken place so far. In the first half of May, we plan to inspect another seven

schools.” And how are the schools doing? “Recycling bins and containers mostly need to be supplied. Most schools already have bins for plastic materials, now they want others for glass or paper. The mowing and trimming of gardens and green areas around the schools are mostly arranged for by the city hall, and we have agreed to continue in this arrangement at most schools. Some schools, though, want to include the care of green areas in their environmental education syllabus. The standard of environmental education at the schools varies; Malika and Husova elementary schools are excellent,” said Truneckova. The final results will have been communicated to the respective headmasters by the end of May. Schools where no problems have been identified will receive a certificate.

On Thursday, April 22, the centre of Chrudim turned into an oasis of ecology and sustainable development. In recognition of the Earth Day, the

Ressel Square hosted a fair of conservationists, ecological farmers and traditional craftsmen. The event mostly attracted basic school children – there was a stand with American Indian items, a puppet show and a pub brawl performed by Chrudim's fencers. Adults enjoyed Romany dancing and stands selling ceramics, paintings on glass or products made of straw. Both children and adults could try out making hand-made paper and candles or working with clay. The whole square was decorated with pictures from the **Water – The Source of Life** painting contest, organised for kindergarten children and basic school pupils by the Green House CSOP Ecocentre and the Healthy City of Chrudim. For the seventh year, the Aluminium Eater visited Chrudim schools in March, and the children competed in “feeding” it. The results of the **Feed the Aluminium Eater** contest were announced at the Ressel Square on the Earth Day.

Kromeriz: Though Aluminium Is Not Gold, It Is Certainly Worth Recycling

As in the past years, Planorbis, a conservationist association, has had a lion's share in the organisation of environmental campaigns in Kromeriz. As part of this year's celebrations, it organised natural-scientific tours to the Hraza biocentre, installed information panels along new nature trails Stonac and Zamecek and gave a series of lectures on the environment for basic and secondary schools. On the eve of the Earth Day, winners of the district-wide drawing contest Children for Earth were announced at the Kromeriz Regional Library. Young artists competed for the best rendition of an environmental topic. The key theme of this year's campaign was recycling, with a particular focus on aluminium. Following the motto “Though Aluminium Is Not Gold, It Is Certainly Worth Recycling”, basic school pupils collected aluminium waste as part of a large contest. The winner, Zachar Basic School, collected 19 kg of aluminium. Earth Day celebrations culminated with an **afternoon program at the Large Square** on April 22. “Four hundred children from after-school centres competed in decorating dust bins and containers. The results of their work were exhibited at the Large Square and winners of the contest were announced at the end of the celebrations. This year, it was pupils from the Zamoravi Basic School,” said local HCP coordinator Marie Pokorna. Exhibited in the square were also pieces of art from recycled materials and waste handling equipment.

Children competed in aluminium ball hockey slalom and in aluminium shot put, aiming to throw the ball in their decorated dust bin. Another task awaiting them was to sort out mixed waste (including skins from potatoes they themselves peeled) and place the waste in the correct dust bin. There were several children performances. The Company of Fantasy and Wood Fencing Friends made their debut, introducing a less expensive form of historic fencing. The space in front of the main platform was decorated with various pictures and literary pieces by children.



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