

Millions celebrate Earth Day

The Associated Press

An estimated 200 million people all over the planet celebrated the 20th anniversary of Earth Day as activists pleaded for the rise of a new "conservation generation" to care for the fragile environment.

Even as a hot air balloon representing the Earth rose in Times Square and tens of thousands demonstrated at the U.S. Capitol on Sunday, some worried about sustaining interest in the environ-

ment so that it becomes more than a fad.

"Earth Day is primarily a light we turn on so that we can see the work. The work is still yet to be done," said novelist Wallace Stegner, who led a pledge of allegiance to the Earth in Palo Alto, Calif., where Earth Day has its headquarters.

Some of Sunday's activism spilled over into today, when about 400 protesters blocked traffic and overturned garbage bins along New York's

Wall Street during the morning rush hour. More than 100 people were arrested.

A coalition of groups calling itself Earth Day Wall Street Action said it hoped to shut down Wall Street for a day to call attention to "corporate abuse" of the environment. But officials said trading began as usual this morning.

In Washington on Sunday, Earth Day founder Gaylord Nelson urged more than 100,000 people massed at the foot of the Capitol to work to

motivate politicians and corporate leaders to environmental action.

"I don't want to come back here 20 years from now and have to tell your sons and daughters that you didn't do your duty," said Nelson, 74, who originated Earth Day when he was a senator from Wisconsin. "We've got to raise a conservation generation."

Earth Day was celebrated in more than 3,600 U.S. commu-

See EARTH page 12

VCP EARTH DAY 4/23/90 RP

EARTH

nities and in 140 other nations, according to organizers.

Environmentalists collected tons of garbage from Japanese beaches, sculpted a giant thermometer from a French glacier to protest global warming and carried a globe on a stretcher, symbolizing a sick Earth, in a parade in Hong Kong's twin city of Kowloon.

In New York, an estimated 1 million people turned to the greenest part of Manhattan, Central Park, for a concert that included performances by Hall and Oates, the B-52's, the Roches and the Saturday Night Live Band. Concerts also drew hundreds of thousands to Earth Day activities in Boston and San Francisco.

"Within 50 years, if we don't change the way we do things, we won't recognize this Earth," consumer activist Ralph Nader told a crowd of about 1,000 at North Carolina

State University in Raleigh.

In New Orleans, nearly 1,000 "mourners" watched as a band played dirges in a jazz funeral for polluted Lake Pontchartrain, where environmentalists have found evidence of "dead zones" — areas that no longer support aquatic life.

In the nation's capital, environmental activists blasted President Bush for bypassing the rally for a vacation in Florida. "Where is the president today? He's gone fishing!" railed Ruth Caplan, executive director of the Environmental Action Foundation.

Bush took a break from his fishing trip in the Florida Keys to give what he calls a "point of light" award to the citizens group Reef Relief, which is working to save the coral reef flanking the Keys.

In Missouri, thousands of volunteers got down on hands and knees Sunday to plant 10,000 trees along the Mississippi River.