

**3rd Annual Earth Day Celebration
Community Square Community Garden
Mayor Van Johnson's Remarks
Friday, April 22, 2011**

I like to thank each of you for joining with us on such a beautiful day to celebrate the 3rd Anniversary of the Apalachicola City Square Community Garden Project.

From its inception - the organizers of the project chose appropriately to host this event on Earth Day and it's important to note - that this year Earth Day falls on Good Friday.

I can only imagine that during the planning stages the organizers never contemplated the garden receiving such high visibility and sustained success. All of which can be contributed to a community wiliness to cross the lines of race, gender, age and social class to come together to work in true partnership with its local government.

The mechanics of such can be used as a catalyst on how to improve the broader community and on what we can accomplish when we reconcile our differences.

As we use this occasion to celebrate Earth Day - we must consider and reflect over the past year the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig that killed 11 workers, injured 16 others and unleashed what is now being considered one of the worst environmental disasters in U.S. history, second only to the 1930 Dust Bowl. In addition, to be considered is the reactor meltdown in Japan.

Those disasters should serve as a wakeup call for America, where we all should resolve never to accept profit over our natural resources, which are a part of the wealth of this great nation. If we destroy or overburden those resources - this country could become another 1930's wasteland.

As we celebrate this resurrection weekend - we must also recognize the uniqueness of Good Friday falling on Earth Day. We must be unyielding in our resolve to be good stewards over our natural resources so divinely entrusted to us by our Creator.

The residents of this city recently demonstrated their resolve, when they aptly rose to the occasion to protect and preserve the many trees that line our streets and provide shade to our neighborhoods.

As a nation of communities - we must continue on that path!

Again, I like to thank each of you for coming out and joining with us.

Thank you!