



Above L to R:
 Councilmember Tommy Wells fires up the crowd.
 "Line" dancing at Walk to School Day
 Walkers - and scooters - head off to school.
 Maury Principal Carolyne Albert-Garvey chats up
 Councilmember Tommy Wells.

Off to School – Via the Shoe-Leather Express

BY ELIZABETH NELSON

Braving an early morning drizzle on Oct. 7, bleary-eyed parents and slightly dazed students convened in Lincoln Park to celebrate International Walk to School Day. They were soon revived by a tasty and healthy breakfast courtesy of Chartwells, the DC Public School food service provider. Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells, a big fan of green transportation, served as the keynote speaker and number-one cheerleader. The event concluded with line dancing led by the school principals and then ... the point of it all ... a march off to school, sporting the District Department of Transportation's nifty reflective safety stickers.

Walk to School Day is an annual event, each year attracting a larger crowd as more neighborhood families are supporting local schools and recognizing the distinctly urban pleasure and convenience of car-free commuting. As Anne Phelps, Wells' smart growth and transportation policy advisor (and Maury mom) puts it, "It's terrific to see so many children and families celebrating ways to get to school beyond the car - walking, biking and on their scooters!"

The event received broad community support. Whole Foods passed out lunch bags; the Capitol Hill Restoration Society distributed pencils. Safeway provided water. The Capitol Hill Community Foundation paid for the permit, and DC Farm to School Network distributed local apples donated by MAGNET. And last but not least, the school families, friends, faculty, staff and event organizers contributed their presence and reminded us all that walking to school (or work) is a great way to include increased activity into a busy schedule.

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