



NEWS

For Immediate Release

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Fall Great Arkansas Cleanup an Opportunity for Communities to Pickup Litter, Improve Quality of Life in Hometown

LITTLE ROCK (Aug. 24, 2007) – Each year, Arkansans improve the environmental quality of their communities by volunteering in Keep Arkansas Beautiful’s (KAB) Great Arkansas Cleanup (GAC). This year’s fall cleanup campaign will run Sept. 8-Nov. 24.

Already, 48 local GAC events in 45 counties across the state have been organized. All communities across the state are encouraged to become involved in this annual litter-pickup event. To learn more about organizing a cleanup event in your community or to volunteer in a local event, please visit KeepArkansasBeautiful.com, e-mail pickuparkteresa@sbcglobal.net or call toll-free 888-742-8701.

Last year, the GAC included 189 events in 55 Arkansas counties. Just over 20,000 volunteers picked up 4.4 million pounds of trash; cleaned up 4,077 miles of roadway, 148 parks and public areas, and 1,048 miles of shoreline; and closed 46 illegal dumping sites. The volunteer effort provided the state and participating communities a cost-saving value of \$1.62 million.

“We try to make it as easy as possible to clean up communities. We stress litter-prevention methods so that more volunteers and communities will become a part of our campaign,” says Robert Phelps, director of KAB. “This event is fueled by proud citizen volunteers who realize the negative consequences of litter to their communities and are willing to work for the cause of state beautification.”

Once a community signs on to host a GAC event, KAB will work with that community to organize and publicize the effort. KAB is able to furnish volunteers with cleanup materials and supplies, such as trash bags, gloves, safety vests and site signage. Other promotional and incentive items available include T-shirts, volunteer stickers, temporary tattoos and an opportunity to win a Troy-Bilt® Chipper Shredder Vac. Children and Youth who are winners in the GAC Poster Contest will receive Wal-Mart gift cards.

KAB is promoting the GAC using TV, radio and newspaper advertising to increase volunteerism at GAC events around the state and is also providing local GAC coordinators with customizable marketing materials, including posters, print PSAs and news releases.

The GAC is sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, Entergy Arkansas, GLAD ForceFlex[®] Trash Bags, Keep America Beautiful Inc., Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Sam's Club. Sponsors help provide gloves, safety vests, trash bags, T-shirts and landfill accessibility to GAC participants, and this year, Johnson & Johnson and Keep America Beautiful are providing individual bottles of Purell[®] Hand Sanitizer for GAC volunteers.

About the Great Arkansas Cleanup

The Great Arkansas Cleanup grew out of an effort that began 38 years ago as the Greers Ferry Lake and Little Red River Cleanup. In 1985, U.S. Sen. Dale Bumpers guided legislation requiring an annual pickup event during the weekend after Labor Day on all federal lands. This law, the Carl Garner Federal Lands Cleanup Act, honors the founder of the event. Mr. Garner continues his advocacy for a clean and litter-free environment as a member of the Keep Arkansas Beautiful Foundation board of directors. The first statewide GAC was organized by KAB in 1989.

About Keep Arkansas Beautiful

As a state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, the nation's premier community environmental-improvement organization, KAB works to engage individuals to accept responsibility for enhancing their local community through effective actions to reduce litter, encourage recycling and promote scenic beautification. It operates as a division of the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism and is overseen by a nine-member commission appointed by the governor. KAB is funded by 1 percent of the one-eighth-cent conservation tax and, by utilizing volunteers, returns to the state a cost benefit of \$8.05 in community service for each program dollar spent. For more information about KAB, call toll-free 888-742-8701 or visit KeepArkansasBeautiful.com.

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