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Great American Cleanup to host Awareness Fairs

(April 12, 2010) Keep Troup Beautiful looks forward to a fun-filled day of work and play Saturday as residents throughout Troup County come together to collect litter and recyclables during the Great American Cleanup.

As part of this year's annual day of community cleanup, Keep Troup Beautiful will host Community Awareness Fairs with environmental and conservation groups on-hand to share information about their organizations.

"We wanted to give people an opportunity to learn about local organizations that target environmental or conservation concerns and we wanted to give these groups an opportunity to promote their organizations," said Doris Jefferson, executive director of Keep Troup Beautiful. "We think this will be a community-building effort that will add to the excitement of the Great American Cleanup, and it's a way to recycle items that will benefit neighborhood organizations."

Community Awareness Fairs will be held in conjunction with Great American Cleanup closing celebrations Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at LaGrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce and Calvin Hipp Park in Hoganville. West Point, which is holding its Great American Cleanup festivities a day early, will host its Community Awareness Fair at Givorn's parking lot from 9 a.m. to noon on Friday.

Organizations setting up shop at the Fair in LaGrange include Hollis Hand Elementary School which will collect used tennis shoes for recycling, God's Grace Outreach which will collect used clothing, Hillside Community, Troup County Recycles, Sierra Club, Troup TREEmendous and Troup County Sheriff's Department.

In Hogansville, God's Bread Basket will accept donations of nonperishable food items to distribute to local citizens in need. Also manning tables will be the Boys and Girls Club, The Green Team from Hogansville Elementary School, and the Ministerial Association.

In West Point, Harmony House and the Food Bank will accept bed linens and bath towels, and food items, respectively; The Friends of Hawkes Library will collect used books; and Sav-a-Life will be collecting gently used and new baby items—all while distributing information about their organizations.

Jefferson said approximately 600 individuals are registered to date for participation in the Cleanup, “about equal to the largest number we’ve ever had for pre-registration,” she said, adding she anticipates more than 1,000 citizens taking part in Saturday’s event.

“But you don’t have to do your projects that day,” she said. “The Great American Cleanup runs through May 15, so if you can’t participate on Saturday, you can always do your part in the weeks after.”

Jefferson encourages groups who do pick up litter to let Keep Troup Beautiful know by May 15 how many bags of trash they collect so accurate statistics can be reflected in their annual report and shared with Keep Georgia Beautiful.

On Saturday, Cleanup participants may haul their bags of litter to the nearest Troup County convenience center or to the Chamber plaza where a trailer will be parked to accept bagged litter. Jefferson urges groups not able to haul bags on the day of the Cleanup to let Keep Troup Beautiful know the roadside location of their bagged trash by noon on Saturday and Troup County will retrieve them.

Troup County and City of LaGrange will accept tires during the Great American Cleanup at the Troup County Correctional Institute and the former location of the Main Street Fire Department.

Keep Troup Beautiful will collect various electronics for recycling, “everything except televisions,” said Jefferson, noting that operable TVs may be donated to Habitat for Humanity.

Closing celebrations in LaGrange and Hogansville begin at approximately 11:30 Saturday morning with door prizes distributed and awards presented for various contests,

including a competition among local high schools performing beautification projects and a contest to determine which group collecting trash on Saturday finds the most unusual item. Last year's most unusual item award went to LaGrange College students who found a set of animal bones, according to Jefferson.

The Second Annual Troup Trash Bash Challenge award will go to the government entity that picks up the most trash. Troup County Commissioners won last year's inaugural Trash Bash Challenge.

For more, call Keep Troup Beautiful at 706-884-9922, fax at 706-883-8215, or email djefferson@asginfo.net. Download registration forms at www.keeptroupbeautiful.com or pick them up at KTB offices at 251 S.L. White Boulevard, off Callaway Church Road; Troup County Government Center Commissioners Office or Planning Department; LaGrange Daily News at 105 Ashton Street; or Mimi's Apparel in Hogansville.