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**Troup commission challenges cities to bash trash  
at April 17 Great American Cleanup**

**(March 10, 2010)** The Troup County Board of Commissioners has thrown down the gauntlet, challenging the cities of LaGrange, West Point and Hogansville to gather the most trash at this year's Great American Cleanup, sponsored by Keep Troup Beautiful on April 17.

Troup's commissioners hauled in 1,051 bags of litter to claim victory at last year's inaugural Troup County Trash Bash Challenge.

"As defending champions, Troup County would love to welcome any newcomers to the contest," said Commission Chairman Ricky Wolfe.

The commission chairman and mayors brought a light-hearted approach to the heavy issue of local litter last year as they sought to raise awareness of the roadside trash problem while promoting the Great American Cleanup, a day set aside each spring to rid local roadsides of trash.



The beauty of spring in Troup County too often is marred by the presence of roadside litter.

“The county commissioners are challenging the mayors and councils and challenging other organizations to get involved,” said Keep Troup Beautiful Executive Director Doris Jefferson. “There’s a lot of space in Troup County but if everyone out there would pledge one hour, we could almost cover the entire county. It’s simply a matter of commitment and community-mindedness.”

Keep Troup Beautiful invites organizations to sign up as Pacesetters in March to build enthusiasm leading up to the Cleanup in April. Whether collecting trash or planting trees or flowers, Pacesetter groups willing to do their projects in advance will pave the way for a successful Cleanup, according to Jefferson. Pacesetters signed on so far include Hollis Hand Elementary School, Troup County Realtors Association, Kids for the Community, and the Hillside Community.

“Pacesetters, as well as any groups that take part in the Cleanup, can collect litter at spots they choose or call Keep Troup Beautiful and we’ll match you with an area in need,” said Jefferson. Trash collected at the Cleanup will be brought to sites in LaGrange, West Point and Hogansville where closing ceremonies are scheduled. The West Point Cleanup will be held April 16 with registration at Givorn’s parking lot. Hogansville’s Cleanup is set for April 17 with registration at City Park.

Registration for LaGrange and Troup County will be at the LaGrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce plaza where the Keep Georgia Beautiful mascot, “Buster the Brown

Trasher” will be on-hand to meet and greet participants and to congratulate groups that collect the most trash.

Jefferson encourages youth groups like Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to get involved and is pleased that 4-H Clubs plan to participate in this year’s Cleanup.

“And we would like to get more churches involved, especially their youth groups,” she said, adding her hopes that this year’s Cleanup tally of trash exceeds last year’s total of 20 tons, or 40,000 pounds. That total, according to Jefferson, included about 11,000 pounds of tires.

Tires will be collected again this year along with electronics for recycling. Used clothing will be accepted for God’s Grace Outreach, a local nonprofit that distributes clothes to those in need, and nonperishable food items will be accepted for God’s Bread Basket, a Hogansville food bank.

Keep Troup Beautiful invites local companies and organizations involved with conservation and/or environmental issues to set up a table on the morning of the event at the Chamber plaza where closing ceremonies will begin at 11:30.

“We’re offering this as a free opportunity for them to spread the word about what their organizations are doing in the area of environmental conservation,” said Jefferson.

To sign up as a Pacesetter, pre-register for the Great American Cleanup, or reserve a table for your organization at the Chamber plaza on the day of the event, call Keep Troup Beautiful, 706-884-9922, or pick up a registration form at their office at 251 S.L. White Boulevard, off Callaway Church Road.