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Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Announces Recipients of 2022 Volunteer and Community Partners Awards Program

(January 12, 2023) Each year, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful (KPB), a statewide nonprofit that focuses on litter cleanups and community improvements, announces the recipients of their recognition program for individuals, government, organizations and businesses whose efforts support and strengthen the mission of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania.

“We are grateful for our volunteers and partners across the state whose dedication, commitment and exceptional contributions helped advance our mission and strengthen community improvement efforts statewide in 2022”, said Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. “Each one is deserving of recognition.”

The **Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Volunteer of the Year Award** recognizes volunteers for significant and positive impacts toward keeping local communities clean and beautiful. The 2022 volunteers recognized include:

Jan Nehilla, nominated by Allegheny CleanWays

Jan was nominated by Allegheny CleanWays (ACW) for her work helping to clean up illegal dumpsites. She began volunteering in February 2022 and has over 24 events under her belt already! “Jan is a hard worker and up for any challenges ACW faces on dumpsite cleanups. She never complains and always has a good attitude. Jan is truly dedicated to making Allegheny County a cleaner, safer place to live,” said Erica Erica Pasquali, Allegheny CleanWays Land-Based Program Coordinator.

Fred Wertz, nominated by Keep Perry County Beautiful

Fred started volunteering with Keep Perry County Beautiful in 2016, during their annual Juniata River Cleanup. Since then, Fred has assisted with every waterway cleanup hosted by the affiliate and helped make the first official Earth Day Celebration in Perry County a success. He has also recruited friends to be part of affiliate activities. Fred also volunteers with numerous other community organizations and special events. You will often find him in his kayak making a difference!

Jenna Dillion, nominated by PA CleanWays of Venango County

This past year, Jenna has consistently volunteered at every special collection and recycling event at the Venango County's new Recycling Center. She has also been integral in recruiting additional volunteers during 2022. “Jenna not only cares deeply about recycling and the environment, but also about safety. She helps ensure that participants and volunteers have a safe and enjoyable time,” said Erik Johnson, PA CleanWays of Venango County Coordinator

and Recycling Coordinator & Facility Manager of Venango County Regional Planning Commission.

Tshoumi Quei Robinson II, nominated by Keep Royal Gardens Beautiful

Tshoumi joined as a member of Keep Royal Gardens Beautiful at the height of the pandemic when he contacted the affiliate in need of a volunteer project for his High School community service requirement. Once he saw the overgrowth of vegetation and the amount of work to be done, he recruited his entire family to volunteer. Together, they restored all the flower beds back to their natural beauty and pruned and mulched the trees. In addition, Tshoumi and his father cleaned up trash, tires and other debris along the perimeter of Royal Gardens. "I'm proud to honor Tshoumi with the 2022 Volunteer of the Year award, for his excellence, dedication and honorable contributions to the green spaces of our community," said Nicole Chandler, Keep Royal Gardens Beautiful Coordinator.

Beth Intoccia, nominated by Keep Chester County Beautiful

Beth founded the Litter Lifters of West Vincent, which has held many events since mid-2020 and removed well over 1,000 bags of litter from Chester County roadways and streams. "In addition to launching this group, she passionately advocated for a Keep PA Beautiful affiliate for Chester County. Beth's passion for improving the environment and educating others, also includes her mentoring others interested in making a difference in and around their communities in Chester County and beyond. Without Beth's drive, determination, and guidance, the Keep Chester County Beautiful affiliate would not exist today. We are grateful for Beth's love of nature and making communities stronger, cleaner, and better places to live," said Carrie Conwell, Keep Chester County Beautiful Coordinator and Senior Environmental Planner of Chester County.

The **Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Community Partner Award** honors outstanding partnerships with local governments, community organizations or businesses who enhance and are essential to local community programming. The 2022 recipients include:

The Creation Care Team of Saint Bruno Parish, nominated by Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling

In 2016 the Creation Care Team began collecting aluminum cans at St. Bruno's events in an effort to reduce landfill waste. After Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling opened the new Recycling Center in 2020, the Creation Care Team added glass bottles and jars to their list of acceptable items. They continued to develop their program when in March of 2022, an Eagle Scout built a recycling shelter on the edge of St. Bruno's property for parishioners and local community members to drop off glass bottles, and tin and aluminum cans. Currently the Creation Care Team consists of six volunteers that monitor the shelter daily. "Since the program began six years ago, the team has collected and recycled over 7, 264 pounds of aluminum cans. No matter the weather, the team of volunteers visit the site daily to ensure that the bins are not overflowing and creating unintentional litter," said Natalie Reece Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling, Program Director.

The City of McKeesport, nominated by Allegheny CleanWays

Allegheny CleanWays started working with the City of McKeesport in August of 2020 doing land-based cleanups. McKeesport's City Administrator Tom Maglicco, who recently joined the Allegheny CleanWays board of directors, has been a great advocate for the affiliate's work in the Mon Valley. Tom has not only stepped in to help with cleanups but has gotten media coverage; provided roll-off dumpsters; and helped secure other resources, including local

office/storage space, volunteers, and grant funding. The city Code Enforcement Agent, Eric Gumbert, who also works closely with the affiliate, reports illegal dumpsites, offers help anytime it's needed and praises the affiliate's hard work. Lastly, the city public works department has provided tire disposal and has given the affiliate access to their dumpsters and restroom facilities.

Wildheart Ministries, nominated by Keep Harrisburg-Dauphin County Beautiful (a program of Tri County Community Action)

Through a six-year partnership, Wildheart Ministries and Keep Harrisburg-Dauphin County Beautiful continue to make a huge impact in South Allison Hill by catalyzing various events that transform communities. During the Great Harrisburg Litter Cleanup, 56,260 pounds of trash and 600 tires were removed from public spaces throughout the city, making Harrisburg a cleaner and safer place to live, work and play. "Collaborating together has increased community involvement and increased the amount of trash collected," said Erica Lopez Martinez, Keep Harrisburg-Dauphin County Beautiful Coordinator and Tri County Community Action's Revitalization Coordinator.

Lewistown Borough, nominated by PA CleanWays of Mifflin County

For over 10 years, Lewistown Borough has donated space for the affiliate's annual tire recycling collection. The donation of a safe and convenient space allows the affiliate to continuously offer the community tire disposal at a low rate, reducing the number of illegally dumped tires throughout the community and ensuring proper disposal. Lewistown Borough also partners with the affiliate for their annual Juniata River cleanup by donating dumpsters at a reduced rate.

"It's inspiring and humbling to learn what's being done locally to improve neighborhoods and change behavior. Without our affiliates, volunteers and partners, our programs would not be possible. A big thanks to all of you! Your help and support is essential to our work," said Reiter.

Award winners and their programs can be found at keeppabeautiful.org under Grants & Awards. For volunteer opportunities choose Calendar of Events.

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About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's vision is a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has worked with hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the state to pick up nearly 152 million pounds of trash from Pennsylvania's roadways, waterways, greenways, vacant lots, forestlands and other community spaces. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's core programming focuses on litter and illegal dump prevention, cleanup, community greening, and proper waste handling and sustainable practices. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful works with many partnering organizations on the state and grassroots level to accomplish our goal of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the nation's largest volunteer-based community action and education organization. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit www.keeppabeautiful.org.