

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Stephanie Larson, Program Coordinator  
Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful  
Tel: (724) 836-4121  
Email: [slarson@keeppabeautiful.org](mailto:slarson@keeppabeautiful.org)  
Web site: [www.keeppabeautiful.org](http://www.keeppabeautiful.org)



---

**Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Announces Recipients of 2024 Affiliate Volunteers, Community Partners, and Stewards for Tomorrow Awards**

(February 7, 2025) Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful (KPB) recognizes individuals, government, organizations and businesses whose efforts support and strengthen the mission of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. The recipients were nominated by Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's Affiliates who carry out community improvement programs and events statewide.

"We are grateful for our affiliates who foster strong relationships within their communities, as well as the volunteers and partners whose unwavering dedication, commitment and exceptional contributions have advanced our mission and strengthened community improvement efforts across Pennsylvania in 2024", said Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. "Each one is truly 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 2024 volunteers recognized include:

**Katherine Crawford**, nominated by Allegheny CleanWays



Katherine has been participating in Land and Water clean-ups with Allegheny CleanWays (ACW) since the Spring of 2023. She started volunteering with ACW as a way to be outside with other people after she took a work-from-home job. "I enjoy guessing what a piece of trash used to be or how old it is; it's mini-anthropology sessions. It's rewarding to see areas return to nature after we've removed major debris," said Katherine.

**Dave Shirey**, nominated by Keep Chester County Beautiful



For the past eight years Dave has organized a litter cleanup day at 80 locations in southern Chester County, and each year the event grows. Dave organizes over 100 volunteers, assigning groups to specific areas, detailing what help is needed and how to accomplish it. He also engages the community, specifically athletes and coaches at Avon Grove High School who now participate in the clean-ups. "He is a wonderful person who always stops what he is doing to come pick me up if I walk too far during a cleanup. He has never given up hope that individuals will step up to maintain the beauty of Chester County," said Kelly McDowell, 2023 Volunteer of the Year.

**Dave Rice**, nominated by Keep Fayette County Green



"Dave Rice and his wife have lived in Wharton Township since July 2020. He began volunteering at the township's recycling day and also volunteers for our Annual Hard-to-Recycle event. Dave is a faithful, dependable volunteer and rarely misses a recycling day. He has been an asset to the township," said Sheila Shea, Recycling Coordinator, Fayette County Recycling Convenience Center and Keep Fayette County Green Coordinator.

"Donating 4 hours each month to help our community is a small price to pay to help keep Wharton Township environmentally clean and beautiful for years to come," Rice said. Dave and his wife enjoy spending time in the outdoors with their dogs and are happy to call

the Laurel Highlands area home.

**John Morrow**, nominated by Keep Northeastern PA Beautiful



John is an indispensable asset to community conservation efforts in Northeastern Pennsylvania (NEPA). He is a dedicated member of Keep NEPA Beautiful's advisory committee and plays a pivotal role in youth outreach that ensures that the next generation understands the importance of sustainability and conservation. Notable examples of his dedication include organizing the Duryea Swamps cleanup, where his efforts addressed critical environmental challenges in a sensitive wetland area, and leading tree-plantings at the historic Knox Mine Disaster site, contributing to both ecological restoration and community remembrance. John's commitment to conservation is unwavering, reflecting his passion for preserving the natural beauty and heritage of Northeastern

Pennsylvania.

**Darby Wiekrykas**, nominated by Keep Reading Beautiful



Darby is a mentor, a connector and a cheerleader for Reading's community organizations. For many years she has served as the volunteer coordinator for United Way of Berks County, she has also mentored the next generation of volunteer coordinators and non-profits serving the community in a variety of ways. Darby's support was instrumental in the establishment of Keep Reading Beautiful, providing behind the scenes support that has increased participation and longevity of events like Keep Reading Beautiful's Great American Cleanup, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, and September 11 Day of Giving.

**Kaye Schwenk**, nominated by Schuylkill Keep It Pretty (SKIP)

As the biology teacher and Biology Club advisor at Schuylkill Haven Area High School (SHAHS), Kaye Schwenk has been involved with Schuylkill Keep It Pretty (SKIP)'s conservation efforts in Schuylkill County, both personally and through her classroom, for more than two decades. Her long list includes 24 years of highway litter cleanups, 12 years of student tree



plantings with the PA Game Commission, the PPL Community Roots Seedling program, engaging students for the Schuylkill Action Network Clean Water Art Contest, Schuylkill Acts and Impacts during a week-long watershed student engagement expedition, PA Fish & Boat Commission's Trout in the Classroom program, and last but not least involving students in trout stocking with the Schuylkill Headwaters and the Schuylkill Haven Recreation Commission! "Kaye would be the perfect

person for this honor. She has been doing cleanups for decades in our county and she truly has devoted her life to helping the waterways and environments of Schuylkill County," said Ty Warman, SHAHS Principal.

### **Patricia Jacobina, nominated by Westmoreland Cleanways**



During the spring of 2024, a pollinator garden was planted at Westmoreland Cleanways. Patti Jacobina, a volunteer, was an integral component in this process. As a local Penn State Master Gardener and Phipps certified Sustainable Landcare Advocate, Patti provided invaluable expertise for the project. She designed the garden's layout, had the soil tested, then researched where to find the most appropriate native plants to include based on the results. Finally, she organized volunteers needed to transplant the hundreds of plants into the garden. Since the initial planting, Patti continues to care for the garden by weeding, offering advice on deer, and making future plans for adding new plants. Patti devoted more than 50 hours to this project and plans to continue volunteering during future growing seasons. Her hands-on work in planting, organizing, and maintaining

the garden ensures its success in helping to beautify the grounds of the recycling center and in supporting local pollinators!

The **Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Community Partner Award** honors an outstanding partnership with local government, community organization or business who enhance and are essential to local community programming. The 2024 partners recognized include:

### **All You Can Inc., nominated by Keep Dauphin County Beautiful**



Keep Dauphin County Beautiful is proud to award All You Can Inc. with our 2024 Community Partner award. All You Can Inc.'s help in Harrisburg City council's Hot Spot Saturdays program helped build a network of local residents to foster a strong community sense of purpose and beneficial habits. In the past three years the initiative helped removed over 150 tons of litter and rubbish

while engaging over 100 volunteers!

**Fayette County Association of Township Supervisors & Fayette County Boroughs,**  
nominated by Keep Fayette County Green



For the past five years, Fayette County Association of Township Supervisors and Fayette County Boroughs have been invaluable community partners by demonstrating a deep commitment to recycling in Fayette County. They have participated in both hard-to-recycle collection events and roadside cleanups. In 2024, they partnered with Keep Fayette County Green for four “Mountain Area

Cleanups” which collected: 1.5 tons of household recyclables, 16.67 tons of tires, 6 tons of scrap metal and 8.19 tons of electronics and televisions. They contribute to environmental conservation and community engagement by helping to restore natural beauty, protect wildlife and create a sense of pride and responsibility in their communities. They also address illegal dumpsites and promptly clean them up to help prevent them from becoming health risks for their communities. These efforts help keep our communities clean and as more desirable places to live.

**Hamilton Lane,** nominated by Scranton Tomorrow



In mid-2023, Jared Deutsch, an associate with Hamilton Lane, contacted Scranton Tomorrow about bringing members of his team to a City Pride project. Shortly afterwards, Jared expressed his desire that Hamilton Lane be a part of as many projects as possible with Scranton Tomorrow. As a company, priorities for Hamilton Lane include meaningful work, ways to support all members of the community, education efforts, economic development, and the environment, thus they were a perfect partner for Scranton Tomorrow. Hamilton Lane participated in numerous community events

including cleanups and plantings at Capouse Corners Pocket Park, plantings in Doherty Park, assisting with a recycling event on National Pennsylvania Day, and initiating, as well as sponsoring, three projects at the Gino Merli Veterans Center.

**Hydro,** nominated by Schuylkill Keep It Pretty



Hydro has been an Adopt a Highway business for over 20 years, conducting two clean ups a year, along a stretch of Route 61 in Schuylkill County. In 2024, Hydro employees collected 57 bags of litter during their spring and fall cleanups. Hydro also makes many investments in Schuylkill County through recycling initiatives and sponsorships. In 2024, Hydro unveiled a large expansion of the recycling facility in its Cressona facility in Schuylkill County. With this expansion, the facility will be able to process 64,000 tons of post-consumer scrap annually, an increase of 30,000 tons.

The enhanced recycling capacity and capabilities support the shift toward a closed-loop system, allowing aluminum scrap to be reprocessed into new products, further advancing Hydro's sustainability efforts.

**Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, nominated by Allegheny CleanWays**



For the past decade Allegheny CleanWays (ACW) has been partnering with Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (PPC) to help eliminate litter and illegal dumping throughout city parks. With PPC's support ACW has been able to remove two tons of dumped trash and 106 tires from Hays Woods, three tons of dumped

trash and 235 tires from McKinley Park and four tons, plus 93 tires from Mt. Washington Park. For over five years ACW has participated in 'What the Muck?,' the multi-day clean-up effort organized by PPC each spring for Lake Elizabeth in Allegheny Commons Park on the Northside. PPC helps support ACW through collective grants, providing cleanup supplies, volunteer recruitment and social media presence. PPC shares ACW's passion for cleaner, healthier public parks for all to enjoy. Their staff are organized, reliable, consistent and willing to dive into messy projects right alongside ACW!

**Recycling Services, Inc., nominated by Keep Chester County Beautiful**



Recycling Services, Inc. (RSI) is a local, Chester County based non-profit recycling center, located in North Coventry Township. RSI volunteered to serve as the drop off location for the county's campaign sign recycling event that was held in November over a two-week period. RSI helped unload and sort all steel and plastic collected from four collection sites and arranged for the items to be properly recycled. The collection resulted in hundreds of pounds of plastic and well over one thousand pounds of steel for recycling. RSI allowed Keep Chester County Beautiful to use their site, plus they provided volunteers, storage and transportation for the collection. Just as important, RSI provided their invaluable experience. This reduced the learning curve for Keep Chester County Beautiful as RSI provided education on how

the materials need to be collected, sorted, stored, and recycled. This first-time event could not have had the level of success it did without the folks of Recycling Services, Inc.!

**Stony Creek Anglers, nominated by Keep Norristown Beautiful**



The Stony Creek Anglers have been cleaning up Stony Creek in Norristown for nearly 40 years! This past year was their 38th clean-up of the creek and surrounding Elmwood Park. Each clean-up honors the memory of a past member(s) of the Stony Creek Anglers and includes stocking Stony Creek with trout. The Stony Creek Anglers, founded in 1997, provide a meeting place in Montgomery County for all Sports persons of good will - to foster Conservation of Fishing Areas and Game Lands in our Commonwealth - to encourage the protection and propagation of all Wildlife, Game, and Fish - to develop

opportunities for the greater enjoyment of Hunting, Fishing, and other outdoor recreation, and to search for solutions to problems of Ecology and Pollution of the natural resources on our

Community and Commonwealth. The annual event attracts over 100 volunteers and the support of the local Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts.

The **Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Stewards For Tomorrow Youth Award** honors an outstanding community member, 18 or under, who has demonstrated commitment to keeping their community clean and beautiful. The 2024 Stewards recognized include:

**Luke Hamaker**, nominated by [Keep Fayette County Green](#)



“Luke’s work with Keep Fayette County Green started in October 2023 when his mother asked for a tour of the county recycling center for his 10th birthday. She said her son loves to recycle and all he wanted was to tour a recycling center,” said Sheila Shea, the Fayette County Recycling Coordinator and Stormwater Manager. After Luke toured the facility, he came back to Sheila with some great questions and ideas. So, Sheila gave Luke a goal: collect 1,000 pounds of plastic bags/film for the [Nex-Trex challenge](#). He took that challenge and exceeded it in just four months. Not content to stop there, Luke further collected over 7,000 pounds of plastic bags/film! Luke has dedicated himself to protecting our environment and saving the planet. We are proud to honor Luke

as a representative of Keep Fayette County Green, the county affiliate of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, in the hope that his kind heart and bright spirit will encourage others to start their own recycling journeys!

**Alex Kirkpatrick**, nominated by [Allegheny CleanWays](#)



Alex began his relationship with Allegheny CleanWays (ACW) in 2013, when ACW gave Alex and his family supplies for a community cleanup in the Brentwood area. After that first event, Alex began volunteering with his mother and father at cleanups on a regular basis. Starting in 2021, Alex began logging his volunteer hours with ACW for his Scout Troop 228. According to ACW’s records, Alex logged over 130 volunteer hours in the past four years!

Alex also took a leadership role by coordinating several large dumpsite cleanups with his scout troop. Most recently, 24 volunteers showed up to assist Alex and his troop to remove a large dumpsite in the Spring Hill neighborhood of Pittsburgh. Despite a cold rain that turned the hillsides to mud, the group persevered to remove 2,800 pounds of debris. Alex and his father have also participated in two of ACW’s triTRASHlon events, which is a two-day bike packing, dumpbusting experience.

For more information about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and their county and municipal affiliates, visit [keepbeautiful.org/](http://keepbeautiful.org/).

# # #

### **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 162 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.keppabeautiful.org](http://www.keppabeautiful.org).