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2012 KHB Annual Report



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Jim Tates

*Incoming Chair, Houston Clean City Commission,
dba Keep Houston Beautiful
President, U.S. West Region & Latin America
The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company*

Jim began supporting Keep Houston Beautiful as a corporate event sponsor, and then demonstrated his strong commitment to its mission by first becoming a Commissioner. He then quickly graduated to Executive Committee member, and now he is excited about the opportunity to serve as the new Chairman. Jim is truly dedicated to the mission of the organization, and looks forward to working with its leadership team in order to build upon the successes and momentum built over the past years. He believes his own company's vision aligns perfectly – Scotts Miracle-Gro aims “to help people of all ages express themselves on their own piece of earth.” Jim enthuses, “How rewarding when that self-expression leads to the beautification of Houston!”

Jim's plans for the future are to continue to increase awareness of the need to create a cleaner and healthier city for all Houstonians through education and community partnerships; he also wants to better communicate to citizens that they each have an important role to play in improving our city's natural beauty and our quality of life. In addition, he would like to sponsor consumer research to better understand the household recognition of the Keep Houston Beautiful brand and its mission, and thus find new ways to increase the level of public awareness of its programs. Jim believes this will in turn lead to more community participation and more fund raising success in support of the Commission's efforts.





TRIBUTE TO OUTGOING CHAIRMAN



Daniel Sullenbarger

*Outgoing Chairman, Houston Clean City Commission
Area Manager, VP Corporate Compliance
Marathon Oil Company*

Reporting on a year of accomplishments at Keep Houston Beautiful, Chairman Dan Sullenbarger presented KHB's 2012 Impact Report before the Houston Clean City Commission at its Annual December meeting hosted by Marathon Oil Corporation. It was his last meeting prior to his retirement from Marathon and the Commission.

Executive Director, Robin Blut paid tribute to Sullenbarger and the earlier Chairmen who left a priceless legacy in her introductory remarks.

"The Houston Clean City Commission has been blessed over the years by having exceptional chairmen. Each has brought a set of unique skills to the commission, right as we needed it. Don Fitch, an early chairman, had a public relations background and worked in the solid waste business, and loved strategic planning. He was our chair during the Economic Summit and helped planned the citywide cleanup involving over 10,000 volunteers.

"Bill Linthicum, another past chairman, also worked in the waste industry. His company provided equipment, volunteers and refreshments for many ongoing weekend cleanups.

"Dan Sullenbarger, as an attorney, served as a legal counselor to me in my role as Executive Director. He focused his energies on the health of the Commission as an organization. He made sure the agency protocols were up to date with all rules and standards, something an agency that has been around for so many years truly needs. Dan invested a lot of time in preparing for our meetings to ensure that everything was complete and running smoothly. He managed our compliance issues with such warmth and charm, that the whole process was virtually painless. He demonstrated a sincere interest in the individuals who served on the Commission, he encouraged participation, and his company provided meeting space and refreshments for all our Commission meetings. As a result of his special expertise and dedication to detail, the Commission is a much healthier agency today."

Sullenbarger reflected on his role as Chairman, "My vision [as Chairman] was to make as many people as possible aware of the

vital role KHB plays for the benefit of our community."

"I believe [my] single greatest contribution is my spirit of commitment to the goals and objectives of KHB. I continuously challenged my fellow Commissioners to lead by example and live up to the expectation others had in them as Clean City Commissioners. Whether it was attendance at Commission meetings, volunteering at the next clean up or beautification project, or meeting with local civic groups to discuss KHB, I worked to inspire others to carry the KHB banner high and proudly serve to improve our great city.

He said, "There is no other non-profit in our community that does more to improve the Greater Houston area than Keep Houston Beautiful. With a paid staff of 3 people and an annual expense budget of about \$500,000, KHB partners with over 26,000 volunteers to complete over 600 projects. The work of KHB is openly visible to every resident and visitor of our city, and no other local non-profit's statistics can compare on a cost – benefit analysis."

"People who are actively involved in HCC/KHB have historically had a passion to do [whatever] it takes to make our city more beautiful... This consistent common bond inspires those involved with HCC/KHB to look at work accomplishments as 'projects,' not in the short term, but in the long term, and to come to recognize [that] it is more about a 'process.' The efforts of people, like me, really never end with the success of a particular project... It is truly this process that keeps those involved with HCC/KHB highly inspired and motivated for today and optimistic about Houston for the future," he concluded.

In his remarks, Jim Tates, incoming Chairman paid tribute to Sullenbarger, "As Chairman, Dan has provided outstanding service to the City of Houston. He is a professional, authentic, benevolent leader who gets involved and delivers great results."



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2012 IMPACT REPORT

KHB – Our Reach, Our Impact

July 2011 to June 2012

Mission

Our mission is to engage individuals to take greater responsibility for their neighborhood environments.

A massive amount of progress was made over a year's time by Keep Houston Beautiful and its many partners, sponsors and community volunteers to create an ever more vibrant and sustainable community. And this progress was clearly quantifiable. Real armies of volunteers were organized and mobilized, an enormous amount of goods and supplies were donated or underwritten, many creative design projects were imagined and completed, and numerous city departments and agencies pulled together to realize truly impressive improvements all over our city.

In total, KHB put together 614 neighborhood cleanup weekends in a single year, enlisting over 26,000 volunteers! Our volunteer workforces tackled the toughest and dirtiest of jobs:

- We removed well over a million pounds of trash and debris in all;
- We cleared 52 illegal dumps and disposed of over 2,000 old tires; and
- We cleaned trash out of more than 500 vacant lots and over 300 ditches!

And then we labored further to beautify the city and restore public areas to our citizens:

- 39 parks were cleaned up, as well as more than 200 esplanades and over 1,500 city blocks;
- 109 flower beds and gardens were installed with over 1,800 flowers and plants; and
- a total of 28,690 trees were planted to help replenish our urban forest after one of the most damaging droughts in recent history!

KHB also routinely undertakes another important responsibility -- to educate our citizens about the far-reaching value of all these beautification efforts. During this year, KHB reached close to 15,000 students through our education programs, and improved the understanding of almost 42,000 volunteers via 17 community events! And the results create a measurable economic impact:

- Planting a tree within 50 feet of a residence can increase a home's value by 9%.
- Reclamation and greening of vacant lots can increase adjacent property values by 30%.
- We realize a 23:1 return on community improvement initiatives, meaning that for every \$1 invested in community improvement, nearly \$23 in measurable benefits is returned through our actions.

Without a doubt, Keep Houston Beautiful and its partners and volunteers have changed the face of many of our local communities. Together we have given the gift of neighborhood pride and a new, invigorated quality of life to countless residents who call Houston home.

BEAUTIFICATION FEATURES

Keep Houston Beautiful Tool Warehouse

KHB's extraordinarily broad experience base, along with our vast contacts in the community, have placed this organization at the nexus of Mayor Annise Parker's efforts to build strong neighborhoods. Just as the Mayor envisions a city defined by vibrant neighborhoods and a clean, flourishing environment, KHB fosters joint agency partnerships, and leverages local resources to support beautification efforts throughout our community. We are mobilizing our residents to work together to build a better neighborhood and a better future for all of us.

KHB's Tool Warehouse is one of the showpieces of this effort. We offer a lending library of tools to the public, including all the various hand and power implements and equipment needed to clean up litter, build nature play gardens, plant trees and flower beds and more. Indeed, these tools are a critical part of the success of many neighborhood improvement projects across our city, streamlining volunteer beautification efforts. The KHB warehouse is located in the City of Houston's Environmental Service Center at 5614 Neches, Houston, Texas 77026.

In another special proactive effort, Keep Houston Beautiful applied for and won a grant for 50 recycling bins that were then stored at our tool warehouse and made available at no charge for various special events. These receptacles were given by the Coca-Cola Public Space Recycling Bin Grant program, which is administered by Keep America Beautiful, and which is designed to support local efforts to collect beverage containers in large public settings. For example, thanks to KHB and the Coca-Cola grant, the City of Houston was able to utilize all of our bins at the Discovery Green New Years Celebration.

According to Alyce Coffee, Solid Waste Department, "Ten tons of recyclable beverage containers were collected at special events in 2012."

The main thrust of this idea is to capture more "away-from-home" recyclable materials that would not normally be captured in our regular curbside pickup programs.

Keep Houston Beautiful goes to great lengths to support all kinds of community beautification efforts. Volunteer organizations simply submit a request packet for the tools they need to borrow a few weeks in advance of the landscaping/beautification plantings or community/neighborhood cleanup projects they have planned. All the instructions about how to reserve tools and supplies are conveniently posted on-line at www.houstonbeautiful.org under the Beautification and Cleanup category. Whatever your neighborhood vision may be, KHB's warehouse has the right tools for your job!

Houston Rockets Go Green Tree Plantings

April 2012

The Houston Rockets approached Keep Houston Beautiful to design a volunteer activity for their employees, and the Houston Rockets Go Green effort was born. KHB routinely matches corporate volunteer initiatives with community programs to create customized service projects, and in this case, KHB connected the Rockets organization with the Houston Housing Authority and others, which resulted in a total of 50 trees being planted to beautify two public housing developments.

"Keep Houston Beautiful has been a great partner for us, not only helping us give back to the community environmentally, but by helping us giving back in general and to those in need," says **Hai Duong, Senior Community Relations Coordinator for the Houston Rockets** organization. "Mr. [Les] Alexander and the Houston Rockets have always focused on not only winning championships, but also being a champion in the community". She added, "[This event] helped educate us about the community around us and how we can help and participate in future projects."

Twenty-five of the trees were planted along a future bike trail behind Clayton Homes, and the rest of the trees were installed around an amphitheater at the center of Kennedy Place. Living Earth Technology generously supplied the mulch, and KHB provided the tools to support the work, managed the logistics of each planting, and arranged the donation of all the trees from Lowe's. The Rockets Go Green initiative also included their hosting of a number of recycling events throughout the Houston area. As a result, a whopping 12,332 pounds of e-waste was collected and saved from our landfills!

"We are excited to partner with organizations that share our enthusiasm for making our developments greener places to live," said **Tory Gunsolley, Houston Housing Authority's President and CEO**. "This effort also shows how a little teamwork can make a big difference in our communities and for the families who call them home."

"It's great teamwork," said **Dan Sullenbarger, former Chairman of Houston Clean City Commission and Keep Houston Beautiful**, "I feel the buzz of activity every day at KHB as our commissioners, staff and volunteers help make events like this one successful for the benefit of our wonderful Houston community."

Houston Police Department's Southwest Division

*Officers Remembrance Garden
August 2012*

Ruth Hurst, long-time KHB commissioner and dedicated Houston Police Department volunteer, focused our attention on the need for renovation and enhancement of the memorial garden and landscaping at the Southwest Police Station. So Keep Houston Beautiful partnered with the Houston Police Department and with Disney, through a special screening of *The Odd Life of Timothy Green*, to celebrate the revitalization of this special outdoor area designed to commemorate lost officers. The memorial was originally created in honor of James C. Boswell (killed in the line of duty 12/9/89) and Guy Gaddis (killed in the line of duty 1/31/94), but was in need of extensive repair.

Organized and directed by Keep Houston Beautiful, a large crew of volunteers worked to trim trees, lay mulch, repair planters, replace station signs, and restore plaques and plant flowers. This was much more than just a memorial maintenance project – strategic improvements also addressed drainage problems, repaired hazardous areas, and enhanced access.

Susan Cita, professional landscape architect and Senior Associate for TBG Partners, is a dedicated Keep Houston Beautiful volunteer who planned the work and created an inspirational 4-season remembrance garden, with the thought that, “We should not just remember these heroes on the anniversary of their deaths -- we want to honor them year round.” With this intention in mind, she planted the garden space with a red, white and blue patriotic theme, designed to always be in bloom. Susan contributes her expertise and time to these projects because she believes we all have an obligation to give back to our community, just as these officers gave to us. As a result, the project united the community in a volunteer effort to bring charm and life back to the Southwest Division, and to make it a more inviting gathering place for area residents.

And sadly, Officer Amadi Huerta, Jr. (killed off-duty on 10/21/12) was recently honored with a new cross which was added to this Remembrance Garden, demonstrating that this is indeed a sustainable effort -- a truly living memorial that continues to inspire the police officers and the community they serve.

Many thanks to members of KHB Beautification Committee for pitching in to give the volunteers a hand, Sallé Morse and Jan Rose supervised a cadre of 22 volunteers from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Houston, Texas North Stake. In-kind service providers include; New Braeswood Revitalization Association, Key-Scape LLC, Upchurch Kimbrough Houston, The City of Houston Public Works and Engineering Streets and Drainage Division, Environmental Design and Trees for Houston and Living Earth Technology.

Houston Astros Play Green Tree Planting

June 2012

As part of an ongoing environmental partnership, Keep Houston Beautiful and the Houston Astros team up twice a year for a “Home Run” tree planting to beautify and restore our local community. These projects are part of the Astros Play Green program, an effort that seeks to enhance the quality of life for Astros fans, and KHB takes on the role of planning each planting project, and organizing a volunteer workforce to get the job done. This time the tree planting was staged in Memorial Park, to help replace some of the forest lost to Hurricane Ike. In one day, 35 trees were planted near I-10 and Westcott, with each representing a home run hit by an Astros player at Minute Maid Park. This coordinated effort shows how a positive business attitude and nurtured alliances can significantly contribute to our community’s wellbeing.

Partners in this project include the Houston Astros, Keep Houston Beautiful, the Associated Credit Union of Texas, HLS Enterprises, Christison Landscaping, Tree Town USA – Home of the Empire Live Oak, Memorial Park Conservancy, and the Houston Parks and Recreation Department.



LITTER PREVENTION AND RECYCLING EDUCATION

Litter Is Wrong Too Campaign

2012

Keep Houston Beautiful embarked on a fun public service campaign this year to engage the public in an entertaining way at several outreach events. The goal is to remind residents that littering is just plain wrong. Everyone is encouraged to take part and tell us what those wrongs are -- "Littering is wrong, but you can make it write!" Participants are asked to visit Keep America Beautiful's website at www.LitteringIsWrongToo.org to "write your wrong," share it with friends and pledge their support.

The effort is a light-hearted approach to get attention and to get people talking about littering, with a special focus on engaging young people from age 18 to 34 in a prevention strategy. The message is:

- Littering in Houston is unacceptable, inappropriate and just plain wrong.
- Litter, sadly, can be seen throughout Houston; it is an eyesore to our beautiful (and green) city and impacts us all.
- Litter invites more litter. Once litter has accumulated along a road or in a community, people are more likely to keep littering. Now that is wrong.
- Eighty percent of our waterways are littered with trash that was dropped on land.
- Litter is costly to us all. Cleanup costs the U.S. almost \$11.5 billion each year, with businesses paying \$9.1 billion. Governments, schools and other organizations pick up the remainder.
- Keep America Beautiful's 2009 National Visible Litter Survey and Litter Cost Study found that litter in a community decreases property values by 7 percent.
- Litter can also hurt Houston's economy by discouraging new businesses from opening in the city.

The KHB displays are set up at large group events, like at the Rockets, Astros and Dynamo games, as well as at farmers markets and other public gatherings. The Litter Is Wrong Too campaign has been a very creative and fun feature to add to our anti-littering efforts.



Litter Index

February 2012

Early in the calendar year, KHB did a visual survey of the broad Houston area to assess the amount of litter in our community. The Community Appearance Index is designed to gather data annually, and the results are used to develop a local plan to change attitudes and behavior regarding litter and related community improvement issues. Developed by the national office of Keep America Beautiful, this is a complex procedure using a rating scale of 1 to 4, with 1 representing the least amount of litter, and 4 indicating a high level of litter present. In the end, Houston's composite score fell a little below the middle nationally, which is a positive rating overall, meaning that our city is maintaining a reasonable level of litter, but there is still a lot of work to be done.

The process began with a group of landscape architects working to create maps of the Houston area, along with the City of Houston Planning Department. Then they divided the city into police districts so assessors could drive through each area contiguously. Wil Uecker, retired Rice University faculty member and former KHB commissioner, helped set up the Litter Index project and provided invaluable services, including:

- Preparation of the maps,
- Selection of sites,
- Training for assessors, and
- Color coding system that would better communicate the results.

All the sites were pre-selected on our maps and the routes were determined in advance, well before the workers were sent out to observe and record their findings. Then the scorers drove around vacant lots, Houston Parks and Recreation Department areas, utility corridors, street curbs and esplanades and school areas, as well as other places where litter tends to collect. They traversed residential areas, multi-family housing developments, commercial properties, industrial complexes, civic areas, vacant lots and open areas as well. It was a big job, but the effort was worth it. The survey results showed which police districts were below the City average, and what kind of problems were encountered in each. This included tabulating where there were a high number of junk vehicles, lots of outdoor storage areas and illegal dumping sites, as well as what types of other litter were found around town.

Thanks to this assessment, we are better able to address our trouble spots, and focus our efforts on the most needy areas for improvement. One example of how we can use the information gathered is in what we found around school areas overall. We saw that a lot of the litter around schools is primarily composed of cans and plastic drink bottles, which suggests that an addition of well-placed recycling bins at the schools and nearby transition points might help alleviate the amount of public trash in these locations. Another benefit of the survey is that the results generated strong statistics to support a City of Houston grant request to the EPA to help us address the serious issue of illegal dumping in the Houston area.

The Litter Index project was another successful partnership in a local application of a program generated by the Keep America Beautiful office, in which our Houston coalition of volunteers and agencies led the way in a worthy effort that stretched across the nation. Involving many community representatives in the process is vitally important, in order to achieve partnership solutions and to promote individual responsibility, ownership and pride in the results generated from this survey.

Recycling Round Up

2012

Keep Houston Beautiful is deeply dedicated to recycling as an important component of litter reduction and community beautification and pride. Year-round, the KHB website provides many tools to promote and facilitate recycling efforts, including:

- Talkin' Trash, a recycle facts activity sheet for kids.
- Downloadable recycling activity books.
- Composting, rain barrel and rain garden fact sheets.
- Free supplies for America Recycles Day.
- Link to web-based children's recycling programs from Clean Sweep U.S.A.
- Teacher training and handbooks and activity books to support teacher curricula.
- A guide to create Environmental Outdoor Learning Centers.
- Litter Free School Zone program materials.
- Hosting the Zero and One Club student challenge program.
- Listing of neighborhood drop-off sites.
- Link to Earth 911.com for other drop-off sites around the country, with the theme, Make Every Day Earth Day!
- Information about Living Earth mulch.
- Linking to the Curbside Value Partnership program, an joint effort between professionals, the general public and educators to increase participation in curbside recycling, giving recycling tools and listing best practices for communities, and offering a way to measure growth using solid data.

Keep Houston Beautiful also participated in a number of exciting special seasonal events:

- The local component of the Keep America Beautiful Recycle Bowl, a K-12 school competition in the state and across the country that took place this year from October 15 to November 9, is a friendly contest to motivate young people to adopt more sustainable behaviors. The purpose is to drive home the point that recycling is the easiest and most effective way to protect our natural resources, conserve energy and reduce carbon emissions. The program also teaches students that recycling creates jobs and stimulates our economy. In Houston, our local Briargrove Elementary participated in the national competition for the second year in a row.
- America Recycles Day, designated by President Obama as November 15, 2012, offered another opportunity for Keep Houston Beautiful to promote recycling in Houston. The national program included a new Recycling At Work pledge for businesses, recycling tips for everyone, a Video of the Week posting and a T-shirt design contest for the special day.

Most importantly, toolkits and go-to guides were provided to help local groups organize their own events, including customizable templates for posters and banners and handouts, media materials and activity plans.

- KHB was also pleased to help host the 4th annual Books and Bikes Giveaway, together with the City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department and DRC Emergency Services, which provided bikes and books to 30 boys and girls between the ages of 6-10 years of age. Houston City Council members helped identify deserving families for these special holiday gifts.

Keep Houston Beautiful also makes available 50 large beverage recycling bins from our Tool Warehouse for various special events for the public. These receptacles are provided to capture more "away-from-home" recyclable materials that would otherwise not be collected in our regular curbside pickup programs. KHB applied for and won a grant from Coca-Cola in order to add this service to our community recycling effort.

Keep Houston Beautiful provides strong, ongoing inspiration by invigorating a wide variety of local recycling efforts. The KHB website is an invaluable one-stop-shop service, providing access to all these programs, plus information about the City of Houston's ReUse Warehouse for constructions materials, information about compostable bags, tree and junk waste collection services, and how to utilize a RecycleBank to earn spendable points for recycling. Recycling remains a crucial part of neighborhood cleanup efforts, and KHB leads the way in providing recycling resources.



GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP

The Great American Cleanup

March, April and May 2012

The GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP was a special project of the national organization, Keep America Beautiful, and was designed to be the country's largest community improvement program. As part of this effort, our local chapter, Keep Houston Beautiful, was handpicked to be one of the 10 major urban areas across the U.S. to host a first-ever National Day of Action on April 28 as well. KHB kicked everything off with their annual Keep Houston Beautiful Day on April 14, then coordinated a number of projects throughout the month to help clean neighborhoods, to plant more trees, to improve our parks, to spread the word about the need to conserve our resources, and to put in the effort to keep our city sparkling.

The GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP reminds us all that a better environment begins in our own communities. In fact, the work we do in our own backyard affects our entire planet. Their motto is, 'Green Starts Here!' It's all about our quality of life – beautiful communities are more than just nice places to look at – they are economically vibrant centers where people want to live, work, shop and play. Communities that are clean and well cared for help deter crime and keep our neighborhoods safe. And a community that takes pride in their own surroundings sets an example for others to treat it with the same respect.

Keep Houston Beautiful Day is an annual tradition of KHB, and this year it also served as a spark to ignite this special national event. The day began with two cleanup projects deftly planned and coordinated by the Greater East End Management District, with KHB supplying the volunteer workforce to complete the tasks they designed:

- They spruced up Japhet Creek Green Finger Park, which is located along a natural stream on the east side of downtown; it is the last tributary of Buffalo Bayou that has not yet been covered or channeled.
- They also cleaned up the historic Dawson-Lunnon Cemetery, located in a 100-year-old African American neighborhood for which a plaque is being sought from the Texas Historical Commission.

"Our 2012 clean-up project sites ... brought together public and private entities with the East End community to make the kind of improvements that not only beautified these unique locations, but also brought an awareness of conservation, environmental protection, and historic preservation to all participants. Keep Houston supported us with volunteers, tools, and an ever-present spirit of teamwork and resourcefulness. Our thanks to the KHB staff for truly keeping Houston beautiful year after year!" -- Hedy Wolpa, Vice President, Greater East End Management District

Then the local beautification blast swept through a variety of other Houston areas, including:

- A cleanup of the historic College Park Cemetery at 3605 Dallas,
- Another cleanup of a site near I-10 and Washington Avenue,

- sponsored by the Woodcrest Neighborhood Civic Association,
- The completion of a Sunnyside neighborhood revitalization project,
- The completion of a curb painting project near Worthing High School, with the support of the Mayor's Department of Neighborhoods,
- A cleanup project in Houston City Council District B, and
- Yet another cleanup organized by the Southwest Coalition of Neighborhoods.

The National Day of Action in Houston rounded out the month's flurry of activity. Key programs completed with the support of KHB included:

- An Earth Day celebration, organized by the Houston Museum of Natural Science Conservation Energy Club, where they invited local organizations to host booths in their Great Hall, and hosted a variety of activities to teach about conservation of resources and the benefits of keeping our city clean;
- A huge effort in Hermann Park, where KHB's main work involved planting new trees;
- A cleanup and esplanade renewal of the Museum Park Super Neighborhood; and
- A cleanup of R.L. and Cora Johnson Park, sponsored by Carverdale Civic Club and Waste Management.

This special day was warmly received and highly praised by the community it touched:

"I want to add my thanks to all who made this project a success. HPC was the grateful recipient of almost 200 trees, much needed to replace trees lost to last summer's drought.... An urban forest in the making!" -- Barbara Jo Harwell, Conservation Director, Hermann Park Conservancy

"Thank you everyone for a great day!!!! We thoroughly enjoyed working with everyone and creating opportunities for people to make a difference and to learn about taking care of the Earth." -- Claire Scoggin, Director of Wiess Energy Hall Programming, The Houston Museum of Natural Science

"Not only was Saturday a beautiful spring day it was also a perfect volunteer experience. Thank you so much for all of the time and effort every one of you spent making it happen. The day felt seamless. Only seasoned pros can make that kind of magic!" -- Robin Blut, Executive Director, Keep Houston Beautiful

"Thank you to all, very sincerely. This was a wonderful event. The COH was so helpful. KHB and HMNS were outstanding in organizing everything. The trees look great! ... Things came together so well. Again, this was an amazing fun and beneficial event, thank you all." -- Diane Kerr, Manager of Volunteer Programs, Hermann Park Conservancy

"Wow. Results: A very full dump truck. 300 yds. of mulch spread. 14 medians improved. Over 60 volunteers. Many, many thanks to all those from around the City, neighbors, Keep Houston Beautiful, Houston Museum of Natural Science, City of Houston, Republic Services, Covenant House, Carnegie

Vanguard HS, CoH JCMP...so many pitched in on a gorgeous spring morning. Thank you, thank you, thank you." --Kathleen O'Reilly and Museum Park Super Neighborhood

The mission of Keep America Beautiful is to engage individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their communities, and the National Day of Action was a creative way to accelerate the participation in this year's GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP. In response to this call to action, Keep Houston Beautiful mobilized 1,697 local volunteers, organized diverse partnerships, and helped supply and administer a truly impressive collage of beautification activities for a marked improvement of our community as a whole.

Support for Houston activities was provided by City of Houston Department of Engineering and Public Works Streets and Drainage Division, Department of Solid Waste Management, Department of Neighborhoods, Parks and Recreation Department. Sponsors include Waste Management, Republic Services, Marathon Oil Corporation, Shell, ConocoPhillips, Apache Foundation and Lowes.

National support Troy-Bilt, Nestle Waters



Comcast Cares Day in Acres Homes Neighborhood

April 21

For 30 years, Keep Houston Beautiful has been reaching out to all segments of our community to educate and empower individuals and other organizations to take greater responsibility for beautifying and enhancing Houston's environment. This year, Comcast Cable – Houston Region and KHB created a special partnership, as Comcast stepped forward and dedicated its impressive employee volunteer force to a beautification project in Acres Homes. This was another vital alliance that was formed during the month-long activities of The Great American Cleanup.

Comcast Cares Day began in 2001 as a corporate tradition involving 6,100 volunteers at nearly 110 projects across the country, making it one of the largest single-day volunteer efforts in corporate America. In Houston alone, they put 1,800 workers to task on 9 different projects, and with our combined strengths, we were able to generate a much bigger and better impact in the Acres Homes neighborhood. Like KHB, Comcast is committed to improving the quality of life in our community, where their customers and employee live and work.

KHB helped Comcast identify and select Acres Homes as a suitable worksite for their volunteer effort, and then went on to handle the logistics of the workday, supervising the volunteers and providing the tools from the KHB lending warehouse. The partnership was a great success, and it generated a day to be proud of for all the participants.

"...thank you for the opportunity to work with you during this year's Comcast Cares Day event. I really enjoyed this project and it met all of our objectives, including having a visible before/after impact. I don't live too far from the Acres Homes area and I look forward to stopping by in the future to see how the trees are faring." -- Carolyn Schaff, Director of Engineering, Comcast Cable - Houston Region

The City of Houston Department of Public Works – Streets and Drainage Division was instrumental in preparing the ground for trees to be planted, also transporting the trees and the tools to the site. This City department has continually been an amazing partner, carrying an integral role in so many KHB projects. This is an example of just how intertwined the various agencies really are in what evolves as a very joyous process, with all the volunteers and participants really having a good time while they do great things for others.

In-kind support for the Acres Homes site was provided by Lowe's and Living Earth Technology.

PROUD PARTNERS



28th Annual Mayor's Proud Partner Awards

October 2012

This yearly event is designed to be a catalyst to heighten our awareness of the value of improving our community. Beautified communities are more than just aesthetically pleasing – they are vibrant places with more engaged citizens and more active local economies with higher property values. They are healthier environments in which to live, and they have a higher degree of public safety. In short, they are simply better places for living life. This 2012 recognition luncheon celebrates and honors Houston's most innovative and successful beautification, education and stewardship programs of the year, and is widely regarded as one of the premier environmental events of the season. It is a testimony to the power of community beautification.

Achievements by Individuals, groups and companies that contributed to a cleaner, more beautiful environment over the past year were highlighted, including clean-up, green-up, recycling and many other volunteer programs. The response to our call for nominations for these awards was terrific, demonstrating just how many important endeavors were made throughout the year to improve our city. Each year one local corporate leader is specially recognized as the Mayor's Outstanding Proud Partner of the Year.

Dan Sullenbarger, Chairman of Houston Clean City Commission added, "I'm pleased to report that during the past year, 26,516 volunteers teamed with Keep Houston Beautiful. Those volunteers at 614 clean-ups removed 1,009,583 pounds of litter, planted 30,543 trees and shrubs, mowed 531 vacant lots and cleaned 39 parks. This clearly demonstrates the value and strength of building strong grassroots organizations like Keep Houston Beautiful that deliver programs of value directly to Houston residents."

On this occasion, Keep Houston Beautiful was pleased to honor Marathon Oil Corporation, headed by President and CEO, Clarence P. Cazalot, Jr. with our premier award for 2012 Mayor's Outstanding Proud Partner. Marathon's policy of "Living Our Values," through safety education, environmental stewardship, protecting preservation of our surroundings and improving our city emulates the core principles behind this award.

Paul Weeditz of Marathon Oil, our major event honoree said, "In our corporate philanthropy, environmental concerns are major. We actively look for good efforts to fund, and we give to many projects. But with Keep Houston Beautiful, we also find a welcome place to mobilize our company volunteers in order to make a real difference in our community. This annual awards event allowed us to highlight our own Dan Sullenbarger, Marathon VP of Corporate Compliance, representing our management team and also serving for years as Houston Clean City Commission chair, as well as many of our staff members who have given back with their own hours." He added that, "It was also moving for us to hear comments from other community partners in the video presentation at this luncheon – to know that we have helped them create significant, sustainable projects that will continue to affect our community for years to come."

Over 400 guests enjoyed lunch, a video presentation of the winning projects, and a special appearance by The Honorable Annise D. Parker, Mayor of the City of Houston, who personally congratulated each individual winner as they were presented with a personalized artistic rendering on a hand-crafted award. Environmentalists from around the community welcome this annual event as an opportunity to convene and to share in the year's successes.

Houston Mayor, Annise Parker, noted, "This organization's extraordinary network with civic organizations, neighborhoods, and the corporate community is unparalleled. Just take a look at what the winners of these awards have accomplished! Their projects contributed more than \$25 million in volunteer labor and \$18 million in cash and in-kind contributions to really make a meaningful and sustainable difference in Houston."

Award winners included:

William Jackson “Jack” Bowen Chairman Award

Waste Management

Landmark Award

Hermann Park Conservancy

J. Howard Rambin III Founder’s Award

Dynamo Charities

Distinguished Service

Girl Scouts of San Jacinto and Houston Arboretum & Nature Center

Proud Partner Awards:

2012 Visions for a Green Houston Summit

Citizens’ Environmental Coalition (CEC)

BCM Recycles!

Baylor College of Medicine

Bayou Preservation Association Removal of Litter and Invasive Species at Terry Hershey Park

Bayou Preservation Association

Beautification and Preservation of East End’s Historic African-American Dawson Lunnon Cemetery

Greater East End Management District, LyondellBasell

Better Block Event

BetterHouston

The Butterfly Pavilion at the Alief Community Garden

University of Houston Graduate Design/Build Studio

Greater Houston Blossoms with Amazing Chemistry

LyondellBasell

Hazel Potvin

Westbury Area Improvement Corp

Houston Coca-Cola “Live Positively” Project

Coca-Cola Refreshments of Houston

Lake Houston Wilderness Park Phase 1

Houston Parks and Recreation Department

Certificate of Recognition:

Agape Development Ministries 3rd Ward Community Garden

Agape Development Ministries

BLVD Place

Wulfe & Co.

CompuCycle E-Cycling Drop Off Locations

CompuCycle

Margaret Jenkins Park

City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department

Original Greek Festival

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral

Project KLEAN (Keeping Lots Empty and Neat)

Avenue Community Development Corporation – GO Neighborhoods

The Rehabilitation of White Lake at Cullinan Park

Houston Parks and Recreation Department and Friends of Cullinan Park

SCA Houston Community Programs

Student Conservation Association

Solid Waste Management Department Art Exhibition Program

City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department

Steve Mueller

Songwood Civic Club

Sylvia Brumlow

HPD Environmental Investigations Unity

Richard E. Wainerdi Flag Plaza

Thermal Energy Corporation Penny Butler

Re-Pride Sunnyside

City of Houston Department of Neighborhoods, State Representative Borris Miles, Council Member Wanda Adams, Worthing High School, Houston Contractor’s Association

South Gessner Esplanades and Beltway 8/Westheimer Interchange Landscaping

Westchase District and Westchase Community Association

Toshiba International Corp Tree Planting with Trees for Houston

Toshiba International Corporation

Travis Elementary School SPARK Park

SPARK School Park Program

US 90A Beautification

City of Stafford

Veteran’s Home Repair Program

Rebuilding Together Houston, The Home Depot Foundation, The Office of Council Member Wanda Adams, Majic 102.1

PROUD PARTNERS cont.

WaterWorks Education Center

City of Houston Department of Public Works and Engineering,
Public Utilities Division

Honorable Mention:

Annapurna Jonnalagadda

Comcast Cares Day

Comcast

Creston Baptist Church Community Garden

Creston Baptist Church

Greenway Crates LLC

HeatRecycle System Installation

Hilton Americas-Houston

Mike Tauser

Outdoor Demonstration Kitchen at the Park at Palm Center

University of Houston Collaborative Design/Build Studio

Toshiba International Corp E-Waste Collection Event

Toshiba International Corporation

University of Houston Campus Cleanup Day

UH Facilities Management

YES Prep Serves!

YES Prep Public Schools



NEIGHBORS WORKING TOGETHER

Alief Nature Play Garden

December 2012

Keep Houston Beautiful coordinated a wide community cross-section of over 250 volunteers, ranging from children to seniors, to create a special nature retreat, vegetable and herb garden, orange and pecan tree grove and recreational area in the existing Alief SPARK Park and Nature Center – all in a single day of work. Made possible by a \$20,000 grant from Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation, this Nature Play Garden was added to a butterfly pavilion, a shade structure with a rainwater collection system and a tree farm and orchard already established onsite in Alief. The site is across the street from Youngblood Intermediate School, and built on land leased from the Alief School District for only \$1 per year. This project was made possible with 5 sponsoring organizations, 9 in-kind sponsors and 6 volunteer groups.

This is the largest nature play garden KHB volunteers have ever constructed. Designed by Susan Cita, landscape architect and Senior Associate of TBG Partners, the project was given a spark by the Lowe's grant, then tripled in value by special in-kind donations from TBG, Lowe's, Scott's Miracle-Gro, Alamo Stones, and CenterPoint Energy. Special features that are all elements of an overall butterfly design include:

- Turtle play structure made of boulders
- Sand pit and stone seating area
- Balance beam
- Reading circle with log seating
- Sloping play hills
- Orange and pecan tree orchard
- Climbing vines of herbs, vegetables and grapes
- Birdbath and sundial focal points
- Mulch walking paths
- Shade and trellis structures

This creatively designed play and activity area was added to the 41 vegetable plots already established there, that are maintained by local gardeners, including Youngblood students. The tree farm, which has trees designated for future planting on Alief esplanades, is worked and maintained by Future Farmers of America (FFA) student volunteers from Alief high schools. In fact, the Alief Community Garden is already planning a spring planting – a real testimony to the great enthusiasm for this active, living project. This is not just a playground or a park; it is a multi-faceted recreation and growing area that contributes to the beauty and sustainability of the area, while it unites community residents in outdoor activity.

KHB's Alief Play Garden Project was a truly rewarding group effort, the success of which was magnified by the great spirit of collaboration and ongoing community relationships that were created that day.

Susan Cita, Senior Associate of TBG Partners, commented, "I was amazed at how many volunteers showed up, and how quickly everyone stepped up to the tasks we laid out. We were able to get a lot done in a very short time, and it was really, really fun! The spirit of teamwork was by far the greatest thing."

"The play garden is a delightful addition to our nature center -- we now have something for our neighbors of all ages! We hope to add more walking paths with benches around the play area next, and we plan to build additional raised beds with the leftover soil and mulch. In fact, we actually have a list of folks who have been waiting for more planting areas," says Barbara Quattro, Chair of the Alief Super Neighborhood Council. "And thanks to all these improvements, we continue to get a terrific response from our Alief volunteers each time we schedule a work day."

Not only was there an overwhelming response to Keep Houston Beautiful's call for volunteers, this effort was also notable because it reached so many age groups, backgrounds, ethnicities and organizations. By working together with such an array of people, all toward a common goal, the ripple effect of this community project extends even further. Certainly a beautiful, usable space was created, but in addition, many unlikely bonds were formed from working side by side with neighbors, friends and strangers -- a wonderful byproduct of an amazing event. The common binding factor was the community in which they each lived, learned or grew.

Already a group of "at risk" youth has stepped up to the task of helping to maintain the grounds, in conjunction with the existing management district. In these new green common areas, these students have found a connection and a place to practice stewardship and responsibility for their environment. Other project volunteers have returned with their families to see the changes already taking place as the plants take root. In the end, a meaningful attachment to the garden has been created among a variety of its neighbors, and they in turn have developed a new social bond with one another.

Philip Goglia, Store Manager of the local Lowe's store that provided much of the materials, enthused about the project, "It was very gratifying to know that when we walked away from this project, when the building was done, it was not just a simple, one-time beautification job. So many local community members already felt pride and ownership of this living center, with a great cross-section of the neighborhood public getting involved, participating and maintaining the gardens, even before we left the site. I was truly impressed by their enthusiasm and the energy that makes this a real, ongoing gathering place. This is a perfect model for the rest of our city."

"The transformation of the space from open land to a special nature retreat was impressive! The transformation of 200+ students (non-gardeners) to gardeners was truly inspirational. Susan Cita and team did an outstanding job with the project design, implementation and education of our new student gardeners," remarked Jim Bates, Chairman Houston Clean City Commission.

Other community partners included the Alief Community Garden, Alief Super Neighborhood Council, the International Management District, and the City of Houston's Department of Public Works and Engineering – Streets and Drainage Division.

BRINGING FRESH FOOD WITHIN REACH

Houston City Gardens Celebration

June 2012

Launched in 2010 in the heart of downtown outside the Bob Lanier Public Works Building, these container gardens are part of the Mayor's local food initiative. They offer Houstonians ideas, resources and information on healthier food consumption and production. The planning and design work was a collaboration of landscape architect Keiji Asakura, Laura Spanjian, Director of sustainability for the City of Houston, Urban Harvest and Keep Houston Beautiful. These homegrown vegetable gardens not only enhance the downtown neighborhood for those who live there, they also beautify the urban setting for those who work there each day.

In June this year, we celebrated the inclusion of our Houston City Gardens in First Lady Michelle Obama's book, *American Grown: The Story of the White House Kitchen Garden and Gardens Across America*.

"The City Hall Victory Garden is another opportunity to bring citizens into the city-wide sustainability strategy – to make Houston a greener and healthier place to work. The City of Houston is leading by example, demonstrating how easy and affordable it can be to build a container garden," said Houston Mayor Annise Parker. "In addition to the health, environmental and economic benefits, the City Gardens create a sense of community for staff, fostering collaboration and teamwork," she added.

Creative partnerships like this often allow each participant to focus on what they do best, maximizing the outcome. In this case, the partnerships formed through the City Gardens have been truly transformational. Their collective effort not only converted downtown sidewalks into a beautiful community garden, it spawned an entire network of satellite gardens around the city, earning national recognition for their work.

"The City Gardens are an outstanding testimony to the common commitment that is felt citywide. We are so proud of the generosity from all the volunteers, sponsors and supporters toward this project. This is an example of true giving and caring spirit that Keeps Houston Beautiful," says Salle Morse, Commissioner, Keep Houston Beautiful.

"The sweat and effort put in the garden not only honors our community but provides a revitalized outdoors space everyone can enjoy. As Michelle Obama's book, *American Grown* highlights - The Houston City Garden is an example for the rest of the country to follow," said Mike Sutterer, VP Regional Marketing The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company.

Collaborators and donors included Asakura-Robinson, The City of Houston, Urban Harvest, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Scott's Miracle-Gro, Keep Houston Beautiful, Houston Department of Public Works, Texas AgriLife, University of Houston Downtown Environmental Club, Nature's Way Resources, San Jacinto Environmental and Thompson and Hanson.

Lyerly Place Senior Public Housing

*Community Room and Courtyard Renovation
June 2012*

Thanks to Sony and Columbia Pictures, The Amazing Spiderman release and their "Be Amazing, Stand Up and Volunteer" program that celebrates the hero in all of us, Keep Houston Beautiful planned and directed a truly amazing and much-needed renovation of a local senior housing project. The new Lyerly Place community room and courtyard has enhanced the lives of about 200 seniors and their families, as well as making their staff's job a lot easier. On a single day, and with the support of a volunteer force of over 100 Houstonians, the City of Houston's Volunteer Initiatives Program (VIP), Houston Housing Authority and KRBE-FM, the group came together to not only improve and beautify this facility, but also to create an innovative horticultural therapy vehicle for its residents.

Volunteers worked in the community room to paint and repair walls and floors, and to add sofas, recliners and electronics. They worked outside in the courtyard to replace sod and add mulch, bringing in picnic tables, benches, planter boxes, barbeque grills and a rock garden. All the outdoor amenities were designed to be interesting, motivating and interactive, and all are wheelchair-accessible. Furthermore, the new garden area is not only a restful and beautiful oasis like the indoor community room, it is also an activity for Lyerly Place citizens and staff, as they groom their own vegetable crop. In this courtyard, they have inherited a living thing to nurture, inspiring resident responsibility and pride of ownership. Even before the volunteers left at the end of the day, one resident was already taking over the watering and care of the potted plants.

Susan Cita, Senior Associate with TBG Partners, a long time Houston Clean City Commissioner and the volunteer landscape designer for the project, is very passionate about her work here. "Many people in public housing just don't often have the opportunity to enjoy this kind of quality of life where they live. When people come together in a partnership like this, and give their time and labor, we can do great things for those who really need it, all with minimal budget."

Scott-Miracle Gro generously provided soil and mulch to help establish the courtyard garden.

ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

Mayor's Department of Neighborhoods

Spring 2012

Led by new Director, Katy Tipton, Houston's Department of Neighborhoods is dedicated to improving residents' quality of life and helping resolve neighborhood issues through outreach, strong partnerships with agencies like Keep Houston Beautiful and improved government responsiveness. Keep Houston Beautiful has supported the Department of Neighborhoods with much of the behind-the-scenes organization by:

- Helping to identify neighborhoods in need;
- Assisting in strategic planning, logistics and technical support for projects;
- Helping to coordinate the worksites;
- Providing equipment and tools from the KHB year-round tool lending library; and
- Recruiting the volunteer workforces.

Two major projects this year included:

Re-Pride Sunnyside

This cleanup and beautification initiative targeted one of Houston's oldest and predominately African-American neighborhoods, and was part of Mayor Parker's continuing effort to revitalize Houston. Over 200 volunteers removed thousands of pounds of trash, cleaned and mowed dozens of vacant lots, painted curb end-caps and mulched esplanades. And this was not an easy day of volunteering – this large group of students from Worthing High School, along with many others, labored over two long weekends to complete the job.

We could never have accomplished so much in so little time without the help of our partners. The Department of Solid Waste provided all of the paint, Houston Parks and Recreation supplied the needed mulch, and 34 dangerous buildings were demolished, thanks to the very generous contribution of skilled labor and heavy equipment by the Houston Contractors Association. The main purpose of Re-Pride Sunnyside was not just to beautify the entryway to this notable community, it was intended to do something far greater -- to give back a sense of ownership to the people who live there.

According to Department of Neighborhoods' Conya Berraras, "This project was very well received by Sunnyside residents. It was especially important because there is such a historical value to Sunnyside, and this work will help recognize and restore the pride and heritage of this area."

Houston City Councilmember and project supporter Wanda Adams emphasized, "We want to shine a positive light on the residents of Sunnyside!"

This kick-off event was a clear demonstration of the commitment of local community leaders and agencies to this historic neighborhood. It truly inspired Sunnyside residents, who have since participated in several more cleanup efforts of their own, involving over 100 volunteers, as they continue to nurture their community.

YES Prep Serves!

This huge, one-day regional service event was a multi-campus collaboration coordinated with the Department of Neighborhoods, Keep Houston Beautiful and many other organizations. In an effort to revitalize the meaning of the YES Prep mission – Youth Engaged in Service -- over 1,500 middle school and high school students, staff members and corporate volunteers came together with several area agencies to work at 13 different sites around Houston. It was an amazing day of work!

Together they picked up trash in three parks and on public lots and in the 3rd Ward area, including cleaning up litter in an entire shopping center. They painted curbs on 15 blocks in Acres Homes, packaged food for the hungry at the Houston Food Bank, and assembled and painted picnic benches for Habitat for Humanity. In Hermann Park, they took on the big job of mulching numerous trees in this huge facility, and in the 5th Ward, the volunteer workers added mulch, planted flowers, weeded, and built new raised garden beds for growing summer crops.

Keep Houston Beautiful provided onsite management for the Acres Homes site, carrying the big job of supervising the large group of student workers. Brays Oaks Management District coordinated several work sites in Southwest Houston. The Department of Public Works – Streets and Drainage Division also played a key role in making the day a success, moving equipment from KHB's warehouse to the sites and back, providing street safety equipment for the workers, and creating an active presence onsite during the day of the event to provide security.

The event created an increased awareness of beautification and recycling needs in a broad sector of the community, as well as instilling a sense of civic responsibility among the students. As a result, not only were several parks and public spaces cleaned up and beautified, this multi-campus collaborative effort generated a desire at YES Prep for more awareness and recycling programs at their schools, and more community service days like this in the future.

Jerry Davis of Council District B, Ellen Cohen of District C, and Larry Green of District K all helped identify the work sites. Partners on this YES Prep Serves! Project included:

Brays Oaks Management District
Department of Public Works – Streets and Drainage Division
Generation One
Habitat for Humanity
Hermann Park Conservancy
Houston Fire Department – 5th Ward
Houston Food Bank
Houston Parks and Recreation Department
(Hermann Park, Townwood Park, T.C.Jester Park)
Mayor's Citizens Assistance Office
Mayor's Department of Neighborhoods
Keep Houston Beautiful
Sheriff's Department – 5th Ward
South Houston Concerned Citizens Coalition
Urban Harvest
YES Prep Schools

ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE cont.

Teach for America Service Day

May and July 2012

Over the past 4 years, Keep Houston Beautiful and Teach for America have successfully partnered on a number of beautification projects, and this year they teamed up to target an illegal dumping site and to beautify the entrance corridors to an area middle school.

Illegal Dumping Cleanup

The first Teach for America service day took place in May. The group focused on an exciting, large-scale effort to clean up and breathe new life into a neighborhood in Southeast Houston that has long been plagued by the scourge of illegal dumping. It was the area around Cherburg Road and Soutlea Street that was singled out for special attention.

“Our hope is that the work we do will get the residents a renewed sense of pride, as well as serve notice that illegal dumping is a crime and Houstonians are not going to sit by and allow it to continue,” said Rey de la Reza, principal of a local architectural firm and Keep Houston Beautiful Commissioner.

Together with the Department of Public Works – Streets and Drainage Division, Waste Management, Lowe’s, and the Department of Solid Waste, KHB and over 400 volunteers turned out to transform the area from a dangerous eyesore into a pleasing community asset. First they cleaned curbs and gutters and storm drain inlets to reduce the amount of standing water, and all together they picked up over 26 tons of trash and debris that had been dumped there! Then they went on to landscape with beautiful new crepe myrtle trees, shrubs and grass, simultaneously creating new walkways to area schools, all part of an overall effort to enhance quality of life for all neighboring residents.

Creative strategies were employed to try to create a permanent solution to the criminal dumping. Work crews created low maintenance, aesthetic conservation easements, and then lined with them with strong concrete posts along the drainage easements to act as barriers to future potential dumpers. ‘No Littering’ signs were installed along the way to warn violators that residents are watching. Special attention was given to maintaining good lighting in the area. Finally, the local residents were also encouraged to take pride in their newly beautified neighborhood by becoming active protectors and calling 3-1-1 to report any illegal dumping activity they may see.

“Teach for America” teachers volunteering for this project, work and live in the area and feel a sense of ownership in the community,” said Drew Hodges, Manager, Teacher Leadership Development with Teach for America. “Our commitment to the community extends from the students we teach, the parents we work with and the education we provide.”

Waste Management generously provided community support for the beautification effort through a Keep America Beautiful

‘Think Green’ grant. Ongoing landscape maintenance will be supported by the students and parents from Kelco Elementary who also participated in the work. Further assistance was provided by the Department of Public Works and Engineering - Streets and Drainage Division, City of Houston Solid Waste Management, Rey de la Reza Architects, Inc. and Lowe’s.

Dowling Middle School Entranceways

Then again in July during their summer break, 100 teachers from Teach for America turned out to remove the litter from the four main entrance corridors leading to the campus of Dowling Middle School. This effort was organized by KHB and supported by the City of Houston Public Works and Engineering – Streets and Drainage Division. Thanks to their work and that of these dedicated teacher volunteers, a new pride of place was created, as the area was made much more aesthetically pleasing. Now the students, parents and staff can feel a much warmer welcome as they approach their school day and their workplace.

Urban Run-Off Challenge – U-ROC.org!

KHB’s new website and educational component, U-ROC.org, houses state-approved educational lesson plans about stormwater for teachers to access and use in their own classrooms. It supplies support materials and activities to augment lesson plans and educate both students and the general public about the importance of reducing pollution from urban run-off. The website is bright and colorful and easy to navigate, advising everyone that whatever washes off your yard and street can pollute our water, including lawn fertilizers, grass clippings, pet waste, tree leaves and seeds. These items are all sources of phosphorous, the plant nutrient that turns our creeks, bayous, and bays green with algae. The website also encourages everyone to dispose of toxic chemicals properly, avoiding pouring motor oil and other dangerous substances down the storm drains.

The U-ROC.org website goes further to create an eye-catching and interactive twist, offering a detailed pledge for groups and classes describing specific actions they promise to take to keep Houston water clean. Maps are available to help identify areas of concern that are nearby each group, to help them engage easier. Everyone who joins the effort is encouraged to post their photos on the website and describe their activities so everyone can track their progress. The program even awards achievement badges for the volunteers, and gives out certificates that they can post in their own classrooms as a visible token to celebrate their efforts. The U-ROC.org website also offers a free monthly newsletter so participants can stay in touch and hear about other Stormwater Challenge activities around our community.

The City of Houston Stormwater Challenge curriculum is a joint project of Keep Houston Beautiful, the City of Houston Department of Public Works and Engineering, and the University of Houston’s Kappa Delta Pi. The U-ROC.org website is yet another interesting and effective tool to captivate and energize our youth in the effort to keep our city clean and beautiful and healthful for us all. Visit the website at <http://u-roc.org/>.

CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION

National Planting Day

September 2012

Keep Houston Beautiful participated in this first national day of planting by funding the creation of a demonstration garden in a pocket prairie in Hermann Park's Bayou Parkland. This special day began as an initiative of the national Keep America Beautiful office, which sought to increase attention to and celebrate the value and power of native species in our beautification efforts. Their theme of "Get Growing America!" especially resonated with a member of Texas Master Naturalists – Gulf Coast Chapter, and they reached out to KHB to help invigorate their efforts. Their purpose was to create an area that would both improve the native prairie and educate the public about native plants:

- Native plants enhance biodiversity. They are critical to attracting specialized pollinators and insects, which in turn provide food for birds, and ultimately many more animals up the food chain.
- Native plants also protect our wildlife by providing much-needed habitat.
- Native plants are hardy and eco-friendly. They require less maintenance and less water than other ornamentals. They also reduce the need for chemical fertilizers that run off into our water supply.

Approximately 260 volunteers planted 400 pots of native wildflowers of the coastal prairie and several varieties of wild grass plugs. The object of the demo garden, which abuts the pocket prairie, is to show how prairie plants can be used in a garden setting while creating a significant benefit to our regional environment. Thanks to this project, not only will part of our natural heritage be preserved, many more residents will learn that using natives like these will result in plants that will grow without much need for garden chemicals or supplemental watering.

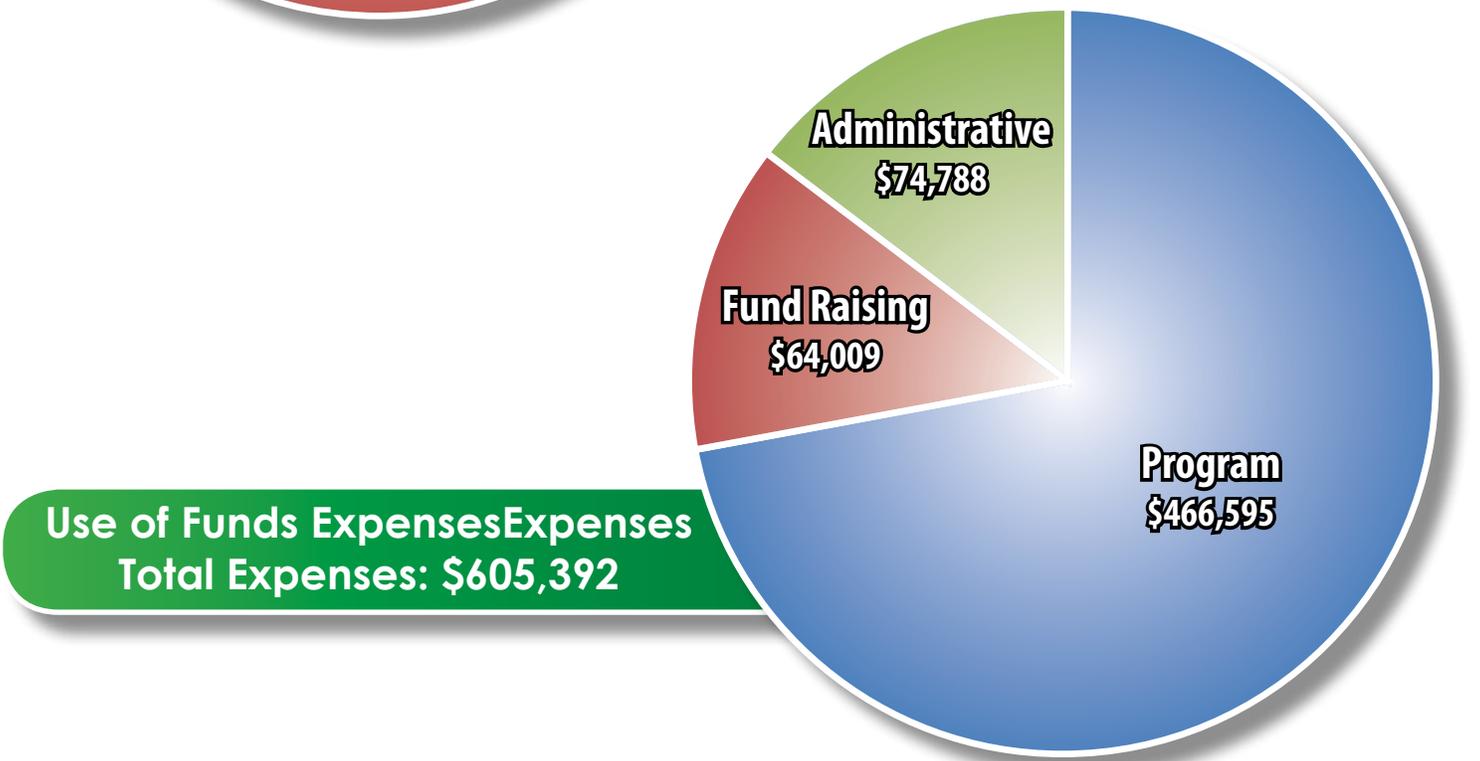
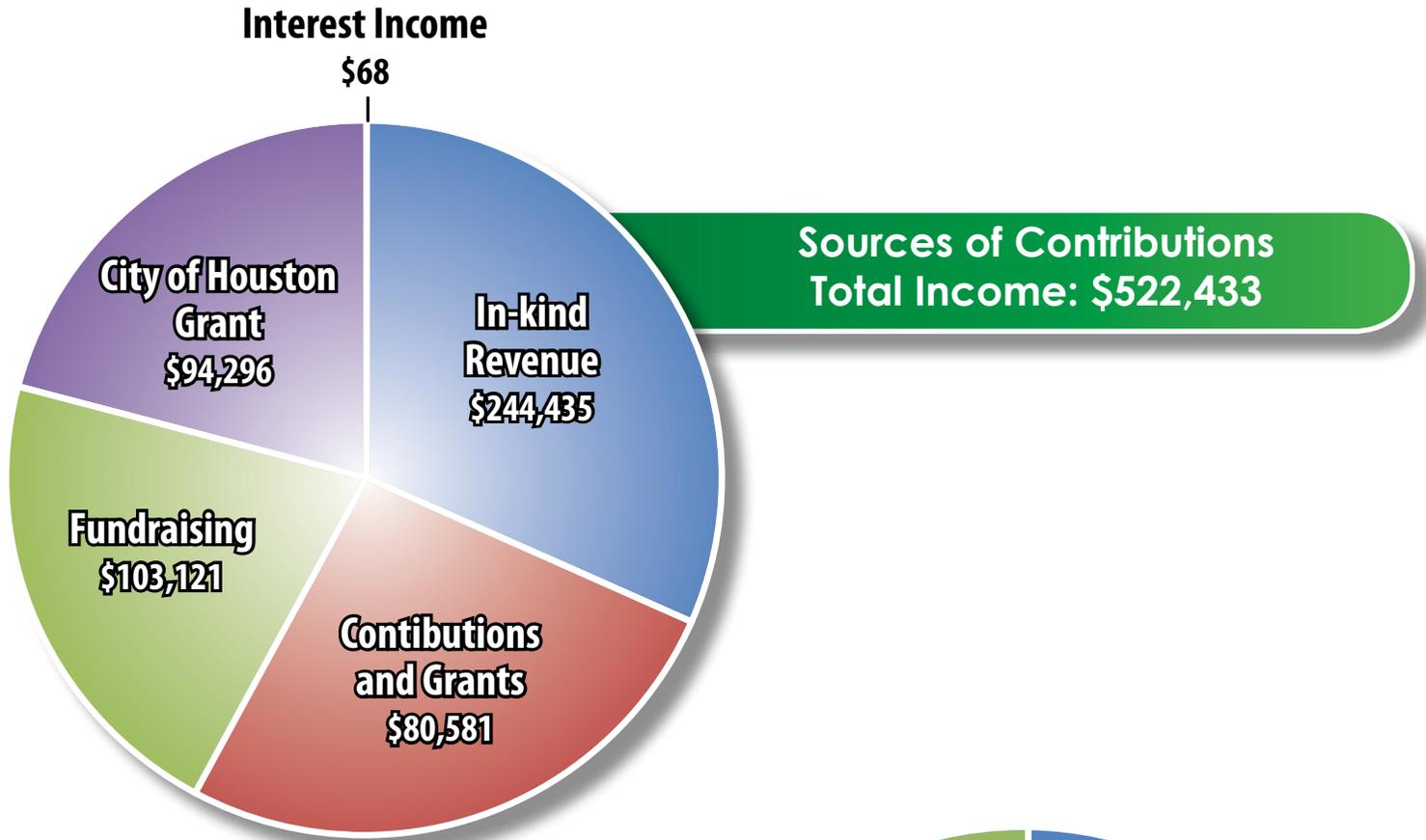
KHB regularly participates in and fosters community partnerships, and enjoys the opportunity to leverage the missions of other agencies who are also working for greener, more beautiful, and more sustainable communities for us all. By supporting this effort, KHB also helped spread awareness of the importance of native plants, as well as the need to preserve and restore the vanishing coastal prairie around the Houston area.

"Thanks to all involved, we had a very successful Prairie and Demonstration Garden Planting Day with Mayor Annise Parker at Savannah on the Bayou in the Hermann Park Bayou Parkland."
– Lan Shen, Texas Master Naturalists-Gulf Coast Chapter member and Coastal Prairie Partnership volunteer.

This collaboration included Texas Master Naturalists, Native Plant Society, Coastal Prairie Partnership, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Hermann Park Conservancy, Katy Prairie Conservancy and Keep Houston Beautiful, and was also supported by the Mayor's Office.

Statement of Audited Revenues and Expenses

For the Fiscal Year July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012



Net Assets at end of Year: \$86,275

The Houston Clean City Commission, Inc. d/b/a. Keep Houston Beautiful (KHB) is grateful to the following individuals and organizations for their gifts, received below between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012. Contributors like these help KHB continue its mission of improving the quality of life and creating a sense of community through litter reduction, recycling education and beautification initiatives. Special thanks also to the many volunteers who support the work of KHB.

Benefactor 25,000 and Above

City of Houston
Scotts Miracle Gro*

Sponsor \$10,000 and Above

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Shell Oil Company Foundation
TBG Partners*
Waste Management
Williams Brothers Construction Co. Inc.

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Fiesta*
Friedman Foundation
HLS Enterprises of Texas, Inc.*
Magnolia Gardens Nursery*

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Brookhollow Baptist Church
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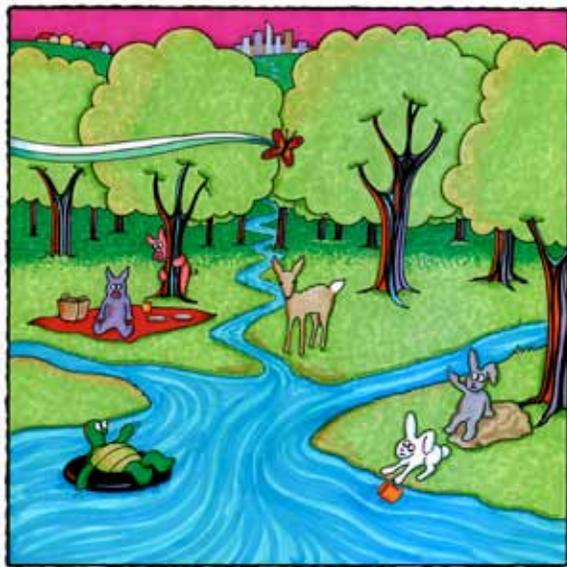
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Keep Houston Beautiful Staff

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Elizabeth Fenton, Volunteer Coordinator and Program Manager
Howard Aden, Warehouse Manager
Elizabeth Avila, Bookkeeper

Urban Runoff Challenge

*April Murphy
AEM Gallery*



U-roc.org



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