

KEEP MISSISSIPPI BEAUTIFUL
A Keep America Beautiful Affiliate



KEEP MISSISSIPPI BEAUTIFUL 2023 – 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Mission:

Our mission is to inspire and educate Mississippians to take action every day to impact, improve, and beautify their community environment.

Accomplishments:

Over the past year, Keep Mississippi Beautiful has focused on empowering affiliates to have positive impacts in their communities as well as growing our network to have a bigger footprint across the state. We attribute much of our success to our strong partnerships across the state with both the public and private sectors. This year's highlights include:

- Enabling Mississippians to volunteer more than 100,000 hours to pick up more than 792,000 pounds of litter, and recycling more than 100,000 pounds of recyclables. This includes the 138,650 pounds of litter that were picked up through our close partnership with the Mississippi Department of Transportation during Trash Bash events across this state.
- Welcoming a new certified affiliate to the Keep Mississippi Beautiful family this year and pre-certifying a community. Trained six new affiliate directors, helping to ensure affiliate success and longevity.
- Saving Mississippi taxpayers more than \$3.1 million (based on Keep America Beautiful's volunteer rate) through volunteer service.
- For every \$1 invested in community improvement projects, KMB volunteers return on average \$5.00 - \$7.00 in measurable benefits.

The Keep Mississippi Beautiful team is committed to partnering with cities and counties and growing and supporting the network throughout the state. This year, we certified Keep Saltillo Beautiful, and helped six affiliate communities in their process of training new directors. This past year we have met with many communities across the state, providing information, supplies, and guidance in planning litter cleanups with community involvement, providing flower bulbs for beautification efforts, and wildflower seeds through our Wildflower Trails of Mississippi program.

Objectives:

1) Encourage and assist local communities to become certified by the Keep America Beautiful System.

Saltillo, Mississippi achieved Keep America Beautiful certification this past year, growing our network to 60 Keep Mississippi Beautiful local affiliate organizations. We also trained new affiliate directors in Natchez, Harrison County, DeSoto County, Ocean Springs, Meridian, and Vicksburg. Our affiliates impact many Mississippians through education, grants, training, beautification, tree planting, volunteer programs, and other initiatives. This past year, KMB affiliates have received over \$60,000 in Keep America Beautiful, private foundation, and state and federal grants, which have been used in improving communities across the state. One additional community is in the process of completing the requirements to become certified with KMB and KAB and Yazoo City is migrating to a county affiliate to serve the entire Yazoo County population. Keep Mississippi Beautiful continues to be one of the fastest-growing state affiliate networks under Keep America Beautiful.

2) Implement an annual communications plan designed to inform people throughout the State regarding litter prevention and abatement.

Keep Mississippi Beautiful had over \$40,000 (50% donated in-kind) in media value of advertisement broadcasting litter-prevention messaging through TeleSouth Communications' SuperTalk Radio across the state.

Keep Mississippi Beautiful encourages Mississippians to be good stewards with the new radio advertisement campaign. Messaging included the importance of securing and covering loads. A clean community discourages littering and improves the community's appearance and quality of life of its citizens. Radio PSAs run during SuperTalk news hours. On our website, we promoted Secure Your Load Day, held on June 6, to educate people about the safety issues and accidents that result from roadway debris.

We worked with Lamar Advertising to share our message with motorists across the state. There were over 15 billboard panels displayed across the state with over one million weekly impressions. The value of donated space from Lamar and Meridian Coca-Cola is \$142,560 and this number will continue to grow through this upcoming fiscal year. Billboard graphics promote green, clean, and litter-free communities, roads and waterways.

Keep Mississippi Beautiful provided all 25 state parks with "Do Not Litter" signs to bring litter prevention awareness to the Mississippi State Park system. State parks and campground personnel also maintained over 5,000 bulbs planted last year, provided by Keep Mississippi Beautiful's partnership with Van Zyverdens.

3) Serve as a statewide clearinghouse of information on ideas and projects to make local litter prevention, beautification, and recycling programs effective.

Our website traffic numbers are high and steady. Paid social media posts ran on our social media pages include Facebook and Instagram. Due to the ever-increasing importance of websites and social media as a means of communicating and educating the public, especially the young adult demographic. Photo albums, resources, and community events are posted regularly on social media and the website.

Our meeting display reflects the theme of Keep America Beautiful's three-point message of Litter Prevention, Beautification and Recycling. KMB sends an email newsletter and publishes it on our website which gives information and updates to communities across state. We showcase our local affiliates and their projects and achievements. Over 120 newsletter subscribers were added this year from contacts made at meetings where KMB has displayed information about our organization. KMB also utilizes Keep America Beautiful's media campaign assets at no cost, which include social media content and informational videos about litter prevention and recycling. Area affiliates participate in the Pearl River Clean Sweep, involving 490 miles of river and 15 counties 445 volunteers and 12,700 pounds of trash in September 2023.

Keep Copiah County Beautiful and Keep Leake County Beautiful received Keep America Beautiful cigarette litter program grants. Through education and collection containers, this program contributes to reducing the most littered item in our country- cigarette butts.

Garden Clubs, Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, Genuine Mississippi with Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, and Mississippi Extension offices are among our other partners.

Keep Mississippi Beautiful is in its sixth year of a \$75,000 Wildflower Trails of Mississippi USDA grant. With these monies, we have been able to provide wildflower seed to be planted on byways, community entrances, schools, and other visible locations in communities across the state along with our partnership with Dr. J. Brett Rushing with Mississippi State Extension Service. Over 30 sites were planted this year. The seed mix is a variety of three to five different types of native seeds that will bloom from spring-fall with low-blooming species adequate for Mississippi roadways.

The Wildflower Trails of Mississippi has its own website (www.mswildflowers.org) and its own social media outlets such as Facebook and a blog. KMB has met with various communities, county extension offices, garden clubs, affiliates, and schools this past year to help establish our growing Wildflower Trails of Mississippi sites, enhancing our state's beautification, conservation, ecotourism and restoring pollinators habitats.

4) Coordinate an annual statewide project which will heighten public awareness of the problem of littering.

With our partnership with the Mississippi Department of Transportation, all seven districts held successful Trash Bash events this spring. Over 6,934 bags of litter were collected, which translates to over 138,680 pounds of litter picked up by 1,739 participants. Keep Mississippi Beautiful provided KMB/Trash Bash co-branded t-shirts to participants from each district. Litter prevention coordinators from each district distributed the t-shirts, reported results, and provided photos of the successful events.

KMB is proud to be a partner in the annual MDOT Trash Bash event. Photos from the Spring 2024 Trash Bash



Keep Mississippi Beautiful held the Mississippi 2024 Great American Cleanup Kickoff event this year, led by Keep the Reservoir Beautiful. Area elected officials, Reservoir Police and Fire Departments, Pearl River Valley Authority, Boy Scouts, and the Reservoir Foundation were significant collaborators on the event. Several MDOT Litter Prevention Coordinators supported the event by participating in the Great American Cleanup Kickoff. Volunteers worked in five sites including Turtle Point, Timberlake Campground, The Botanical Garden, and Bobby Cleveland Park at Lakeshore, Pelehatchie Shore Park, planting over 100 trees, installing picnic tables, landscaping new beds and refurbishing others, and collecting litter. Flag poles and flags were also installed at several locations.



Volunteers, elected officials, and business partners working at the Mississippi Great American Cleanup, Reservoir Park, Reservoir Botanical Gardens, Turtle Point and Campgrounds.

Across the state, our affiliates held over 550 events in their communities, in parks, green spaces, waterways, schools, libraries, and gardens. Public spaces and waterways were cleaned and improved. Over 7,000 students in our affiliate communities learned about recycling and reducing waste, litter prevention, and beautification at various local events.

The 2023 Mississippi State Fair had over 526,000 attendees and for the 10th year KMB had a presence at this event. “Don’t Litter... Can It, Mississippi” and “Be Beautiful. Keep Our Communities Litter-Free” campaign banners were placed at all entrances of the fairgrounds and on the midway, with volunteer assistance.

The Dixie National Rodeo Wagon Train partnership with Keep Mississippi Beautiful grew to include seven Wagon Trains this year. 833 wagon train riders picked up litter on 1,190 miles of roadways as each train traveled on the week-long expedition from various parts of the state to the State Fairgrounds. Over 2,100 bags of litter were picked up. Mississippians of all ages participate in the wagon trails, so this is also a great educational opportunity.

Keep Mississippi Beautiful partners with the Mississippi Tax Collectors, providing over 50,000 car litter bags to county tax collectors. New car tags are placed inside the bag which has been a great awareness tool for KMB. KMB also provides car litter bags to Welcome Centers in the state. Our network of KMB affiliates is listed on the car litter bag, as well as partner logos, including MDOT. Many of our Affiliates do not have marketing materials, so KMB provides them with car litter bags that they hand out for their events.

Keep Mississippi Beautiful was a contributing sponsor to two e-waste day led by Nextech, Inc. held at The Renaissance at Colony Park in Ridgeland. KMB encourages affiliate cities and counties to utilize MDEQ grant opportunities to operate Household Hazardous Waste Days. Some of our Mississippi rest stops house recycle bins donated by KMB, to collect recyclable bottles.

5) Coordinate an annual awards program to recognize individual and community achievement in litter prevention and hosted a state-wide training conference for our affiliates.

Keep Mississippi Beautiful 30th Annual Awards program held in Jackson, had 225



attendees. Commissioner Willie Simmons addressed the audience during the program. KMB was honored to have MDOT personnel in attendance. The award entries demonstrate the dynamic work being done to address litter, beautification, and recycling in our communities. Award-winners represented communities from all areas of the state.

Representative Angela and Mr. Byron Hill received the Louise Godwin Award.

Keep Mississippi Beautiful *nominated* the Mississippi Department of Transportation as well as the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum and both partnerships were given a Keep



America Beautiful “State Agency Partnership” National Award. Both of, our partnerships were recognized for the collaboration, support, and relationship in our joint work in 2022. MDOT Litter Prevention Coordinators attended the National Keep America Beautiful conference in San Diego, where they accepted the award with Keep Mississippi Beautiful. Three of our affiliates were invited to speak about their work at the National Conference and two additional national awards were won by our affiliates.

2024 Keep American Beautiful National Conference. KMB and MDOT won a national partnership award. Two litter prevention coordinators attended the conference.

A Keep Mississippi Beautiful affiliate training conference was held in October 2023 at Holmes Community College, where affiliates earned their required training hours.

6) Encourage donations of funds and other resources from the private sector.

In Kind:

Board Member Legislative Monitoring	\$ 12,000.00
Clark Beverages	\$ 400.00
Billboard Space: Lamar Advertising and	\$ 142,560.00
Meridian Coca-Cola	\$ 3,600.00
Mississippi Municipal League	\$ 1,000.00
MSU Extension Service	\$ 3,000.00
MVP Sonic Group Picnic Tables	\$ 18,000.00
TeleSouth	\$ 40,000.00
VanZyverden Inc.	\$ 58,000.00
Volunteer Hours Value	\$3,135,400.00
Woodman Group, Flags and Flagpoles	\$ 6,000.00

Contributions:

Kroger Community Rewards	\$ 117.00
MS Beverage Association	\$ 5,000.00
MS Collectors & Assessors Association	\$ 1,000.00
MS Municipal League	\$ 250.00
MS Power Company	\$ 2,000.00
Real Christian Foundation	\$ 500.00
MS Beer Distributors	\$ 2,000.00
Entergy	\$ 2,500.00
Personal Contributions	\$ 350.00

Grant Contributions:

Affiliates Outside Grants Received	\$ 33,500.00
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Total Benefits: \$ 3,454,277.00

7) Serve as an authority that approves and disburses financial assistance to any nonprofit corporation, county, or municipality that, in a written application, seeks such assistance to implement a local litter prevention project. The financial assistance authorized herein shall not exceed forty percent (40%) of the cost of the local litter prevention project for which such assistance is sought.

KMB gave a total of 25 grants totaling \$40,500 to the affiliates who met all criteria for Keep America Beautiful's President's Circle and Keep Mississippi Beautiful's Circle of Excellence Award. With these funds, affiliates purchased cleanup safety supplies, and landscaping materials to improve community beautification. Grants also will be used throughout the affiliate area to promote community-wide cleanup events. Part of these funds may be used toward future conference registration to receive the required minimum of 6 hours of training annually.

8) Coordinate school-based litter prevention efforts.

KMB staff and MDOT Litter Coordinators work jointly with school field day events where a session is shared giving educational presentations on litter prevention, beautification and recycling. KMB attended Crystal Springs Park and Recreation Field Day, and the



district MDOT litter coordinator had a station at the event as well. Our two groups taught students about litter prevention, pollinator plants, and recycling. Children from area schools attended. Keep Mississippi Beautiful participated in Yazoo Extension Conservation Camp, where these lessons and activities were shared with children from area schools age six through high school



Photos: Keep Crystal Spring Park and Recreation Spring Field Day, where KMB was a presenter.

KMB staff/certified trainers conducted Waste in Place Teacher Workshops where teachers receive CEUs. Workshops hosted by the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission were held in Lamar and Yazoo Counties. Keep

America Beautiful provided in-kind education materials for the workshop attendees. Educators attending these workshops are given Keep America Beautiful's Waste in Place curriculum guide with hands-on lesson plans to take back to their classrooms. Lesson plans are taught on litter prevention, beautification, sustainability, community greening, recycling and an integrated approach to solid waste management. KMB staff reminds educators of the estimated cost the MDOT spends on litter removal on state-

maintained highways and that they may call the MDOT Litter Prevention Coordinator in their district for classroom presentations. Keep Mississippi Beautiful also had a booth at the Agriculture and Forestry Museum Farms Days three-day event and the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science school visit days.

9) Promote teamwork between MDOT Litter Prevention Coordinators and local KMB Affiliates.

Keep Mississippi Beautiful and Mississippi Department of Transportation Litter Prevention Coordinators KMB appreciated the MDOT representatives for volunteering at the kickoff event, involving five Reservoir nature areas.

Several of the MDOT Litter Prevention Coordinators serve on KMB affiliate's board of directors. Some local affiliates invite the Litter Prevention Coordinator in their district to assist with litter prevention programs and to talk to their community groups. Having them attend these meetings strengthens the partnership between MDOT and KMB. Litter Prevention Coordinators also are invited to participate in our affiliate conferences.

10) Work jointly with MDOT to enhance enforcement-related efforts.

Law Enforcement are honored each year at our KMB Annual Awards Program where an officer is chosen for their outstanding service. This year we presented the Law Enforcement Recognition Award to Pearl River Valley Water Supply District Reservoir Patrol. KMB furnished the award presented at the annual Sheriff's conference, to Ponotoc County Sheriff Leo Mask, for collecting the most litter out of all the participating counties in the Sheriff Inmate Litter Program. Sheriff Mask's program collected 29,300 bags of litter in 2023, his district litter prevention coordinator reported.

Keep Mississippi Beautiful purchases trailers for KMB affiliates, communities, and sheriff departments for their efforts in litter removal. Keep luka, Keep Belzoni, Keep Crystal Springs, and Keep Harrison County Beautiful received trailers this year.

10) Serve on MDOT Scenic-By-Way Committee and Recycle Coalition

KMB Executive Director Sarah Kountouris and KMB Board Member Ron Aldridge, serve on the Scenic-By-Way Committee. KMB serving on the Scenic-By-Way Committee continually shows a strong partnership between MDOT and KMB. Reading the applications broadens KMB's awareness of the importance of clean and beautiful highways, especially on these historic byways. The Scenic-By-Ways have huge economic and tourism benefits for our state. Both Ron Aldridge and Sarah Kountouris also serve on the State Recycle Coalition.

11) Partnerships

To successfully enhance our programs and achieve our goals we have continued our partnerships with the following.

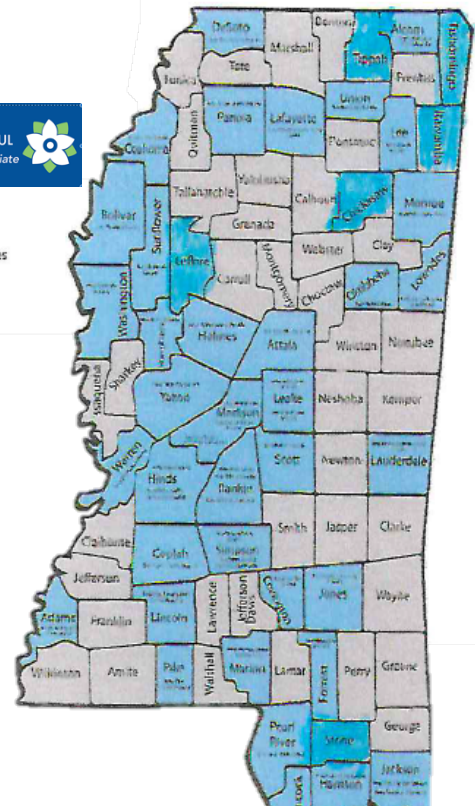
Clark Beverage
Entergy Mississippi
Garden Clubs of Mississippi
Genuine Mississippi
Keep America Beautiful
Keep Mississippi Affiliates
Kroger
Lamar Advertising
Lowe's
Master Gardeners of Mississippi
McComb Garden Club
Meridian Coca-Cola
Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum
Mississippi Assessors and Collectors Association
Mississippi Association of Conservation Districts
Mississippi Beverage Association
Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks
Mississippi Beer Distributors Association
Mississippi Forestry Commission
Mississippi Municipal League
Mississippi Recycling Coalition
Mississippi State University Extension Service
Mississippi Soil & Water Conservation
Mississippi Power Company
MVP Sonic
Natural Resources Conservation Services
Nucor Steel
REAL Christian Foundation
Keep Simpson County Beautiful
TeleSouth Communications
United States Department of Agriculture
Van Zyverden, Inc.
Waste Management
Woodman Group

KEEP MISSISSIPPI BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATES

1. Keep Belzoni Beautiful, Chandra Hines
2. Keep Booneville Beautiful, Lori Tucker
3. Keep Brookhaven-Lincoln County Beautiful, Katie Nations
4. Keep Byram Beautiful, Diandra Hosey
5. Keep Canton Beautiful, Kathy Osborne, Andre' Hines
6. Keep Chickasaw County Beautiful, Patsy Gregory
7. Keep Clarksdale Beautiful, Lisa Fisher
8. Keep Cleveland Beautiful, Myrtis Tabb
9. Keep Clinton Beautiful
10. Keep Columbia/Marion County Beautiful, Yvette Cutrer
11. Keep Columbus/Lowndes County Beautiful, Sasha James
12. Keep Copiah County Beautiful, Cathy Stroud
13. Keep Corinth/Alcorn County Beautiful, Lane Yoder
14. Keep Crystal Springs Beautiful, Felica Thompson
15. Keep Desoto County Beautiful, Ray Laughter
16. Keep Diamondhead Beautiful, Mitzi Botsay
17. Keep Flora Beautiful, Nicole Kitchens
18. Keep Fulton Beautiful, Mayor Emily Quinn
19. Keep Greenwood-Leflore County Beautiful, Beth Stevens
20. Keep Greenville Beautiful, Carrie Martin
21. Keep Hancock County Beautiful
22. Keep Harrison County Beautiful, Michelle Clifford
23. Keep Hattiesburg Beautiful, Nkruma Frazier
24. Keep Holmes County Beautiful, Lydia McClelland
25. Keep Indianola Beautiful, Robin Rosenthal
26. Keep Iuka Beautiful, Emily Bell
27. Keep Jackson Beautiful, Alicia Crudup
28. Keep Kosciusko Beautiful, Mayor Tim Kyle
29. Keep Laurel/Jones County Beautiful
30. Keep Leake County Beautiful, Lucas Brown
31. Keep Madison the City Beautiful, Tona Becker
32. Keep Magee Beautiful, Christian Carrico
33. Keep Mendenhall Beautiful, Latasha Millis
34. Keep Meridian-Lauderdale County Beautiful, Craig Hitts
35. Keep Monroe County Beautiful, Susan Honeycutt
36. Keep Morton Beautiful, Lisa Alford
37. Keep Mount Olive Beautiful, Breyon Magee
38. Keep Natchez/Adams County Beautiful, Mayor Dan Gibson
39. Keep New Albany Beautiful, Billye Jean Stroud
40. Keep Ocean Springs Beautiful, Ravin Nettles
41. Keep Oxford/Lafayette County Beautiful, Ashley Gonce Davis
42. Keep Panola County Beautiful, Jennifer Jackson
43. Keep Pascagoula Beautiful, Antoinette Johnson,
44. Keep Pearl Beautiful, Stacy Smith
45. Keep Pearl River County Beautiful, Christy Goss
46. Keep Picayune Beautiful, Sydney Stubbs
47. Keep Pike County Beautiful, Angela Harvey
48. Keep the Reservoir Beautiful, Jeannine May



Existing Affiliates
No Existing Affiliates



49. Keep Richland Beautiful, Stephanie Ward
50. Keep Ridgeland Beautiful, Jan Richardson
51. Keep Ripley Beautiful, Elizabeth Behm
52. Keep Saltillo Beautiful, Deanna Knight
53. Keep Simpson County Beautiful, Evelyn Copeland
54. Keep Starkville Beautiful, Chris Smiley
55. Keep Stone County Beautiful, Timothy Barnaba
56. Keep Tupelo Beautiful, Kathryn Rhea
57. Keep Vicksburg Beautiful, Laura Beth Strickland
58. Keep Walnut Grove Beautiful, Brian Gomillion
59. Keep Waveland Beautiful, Bryan Therolf
60. Keep Yazoo City Beautiful, David Peyton

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Chair: Sandy Powlettt, Entergy

Vice-Chair: Hardy Graham, Meridian Coca-Cola, Inc.

Treasurer: Ricky Brown, Mississippi Beer Distr.

Secretary: Gay Austin, State and National Garden Clubs