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Plastic Bag Collection Events Tip the Scales on America Recycles Day

'A Bag's Life' Congratulates Keep America Beautiful Educational Events in 35 States

WASHINGTON, DC December 2, 2011 – Plastic bag recycling took on an educational and festive flair in schools, village squares, college campuses and retail store parking lots during America Recycles Day 2011, as community groups in 35 states embraced the message that plastic bags should not be treated like trash. In all, more than 130 plastic bag collection activities were held to celebrate the annual event sponsored by Keep America Beautiful and aimed at raising public awareness to reduce, reuse and recycle throughout the year.

The America Recycles Day celebrations ranged from school-wide collection competitions to craft fairs showcasing items made from reused plastic bags and earth patrols promoting sustainability. In addition, "Caught in the Act" collection events were held in five states that have adopted the *A Bag's Life* public-private program that encourages greater recycling of plastic bag and wraps. Pennsylvania became the latest state to join A Bag's Life on Nov. 15, officially America Recycles Day.

"It was exciting to see the enthusiasm with which our local America Recycles Day event organizers across the country embraced plastic bag collections and educational events," said Brenda Pulley, vice president recycling programs for Keep America Beautiful. "Recycling plastic bags makes sense and is one action consumers can take to protect our environmental resources. Plus, it is such an easy thing to do, you just have to remind people that they can take them back to a nearby store that recycles."

Nationwide, the recycling of plastic bags and wraps is on the rise, with more than 855 million pounds recycled in 2009 — a 31 percent increase since 2005.

A Bag's Life and its thought-provoking monikers "Don't Treat Me Like Trash" and "Gimme A Second Chance" were a big hit in Cambria Heights Elementary School in Carrolltown, PA.

Administrators there “carefully and lovingly” counted 40,141 plastic bags before declaring the collection contest an overwhelming success and ending it a week early.

“It was over-the-top invaluable for the students,” said Daria Wargo, school counselor a.k.a. Captain Recycle to students. “Parents, teachers, our local Walmart and county solid waste department were all on board to help. *A Bag’s Life* and its smiley face gave us the incentive we needed to get it going. Many of our lesson plans include the recycling message and we’ll continue to promote it throughout the school year.”

A Bag’s Life, also in full swing in Florida, Virginia, Texas and North Carolina, encourages consumers to additionally recycle other bags, like those used for dry cleaning, newspapers and bread, as well as wraps used on products like paper towels or bottled water. It includes an interactive and educational website (www.abagslife.com) and an app that pinpoints more than 10,000 drop-off sites by zip code.

A Bag’s Life congratulates the following organizations for their tremendous effort in educating consumers about plastic bag recycling:

White Oaks Elementary School PTA
Keep West Baton Rouge Beautiful
City of Tempe Recycles
Burbank High School
City of Tempe, Arizona
Keep Cincinnati Beautiful
Waste Reduction Resource Awareness Program
Keep The Rez Beautiful
David Lipscomb Elementary School
City of Newport
Keep Lexington Beautiful
Keep Lincoln Parish Beautiful
Timber Point Elementary School
NAS/MWR RECYCLING
Cambria Heights Elementary School
J.A. Garcia ES/ Green Team
Kilohana Elementary School
Keep Port Aransas Beautiful
Keep Kingsport Beautiful
Binghamton Recycling
The International School at Mesa del Sol
Iowa DNR Green Team
Chaparral Elementary School
Westowne Elementary School
Edgewood Colesburg Cub Scouts

Grafflin Elementary
City of Hutto - Green Committee
City of Omaha Recreation Department - Florence Community Center
General Services Administration
Jobs For Georgia Graduates Career Association
Bloom High School
Zion Lutheran School
Worden Community Service Club
Campbell County's Mayor Office
Westmoreland Cleanways
Hampton Roads Planning Dist. Comm.
SRA International
Rochester Area School District
McBride Elementary
Keep Troup Beautiful
Yolo County
Cuero Intermediate School
Brushy Creek MUD
Flat Rock Elementary School
Native Village of Old Harbor
Camp Creek Earth Patrol
Scioto County Soil and Water Conservation District
City of Phoenix Public Works Department
Clermont County Board of DD
Anna's Daughter
La Porte County Solid Waste District
City of Kimmswick, Missouri 63053
Deland High School Eco Club
City of Flagstaff Sustainability Program
US District Court
Annistown Elementary
Student Advocates for Earth (s.a.f.e)
Pride In McAlester
Quality Cleaners
Brentwood Elementary School PTO
Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and Quality Cleaners
Whitson Elementary School
Douglas Jamerson Elementary School
Booz Allen Hamilton
Stephens County High School - Preservation of the Reservation
Tri-County CleanWays
ECO
Kimball Elementary School
Keep Baytown Beautiful/City of Baytown Health Department
SHARP CHULA VISTA MEDICAL CENTER
DD Eisenhower Elementary School

Keep Lexington Beautiful
Keep Greenville Beautiful
GE Healthcare
Eastman Chemical Company
West Point Family and MWR
Chrysler Group, LLC
Haw Creek Elementary School
City of Mansfield
Wilburton Rising
In Harmony Community Club
PCS
Sustainability OIT
Berkmar APES
Salt Lake City
Otto Environmental Systems North America, Inc.
BBA Daisy & Brownies Scouts
TeamHealth Midwest
The Goddard School
Oregon State University Campus Recycling
Klockner PTA
KinderCare
Clorox Services Company
Buffalo Community Middle School
Landstar System, Inc
Keep York Co. Beautiful-Penn State Extension
Student Volunteers
Naifeh's Food Markets
Barbara Bush Elementary
City of Flagstaff Sustainability Program
UMF Dining & SCC
Stanton Elementary School
JobOne
Frito-Lay-Green Team
FIS Green Team
Greene County Career Center
American Transmission Company
Gainesville Children's Center
Tatanka Elementary School
Ann Arbor Learning Community
St John the Baptist School
Students for Humanity
Dunwoody Elementary School
David City Public Schools
Alain L. Locke Magnet School for Environmental Stewardship
Bucks County Conservation District
Pine Bush Elementary

Maple Lake Elementary
Mission Hill Health Movement
Mohawk Elementary
Danville FCCLA Chapter
Cook Wissahickon School
Green Iowa Americorps
Trane
Upper Sioux Community
Key Biscayne Presbyterian Church School
Pak-Sher
Emerald City
Closed Loop Recycling
Ascension Catholic School
Keep Lancaster County Beautiful

About A Bag's A Bag's Life is a public educational campaign that unites non-profits, business, community and government organizations around the common goal of promoting the three R's as they relate to plastic bags — reduce, reuse and recycle. Partners include the nation's largest retail stores, regional and local grocery stores and dry cleaners, environmental groups, state governmental agencies and the American Chemistry Council's Plastics Division. To learn more, visit www.abagslife.com.

About Keep America Beautiful, Inc.

Keep America Beautiful, Inc., established in 1953, is the nation's largest volunteer-based community action and education organization. With a network of over 1,200 affiliate and participating organizations, Keep America Beautiful forms public-private partnerships and programs that engage individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their community's environment. To learn more, visit www.kab.org.

About America Recycles Day

America Recycles DaySM Is a national program of Keep America Beautiful, and is the only nationally recognized day and community-driven awareness event dedicated to promoting and celebrating recycling in the U.S. Since its inception in 1997, communities across the country have participated in America Recycles Day on November 15 to educate, promote environmental citizenship, and encourage action.

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