

TAKE PRIDE[®] IN AMERICA



It's Your Land, Lend A Hand

GO AHEAD MAKE MY DAY – VOLUNTEER ON PUBLIC LANDS!

Clint Eastwood reprised his role as spokesman for Take Pride in America[®] during a press conference and volunteer activity Tuesday, May 25 at Franklin Canyon in Santa Monica National Recreation Area. Eastwood, who also serves as a California State Parks Commissioner, issued a call to action, telling Americans, "It's your land, lend a hand."

"Take Pride is all about partnerships, among federal, state and local governments, as well as civic organizations, youth groups, conservation groups and businesses," Marti Allbright, Executive Director of Take Pride in America told the audience.

Special guests at the announcement included Charity Wallace, Associate Director of Public Liaison for USA Freedom Corps, who brought greetings and a letter from President George W. Bush thanking Eastwood for his community service and support of Take Pride and Michael Chrisman, California Secretary of Resources, who represented Governor Schwarzenegger in announcing California's participation with Take Pride at the event.

California State Park Director Ruth Coleman and Angeles National Forest Supervisor Jody Noiron were also among the distinguished guests. The Charter Partners were represented as well, with Derrick Crandall of American Recreation Council; Kym Murphy, Karen Kawanami, Kris McNamara and Janice Sindoni of The Walt Disney Company; Sue Bray of The Good Sam Club; Bill Anderson of Westrec

Marinas; and Shari Boyer and Chris Boyer of Government Solutions Group attending.

Many thanks to Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Superintendent Woody Smeck, his staff, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority for hosting this great Take Pride event!

Working together, Eastwood, National Park Service volunteers and a fifth-grade class painted picnic tables and benches, and refurbished a hiking trail. The class, from Park View Center School in Simi Valley, California, is the Grand Prize Winner of the 2003-2004 Jiminy Cricket's *Environmentality* Challenge, a unique program led by The Walt Disney Company that encourages fifth-grade students to think more about their environment and why it is "cool to care" about the Earth.

You can watch Eastwood in a public service advertisement produced in 1987 by the Ad Council online. Visit this link to see it: www.takepride.gov/eastwoodpsa.html.

2004 NATIONAL AWARDS

Take Pride is accepting nominations for our annual National Awards. Outstanding volunteer efforts between January 1, 2003 and May 31, 2004 are eligible. Nominations must be submitted by June 30, 2004. This year, we are looking forward to presenting awards to more recipients since we have 12 categories. The awards ceremony will be held in late September in Washington, D.C., and Clint Eastwood will attend. Send a nomination online or via fax. Visit www.TakePride.gov for more details and a nomination form.

TAKE PRIDE IS GROWING!

This May, Governor Schwarzenegger became the 45th governor to support Take Pride. With California now on board, we have 44 states and one territory participating with Take Pride. In addition, 18 U.S. Senators and 25 Members of the U.S. House of Representatives are proud supporters of the program.

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA CITIES

We recently started a new program called Take Pride in America Cities. We welcome the first group of mayors who are bringing Take Pride into their communities: Miami, FL; Hempstead, NY; Norwalk, CT; Apple Valley, CA; Akron, OH; Stockton, CA; Park City, UT; and Las Vegas, NV. Your community can be a Take Pride in America City too. For more information, call our office at (202) 208-5848.

TAKE PRIDE ON THE ROAD

We are taking our message to the road – to 10 Western states in less than one month to be exact! June 14 through July 2 Take Pride staff will board an RV to tour parts of Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Utah and Colorado. The road trip will allow us to meet with folks familiar with our program and, more importantly, introduce it to others. We're excited to work with our state and local partners to make this excursion a fun success. Unilever, a leading producer of food and personal care items, will be a key sponsor of this tour. Follow our progress on the website!

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

We would like to hear from you about the volunteer activities you are hosting, please email us photos and a brief summary to: TakePride@ios.doi.gov.

Lincoln, Nebraska Hosts Take Pride in America Day

More than 500 Nebraskans turned out May 15 for inaugural Take Pride in America Day activities in 31 state parks, recreation areas and wildlife management areas. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission benefited from more than 3,000 volunteer service hours devoted to cleaning and repairing agency facilities in every geographic area of the state.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for people to get outside, enjoy the spring weather and camaraderie of other volunteers, and contribute their time and energy to truly make a difference in our state parks," said Nebraska Governor Mike Johanns.

"It's really impossible to overestimate the value of volunteers in our state," said Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Director Rex Amack. "[Take Pride in America] is a wonderful opportunity for people to give something back to our communities."

Take Pride Volunteers Help with Southern California Fire Restoration

On May 15, Interior Assistant Secretary Lynn Scarlett, along with U.S. Forest Service Associate Chief Sally Collins, Deputy Chief Chris Pyron and Angeles National Forest Supervisor Jody Noiron, kicked-off a major Take Pride in America volunteer effort to help restore fire-damaged public lands in southern California.

Late last year, Take Pride in America, working with Southern California Friends of Take Pride, sponsored a New Year's Resolution Volunteer Pledge Drive to solicit 10 hours per person to work on the approximately 800,000 acres burned this fall. The drive netted over 400,000 hours.

On May 15 volunteers began to tap into these hours.

At 22 "Take Pride" locations on public lands throughout southern California, hundreds of volunteers helped with hillside stabilization and replanting, seed collection, dead tree and brush removal, sign repair and painting, and trash clean-up. Senior citizens, youth groups, off-road-enthusiasts, recreational vehicle owners, conservationists and others participated at four national forests, the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management public land sites.

Tree Utah Helping One Tree at a Time

On May 7 Take Pride Executive Director Marti Allbright helped plant several trees at Jackson Elementary, in Salt Lake City, UT. The event, part of the Utah Department of Natural Resources' Take Pride in Utah month, was put together by Tree Utah a non-profit organization dedicated to the planting and care of trees in the state. Also in attendance for the event was Darin Bird, Assistant Director of the Utah Department of Natural Resources and Justina Parsons-Bernstein, Director Tree Utah. The event would not have happened if it weren't for the efforts of a local 4th grader. This student took it upon himself to locate and contact the Tree Utah program to help beautify the school grounds. For more information on the Tree Utah program, please visit their website at www.TreeUtah.org.

Stockton, California Students Plant Flowers, Learn about Volunteer Legislation

Interior Secretary Gale Norton, House Resources Committee Chairman Richard Pombo (R-Tracy), and Stockton Mayor Gary

Podesto joined students from Stockton, California's Cleveland Elementary School on April 23 to beautify the school with plants and flowers donated by Home Depot.

"People are genuinely looking to roll up their sleeves and make a difference in their own communities," said Pombo. "I introduced a bill in Congress this week that allows the Secretary to give people the opportunity to help beautify public places that are so often the hallmarks of our neighborhoods. The Cleveland School is a great place to start."

Interior, through several of its bureaus, benefits from the contributions of over 200,000 volunteers each year. The Department of the Interior Volunteer Recruitment Act of 2004 (H.R. 4170) gives the Secretary Department-wide authority to accept volunteer services. Norton is an advocate of the bill as it reflects the mission of "Take Pride in America."

"Volunteers across America help improve public lands in many ways – they repair schoolyards, maintain trails and guide visitors at historical sites," Norton said. "But volunteers could do even more if Congress provided Interior's bureaus with the right statutory tools. That's why I am delighted that Chairman Pombo has introduced H.R. 4170 to fill these statutory gaps."

NEW PROGRAM IN THE WORKS

We are working on some exciting programs for fall, including a new virtual adoption program to support the Wild Horse and Burro Program of the Bureau of Land Management. This is an opportunity for urban youth groups, schools, community civic organizations and businesses to participate in our American heritage. Details will be coming soon!