

"The Gift of a Beautiful Land"

"Iowa" the beautiful land derives its name from our Native American heritage. A legacy of natural beauty that in some areas is subtle and in others it is spectacular. Iowans feel that the beauty of Iowa is important to them.

An attitudinal survey conducted by the Iowa Department of Transportation for Keep Iowa Beautiful on the issue of litter resulted in a 46.7% response rate. The survey was mailed to over 4,700 Iowans - the resulting response rate to the four page survey was unheard of and dramatic. Survey response rates seldom exceed a 5% return. Almost half the surveys were returned by Iowans. Nearly 97% of those responding said that it is important to maintain a clean and litter free environment - **A REAL COMMITMENT TO THE QUALITY AND BEAUTY OF IOWA.**

Many times we find it difficult to figure out how we can help, be involved, improve the quality of life, return what Iowa has provided to us - in other words how can each of us help improve our State.

It is clear that we don't want to simply become a State of janitors or trash collectors where we continuously have to clean up after ourselves. The simple answer on how each of us can help improve the beauty of our State is to **PREVENT LITTERING AND BECOME INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION.** We do not need to tolerate littering or unattractive areas.

Helping to beautify our home, yard, neighborhood, community or area is something that every Iowan can do. It is a way of volunteering and making a difference that every individual has the ability to do either alone or with others. Beautification efforts can be done without a great deal of organization, dollars, materials, etc. It starts by not littering, by not tolerating it when others do, and by taking the extra effort to pass the word along to others.

How many times do you see someone throw away a candy bar wrapper or "flip" a cigarette butt? People are doing it without thinking - we need to remind them that one item may not seem important, but that if thousands of people do it - the result is a significant negative impact on the quality of Iowa's beauty. Administrators and school students need to consider making the school events "litter free". Theaters needs to encourage people to bring the trash back out. Parades and festivals need to organize for litter free events. University "tail gate parties" need to clean up before they leave the parking lots.

You get the idea - become involved and speak out against littering to help keep Iowa the "beautiful land".

To obtain additional information on the organization please contact:

Gerald F. Schnepf, Executive Director
Keep Iowa Beautiful
300 East Locust - Suite 100
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: 515-323-6507
E-mail: gschnepf@keepiowabeautiful.com
Web Page: www.keepiowabeautiful.com

See you in the next column featuring the "Measuring Success".

Helping to Keep Iowa Beautiful

Gerald F. Schnepf, Executive Director