

"The Iowa Story"

Iowan's have a long standing interest in the beauty of their communities. Local beautification efforts have been in existence in communities throughout the state for decades. The idea, however, of a statewide effort to assist, support and enhance local efforts is new.

Through the leadership of Donald F. Lamberti, Chairman of the Board of Casey's General Stores, former Governor Robert D. Ray and nine other Board members (see list at end of column) Keep Iowa Beautiful (KIB) was started in January of 2000. The 501c3 charitable status was obtained in March. The organization was affiliated with Keep America Beautiful on April 12, 2000 with the support and leadership of Governor Thomas J. Vilsack.

Financial support for the organization is raised from private individuals, organizations and companies. They recognize the importance of the issue and the role that KIB can play in helping to change behavior patterns. Some Iowan's may have forgotten that pride in our property and neighborhood is key to a healthy and vital community.

Early in the organizational stages it was recognized that the logo and identity of the organization should be one that builds on State pride. That is how the Iowa rose became the logo for KIB. The rose is used in the "Adopt-a-Highway" signage by the Iowa Department of Transportation and is present on the REAP special license plate. The Board of Directors feels that the rose should become the symbol of beauty and cleanliness recognized by all Iowan's.

Objectives of the organization are:

- Reduction of litter levels in Iowa by 50% in three to four years with the long term goal of making Iowa a "Litter Free" State.
- Conducting appropriate research to have the facts in dealing with the issue of litter. In the context a statewide litter survey is now underway and contains the following four elements (initial funding is from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Iowa Society of Solid Waste Operators, and the private industry sector):
- Attitudinal survey of Iowan's regarding litter. Completed by the Iowa Department of Transportation.
- Background survey of the cost to Iowans of littering - underway by Franklin and Associates of Kansas City.
- Physical survey of litter at 150 urban / rural sample sites along the roadways of Iowa - underway by Barker and LeMar of Des Moines.
- Based on this background work - the development of major public awareness and education efforts targeted at changing behavior patterns - underway by Strategic America of Des Moines.
- Supporting community beautification efforts around the state. In that context a special Keep Iowa Beautiful award program has been established in conjunction

with the Community Betterment Program in the Iowa Department of Economic Development. The first award(s) will be presented in early 2002. In addition a Keep Iowa Beautiful check-off has been established for the 2002 Iowa income tax form. Funds obtained will be used for research, public awareness / education and for communities around the State. None of the dollars will be used for administration.

- Increasing the number of affiliates throughout the State. There are currently three affiliates - Keep Boone County Beautiful, Keep Central Iowa Beautiful (12 communities in and around Polk County) and Keep Scott County Beautiful.
- Recognizing those in the enforcement field who are making significant efforts in litter prevention.
- Recognizing those companies that are making significant improvements to properties or the development of employee programs helping to keep Iowa beautiful.

Initial sponsors of KIB are Donald F. Lamberti, A&E Dairy, Casey's Corporation, Barker-LeMar, Bill Fultz, Hy Vee, Inc., Wells Blue Bunny, Taylor Ball, Weitz Construction Co., Metro Waste Authority,

The support is growing and we hope that you will join in helping this organization reach its goals and that you will become involved in your neighborhood and community.

To obtain additional information on the organization please contact:

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See you in the next column featuring the "The Town 'Eyesore' ".

Helping to Keep Iowa Beautiful

Gerald F. Schnepf, Executive Director