

Keep Blanco Beautiful Newsletter

Issue I



Our 20th Year (1999-2019)

This year marks our 20th anniversary and we are ready to celebrate! This newsletter will inform everyone on all our events and projects throughout the year. We wouldn't be able to make it 20 years without your help and support. We're also so appreciative of your time. Let's continue to make and keep Blanco beautiful!

2018 in Review

We had such a wonderful 2018 year!

The first big event was the 19th Annual Don't Mess with Texas Trash Off and 12th Annual Blanco River Clean-up which occurred on Saturday, April 7, 2018. Despite the cold weather, there were 140 volunteers that showed up at the event. The Blanco County Wide Household Waste Collection Event was held April 28, 2018. There were over 85,000 pounds of litter, debris, and bulky waste and over 33,000 pounds of recyclables during these spring events. KBB also held a Don't Mess with Texas Art Contest at Blanco Elementary school and awarded 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place for each grade and submitted the 1st

place winners to [Keep Texas Beautiful](#) (KTB) to have a chance at being selected for the calendar. According to the KTB website, “the purpose of the Contest is to inspire our future leaders to refrain from littering, advocate for litter prevention, and keep Texas beautiful.” One of the major projects KBB worked on throughout 2018 was the [Town Creek Riparian Restoration Project](#). The work focused on a reach of the city park between the Pecan Street bridge (upper boundary) and where the footpath crosses Town Creek (lower boundary). In Jan. the focus of the project was to develop grow zones. A grow zone is an effort to stop mowing along rivers or streams and allow the growth of more dense, diverse riparian vegetation. March was a busy month. 70 more cedar logs were laid along the riparian creating a border for the grow zones and planting also had begun in the grow zones. There was also a cactus garden created by planting cactus along the fence post by the footpath near the creek. In March, the hay bales that once lined the sidewalk were removed and replaced with cedar log stumps and more new plants planted in grow zones. The progress on the project was so successful that in Oct. KBB celebrated all the hard work. At the celebration, there were short presentations by Daniel Oppenheimer (the [Hill Country Alliance](#)), Ryan McGillicuddy ([Texas Parks & Wildlife](#)) and Rachael Ranft ([The Nature Conservancy](#)), a ribbon cutting ceremony, a tour of the riparian to see how well it has come along and grow zone signs placed along the grow zone area. KBB is applying for the Governor’s Community Achievement Awards (GCAA) award through KTB in the beginning of 2019 and will be using this project as an example for the application. “Winning a GCAA earns your community positive statewide recognition, prestige in your region and a plaque from TxDOT you can proudly display in a prominent place, such as City Hall,” according to the website. KBB members, Debbie Andry and Pete Powell, attended the KTB Conference in Austin from June 11-13. They were able to attend a variety of classes. The “Help Save the Historic Rock Walls” raffle was held on Oct. 12, 2018 at 3:15 p.m. \$800 was collected via the raffle. Towards the end of the year, KBB began a cigarette butt campaign by placing receptacles around the square. Keep America Beautiful had donated 11 post receptacles and KBB purchased an additional 10 free standing receptacles from Amazon. This campaign will continue throughout 2019 to reduce the number of butts on the ground around town. Lastly, the annual KBB Christmas party took place on Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2018 and was full of laughter and fun. KBB is looking forward to another busy and exciting year in 2019 which will also be the 20 year anniversary of the

organization forming.



Education Chair Needed

KBB is currently searching for an Education chair. The Education chair is responsible for



educating school children regarding litter and waste handling practices. He/she also educates officials, teachers, semi-professional staff, clerical and maintenance staffs regarding cleanliness techniques; and recognition of outstanding class/school/staff. We are also always looking for new members to join the other committees as well. Our committees include: Beautification, Civic/Neighborhood, Education/ Schools, Fundraising/Finance, Law enforcement/Municipal, Public Awareness, and Recycling. Please let us know if you are interested in joining us!

[Click here for more information on our committees](#)

Trash-off and River Cleanup



The Great American Cleanup is the largest nationwide event sponsored by Keep America Beautiful. The program is designated to help end littering, improve recycling, and beautify America's towns. It runs from March 1st to May 31st each year with over 20,000 communities taking part of this event. Keep Texas Beautiful along with TxDOT are also involved with the GAC by hosting the Don't Mess with Texas Trash Off. This is the largest one-day cleanup event in the great state of Texas. Our town was lucky enough to have several events going on during the time-frame of GAC. These events are the following: KBB's Annual Trash-Off and River Cleanup (4/27), City of Blanco's Trash-Off (4/1-4/6), and Blanco Countywide Household (4/27). KBB helps with all these events, however, it should be noted that all three are not the same event. This year, KBB had to move our Trash-off and River Cleanup event twice due to bad weather. This is the first time we have ever had to reschedule our event and we would like to thank everyone for their patience. The city yard remained open as scheduled on April 6. Citizens who had signed up at the city for assistance were also taken care of on Saturday by volunteers with trailers who went around town collecting the trash. Members of [Boy Scout Troop #497](#) gathered on April 13 to

clean up the Blanco River. The rain held off at the beginning so three boys in three kayaks and six boys in two canoes began collecting trash in the river. Other boys cleaned along the shores. Around 10 a.m. lightning was spotted so everyone came back to shore. The troop members waited for a bit and then continued to cleanup until the rain started falling and more lightning occurred. They were also able to practice for their upcoming Canoe Race which took place April 26-27. The final event took place on April 27 with volunteers from different organizations joining us in picking up litter from the city easements. Everyone was treated to breakfast tacos after finishing up their designated areas. Thank you to all our wonderful Trash-Off and River Cleanup volunteers! We are in the works of planning a "Fall Sweep" event so get excited!

Blanco Elementary Don't Mess with Texas Art Contest

Each year, Keep Blanco Beautiful (KBB) holds a Don't Mess With Texas Trash Off Art Contest at the Blanco Elementary School for students in grades kindergarten through fifth. Olga Ibarra, Francis Dickey, Sally Wall, and Claudia Smith, members of Tejas Art Club, volunteered to judge the contest entries on Tuesday, April 16. The first, second, and third place winners of each grade will be submitted to Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB) to be entered in their calendar contest. KTB says, "The purpose of the Contest is to inspire our future leaders to refrain from littering, advocate for litter prevention, and keep Texas beautiful." KBB members presented winners with a certificate and cool sunglasses on April 25.



[Click here for more Trash-off details](#)

Restoration of the Byars Live Oak Tree





KBB contracted Kevin Belter president and Consulting Arborist of [ArborCare and Consulting of the Guadalupe River Valley](#) for the restoration of the Byars Live Oak Tree. The tree is over 500 years old (possibly 700 years old) and has only been sprayed for treatment for ball moss and trimmed when needed. Belter recommended level 2 pruning for the tree. This level includes: canopy thinning, elimination of large and medium-sized dead branches, ball moss removal, and selection of key dominant limbs and elimination of some key inferior branches, and any necessary lifting off the roof. The removal of sprouts on the main trunk and in the main lower branch unions will also take place. Pruning level two also includes painting of all oak cuts ½ inch or larger with an oil-based, non-phytotoxic paint. ArborCare will also make sure to clean up and debris caused during the project. The company arrived on Friday, Feb. 1 to begin working on the tree.

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