

THIS WEEK IN "LITTERLAND"

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May 28, 2017

Sign of the times

Sycamore Seniors get together with one goal in mind: cleaning their hometown Talladega County, Alabama. As well as regularly doing their bit, they try to involve others. → →

Please don't litter: be a 'deer' this year



In 85 weeks, Mumbai beach goes from dirtiest to cleanest

Versova Beach in Mumbai went from filthy to fantastic all because two volunteers stuck to the job for 85 weeks and recruited others to help. Lawyer Afroz Shaw and his neighbour, Harbansh Mathur, 84, began by tackling 2.5 km of shoreline in October 2015. By April 2017 the beach was spotless. The project of weekly cleanups grew to attract up to 300 people each time, hauled away 5.3 million kg of trash and drew high praise from United Nations Environment Program and civic authorities.

200,000+ polluting butts rescued

A recent clean up dedicated to picking up littered cigarette butts in Canada was branded a success by the organizing group, A Greener Future. In total 200,719 of the castaways were collected during a one-day Butt Blitz on May 9 and were shipped to the up-cycling firm TerraCycle for recycling and reuse as industrial plastic.

Paul has more good tips for you

How do you stay on top of litter and keep your cleaned spaces clean? Guest columnist and litter expert Paul Cusack has some answers to this bewildering question. Read more on Page 2.

Hollywood star power weighs in

In his new movie "Spider-Man: The Homecoming", opening July 7, **Michael Keaton** plays the character of Vulture, the villain. But this week in *Litterland* he's a hero for his response in a rapid fire exchange with **Ellen DeGeneres** during the Ellen's Burning Questions segment of her May 24th show. When she asked for his pet peeve, Keaton replied, without missing a beat, "littering." We cheer celebrities who give voice and credibility to the litter issue and serve as an example to their fans. Never underestimate the power of a Hollywood star's endorsement. Now if only more of entertainment's elite would pick up on Keaton's cue.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Manifesto Club, formed to challenge state regulation in everyday life, has privatized litter enforcement in its sightlines. A prime objection flows from petty ticketing spurred by quota and reward systems. [Data the group released](#), gained from its freedom of information requests to 46 councils, included that Kent issued 16,286 tickets last year, representing £1.3 million in fines.

HEADLINE LITTER GRABBERS (MAY 21 - 28)

Some of what made our News Reel this week

David Lynch's rat video was kind of creepy (5/23)

Archival footage surfaced this week in the form of a 2010 anti-litter commercial directed by David Lynch, of pop surrealist movie fame. The PSA exploits the horror of rats infesting New York garbage. View it [here](#).

A monumental Indian app is unveiled (5/25)

Out to protect its 116 national monuments from desecration by litter, the Indian government has come out with an app to help the public report messes seen at federally important sites so they can be tidied promptly.

Kildare gum busters on the move (5/23)

This is the third and possibly the final year for "Bin your gum when you're done!", a three-year deal forged by Ireland's Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment and Food Drink Ireland (FDI) representing the gum industry, to fund a national gum litter awareness programme from 2015-2017. Kildare kicked off its Year 3 effort and swears by it. Wrigley took the lead for the chewing gum makers.

There's a new (green) sheriff in town (5/24)

Senator Ben Ayade, governor of Cross River, Nigeria has renamed his squad of urban forest guards, formerly known as green police, an environmental team he created. He announced a new title of Green Sheriff. He warned people not to litter the capital of Calabar as the sheriffs are empowered to caution and arrest them.



YOUR SPACE

Experts share their insights and tricks of the trade

“Partnerships and Community Participation”

by Paul Cusack

It doesn't matter if you're from government, the business sector or a passionate member of your community, alone none of us can defeat litter. It requires the continuous efforts of many just to stay on top of litter.

We should always be looking for ways to connect with as many groups and sectors, encouraging them to participate regularly in picking up a few bits of litter when and wherever they see it. Clean-up events, not-for-profits and programmed government work all play an important role in managing litter, but to get in front of litter you have to think differently. Think continuous improvement.

Along with education programs into schools we should be engaging with seniors across the world and encouraging them to get involved. Many seniors walk for exercise a few times a week in and around their neighbourhood. By approaching seniors and encouraging them to pick up a few bits of litter each time they are out and about you will impact on the easy to see, easy to collect bits of litter. This is perhaps the biggest untapped sector: you only need to ask them to do a little bit locally.

Many seniors have now retired, raised a family and are perhaps even enjoying grandchildren. So over the years they have picked up after their kids, probably picked up after the grandkids. They are already well qualified in the actions of picking stuff up, now it's just about focusing their attention on litter.

The request has to be achievable, no one person can eliminate litter but that one person can do their bit. And throughout a year that little bit adds up. It's a consistent everyday approach that works.

Businesses have a vested interest in keeping the surrounds of their business clean and litter free. If every business is only asked to look after the front of their store as well as the neighbouring businesses they can achieve exceptional results. In a strip of shops it's sharing the workload as well as sharing the successful outcomes.

Governments, councils and event organisers think nothing of asking people to get involved in major clean-up events. Instead of adopting the all-in approach we need to be spreading the request across 365 days, think of it like eating healthy or exercising throughout the year instead of one or two days a year.

This approach is about asking as many people and groups as you can find to just do a little bit and to do it regularly. There is a tailored approach for every sector in your community, if your request is well intended and the requested action achievable then you can get the levels of participation you seek.

There is literally no cost in asking people to get involved, over time you and your organisation will get better at it and you will find more and more people participating. Ask them to address the easy to see and easy to collect bits of litter, once they have got used to dealing with that they will graduate onto the next types of litter without prompting.

Be prepared to get involved with them, keep communication open and be responsive to requests and suggestions. And most importantly keep the conversations positive, like "its easy to achieve this if we all just do a little" rather than discuss the problems with litterbugs and environmental issues.

If you are struggling with a way to approach your first group please send in your details to *Litterland* and we will work with you on an initial approach.

Paul Cusack is a Queensland-based consultant, head of Bin Screens Creative, specializing in bin design and placement.