

### Success Stories

Over the years, we have been amazed at the creativity, ingenuity and enthusiasm shown by the many participants in the GACR. Some groups have conducted RoundUps to earn funds for worthy causes. Here are some examples that might generate ideas for your events.

**WAHPETON, ND** - Youth groups in Wahpeton, North Dakota hosted a Great American Can RoundUp to earn enough funds to purchase a camel for their city zoo. The program was so successful that recycling proceeds also purchased a female mate to keep the first camel company. The RoundUp continues as "Cans to Feed the Camels."

**NAPLES, FL** - Children at Lely Elementary School in Naples, Florida used their aluminum can recycling earnings to buy microscopes, binoculars, dip nets and books for an outdoor "cypress swamp classroom" and learning center.

**LAKEWOOD, CO** - Members of Lakewood, Colorado chapters of the Explorers and Boy Scouts collected 10,000 pounds of cans and were recognized during the pre-game show of the Rockies baseball team at Mile High Stadium. Funds were used to buy radios, stretchers, bandages and other supplies to be used in search and rescue operations.

**HUTCHINSON, KS** - Girl Scout Troop 50044 in partnership with Midwest Iron & Metal has cars, pick-up trucks and livestock trailers lined up along Main Street waiting to recycle their aluminum cans with the Girl Scouts on the Saturday of Earth Week. The local community receives cash for their cans or donates them to the troop. Midwest Iron & Metal contributes a premium per pound collected to the troop. One year the troop collected 1 million cans. The cans were temporarily stored at the state fair grounds. Kansans from all over the state,

including school children by the bus load, visited the site to see what a million cans look like.

Read on to learn more about a few of the many Great American Can RoundUp success stories, in each group's own words and enter your group into the GACR Photo/Blog Success Story competition.

### COMMUNITY GROUPS

**NEWARK, OH** - Our project, Cans for Camp O'Bannon, was a big success, both in recycling and in building community spirit. Camp O'Bannon is a summer camp for disadvantaged children who would otherwise not be able to enjoy a camping experience. O'Bannon Camp is supported by two volunteer organizations and seeks donations to help provide a wonderful experience for the children.

To launch our "Cans for Camp O'Bannon RoundUp", we made initial contacts with the local media, who got involved and enthusiastically promoted the project. Local newspapers, TV and radio stations kicked off on August 14 with messages to start saving cans immediately, to be turned in the first week of September. The Mayor of Newark declared those dates "Cans for Camp Week."



CANS: INFINITELY RECYCLABLE™

## **Success Stories (continued)**

Our local Goodwill Industry Director and Recycling Manager agreed to use their recycling center as one of the drop-off points and to collect the cans at the end of each day from the other drop-off locations. Their workers weighed cans, kept track of the weights and donors, crushed the cans and transported them to be sold.

The enthusiasm generated for the project was heartwarming and produced 3,509 pounds of aluminum cans, which translates to 107,700 cans that were diverted from our landfill and recycled! We were able to present Camp O'Bannon with a check for \$1,436. The overwhelmingly positive community response has encouraged the Camp O'Bannon Board of Directors to adopt "Cans for Camp" as an annual fundraising project!

### **GIRL SCOUTS**

**CLARK, NJ** - Some people look at an aluminum can and simply see a convenient container for a cold beverage. The Clark-Winfield Girl Scouts (CWGS) see much, much more. They see an opportunity to increase their community's awareness and involvement in helping the environment and bring hope and help to young burn victims through their recycling efforts.

The CWGS have been participating in The Great American Can RoundUp program since 1993. In cooperation with the Clark Volunteer Fire Department, they designed a program that stressed the environmental importance of recycling and helped to raise much needed funds for the St. Barnabas Burn Foundation program, Aluminum Cans for Burned Children. The Girl Scouts bring their aluminum cans to scheduled drop-offs every two weeks, where the cans are weighed and the total weight recorded. The cans are transported to a local recycler by members of the Clark Volunteer Fire

Department. All recycling proceeds are donated to the St. Barnabas Burn Foundation, the only certified burn treatment facility in New Jersey.

Monies raised help to provide non-medical items and financial assistance to the families of young burn victims. The funds also support burn education and fire safety programs such as the ACBC Fire Safety House, a two-story mobile classroom that gives children hands-on experience in fire safety.

In less than a year, 53 Girl Scouts have collected a total of 4,583 pounds of aluminum cans. Since initiating the program, the CWGS have helped to raise over \$10,000 for the St. Barnabas Burn Foundation.

### **SCHOOLS**

**LAKE MILLS, WI** - When we started our Aluminum Can Recycle-A-Thon, our goal was to raise enough money for a new playground. We decided to collect aluminum cans because it was something everyone, young and old, could do. This gave everyone a sense of accomplishment knowing they helped, even in the smallest way.

Recycling aluminum cans was the best way to go because we didn't have to ask for money to fund the new playground. Collecting aluminum cans gave people an opportunity to donate their cans without having to delve into their pocketbooks. We advertised to the entire city of Lake Mills: **ALUMINUM CAN RECYCLE-A-THON!** The response was unbelievable!

The cans were weighed and stored in a school family's garage. Every two weeks a caravan of vehicles would load up the enormous mountain of aluminum cans and

## Success Stories (continued)

take them to the recycling center. Collecting from April through June gave us \$2,540 by recycling 6,712 pounds of aluminum cans.

Not only did the school recycle cans, but letters were sent out to the area businesses to help, either financially or by donating their aluminum cans. Many of the businesses responded. One gave us 700 pounds of beverage cans! Individuals, groups and memorials were also given to the playground fund. All in all, we raised over \$7,500!

**HENDERSONVILLE, TN** - On the first Wednesday of each month, Beech Elementary is buzzing with parents and students who are truly working to make our world a better place to live. From January 1 through September 25, they joined together to recycle 8,707 pounds of aluminum cans and raised \$4,573.82 to purchase library books, computer equipment, a portable sound system, and seating for the new outdoor classroom. The "Beech Recycles" Can RoundUp was a monthly fundraiser held at the school where cans are dropped off and then taken to the recycling center by parents and grandparents.

The PTA Recycling Coordinator contacted local businesses to support Beech's recycling effort, and each donated incentive awards for those students who recycle. On "Can Day," every student who recycles receives some type of reward. Big ticket items such as stereos, CDs, and movie passes are given away to the top monthly recyclers.

Businesses are also saving their cans for weekly or monthly collection by students and their parents.

Our program is continuing to grow each year and the number of participating families and businesses who are participating grows. Those who recycle say they just can't stop picking up cans!

**ELFERS, FL** - The students of Mittye P. Locke Elementary in Elfers, Florida are well into their UPDATE HOW MANY YEARS IF STILL PARTICIPATING and most successful year of our Great American Can RoundUp Cash for Cans recycling program. Cash for Cans is an ongoing project in which the students do most of the hands-on recycling and decide how to spend the profits.

Children, parents, staff and several area businesses worked together to make the program a success. Although beverage cans are dropped off any day, Thursday is the big "CAN DAY" at Mittye P. Locke. Students work in teams to sort, count, bag and load the aluminum cans into the truck. Weekly and grand totals are then reported to the student body and staff through our "Sharing Wall" and via daily announcements on the intercom. Notices are sent to parents to keep them informed and involved in recycling efforts. We have recycled 6,303 pounds of aluminum cans in the past year.

All money earned through aluminum can recycling is spent on student projects. Teachers and students provide suggestions and the entire student body makes its choices by classroom ballots. Local charities and environmental organizations are always the biggest recipients of Mittye P. Locke's "can" money. Proceeds from The Great American Can RoundUp have purchased toys at Christmas for needy area children and sent over 1,000 pounds of pet food to the S.P.C.A.