



PRESS RELEASE

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UGRA's 16th Annual River Clean Up

UGRA hosted its 16th Annual River Clean Up on Saturday, July 27th. A total of 10,695 pounds of garbage was collected by 526 participants, working along the river from Hunt all the way to Comfort. Along with the expected paper and plastic trash, participants retrieved a wooden umbrella, Lionel Ritchie cassette tape, 1954 license plate, love letter, longnose gar skull entangled in fishing line, Christmas tree with lights, plane ticket, Mother's Day card, lawn mower, mattress, pond liner, recliner, protein feeder, metal pipe, safe door, boat with a cypress tree growing out of it, and 19 tires. The volunteers who recovered these items entered them into the biggest and most unusual items contest.

The enthusiastic volunteers scoured the river and its banks from about 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM and when they returned to Flat Rock Park with their trash, they were served hot dogs from the Bald Eagle Café, pizza from Papa John's, and homemade treats from the Kerrville Garden Club. Participants also enjoyed exhibits by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Hill Country Master Naturalists, Hill Country Master Gardeners, Hill Country Fly Fishers, Be a Pollinator Champion, Riverside Nature Center, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, and UGRA.

"To protect the river, we actively promote watershed awareness. Simply put, the watershed is all the land area that drains to the Guadalupe River. Anything including paper, plastic, or metal can and will make its way to the river at some point, so it's important to protect our watershed from trash and pollutants. It's rewarding to see so many people working together to prevent this negative impact to our river. This one-time event raises the necessary awareness, so all understand the importance of protecting the Guadalupe River which not only provides enjoyment to us but is an economic engine for the county," said Ray Buck, UGRA General Manager.

The dedicated group of volunteers included many coworkers, friends, and families as well as groups from Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Girl Scout troops from Kerr County and the San Antonio area, 4H First Tee, Aqua, Atmos Energy, City of Kerrville, Christian Women's Job Corps, First Presbyterian Church Youth, Kerrville Fire Department Water Operations, Guadalupe Bank, Kerrville Board of Realtors, Kerr County Democrats, Kerr County Women's Chamber, Martin Marietta, Pathways 3H, River Hills Health & Rehab, Rotaract Community Club of Kerrville, Rotary Club of Kerrville Morning, Salvation Army Kroc Center, St. Michael's Anglican Church, Schreiner University Green Society, Stablewood Springs Resort, Texas River Stewards, Tom Daniels Robotics, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Hardworking employees of the City

of Kerrville, Garrett Services, Kerrville Recycling, and Republic Services hauled away the trash and recyclables free of charge.

The Trash to Treasure Hunt brings a fun and competitive element to the River Clean Up. Once again this year, the contest was sponsored by Kerrville Recycling. Three milk jugs marked with the River 106.1 stickers were hidden near the Guadalupe River or one of the tributaries. Glenn Taylor of The River 106.1 was on hand to award the \$100 cash prize to each of the three lucky volunteers who found the hidden items.

UGRA staff and board members distributed free t-shirts, refreshments, and raffle prizes to participants, as well as a prize to the first pre-registered volunteer, the oldest volunteer, and the youngest volunteer. These items were made possible due to the generous donations from Aqua, Broadway Bank, Buckhorn Lake Resort, The Cailloux Foundation, City of Kerrville, Garrett Services, HEB, Hill Country Master Gardeners, James Avery Artisan Jewelry, Keep Texas Beautiful, Kerr County Soil & Water Conservation District, Kerr Screen Graphics, Kerrville Board of Realtors, Kerrville Garden Club, Kerrville Kayak and Canoe, Kerrville Recycling, Martin Marietta, The Music Maker, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Papa John's, The Ranch 92.3, Republic Services, The River 106.1, Riverside Nature Center, and Security State Bank & Trust. "We are a small staff at UGRA, but through the generosity of our sponsors and the dedication of our volunteers, we are able to host a successful event each year. Our sponsors provide everything from food service, to cleanup supplies, to audio support. We also have dozens of additional participants who help ensure the day runs smoothly. Obviously, we wouldn't have a River Clean Up at all without enthusiastic volunteers to dedicate their Saturday morning to improving our community. Each participant plays a vital role and I am grateful to all," said Tara Bushnoe, UGRA Natural Resources Coordinator.

All volunteers received an 16th Annual River Clean Up t-shirt. The t-shirt was designed by young Kerr County artist, Madellyn Fiedler, whose artwork won the t-shirt design contest earlier this year.

The Annual River Clean Up is just one component of UGRA's Trash Free Initiative. UGRA contracts with Garrett Services of Kerrville to pick up litter at 15 low water crossings year-round. The amount of trash these crews collect is staggering – over 32,000 pounds in 2018 alone. As a proactive measure to reduce littering, UGRA is continuing to fund summertime litter patrols with licensed peace officers at the most popular river crossings to promote the message, "Pack it in, Pack it out." In addition, UGRA's environmental education programs focus on preserving the water quality of the Guadalupe River.

Let's Keep Our River Clean



Over 525 volunteers gathered for announcements and prizes at the 16th Annual River Clean Up



Volunteers help unload vehicles and sort trash.



The City of Kerrville hauls away trash collected during the 16th Annual River Clean Up.



Volunteers from team Aqua pose with the boat they hauled out of Johnson Creek.