

## Local teens collect record debris during Keep Martin Beautiful makeover in Indiantown

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THE FIREFLY GROUP

High school students from South Fork High School's JROTC program unload yard clippings, litter and debris collected during the Indiantown community cleanup on Feb. 25. The 250 volunteers collected 13.7 tons of litter during the four-hour cleanup.

PALM CITY — Pulling out dead tree stumps, tossing trash from overgrown bushes, and hauling old appliances from the back yards of homes in Indiantown, more than 250 volunteers came together on Saturday, Feb. 25, as a part of the Indiantown Community Makeover, running now through May 30.

Each year, groups of volunteers of all ages gather for Keep Martin Beautiful's annual Extreme Martin Makeover, the local community cleanup efforts coordinated as a part of the national Great American Cleanup campaign. However, on this particular day, the number of youth representatives from local high schools and middle schools was remarkable.

Colonel James Daly led his Junior ROTC program from South Fork High School in the volunteer efforts. "Teaching our student leaders the importance of citizenship through volunteer opportunities like this has always been a high priority for me," Daly said. "The chance to do a joint service learning project with the JROTC programs from Martin County and Jensen Beach high schools was something we had been looking to do for a while, and when Habitat Angel asked for our help, we jumped at the chance."

Clad in T-shirts with quotes about leadership and teamwork, nearly 150 teenage volunteers donned shovels, gloves and trash bags to help make an "Extreme Difference" in the Booker Park community of Indiantown. With 80 homes identified as a part of the revitalization and beautification projects planned for the next three years, the teens had no shortage of work ahead of them, and accomplished more than expected in the four-hour time period allotted. The group collected a record amount of 13.7 tons, or 27,400 pounds of litter and debris.

In partnership with Habitat Angel, Habitat for Humanity, Indiantown NonProfit Housing, Indiantown Ministerial Alliance, Martin County and The UPS Foundation, KMB has partnered with local organizations to organize the ongoing cleaning, painting and landscaping projects. The next large-scale volunteer effort in Indiantown is scheduled for March 24.

"With the dedication of our volunteer organizations and the energy in the youth we saw on Saturday, we will be able to do some incredible things for the residents in this neighborhood," Rob Ranieri, Keep Martin Beautiful logistics coordinator said. "That's what this project is all about -- creating a clean, safe, and more beautiful place for these families to live."

More volunteers for this year's Extreme Martin Makeover are always needed and encouraged to participate.

For more information or to participate in a cleanup, visit [www.keepmartinbeautiful.org](http://www.keepmartinbeautiful.org), [www.facebook.com/KeepMartinBeautiful](http://www.facebook.com/KeepMartinBeautiful) or contact KMB at 772-781-1222 or [info@keepmartinbeautiful.org](mailto:info@keepmartinbeautiful.org).

From March 1 through May 31, KMB - along with Keep America Beautiful affiliates across the country - participates in the Great American Cleanup, the nation's largest, annual community improvement program. In addition to community cleanups that run through the duration of the three-month campaign, KMB hosts the Extreme Martin Makeover, a series of projects that focus on litter removal, revitalization and beautification efforts in specific neighborhoods throughout Martin County.

Neighborhood groups, civic clubs, schools, scouts, businesses and individuals can all be part of the Great American Cleanup. Volunteers can organize their own clean up activity or sign up for a site already identified by Keep Martin Beautiful. All cleanup projects that take place between March and May will count as part of the Great American Cleanup, and volunteer groups will be provided with supplies including trash bags, water and T-shirts (while supplies last).

Thank you to the sponsors who have made the 2012 GAC events possible, which include AT&T, Waste Management, The Firefly Group, Martin County Solid Waste Authority, AgTEC, Seacoast National Bank, Florida Power & Light, Harmony Martin County, Sailor's Return, Wallace Automotive, Whitticar Boat Works, Continental Shelf Associates, Waste Pro, The Garden Club of Stuart, Culpepper & Terpening, Forest Hills Funeral Home and NisAir. Sponsorship opportunities are still available and needed to support the year-round operations of Keep Martin Beautiful. It provides for a great way to promote your business while helping the community.

#### About Keep Martin Beautiful

Keep Martin Beautiful is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community organization founded in 1994 as an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful. Its mission is to preserve and enhance the quality of life in Martin County through litter prevention, promotion of recycling, improvement of solid waste management practices, and beautification and community revitalization activities. KMB signature events and programs include the annual Environmental Stewardship Awards Ceremony, International Coastal Cleanup, Great American Cleanup, Adopt-A-Road program, Adopt-A-Street program and other educational and outreach activities. Find KMB on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/KeepMartinBeautiful](http://www.facebook.com/KeepMartinBeautiful), follow KMB on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/KMBmartin](http://www.twitter.com/KMBmartin) or visit [www.keepmartinbeautiful.org](http://www.keepmartinbeautiful.org).