

More Than A Slogan

By Melissa Black

Missourians pick up on ...

Litter. Trash. Garbage. Waste. No matter what it's called, most people believe littering is disgusting and trash belongs in garbage cans.



The Missouri departments of Conservation and Transportation agree. Tired of picking up litter in the state's parks, streams, roadsides and other public areas, the two agencies joined together to create Missouri's first statewide anti-litter campaign, No MOrE Trash!

The campaign's goal is to reduce littering in Missouri and make it a cleaner, more beautiful place to live and visit. From St. Louis to St. Joseph, Hannibal to Joplin, litter affects the quality of life for everyone and, whether we realize it or not, costs all of us money. It's a problem that thrives on neglect, and MoDOT and MDC hope that by raising awareness of the situation, Missourians will rise to the occasion and take positive action.

"MoDOT spends more than \$6 million a year to clear litter from highways



PHOTOGRAPHS THIS PAGE: MO. DEPT. OF CONSERVATION, INSET BY MIKE WRIGHT. PHOTOGRAPHS OPPOSITE PAGE: TOP BY MELISSA BLACK, BOTTOM BY MO. DEPT. OF CONSERVATION.

throughout the state,” says Stacy Armstrong, MoDOT’s statewide Adopt-A-Highway coordinator and No MOre Trash! campaign coordinator. “We have more than 3,500 Adopt-A-Highway groups whose efforts are worth another \$1.5 million, and several incarcerated personnel crews that clean up litter, but we still barely make a dent in the problem. We would much rather use that money on roadside beautification and other projects.”

The campaign initially will target 16-to-24-year-olds, the age group research shows is most likely to litter, through a television spots, web site and video contest. Posters, banners, hand stamps, signs and displays also are getting the message across.

The 30-second television spots began running April 30 on Comedy Central, MTV, BET and other cable networks that attract younger viewers. Target markets include St. Louis, Kansas City, Columbia, Jefferson City, Springfield and Cape Girardeau. The TV spots also are available on a new interactive web site, www.nomoretrash.org, which informs visitors about statewide efforts to fight litter and how to get involved.

The No MOre Trash! video contest is an opportunity for anyone age 16-24 to submit his or her own 30-second anti-littering video and compete for cash prizes. Winning entries will be used to help promote the campaign. The contest will continue through September.



Production of the NoMOre Trash! television commercials took place in various Kansas City locations. They run on cable TV and feature young people reminding viewers that littering is a serious issue.

Dare to Dream

“What we want to do is plant a dream,” says Lorna Domke, MDC’s outreach chief and No MOre Trash! campaign coordinator. “Picture yourself living in a Missouri that’s fresh, clean and full of life. No broken glass to hurt you, no piles of food wrappers, no discarded tires, no cigarette butts. Just you and a clean sidewalk, green lawn or clear stretch of stream.”

Domke says MDC Stream Teams, which adopt sections of the state’s streams and lakes, picked up more than 420 tons of trash last year, an increase of 30 percent over the amount collected in 2000.

Enforcement of the Missouri litter law is another key to curb Missouri littering. Anyone caught littering in Missouri can receive a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or a year in jail.

MoDOT and MDC jointly provided \$80,000 to fund the No MOre Trash! campaign. MoDOT’s portion comes from federal enhancement monies that cannot be used for construction. MDC is contributing \$30,000. The agencies hope to raise additional funds to expand the effort.

A Dedicated Board

The No MOre Trash! program receives strong support from the Missouri Anti-litter Advisory Board established by Gov. Holden and First Lady Lori Hauser Holden. The board is composed of government, business and non-profit organizations that will help carry litter-free messages to the rest of the state.

Advisory board member Valerie McEuen, fourth-grade teacher at Bourbon Elementary School and Adopt-A-Highway volunteer, contacted MDC last fall when she saw an editorial in the *Missouri Conservationist* about the new statewide anti-litter campaign.

“I wanted to help in whatever way possible,” she says. “It sickens me to see all the filth out there contaminating our beautiful state, and I wanted to make a difference in the future.”

So she got her students involved in several projects that emphasize their personal responsibility to reduce, reuse and recycle.

“I want to educate them on what they can do, so that they in turn can educate their family and friends,” McEuen says. “I’m hoping that others will spread the word about No MOre Trash! and that we can all look forward to living in a cleaner state.”

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the car, which Darin drove in the 1962 movie, "Too Late Blues," and donated to the museum in 1970.

Moving into the Future

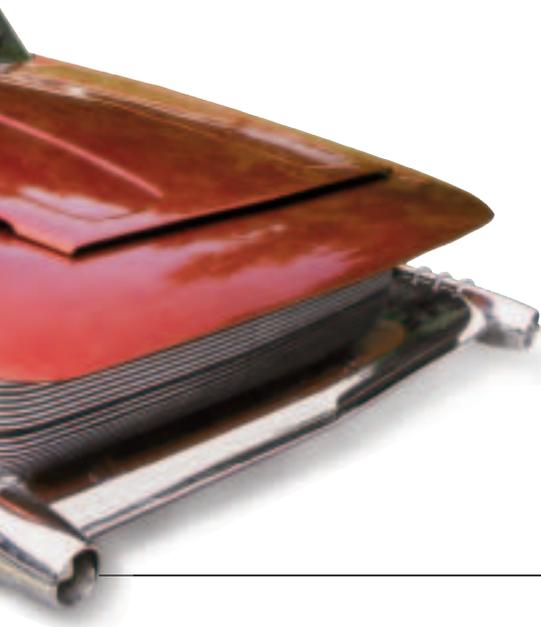
Now operated by the St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation, the Museum of Transportation is planning for the future. Capital and project funding for the museum comes largely from public and corporate donations. Working with the Transport Museum Association, the parks department is hoping to generate enough money to improve several features.

"Hopefully, improvements will include things like a restaurant, a new gift shop, a couple of galleries, and restrooms," Butterworth says, stressing the last item. "Right now, it's either the Porta Potty or a hike back to the visitors' center."

In the end, these displays are more than restored exhibits of cars and trains. They are captured moments of history. Their design and construction reflect the values and needs of generations long past. They are not merely machines, but lessons about where we're from and how we got here.

May their journeys never end. ■

Matt Hiebert is senior writer for Pathways and an outreach specialist at MoDOT General Headquarters.



Bourbon citizens participated in the eighth annual citywide Trash Bash on May 11. Volunteers picked up enough litter to fill more than 100 bags of trash.

Domke agrees, "This really is a grassroots campaign. The power of multiplying the message through a variety of local business and community efforts is huge. Neighbor-to-neighbor, friend-to-friend, teacher-to-student, salesperson-to-customer – the message will spread best when it's shared personally and continually."

Want to Help?

Armstrong encourages everyone to get involved on a local level by joining a Stream Team, the Adopt-A-Highway program or any other litter-free group. Citizens also can call local authorities and report littering or dumping.

"The best thing people can do is put their trash in garbage cans and remind others to do the same," she says. "It doesn't hurt anyone to stop and pick up a piece of trash and throw it away, and it sets a great example for others."

Additional information about the No MOre Trash! campaign is available at www.nomoretrash.com. Contest videos should be sent to: No MOre Trash! 9229 Ward Parkway, Suite 225, Kansas City, MO 64114. ■

The Missouri Litter Profile

Who (Most Likely To Litter)

- Age 16-24, particularly when in groups
- Single
- Smokes
- Eats fast food at least twice a week

Why

- Doesn't care
- Doesn't consider it littering
- Thinks others will pick it up
- No trash can handy

What

• Fast food waste	33 %
• Paper	29 %
• Aluminum	28 %
• Glass	6 %
• Plastic	2 %
• Other	2 %

Source: MoDOT research

Melissa Black is Operations communications manager at MoDOT General Headquarters.