**Community Program of the Year: Keep Luna County Beautiful**

It’s a joy to award the Community Program of the Year Award to Keep Luna County Beautiful. This Keep America Beautiful affiliate implements numerous community building recycling initiatives, such as the “You CAN Do It” Program and the annual Community Yard sale.

Both of these programs began in 2013 and have quickly become annual events that residents look forward to. Additionally they have been implemented on a limited budget and do not require any new systems, equipment or technology.

“You CAN Do It” is a recycling program that assists children in low income families. The “You CAN Do It” program provides an opportunity for children to receive swim or bowling passes throughout the summer as rewards for recycling efforts. The children collect 48 aluminum cans that are taken to the local extension office, the County’s partner, where they will then receive their choice of a bowling or swimming pass. The cans are recycled and help to create a smart and simple solution that is actively increasing diversion, recycling education and the involvement of families and children in an impoverished area. From May 2014 through May 2017, the You CAN Do It Program has collected 2,091 pounds of aluminum cans.

The community yard sale involves members bringing their used personal items to a central location to sell, swap, or give away.  This allows for items to be reused, reduced, recycled and repurposed which in turn reduces the amount of materials that would otherwise end up in our local landfills. The program is also innovative as many people typically dispose of their personal belongings in lieu of recycling or repurposing them.  However, with advertisement and community awareness and involvement, individuals come together twice a year for this important project that benefits the community. The yard sale takes place at the Court House Park and accommodates over 80 slots for vendors and draws a crowd of over 2,000 community members. Luna County provides the park space free of charge and the Teen court participants clean the area after the event.

Keep Luna County Beautiful is grateful to its collaborators in this program: the Extension Office for collections, Starmax Entertainment Center for providing discounted bowling tickets and the City of Deming for provides discounted swimming passes and free park space. Congratulations! Accepting the program on behalf of Keep Luna County Beautiful is Joe Padilla and Jessica Etcheverry.