

THE PALS PRINTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF ALABAMA PALS AND THE ALABAMA ADOPT-A-MILE PROGRAM

WINTER QUARTER 2025 • VOLUME 49

DIRECTORS NOTES: "HONORING THE PAST WHILE EMBRACING THE FUTURE"

After 33 years in Old Alabama Town, Alabama PALS has moved to a new location! As you can imagine after 33 years in that building, there was a lot of sifting and sorting that needed to take place. We found original minutes from some of the first PALS board meetings; we found newspaper clippings from around the state advertising the "new" Adopt-A-Mile program; and we even found the original PALS stuffed animal mascot, "Seymour the Dinosaur!" We had some laughs going through those old documents. They are now all safely filed away in our new office if anyone would like some interesting reading material.

The one thing that seemed to be a constant in all the material we found was the passion, heart, and dedication to the mission that each of the founding members of PALS had for this organization. That dedication along with each volunteer that has bought into those ideals along the way has made this organization stronger and more vital each year. It is rare nowadays to see organizations have the sort of success and longevity PALS has had, and that is a credit to the founders for building it on a very solid foundation.

How can we possibly talk about PALS' past without mentioning Spencer Ryan? With the steady leadership of Spencer Ryan for these past 38 years, this organization has stayed true to our mission of "Alabama Communities Working Together for a Cleaner and More Beautiful Alabama." If you ever had the pleasure of working with Spencer, you know exactly why this organization has had the longevity and success it has had. In the 10 years I worked for Spencer, I watched him lead with a humble spirit but a firm belief that the work we do is important and that we are absolutely nothing without community connections and our amazing volunteers.

In this newsletter, you will see the new award we added to this year's Governor's awards in honor of Spencer. It is called the "Spencer Ryan Community Connections" Award, and it is given to a county or community that has gone the "extra mile" to bring schools, city and county leaders, law enforcement, and local businesses together to create a community litter plan. We hope this award encourages other counties to set goals and get everyone on the same page when it comes to litter prevention and removal in their areas.

Continued on page 3

2025 ALABAMA PALS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Form/Application can be submitted online at alpals.org

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____ Phone # _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Partner: \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Steward: \$ 250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Litter Free Leader: \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PALS Advocate: \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> PALS Partner: \$25 | |

(Membership Dues are paid Annually)

Alabama PALS is a 501C3 non-profit organization.

Your contribution to Alabama PALS is tax deductible

Please Make Checks Payable to:

Alabama PALS, 8136 Old Federal Road, Montgomery, AL 36117



"Working Together for an Unlittered Alabama"

THE 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ALABAMA PALS

Jeff Helms

Chairman

Carol Maxwell

Vice Chairman

Joy Noble

Secretary/Treasurer

Don Bates

Hana Berres

Andy Britton

Tony Harris

Phillip Hinesely

Tiffany Lester

Sharon Tinsley

Will Underwood

THE STAFF OF ALABAMA PALS

Jamie Mitchell

Executive Director

jamie@alpals.org

Christy Waddell

Executive Assistant

State Adopt-A-Mile Coordinator

christy@alpals.org

Shay Grant

Clean Campus State Coordinator

Social Media Director

shay@alpals.org

Phone: 334-263-7737 or

In-State Watts 800-ALA-PALS

WEBSITE: www.alpals.org

8136 Old Federal Road

Montgomery, AL 36117

ALABAMA PALS MISSION STATEMENT

"Alabama Communities Working
Together for A Cleaner and
More Beautiful Alabama"

THE CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

BY JEFF HELMS, CHAIRMAN, ALABAMA PALS

As we prepare to welcome the New Year, Alabama PALS is ushering in a new era of stewardship under the leadership of Executive Director Jamie Mitchell.

With a decade of experience as Clean Campus Coordinator, Jamie brings a passion for education to her new role as well as a deep appreciation for the volunteers who make our organization great.

With the support of retired Executive Director and mentor Spencer Ryan, Jamie is positioning Alabama PALS for even greater impact in the future. We recently relocated the Alabama PALS office to a more energy-efficient space off Vaughn Road in east Montgomery. Jamie also is leading efforts to modernize accounting functions and develop more detailed budgets for PALS' programs.

Joining Jamie's vision to strengthen Alabama PALS are Adopt-A-Mile Coordinator Christy Waddell and Clean Campus Coordinator Shay Grant. Christy's attention to detail has improved audits, recordkeeping, and sign distribution for adopted miles. She has recently identified signs in need of replacement and is working with ALDOT to ensure these markers are a worthy representation of our volunteers' work. Christy also has streamlined the shipping of signs.

Meanwhile, Shay brings decades of classroom experience and a love for teaching to the Clean Campus program. She has already visited about 15 schools this fall, with more on the calendar for 2025.

The Board of Directors is excited about this trio's vision for the future of Alabama PALS. As we work to equip the staff for success, we also are taking steps to strengthen the organization's governance and continuity. In 2024, we updated the Alabama PALS bylaws to reflect programmatic and technology changes and to ensure our practices align with the PALS' mission.

We also voted to add two longtime partners to the Board. In 2025, we are excited to welcome Andy Britton of Coca-Cola UNITED and Sharon Tinsley of the Alabama Broadcasters Association. Andy has been a vital link in expanding Alabama PALS' recycling efforts and engaging the Alabama Community College System with the Clean Campus program. Meanwhile, Sharon has led the production and broadcast of the Alabama PALS public service announcement for more years than I can remember. We appreciate their ongoing contributions to the organization and willingness to serve in leadership roles.

As you can see, great things are on the horizon for Alabama PALS. With your help, we can make 2025 our best year yet!

MESSAGE FROM:

JOHN COOPER Director, Alabama Department of Transportation

As we approach the end of the year, I want to thank Alabama PALS and its dedicated volunteers for their commitment to keeping our state beautiful. Through your efforts, we are making tangible differences in our communities, ensuring that Alabama's roadways and public spaces remain clean and inviting for everyone.

This season of giving is also a time of increased travel, as families and friends come together to celebrate the holidays. At the Alabama Department of Transportation, we are keenly aware of the importance of safe and pleasant journeys for everyone who uses our roads. A clean roadway reflects the pride we take in our state.

Alabama PALS plays a vital role in ensuring our roadsides are litter free and that

Continued on page 3

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Continued from page 1

Speaking of the Governor's Awards, we had a lovely luncheon this year and gave out 65 awards to deserving volunteers, schools, students, law enforcement officers, businesses, cities, and counties. We were thrilled to have a welcome video from Governor Ivey herself to thank the many volunteers that made 2024 such a success! Secretary of State Wes Allen gave our remarks, and Secretary Hal Taylor from ALEA helped hand out our Law Enforcement Awards again this year. Many of our amazing corporate sponsors and other partners were represented, as well. As you are planning your cleanups for 2025, notice any individuals, law enforcement officers, businesses or elected officials that are going above and beyond and nominate them for next year's awards! It is a great way to recognize those that are doing such good work!

On September 21st, in conjunction with the ADCNR, 31 outstanding zone captains, over 2,000 volunteers, and the most supportive corporate sponsors including our Presenting Sponsor, the Poarch Creek Indians, we conducted another very successful Alabama Coastal Cleanup. It was one of the most beautiful days we have had in years for the Coastal Cleanup as you will see in the pictures on the following pages. There was over 10,000 pounds of litter collected and over 200 pounds of recycling sorted by Osprey Initiative. The 2 most collected items were cigarette butts and plastic bottles with over 1,000 of each of those being picked up. Go ahead and make plans to join us for the 2025 cleanup! It is always the 3rd Saturday in September.

As we look to the future of PALS in a new location and under new leadership, we will continue to honor the past and stay true to the mission that has gotten us this far. We will maintain the wonderful partnerships with ALDOT, ADECA, ADCNR, ACCA, ACCS and more. We will continue to foster relationships with the communities in our state that desire to have a cleaner and more beautiful community. We will continue to be grateful for each member, volunteer and corporate sponsor of PALS. There are only 3 of us here in the PALS office, so it really is YOU that makes this place so special and will continue to for many years to come.

In closing, we look forward to working with each of you in 2025. Let's make the 2025 "Don't Drop It on Alabama" Spring Cleanup in April the largest and most effective statewide cleanup ever. Let us know how we can best assist your cities, counties, groups and communities in preparing for the 2025 statewide cleanup. We also want to extend our thanks to Coca-Cola UNITED for once again serving as Title Sponsor for the event.

Thank you for all you have done in 2024, and let's make 2025 our best year yet!
-Jamie Mitchell

MESSAGE FROM:

JOHN COOPER Director, Alabama Department of Transportation

Continued from page 2

all Alabamians can take pride in their state. Your contributions to the "Don't Drop It On Alabama" Spring Cleanup and other initiatives directly support ALDOT's mission to provide a transportation system that serves motorists while preserving the natural beauty of our state.

As we enter the new year, I encourage everyone to carry forward the PALS mission by being mindful of litter, protecting our natural resources and promoting a clean Alabama. On behalf of ALDOT, I thank Alabama PALS for our partnership and continuing to inspire stewardship across our state. Your dedication is a gift to Alabamians and everyone traveling on our roadways.

PALS SUSTAINING CORPORATE SPONSORS



**The "Don't Drop It On
Alabama" Spring Cleanup**

**The Alabama Clean
Campus Program**

Adopt-A-Mile

Adopt-A-Stream

Alabama Coastal Cleanup

Litter Education Curriculum

Annual Governor's Awards

Statewide Chapter Network

ALDOT REGIONAL ENGINEERS AND AREA OFFICES

CURTIS W. VINCENT

North Regional Engineer
256-505-4956

DEJARVIS LEONARD

East Central
Regional Engineer
256-234-8401

STEVEN GRABEN

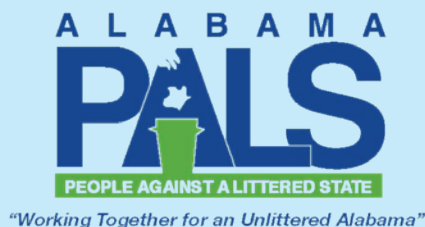
SE Regional Engineer
334-353-6851

MATTHEW J. ERICKSEN

SW Regional Engineer
251-470-8204

WALLACE C. MCADORY, III, P.E.

West Central
Regional Engineer
205-327-4963



MESSAGE FROM:

SHAY GRANT – Clean Campus State Coordinator

The Clean Campus Program had a busy year in 2024! Jamie Mitchell moved from the Clean Campus State Coordinator to the Executive Director of Alabama PALS. She completed the school year with many visits to schools across the state, helped with the Spring Clean-up, as well as oversaw the poster and recycled art contests in 2024. I joined the PALS team in September as the new Clean Campus State Coordinator and am thrilled to have this new opportunity to go into schools and spread the anti-litter message to students. I retired from the classroom in June after 33 years of teaching and can't wait to work with teachers to come up with ways to implement the Clean Campus Program.

With spring just around the corner, I hope that you will consider adding cleanups or campus beautification projects into your routine. If you need any help with ideas for this, do not hesitate to contact me. If you have not already had an in-person visit from me, I would love to schedule a time to come speak with your students. Our poster and recycled art contests are a fantastic way to get students excited about keeping our state clean! The theme for this year's poster contest is "Help Alabama Thrive! Clean Up in 2025!" Please have your own school contest first, then send in only your top three posters for statewide judging. Also, note the judging guidelines that will help your students when planning their posters and for judging at the local level. Be sure to have your winners include ALL contact information requested on the backside of their posters. Entries are due April 16, 2025.

Continued on page 6

CLEAN CAMPUS PROGRAM PARTICIPATION FORM

Either fill out form and mail to Alabama PALS Attn: Shay Grant

8136 Old Federal Road, Montgomery, AL 36117

or apply online at www.alpals.org

Current Member? ____ Y or ____ N Circle One: City School County School Private School

City: _____ County: _____

Participating School: _____

Address: _____ + _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email for Contact Person: _____

Our school has reviewed the requirements for the Alabama PALS Clean Campus Program and is therefore applying to be a participating school in this statewide program.

Signed: _____ (Contact Person)

Date: _____ Phone: _____

PRINCIPAL PERMISSION

I, _____ (Principal), give consent for _____ school to participate in the Alabama PALS Clean Campus Program for the 2024-2025 school year.

Signed: _____ (Principal) Date: _____

ALABAMA ADOPT-A-MILE PARTICIPATION FORM

Please Complete and Return to The PALS Office
8136 Old Federal Road / Montgomery, AL 36117

Name of Participating Group _____
Name of Group or Individual on Sign _____
City _____ County _____
Contact Person _____ Phone _____
Address _____ Zip _____
Email Address of Contact Person _____
State Highway Number _____ Federal Highway # _____ County Highway or Road # _____
Location of Sign: Mile Marker# _____ to Mile Marker # _____
____ Currently Participating
____ Not Participating at This time and want sign taken down
____ Participating But Sign Needs Replacing or Repaired

Adopt-A-Mile Program Application for Highway Adoption - State/Federal

City _____
County _____
Applicant (Participating Organization) _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____
Email Address: _____
Highway section(s) you propose to adopt:
(minimum of one mile)
State or U.S. Highway Number _____
Milepost Number _____ to Milepost Number _____
State or U.S. Highway Number _____
Milepost Number _____ to Milepost Number _____

Authorized Signature of Applicant
Recommended for Approval:

Approved: _____
District Engineer, Alabama Dept. of Transportation

Interested in "adopting"

Fill out application form and mail to:

Alabama PALS

8136 Old Federal Road, Montgomery, AL 36117
Form/Application can be submitted
online at alpals.org

County Adopt-A-Mile Program Application for County Road Adoption

County _____
Applicant (Participating Organization) _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____
Email Address: _____
Road section(s) you propose to adopt:
(minimum of one mile)
County Road Number _____
Milepost Number _____ to Milepost Number _____
County Road Number _____
Milepost Number _____ to Milepost Number _____

Authorized Signature of Applicant
Recommended Approval:

County Engineer

Chairman, County Commission
Approved: _____
District Engineer, Alabama Dept. of Transportation

Interested in "adopting"

Fill out application form and mail to:

Alabama PALS

8136 Old Federal Road, Montgomery, AL 36117
Form/Application can be submitted
online at alpals.org

MESSAGE FROM:

CHRISTY WADDELL

State Adopt-A-Mile Coordinator

As we wrap up 2024, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our incredible volunteers who have contributed to our success this year. We've ordered over 85 new signs, what an achievement!

As we look ahead to 2025, we want to continue expanding our adopted miles and streams. Our goal is to order 100 new signs this year, but we can't do it without your support. Please encourage your neighbors, local schools, churches, and civic organizations to join us in the fight against litter. It's our responsibility as stewards of the great state of Alabama to keep it beautiful.

And don't forget to share your cleanup photos with us. We love to showcase the incredible work our volunteers are doing. Every effort, no matter how small, should be recognized. We would love to celebrate your hard work on Facebook and Instagram!

Thank you again for all that you are doing to make Alabama truly "Alabama the Beautiful". I continue to be amazed by the dedication and enthusiasm of all the groups that I have the pleasure of working with on a daily basis. Please contact me if I can answer any questions or if I can provide you with any additional information.

PALS 2025 POSTER CONTEST

GUIDELINES:

- Theme: "Help Alabama Thrive! Clean Up in 2025!"
- K-6th (Two categories K-3rd and 4th-6th)
- Only one student may work on each poster... no partners, teams or groups.
- Standard White Poster or Foam Board (May be split in half)
- All mediums acceptable
- Posters will be judged on clarity of theme, age-appropriate neatness, originality, overall design and inclusion of helpful information or tips.
- Please only send in the top 3 posters from your school in each category.
- Back of Poster must include the following:
****We really need ALL this information!!****

Student(s) Name(s): _____

Current Grade: _____

Phone Number & Email for Parent: _____

School: _____

Point of Contact at School: _____

Phone Number & Email of Point of Contact at School: _____

**ALL posters are due in the PALS office by
Wednesday, April 16th, 2025**

WINNERS:

First Place: \$200 & Plaque

Second Place: \$25 & Plaque

Third Place: \$25 & Plaque

Honorable Mention: Plaque

****All winners will be recognized at our annual
Governor's Awards Luncheon in November 2025****

MESSAGE FROM:

SHAY GRANT – Clean Campus
State Coordinator

Continued from page 4

There is no set theme for the Recycled Art Contest, so be CREATIVE!! 2-D and 3-D projects will be accepted. The project should be made entirely from recycled materials other than a small amount of fastening materials. Please only send your top three winners from your school. You may either deliver the pieces or enter digitally if it is too heavy or cumbersome to transport for judging. If sending a digital entry and chosen as a winner, that piece will need to be delivered to the PALS office as soon as possible after notification. Be sure to include ALL contact information requested attached to the artwork entry. Entries are due April 16, 2025.

The PALS office will notify each winner, school, and PALS county contact by May 8, 2025. Winners will be recognized and presented with their respective awards at

Send posters to:

Alabama PALS
Attn: Shay Grant
8136 Old Federal Drive
Montgomery, AL 36117

*Please contact Shay with any
further questions at:*

(334) 263-7737

shay@alpals.org

*****Winners will be notified by
May 8th. If your poster is not
chosen, you may pick it up at
the PALS office no later than
May 21st*****

the Annual Governor's Awards Luncheon in November 2025.

I would like to thank all of you for committing to keeping your campus and community clean. Thank you to each school that is a part of the Clean Campus Program. Thank you to each student that is learning to be better stewards of the environment, participating in regular campus and community clean ups, contests and spreading the word about litter. It takes all of us to keep Alabama the Beautiful!

It is not too late to enroll in the Clean Campus Program. If you are not currently enrolled, please visit www.alpals.org to sign up. The program is FREE to all Alabama schools thanks to the generosity of Coca-Cola UNITED, Vulcan, ALFA, and the Alabama Farmers Cooperative. Please call or email me with any questions about the program or our contests at (334) 263-7737 or shay@alpals.org.

ALL Recycled Art projects may either be mailed to the PALS office OR photos of your project may be submitted by email to shay@alpals.org. If mailing/delivering your project, send to:
Alabama PALS
Attn: Shay Grant
8136 Old Federal Drive
Montgomery, AL 36117

Please contact Shay with any further questions at:

(334) 263-7737

shay@alpals.org

*****Winners will be notified by May 8th. If your piece was submitted digitally and is chosen as a winner, it must be arranged to be delivered to the PALS office after notification. If your piece is not chosen, you may pick it up at the PALS office no later than May 21st. *****

PALS 2025 RECYCLED ART CONTEST

GUIDELINES:

- No set theme, so get CREATIVE and ORIGINAL!!
- 7th-12th grades
- May work alone or with one friend (no more than 2 students per art piece)
- Piece may be 2-D or 3-D and any size, as long as it can be easily moved.
- Art must be made entirely of materials that are eligible for recycling or that would be otherwise considered trash, except for a small amount of fastening materials such as screws, bolts, wire, welding, glue, tape and twine.
- Pieces will be judged on originality, visual impact, overall design and craftsmanship.
- Please only send in the top 3 recycled art projects from your school.
- Please include the following information with each submitted piece: ****We really need ALL this information!!****

Student(s) Name(s): _____

Current Grade: _____

Phone Number & Email for Parent: _____

School: _____

Point of Contact at School: _____

Phone Number & Email of Point of Contact at School: _____

Art pieces due by mail, delivery or email by April 16th, 2025

WINNERS:

First Place: \$200 (to be divided if working with a friend) & Plaque

Second Place: \$25 & Plaque

Third Place: \$25 & Plaque

Honorable Mention: Plaque

****All winners will be recognized at our annual Governor's Awards Luncheon in November 2025****

LEARNING EVENTS MONTGOMERY AND AUTAGA COUNTIES

BY JAMIE MITCHELL

There is nothing quite like fall in Alabama when the hot days begin to yield to cooler nights and football becomes everyone's favorite topic of conversation! We certainly love fall here at Alabama PALS when the Clean Campus Program kicks into full swing and the Coastal Cleanup means thousands of residents and visitors will help pick up those last pieces of debris left over from summer fun. We hope as you enjoy the cooler weather to come, you will make some time in your calendar to join a local cleanup or consider signing up for the Adopt-A-Mile program. It is also our hope that as schools get back into their routines, they will join the Clean Campus Program and be more mindful of litter on their campus and in the community.

Over the summer, we had a chance to participate in some learning events to spread the anti-litter message to students in Montgomery and Autauga Counties. In



Montgomery County, we were happy to partner with the Alabama River Foundation to speak at the 2nd Annual Riverfront Rendezvous. This event brought in 160 students from Montgomery Community Centers and Boys & Girls Clubs to give them an opportunity to learn more about keeping our rivers clean, river safety and river wildlife. Each child also had the opportunity to ride on the "Sip and Cycle" Pedal Cruise, which was the first time many of these children had ever been on a boat!

We were also honored to partner with Autauga County 4H to speak at a special "Under the Sea" summer camp held at Daniel Pratt Elementary School. This was another opportunity to speak about keeping our Alabama waters clean and how our trash affects Alabama wildlife. The students were given pencils made from recycled newspaper as well as Clean Campus coloring books to help reinforce our message.

As we look to close out 2024, please contact us if we can help with cleanups in your community or to sign up for any of our programs. We can be reached at (334) 263-7737 or at info@alpals.org. You may also find us online at www.alpals.org. 🌻



BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

Chambers County Commissioner, Sam Bradford, began the Clean Up Chambers County initiative in partnership with ALPALS in 2022 and challenged all local schools to participate in the Clean Campus Program. The Chambers County Commission incentivized participation by providing \$250 to each organization that cleaned up a designated mile in the county. This was the perfect opportunity for Valley High School's newly formed Ecology Club and was the financial boost needed to get started! What started as a way to provide funding for the club turned into a chance to teach and remind students that pulling together for a common purpose as a group can be rewarding and fun.

The goal of the club was to lead the charge in bringing environmental awareness to others at Valley High, so students decided the best way to incorporate the mission of getting more students on board was to host Lunch-n-Learn library programs during the students' normal lunch waves. The ticketed event, hosted by Jamie Mitchell, for the last two years was attended by approximately 130 students each year. Interested students were invited to sign up and eat lunch in the library while the program focused on statewide efforts to keep "Alabama the Beautiful" was presented. Through this annual program students learn the importance of recycling and are encouraged to participate in the recycled art contest in the spring. This year's "Love Your Earth" Lunch-n-Learn is planned for February 13th and we look forward to having Shay Grant as our presenter.

Members often come up with fun ways to recycle and we try to schedule activities each month to keep students interested. Some favorite past projects include:

March, 2023-Students helped the Corp of Engineers at West Point Lake

weed an overgrown bed and planted a butterfly garden. They also picked up trash on one of the hiking trails.

April, 2023-Students participated in the City of Valley Clean Up Day by picking up trash on the Rails to Trails walking path, which happens to be right in front of the high school. They also cleaned up their first mile of trash in the county on this day.

November, 2023-Students had an opportunity to recycle and incorporate a field trip. The students collected pumpkins (non-carved or non-painted) that people were ready to toss and donated them to Wild Animal Safari for the animals to have nutritious snacks.

January & February, 2024-The greenhouse cleanup and restoration during the winter was one of our biggest projects of the year. An old greenhouse on campus was an eyesore and the students felt passionate about cleaning it out and using it, even though it was not fully functional. After cleaning and tossing broken and non-usable items, they organized what was left and even built a compost bin. The students grew plants and donated them to a local assisted living facility. The vegetables grown were nurtured, fertilized, and harvested for our members to enjoy and

give away. We found out later that the greenhouse had been placed on the surplus list and purchased by a farmer in Kentucky. The students were sad to see it go, but now feel inspired to write a grant or search for other funding to put in raised beds and hopefully acquire a smaller greenhouse in the future.

March, 2024-The club recycled old t-shirts to make dog toys to donate to the Chattahoochee Valley Humane Society. "Day of Change", our school's annual service day, was held with over 150 students taking part. Students were divided into groups and assigned to various businesses, schools, and other non-profits to help in the community. Some Ecology Club members helped clean and bring new life to a courtyard at Lanier Hospital while others helped a local non-profit organization pick up litter in a residential area.

April brings Earth Day so what better time to shine? On April 20th, the Ecology Club took part in the city's "Clean Up Valley Day" by picking up trash on the Rails to Trails walking trail before heading out to complete the designated one mile pickup for the county. Students collected 6 bags of trash on the trail and 12 bags of trash in the county. Many students entered the ALPALS Recycled Art Contest



and one student's artwork won an honorable mention at state.

May, 2024-The club participated in the annual "Preview Day". On this day, 8th graders from W.F. Burns Middle School visit and each club is represented at the fair. Many students were recruited as potential members on this day. Also in May, club members work the 4th grade Chambers County Groundwater Festival and help guide students from station to station as they learn about water safety, conservation, erosion, fish identification and wildlife conservation.

July, 2024-Students worked with a local civic group to help clean flower beds and a courtyard at Fairfax Elementary School.

September, 2024-Club members placed 1st in the homecoming parade with a "We Speak for the Tree" theme based on the movie, The Lorax.

October, 2024-The scrapbook committee worked hard to take the collection of items from the past year and assemble a winning scrapbook.

November, 2024-The club conducted a litter audit in early November and to no one's surprise found candy wrappers to be the most commonly found trash on campus with plastic bottles as a close second. Scrapbook committee members attended the ALPALS Governor's Luncheon to receive the Clean Campus Award. One VHS student received an Honorable Mention for her recycled art entry.

December, 2024-Students created centerpieces made of greenery collected in the woods and donated those to a local Senior Living facility for Christmas.

Anyone with a passion for making our school, city, state and nation a better place to live is invited to join The Ecology Club. We often work with the Chambers County 4-H leaders to seek opportunities for leadership development and activities. The club does not require service hours but provides an opportunity for students



to accumulate service hours for other groups through many of our activities. Students have learned that participating in meaningful activities and having fun together can be very rewarding as we strive to make our school, city, and county a better place to live.

Being visible and bringing awareness has seemed to make students think twice before throwing trash on the ground. Change has to start somewhere, and these students are enthusiastic about seeing change. We are very thankful to have ALPALS visit our schools each year, lighting a fire in these students, and for

providing the framework to help bring about change in our community. Thanks to Sam Bradford, the Chambers County Commission, and the City of Valley, these high school students have had many opportunities to help build pride in our community. The feedback received and opportunities that continue to come our way lets us know that others value what we are trying to accomplish. If students are seen on the side of the road picking up litter, it is our hope that many adults will soon follow their example and hold onto their trash until they find a waste basket.



In October, Alabama PALS participated in the "Scarecrows on Parade" Community Event. Our recycled scarecrow won 1st place! His head was one of our past recycled art entries, and we found other objects around the office to complete his look! At the event, we also handed out trash grabbers, bags, and pencils made from recycled newspaper which were a big hit!



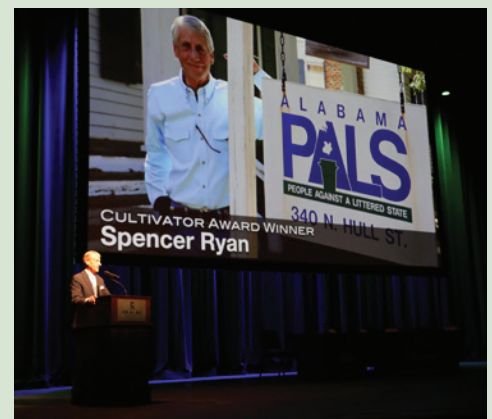
RIVERFRONT EVENT



CONGRATULATIONS SPENCER RYAN



A big congratulations to Spencer Ryan for receiving the ALFA Cultivator Award at their recent awards ceremony. We are so proud of Spencer for the nearly 38 years he spent leading PALS and being a champion for litter removal in our great state. He is most deserving of this honor, and we are so proud that he was recognized in this special way!



SPRING CLEAN-UP 2025

The 2025 “Don’t Drop it on Alabama” Spring Cleanup is just around the corner! Every year as we begin to prepare for the spring cleanup before the holidays, I always wonder where the time goes. Seems like we were just handing out supplies for 2024! We are excited to add new counties and communities to this year’s cleanup and can’t wait to see all the wonderful work that is done around the state in 2025! Several years ago, we made the change from one week to the entire month of April for the cleanup, and that has gone really well. Please plan your cleanups for the days or weekends that work best for your community.

We have already ordered the bags for the 2025 cleanup, and they will be ready for pickup in the first 2 weeks of March. PALS is so fortunate to have Coca-Cola UNITED as our Title Sponsor again in 2025. Coca-Cola UNITED and our other valued Sustaining Corporate Sponsors make all of the statewide PALS programs possible, so please be sure to take time to thank each of these sponsors for all that they continue to do to accomplish the goal of a clean and more beautiful Alabama.

Please also thank your respective County Commission Chair or Engineer for their part in the “Don’t Drop it on Alabama” Spring Cleanup, as well. They take the time to pick up their respective county’s materials in Montgomery and distribute them locally. We are grateful for their support and partnership. We are also thankful for the Association of County Commissions of Alabama for assisting PALS in communications and distribution of supplies to each county. A very big THANK YOU to Jennifer Datcher with ACCA for all the work she does organizing, communicating, and scheduling with counties for pickups!

If your county, group, or organization has not already turned in the Contact Information Form, please send that in ASAP either by email to jamie@alpals.org or by mail to 8136 Old Federal Road, Montgomery, AL, 36117. Be sure to check our Facebook and Instagram pages for reminders and updates, as well.

Recycling

If you plan to recycle plastic soda bottles (PET 1) and aluminum cans for the 2025 cleanup, recycling bags will be provided in addition to the heavy duty cleanup bags. Please fill out the information form and indicate if your locality will be participating in recycling. If there is not a recycling facility close to you, please contact us. We may have a solution that can help!

Important Dates for 2025 “Don’t Drop it on Alabama” Spring Cleanup

January	All Spring Cleanup Materials Ordered
Jan/Feb	All County/Group Contact Info to PALS office
March 3-14	Materials and Supplies in Warehouse for Pickup
April 2025	“Don’t Drop it on Alabama” Spring Cleanup Month
May 30	Report Forms Due in PALS Office

Materials Provided by PALS

Large, Heavy Duty Trash Bags with Corporate Sponsor Logos, Recycling Bags with Recycle Logo, Spring Cleanup Marketing Sheet, Window Decals, Reporting Forms, Liability Forms, PALS Program Brochures

I would also like to encourage each county to commit to adding new participants in the Adopt-A-Mile, Clean Campus, and Adopt-A-Stream Programs during this year’s cleanup. These are great tools to prevent and pick up litter year-round in your areas. This is an excellent opportunity to involve additional numbers of groups and volunteers for the cleanup, as well as grow the active involvement in the mission of Alabama PALS. PALS is once again setting the goal of 50 new miles adopted during the month of April. We will send brochures to each county prior to the cleanup or they may also be found online at www.alpals.org.

Please let us know if we can assist you in any way in your planning for the 2025 Spring Cleanup. Thanks again for all that you and your groups do to further the goal of a clean and more beautiful Alabama. It is because of each of you that we can truly say “We are Making a Difference!”

-Jamie Mitchell, Executive Director, Alabama PALS



2025 Alabama PALS

“Don’t Drop It On Alabama”

Statewide Spring Cleanup

Entire Month of April 2025

ALL SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS FURNISHED

Make Plans NOW for your City, County, School, Neighborhood or Volunteer Group to Join Volunteers from Every County in Alabama For the Annual Statewide Spring Cleanup!

Cleanup Coordinator’s Name _____

Contact Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

Cleanup Details _____

Other Information _____





2025 “Don’t Drop It On Alabama” SPRING CLEANUP CONTACT INFORMATION FORM

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Affiliation _____ County _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Same number of bags as last year: Y or N If different, how many? _____

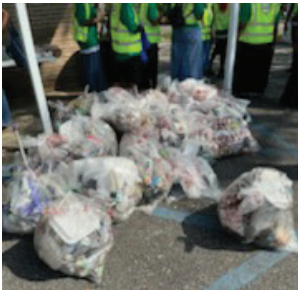
Shipping Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

We are interested in RECYCLING aluminum CANS and Plastic Bottles during the 2025 Spring Cleanup?
YES _____ NO _____

PLEASE send completed Form to **Alabama PALS, 8136 Old Federal Road, Montgomery, AL 36117**
or email to jamie@alpals.org

CITY OF CENTER POINT

The City of Center Point and Israel United in Christ hosted a cleanup on Sunday, September 22. Forty bags of trash and miscellaneous debris was collected from their roadside litter pickup.



MARTINTOWN



HIGHEST HONOR THOMPSON WINS DON HINES MEMORIAL AWARD

By LIZI ARBOGAST GWIN

Managing Editor, Tallapoosa Publishers Inc

There's people who are anti-littering, and then there's John Thompson.

Thompson has been known as the anti-litter man around Lake Martin for many, many years and he was honored at the recent Alabama People Against A Littered State Governor's Awards dinner.

Thompson is used to winning awards for his environmental efforts, but winning the Don Hines Memorial Award was on a whole new level.

Much like a lifetime achievement award, the Don Hines Memorial Award is the highest annual honor given by Alabama PALS every year.

"It's really given to people who have been kind of lifelong stewards of the environment," PALS executive director Jamie Mitchell said. "When you think of whoever is going to get this award, you think of longevity. You really think about somebody who's given years of their life to this work, and John is exactly that."

To win the award, Thompson had to be nominated, which was done by Alexander City Chamber of Commerce president and Tallapoosa County Commissioner Steve Robinson.

Robinson has been a longtime friend and supporter of Thompson and his environmental efforts. The two even teamed up for the second Saturday cleanup in Alexander City to start awarding prize money to nonprofit organizations that joined the cleanup.

In addition to his work for the second Saturday cleanup, Thompson was the longtime president of Lake Martin Resource Association where he helped LMRA get involved with Alabama Power's Renew Our Rivers cleanup. That lake-wide cleanup celebrated 20 years in 2024 with LMRA's partnership.

"Beyond just cleaning up, there's



Lake Martin's own John Thompson, right, was honored with the Don Hines Memorial Award last week at the Alabama PALS Governor's Awards dinner.

environmental education that he's been a part of and the clean water initiatives," Robinson said. "He's done that for decades."

In addition to being a boots-on-the-ground volunteer, Thompson has also donated financially toward helping purchase cleanup materials and in getting a third Saturday cleanup started in Alex City in the minority community, according to Robinson.

Thompson's time in anti-littering spans back to the 1970s with the Crying Indian ad, which was a public service announcement on TV discussing keeping America beautiful.

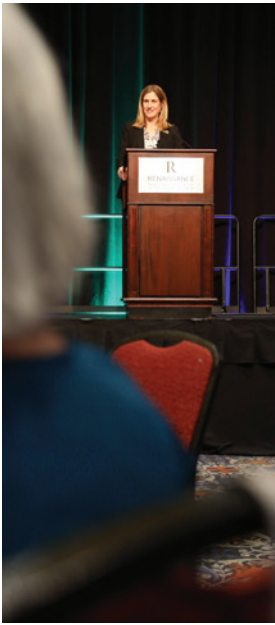
It wasn't only the PSA that touched Thompson's heart but a poster his son created in art class with a Crying Indian on it.

"It all went from there," Thompson said. "I think both (my son) and I both

have had this passion for just keeping our roadsides clean, and then when I moved to the lake, there were some areas that hadn't been touched for 20 years. It just turned my stomach to the point where I said we cannot leave this stuff building up like this."

Thompson started a small neighborhood cleanup near the Sturdivant area and just started, quite literally, tackling the trash. From there, that developed into larger cleanups and involvement in LMRA.

"I think what John has done has just been great," Robinson said. "He is a very humble person, very focused, but he's a leader. He's helped engage many others. So the strength of what John has done is really a legacy thing. There are other people that he's engaged that are now involved in doing what he's done, and he really carries that torch."



POSTER CONTEST K-3RD – WINNERS



1st Place: Kopen Bryant Cagle,
Lynn Elementary School



2nd Place: Chaemin Jannie
Kwon, Forest Avenue Academic
Magnet



3rd Place: Rock Chen,
Highland Park Elementary
School

POSTER CONTEST K-3RD – HONORABLE MENTION



Olivia Kayte Blank,
Crestline Elementary
School



Isaiah Rigoni,
Crestline
Elementary School



Mackenzie
Vaughn, Huguley
Elementary School

Not Pictured: Kentley Sellers, Millry Elementary School, Honorable Mention

POSTER CONTEST 4-6TH – WINNERS



1st Place: Eden Choi, Forest Avenue Academic Magnet



2nd Place: Clementine Smith, Hibbett Intermediate



3rd Place: Lilliana Ramirez, Sparta Academy

POSTER CONTEST 4-6TH – HONORABLE MENTION



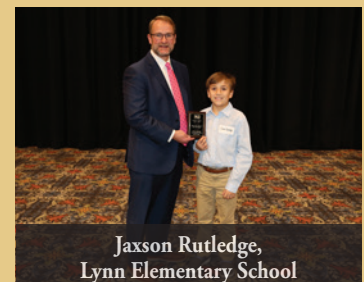
Isla Orench Engler, Hampton Cove
Elementary School



Emory Govan,
Trinity Presbyterian School



Harper Hynds, Hubbertville School



Jaxson Rutledge,
Lynn Elementary School

RECYCLED ART CONTEST 7-12TH – WINNERS



1st Place: Allie Estes and Emma Shelton,
Pickens Academy



2nd Place: Dixie Vaughn, W.F. Burns Middle School



3rd Place: Mylie Kate Hubbert, Hubbertville School

CLEAN CAMPUS SCRAPBOOK CONTEST



1st Place: Valley High School



Honorable Mention: Mariana Escobar, Valley High School



2nd Place: Bear Exploration Center



Honorable Mention: Amora Gonzales,
Albertville Middle School



Honorable Mention: Azaria Hill and
Evie Elliott, Trinity Presbyterian
School

ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM SPRING CLEANUP AWARD



3rd Place: Cherrie Haney accepting on behalf of Parkside School



Gadsden State Community College



PALS PARTNERSHIP AWARD

Association of County Commissions, Jennifer Datcher



PALS PARTNERSHIP AWARD

Osprey Initiative, Mitch Lowe accepting on behalf of Don Bates



PALS PARTNERSHIP AWARD

Alabama Broadcasters Association, Mark Bunting from WSEA accepting on behalf of Sharon Tinsley



PALS PARTNERSHIP AWARD

Alabama Community College System, David Walters and Elijah Baker



ADOPT-A-MILE AWARD

Dale Strange, Marshall County



ADOPT-A-MILE AWARD

Marshall County Democratic Club, Marshall Co.



ADOPT-A-MILE AWARD

Southside High School Air Force ROTC AL-961, Dallas Co.



ADOPT-A-MILE AWARD

Delta Chi Fraternity – University of AL, Tuscaloosa Co.



SPECIAL CATEGORY AWARD

Ms. Betty Jean Trimble, Marshall Co.



SPECIAL CATEGORY AWARD

City of Irondale, Jefferson Co.



SPECIAL CATEGORY AWARD

City of Fairfield, Jefferson Co.



SPECIAL CATEGORY AWARD

Janis Barksdale and Tiffany Wolfe, Jefferson Co.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY AWARD

Newman Technology, Inc., Marshall Co.



SPECIAL CATEGORY AWARD

Freshwater Land Trust, Jefferson Co.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY AWARD

Syncro, Marshall Co.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY AWARD

Staples – Trussville, Jefferson Co.

P A L S A W A R D S



CITY AWARD
City of Cullman Sanitation
Department



COUNTY AWARD
Cullman County PALS



COCA-COLA "DON'T DROP IT ON ALABAMA" AWARD
Lee Taylor and Rachel Davis/
Town of Mulga



COCA-COLA "DON'T DROP IT ON ALABAMA" AWARD
Mobile County Environmental Department



CITY AWARD
Martintown Raimund Community



COUNTY AWARD
Marshall County Commission



LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD
Jefferson County Sheriff's
Department-Reserves



LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD
Sheriff Matt Gentry,
Cullman Co.



LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD
City of Adamsville's Police
Department, Jefferson Co.



COASTAL CLEANUP AWARD
Rock and Roll Offs/Rocky
Fremin, Mobile Co.



COASTAL CLEANUP AWARD
Cathy Barnette/May Day Park
Zone, Baldwin Co.



COASTAL CLEANUP AWARD
Trust Believe Achieve Charitable
Organization, Baldwin Co.



LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD
Not Pictured:
Sheriff Phil Sims,
Marshall Co.



MEDIA AWARD
Sand Mountain Reporter, Marshall Co.



EDUCATION AWARD
Oak Grove High School,
Jefferson Co.



EDUCATION AWARD
Minor High School, Jefferson Co.



JEAN McCRADY SERVICE AWARD
Trudy Parsons, Jefferson Co.



VULCAN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD
Keith Evans, Jefferson Co.



MEDIA AWARD
The Advertiser-Glean,
Marshall Co.



EDUCATION AWARD
Clay Chalkville High School Broadcast Academy, Jefferson Co.



VULCAN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD
Alpha Kappa Omega Hearts Sorority, Jefferson Co.

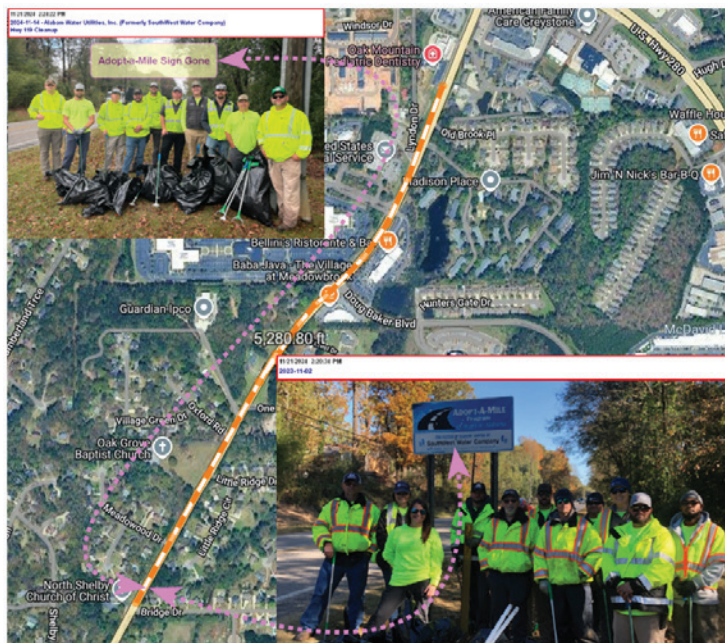


DON HINES MEMORIAL AWARD
John Thompson,
Tallapoosa Co.



SPENCER RYAN COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AWARD
Chambers County

ADOPT-A-MILE

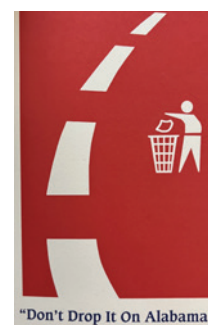


Let's Work Together
To Put Litter On The
Endangered Species List

You Can Make A Difference!

**Adopt-A-Mile
Program**

A Joint Project of
Alabama Department of
Transportation and Alabama PALS
(People Against A Littered State)



ALABAMA PALS COASTAL CLEANUP



ALABAMA PALS COASTAL CLEANUP



CAHABA RIVER



POARCH CREEK CLEAN SWEEP



ADOPT-A-STREAM APPLICATION FORM

Name of Participating Group _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Contact Person: _____

Location of Proposed Stream Crossing: _____

_____ County: _____

Location for Adopt-A-Stream Signs (Hwy #'s, Mile Markers, etc.) _____

Send Applications to Alabama PALS, 8136 Old Federal Road, Montgomery, AL 36117
Application can be submitted online at alpals.org



"Working Together for an Unlittered Alabama"

Alabama PALS Newsletter

People Against A Littered State

8136 Old Federal Road
Montgomery AL 3617

Non Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Montgomery, AL
Permit No. 571



2024 ALABAMA COASTAL CLEANUP SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

THE POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS

*Ike's Beach Service • Bebo's Express • Flora-Bama
CoastAL • Perdido Beach Resort*

Alabama Power Company • City of Orange Beach • LuLu's • City of Gulf Shores

Riviera Utilities • Evonik • Rock & Roll Offs • Compass Media • Coast 360

Coastal Conservation Association-Alabama • ALDOT • ALFA • Coca-Cola United

Vulcan Materials Company • Honda • Alabama Farmers Cooperative

Association of County Commissions of Alabama • Kommerling USA • ADCNR • Airbus

Osprey Initiative • Weeks Bay • The Home Depot

*Thank You
To Our Valued Sponsors and Partners!*

