

Volunteers set city cleanup record

A group of volunteers worked with Keep Martin Beautiful (KMB) and cleaned the streets throughout an East Stuart neighborhood, setting the record for the highest amount of waste ever collected in a neighborhood cleanup project. More than 15 tons of bulk material and 10 tons of vegetation and yard waste was collected.

On March 13, Keep Martin Beautiful, along with Habitat Angel, Hooks Construction, East Stuart Main Street and the City of Stuart, made over 16 homes in

the neighborhood. Hooks Construction donated the time and manpower to prepare the homes that were in need of structural repairs, and 428 volunteers showed up to pick up litter and plant trees around the houses.

Also sponsoring the event were Mosley & Son Construction, Steven Martine Photography, South Florida Water Management District, Sherwin-Williams, Picture Perfect Landscape, Botanics Wholesale, Kross & Decker, United Rentals, Red Tail Hawk, Becker Tree Farm, the City of Stuart CRA and Code Red Roofers.

With paintings of the homes rescheduled due to inclement weather, the volunteers focused their efforts on litter cleanup and landscaping. They planted eight trees and 134 shrubs and also spread sod and mulch around the homes.

The Martin County Hazmobile was available for disposal of hazardous household materials like paints, used motor oil, rechargeable batteries, fluorescent bulbs, aerosol cans, pool chemicals, pesticides, weed killers and fertilizers.

More than 1,200 pounds of hazardous waste was collected during the cleanup.

An appreciation barbecue with food, drinks and outdoor activities followed the cleanup.

The homes that were originally scheduled to be painted have been rescheduled for April 17 at 8 a.m. Volunteers can register at Gertrude Walden Child Care Center in Stuart. Volunteers between the ages of 13 and 17 must be with an adult.

The project was one of the many community improvement projects organized by Keep Martin Beautiful as part of the Great American Cleanup, the nation's largest annual community improvement program. Coordinated locally each year from March through May, the ongoing theme is "Extreme Martin Makeover."

Sponsorship opportunities still are available for the Great American Cleanup. For more information or to participate in future cleanup activities, contact Keep Martin Beautiful at (772) 781-1222 or info@keepmartinbeautiful.org.