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KMCB on a litter prevention crusade

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Charlotte Harris said she has a personal goal of picking up one piece of litter every day, and encourages the public to do the same.

As a member of the Keep Montgomery County Beautiful board of directors, Harris shared spoke out about litter prevention at the Rotary Club meeting on April 27.

Harris became involved in the local anti-litter campaign last year after Keep Montgomery County focused its strategic goals on litter prevention and waste reduction.

Litter is the one environmental issue that can be easily solved right now, Harris said.

"There are lots of things going on in the world, but I've never heard anyone say the roads look great; All this litter looks great," Harris said. "I've never heard anyone admit that they litter. Somehow, the litter that we see on our beautiful highway is getting there somehow, but we can take care of it," Harris said.

The Don't Mess with Texas litter campaign cites that 16-25 year olds litter the most of any age group. Don't Mess with Texas estimates that \$11.5 billion is spent annually by the federal government to pick up litter off the sides of the roads across the nation.

"You would think that the next generation would have gotten the message by now that littering is not something that's OK to do," Harris said. "Our taxes are going to pay for litter pickup off the sides of the roads. Obviously that's a huge amount of money and I think all that money can go to other places and be much more useful for our society."

To prevent litter from even occurring on the highways, Harris encourages people to talk to teenagers about not littering.

"People always grumble about it, but it's coming from somewhere."

Harris said litter is not only ugly; it can be dangerous as well.

"It can harm animals. You see all the little plastic bags and all the things in the waterway the ditches along the way," she said. "That's going to end up in Galveston Bay. It goes all the way through our water ways down to Galveston Bay and impacts the wild life."

Keep Montgomery County Beautiful proposes one way to prevent litter is to collaborate with the Adopt-a-Highway program.

The Adopt-a-Highway program started in Tyler, Texas and has prompted the creation of similar programs around the world. When a group adopts a road they adopt a two mile stretch.



Charlotte Harris, board of directors member for Keep Montgomery County Beautiful spoke out on litter prevention at the Rotary meeting on April 27.

In 2009, Keep Montgomery County Beautiful held their first plant sale, which funds a grant program to help small organizations who are doing beautification projects around the county.

For more information about KMCB or the grant projects go to www.kmcbtexas.org.

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