



NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of the Secretary
For Immediate Release: Sept. 21, 2004

Contact: Kathryn Harrington
(202) 208-6502

SECRETARY NORTON COMMENDS 2004 NATIONAL TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA® AWARD WINNERS AT DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR CEREMONY

***Outstanding Public Land Volunteer Groups and Individuals, Including
The Walt Disney Company & Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. Inc., Receive Awards***

WASHINGTON – The 2004 National Take Pride in America Award recipients, individuals and groups from across the country recognized for their outstanding contributions to our public lands, were honored at an awards ceremony today in Washington, D.C. Interior Secretary Gale Norton, USA Freedom Corps Director Desiree Sayle and Take Pride in America Executive Director Marti Allbright commended the volunteers during the Department of Interior rooftop event. Clint Eastwood, Take Pride spokesman, addressed the audience via a recorded video message.

“Cooperative conservation is essential to the long-term vitality of our nation’s most prized treasure – our public lands,” Secretary Norton said. “The exemplary volunteers applauded today represent countless hours of care towards the timeless value of stewardship.”

Presented annually, the Take Pride in America national awards recognize specific volunteer projects and efforts in a variety of categories. These awards honor those who best protect and/or enhance our public parks, forests, grasslands, reservoirs, wildlife refuges, cultural and historic sites, local playgrounds, and other recreation areas. Last year’s awards program recognized 15 groups or individuals. This year, as the program has grown, there are 25 award recipients representing 14 states. The individuals and groups honored in 2003 also contributed more than 150,000 hours of time to local, state and federal public lands.

Take Pride in America charter partner, The Walt Disney Company, was honored for its exceptional contributions to the program. Two of its many contributions this year are including a Take Pride in America promotional flyer in *Brother Bear* DVDs and video packaging and hosting a brainstorming session involving Department of Interior personnel and Walt Disney Imagineers. Kym Murphy, senior vice president of Environmental Policy, and Karen Kawanami, manager of Disney Worldwide Outreach, accepted the award today.

-- MORE --

The recipient of the corporate award was Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. Inc., honored for its ongoing commitment to National Public Lands Day. This year marks the company's sixth anniversary as the national corporate sponsor for the nation's largest, one-day, hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance America's public lands. Alan Cohen, vice president, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. Inc., accepted the award on behalf of the company.

A special Spirit of Take Pride in America award was presented to Derrick Crandall, president, American Recreation Coalition. The award is not an annual award, but is presented by the executive director only in those years when someone's efforts on behalf of Take Pride in America merit special recognition.

"Derrick has dedicated himself to recruiting new partners, raising funds for the program, finding new opportunities to spread the message of Take Pride and has been the inspiration behind many of our Take Pride events over the past year," Allbright said. "I cannot think of any assistance I have requested from Derrick that has not been met with an immediate and enthusiastic response."

This year's recipients are listed below:

Charter Partner

- The Walt Disney Company

Corporate

- Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. Inc.

Faith Based

- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Mililani, Hawaii

Federal Volunteer Program

- Trash Tracker Program; Page, Ariz.
- Tumacacori National Historical Park; Tumacacori, Ariz.
- BLM Roseburg District Volunteer Program; Roseburg, Ore.

Individual

- Neil Flanagan; Washington, D.C.
- Irene DeLaby; Homosassa Springs, Fla.

Local Government

- Presque Isle State Park Volunteers; Erie, Pa.
- Bountiful City, Utah

-- MORE --

Non-Profit

- Friends of Lake Louisa State Park; Clermont, Fla.
- Coastal Wildlife Club Inc.; Englewood, Fla.
- Illinois Natural Area Guardians; Amboy, Ill.
- Pacific Northwest Four Wheel Drive Association; Auburn, Wash.

Public/Private Partnership

- Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado; Denver, Colo.
- Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition; Slippery Rock, Pa.

School

- Ainsworth Nebraska Community School; Long Pine, Neb.

State

- Take Pride in Utah; Salt Lake City, Utah

Youth

- Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy; Augusta, Ga.
- Boy Scout Troop #46; Winston, Ore.

Spirit of Take Pride in America

- Derrick Crandall, president, American Recreation Coalition

Federal Land Managers

- Brad Knudsen, refuge manager, Patuxent Research Refuge, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bill Martin, outdoor recreation planner, Lower Colorado Regional Office, Bureau of Reclamation
- LouAnn Jacobson, manager, Canyon of the Ancients National Monument and Anasazi Heritage Center, Bureau of Land Management
- Brian O'Neill, volunteer coordinator, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, National Park Service
- Jack Blackwell, regional forester, Region Five, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service

Audio recordings of Secretary Norton, Executive Director Allbright and select award recipients will be available following the ceremony at www.doi.gov/audio.html. Images from the ceremony and of the award recipients will be available upon request.

-- MORE --

About Take Pride in America

Take Pride in America is a national partnership that encourages, supports and recognizes volunteers who work to improve our public parks, forests, grasslands, reservoirs, wildlife refuges, cultural and historic sites, local playgrounds, and other recreation areas. With 100 Charter Partners, Take Pride involves federal, state and local governments; conservation, youth and recreation groups; and top national corporations and organizations. Together, we protect and enhance the special legacy all Americans share – our public lands that cover more than one in every three acres across the nation. For more information visit: www.TakePride.gov.

-- DOI --