



Published March 23, 2009 12:09 am

Local coalition cleans up local parks

For The Transcript

Members of Cleveland County Turning Point/Tobacco Free Cleveland County Coalition and Students Working against Tobacco are joining thousands of adults and kids across the country to take part in Kick Butts Day. The one day each year America's youngest leaders team up to stop youth tobacco use in their communities.

This year for Kick Butts Day, members of TFCC and SWAT will be hosting a fun and educational "Cigarette Butt Clean-Up" day at Norman's Reaves Park. The event will be noon to 2 p.m. March 28.

This Cigarette Butt Clean-Up is a free and family friendly community-wide event. There will be free pizza and drinks, games, music and free tobacco cessation kits. Plus everyone who attends will get a T-shirt to celebrate the day.

Everyday, 1,200 Americans die due to tobacco related diseases. Tobacco kills more Americans each year than alcohol, cocaine, crack, heroin, car accidents, homicide, suicide, fires and AIDS combined.

Youth from the SWAT teams will also be conducting educational activities for the community members on several issues:

- The environment and cigarette butts litter
- Importance of youth advocacy and the fight against Big Tobacco advertising
- Effects of tobacco use on the body
- Secondhand smoke exposure
- Tobacco Free Youth Sporting Venues

"The goal of this event is to educate and inform our community about the help available to end the tobacco habit as well as increase awareness of issues related to tobacco use and advertising" said Travis Humphrey, TFCC Coalition Chair.

"During the event, the youth are sending two important messages: they want the tobacco industry to stop targeting them with advertising and the importance of having leaders at all levels of government, business community, civic...to do more to protect them from tobacco."

The coalition also is encouraging smokers and other tobacco users in Cleveland County to call the free Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

The Helpline's professional Quit Coaches work with callers to create a quit plan tailored to their individual needs, including up to four additional personal coaching sessions. The Helpline's hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. seven days a week, and staff will return any messages left after hours.