

The butts are gone!

A group of volunteers spent Saturday stamping out cigarette butts along Maynardville Highway in Halls.

The vols gave the median a facelift, scraping dirt and refuse, mostly cigarette butts, from the median's edge.

They wore shirts emblazoned with the catchy slogan "Butts Begone."

Meanwhile, Americorps workers mulched the Tribute Trees that have been growing in the median since 2003.

Event organizer Scott Frith said the cleanup was a program of the Halls Business and Professionals Association in partnership with several other organizations.

CAC AmeriCorps volunteers, led by Ruth Anne Hanahan and Tim Gangaware, headed up the mulching detail.

"They are a great group of young people who would come out here on a Saturday and help," said Frith.

Frith thanked the Knox County Sherriff's Office, especially Capt. Joe Brooks, for keeping the event safe.

"Even though we're on a state highway, we're completely safe," Frith said.

He also thanked Todd Cook of the Knox County Mayor's Office, Tom Salter of Keep Knoxville Beautiful, Hallsdale-Powell Utility District for providing water, and Shopper-News for publicity and T-shirts.

The Mulch Company on Maynardville Highway, he said, gave the group an excellent deal on mulch. The owner is Tom Rizzitiello.

Commissioner-elect R. Lar-

**Shannon
Carey**



ry Smith participated in the cleanup. He used a weed eater and blower to give the median a little extra trim.

"A lot of politicians talk about helping, but Larry actually came out and worked the whole time," said Frith. "This shows

how much we can accomplish when we all work together."

Finally, Frith thanked Halls High School and North Knox Vocational Center horticulture teacher Mike Blankenship. Frith called Blankenship's work "outstanding."

Blankenship, a self-proclaimed "man of few words," summed up the day.

"I'm just ficked to death that the community spirit is there," he said.

"Halls is synonymous with community."

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Mike Blankenship, Todd Cook, R. Larry Smith, Joe Brooks and Scott Frith at Saturday's Butts Begone! curb clean-up in Halls.

(Photos by Ruth White)