



The President's
Environmental
Youth Awards

National
Ceremony

The White House

April 22, 2004

Helping Hands in the New Millennium

Busy Bison 4-H Club
Barrackville, West Virginia

This community service and conservation project involves many aspects of conservation and environmental studies. Each Busy Bison member has organized, initiated, and participated in environmental projects designed to achieve individual goals. Members come together as a club to help one another achieve these goals to make life in their community better for everyone.

Many of these individual goals are represented by Adopt-A-Highway programs, stream monitoring and cleanup, recycling, local beautification, genealogy and history projects, and wildlife and habitat improvement. Club members have designed and built a pond at a local county camp and set up wetlands and nature trails—the \$6,000 cost was raised by the Bisons themselves. As part of its “Partners for Earth” project, the club took rejected plants from nurseries and greenhouses, nurtured them back to health and planted them throughout the county. 4-H members also volunteer at a local Raptor Center to help care for injured birds, and at the Humane Society to help bathe and walk the animals and participate in animal food drives. The club held a rabies clinic last year and vaccinated more than 315 dogs and cats.

The Busy Bison 4-H Club has adopted more than 20 miles of highway, which they clean up every month in addition to setting up and maintaining trash cans. Their “Clean Streams, American Dreams” project consists of two yearly cleanups of Buffalo Creek, a 20-mile river between Mannington and Fairmont, and monthly water aquatic monitoring and chemical monitoring.

Last year, the club recycled 610 pounds of aluminum; 4,305 pounds of steel; 6,002 pounds of paper; 27,953 plastic bags; 1,080 pounds of plastic; 2,929 pounds of glass; 690 tires; and much, much more as part of their “Waste Not Want Not” and “Guardian for Earth” projects. Bison members have rebuilt and reprogrammed more than 500 donated computers, distributing many of them to local students and organizations in need, and shipping more than 300 of them to students in Nigeria.

The need for their projects and enthusiasm is perhaps best demonstrated by the surprising tally of objects removed from local roads as part of a Bison project. These items include: shingles, metal, carpet, oil drums, various lengths of pipe and fencing, garbage, tires, TVs, couches, paint cans, home appliances, 3 toxic Freon containers, mufflers, 2 car fenders, and 9 dishwashers. These helping hands are clearly a gift to their community.

