

Business is



Picking-Up . . .

By Don Savard, CSFM, CGM

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For years I had been providing trashcans around my sports fields with the expectation that the players and spectators would use them. I would end up with full or half empty trashcans that needed to be emptied. There was always litter and trash in the vicinity of the cans and elsewhere that needed to be picked up. We put out more trashcans and even signs politely asking people to use the cans. Still more trash and litter.

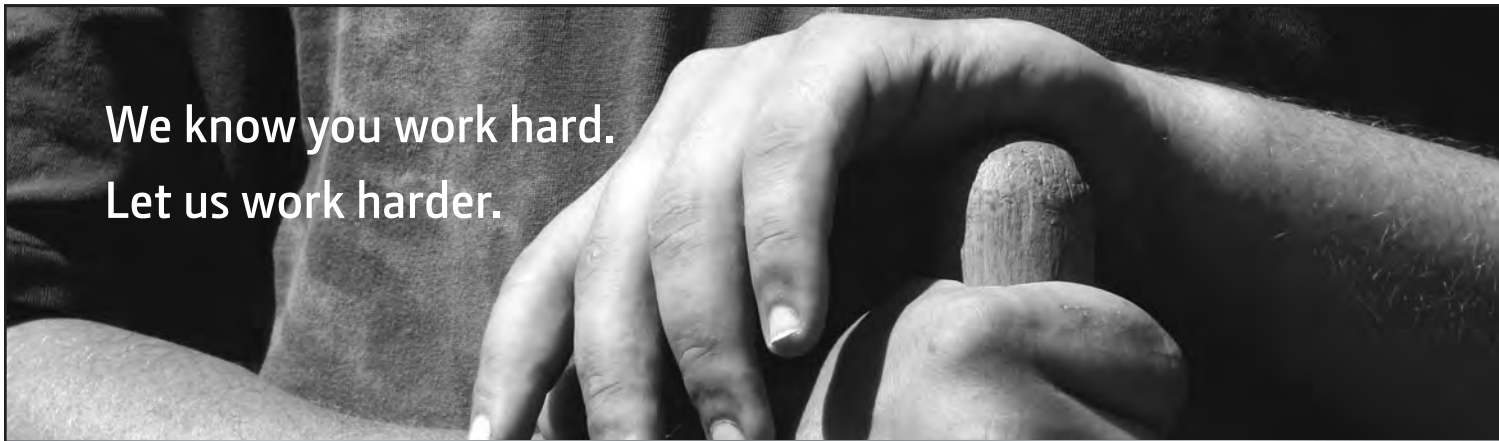
Across the road from our School there is a State Park. I rarely notice a trash problem there. It is a "Carry in-Carry out" park, which means they do not provide trashcans. They have signs to the effect and even provide bags if you need them. And the program seems to be effective. Hmm, I thought.

This past spring, I tried an "experiment". I didn't put out trashcans. I said nothing to the coaches. Baseball and Lacrosse teams played games and practiced daily. No trash problem, very little litter. Summer camps used the field's last summer, same results no trash, almost no litter. I told the Athletic Director. He seemed skeptical. This fall - football and soccer. Big programs, many kids. Lots of paper cups. We provided the Athletic Trainers with plastic bags to accompany the big orange water containers. We convinced the teams that it was their responsibility to pick-up and haul away the trash bags when they return the orange jugs to the equipment room after practice. While the football teams throw the cups at the bag trying to toss them in and the soccer players still throw the

cups on the ground during practice, they do pick up their litter before they leave and do a pretty good job most of the time. The Athletic Director was impressed.

We still find some litter in the spectator areas after events. Nothing is perfect I guess! But our campus is staying cleaner, and we spend fewer man-hours picking litter, hauling trash and washing trashcans. Best of all, nobody has said anything about our "experiment".

*Don Savard is a
Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) and
Certified Grounds Manager (CGM);
Director, Athletic Facilities and Grounds, Salesianum
School; and a member of the
SFMANJ Board of Directors.*



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