

NEW YEAR GIFT to JTCA

"Vagrant Village" Cleared Out

Behind Target, West of Park and North of Tyrone Boulevard

By Dr. Ed Carlson

The STORY

A Decade+, the large wild area behind Target shopping center was a living area for vagrants and homeless who accessed our neighborhood.

This area is north of Tyrone Blvd. and west of Park Street, abutting the Pinellas Trail.

Our **Sheriff** specifically designated a Deputy to deal with homeless people.

Chief Pinellas TRAIL Ranger Gray, coordinated with **Sheriff's Deputy** to be certain there were no transients in the area. Chief Ranger Gray also coordinated with **Keep Pinellas Beautiful** <http://www.mykpb.com/> and with **Jungle Terrace Civic Association** for Volunteers.

Jungle Terrace asked, "Trash pickup only, or vegetation removal also?" "Excess of vegetation, I am bringing loppers," was the reply.

JTCA volunteered to bring two battery pole chainsaws.

70+ Volunteers swarmed the area carrying out mattresses, carts and wheelbarrows of junk and trash – sorted into recyclable and disposable.

Amazing to see!

JT volunteers began cutting down invasive trees low to ground for mowers to go over, and treating the stumps to prevent re-sprouting. When we had a large area of toppled saplings, two County workers asked, "Do you want a chipper?" YES!

A huge dump truck and big powerful chipper arrived. Many hands began hauling vegetation to the chipper. One said, "I have a regular chainsaw . . . should I crank it up?" YES! He began taking down larger Brazilian pepper trees – really large one required a winch to haul it out to chipper.

The entire dump truck was FILLED with mulched excess vegetation.

All invasive species were removed from the area!

"Mower lines" were extended to create easier mowing maintenance.

This project became a major HAPPENING with fabulous **RESULTS!**

This benefits us all and our neighborhood greatly.

The PHOTOS



**Jamie McWade, KPB Program Coordinator; Dr. Ed, JTCA;
Chief Ranger Carol Gray, Pinellas County Parks and Conservation**



County Helicopter (and Jet) Pilot Daniel Funk with Pole Chainsaw.



Deep in the Jungle!





Stuffing the Chipper!



MORE Stuff for the Chipper!



Bio Litter and Human Litter





Dragging out the Invasive trees!





Loaded Truck of mulched Invasive Vegetation!



Dave, Mosquito Control Expert, Dr. Ed, Dan Funk, County Pilot



Our MULTITUDE of Volunteers!~!

To All Who Participated:

Thank you again for all who assisted with today's project behind TARGET adjacent to the Pinellas Trail and Bay. This was an area on the P. Trail that surely needed TLC.

Thank you Sheriff's Deputy Harlan for scouting out the area prior. We conducted a second walk through this morning and **found no recent transient activity**. We appreciate the Sheriff's Office continuing support working with the homeless.

Special thanks to Jamie, Carly and Megan, (Keep Pinellas Beautiful Staff), for organizing the project, and to Dr. Ed, (Jungle Terrace) for Volunteers and stimulating the unplanned invasive vegetation removal with pole chainsaws. We look forward to hearing the Solid Waste weight results from the trash debris hauled away.

A hugely successful effort by 70+ Pinellas County staff, Keep Pinellas Beautiful and Volunteers. All planned tasks and then unplanned extras were completed in a very timely manner.

Hope you enjoy the photos!

C. Gray, Chief Park Ranger II