

# **FY26 NMCB Coffee Hours-04.09.2026-Heather Lutz, KLCB Youth Groups TRANSCRIPT**

0:04

Hey, good morning, everyone.

0:06

Thank you for joining us.

0:07

For this morning's coffee hours, we have Heather Lutz from Keep Luna County Beautiful.

0:12

She's going to present on the cleanups they have down there and also the youth groups.

0:18

So go ahead, Heather.

0:19

Thank you.

0:21

Good morning everyone, and welcome to my presentation.

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So the this first scene was one of the last cleanups we had.

0:29

They had a lot of fun.

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They were telling me all about the trash that they picked up and I snapped a funny picture.

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It's great, but let's look at what we got.

0:38

All right, so let's start at the very, very beginning, which I find is always the best place to start.

0:44

How I started was your funding basically dictates how much you can pay your groups.

0:53

With what I get, I pay \$250 per four hours of work or per cleanup per group, you know, So if I have

one group, it's \$250 for them for the four hours worth of cleanup and that seems to work relatively well.

1:04

Even if I have events, I do them in 4 hour blocks so that that works very well.

1:12

If you're looking on where to start, I always say start with the schools.

1:15

Obviously they're your youth group programs.

1:17

Churches are the second thing I added to that list because most churches have youth groups and if you're in a location like mine, there's enough economic disparity that most churches help with like backpacks and food and clothing and things like that.

1:36

So it's a very, very good program for fundraising for all of those sources.

1:43

Now, what I do now, which I've found very helpful, is sending newsletters with upcoming dates and all of that.

1:49

And I do it to the schools, the city of Deming, the county, the Chamber of Commerce, who disperse it to all of their business members, Main Street, who puts it on all of their websites and all of my social media.

2:02

Plus it's being shared, you know, throughout.

2:06

I also do now the monthly coalition meetings.

2:11

And every time I have an upcoming event, I will do my, you know, at the end they say, OK, who's got events coming up this month?

2:19

And I'm always there talking about it.

2:20

And hey, if you have a youth group, hey, if you want to come volunteer, this is what we do with this.

2:24

How to contact me?

2:26

I've probably gone through about 500 business cards in the last about four months.

2:31

So that's not bad.

2:32

That's not bad.

2:33

So I would get with your local chamber people and see if you have a coalition like for businesses, 'cause that's what it is.

2:42

It's just a community coalition and that's awesome.

2:46

I announce it as a fundraiser because it's a great fundraising opportunity and I also would announce it for like, hey, for early college for things like that.

2:55

This is a great way to get your stewardship in.

2:59

I know they have to do a lot of community service for stewardship and this fits into that perfectly.

3:05

So we usually have early college that come every single month and they only request pay like twice.

3:14

So what happens next is so you get an e-mail and it says I want to be part of the Keep Luna County.

3:21

I'll use that for the sake cleanup crew.

3:25

And I have a formatted e-mail that says, hey, welcome, so glad to have you.

3:31

I let them know the process like, hey, this is what I do.

3:34

This is what I need.

3:35

I need a letter of interest.

3:37

It can be even just an e-mail stating, well, you know who you are as a youth group, what ages you serve and what the money could would potentially be used for 'cause we know that things always change, right?

3:51

And I send them a contract with that letter.

3:53

Now, if you send the contract with that, it is a psychological thing that they will usually sign it and do what needs to be done because it's an action item, right?

4:03

If you have to think about it and then send, you know, let us for letter of interest and then get a contract it, it takes a lot of time in between.

4:09

So if you cut out that section, I get a lot more people just signing the contract and send me the letter of interest all at once.

4:16

Also at the same time, I send out my calendar and I say, hey, choose your dates.

4:20

I would love to see your dates.

4:21

Let me know immediately, you know, so I do that all in my beginning e-mail and then I go over a brief section of this is where we meet on Saturdays when we clean up and I usually do it every other Saturday.

4:34

And this is what I talk about.

4:37

And after that we go to our locations.

4:39

This is what your kids should generally wear.

4:43

Make sure they have hats.

4:44

You know, I have sunscreen, but please bring some as well.

4:47

This is what I provide and that seems to really help any like further questions and if they have follow up questions, it's not usually very much.

4:56

And then to the top of it, I have my little service agreement and generally it just, you know, says basically you have to have a certain amount of adults per kids, how many people can participate or you know, at minimum or whatnot, which I've kind of laxed on because there are some that don't have very many, but clean up as much as somebody with 10 or more.

5:21

So, and generally it's about a capacity issue on what you can clean and not on a person issue as in how many people are there.

5:30

I do also put in there that they must participate in the Greatest American cleanup.

5:34

There are only a few exceptions for that.

5:36

And I have the May 2nd, the very last cleanup for them to come and participate even though they couldn't be in the Greatest American.

5:43

April is extremely busy in our town, at least for like the archery club and baseball has their tournaments all of April, I mean most of the weekends.

5:54

So I understand that.

5:58

Then I have a social media participation.

6:00

They are welcome to opt out and it does state that.

6:03

Just let me know if you want to opt out.

6:04

Totally fine with it.

6:05

No one has done so yet.

6:07

In fact, they have all been very, very helpful with me and social media, which I'll get to, but this one was for the band boosters and these people here are early college archery clubs.

6:17

They were very excited to be there.

6:21

So then what happens next?

6:24

That kid cracks me up.

6:25

He was having so much fun.

6:27

When they send a contract back and a date or multiple dates, because some people do that, I create a requisition.

6:34

I don't know what you guys do in each of your sections, but that gives me a purchase order, right?

6:39

So I put in a req.

6:40

They gave me a purchase order.

6:41

I send my contractors that purchase order so they know exactly what they signed up for.

6:47

There's no questions to it.

6:49

Now, if they are very new to the event or if they've never done keep Luna County Beauty before, I'll go back through some guidelines like hey, we expect your kids to not be running in the road.

6:57

You know, if it's sharp, don't let it cut them where you know there's adults and road department people or even I will go and handle that.

7:05

Wear appropriate shoes because some kids want to go with their friends on a Saturday for a few hours and they want to wear heels or sandals and you can't do that on the side of the road in the middle of nowhere, right?

7:18

So I also let them know, hey, we are a desert.

7:22

There are animals, you know, this is kind of what we expect.

7:25

If you see a rattlesnake or what happens, you know, there's always exceptions, but I kind of want them to be aware.

7:31

So I always give them a spiel and if you want to call me and talk to me, I'd be happy to do it.

7:35

If you want me to go to you and talk to you, I'd be happy to do it.

7:39

Most of the time they don't have any further questions, but I always allow them that opportunity.

7:47

So the morning of the actual event, you can see me on my soapbox there.

7:52

I usually start by climbing on the back of the truck.

7:54

I climb on the back of the truck and introduce myself.

7:56

Even if that I've known kids that are there the entire time.

8:00

I introduce myself.

8:02

Hey, my name is Heather Lutz.

8:04

Thank you so much for being here.

8:05

I'm always so thankful for them being there.

8:09

I let them know that we have vests, that I expect everyone to wear them, that I have gloves for them.

8:14

I have different sizes for different, you know, whatever you need.

8:17

I have my pickers, I have trash bags.

8:20

The road departments here, they have trash bags.

8:22

These are what they look like.

8:23

They have their truck, they have their lights.

8:25

Please stay, you know, around these trucks.

8:28

Don't be too far away from the group, but you know, spread out as you can.

8:32

I generally have enough trucks that it's not a problem ever.

8:38

I again advise them that if anything is going to hurt them, don't mess with it.

8:42

You know, if it's sharp, if it's got an edge, if it's a needle, if it's a broken bottle, there's enough adults and there's enough people that are trained to handle that that can handle that.

8:55

I give the clipboards out to the leaders and for them to sign in.

9:00

And I've only lost two in the wind.

9:04

But besides that, I generally get them back and usually I have a little sheet that shows how many bags I've picked up and I correlate that with how much poundage we get.

9:14

The road department takes the trash for us and weighs it and all that good stuff.

9:18

So that's awesome.

9:19

The road department's been my one of my strongest assets here meeting at the locations.

9:28

And then you can see here I've got one of my girls and then there's the big truck.

9:33

And then there's two more, three more trucks with lights over there just kind of spread up between the groups.

9:39

Depending on the group size.

9:41

I kind of generally take the locations based off that.

9:45

I have a list of locations already.

9:49

But if it's really big, a really big group or multiple big groups, they'll be like, hey, OK, so we have a lot of people.

9:55

Let's do 549 from here to here on both sides, you know, 1 going East, 1 going West.

10:01

And that's really cool because one, for some reason kids always find a way to make it a competition.

10:07

And two, you can have both sides of a larger area completed and it's easy for you as the coordinator to be able to go between them and make sure everyone's good, especially if you have enough people.

10:18

Now, if you don't have people like the road department that have lights and trucks, I would get a few volunteers with flashers or even the parents, Hey, put your car here with flashers, please.

10:31

It does help with vehicles.

10:33

So that's always a good thing.

10:37

I always just join in on the fun.

10:38

You know, I make sure to take pictures with them and to video them and to have them video each other be like, hey, I need you to go ask all your friends how many trash bags they're gonna get today, you know, and they do.

10:52

And they're getting better and better at that.

10:54

And they say that now they, they tell me all the time, Hey, miss, you know what your catch phrase is?

10:58

It's Keep Luna County Beautiful.

11:00

So now we do that all the time, like it's become its own catch phrase.

11:03

So where do you go from there?

11:05

You know, you've cleaned up the four hours is done, you've done your due diligence and how do you end it?

11:11

You know, and that's all that was always my big question.

11:13

Like do you just leave?

11:14

Like what do you, what do you do, you know?

11:17

So I generally gather each group or if they're close together, put them all together and I make a video or take a picture.

11:26

And I asked the kids questions.

11:27

And that to me has been very important because there's been kids that have been here all year and they have different answers every time.

11:34

And so I always do things like, what kind of trash did you pick up this time?

11:41

What was the oddest thing you picked up?

11:44

You know, what do you think about all the trash that you picked up?

11:46

Like, like, what does this mean to you?

11:48

And, you know, I, I give them those type of conversations and allow them to tell me, you know, the last time.

11:54

And it changes by location, which is interesting to me.

11:58

Further in town, they're always saying things like, Miss, it's just a lot of apes.

12:01

And I'm like, well, that's interesting.

12:03

That wasn't a problem even five years ago, you know, at all.

12:07

And, you know, if we're on a highway, they're like, hey, there's a lot of food containers and little mini liquor bottles.

12:14

I said, OK, what do you think about that. "Styrofoam's terrible Miss

12:17

That's what I think."

12:18

I'm like, I'm right there with you, you know?

12:22

But having that sort of open dialogue gives them a different way of seeing the trash.

12:28

And I really enjoy that for them keeping score.

12:34

So I like to keep track of how much we pick up.

12:36

I generally try to do it on the Mondays after.

12:39

Sometimes I have to wait for the road department, but for their final trash tally or weight tally.

12:45

But I also make sure to use the pictures and videos and the social media and I like pinning the kids against each other.

12:52

And honestly, I didn't start that.

12:53

They did, you know, the just last weekend the track team was like, we're going to get 60 some bags and early college heard it and they're like, well, we're going to get 72.

13:05

And then the middle schoolers heard it and they're like, we're going to get 73.

13:09

And they, we're really trying very hard to outdo each other.

13:14

And so I just utilize that.

13:15

I, I don't utilize it like, Hey, we're going to pin you guys against each other.

13:18

Just ask, hey, how many trash bags do you think you're going to get today?

13:21

And it just naturally grows from there, which I love.

13:25

There's my National Honor Society kids.

13:29

That's really it for me.

13:30

The biggest thing for me has been having the backup of the community, especially the county.

13:40

They've allowed me a lot of leeway to be able to go and talk to people, to give presentations, to go to the coalition meetings, to talk at Commission meetings like I'll be doing today at 1:30, to go talk to the city, to meet with the schools, talk to the chamber and to take pictures and do it.

14:01

And do social media that they've, they've been a really, really very, very good asset for that.

14:07

And they've also helped me when I needed people like from the road department, which I loved having because then the trash isn't on the side of the road waiting for someone else to pick it up.

14:18

It's picked up as we go.

14:20

So that matters to me.

14:24

But these youth groups I hire for mostly cleanups.

14:28

Now we're trading towards beautification just because I'm having a hard time finding a stretch of Rd.

14:36

that can accommodate an entire group for enough trash to handle them.

14:43

So which is great.

14:46

So I'll have to have smaller groups for smaller areas I gather, and then beautification between.

14:52

So we're going to go to graffiti and flowers and now we can, now that we've got the trash under control, we can kind of go to the next level, which I'm super excited about.

15:03

But is there any questions, anything I can answer for you guys?

15:18

I have a question, Heather.

15:21

So this is Martina.

15:21

I'm over at Bernalillo County.

15:24

So I might have missed in the beginning when you were talking about your contract.

15:27

So when you get started, because these are they're like high school groups or younger or so do they have to get permission from parents or do they have to just get like permission from the school as a group when you start doing this, right?

15:43

So the groups themselves, if they're from the schools, they have to have like a fundraising form is what we have here.

15:49

And they submit the fundraising form to the schools with the contract.

15:54

So they know cost associations and the schools here allow the fundraising for keeping the county beautiful instead of them doing a fundraising form every single time.

16:04

They have it for all grant year.

16:07

So they'll have it till the end of the school year.

16:10

You know, if they do it in September, it'll be up in, you know, June 30th.

16:15

And so, yeah, that we don't have to do anything in specific on that side.

16:22

We create them as vendors for the county and that way I'm allowed to pay them on that.

16:27

But as far as their side goes, it has to be a legit youth group.

16:31

So it's got to be like the Church of Latter Day Saints youth group and they have to have like they have their own separation of that.

16:40

And so for your funding for that, is that that's grant funding as well that the how you guys pay them?

16:48

Yes, yes, that goes from 4.2 youth groups.

16:52

OK, I see.

16:54

Thank you.

16:55

Of course.

17:03

And I can also share with you whatever you guys need if you guys are just starting this and you need, hey, can you give me a blank contract so I can see what I'm working with or what should be in mine?

17:13

Mine was approved by our lawyer with the county.

17:15

I would have your people also check into your guys's regulations, whatever.

17:20

But this one's what works for us.

17:22

I can send you my calendar so you can kind of see my timing on things.

17:26

If you'd like, I'll, I can send you whatever you guys need to help you on that.

17:32

I'm very, very forthcoming with all that information because it has been such a big difference with the youth groups.

17:41

Martina, I will write you down to send you that.

17:45

I'm going to put my e-mail here and you guys just send me emails of whatever you need spelling it right.

17:58

We do have our greatest American kicking off and we've made this one the biggest yet with the youth groups and they've requested and got the museum coming in, the Dag Ship animal shelters coming in to try to get people to adopt the pets.

18:19

We got a snow cone place coming in.

18:21

We've got the road department's bringing some of their big equipment for just for them to go see it.

18:26

We're going to have the yard sale that day.

18:28

So the parents that aren't going to be doing the cleanups can do a yard sale and stay on and are in site.

18:34

Fire department's going to be cooking burgers.

18:36

I mean, there's a lot of things going on on that day that they're super, super excited about.

18:42

But the kids all tell me what they want and they have Instagram.

18:45

By the way, if you only have Facebook, I got told I was old for only having Facebook.

18:50

So I also have Instagram and whatever I posted Facebook I just put on Instagram as well.

18:55

But most of the high schoolers have Instagram.

19:06

Is there anything else, you guys?

19:08

Oh yeah, Thank you so much, Heather.

19:12

Just if anyone else has any questions, Heather did put her contact information in the chat and this will this is recorded.

19:25

So we will put it on the website, of course.

19:30

And guys, thank you so much for having me.

19:32

I absolutely love this program.