



Alexandra Wimley/PG

# Want to be an Olympian? Start picking up trash



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Participants in Pittsburgh's Garbage Olympics have found some wacky items over the years: a tombstone, a washing machine full of silverware, lots of socks.



This year, however, the Morningside trash team may have found the oddest thing yet — a stuffed parrot probably prepared by a taxidermist.



The Garbage Olympics, an effort to pick up trash throughout Pittsburgh, had hundreds of volunteers out on Saturday participating in the sixth annual effort to help keep their city

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participating in the sixth annual event to help keep their city clean.

The Garbage Olympics began in 2017 with five teams competing for a trophy for the most trash collected. That year, 70 volunteers turned out. This year, the event attracted at least 572, spanning 48 neighborhood teams.

They collected more than 1,000 bags of trash, at least 192 automobile tires and 112 television sets,

The winning team this year was the Allentown Trash Dragons, whose members collected at least 57 bags of trash in their neighborhood.

Lena Andrews is one of three co-founders of the Garbage Olympics and captain of her team, the East Liberty Trash Warriors.

“My group in East Liberty, we started picking up trash because we wanted to make a positive change,” Ms. Andrews said. “It seemed like a problem we could actually do something about.”

Aside from the odd things found in the cleanup, organizers said the most common items they find include cans, bottles and tires.

Reyna Garvey, a Garbage Olympics volunteer for the South Oakland area, said she was surprised by amount of trash littered across the neighborhoods.

“I do think it’s a little gross how much trash was everywhere, especially considering there are trash cans everywhere. People still are littering like right next to the trash cans,” Ms. Garvey said.

Ms. Garvey said she wishes that students and residents across the city would simply take a second to help keep their community clean.

“If you find trash right next to you or if it falls out of the can, just pick it up and put it in the trash. It takes like a second, and you get to live in a cleaner neighborhood,” Ms. Garvey said.

Ms. Andrews said she has definitely noticed a cleaner city since the start of the Olympics six years ago.

“Actually today we were like, where’s the trash?” Ms. Andrews said. “And that felt really good because we’ve been doing cleanups for nine years, and we’ve been doing the olympics for six years... It’s making a real difference.”

Ms. Andrews said the Garbage Olympics is the perfect chance for city residents to clean up their city.



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“It’s really fun — I think everyone has always wanted to feel like an Olympian and now they can be, with Garbage Olympics,” Ms. Andrews said. “And it’s an even bigger win because their neighborhood gets cleaned up, and they meet people from other neighborhoods who care about litter.”

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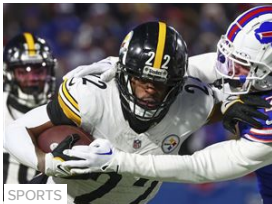
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