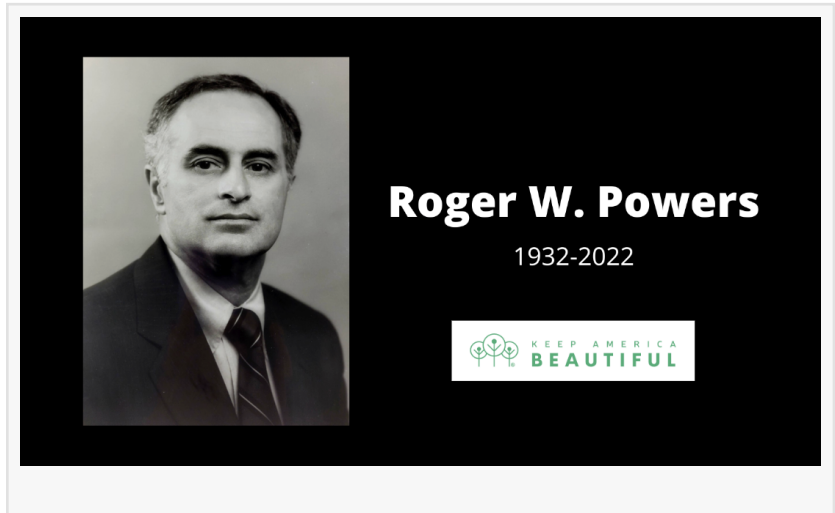


Keep America Beautiful Remembers Former KAB President, Roger W. Powers; 1932-2022

STAMFORD, CONN., USA, August 29, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Keep America Beautiful® honors the life and legacy of Roger W. Powers, who passed away in Scottsdale, Arizona on August 8 at the age of 89.

Powers worked for Keep America Beautiful from 1969 to 1997. His daughter, Pamela Powers January, tells KAB his time with the organization was "his life's work."



"Keep America Beautiful became an extension of Dad's personal beliefs and core values. He proudly and tirelessly championed the KAB mission that had people coming together at a grass roots level, cleaning up their towns and highways. Dad admired a 'can do' attitude and those who accepted responsibility for their actions. He fervently believed that one's individual efforts make a difference, and that good stewardship included sound management of one's property, one's home, one's community, one's self."

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I think people have to know there is a solution, that it remains for them to make an individual commitment. Set an example, and you'd be surprised how many people will follow in a positive way."

Powers, quoted in The New York Times, 1988

Roger Weldon Powers was born on October 12, 1932, in Peoria, Illinois. He attended Bradley University and also served in the US Army in that time. He was elected into Keep America Beautiful in 1969 after spending 12 years with the United States Brewers Association. It was there he created a nationwide litter prevention program that was used by brewers and packaging manufacturers in 36

states. He brought that expertise to KAB, becoming the Executive Vice President before becoming President.

"Dad possessed a tremendous pride of country. He was patriotic to his core. He recalled often that serving our country provided him the foundation for his success in life. He appreciated the

order and structure which also produced his enormous drive and self-discipline. He valued camaraderie and teamwork, too," Powers January told KAB. "These traits, I believe, made him a good fit with Keep America Beautiful. He upheld the belief that all Americans share the responsibility of keeping America litter-free as a matter of national and civic pride."

In his time with KAB, Powers met with several U.S. Presidents - Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton - to promote KAB's litter abatement campaign. Powers

considered litter a "people problem" and knew that just raising awareness about litter wouldn't solve the problem. He knew there needed to be a call to action, so he worked with behavioral scientists to create the Clean Community System which is now the KAB affiliate network. He traveled all over the country to promote the Model for Change and to encourage communities to join KAB. He started with three pilot communities in the early 70's which has now grown to 700 affiliates nationwide.

"I think it's accurate to say that the Clean Community System was dad's finest hour at Keep America Beautiful," said Powers January. "It seemed to me that this was the effort he was most proud of and enthusiastic about. It put him in touch with people in a very personal way. Many of his constituents became lifetime friends and admirers."

The 1971 PSA campaign featuring "The Crying Indian" with actor Iron Eyes Cody was created by the Ad Council under Powers's watch. The ad was named by Ad Age Magazine as one of the top 100 advertising campaigns of the 20th century and won two Clio Awards.

It is evident Powers had a big hand in transforming not just the American environment but also lives within the organization. He is the person who hired Sue Smith in 1991. Smith is well-known throughout the organization and beyond, formerly serving as the Keep America Beautiful Director of Education & Training and currently as the Keep America Beautiful-Chicago Director.

"It was a pleasure to have worked with Roger. He was a strong and steady leader and I learned much from him. He was ambitious for Keep America Beautiful and open to hear how we could better serve the affiliate network," said Smith. "The wisdom he brought from the business world helped me see how best to be a good steward of the non-profit funds and the reputation of Keep America Beautiful."



Roger Powers in his Keep America Beautiful office

Powers also hired Becky Lyons, who has served many roles within the organization for 36 years, joining in 1986. Lyons is currently the organization's Chief Operating Officer.

"Roger had an incredible vision for KAB. His passion and enthusiasm were inspiring," said Lyons. "I was privileged to work for him for over a decade and I am incredibly grateful for the tutelage and mentoring he provided me in my early career."

Former employee Roger Baumgarten was one of many who reached out to KAB to share about the important role Powers played in his life.

"Roger gave this 20-something a foot in the door of public/media relations back in 1986, and put me on the path to a 35-year career in the field. My three years with KAB remain one of the highlights of my professional career," said Baumgarten. "In hindsight, I think it was the big picture: his willingness to hire - and trust - a bunch of mid-twenties college grads with no discernible skills or experience to represent one of the nation's most recognizable organizations. In the ensuing years, I've had few bosses who trusted their staff as Roger did. I will always be grateful for the opportunity he gave me."

And, to this day, those opportunities Powers gave to so many play a significant part in the foundation and strength of Keep America Beautiful.

"As I take on the role as KAB President this year, I am eager to capture the energy and passion Roger Powers built and championed during his tenure with KAB. He had a vision and plan for this organization that served us so well," said Keep America Beautiful President and CEO, Jennifer Lawson. "Roger's work to include and inspire people to take action was far ahead of its time, and I am committed to carry on what he so skillfully began."

Keep America Beautiful offers deepest condolences to Roger's family and friends. He will forever be a part of the KAB family.

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