

MARDI GRAS WASTE REDUCTION 02.20.2020



*A NON-PROFIT DEDICATED TO HELPING NEW ORLEANS
SPECIAL EVENTS REDUCE WASTE, IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND
LOWER THEIR IMPACT ON OUR PLANET.*

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WASTE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW:

In 2019, over 1,300 tons, or 2.6 million pounds, of waste was collected off New Orleans streets during just 11 days of carnival season, up from 960 tons in 2016.

A significant amount of this material is discarded or neglected single use items that could easily be recycled or reused.

The waste poses many hazards, is costly to clean up and there is currently no system in place to deal with it effectively.



WASTE SUMMARY

WASTE TYPES:

Parade Throws - beads, cups, plush toys, trinkets (reusable) and light up/battery throws (not reusable)

Aluminum - single use drink cans w/ low contamination, light weight (recyclable)

Plastic - single use #1 #2 drink bottles (recyclable), go cups, food bags, throw bags and tarps (non-recyclable)

Paper - cardboard throw packaging (recyclable) and contaminated food packaging (non-recyclable)

Polystyrene - "styrofoam" cups and food packaging (non-recyclable)



~50% recyclable material typology

WASTE SUMMARY

WASTE EFFECTS:

Environment - waste accumulates in soil, waterways and landfills. energy and emissions required to produce, haul and dispose of waste that is slow to break down in all environments.

Infrastructure - waste hinders city storm water drainage, private trash bins, bike lanes.

Health & Safety - throws contain toxins like lead, phallates and fire retardants.

Aesthetic - waste collects on streets, neutral grounds, yards, and trees which shed throws year round.

Cost - 1.5 million in taxpayer dollars spent annually for labor, equipment, transport and landfill costs.



WASTE SUMMARY

CURRENT WASTE MANAGEMENT:

- No recycling effort or infrastructure provided by city or Krewes.
- Everything picked up on street goes to landfill.
- Public leaves loose trash or unwanted throws on ground, puts in nearby residential trash bins or takes home.
- Krewes pay no fee correlated to waste produced by parade and picked up city.
- Virtually no restrictions on imported throw materials, safety or production standards.



CHALLENGES

KREWES

- IN THE 1970'S NEW "SUPER KREWES" LEAD A RAPID SHIFT AWAY FROM GLASS BEADS AND WOODEN DOUBLOONS TOWARDS A MULTITUDE OF PLASTIC OFFERINGS (~25 MILLION POUNDS IMPORTED ANNUALLY).
- THE PRODUCTION OF THESE THROWS NOW HAPPENS IN CHINA WHERE HEALTH, SAFETY, MATERIALS AND LABOR STANDARDS ARE LOW MEANING ITEMS ARE CHEAP ENOUGH TO THROW IN QUANTITIES THAT DEVALUE THEM TO PARADE GOERS.
- OVER TIME, MORE AND MORE PARADES HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE CARNIVAL SCHEDULE, WITH INCREASING RIDERSHIP AND COMPETITION AMONGST KREWES TO HAVE LARGER, GRANDER, EVER CHANGING FLOATS, THE BEST BANDS AND MOST POPULAR MARCHING KREWES, ALL OF WHICH ARE RELIANT ON MONEY GENERATED BY THROW SALES WITHIN THE KREWE.
- KREWES, WHICH ARE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, OCCASIONALLY HAVE LEADERSHIP WITH A STAKE IN THROW DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES.



72 PARADES IN 11 DAYS

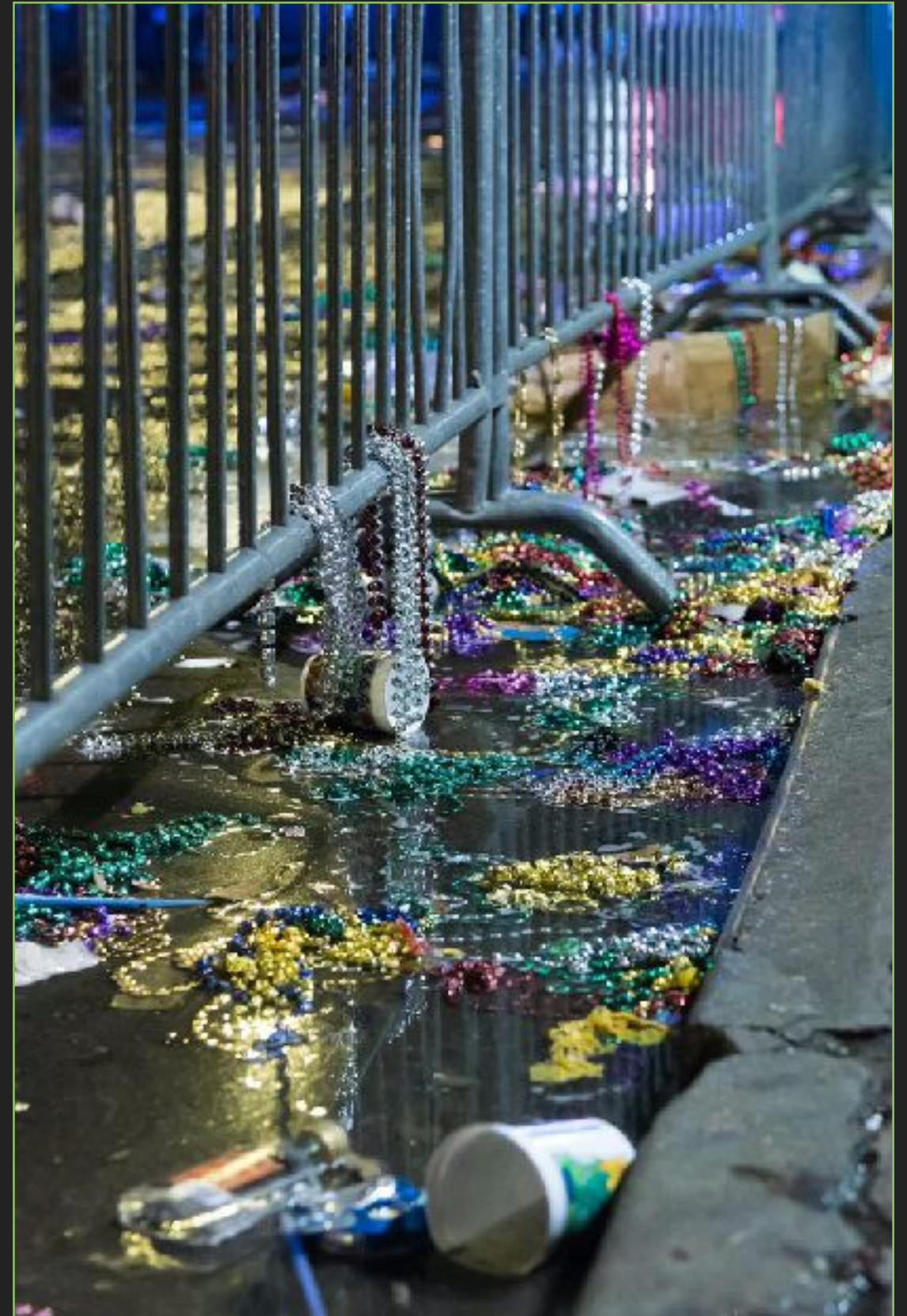
"MARDI GRAS WARS"

"THROW TILL IT HURTS"

CHALLENGES

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

- NO "CARROT OR STICK" REGARDING WASTE. DESPITE GROWING WASTE AMOUNTS AND COSTS CLEAN UP. PERMIT FEES REMAIN BETWEEN \$750 - \$1500.
- CITY CLAIMS MARDI GRAS TOURISM BRINGS IN HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS, YET "THERE ARE NO FUNDS" FOR SANITATION DEPARTMENT TO IMPLEMENT ANY FORM OF A PARADE RECYCLING EFFORT.
- MAYORS MARDI GRAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE IS MOSTLY KREWE LEADERSHIP. TREATING MARDI GRAS ONLY AS A BUSINESS, EXTERNALIZING COSTS, PROFITING THROUGH THROW DISTRIBUTION. HAS LITTLE INTEREST IN LIMITING ACTIVITIES OR ASSOCIATED WASTE.
- SANITATION DEPARTMENT DOES "TOO GOOD OF A JOB CLEANING UP" AFTER EVERY PARADE. TRUE SCALE OF WASTE GOES UNSEEN BY PUBLIC.



CHALLENGES

MARKET:

- FOREIGN MANUFACTURING COSTS WILL ALWAYS OUTCOMPETE LOCAL BUSINESS, ARTISANS AND CRAFTERS.
- LACK OF AFFORDABLE OPTIONS FOR RIDERS WHO WANT TO THROW ALTERNATIVES.
- VALUE OF RECYCLED MATERIAL DESTROYED IN 2018 WHEN CHINA STOPPED ACCEPTING RECYCLED WASTE FROM THE U.S DUE TO CONTAMINATION AND OVER-SUPPLY.



CULTURE:

- REFRAIN THAT "MARDI GRAS IS ALL ABOUT EXCESS"
- TOO MANY OTHER ISSUES THREATENING CITY LIKE CRIME, FLOODING AND POOR ROADS TO PRIORITIZE WASTE MANAGEMENT.



AWARENESS:

- PRESS & PUBLIC MAY BE AFRAID OF SHAMING MARDI CULTURE, KREWES AND CITY AS IT MAY BE PERCEIVED AS INTERFERENCE WITH TOURISM \$.
- LACK OF POSITIVE EXAMPLES TO COVER. WHO IS SUCCEEDING IN LOWERING WASTE IMPACT & PROVIDING VIABLE ALTERNATIVES TO CURRENT SYSTEM?
- PUBLIC UNAWARE OF SCALE OF PROBLEM, WHO PAYS FOR CLEAN UP AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THROWS.



GROUNDS KREWE INITIATIVES

"ON THE ROUTE" THROWS, CANS & PLASTIC BOTTLES RECYCLING

1. Volunteers in vests walk before the parade passing out free recycling bags to the public on the uptown route. Verbal and written instructions explain the bags purpose, benefit and use.



2. Parade watchers hang the two types of bags on their ladder, chair or tent and fill them with either unwanted throws or empty cans and plastic bottles.



3. When the bags are full or parade watchers are ready to leave, they can leave the them on the curb or neutral ground for pickup by volunteers and workers.



4. After the parade passes, but before the city clean up crews arrive, recycling trucks and volunteers travel the route accepting and finding the bags to then load onto the trucks.



5. The trucks and volunteers exit the route and bring their haul to recycling facilities at Republic Services for cans and bottles or to ARC warehouse for throws.



6. Throws sent to the ARC facility are sorted year round by members in need of work as well as volunteers. The throws are repackaged and sold to parade riders the next year at affordable prices.



7. Cans and bottles sent to Republic Services are sent through their materials recycling facility for sorting, baling and eventual reuse in new products.



GROUNDS KREWE INITIATIVES

SUSTAINABLE THROW CATALOG

OBJECTIVE:

- MEET GROWING DEMAND FOR AFFORDABLE SUSTAINABLE THROWS MADE FROM RECYCLED, RENEWABLE OR BIODEGRADABLE MATERIALS AS WELL AS FUNCTIONAL.
- PARTNER WITH BUSINESSES TO PROMOTE LOCAL CULTURE & SOURCING. USE NON-PROFIT MODEL AS GO BETWEEN TO AVOID COMMERCIALIZATION.
- PARTNER WITH ORGS TO MAKE THROWS WITH AND PROVIDE JOBS FOR THE INTELLECTUALLY OR PHYSICALLY DISABLED.
- REINVEST PROCEEDS IN YEAR ROUND WASTE REDUCTION INITIATIVES.

PROGRESS:

- **OVER 16,000 THROWS SOLD IN 7 WEEKS.**

FUTURE GOALS:

- CREATE MULTI-VENDOR E-COMMERCE PLATFORM LIKE ETSY JUST FOR LOCALLY MADE OR SUSTAINABLE THROWS.
- WORK WITH KREWES TO INCLUDE ECO-FRIENDLY OFFERINGS IN THROW PACKAGES.
- ANNUAL EXPO FOR SUSTAINABLE THROWS, CRAFTING CULTURE AND COSTUME SWAPS.
- BIODEGRADABLE BEAD - RECYCLED PAPER PULP, SUGARCANE OR RECYCLED PLASTIC.



GROUNDS KREWE INITIATIVES



'LOCAL FLAVOR' THROW ASSEMBLY AT ARC GNO
CREATING WAGE-EARNING JOBS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

GROUNDS KREWE INITIATIVES

RECYCLING MARCHING KREWE

OVERVIEW: THE TRASHFORMERS FLIP THE SCRIPT ON PARADING BY COLLECTING RECYCLABLE WASTE AS THEY PASS BY INSTEAD OF PRODUCING IT.

OBJECTIVE:

- GET PARADE GOERS THINKING ABOUT LACK OF RECYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPPORTUNITIES.
- PROVIDE A RECYCLING OPPORTUNITY IN AN AMUSING AND INTERACTIVE WAY.
- EMPOWER THE PUBLIC BUT DO NOT BE A CLEAN UP CREW.

FUTURE GOALS:

- REPLICATE RECYCLABLE COLLECTION METHOD INTERMITTENTLY THROUGHOUT MANY PARADES.
- RE-INSTALEMENT OF ARC THROW BACK FLOAT.
- SET EXAMPLE FOR CITY AND POTENTIAL FIRST WAVE CLEAN UP CREWS.

COSTUME HIGHLIGHTS:

- PACIFIC GARBAGE PATCH DOLL
- OSCAR THE RECYCLING GROUCH
- MARIE "CAN-DO"
- THE ALUM-INATI
- HANZ THE CAN CRUSHER
- STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPOST



THOUGHTS FOR THE COUNCIL

KREWE SUSTAINABILITY SCORECARD

OBJECTIVE:

- 5 METRIC CATEGORIES FOR PRACTICAL WAYS IN WHICH KREWES CAN LOWER THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL & WASTE IMPACT.
- MEANT FOR RIDERS & KREWE LEADERSHIP
- CONVERSATION STARTER FOR BOTTOM UP OR TOP DOWN CHANGE

Category	Objective	Yes/No/Maybe/Sometimes
THROWS	Does your Krewe offer riders the ability to purchase recycled throws through Krewe packages or 3rd party vendors?	
	Does your Krewe offer riders the ability to purchase sustainable, consumable, locally made and/or handcrafted throws?	
	Does your Krewe have a unique and iconic sustainable, consumable and/or handcrafted throw? (ex: shoe, purse, coconut)	
POLICIES	Does your Krewe require the appointment of a dedicated sustainability coordinator or waste management person?	
	Does your Krewe require riders to unbox and recycle all cardboard packaging material before the parade?	
	Does your Krewe require that all packaging material produced on floats during the parade is not thrown overboard?	
	Does your krewe require that no unopened bags of beads be thrown to parade goers?	
	Does your Krewe require that parade formation points have disposable waste recycling containers available?	
	Does your Krewe require that riders or staff collect unused throws and disposable waste off floats at parade termination for recycling?	
	Does your Krewe require that dens contain recycling containers be present for throws, disposable waste, cardboard, lights & paint?	
	Does your Krewe require that only biodegradable glitter be used by riders, crafters and marching Krewe members?	
Does your Krewe sustainability coordinator publicly share information on throws sold through the organization? (type, qty. and value)		
ACTIONS	Does your Krewe have a partnership with a throw recycling organization that collects throws during or after your parade?	
	Does your Krewe have a partnership with a disposable waste recycling organization that collects recyclable waste during your parade?	
	Does your Krewe incorporate any marching Krewes that promote or accept recycling before, during or after parade?	
	Does your Krewe promote the purchase of recycled or sustainable throws at meetings, events and through member/public outreach?	
	Does your Krewe promote disposable waste recycling at meetings, events and through member/public outreach?	
	Does your Krewe incorporate any sustainable or alternative methods for powering and/or pulling floats such as electricity or biodiesel?	
	Does your Krewe incorporate LED lighting into the design of all floats with lights?	
	Does your Krewe construct floats from alternate materials other than styrofoam and fiberglass?	
Does your Krewe organize volunteer opportunities with local sustainability efforts or organizations?		
ADVOCACY	Would your Krewe be willing to support legislation or ordinances that allow for the use of "throw back float" for throw/bead collection?	
	Would your Krewe be willing to support legislation that sets a baseline for waste amounts produced during Carnival season?	
	Would your Krewe be willing to support legislation that requires recycling infrastructure be provided along the parade route?	
	Would your Krewe be willing to support legislation that requires a "first wave" recycling crew follow all parades during Carnival?	
OFFSETS	Does your Krewe donate money or volunteer time to support any local sustainability/waste reduction efforts or organizations?	
	Does your Krewe purchase any environmental offsets (carbon, mitigation banking, etc.)	
METRICS	How many dollars worth of throws did your Krewe purchase through a throw recycling organization last year? (shown in receipts)	
	How many dollars in charitable contributions did your Krewe donate to local sustainability/waste reduction efforts or organizations?	
	How many volunteer hours did members of your Krewe contribute to local sustainability/waste reduction efforts or organizations?	
	How many hours do you give riders to load/unpack throws and properly dispose of packaging materials?	
	On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate your Krewe's current actions as they relate to sustainable behavior? 1 being least sustainable.	
On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate your Krewe's aspiration to become more sustainable? 1 being lowest aspiration.		

GROUNDS KREWE INITIATIVES

FUTURE OBJECTIVES

PARADE RECYLING:

- FINE TUNE EFFORTS BASED ON AREA, DEMOGRAPHICS AND TIMING
- PARTNER WITH BUSINESS & RESIDENTS ALONG THE ROUTE TO ACT AS RECYCLING BAG DISTRIBUTION & TEMPORARY COLLECTION CENTERS.

SUSTAINABLE THROW CATALOG:

- WORK WITH KREWES TO GET SUSTAINABLE THROWS AS A PART OF PACKAGE OFFERINGS.
- FIND OTHER SOURCES OF UNDER UTILIZED, HIGH NEED LABOR FORCES TO HELP ASSEMBLE THROWS.
- ACT AS MARKETPLACE FOR ALL LOCAL THROW MAKERS.
- SET EXAMPLE FOR OTHER FOR PROFIT & NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO FOLLOW.

MARCHING KREWE:

- USE IN MULTIPLE PARADES
- USE WITH EXISTING MARCHING KREWES



46 TONS OF BEADS IN 5 BLOCKS HAS COMPLETELY REFRAMED THE MARDI GRAS WASTE ISSUE



JANURAY 28TH, 2018



FEBRUARY 16TH, 2020

THIS IS NO LONGER JUST ABOUT EXCESSIVE, UNWANTED, UNHEALTHY DISPOSABLE CHINESE PLASTIC

IT'S ABOUT PROTECTING OUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST FLOODING & SAVING THE CITY \$

IDENTIFY WHO CURRENTLY 'OWNS' THE WASTE & CLEAN UP COSTS

WASTE = ? CLEAN UP COSTS = RESIDENT TAXPAYERS

City Of New Orleans Dept. Of Sanitation Mardi Gras/Taxpayer Expenses			
Category	2008	2013	2018
Labor	\$173,251.99	\$194,543.37	\$467,421.52
Overtime	\$50,342.24	\$180,000.00	\$254,845.30
Equipment	\$375,904.18	\$460,447.65	\$460,942.04
Landfill	\$106,830.00	\$67,077.28	\$37,749.22
Contracted Segments	\$257,725.80	\$397,803.00	\$303,537.70
Food/Water	\$429.00	\$4,053.56	\$15,394.87
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$5,859.51	\$983.79
Total:	\$964,483.21	\$1,309,784.37	\$1,540,874.44

PARADE FEES:

14 TO 27 PULL UNITS: \$750.00

28 TO 36 PULL UNITS: \$1,000.00

37 TO 45 PULL UNITS: \$1,500.00

ASK WHO SHOULD OWN THE WASTE & CLEAN UP COSTS?

RIDERS? KREWES? PARADE GOERS? THE CITY? THE BUSINESSES THAT MAKE \$?

CAN THEY HELP SHARE THE WASTE & COST BURDEN?

THERE IS NO CORRELATION BETWEEN THROW QUANTITIES & THE ECONOMIC SUCCESS OF MARDI GRAS



NO HANDS UP - MARDI GRAS WAS SUCCESSFUL BEFORE THE ERA OF DISPOSABLE THROWS

IN FACT, THERE MAY BE AN INVERSE RELATIONSHIP

UNNECESSARY STREET WASTE IS A TURN OFF TO LOCALS / VISITORS & REQUIRES LOTS OF \$ TO DEAL WITH

WHAT IF A KREWE WITH OVER 3,000 RIDERS COMMITTED TO SPENDING \$10 LESS PER PERSON ON IMPORTED THROWS & PUT THAT MONEY TOWARDS A \$30,000 PARADE RECYCLING EFFORT?

WHO'S THE BIGGEST?

Membership rosters in 2020 show Nyx with 3,476 women, Iris with 3,448 women, Endymion with 3,300 men, Thoth with 1,975 men and Tucks with 1,800 men and women.

HOW MANY CANS & PLASTIC BOTTLES COULD 15 "FIRST WAVE" SANITATION WORKERS & 2 TRUCKS DIVERT FROM THE LANDFILL?

THE CITY WOULD HAVE LESS WASTE TO MANAGE & \$ TO HELP DO IT

THE MAYOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MARDI GRAS NEEDS A SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY VOICE



MARDI GRAS WASTE IS DIRECTLY TIED TO OUR CITY'S ABILITY TO ADAPT TO COMING CHALLENGES

A COMMITTEE OF MOSTLY KREWE/BUSINESS INTERESTS & LOGISTICS
STAFF MAY AVOID PUSHING FOR THE RAPID CHANGE THAT IS REQUIRED

INSTEAD THEY WILL EXTERNALIZE COSTS, AVOID CHANGE & EMBRACE THE STATUS QUO

OPTIONS FOR REGULATING THROW WASTE

RESTRICTING THROW AMOUNTS – UNPOPULAR & HARD TO TRACK / ENFORCE.

PERMIT FEES – KREWES ONLY PAY \$1500 OR LESS TO CITY FOR ENTIRE PARADE. WHAT IS THAT NUMBER & WHY HASN'T IT CHANGED AS WASTE AMOUNTS HAVE BALLOONED?

CARROT INCENTIVES – BENEFITS FOR THE KREWES WHO COMMIT TO BUYING A PERCENTAGE OF THEIR THROW PACKAGE OFFERINGS FROM THROW RECYCLING FACILITIES SUCH AS ARC GNO.

STICK INCENTIVES – PER RIDER WASTE MANAGEMENT FEE. SOME KREWES WITH MEMBERSHIP WAIT LISTS OF OVER 3 YEARS,

PROMOTING ALTERNATIVE THROWS – FOSTERING BUSINESS THROUGH GRANTS & IN KIND SERVICES.

PROMOTING ALTERNATIVE PARADING – BANDS, MARCHING KREWES, HAND CRAFTED MARDI GRAS. IT'S THE SHOW, NOT THE THROW. LOWER PERMIT FEES.

PROMOTING A SUSTAINABLE THROW CULTURE

REDUCE – THE #1 ISSUE LEAVING WASTE IN OUR STREETS IS OVER-ABUNDANCE & LACK OF DEMAND.

DEFINE SUSTAINABLE – THROWS MADE FROM REUSED, RECYCLED, RENEWABLE OR BIODEGRADABLE MATERIALS. FUNCTIONAL OR CONSUMABLE.

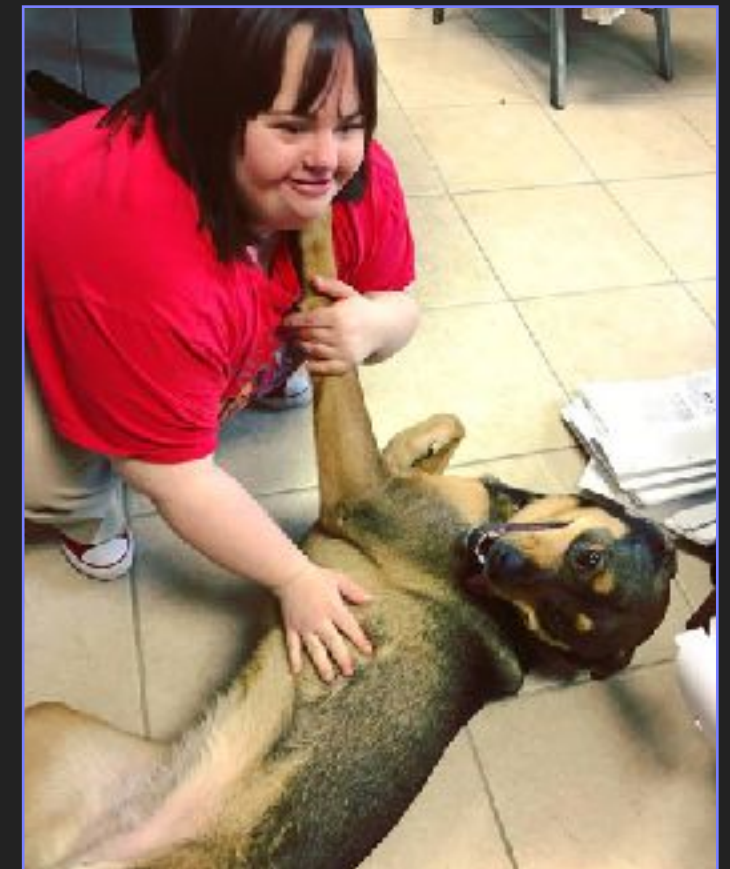
REUSE – NO THROW IS MORE ECO-FRIENDLY THAN ONE THAT IS USED REPEATEDLY. 100% RE-USE IS NOT POSSIBLE & CHINESE PLASTIC/PAINT IS STILL NOT HEALTHY.

BRANDING – LOCAL CRAFTERS & THROW MAKERS UNABLE TO BRAND THROWS DUE TO ORDINANCES. HARD TO GROW WITHOUT IDENTIFICATION. CONSIDER USE OF NON TRADE-MARKED LOGO TO IDENTIFY LOCALLY MADE OR SUSTAINABLE THROWS?

“BIO-DEGRADABLE BEAD” – SURE, BUT REMEMBER EXCESS IS THE ISSUE. PEOPLE WON'T BEND OVER TO PICK UP SOMETHING THEY ALREADY HAVE TOO MUCH OF.

ArcGNO Services

- Assist parents in finding effective therapies for infants
- Guide special ed students in exploring options after high school
- Job coaching and placement for those seeking employment
- Employment for those needing ongoing supports
- Day activities that enable individuals to be active and integrated into the community
- Personal care attendants to assist in the home and around the community
- Transportation to and from our services
- Social organizations to encourage active



ArcGNO Social Enterprises

ArcGNO MARDI GRAS RECYCLE CENTER:

ArcGNO recycled 50 tons of throws for Mardi Gras 2019, funding over 80 jobs (9 year round). Since Mardi Gras 2019 ArcGNO has collected over 163 tons of throws to be recycled for Mardi Gras 2020. ArcGNO has also more than doubled the number of hours our participants are working from 5,000 in 2017 to 11,000 in 2019 - earning \$82,000 in wages last fiscal year.

ArcGNO JANITORIAL SERVICES:

ArcGNO employs 13 janitors, who clean offices and schools throughout the metro area

ArcGNO GROUNDSKEEPING:

ArcGNO employs 20 workers, who cut grass and clean public spaces throughout the city

ArcGNO also employs another 5 individuals to support administrative functions.



THROW INTAKE

2017 - 25 TONS

2018 - 60 TONS

2019 - 190 TONS

RECYCLED THROW SALES

2017 - \$ 181,000

2018 - \$241,000

2019 TO DATE - \$370,000

2019 PROJECTED \$400,000

ArcGNO Future Objectives

- Expansion of Mardi Gras Recycling Initiative
- Sustainable Throw Production & Assembly
- Throw "Give Back Float"
- Wings program at the new MSY
- Arc on the Parkway
- Center for Creativity and Wellness @ 5700 Loyola Ave

