

Creating a Green Community with Gaming

Back in November 2021, my partner Paul and I started playing a mobile app called *Pikmin Bloom*. In this game your objective is to plant flowers in your neighborhood while growing little plant-like creatures called *Pikmin*. It's essentially a gamified step tracker! One day while we were taking our usual route by the Wawa in Emmaus, we noticed an abundance of litter dispersed throughout the preserved wooded areas of the trail. That day we decided to bring our extra grocery bags along with a pair of gloves to pick up litter as we walked. After several weeks of doing this, we eventually noticed less and less new litter. I think people are less likely to litter when they don't see already existing garbage, so we really saw a tangible effect on the community and environment. We took a break from playing for a while up until recently, when we noticed again the accumulation of litter in the wildlife area. This time Paul and I wanted to be better prepared, not only for that area but to expand to different parts of Emmaus. There is an online community on Reddit called *DeTrashed* which shares the work of people cleaning the environment, ways you can get involved and tools and tips if you're just starting. Allentown is frequently featured on *DeTrashed*! This community of people on Reddit educated us to take safer and more effective measures to make our home of Emmaus a more beautiful and comfortable place to live! – Submitted By: Andrea Williams, aka Admin. Asst. of St. John's.

