

# City of Broken Records

They came from all over Dubai, a Persian Gulf city in the **United Arab Emirates**<sup>1</sup>. They were young and old, tall and skinny, short and squat. But all of them had one thing in common: They were all named Mohammed.

Between 1,500 and 2,000 Mohammeds gathered in Dubai in February [2005], hoping to break the world record for the largest gathering of people sharing the same name.

Once the Mohammeds broke the record, the city turned its sights on another world record: forming the largest human flag. More than 16,000 schoolchildren created a huge red, white, black, and green flag of the United Arab Emirates.

The city is also hoping to break records for the largest charity box and the biggest **mosaic**<sup>2</sup> made from drink cans.

A few years ago, officials decided to make their city famous by breaking world records—any world record. The stunt spread like wildfire. The city now holds a month-long record-breaking festival each year. Laura McTurk from Guinness World Records told *Weekly Reader Senior Edition* that the United Arab Emirates holds 33 world records. The people of Dubai have built the world's longest sofa (100 feet) and the largest incense burner (10 feet). "It's an awful lot of records for such a small place," said another official from Guinness.



Weekly Reader

<sup>1</sup> **United Arab Emirates:** a country in the Middle East, bordering the Persian Gulf

<sup>2</sup> **mosaic:** a picture or decoration made of tiny colored tiles, bits of glass or stone