



CLEAN OCEAN ADVOCATE

Defending the Sea Since 1984

November 2021

Office: (732) 872-0111

Photo Credit: Ryan Struck Photography, 3rd Annual COA Surf Open

WATER QUALITY

*Alison Jones, Watershed Program Coordinator; Swarna Muthukrishnan, Ph.D, Staff Scientist;
Catie Mitchell, Community Science Associate*

Scent-Trained Dog Sniffs out "Poo-llution" in the Toms River

Led by Clean Ocean Action (COA), a collaboration of environmental groups, municipal partners, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) officials, students, and a specialized "poo-llution" sniffing dog completed an extensive investigation of the Toms River watershed area. With Karen and Scott Reynolds of Environmental Canine Service (ECS), their dog Remi, a rescued lab-mix trained to identify human waste pollution, was the star of the week. The focus of the investigation was potential sources of human waste in the waterways and infrastructure in six municipalities along the Toms River.



Karen Reynolds (ECS) and Remi demonstrate their track-down techniques

The ECS field investigation was just one phase of "Rally for Barnegat Bay" (RBB) – a COA-led initiative to find and fix sources of sanitary sewage pollution in the Toms River subwatershed, with a no-blame game approach. Modeled after COA's Rally for the Navesink, RBB is a partnership between COA, Save Barnegat Bay (SBB), the Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science (MATES), and the six "river towns": Beachwood, Island Heights, Ocean Gate, Pine Beach, South Toms River, and Toms River. Results from the ECS field investigation will inform ongoing water quality monitoring, which will be conducted through a community science program based at SBB's EcoCenter in partnership with COA.

The project was made possible with the support from a NJDEP contract funded by a Nonpoint Source (NPS) Water Quality Restoration and Federal 319(h) grant awarded to address pathogen pollution in the Barnegat Bay Watershed.

2021 Summer's Troubled Waters

Weekly beach water quality reports based on NJDEP's Coastal Cooperative Monitoring Program were shared on COA social media platforms. During the 2021 season, there were 43 beach closures and 30 advisories issued. Problems plaguing the shore this summer included marine debris, menhaden fish die-offs, and storm events. COA continues to battle marine debris through our Beach Sweeps and policy initiatives. Menhaden fish die-offs were attributed to *Vibrio anguillarum* bacterial infections and were confirmed by the NJDEP. Storm water can carry pathogens into our waterways as well as "floatables," a general term for debris that washes-up on the shoreline. COA's Rally for the Waterways model offers a find-it, fix-it, no-blame approach to pathogen source track-down. This model is utilized across the state: Rally for the Two Rivers (Shrewsbury and Navesink), Rally for Barnegat Bay, and Rally for Deal Lake.



Fish die-offs plagued coastal waters this summer

Rally for the Two Rivers: Gardening for Wildlife (and Water Quality!)

At the Rally for the Two Rivers public meeting on September 30th, guest speaker Kristin Hock, Habitat Outreach Coordinator for NJ Audubon, presented on the Garden for Wildlife™ program. Attendees learned how to transform their outdoor spaces into an eligible Certified Wildlife Habitat to support wildlife – especially vulnerable species like pollinators and songbirds – by providing food, water, cover, and places to raise young, and by using sustainable practices. The program encourages homeowners to increase natural areas, reduce impervious surfaces, and implement green infrastructure, which benefits wildlife and water quality. Save the date for the next Rally for the Two Rivers meeting on November 18th at 7 pm via Zoom.



POLICY

Kari Martin, Advocacy Campaign Manager, Citizens@CleanOceanAction.org

The Offshore Wind Rush

A constant refrain has followed plans for offshore wind energy: 'It will be done responsibly to protect the ocean and the living marine resources.' This commitment is at the heart of Clean Ocean Action's lack of opposition to reasonable and responsible offshore wind. However, the current pace and scope of the rapid massive ocean industrialization is of grave concern.

NY/NJ Offshore Wind By the Numbers:
425,000 acres leased
800,000+ acres proposed to lease
1.28 million total acres lease/proposed
585 est. number of wind turbines from just 3 projects
8.7 miles to shore for closest project
920 feet: height of proposed wind turbine (15MW), nearly equal to the Eiffel Tower (984 ft)

With federal and state leaders planning "big" for offshore wind, the ocean off the Jersey Shore is now mapped with **over 1.2 million acres** committed or proposed – the size of the Grand Canyon National Park—with even more on the way. Marine scientists agree there are many unknowns about the impacts of offshore wind on resources and communities. States are scrambling to gather available data—which may be too little, too late. Short-term and long-term impacts, as well as cumulative impacts, are expected from the depths of the benthos to the sky. The ocean is the life-sustaining force of the planet. In fact, the ocean has been "taking one for the planet" for decades, buffering the impacts of climate change by absorbing heat and carbon, albeit, to its own demise. Now it is being asked to become the sacrificial ecosystem. To be serious about climate change, energy conservation and efficiency should be the first commitment with meaningful actions to eliminate energy waste. Aggressive solar energy policy must also be established. Combined, these would generate many more long-term jobs.

COA is advocating to protect ocean resources at work-group meetings, conferences, and webinars, and providing comments for pending projects including Orsted's (formerly Danish Oil and Natural Gas) Ocean Wind, Shell Oil and EDF Renewables' Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind, and Equinor's (formerly Statoil) Empire Wind projects. Many others are also participating, raising issues of privatizing the ocean with industrial development before ocean protection is assured. The Barrier Island Mayors Association submitted a strong letter citing concerns. Check out our social media and website for updates.

Legislative Actions to Reduce Plastic Pollution

This fall, the NJ Assembly will be considering the "Recycled Content" bill (S.2515/A.4676) which, if passed, will create a strong market for recycled plastic, reduce the use of virgin plastic and fossil fuels, and lower municipal recycling costs. The bill, championed by NJ Senator Bob Smith (D-17), establishes postconsumer recycled content requirements for rigid plastic containers, glass containers, paper and plastic carryout bags, and plastic trash bags. Also, the sale of polystyrene loose fill packaging (e.g., "packing peanuts") will be prohibited as well.

At the other end of the spectrum, the petrochemical industry is promoting the burning of plastic – what they are falsely labeling "chemical recycling" – as a solution to the plastic recycling crisis. This is an experimental, expensive, energy-intensive, and a highly polluting technology that is antithetical to reducing plastic and all its ills. Unfortunately, NJ Assemblymember John McKeon (D-27) introduced A.5803 which will let these dangerous plastic-burning facilities "off the hook" from the state solid waste and recycling laws.

You Can Help:

- ✓ Contact NJ Assemblymembers: support A.4676 & oppose A.5803.
- ✓ Urge your town to pass a resolution to support A.4676 and oppose A.5803.

HONORING BOB BENNEKAMPER

Cindy Zipf, Executive Director

"Passion, Effort, & Honesty"

The life and legacy of Bob Bennekamper was honored and celebrated on October 17 by his Clean Ocean Action family with his wife Pat and their wonderful shared families. The testimonials and presentations were filled with love, respect and admiration for Bob's courage, strength, and values. The event was held at the new COA Headquarters, and as Bob played a key role in helping to locate a new office, it was fitting that it was the first major public event held there.

COA President Tom Fagan expressed appreciation for Bob's 20+ years of service on the board which he shared with Pat. He spoke to Bob's commitment which helped to empower and grow COA. Tom read a Proclamation from Bob and Pat's hometown, Brick Township, which was facilitated by COA staff alum, Keith Rella who now works for the town. It highlighted Bob's many achievements, and resolved with making October 17, 2021, Bob Bennekamper Day.

Zach McCue, who worked at COA and built a close friendship with Bob, now works as Deputy State Director for US Senator Cory Booker. Zach shared a moving tribute to Bob and Pat, and presented Pat with a US Flag that had flown over the Capitol Building. The certificate read in part, "in honor of Bob Bennekamper...dedicated advocate for the protection of NJ's waterways and beaches."

Cindy Zipf, Executive Director, spoke of her personal gratitude, and highlighted how Bob and Pat are cherished by all at COA for their true-blue dedication, which included staffing action tables at countless events, collecting thousands of signatures to defend and protect the ocean.

In addition, the 10th Legislative District issued a State Joint Resolution from the Senate and Assembly honoring Bob's life, valor, and dedication, concluding that the legislature "pays tribute to his meritorious record of service, leadership, and commitment."



Pat Bennekamper enjoying Bob's bench with their grandson Bryan

At the conclusion of the event, on behalf of the Board and Staff, Tom unveiled a bench which was inscribed in Bob's honor with his "benchmarks" of commitment: "Passion, Effort & Honesty." Tom also shared the unlikely and remarkable journey of unity, brotherhood and sisterhood which came together to make the dedication possible. Bob would have loved it!



Due to the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, we are not having our Annual in-person Ocean Celebration event. Instead, we are gearing up for a big campaign for our End of the Year Appeal! We are hoping that you will direct your support to us for the End of the Year Appeal and in the new year, look forward to a fun event!

EDUCATION

Kristen Grazioso, Education Coordinator, KGrazioso@CleanOceanAction.org

Student Summits are Back!



Fall season and back-to school means Clean Ocean Action's Virtual Student Summits are back, as well! This year marked the 33rd year of COA's Fall Student Summit, and its second year successfully virtual! During the week of October 4-8, ten southern New Jersey middle schools participated in this virtual "day at the beach". This Virtual Fall Student Summit was better than ever, as we made improvements using feedback from previous summits, included COA's new "Shark Tooth Tales" educational video, and premiered a morning full of live virtual presentations featuring live animals thanks to the incredibly talented MATES students.

Southern New Jersey middle schoolers were not the only students last month to have an eco-exciting virtual field trip with COA... Staten Island students did, too! From 2017-2019 COA hosted a Staten Island Student Summit at Great Kills Park in conjunction with our friends from the Natural Resources Protective Association (NRPA). While we were unable to do so in 2020, COA launched our first ever *Virtual* Staten Island Student Summit during the week of October 18th, with over 200 participating middle school students!

Clean Ocean Action thanks our true blue Student Summit sponsors, Jon Ben Snow Foundation and Eloise & John Pound for making this program possible!

2021-2022 SEAL Kick-Off

COA welcomed new Student Ocean Advocates and Leaders (SEAL) in October, kicking-off the 2021-2022 Program at our Long Branch office and its neighboring beach, Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park. Through discussions about individual and shared environmental passions and interests, the students get to know one another at the orientation of this exciting leadership program. Stay tuned to follow the journeys of these inspiring and driven future leaders! Waves of thanks to Impact 100 Jersey Coast for making the SEAL program possible with generous funding and enthusiasm.

FUNDRAISING

Maggie Hanrahan, Marketing & Events Coordinator, MHanrahan@CleanOceanAction.org



Raising Spirits

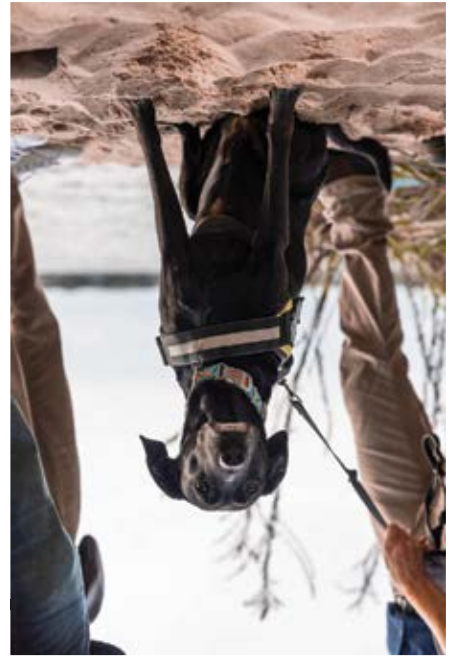
Waves of Thanks to Tito's Handmade Vodka for donating \$10,000 for COA through their Raising Spirits program with the help of local restaurants Tommy's Tavern and Tap, 2nd Jetty, Dominic's Tavern, Santucci's, and more! Each restaurant promoted a signature Tito's Handmade Vodka cocktail at their restaurant, and Tito's donated \$2 for each drink sold May-July! Thank you to the patrons who purchased a yummy Tito's drink to support Clean Ocean Action!



OceanFirst Bank Foundation

COA is honored to be awarded a grant from OceanFirst Foundation. With this grant, we can continue our efforts to improve the degraded water quality of the marine waters off the NY/NJ coasts. The funds will be used toward research, education, and action to protect the ocean. Waves of thanks to OceanFirst Foundation for the generous donation, and for participating in the Beach Sweeps!

Sniffing Out Pollution in the Toms River... See Inside!
Photo: Current Media Company



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Clean Ocean Action
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Follow COA on Social Media For Ocean Updates!

LABEL

CLEAN OCEAN ADVOCATE
November 2021

Tributes

IN MEMORY OF:

- Brian Adams
- Bob Bennekamper
- Dave Brightman
- Phil Brighton
- Peter Cauterucci
- Tim Costello
- Elaine and Douglass Denman
- Captain Jody Distasio
- Allan Fabian
- Katelin Fawkes
- Catherine Gonska
- Howard Kaplan
- Carol Anne Ross
- Molly Olivia Steinsapir
- Will Sverapa
- Edward Swikart, Jr.
- Margaret and Charles Todd
- Evelyn M. Vigna
- Irwin Vogel
- James Francis Wladich
- Jean Zipf-Borup

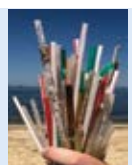
IN HONOR OF:

- Matthew Aromando
- Jade Barlow
- Zoe Capozza
- COA Staff
- COA's work to clean up the trash in Monmouth Beach
- Bruce Feiring
- Casey Forbes
- Lucy Kalian
- Valerie and Frank Montecalvo
- Marriage of Jackie Rodgers and Christopher Kelly
- Marriage of Avery Silciano and Cuffie Winkler
- Benjamin Silverman's Bar Mitvah
- Nick Song
- Carter Trebach's 1st Birthday
- Meg White
- Cindy Zipf

Photo courtesy of Mia Mutascio

New Law: Ask for a Straw! Your Beach Sweeps Data at Work

As of November 4, 2021, straws will only be available "upon request" to customers in NJ!
Help reduce plastic pollution by skipping the straw.





Preliminary results from Sandy Hook collected by 470 volunteers, including the top five items:

- (1) – 6,593 bottle caps/lids
- (2) – 6,488 food and candy wrappers/bags
- (3) – 5,791 plastic pieces
- (4) – 3,461 plastic straws/stirrers
- (5) – 1,421 foam pieces



Beach Sweeps Faces Along the NJ Coast!



Beach Captains and Volunteers in Monmouth Beach



Volunteers in Ventnor City



Four-legged Beach Sweepers at Ortley Beach



Lower Township High School students in Cape May



Colts Neck High School ROTC students



Volunteers at Ideal Beach, Middletown



Mantoloking Department of Public Works assisting at the Sweeps



Red Bank Regional High School students remove a tire from the beach



Girl Scouts in Spring Lake



Volunteers remove buckets full of trash at Riverfront Park, Point Pleasant



County Sponsor Target volunteers in Keansburg



Sea Bright Beach Captain Liz Lawrence & Jr. Beach Captains Sofia and Katie Barreiro

Over 4,000 Volunteers Remove Debris at the 36th Annual Fall Beach Sweeps



6-year-old Nate Thompson cleaning-up at the Leonardo site

Volunteers gathered on Saturday, October 23rd from 9:00am – 12:30pm at 70 New Jersey beaches and waterways to remove harmful debris at COA's 36th Annual Fall Beach Sweeps. Enthusiastic volunteers spent the day cleaning, collecting and tabulating debris that they removed from shorelines from Bergen to Cape May Counties. The data produced from this event will be publicized in an annual report that provides a deeper exploration into the pollution problems throughout the Jersey Shore. The 2021 Annual Beach Sweeps Report will be released in April 2022, prior to the 37th Annual Spring Beach Sweep. Visit CleanOceanAction.org to view past years' Annual Beach Sweeps Reports to learn more about nonpoint source pollution.



Beach Sweepers in action on Sandy Hook!

Beach Sweeps help reduce debris in waterways where it is harmful and even lethal to aquatic life. The data from the Beach Sweeps turns a

one-day event into a legacy of information to improve public awareness, change wasteful habits, enforce litter laws and improve policies to reduce sources of marine debris. Litter is a human caused, human solved issue.



Odd find: an abandoned swimsuit on Brighton Ave beach in Long Branch!

Throughout Beach Sweeps, volunteers are encouraged to note any out-of-the-ordinary finds. COA includes these finds in "The Roster of the Ridiculous." Some of the items in this Beach Sweeps included: a life jacket, doll head, Barbie shoes, test tube, printer ink, panty, religious plate, Legos, burnt straws, Christmas decorations, compressed car, ear plug, and a rabies vaccination dog tag from Eastchester, NY.



Students from Marine Academy of Science and Technology (MAST) volunteering at Sandy Hook



Some garbage from only one Beach Sweeps site in Keansburg!



Beach Sweepers work together to remove junk from the beach on Sandy Hook

Waves of Thanks to our Beach Sweeps Sponsors!

Statewide Sponsor:



County Sponsors:



Additional support provided by Enterprise Holdings Foundation

Site Sponsors:

- American Council of Engineering Companies of New Jersey
- Appalachian Mountain Club New York – North Jersey Chapter
- Atlantic City Electric
- Baine Contracting
- Cohen Water Initiative
- Jenkinson's Boardwalk and Aquarium
- Manasquan Bank
- OceanFirst Foundation
- Slalom
- Vantage Apparel
- 1st Constitution Bank

4th Annual COA Surf Open Unites Community

Surfers ranging from 6-year-old groms to pros turned-out to celebrate one of the ocean's greatest gifts – clean glassy waves – and support a clean ocean on Sunday, September 26, 2021, at Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park in Long Branch, NJ. Amid sunshine, light offshore winds and thrilling waves, over 100 surfers and 300 spectators enjoyed a great day! The COA Open raised over \$25,000 this year due to overwhelming support from sponsors, contestants, and supporters. Volunteers helped all day – from setup and breakdown to non-stop judging and heat rotation.

Some of the best surfers of all ages in NJ and NY awed spectators throughout the day, including Pros Paul Francisco, Mike Gleason, Pat Parenty, Jon Smyth, and Balaram Stack. Jon Smyth, 1st place winner in the Men's 18 & Up division for the second year, also donated his prize money to COA.



10-year-old Carter Doorley (photo above) won the Grom Boys 12 & Under division. His goal is to surf every day – the contest was day 490 of consecutive surfing days!



"Sunday, September 26, was a remarkable day! We were gifted with great waves, weather, and surfing at this year's COA Open, which importantly, raises awareness about protecting our most crucial natural resource, the ocean. Splashing fish joined the lineup with the sun shining brightly all day. The success of the event is due to the help of our committee members, volunteers, and sponsors who showed inspirational support of the local surf community, the event, and Clean Ocean Action. It is a testament to how special the ocean environment is and how we all need to work to protect it. We're already looking forward to next year," exclaimed Tyler Thompson, Volunteer Contest Director.

Throughout the day, surfers and spectators enjoyed great weather and waves while appreciating complimentary drinks from Coffee Surf Co., Ugly Seltzer, and Melonhead. Fanagel the Bagel and Jersey Mikes provided breakfast and lunch for the many volunteers who assisted with registration, judging, organization, and breakdown. Special thanks to the Rumson-Fair Haven High School Surf Team for loaning contest equipment and to the gifted photographers who shared their talents. (See COA's website for links to photos.)

Each contestant received a T-shirt donated and printed by TAK Waterman of Long Branch. Prizes were given to the top 5 winners in each of the nine divisions. The prizes were generously donated by Carvin' Art, Dakine, Farmacy+Co, Greenlines, Katin, JDR Home Repair, Low Tides, Nixon, Smith, The Traveling Mermaid, Vans, Volcom, and Volte Wetsuits.

COA is most grateful to the remarkable community-wide collaboration that made the event possible beginning with the outstanding committee who brought it all together: Tyler Thompson, Contest Director; Mike Gleason and Nick Spadavecchia of TAK Waterman Surf n Fish in Long Branch; Kyle Hopfensperger of 2nd Jetty Seafood in Sea Bright; Luke McCann of Absolute Home Mortgage Co; Rick Jones, Beach Techno Wizard; Joe Schluter; and the extended Thompson Family who have been dedicated to COA since 1984. Special thank you to Head Judge Tom Eadon and judges Tyler Adams, Max Berry, Anthony Giglio, Kelly Krystopowicz, Derf McTighe, Brian Parnagian, Brett Thompson, Mark Thompson, and Steve Walker.

The Monmouth County Freeholders and especially the Monmouth County Parks and Recreation Commission have COA's sincere and beachy gratitude for allowing the event to take place.



Mike Gleason (above), co-owner of TAK Waterman and a lead sponsor, competed in the Pro Division. Surf Photographer Robert Siliato also pictured above.

Waves of Thanks to COA Open 2021 Sponsors

Sponsor support is essential to the success of this event, producing the Surf Open and supporting COA's efforts to protect the ocean. Sincere thanks to all!

Double Overhead:



Overhead:



Ground Swell:

Coffee Surf Co., Melonhead, Messina & Mimnaugh Wealth Management Group, Offshore Coffee Roasters, Parnagian Architects, Salty Dog Watersports, Skytop Landscaping, Suneagles Golf Course, S. W. Decorators, and Wells Painting

Shore Break:

The Traveling Mermaid and Summa Love Surf Camp

2021 COA Open Surf Contest Division Winners

GROM GIRLS 12 AND UNDER:

- MARLEY FENDER-MAROTTA
- VIVIAN ANDERSON
- AMANDA FLAHERTY
- KEIRA SOLEAU
- PRESLIE FENDER-MAROTTA
- DYLAN KOZINN

GROM BOYS 12 AND UNDER:

- CARTER DOORLEY
- JAMES BROOKS
- KAI TAYLOR
- TIMMY MCCOOEY
- DASHIELL COUNTS
- KEVIN FLAHERTY

JR MEN 13-17:

- DECLAN FITZGERALD
- RYAN WIRIN
- NICOLAS GARDELLA
- CHASE JAY ROGERS
- SEAN DUNN
- BRAYDEN TAYLOR

JR WOMEN 13-17:

- AUDREY IGLAY
- CARLY COBLE
- SETON IGLAY
- SKYLAR O'KEEFE

MENS 18 AND UP:

- JON SMYTH
(Donated prize money to COA)
- PAT PARENTY
- JAKE KUIPERS
- GREG DEGERSDORFF

OPEN LONGBOARD:

- MIKE MELEGA
- SCOTT THOMPSON
- TOMMY GEORGE
- DREW MCCOY
- CHASE JAY ROGERS
- DANE CASEY

PRO:

- BALARAM STACK
(Donated prize money to COA)
- MIKE GLEASON
- PAUL FRANCISCO
- PAT PARENTY
- JON SMYTH

WOMEN 18 AND UP:

- ARIA DILIBERTO
- DANIELLE COTE

LEGENDS:

- RYAN FENDER
- JACK MURPHY
- SCOTT THOMPSON
- GARY FINNEGAN
- GERRY MATTHEWS



Pro finalist Paul Francisco (above) at the COA Open



Current Media Company



Robert Siliato Photography

Dylan Kozinn (above) competed in the Grom Girls 12 & Under Final

Competitor Scott Thompson (above) searching for one last wave under the moonlight during the Open Longboard Final. COA salutes Scott, aka The General, for his recent induction into the **NJ Surfing Hall of Fame**. A banner plane flew during the contest to celebrate this long-overdue recognition!