

PRESS RELEASE



*****For Immediate Release*****

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Contact:

Lindsay McNamara, Clean Ocean Action, Press Inquiries (908) 310-6729 (cell)

BATTERED BEACHES BENEFIT FROM BEACH SWEEPS

Thousands of Volunteers Helped Restore NJ Beaches and Waterways after Superstorm Sandy – Annual Spring Beach Sweeps – Saturday, April 27

Coastal New Jersey – Today, thousands of volunteers hit the beaches to participate in Clean Ocean Action's (COA) 28th Annual Spring Beach Sweeps at over 65 sites along the Jersey Shore. Volunteers removed and catalogued each piece of debris to document ongoing pollution issues, making Beach Sweeps the first tally of debris since Superstorm Sandy. Robust crowds were reported up and down the coast.

This year, Beach Sweeps has been folded into Clean Ocean Action's *Wave of Action For The Shore* program, a monthly volunteer initiative started in December 2012 to help the people, businesses, habitats and waterways of New York and New Jersey affected by Superstorm Sandy. Beach Sweeps will be the first *Wave of Action* where data will be collected, a vital addition which will help inform citizens and elected officials of pollution problems after Superstorm Sandy.

"This is the first event where we will be collecting data from clean-up activities since Superstorm Sandy," said **Clean Ocean Action Executive Director Cindy Zipf**. "The outpouring of support from citizens has been inspiring, and we are looking forward to a great day," she added.

The data collected today will be combined with data collected at the Fall Beach Sweep in October, and then analyzed and presented in an annual report. These annual reports identify pollution problems, educate citizens on the types and quantities of debris, aid legislators in passing and enforcing laws to protect the marine environment, and contribute to local and international efforts to combat marine pollution. Clean Ocean Action released the 2012 Annual Beach Sweep Report last week (available at www.cleanoceanaction.org).

“Clean Ocean Action is excited to integrate the 28th Annual Spring Beach Sweeps as part of the Waves of Action, a year-long initiative to recover and restore the NY/NJ coastline after the devastation of Sandy,” commented **Tavia Danch, Clean Ocean Action Program Manager**. “Sandy hit the Jersey Shore hard and littered our beaches with a huge amount of debris,” added Danch.

Key to the program’s success are the Beach Captains that lead each of the Beach Sweeps locations. These dedicated volunteers manage the activities.

“Thank you to everyone who generously volunteers their time to the COA Beach Sweeps. Without your participation this event would not be such a success. This year, as a result of the devastation of Storm Sandy, your participation is needed more than ever,” said **Asbury Park North Beach Captain Ann Abbate**.

“More now than ever we need your support and sense of pride in your beach community,” explained **Franz Adler Margate Beach Captain**. “We know Sandy knocked us down, but the true measure is how well we get back up,” he added.

“Thanks to Clean Ocean Action and all the many volunteers that care enough and come out to make a difference. I hope one day there will be no need for Beach Sweeps because our oceans and beaches will be clean,” remarked **Middle School Student and Union Beach Captain Peter Donnelly**. “Until then you will find me cleaning our oceans and streams every chance I get,” he said.

The Spring Beach Sweeps were made possible by support from generous sponsors. The **Statewide Sponsors** for the 2013 Beach Sweeps are Atlantic City Electric, Aveda, BD, Brook 35 & West, Comcast, Montecalvo Material Recovery Facility, Wakefern/ShopRite, South Jersey Industries, TD Bank (South Jersey and Monmouth County Sponsor) The Grove at Shrewsbury and United Teletech Financial.

The **Site Sponsors** for the 2013 Beach Sweeps are Adventure Aquarium, Brookdale Community College, Enterprise Rent A Car, New Jersey Natural Gas, Paul V. Fernicola & Associates, Rotary Club International District 7510, Surfrider Foundation, Jersey Shore Chapter and Surfrider Foundation, South Jersey Chapter.

Spring 2013 Beach Sweeps Highlights and Unusual Items Found:

- **Raritan Bay Waterfront Park** (South Amboy) – Volunteers found an **unexploded ordnance**! The county police and state police bomb squad response unit arrived on the scene.
- **Seaside Park** – Beach Sweepers found stuffed animals from the boardwalk, debris from the log flume ride, a sea horse, jawbone of a fish, toy saxophone and a piece of coal. A coal barge was sunk off Seaside Park in 1903 and Superstorm Sandy has moved the barge around a bit and

loosened the coal. **The Beach Captain at Seaside Park, John Peterson was given a Community Builder Award by Mayor Matthies for his involvement in Beach Sweeps for over 13 years.**

- **Atlantic Highlands** – A record number of volunteers at Atlantic Highlands filled over 3 dumpsters full of debris. The dumpsters were generously brought by Matt and Rich of **J.H. Reid Construction** based in South Plainfield, NJ. The Harbor Master, John was also a huge help.
- **Sandy Hook** – Over 720 volunteers found a backpack full of personal belongings and enough lumber and debris to over fill the dumpster! **Senator Frank Pallone** spoke on site as well.
- **Atlantic City** – **Senator Jim Whelan** joined volunteers and **Atlantic City Electric President Vince Maione**.
- **Belmar 1st Avenue** – Over 150 Beach Sweepers found tiles from the old public restrooms of the Belmar boardwalk.
- **Keansburg** – 125+ volunteers found a lot of medical waste.
- **Pt. Pleasant Beach, Maryland Avenue** – Over 50 volunteers found a 55 gallon plastic drum syringe, cans, bottles, roofing and some dog poop!
- **Wildwood, Poplar Avenue** – 70+ Beach Sweepers found a hard drive, fake flowers, a boogie board and a welcome mat.
- **Union Beach** – Over 100 volunteers found a garden gnome and enjoyed an after party organized by **Barefoot Wine**. Another after party was held down in North Wildwood.
- **Sea Bright** – A record number of volunteers came into Sea Bright today, so many that COA staff had to deliver more supplies!

To learn more about the Beach Sweeps and Clean Ocean Action, call 732-872-0111 or visit www.cleanoceanaction.org

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