

INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

More than 200 volunteers participated in the International Coastal Cleanup

Saturday, September 21, was the area's most significant recorded participation in International Coastal Cleanup!

Fernandina Beach, Florida, October 1, 2024: Keep Nassau Beautiful would like to thank Surfing's Evolution & Preservation Foundation, Ocean Conservancy, and V Pizza of Fernandina Beach for making the local International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) possible. In its 39th year, ICC engages and inspires people around the world to remove trash from the world's beaches and waterways.

This year's local cleanup, held on Saturday, Sept. 21, engaged more than 200 volunteers. The event was organized by Keep Nassau Beautiful with organizations including A1A Towing, Amelia Island Beach Ambassadors, City of Fernandina Beach, Conserve Nassau, Creation Care at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Eight Flags Jeep Club, Girl Scout Troop #269 & #502, Pack #583 - Wolf Den, Paddle Jax Amelia, and Rotary Club of Amelia Island Sunshine. Site captains were stationed at North Beach, Main Beach, Seaside/Sadler, Peter's Point, Dee Dee Bartels, Fernandina Beach Welcome Center, Creekside Drive, Wade's Place under the Shave Bridge, and a paddle on Lofton Creek launching from Bill Melton Boat Ramp.

Nassau County residents and visitors donned gloves, trash grabbers and reusable bags provided by Mocama Beer Company and White Oak Conservation to spend their Saturday morning helping remove improperly discarded litter and debris. During ICC, volunteers work in teams to record the type and quantity of litter collected. The results are shared with the Ocean Conservancy through their free app, Clean Swell. Volunteer tracking has enabled the Ocean Conservancy to build the world's largest database on marine debris, totaling nearly 400 million items. Data collected from ICC events have informed science and policy. In 2022 and 2023 alone, over 50 peer-reviewed scientific papers and published book chapters cited ICC data. The data collected will be used to support policies that tackle single-use plastics.

"There was a lot of litter collected during today's event, but there were many places we did not reach. Through KNB events and programs, we hope to impact behavior so that each of us will commit to picking up one piece of litter or reducing the use of one single-use plastic item daily. Every action makes a difference," said Josh Baker, KNB Board Chair.

Locally, 60 bags of litter were collected, at a weight of more than 1,200 lbs. The City of Fernandina Beach and Nassau County Public Works departments provided disposal of the collected litter.

Globally, the most collected items include cigarette butts, plastic beverage bottles, and bottle caps. Locally the top three items followed the same trend with the collection of more than 1,900 cigarette butts, 291 plastic beverage bottles and 285 bottle caps. Volunteers also collected large quantities of straws and food wrappers. The volunteer effort kept litter out of our ocean and from harming our natural environment and the wildlife that call it home.

To learn more about how you can get involved, visit Keep Nassau Beautiful's website at <https://keepnassaubeautiful.org/> or the website of any of the participating organizations.

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Keep Nassau Beautiful, Inc. is working to inspire, educate, and equip individuals, groups, businesses and governments to take action to make Nassau County a place where residents, visitors and wildlife can thrive and experience the beauty of Nassau County. Get Involved: www.keepnassaubeautiful.org



Members from Eight Flags Jeep Club during a clean up along Wade's Place and the Shave Bridge.



Members from Conserve Nassau under Shave Bridge removing litter during International Coastal Cleanup.



Members from Creation Care at St.Peter Episcopal Church tallying results from trash removal at the beach.