

Martin County · St. Lucie County



Where the Stars Come Out Every Monday · August 27, 2012

# Luminaries



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FLORIDA'S TREASURE COAST AND PALM BEACHES





Rhonda Irons and Gary Braswell

Cover photos by Thomas Winter Photography. (Top) Rhonda Irons, KMB president; Gary Braswell, Waste Management; Travis Waddell, Freedom Waste; Dale Martinez, Seacoast National Bank; Christine Nisa Mulrooney, NisAir; John Whitticar, Whitticar Boat Works; Gary Jones, CAPTEC Engineering; Diane Spriggs, CAPTEC Engineering; Alex Trovato, The MilCor Group; Jessica Layne, The Firefly Group; (bottom) Jonathan Curtner; Jake Engel; Jeb Harlan; Jane Mills, Rotary Club; Liam Zaccheo; Tori Trovato and Tia Trovato.

# Cover Story

## By land or by sea, be a part of 2012 ICC!

It starts innocently enough – a water bottle that gets left behind on the beach, a plastic bag that blows away from the family picnic table. But for each of these incidents, there is a consequence -- a sea turtle that becomes entangled in our litter, a child digging to build a sand castle and instead uncovering dirty cigarette butts.

We don't have to accept litter and marine debris as a way of life. Everyone can help protect the coast by removing litter from our local beaches, shores and waterways during Keep Martin Beautiful's (KMB) 17th Annual International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) on Sept. 15.

From 8 a.m.-noon, volunteers of all ages will cover the county, tackling litter and debris along all the waterways in our communities. Last year in Martin County, more than 2,100 volunteers - in partnership with dozens of sponsors and other supporters - made the local cleanup a success. Families, businesses, civic and school groups dedicated more than 3,000 hours collecting more than 24,000 pounds of litter and marine debris.

For 27 years, more than 300,000 volunteers from more than 90 nations come together to mitigate the effects of litter and marine debris by participating in the International Coastal Cleanup sponsored by the Ocean Conservancy.

"This cleanup is unique from our other annual programs in that each piece of litter that is collected is recorded and reported to the Ocean Conservancy," explained KMB logistics coordinator Rob Ranieri. "The Ocean Conservancy analyzes the information and uses it to track trends in litter, and create new solutions and educational outreach strategies for the global debris problem."

Cigarettes continue to be the number one source of litter in Martin County.

"There seems to be a misconception that cigarette butts are biodegradable. Some of the same people who would walk the distance to recycle a soda can, won't think twice about throwing a cigarette filter in the sand," Ranieri said.

KMB recently worked with Martin County and the Parks & Recreation Board to develop a new program, similar to its current Adopt-A-Road program, to combat future littering on beaches.

"We're hoping to see a downward trend with this new program in place, and are excited to launch the Adopt-A-Beach program this fall. With the help of families, businesses and civic groups cleaning our shorelines, we should continue to improve the quality of our beaches."

To pre-register for the 2012 cleanup, contact KMB at [info@keepmartinbeautiful.org](mailto:info@keepmartinbeautiful.org) or (772) 781-1222. Volunteers who do not pre-register should join KMB at Stuart Beach on the morning of the cleanup to participate. Immediately following the cleanup, KMB hosts a celebration event at Flagler Park to honor the volunteers, sponsors and community supporters with food and family fun for everyone.

Event sponsors include Florida Inland Navigation District, Martin County Solid Waste Division, AT&T, Waste Management, The Firefly Group, Seacoast National Bank, City of Stuart, King Ranch, Wallace Automotive Group, FPL, Harmony Martin County, Sailor's Return, Continental Shelf Associates, Waste Pro, NisAir Air Conditioning, The Garden Club of Stuart, Forest Hills Funeral Home, Whitticar Boat Works, The MilCor Group and CAPTEC Engineering.

For information about KMB visit [www.keepmartinbeautiful.org](http://www.keepmartinbeautiful.org). Follow KMB on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/KMBmartin](http://www.twitter.com/KMBmartin) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/KeepMartinBeautiful](http://www.facebook.com/KeepMartinBeautiful).

Keep Martin Beautiful is a non-profit organization dedicated to litter prevention, waste reduction, community beautification and neighborhood revitalization.

Submitted by Jessica Layne of The Firefly Group on behalf of Keep Martin Beautiful



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