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Surfrider Foundation, town supporters tidy beach in support of 'coastal management'

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The sun shone, the ocean roared and on a breezy Sunday afternoon, dozens of beach enthusiasts turned out to give the shore line a spring cleaning.

The event, sponsored by the Surfrider Foundation's Palm Beach County chapter, in cooperation with the Palm Beach Public Works Department, was an opportunity to bring the town and the environmental group together for a common purpose.

Outfitted in a sweater, sunglasses, gloves and work shoes, Town Councilman Bill Diamond toted a black plastic bag to help pick up trash. "We must forge good relationships with the environmental community. ... Without them, beach renourishment is not possible," he said.

According to Greg Lyon, chairman of Surfrider's Palm Beach Chapter, "We're here to show that we're working in tandem with the town to optimize coastal management practices."

Many participants noted that the beach was relatively clean. "I'm a beach guy from way back," said Doug Buck. "It's an amazingly clean beach."

Still, the participants netted several bags of trash. Items found included lollipop sticks, bottles and the heel of a tennis shoe.

"It's more [trash] than I expected," said Robert Weber, coastal coordinator for the Town of Palm Beach. While the surface of the beach nearest to the ocean does get a good raking, it doesn't get everything.

"This is a chance to go up and clean the dune," Weber said.

Making the trip from St. Edward Catholic Church, the cleanup made for a family outing for Sylvia Rice-Mesaric and her husband and children.

"It's a nice family thing. We come to the beach as a family, and we should keep it clean," Rice-



Melanie Bell

[\(enlarge photo\)](#)

Sylvia Rice-Mesaric helps her son Stefan Mesaric, 9, with their trash bag as the breeze tries to blow it away during the beach cleanup Sunday afternoon. 'We come to the beach as a family, and we should keep it clean,' said Rice-Mesaric.

Mesaric said. "Any little bit we can do helps, and if everybody did a little bit it makes a big difference."

Rice-Mesaric's daughter, Ivana, 14, agreed: "Nobody likes to go to a beach with garbage on it." A student at Bak Middle School of the Arts, she found, among other things, a dime.

A short walk away from Clark Beach to Midtown Beach netted quite a bit of trash for Town Councilwoman Gail Coniglio. She found cigarette butts, bottles and bits of plastic.


Coniglio applauded the Surfriders for their efforts on beach issues. "Surfriders are doing a good job. They care about the long-term viability of the beach."

Todd Rimmel, Surfrider chapter vice-chairman, hopes that this initial outing will not be the last. "We're looking to continue the momentum with the town and continue to preserve our oceans, waves and beaches for the enjoyment of others."

Steve Weinstein, of Palm Beach, noted his motivation to keep the beach clean. "I'd like to see the beach as pristine as possible. It's the only real natural resource we have."

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