

How often have you walked on the beach and thought that our beaches are clean? I often walk on the beach, and that is what I always thought, until I took a closer look at what is actually on our beaches. It is truly shocking if you start looking around. All the rules and regulations now make sense to me, and yet people still ignore them.

As a member of the Four Wheel Drive Club of Southern Africa (FWDCSA) , I decided to take on the responsibility to organise a beach clean-up.

I contacted John Kieser, who is a specialist in this field. He has an absolute passion for his work, and has dedicated his life to combating debris on our coastline and beaches worldwide. He was in Port Elizabeth recently, and agreed to give us a presentation about the debris on our coast, and share his experiences with us.

From the onset of organising this event, I received a very good response from the Metro and received all the support I needed to start organising a Beach Clean-up.

After sending the news to the members of the FWDCSA, that volunteers were needed to help with this campaign to clean the beach between Maitlands and Van Stadens, the response received from the members exceeded all expectations, I could hardly believe how eager everyone was to lend a helping hand in support this worthy cause towards a cleaner environment. Only 15 vehicles were allowed on the beach, with about 50 volunteers.

The very cold morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> of June did not dampen the spirits of the volunteers. Everyone met at the Maitlands parking shortly after 8am. After drivers briefing, all volunteers were given a list of do's and don'ts by the officials.

After letting down tyre pressures all the vehicles proceeded on to the beach. The kids as well as the adults had so much fun. We tried to see who could pick up the funniest and the biggest item. The biggest item was a 3 metre rope with a diameter of 110mm, and also a few truck tyres. The funniest item was a pair of long pyjama pants. It was amazing to see how many people leave their shoes behind on the beach, not to mention all the glass bottles.

We also discovered a huge amount of glow in the dark sticks, and hundreds of small pieces of nylon rope that are used by the chokka industry.

It took us almost the whole day to complete the distance between Maitlands and Van Stadens, and collected almost 4 tons of rubbish.

We all felt proud to have taken part in such a worthy and important campaign.

Thank you to the FWDCSA for a job well done.