

JAPMOTION **TOYOTA** OWNERS CLUB



Dillon Canem talks to the members of Japmotion – a car owners club and discovers that Motorcar Clubs and Crews are everything but road thugs and illegal street racers.

When thinking of Motorcar Clubs and Crews one tends to think of illegal street racing, illegal and irresponsible road usage and un-roadworthy cars. When meeting the members of Japmotion Toyota Owners Club, however, these pre-conceived ideas are immediately negated. These young men between the ages of 26 – 39 [most with young families], take pride in their vehicles and spend thousands of rands to modify [sometimes re-build completely] and maintain their cars with care. Members come from different parts of Cape Town like Bonteheuwel, Goodwood, Elsies River, Mitchell's Plain, Athlone, Belhar and as far as Malmesbury.

Japmotion has more than 25 members, all proudly Toyota car owners (different models). The club was established in 2010, and the members fondly refer to this brotherhood as their second family. Since the members involve their wives/partners [and even young children] in the activities of the club, Japmotion has indeed become one happy big family.

Membership of Japmotion is subject to strict criteria, which include the road-worthiness of the car, compliance to traffic legislature, presentability of the car, adherence to the Rules and Regulations of the Club as well as any future plans for further modification of the car. This includes adding accessories like rims, lowering kit, interior of your car and paintjobs.

Perks of the Brotherhood

One of the perks that come with membership of Japmotion is the sharing of resources and networks among the members. This comes in quite handy since maintenance of a modified car is quite expensive, e.g. Godfrey has only spent about R3000 to have the interior of his car redone, while it would have cost much more was he not referred by one of his fellow members; or Wesley who was helped by Anthony, another member, to rebuild his engine for far less than the R50 000 it would have cost him. This demonstrates the lack of rivalry amongst members and them taking pride in each other's achievements by helping.

This brotherhood, sense of belonging and camaraderie Japmotion is known and loved for, is however, only part of it. These guys use their passion for their cars to encourage the youth in their local communities to dream big and strive towards a better life.

About four years back, they've collaborated with other community members to make the matric ball something truly special for an underprivileged matric learner in their community. The members of Japmotion offered their time and cars in all its splendour, to escort this learner and her partner to her matric ball in convoy, free of charge. This gesture has become so popular amongst matriculants in their communities, that 'the matric convoy' has already been booked for a couple of Matric balls later this year.

Community Involvement

place recently when they held a charity run collecting clothes and other necessities for the Heatherdale Children's Home in Athlone. Instead of just dropping their collections off, the members of Japmotion [with their partners and kids] actually spent some quality time with the residents of Heatherdale Children's Home. This visit has inspired the club to adopt this place of safety as their charity of choice and they intend to become much more involved in trying to provide in the needs of Heatherdale Children's Home. They're already planning their next visit to the Home to do some painting there.

This was mostly inspired by the fact that most of Japmotion's members grew up in these areas and can hence relate to the struggles and needs of Heatherdale Children's Home. It also resonates with the aim of their club - to give back to, and being agents of change in their community by motivating the kids and act as role models of what is possible when having goals in life.

The next community project of Japmotion is a fundraising event they're planning for early October. A traditional 'show and shine' is planned to raise much needed funds for Bergsig Primary in Bonteheuwel. They're planning a fun-filled day with lots to eat, drink, and enjoy at the school where car clubs from all over Cape Town will display their cars as individuals and groups and are judged in different criteria. Children from the school will partake in modelling shows and local artists will provide entertainment. They hope to get the wider community of Bonteheuwel involved in this event.

Slowly but surely Japmotion is breaking down all stereotypical notions of Car Clubs. By being agents of change, these young men and their families are making a difference in the gang-ridden communities they live, simply by using their hobbies and their passion for their cars as a tool of inspiration for the youth in those communities they grew up in themselves and call home.

