

The Skimmer

Summer 2012

Changes on the Island

As the tides change on Jekyll Island, so do some other things. When you journey down to Jekyll Island this year you will notice a few of these changes once you are on the causeway. Right now there is construction going on near the visitor center. This is where the toll booth to get onto the island will be moved to and will be an automated system when paying the entrance fee(s).

The biggest change, however, is the newly opened convention center. After six years of planning and 18 months of construction, it opened in May and has already been in use providing a unique venue for meetings, conferences and graduations. The Jekyll Island Convention Center is the only oceanfront convention center on the east coast south of New Jersey. It will be one of the first things you notice as you make your way to the 4-H Center.



Save the Date! Open Season!

Registration:

- ☛ The books for fall 2013 and spring 2014 will open **AUGUST 28th at 9:00am.**

Prices:

- ☛ The cost of the Mon.-Wed. or Wed.-Fri. program will be \$108.00/per person.

Availability

- ☛ There are still dates available for next year. Please call to schedule a date soon.



From Donna's Desk

It is hard to believe that spring is rushing into summer and another environmental education season comes to a close. Jekyll 4-H had another great year, lots of students and some much needed improvements. We have new roofs and windows on the dorms, a new well and grease trap for the kitchen. Grease traps did not excite me either as program coordinator but as center director they make me happy. A grease trap catches the grease before it enters the waste water treatment plant causing clogs and very unhappy waste water treatment people.

In January, Larry Weldin, who headed up our maintenance department, left to travel and enjoy retirement. Michael Thrower now attempts to keep everything running smoothly. Michael and James recently completed installing a new irrigation system that should allow us to have a little landscaping around the property. The entire staff had joined in fixing up the parking lot area in a project referred to as "Operation Woodchip". The changes are small but rewarding and much needed.

Contracts have been sent for the 2012/2013 season. It is so satisfying to see the same schools year after year. We appreciate their trust in our program and willingness to provide this experience for their students yearly. Next year we have 85 public schools, 41 private schools and 4 home schools on the books. One of my favorite things about our program is the wide variety of students we serve. There is still room to join us next year so please call to make a reservation. **The books for 2013/2014 will open on August 28, 2012 at 9:00am. Phone calls only please.** There has been a price increase for the next school year. The cost of the traditional lunch to lunch program on Mon. – Wed. or Wed. to Fri. will be \$108.00 per person.

As summer approaches we are hiring staff for next fall and getting ready for summer camp. Jekyll 4-H seldom rests. We are anticipating some kitchen upgrades this August which will improve our food service area. Enjoy your summer and please come see us at the beach. A final quote from a 5th grade student that I heard as he ran past my window, "School should be like this, not stuck inside at a desk".

Register Today!

Jekyll offers several classes, but if we can tailor something for your students please inquire when you start your class selection. Call us at (912) 635-4117 if we can help you plan a Jekyll 4-H field study. We can assist you in picking the right classes for your students. See you on the beach!

History on Jekyll Island

Many schools visit Jekyll Island to participate in field studies in environmental science, but it is also a great place to learn about history. In the early 1900s about one fifth of America's wealth could be found vacationing on the island. Families such as the Rockefellers, Macys, Goodyears and Pulitzers made their home in what is now the historic district for a few months out of the year. The Jekyll Island Club Hotel and the millionaires' cottages can be seen in the historic district. There are also villas and other buildings that were once part of the millionaires' village, some of which are now converted into shops. Jekyll Island is also the birthplace of the Federal Reserve and the first transcontinental phone call was made from the island. Guided tours of the historical district can be booked or teachers can lead independently lead their students through the area.

St. Andrew's picnic area, which is within walking distance from the 4-H center, is another historical area of Jekyll Island. After studying beach ecology, students will have an understanding of how deposition affects this southern end of Jekyll, but St. Andrew's also happens to be the site of the last slave ship, *The Wanderer*, to arrive in the United States. In addition to being the landing site of *The Wanderer*, St. Andrew's was where the U.S. had artillery batteries during the Spanish-American War. Remnants of the batteries can still be found tucked inside the woods.

Some of the plants on Jekyll even have history attached to them. Live Oaks were once used for shipbuilding, especially after the War of 1812 as news spread that British cannonballs simply bounced off the sides of the U.S.S. Constitution. During the colonization and exploration of Georgia, Spanish conquistadors found themselves without many friends. The native people of this area used Spanish Moss to mock the big beards of the conquistadors while the Yucca was referred to as Spanish bayonet by the English in order to taunt them, as the plant was used to line British forts such as Fort Frederica. The Yaupon Holly and Hercules Club were once used by native people and can be seen around the island. The Yaupon Holly was made into a tea and used a purgative in religious ceremonies while the Hercules Club was used for tooth and mouth pain.

The Jekyll Island 4-H Center itself is rich in history. Originally built by African-American business owners in 1956, it was known as The Dolphin Club and Motor Hotel. It remained in operation for a decade and in that time was a popular spot for concerts. Some of the musicians who played here included Otis Redding and B.B. King among others. The Jekyll Island Authority took over the property when it closed in 1966 and was used for events such as family reunions. In 1983 the facilities began being used for 4-H summer camps. Since 1987 the facilities have been used as a 4-H environmental education center.

When coming to Jekyll Island, visiting groups can enhance their experience and learn not only about the natural side of the island, but the history of it as well.



Please help us welcome our New Staff!!!

Meet Beth Walker!

We would like to welcome Beth Walker to our Jekyll 4-H/Tidelands staff. Beth has taken on the role of caring for exhibits, working with the public, teaching, leading kayak tours, etc. here at our 4-H Tidelands Nature Center. Beth and husband Evan moved to Glynn County from Michigan. While in Michigan, Beth worked toward her Master of Science degree and served as an adjunct biology instructor at Grand Valley State University. She also taught biology at Muskegon Community College. Beth attended undergrad in her home state of Mississippi, obtaining a BS in Wildlife and Fisheries (with a specialization in Conservation Law Enforcement). Beth will be wrapping up her Master of Science in Biology (specializing in stream ecology), sometime this fall. She is excited about sharing her talents here along the Georgia coast, and living just a little closer to home.



Meet Michael Thrower!



We would also like to welcome Michael Thrower to our Jekyll 4-H/Tidelands staff. Michael is in charge of maintenance and housekeeping services and will often be seen shoulder to shoulder getting his hands dirty keeping the center running smoothly. Michael has lived in Glynn County all his life of 46 years. He and his wife Dawn have been married for 14 years and have two sons, Brandon and Chris, a daughter-in-law Brittany, and granddaughter Rosaline. Michael graduated from Georgia Southern University with BBA in 1991. Please help us welcome Michael to Jekyll 4-H!

Students show appreciation for for Jekyll experience!



Throughout the season students have expressed their appreciation for their learning experiences on Jekyll. These are just a few examples of pictures and notes that our instructors have received. Whether it is holding a snake, seeing the beach for the first time, walking through a maritime forest, catching a fish in the ocean or learning more about sharks or sea turtles, students will find something that amazes them and will remember for a lifetime. Letting us know how much you like our program makes us enjoy what we do that much more!

Meet the 2011-2012 EE Staff



We have an incredible group of educators from all over the country on staff this season, some from as far away as the west coast while some of us were born and raised in Georgia. I am very grateful to have had the pleasure working with and learning from each and every one of these talented and passionate educators. Pictured from bottom left are Richard Chewning (Georgia), Brittney Austin (Massachusetts), Susan Delfs (Iowa), Tess Couch (Washington), Melissa Jameson (Georgia), and Kate Goodwin (Tennessee). From the top left are Shannon Wilson (Louisiana), Andy Thompson (Georgia), Shawn Garver (Ohio), Kaila Thorne (Florida), Jess Loveless (New York), Donna Stewart (West Virginia), Amber Saville-Andre (Pennsylvania), and Christa Thomas (Georgia). Though not pictured here, Kevin Terrell worked with us during the spring and was a fantastic addition to our staff.

“I Want My Kid to do That”
Or
“How to Plan a Homeschool Field Study to Jekyll 4-H”
Donna Stewart

The number of homeschool parents that contact me regarding programs offered at Jekyll 4-H Center increases yearly. Parents want their children to have the same great learning experience so many other students enjoy. The 4-H Center welcomes homeschool groups and this article will explain how to make the most of a field study to Jekyll 4-H.

The Jekyll Island 4-H Center serves about 11,000 students yearly. We offer programs from grades one through college. We have provided programming for many homeschools as well as all types of public and private schools. We fill up early, esp. for late spring and early fall but our season runs from mid. Sept through late May with a short break around Christmas. We have many groups that only want January dates and personally I prefer the colder weather for teaching. Our Center can house 230 people so there will be other schools on site. Your group will have their own rooms and teaching groups.

We treat homeschool groups like any other school group. Once you are on the books we will send a contract. Within 2 weeks of receiving a contract we ask for a \$250. non-refundable deposit. You will be contacted several weeks before you visit to finalize numbers and put your schedule together. Here are some important points to help you plan your study:

- ❁ The Jekyll Center must have ten people (adults and students) to make a teaching group, or the group must pay for ten participants. All people attending pay for programs, meals and lodging.
- ❁ As the lead teacher we recommend getting a deposit from the other families early. Homeschools often drop numbers and there is a penalty fee if numbers drop too much. We appreciate one check from the group, not separate checks from each family. We do not accept credit cards.
- ❁ As lead teacher you will plan the classes. We aim for 14 people in a group but if you bring 18 or so folks we can have a younger and older group. They do not have to take the same classes. You may bring up to 230 folks but most homeschools are much smaller.
- ❁ We do not encourage children under five years old attending. We are outside all day and have evening activities so it makes a long day for real young children.
- ❁ Our rooms consist of three sets of bunk beds and in some rooms another single bed. The rooms have an a/c and heating unit and their own bathroom. We do need to have rooms filled and we will provide you with enough rooms for your males and females to have separate rooms. If you wish to put families in a room that is fine as long as rooms are filled.
- ❁ Please check out the website to see a sample schedule. You may elect to miss the first lunch or last lunch as a group and there will be a reduction of price. We assume all other meals will be eaten by the entire group. We cannot subtract a meal for just a few people.

In speaking with many other successful homeschool participants the hardest part is getting the group together right in the beginning. If you are doing the planning try to get a commitment and deposit early. Arrange to car pool or at least have a firm arrival time so meals and classes go as planned.

Okay, it sounds like a lot of work but it is well worth it when you see your family learn and enjoy all the experiences that Jekyll has to offer. The students love riding our mini-buses and eating in the cafeteria. You will love watching learning come alive in our outdoor classroom. Please call Donna or Richard at 912-635-4117 to plan your study.

Sea Turtle Survival Game

This is an activity that illustrates the challenges sea turtles face from the time they are eggs in a nest to the time they are adults.

Materials needed:

-Cards marked with the following letters: A, R, H, W, E, X, U, G, D, C, S, L, F, M, N, P, K, B, O, T, Q, & V

*The number of cards can be adjusted for your class/group size, but there should be much fewer cards labeled with B, O, T, Q & V.

-Sea Turtle Survival Game outline/chart found on the next page

Procedure:

1. Pass out cards to students, one for each in the class. Save the card(s) marked with a Q or V for one or two students.
2. Have everyone start by standing up and tell them they are turtles in a nest about to hatch.
3. Use the chart/outline below and begin calling out letters starting with life in the nest. If students have the letter you called out, they sit down. These turtles, unfortunately, did not survive.
4. Go through all stages until the one(s) with the Q and/or V cards are left. This turtle made it and nested successfully!
5. Summarize by reviewing the obstacles sea turtles have to overcome in order to survive and make it to the stage to be able to nest and how these real life scenarios relate to these marine animals being endangered. You may also want to discuss with students what we can do to help out sea turtles.

Sea turtle facts to supplement the activity:

- It can take up to 30 years for a sea turtle to mature and be able to reproduce
- Only about 1 or 2 sea turtle hatchlings out of 4,000 will actually make it to maturity
- Green sea turtles get their name because green is the color of its meat when cooked
- Hawksbill shells were used to make jewelry, combs, glasses frames, etc.
- Temperature determines the sex of sea turtle hatchlings, hot=female & cool=male
- The most endangered sea turtle is the Kemp's Ridley
- Leatherback sea turtles dive the deepest, are the largest and have a layer of fat similar to blubber in marine mammals. They are also the only turtle whose spine is not attached to their shell.



Sea Turtle Survival Game

If you are holding the letter called out, then you have not survived. Pay attention to the reasons these turtles do not survive. We will discuss these reasons and some things that we can do to help sea turtles at the end of the activity.

In the nest... Can you survive the long development period to hatch?

- A- Ants infested the nest
- R- Raccoons found you and dug you up
- H- Wild hogs sniffed out the nest
- W- Waves washed out the nest
- E- Eggs were collected by a human
- X- Excess rain eroded the dunes
- U- Eggs were undeveloped

Congratulations! You made it through the gestation period and you are on your way to the beach.

Can you crawl all the way across the beach into the water?

- G- Sea gulls watching from above got you
- D- A stray dog on the beach found you
- C- Ghost crabs caught you
- S- The sun was a bit too hot and you dried up
- L- Lights on the beach confused you and you went away from the ocean

You have made it to the water!

You're safe in the water now, right? Maybe not! It takes a long time for a sea turtle to mature and have a nest of your own. 30 years is a long time to be in the ocean and lots can happen...

- F- Fish have to eat, too
- M- You got collected for meat. Yes, some people in the world eat sea turtle meat.
- N- A shrimp boat net has drowned you
- P- Pollution in the water, you ate a plastic bag mistaking it for a jellyfish
- K- You just became a tasty snack for a shark

For those turtles who are left it is now time to lay your own nest! Surely nothing else can happen, right?

There are some things on the beach that can prevent you from successfully laying your nest such as:

- B- Dunes have been removed so the beach can be developed
- O- Obstacles on the beach, a seawall perhaps
- T- Too many lights on the beach and you had to turn back

Q & V successfully nested on the beach! Look around and see how many turtles actually made it to this stage.



THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Colleges of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences & Family and Consumer Sciences



Jekyll Island 4-H Center
550 South Beachview Drive
Jekyll Island, Georgia 31527

Wahsega in Dahlonga: (706) 864-2050
<http://www.wahsega4h.org/>

Fortson in Hampton: (770) 946-3276
<http://www.fortson4h.org/>

Rock Eagle in Eatonton: (706) 484-2899
<http://www.rockeagle4h.org/>

Burton on Tybee Island: (912) 786-5534
<http://www.burton4h.org/>

Jekyll Island: (912) 635-4117
<http://www.jekyll4h.org/>

