



Jekyll Island 4-H Center

The Skimmer



Spring 2008

Donna Stewart Returns to Jekyll 4-H

Those of you who have been coming to Jekyll 4-H for more than a few years remember how wonderful Donna Stewart is. Those of you who are newer to our program are in for a treat.

Donna began her career with the University of Georgia as Environmental Education Coordinator at Jekyll Island 4-H Center on January 1, 1989 and transferred to Rock Eagle 4-H Center as EE Coordinator on July 1, 2002. We all know and appreciate the many positive contributions that Donna has made to Georgia 4-H and our Environmental Education Program over the past nineteen years. We

look forward to the leadership that Donna will provide to Jekyll Island 4-H Center and know that she will be missed at Rock Eagle.

Donna brings a tremendous amount of experience and leadership to the coast and the 4-H Center. Here are some fun facts about Donna:

- She finds invertebrates truly fascinating and fun.
- She might just be the only person to have been bitten by almost every marine animal at least once (topping the list are shark, sea turtle, and knobbed whelk)

- She is the 2008-09 president of the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia.

Donna will begin in her new role as Jekyll Island 4-H Center Director May 1, 2008. If you want to welcome and/or congratulate Donna, her email address is donnast@uga.edu.



Donna Stewart

Environmental Education Office:

912-635-4117

www.jekyll4h.org

Special points of interest in this issue:

- ♦ Meet the staff
- ♦ Spotlight on Sharon
- ♦ Shelby moves to Georgia Aquarium
- ♦ Adopt-an-Animal
- ♦ Georgia 4-H Centers across the state

Updates & Important Info

The reservation books for the 2009-2010 school year open Wednesday, August 20th at 9 a.m.

The fees for our lunch to lunch program for the 2008-09 school year will increase to \$92.

The website got another facelift. It's even easier to navigate and has all of your planning needs. Please let us know how we can continue to improve the site.

Learning for Life

There are still limited openings for the 2008-09 school year. Tell your friends to call now to schedule their field study.



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

Meet the Fabulous 2007-08 EE Staff



Front Row L to R:

Kristy McKee & Amelia the gopher tortoise

Sarah Kohl & Dorothy the box turtle

Melanie Biersmith & a hermit crab

Mark Bushman & a horseshoe crab

Parker Bushman & Walter the pine snake

Middle Row L to R:

Jake Martin & Ruby the corn snake

Leigh Anne Harden & Marco the hognose snake

Becky Lasoski & a spider crab

Sarah Kabel & Turtleini the gopher tortoise

Rebecca Taylor & Mo the yellow bellied slider

Kerry Holcomb & Simon and Jekyll the terrapins

Back Row L to R:

Teddy Ivey & Bo the alligator

Richard Chewning & Sammy the kingsnake

Jonathan Gray & Houdini the corn snake

Jekyll 4-H's Year Round Staff—Spotlight on Sharon

In addition to our 12 seasonal environmental educators hired to work each August through May, the Jekyll Island 4-H Center has a support staff of 14-15 that work year round. Our year round staff includes:

Kitchen—Winston Drury, Lucy Holmes, Joyce Hutchinson, Roosevelt Butler, and Sprawley Washington



This month's spotlight is on Sharon Hamilton. Sharon is our administrative associate and has been at the 4-H Center for approximately 20 years.

Facilities—Larry Weldin, James Nobles, Kim Britton, Carol Ducksworth

Tidelands Nature Center—Dawn Zenkert, Tom Woolf

Administration—Sharon Hamilton, Richard Chewning, Melanie Biersmith

Shelby moves to the Georgia Aquarium

Shelby, a loggerhead sea turtle, has been under the care of the educators at the Jekyll Island 4-H Center since he hatched on Jekyll Island in 2002. Shelby is what biologists refer to as a “straggler”. He did not hatch out of the nest with the rest of the hatchlings and was found when trained sea turtle technicians did a routine excavation a full five or more days after the initial mass hatching. Shelby was alive, but considered generally weak, and was given to the 4-H Center to be used as an educational ambassador for its species. Shelby has thrived and grown, and at six years old he will be moving up the state to the Georgia Aquarium. The

Georgia Department of Natural Resources has decided it’s time to move the turtle to a bigger tank and the Aquarium in Atlanta is in a perfect position to help.

Many of you remember when our beloved Dylan, also a loggerhead, moved to the Georgia Aquarium and then back to Jekyll Island to the Georgia Sea Turtle Center. The GSTC has been working with Dylan to get him to feed on his own so that he may be released back to the ocean.

As plans are made to move Shelby north, more plans are in motion to bring another straggler back to the coast. Cabretto, a loggerhead



Many students have enjoyed visiting and learning about the sea turtles at the Jekyll Island 4-H Center and Tideland's Nature Center over the years.

sea turtle that hatched on Sapelo Island, has been at Rock Eagle 4-H Center since 2004. He will move in to the tank vacated by Shelby at the Jekyll Island 4-H Center.

Adopt-an-Animal and Support the 4-H Center

The adopt-an-animal program continues for the upcoming school year. For the 2007-08 school year, Dylan Williams of Monroe, GA adopted a diamondback terrapin. Thanks to Dylan’s contribution, we will be able to continue to make improvements in our animal labs! If you would like to adopt-an-animal, visit our website and download a form: www.jekyll4h.org.



Diamondback Terrapin

Diamondback Terrapin

Malaclemys terrapin

Size: Males, 4-5.5 inches; Females, 6-9.5 inches

Habitat: brackish water (salt marshes, estuaries, tidal creeks)

Range: Cape Cod to Texas along the coast

Diet: snails, clams, worms, crustaceans and insects

Reproduction: Nest June –July. Lays 4-18 pinkish-white, thin-shelled, leathery eggs. Nest cavities 4-8 inches deep are dug at sandy edges of marshes and dunes. Incubation takes 9-15 weeks.

Fun fact: Diamondback meat was highly esteemed as a delicacy at the turn of the century. As a consequence, their numbers were greatly reduced.

A Fond Farewell from Melanie Biersmith

As most of you now know, I am leaving my post as 4-H Center Director and moving up the state in June 2008 to join the 4-H faculty as the Statewide Environmental Education Coordinator. While I hesitate to refer to it this way, this is the job previously filled by Diane Davies (Georgia’s own “Godmother of Environmental Education”). I won’t pretend to fill her shoes, but I do look forward to working with the EE programs at each of Georgia’s five 4-H Centers. I am very excited, but I will miss Jekyll and each of you

very much. Thank you for all of your dedication and support over the last five years. I have really enjoyed working with and getting to know each of you. I still hope to stay in touch in my new role. I will work out of offices at Rock Eagle 4-H Center and/or UGA in Athens. My husband will teach chemistry at Morgan County High School. And, since we will be so much closer to Atlanta, our two children (Drew & Sam) will undoubtedly develop the same passion for Braves baseball as their mother and father!



My email address will remain melmel@uga.edu, please stay in touch!



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Jekyll Island 4-H Center
201 S. Beachview Drive
Jekyll Island, GA 31527

From the Mountains to the Sea, There is a Georgia 4-H Center for you!

As one of the nation's largest providers of residential environmental education, the Georgia 4-H Environmental Education Program invites your school to join the safe haven of Georgia's outdoor classroom. Operating September through May of each year, our five 4-H Centers provide opportunities throughout the state for quality residential field study experiences. Our research-based curriculum correlates to Georgia Performance Standards, providing hands-on learning in real world environments. The Georgia 4-H Environmental Education Program is operated by the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension. Contact any center to learn more about the programs.

Wahsega 4-H Center
Dahlonega, 706-864-2050
www.wahsega4h.org

Fortson 4-H Center
Hampton, 770-946-3276
www.fortson4h.org

Rock Eagle 4-H Center
Eatonton, 706-484-2862
www.rockeagle4h.org

Burton 4-H Center
Tybee Island, 912-786-5534
www.burton4h.org

Jekyll Island 4-H Center
Jekyll Island, 912-635-4117
www.jekyll4h.org



www.georgia4h.org/ee