



# The Delta News

Volume 1, Issue 1

September 2009

## 5 Rivers Continues To Hold Free Classes and Workshops

### Your Delta Fun Fact for the Month:

*Did you know that there is a 45 foot man-made mound in the middle of the Mobile Tensaw Delta? Learn about the people that built it with only their hands and primitive tools on page 2.*

5 Rivers Delta Resource Center continues our free classes and workshops in September and October with even more exciting topics and repeats of past classes. This month will offer a new class on September 26 designed to explain Alabama turtles, including the endangered state reptile, the Alabama Red Bellied Turtle. Students in grades 3 thru 5 will get an up close and personal view of these animals along with a chance to see how hard survival is for a baby turtle. Students will also get to participate in a turtle release. This class will be presented by our resident biologist Shonda Borden. Other classes offered in September will be Backyard Homes for Backyard Critters.

The month of October also has a new topic for children slated for Oct. 10. In honor of Halloween, "Bats!" will have their chance to shine. Students will get to learn all about this misunderstood animal with hands-on activities that include, but are not limited to, understanding bats and their unusual sense of echolocation.

All classes are limited to 20 students, and registration is required to ensure your child has a spot. All classes are from 11:30 to 2:30 with a healthy snack included, and an activity that is theirs to take home. For more information or to register for any of the classes, please contact Shonda or Kellie at 251-625-0814.



This is the group from our first wind energy class aboard the Pelican with their handmade pinwheels.

### Inside this issue:

Turtle Derby and Turtle Week	2
Bottle Creek Trip	2
Alabama Coastal Cleanup	2
Meetings of the Month	3
5 Rivers Delta Safaris	3
Meet a 5 Rivers Staff Member	4

## Alan Sealls Slated to Discuss Weather

On September 19, Chief Meteorologist Alan Sealls from WKRG channel 5 will be visiting the 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center to discuss the one thing that's always on everyone's mind...the weather! His presentation will take place in the Tensaw Theater located next to the Delta Hall. Mr. Sealls will begin talking at 1pm in the afternoon, and has planned his talk to last approximately one hour. The presentation is free and open to anyone who would be interested in learning more about the unique weather found along the Gulf Coast, from afternoon thunderstorms to hurricanes and tropical storms. No reservation is needed for his talk, so hopefully we'll see you there!



September 27, 2009 - Five Rivers Delta Resource Center

# TURTLE DERBY ON THE DELTA

A Rubber Turtle Race and Family Fun Day Benefiting Covenant Hospice

One thousand rubber turtles will race their way to the finish line during the 2nd annual "Turtle Derby on the Delta" benefiting Covenant Hospice of Mobile County. The event will be held here, at 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center's Delta Hall, with activities beginning at noon and the race at 2pm on September 27. The Turtle Derby on the Delta is a rubber turtle race and family fun day. Participants may "adopt" a rubber turtle for a suggested donation of \$5 each to enter in the race. The rubber turtles will be released into

the waterway where they will race in hopes of winning their adopter a fabulous prize! Dan and Shelby with 95 KSJ will be on hand to cheer the turtles on. The event will also include fun activities for the whole family to enjoy while exploring their local delta. These activities will include painting with artist Ricky Trione, face painting and many others. 5 Rivers will also be presenting information on the endangered state reptile, the Alabama Red Bellied Turtle. Proceeds from the event will benefit Covenant Hospice patient and

family services in Mobile County. For more information about the event or to adopt a turtle, please call 478-8671 or visit [www.covenanthospice.org](http://www.covenanthospice.org).



A thousand coolly-attired, sun-glassed turtles get ready to race!

## Loretta's new opossuminum!

Our amazing opossum has moved into to her new home in the Apalachee Exhibit Hall! Her 3-story condo is complete with all the trimmings, including a luxury bathroom and spacious bedroom! Her new home also gives everyone a chance to catch a glimpse of her, with glass all the way around for optimum viewing.

Loretta didn't always have such a cushy life. The Environmental

Studies Center in Mobile had saved her and her siblings after their mother was hit by a car. We picked her up when she was two months old.

Loretta provides great insight into how wonderful our only marsupial is. You may be surprised to find that opossums can be litter trained or that they do not carry rabies. So stop by soon and check out Loretta's new digs. Come early and go with

us on a morning stroll with our awesome opossum!



## 5 Rivers set to take a trip to the Indian Mounds

5 Rivers has teamed up with Dr. Greg Waselkov from the Archaeology Department of South Alabama to give people the opportunity to visit the Delta's most significant indian mound complex. The Bottle Creek excursion will be on October 11th at the price of \$60 per person. The day starts with a class lecture at 9am in 5 Rivers Tensaw Theater, after which participants will be

shuttled to Lower Bryant Landing. There they'll board The Pelican to ride up the Delta to the Mounds. Morning coffee, lunch and snacks will be provided for the trip. There will be a 3/4 of a mile walk to where the mounds are located and Dr. Waselkov will be able to provide copious amounts of information pertaining to the Bottle Creek

civilization. Space is limited on this trip so please call to make a reservation with Shonda or Kellie at 251-625-0814.



The entrance to the trail of Bottle Creek is on the left.

# Get Ready for Birdfest!

The John L. Borom Alabama Coastal Birdfest invites you to come enjoy the wild and beautiful Alabama Gulf Coast, our Southern hospitality, and of course our great birding. Our knowledgeable and entertaining guides will lead you through some of the best birding spots in



North America as we welcome the annual fall migration of birds from all over North America. Coastal Alabama is a critical stopover point during migration, so we never know what we might see as we explore our coast on boat or by foot. Birders from beginning to expert will find much to enjoy and many opportunities to learn more. Explore by foot or by boat, through backcountry, swamp,

and meadows. All trips leave from 5 Rivers and many include transportation and lunch.

The free Bird and Conservation Expo takes place Saturday on the grounds of Faulkner State Community College in beautiful downtown Fairhope. Enjoy hands-on activities for kids of all ages, live raptors and snakes and numerous displays and exhibits.

For more information on any of the trips for Birdfest or to register please visit [AlabamaCoastalBirdFest.com](http://AlabamaCoastalBirdFest.com) or visit the Facebook Page for updates.

## 5 Rivers Delta Safaris Holds Wine Cruises

5 Rivers Delta Safaris has teamed up with Cellar 43 to bring those who enjoy both wine and the outdoors the chance to taste several different varieties of wine while viewing the spectacular delta sunset. The trip gives participants the chance to learn not only about the delta, but also different wines, how to cook with them and how to pair them with meals. The next trip is September 12 beginning at

5:30pm and lasting until 7:30pm. Reservations must be made in advance. Tickets can be purchased at Cellar 43 or by calling 251-625-2830.

If a sunset wine cruise is not appealing, Delta Safaris has other options for exploring the delta. Daily two

hour educational pontoon boat tours depart from 5 Rivers Wednesday thru Sunday at 12pm. Also available are guided kayak tours.



For more information on any of these call 251-259-8531 or visit [www.5RDS.com](http://www.5RDS.com).

## Celebrate the Alabama Red Bellied Turtle!

You may know that Alabama has an official flower (camellia), tree (long-leaf pine) and whiskey (Conecuh Ridge), but did you know Alabama has an official state reptile? We sure do, and it is the endangered Alabama Red Bellied Turtle. Beginning the week of September 22, 5 Rivers will be

celebrating these amazing creatures with activities geared toward better understanding this amazing reptile. The weekend will boast the most hands on learning about the turtle from an obstacle course explaining the difficulty of hatchling survival to actual lectures on the turtles themselves. Sunday will be the big

finale with the Turtle Derby, face painting, and many other activities. So come join us in celebrating our state reptile!



An adult female Alabama Red Bellied Turtle.

## Meet Our 5 Rivers Staff: Cindy Renkert

Meet Cindy Renkert, our event coordinator. Originally from Seattle, WA, this one time coffee shop owner moved to Spanish Fort in 2000 to find warmer weather and more sunshine. She has been with us since before we opened over two years ago volunteering and then working as a cashier in the Cypress Gift Shop until she found her niche booking all kinds of different events for the facility. "I love helping people make their events, such as weddings, special and memorable." Cindy says as she tells about her most memorable experience with event coordinating. It was an evening wedding in which the best man dropped the wedding rings into the water. After all the guests, including the groom were shocked and stunned, the best man turns to the groom and exclaims "Gotcha!" He only pretended to lose the rings, dropping a washer in

the water for an even greater affect. "I enjoy it here", she exclaims, "I've learned so much about the delta and the animals that live in it just from being here and planning events!" Cindy is also talented outside of 5 Rivers. Her hobbies include piano playing, crocheting, and she's one great cook as many at 5 Rivers can attest. She has two daughters and four grandkids that keep her busy the rest of her free time. She is also married to Bruce Renkert who works for the city of Spanish Fort.



Cindy truly enjoying her work!

### A Quick Glimpse of September's Events:

- 09/01/09** Alabama Hiking Trail Society and Mobile Bay Canoe & Kayak Club Meetings
- 9/05/09** 5 Rivers Workshops "imPRESSive" Plants
- 09/08/09** Hunters Education Course and Mobile Bay Audubon Society Meeting
- 09/12/09** 5 Rivers Workshops: Backyard Homes for Backyard Critters
- 09/12/09** 5 Rivers Delta Safaris Wine Tasting Cruise
- 09/19/09** Alabama Coastal Cleanup
- 09/19/09** Saturday Adventure with Meteorologist Alan Sealls
- 09/20/09** American Heart Association Heart Walk
- 09/26/09** 5 Rivers Workshops: Alabama Turtles
- 09/27/09** Turtle Derby on the Delta

For more information on any events please visit our website at [www.alabama5rivers.com](http://www.alabama5rivers.com) or visit our facebook page.



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Find us on Facebook!

Open Monday thru Sunday 8am to 5pm