

Wishing Mr. Carr a Happy Retirement!



Mr. Carr, a teacher at the Environmental Studies Center, has moved on to another chapter of his life: **RETIREMENT!**

Charlie taught 18 years of 5th grade in Martin County, five years at JD Parker and 13 years at Felix A Williams. Then he got “promoted” and was lucky enough to teach 18 years at the ESC. He applied to transfer to the ESC because he’s always had a love for anything environmental, especially when it involves the water. The ESC allowed him to keep teaching AND combine it with the environment. He’s always loved teaching children, and the ESC allowed him to keep teaching but trade in his dress pants and nice shoes for shorts and flip flops.

Mr. Carr has retired with many memorable experiences he gained at the Center. A couple of his favorites are the daily squeals and giggles from the students as they experienced the ESC lessons and animals and almost daily hearing the kids say that being on their ESC field trip was their best day ever.

When thinking back on his time at the ESC, he remembers the staff he had the pleasure to work with each and every day. “They were a small but mighty group”. He acknowledges with pride that all the staff is dedicated to making the ESC the jewel of the Martin County School District.

In retirement, Charlie plans on spending a lot of time fishing and golfing. He and his wife, Gidget, will be traveling as much as possible. They are always excited about the next adventure to see new places. He is most definitely loving the extra time he gets to spend with his boys (dogs)!

We wish Mr. Carr the best in his retirement. He will definitely be missed at the Center as many teachers and students each year looked forward to spending their day at the Center with him. Those fortunate to have had him as their teacher through the years have their own special memories of their days at the Center. And now we welcome new staff member, Joe Bukowski!



As the seasons shift, we’re saying goodbye to a super fun summer filled with sunshine, sea creatures, and unforgettable adventures at the Environmental Studies Center. From touch tank discoveries to mangrove explorations, we loved every moment shared with our students, families, and visitors. Now, we’re excited to welcome fall, a season of cooler breezes, migrating wildlife, and fresh opportunities to learn and explore Florida’s unique ecosystems. Stay tuned for upcoming events and programs this fall, there’s still so much to discover!



Please consider leaving a legacy by naming the Environmental Studies Council in your estate plans.



The Environmental Studies Council, Inc.

2900 NE Indian River Drive
 Jensen Beach, FL 34957
 Council Office: (772) 219-1887 x 121
 Center Office: (772) 219-1887

Mission Statement

To protect and enhance the education programs of the Environmental Studies Center and to promote and extend environmental awareness through community education.

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From the desk of the President

Fall is undeniably one of our favorite times at the Environmental Studies Center. The school year is in full swing, and the classrooms and wet lab are filled with the sounds of children alive with wonder and hands-on learning. Teachers are busy doing what they love most... educating students about the beautiful waterways and what lives around and beneath the surface. We are excited for this new school year, and we hope you are, too!!

As a Council, we have been busy. We had another wildly successful Michael Shields Memorial fishing tournament take place at the end of September, and the October ESC Fall Open House was well received and attended. We continue to reach out to the community to share all the important work the Center does and are always looking for ways to get people involved. We'd love to see you at one of our upcoming Lecture Series, or at the Grandparents & VIPs Day that takes place in March. Be sure to check out our website for the dates and pencil us in.

The world is hectic and ever-changing, and places like the Environmental Studies Center are needed for our children now more than ever. The reminder of and connection to nature provided by the ESC, coupled with the knowledge gained about our ecosystems and wildlife are irreplaceable to our youth. It sets the foundation for adults who will protect, care for, and preserve our natural beauty for generations to come.

Thank you, and remember, ESC is the place to be!!
 Kaija and Kari

Thank you Michael Shields Memorial Inshore Fishing Tournament Sponsors!

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Did Your Membership Expire?

Have you renewed your membership to the Environmental Studies Council? We need your support!

To sign up, log on to www.escmc.org or call (772) 219-1887 x 121

Welcome New Teacher, Mr. Bukowski

We are happy to introduce you to our new Center teacher, Joe Bukowski. Joe grew up in a small town by the beach called Cape May Court House, New Jersey. People think of New Jersey as busy, but Joe says he was lucky to grow up on the cape surrounded by the ocean, bay, salt marshes and pine barrens.

He came to Martin County every year as a child to visit family who lived right down the road from the Environmental Studies Center. His immediate family moved to Tradition 20 years ago and so his visits continued.

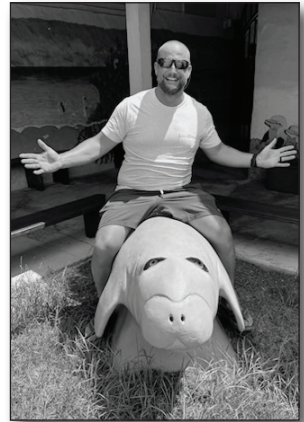
Joe taught 2nd grade in Lindenwold, New Jersey for 7 years, 5th grade Math and Science in Fort Pierce for 2 years until he ended up as a 5th grade Math and Science teacher for 8 years at Seawind Elementary in Martin County. Not only was he a teacher but, also, he can add a cook, restaurant jobs, construction, snowboard instructor, lifeguard and even a firefighter/EMT to his resume.

Joe has always wanted to be a teacher at the ESC since finding out that it is staffed by Martin County teachers. During his first year teaching in Martin County, he participated in a training at the Center and fell in love with it. His favorite time of year was bringing his class to the ESC for their annual field trip. He was hooked and looked forward to his chance to apply when an opening became available. Thanks to the retirement of Charlie Carr, a position finally opened up.

Joe shares that, "This place embodies everything I love. As a kid we had a similar center called the Wetlands Institute and I loved spending time there or at Marine Biology summer camp at our Vocational School. I have always loved the outdoors, waterways and nature in general. As a kid, I read Jacques Cousteau books and pretty much thought I was him as I investigated all the nearshore reefs."

Joe looks forward to being a part of the great team of people keeping the Center alive and sharing the love of the outdoors, nature and this place we are lucky enough to call home. Outside of his teaching career, he keeps busy being outside, boating, surfing, biking, hiking, traveling, gardening, cooking and snowboarding. He's a busy guy!

We are thrilled to have him at the Center and happy his dream to teach here has come true.



THANK YOU, EARTHSAVERS COORDINATORS

Thank you, Samantha Robertson and Nicole Weiler, for everything you've done leading our Earth Savers these past years at the Environmental Studies Center and at Jensen Beach High School. Your enthusiasm, knowledge, and dedication has given these students, fun, hands-on experiences in caring for the environment and has inspired them to volunteer their time not only at ESC events but also in protecting the waterways we all treasure in Martin County. The students have benefited greatly from your leadership, and you will be missed. We wish you both the best in your teaching careers!

WILDLIFE SPOTLIGHT: RACCOONS

You may have seen these clever, masked critters scurrying through mangroves or around the edges of the lagoon! Raccoons are incredibly adaptable and are often found near water, where they hunt for crabs, frogs, and shellfish. They're known for their "washing" behavior — using their nimble front paws to manipulate and rinse food before eating. Raccoons are mostly nocturnal, but it's not unusual to see them during the day, especially in areas where they've grown used to people. Despite their playful appearance, raccoons are wild animals and should not be fed or approached. They play an important role in the ecosystem by helping control insect and rodent populations. Protecting their habitat, including mangroves and coastal hammocks, helps keep the local ecosystem in balance. If you spot one in the wild, snap a photo — you might be featured in our next Photo of the Issue!

Send your photo, along with your name, age (if under 18), and a short caption, to tidemarkfl@gmail.com. Selected photos will be featured in our next newsletter and on ESC social media!

Upcoming Events

Grandparents & VIP's Day
March 28, 2026

Lecture Series

Tom Fitz
February 4, 2026

Janeen Mason
February 25, 2026

Please check our website for times.

Thank you to our sponsors, donors, and volunteers for making the MSM Fishing Tournament a great success!

Wish List

The Environmental Studies Center needs your support! The Center has a current need for:

- Batteries- various sizes
- Paper Towels
- Kleenex
- Quart size plastic ziploc bags
- Dawn Dish Soap

If you are interested in supporting any of the above opportunities, please contact us at info@escmc.org or by calling 772-219-1887 x121. Or stop by the Center - we'd love to see you!

Environmental Studies Council, Inc.
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Jensen Beach, FL 34957

FALL 2025

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The ESC "Book Look"

Looking for the perfect book to cozy up with this fall? Whether you're a young explorer or a lifelong learner, we've got nature-themed reads that connect beautifully with the mission of the Environmental Studies Center. Check out this month's featured picks:

For Kids:

"Over in the Ocean: In a Coral Reef" by Marianne Berkes

This beautifully illustrated, sing-along counting book introduces young readers to the vibrant life beneath the waves. From parrotfish to octopuses, each page dives into the creatures that call coral reefs home — many of which are found right here in Florida's coastal ecosystems. It's rhythmic, educational, and a great tie-in to ESC's touch tanks and marine life programs.

For Adults & Teens:

"The Nature of Florida" by James A. Kushlan

A fantastic field guide and ecological overview of Florida's diverse habitats, this book is perfect for parents, educators, and curious teens. It covers native wildlife, plant communities, and conservation challenges across the state — from wetlands to mangroves — and encourages readers to see Florida through the eyes of a naturalist.

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