

# Soundside Learning

## This Week On Core Sound

### Earth Day Blooms Again

The Core Sound Waterfowl Museum & Heritage Center is proud to announce that we will be bringing back our Earth Day celebration in April of 2022!



The events will occur across a two-day span at the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum & Heritage Center on Harkers Island and will be focused both on elementary school groups as well as the general public. Each day will feature exhibitors from across our region who will bring unique experiences to all in attendance. Our hope is that Core Sound Earth Day will bring together learning opportunities for all who participate and help us all gain a better understanding and appreciation for our natural resources.

### *In Our Night Skies: An Update From The Crystal Coast Stargazers*

Local astronomers are loving these crisp cold nights. We don our “arctic” gear and out we go for some of the most beautiful stargazing experiences of the year. What’s really gratifying is that our CCS public events during this time still have good attendance. Fort Macon State Park’s Astronomy Night on January 14<sup>th</sup> – which was a very cold, and bit windy night – had attendance of over 150! Lots of families turning out which makes for a great night. Experiencing a child looking through a telescope for the first time is guaranteed to make you smile!

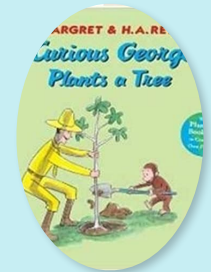
If you will brave the winter nights in February, a great target for naked-eye or binocular viewing is the constellation Orion – The Hunter. Orion can be seen in the southeast sky in early evening and shining high in the south by 9:00 pm. The hour glass shape of the body, contains the asterism – Orion’s Belt – three stars in a row. If you see three equally bright stars in a row, you’re are probably looking at Orion. Through binoculars you can tell that these 3 stars are some of the bluest in the winter sky. The Orion constellation also includes a nebula which you may sometimes be able to see just to the south of Orion’s Belt. The nebula is one of the favorite objects of astrophotographers.

Early risers can catch Venus, which is now The Morning Star, at its greatest brightness on February 9<sup>th</sup>. It will be low above the southeastern horizon before sunrise. By February 21<sup>st</sup> Venus will be at its highest altitude in the pre-dawn sky.

The face of the full moon on February 16<sup>th</sup> will be fully illuminated due to the fact the moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun. This full moon was known by early Native Americans as the Snow Moon because the heaviest snows fell during this time of year.

Bundle up – and take a look at the splendor of winter skies!

-Vermadel Nienstedt, Crystal Coast Stargazers



Sound Reading  
Material For You &  
Your Child

*Curious George  
Plants A Tree*

By: Margret & H.A Rey

*When George finds out that the science museum is planning a “Green Day” dedicated to recycling and planting trees, he is curious and wants to help out! But then George begins to recycle things around town that aren’t quite ready for the recycling bin, and he gets into a jam. Thankfully, George isn’t the only one who wants to help—the whole community can’t wait to lend a hand!*

**Did You Know?**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) found that children who were read to frequently are also more likely to: count to 20, or higher than those who were not (60% vs. 44%), write their own names (54% vs. 40%), read or pretend to read (77% vs. 57%)

# Annis & Mississippi (Part 1 of 2)

By Joel G. Hancock

Geographically, Harkers Island is part of the South — even the “Deep South.” But to the extent that such applies to race relations, the Harkers Island of my youth was a world apart from the tobacco and cotton crescent that stretched from the tidewater area of Virginia to the piney woods of eastern Texas. Racial stereotypes and attitudes may have been as deeply seated here as in Beaufort, New Bern or Raleigh, but at the Island there was a distinction that was also very much a difference.

It was as simple as it was historical. The economic patterns of the antebellum period kept the Banks communities in general, and Harkers Island in particular, apart from the plantation culture that dominated social relations before and after the Civil War. In short, the absence of those plantations also meant the absence of the Black communities that sprang up in and around them. The demographic patterns that had been established before the war continued, and even hardened in the decades that followed.

In some places, Harkers Island included, there were virtually no black families at all. An exception that all but proved the rule was next door to our house. In the home of Tom Martin Guthrie and his wife Evoline lived an old “colored lady,” Annis Pigott. She had spent her entire life as part of white families and was as much a stranger to the harsher aspects of the racial barriers that prevailed in inland communities as anyone and everyone else on the Island. Annis died an old and “wrinkled” woman before the time I could remember. It was said that her appearance was more typical of her gender and age than of her race. In fact, according to my mother, she did not know that Annis was “black” until she was one day visited by her brother from “town” whose color revealed both his race and that of his sister.

Her death certificate indicates that she was over a hundred years old at the time of her passing in 1952. If true, it means that she would have come of age even before the outbreak of the Civil War, and, just as importantly, lived most of her life during the turbulent times of Reconstruction and Jim Crow segregation. Tracking her on the census data from the late 19th century until she shows up near Hancock Landing in 1950, indicates that her home was always on the Banks or one of the other Core Sound communities. Hopefully, that distinction may have shielded her from the more stereotypical images of what life was like for a domestic black woman of that era.

After Annis died a few months before I was born, the nearest Negro families to Harkers Island were at North River. Except for Saturday trips to “town,” I lived almost my entire life as a child without interacting with anyone of another race or color. The Island that I knew was about as “lily white” as one could ever imagine. In fact, until the troop deployments of World War II brought soldiers and sailors from elsewhere who met and married local girls, almost every surname on the Island was either English or Scotch-Irish in origin. Willis, Guthrie, Lewis, Moore, Chadwick, Davis, Gaskill, Hancock, Brooks, Nelson, Rose, Fulcher, Yeomans, Hamilton, Styron, Salter, Russell, Fulford ... all of them thoroughly British or Gaelic.

But when I was about eight years old, and growing into an intense love for baseball – watching it, playing it, reading and talking about it – I came to know the very first black man that I can remember. His name was James Archie, but no one called him that. Rather, he was known to everyone simply as “Mississippi”... **To be continued**

**This story is one of many from *The Education of An Island Boy* by Joel G. Hancock of Harkers Island, NC. The new book is slated to be released later in 2022 and will be available for purchase at the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum & Heritage Center.**



Annis Pigott (far left) with the family of Cleveland Davis, circa 1930.

*Photo: Joel G. Hancock Collection*