

# RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED

April 2026 Public Tour Hours  
April 18th, 24th, 25th & 26th 11 AM-2PM

# RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED

**PURCHASE TOUR TICKETS [HERE](#)**

The Gift Shop is open during tour hours, with no tickets required. All proceeds benefit the turtles!



The Karen Beasley  
SEA TURTLE RESCUE  
& REHABILITATION CENTER  
SURF CITY, NC USA

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CURRENT VOLUNTEERS  
TRIBUTE to JEAN BEASLEY**

## Celebration of Life for Jean Beasley

Please join the Beasley family and the KBSTRRC community in celebrating Jean's legacy.

**Saturday, April 11, 2026**

**at ten o'clock in the morning**

**On the lawn at**

**The Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center**

**302 Tortuga Lane, Surf City, North Carolina**

**Open house and reception to follow until 1 pm**

Parking is limited. Car-pooling is suggested.

*The service will be live-streamed at: [facebook.com/seaturtlehospital](https://facebook.com/seaturtlehospital) and [instagram.com/seaturtlehospital](https://instagram.com/seaturtlehospital).*

## Tribute to Jean Beasley

Our beloved founder, Jean Beasley, passed away peacefully early in the morning of December 2, 2025. She was surrounded by people who loved her. The turtle community here and around the world mourns her loss. We miss her very much.



"If you share your dreams with somebody, you just never know who will step up and share them with you. It is only in sharing it that you really get the full effect."

~Jean Beasley, [A Conversation with Jean Beasley, 2023 \(YouTube Video\)](#)

Mrs. Jean, thank you for sharing your dreams with us. You inspired us to create a better world - for the turtles, for Mother Ocean, and for all. We will do our best to carry forward your legacy. Swim in Peace.

Teaching about sea turtles and conservation was very important to Jean. Donations to the Jean Beasley Fund will help expand our facility with a new Education Center - a long-time dream of Jean's. Thank you for supporting Jean's vision!



**Jean F. Beasley**

*October 18, 1935 – December 2, 2025*  
*Surf City, NC*

Frances Jean Faulkner Beasley, known as Jean, beloved wife, mother, sister, grandmother, great grandmother, devoted teacher, administrator and conservationist passed away December 2, 2025 at the age of 90. Jean passed away peacefully in Franklin, TN where she had moved in August 2021 to be closer to her family.

Jean leaves behind her two sons, Barney Beasley (Karen) of Franklin, TN and Kevin Beasley (Michelle) of Stallings, NC. She leaves her grandchildren: Beth Newman (Hansel) of Franklin, TN; Will Beasley (Mallory) of Dallas, TX; Becky Beasley of Stallings, NC and Sam Beasley of Durham, NC. Jean will be missed by great-grandchildren Reid and Audrey Newman of Franklin, TN. Jean is survived by her brother-in-law George Rose Watkins of Henderson, NC; nephew Chip Watkins (Gayle) of Henderson, NC; niece Leah Dodge (Michael Grey) of Richmond, VA; long time companion of her brother Judy Valentine of Dallas, TX; nephew Rick Corbitt IV of Georgetown, KY and cousin Carolyn Floyd of Wilmington, NC. The number of friends that Jean leaves is staggering and notably to be of vastly different ages and from worldwide places due to her devotion to sea turtle conservation and education efforts internationally.

Jean was preceded in death by her mother Beth Corbitt of Henderson, NC; husband of 52 years Fred Beasley; daughter Karen Beasley; brother Richard Corbitt of Dallas, TX; sister-in-law Chickie Watkins of Henderson, NC and her many dogs and cats that were lucky to have been loved by her.

Jean was born in Henderson, NC on October 18, 1935. She graduated from Duke University in 1957 and remained an avid Duke fan all her life. She and Fred married in 1958 and their first home was in Surf City, NC when Fred was in the United States Marine Corps. Due to Fred's many employment transfers with the FBI, she learned to make every house a home as she raised her family. Jean and Fred purchased a summer beach house in Surf City, NC in 1972 marking the beginning of her love for sea turtles. She led an amazing life with varied occupations always centered around education. She hosted a children's television show on Cincinnati's PBS WCET, she received her Master's Degree in Education from University of Dayton (Ohio) and eventually became dean of students at a junior high and then a high school in Hamilton, OH.

Upon her retirement and the untimely death of her daughter, Karen, Jean's life took on a trajectory all its own. She immersed herself in learning all she could about sea turtles and their nesting, rehabilitation and conservation. She traveled extensively worldwide soaking up knowledge about sea turtles and returning to her little corner of North Carolina to put this knowledge to work. The founding of the Topsail Turtle Project, started by her daughter Karen, and then expanded by Jean to become the Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center is legendary and the stuff of dreams. The number of awards and recognitions she received are too numerous to count but include: 2007 Animal Planet Hero of the Year; North Carolina Order of the Long Leaf Pine from Governor Roy Cooper; Thomas L. Quay Wildlife Diversity Award from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and the Beyond Duke Award for Outstanding Service to Society. In regards to her many awards, Jean said "I didn't earn

these awards by myself. I could never have done any of this without the volunteers. I appreciate the part everyone does to take care of the turtles. Your helping hands are greatly appreciated. All jobs are basic for the success of the organization.” Just a quick Google search of her name will bring you up close and personal with the amazing woman that she was. All of us were blessed to know her and to love her.

The family would like to thank the staff at The Fountains in Franklin, TN for their amazing love and compassion during Jean’s final four months as well as the staff of AccentCare Hospice. A special thanks to the current administration and all past and present volunteers of the Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center and the Topsail Turtle Project. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be sent to The Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center, 302 Tortuga Lane, Surf City, NC 28445 or [seaturtlehospital.org](http://seaturtlehospital.org) to be used for expansion of the facility with an education center. Jean will join her husband to be interred together in an artificial reef ball off the coast of North Carolina by Eternal Reefs ([eternalreefs.com](http://eternalreefs.com)). The family will announce a public memorial service on Topsail Island, North Carolina at a later date.

To the world she was a point of light for sea turtle conservation. To her family growing up she was Buttercup then Mom, Grandma, Grandmama and GiGi. As Jean would say “Just keep swimming.”

DONATE IN MEMORY OF JEAN



## Jean's Legacy

### **Topsail Turtle Project, 1995-2025** *(as of December 8, 2025)*

- ✔ 3,027 Nests Protected
- ✔ 245,952 Emerged Hatchlings

### **Sea Turtle Hospital, 1995-2025** *(through December 8, 2025)*

- ✔ 1,701 Turtles Cared For
- ✔ 1,301 Turtles Released Back to the Ocean

### **Conservationist, Mentor, Friend**

- ✔ Hundreds of interns, junior interns, and veterinary students
- ✔ Thousands of sea turtle campers
- ✔ Tens of thousands of classroom students
- ✔ Hundreds of thousands of visitors

### **Selected Conservation Awards**

- ✔ 2023 Beyond Duke Award for Outstanding Service to Society
- ✔ 2022 Thomas L. Quay Wildlife Diversity Award from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
- ✔ 2021 North Carolina Order of the Long Leaf Pine from Governor Roy Cooper
- ✔ 2017 International Sea Turtle Society Lifetime Achievement Award
- ✔ 2014 North Carolina Wildlife Federation Governor's Award Conservationist of the Year
- ✔ 2013 Oceana Ocean Hero Award
- ✔ 2007 Animal Planet Hero of the Year
- ✔ 1998 Pender County Governor's Volunteer Excellence Award

### **Selected Media Tributes**

- ✔ **'A true leader': Founder of Topsail's sea turtle hospital dies at 90**, by Gareth McGrath, StarNews Online, December 2, 2025
- ✔ **Founder of Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue dies at 90**, by WECT Staff, WECT News 6, December 2, 2025
- ✔ **Founding director of local sea turtle rehabilitation center dies at 90**, by Kaitlyn Dang, WRAL News, December 3, 2025
- ✔ **Jean Beasley founder of the Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue has died**, by WWAY News, WWAY 3 ABC CBS Cape Fear CW, December 2, 2025
- ✔ **Jean Beasley, passionate sea turtle protector, dies at 90**, by Trista Talton, CoastalReview.org, A Daily News Service of the North Carolina Coastal Federation, December 4, 2025
- ✔ **Jean Beasley, who turned her young daughter's dying wish into a mission to save sea turtles**, has died, by Rhett Ayers Butler, MongaBay, December 3, 2025
- ✔ **Memories of Jean Beasley, founder of the Topsail Island sea turtle hospital**, by Ken Blevins, StarNews Online, December 2, 2025
- ✔ **Sea turtle rescue pioneer Jean Beasley remembered for her dedication and legacy**, by Alaina Laster, WCTI ABC News 12, December 2, 2025

### **Older Articles About and By Jean**

- ✔ **Wildlife Commission honors Jean Beasley with Quay Award**, Staff Report, CoastalReview.org, A Daily News Service of the North Carolina Coastal Federation, November 28, 2022
- ✔ **Jean Beasley-Power of Community**, by JOEMC Television, August 27, 2020
- ✔ **The Return of the Sea Turtles**, by Tift Merritt, Our State, May 21, 2020
- ✔ **Jean Beasley and her fight to save the sea turtles**, by Mark Darrough, Port City Daily, February 3, 2019

- ✔ [Inside North Carolina's Sea Turtle Sanctuary](#), by Harry Wilson, Canadian Geographic, August 29, 2016
- ✔ [Mothering Nature](#), by Trista Talton, photos by Ken Blevins, StarNews Online, November 15, 2005
- ✔ [The Turtles of Topsail Island](#), by Jean Beasley, Guideposts, date unknown

### Videos Featuring Jean

- ✔ [A Conversation with Jean Beasley](#), by Hope Agresti, KBSTRRC Intern, August 2023
- ✔ [Prayer to Mother Ocean and Sea Turtle Release](#), by KBSTRRC Interns, June 14, 2022
- ✔ [Jean Beasley - Power of Community](#), by JOEMC TV, August 27, 2020
- ✔ [Turtle Talk at Karen Beasley Turtle Hospital Behind The Scenes - Lewis Realty](#), by Chris Rackley, May 22, 2017
- ✔ [A Daughter's Dream](#), by Brielle Barozzini, December, 2014
- ✔ [Aqua Kids 2013 01 Karen Beasley Turtle Hospital Episode](#), by AquaKidsTV, September 30, 2013
- ✔ [Sea Turtle Day at South Topsail](#), by TopsailVoice, March 30, 2012
- ✔ [Carolina Traveler: Topsail Turtles](#), by JABenton70, September 15, 2011



302 Tortuga Lane  
Surf City, NC 28445

info@seaturtlehospita

### Quick Links

- [DONATE](#)
- [Adopt A Turtle](#)
- [Become an Intern](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Meet our Patients](#)
- [Plan A Visit](#)

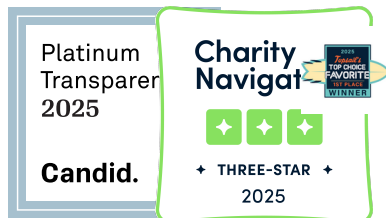
### Visiting Hours

- THE TURTLES**
- WELCOME YOU!**
- CLICK HERE FOR INFORMATION.**
- ADMISSION**

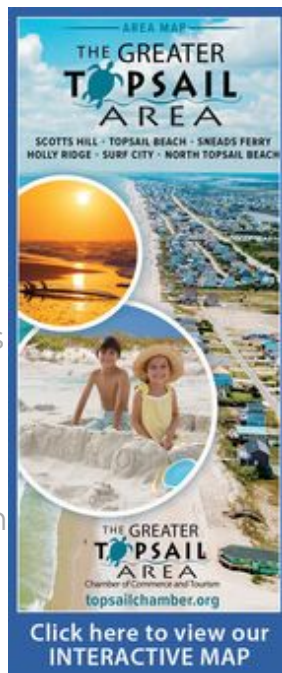
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## SEA TURTLE

**HOTLINE: 910-329-0222 option 3**



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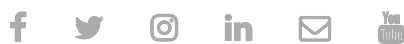
*(PLUS sales tax & fees):*

**\$7.00** General Admission (Ages 13-61)  
**\$6.00** Military (Active Duty and Veterans)  
**\$6.00** Seniors (Ages 62 and up)  
**\$5.00** Children (Ages 3-12)  
**\$0.00** Babies and Toddlers (Ages 0-2)  
*(Babies are free but a ticket is still required to save their spot!)*

## **We are a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization - POWERED BY VOLUNTEERS**

EIN: 56-1967579

This conservation work for protected sea turtles at the Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center and on Topsail Island is authorized by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, ES Permit 26ST05.



© 2026 The Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue & Rehabilitation Center  
 Powered by Volunteers!