



# TOWN NOTES

The Newsletter of the Town of Kiawah Island

Town of Kiawah Island • 21 Beachwalker Drive Kiawah Island, SC 29455 • 843-768-9166 • [www.kiawahisland.org](http://www.kiawahisland.org)

## TOWN OF KIAWAH HIRES TOWN ADMINISTRATOR STEPHANIE MONROE TILLERSON

The Town of Kiawah recently announced it has hired Stephanie Monroe Tillerson as Town Administrator. Tillerson was most recently the City Manager for the City of Woodruff in Spartanburg County, SC. With nearly 15 years of years' experience as city administrator and planning director in various municipalities across South Carolina, Tillerson will support Mayor Charles Lipuma and the Kiawah Island Town Council as well as lead the Town's staff. Her official start date is October 26.

"Stephanie brings the necessary experience and professionalism that the Town needs in order to move forward and achieve its goals in the coming years," said Mayor of Kiawah Island, Charles Lipuma. "Of all the candidates we interviewed, Stephanie distinguished herself as someone with a high ethical standard and the ability to bring instant credibility to an important position within the Kiawah community. She is the right person to lead the Town."

Town Council retained an executive search firm to identify the most qualified candidate pool from across the southeast region. The search resulted in receiving nearly 100 applications for which eleven candidates were recommended to Town Council for further review. From that group of eleven, four candidates were interviewed before offering the position to Tillerson.

Raised in Lansing, Michigan, Tillerson graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Science in Public Affairs Management and Master

in Urban and Regional Planning and Urban Studies. She also holds a Master of



Public Administration from the University of South Carolina.

Ms. Tillerson has a message for the community, "I hope to continue the success the Town of Kiawah Island has established despite the stumbling blocks the community has experienced in the last couple of months. Town Staff and Town Council have done a great job keeping things going.

I want Kiawah residents to know I am a community-oriented manager, and I look forward to meeting people out in the community, as well as getting to know my staff.

I believe what is important to residents is that their Town management is responsive to them and transparent in how we conduct business. Those are aspects of town management that are always important

to me. From my observation, we have a professional staff and a Town Council that provide excellent customer service. They work well together. So I'm very optimistic about the future.

I am ready to get started, and look forward to working with the Mayor and Council on the development of the new Municipal Center and other priorities set by Town Council."

The Town is planning a community reception for Ms. Tillerson in the near future and we will communicate that via the e-blast as well as on the Town website.

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Photo: Jack Kotz, Kiawah Island Photography Club

## Town Office Closings

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Wednesday, November 11th - Veterans Day  
Thursday, November 26th - Thanksgiving  
Friday, November 27th - Day after Thanksgiving  
Friday, December 25th - Christmas  
Friday, January 1st - New Years Day

## Town Notices

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The Town of Kiawah  
wishes you a happy and safe holiday season!

## Solid Waste Change Notices:

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### October

No change in service

### November

Thanksgiving Service Change:  
Yard debris will be picked up Friday, November 27th

### December

No change in service  
Brown Trash/Hazardous Waste-Friday, December 4th.



## Emergency Notification System

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A critical component of the Town's emergency management is its emergency telephone notification system, CodeRED. If you have not already signed up for CodeRED, please do so now! CodeRED is the way that we will communicate with residents during a disaster and severe weather.

You can add yourself to the CodeRED notification system by visiting [www.kiawahisland.org](http://www.kiawahisland.org) | popular links | CodeRED or by calling 843-768-9166.

## Confidential Registry for Residents with Disabilities

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An important role of the Town is to help residents prepare for and to respond in emergencies.

In an effort to provide assistance to those with disabilities, the Town is compiling a list of residents with medical needs or a disability that would impede his/her ability to evacuate the Island in an emergency/evacuation scenario.

If you or a family member might require assistance, call or e-mail Rusty at 843-768-9166 or [rlameo@kiawahisland.org](mailto:rlameo@kiawahisland.org) to get on the list. Please supply your name, address and phone number.

# MAYOR'S CORNER –

## Charles R. Lipuma

Much has transpired since my last report to you when I advised that both our Administrator, Tumiko Rucker, and Treasurer, Ken Gunnells, resigned. In mid-July, I announced at a special Town Council meeting the findings of the forensic investigation. The forensic accountant concluded that Ms. Rucker and Mr. Gunnells were paid compensation of approximately \$125,000 over and above their authorized salaries and steps were taken to conceal and omit those payments. The full text of my public statement can be read on the Town's website.

This information was turned over to the U.S. attorney's office which is now handling the case. Town Council moved quickly to put in place stronger safeguards and financial checks and balances to prevent this from happening again.

In the two months since receiving the auditor's report the Town has completed the following actions:

- Replaced both our previous auditor and payroll provider. We have hired the auditing firm of Greene, Finney and Horton, LLP to become our new auditor. The auditing process has also been strengthened to require greater involvement and oversight by Town Council. We also hired ADP as our new payroll provider, and added additional safeguards to protect the integrity of the payroll system.
- Filed claims with our insurance carrier to recover losses identified by the external forensic audit. The Town believes that it has coverage in place that will replace much, if not all of the financial loss.
- Changed the town's practice regarding employee use of credit cards. The number of cards has been significantly reduced to only the mayor and employees who have an absolute business need. Accounting and approval requirements have been tightened.
- Added additional Council and independent oversight to important financial and personnel



decisions. An audit committee, consisting of one Council member and up to four town residents with significant financial expertise will be formed. This committee will provide support to Town Council and Town staff ensuring the integrity of our financial statements, compliance with legal and regulatory requirements and ethical standards and oversee the performance of the Town's independent auditors.

On September 10th, Town Council interviewed four highly qualified candidates for Town Administrator. The following week at a special Town Council public meeting Ms. Stephanie Monroe Tillerson was unanimously selected. On September 23rd, Ms. Tillerson was formally offered the Administrator position and accepted. We expect her to be on board October 26th.

We will continue to keep you advised on these and other important matters via the Town's website and biweekly e-blasts.

*Charles R. Lipuma*

## Biweekly E-Blasts

Are you subscribed to the Town's e-mail notifications?  
The Town uses several e-mail distribution lists to inform residents of a variety of Town related information and activities.

To be added to the Town's e-mail notification list, send your name and e-mail address to [sbraswell@kiawahisland.org](mailto:sbraswell@kiawahisland.org)

SUBSCRIBE

## ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SUPPORT COMING TO KIAWAH

Kiawah is benefiting from a much needed addition to the emergency medical services provided by Charleston County EMS (CCEMS). A CCEMS Quick Response Vehicle (QRV), staffed with a paramedic and advanced life support equipment, has been placed on Kiawah – effective September 18, 2015. The QRV is located on Kiawah every day will be in service during the 12-hour peak-time period of 10:00 am to 10:00 p.m. As response time data is reviewed, the staffing hours may be adjusted to cover the highest 12-hour incident period. The QRV staffing is planned to transition to 24-hour /7 days per week in 2016. Before this change, all of the County’s emergency medical support for Kiawah came from emergency units positioned off-island. Deputy County Administrator Christine DuRant explained “This is the first of a number of additions to EMS equipment and personnel slated to roll-out county-wide over the next year.” DuRant expects that Kiawah should experience an additional improvement in EMS response times as these resources are added.

According to EMS supervisor Todd McGeorge, the QRV, which is a specially equipped Chevrolet Tahoe SUV, provides all of the advanced life support (ALS) capability and equipment of a full ambulance. The only difference, according to McGeorge, is that the QRV cannot transport patients to area hospitals. Before the addition of this unit, the primary advanced life support unit available to Kiawah was the County’s Unit Medic 10, which is stationed on Betsy Kerrison Parkway and is shared with much of Johns Island.

The Town’s Public Safety Committee chair, Craig Weaver emphasized, “This is a very positive change.” The County’s emergency medical support to Kiawah has been stretched and separate consultant studies commissioned by both the Town

and the St. Johns Fire District last year highlighted a need to expand the County’s resources directed toward Kiawah and reduce response times for calls requiring advanced life support or hospital transit. The County’s addition of the Paramedic – ALS QRV to Kiawah will allow improved response times since the unit will not be traveling several miles to reach Kiawah. We would like to see response times closer to eight to fourteen minutes on Kiawah, depending on location, for calls where paramedic advanced life support skills or hospital transport capability is required.”

Emergency medical support to Kiawah is jointly provided by Charleston County EMS and the St. Johns Fire District, with each having different roles, but working closely together. According to Fire Chief Colleen Walz, when a 911 call from Kiawah is received by Charleston County 911 Center, both organizations are notified and begin an immediate response. “Because the fire district’s personnel are located on the island, SJFD is the first responder to the majority of calls on the island. Each unit at our two Kiawah stations is staffed with EMT certified personnel whose job is to provide initial medical support. For more serious calls requiring advance life support or possible hospital transit we are trained to provide the necessary care and stabilize the patient until a Charleston County EMS unit arrives.” The fire district’s goal is to have their personnel respond to a 911 medical call anywhere on Kiawah within four to six minutes.

The Town and SJFD have recently agreed on a multi-year funding plan to enhance the medical training of their Kiawah based personnel. An initial \$50,000 grant to the fire district will be used to train and certify personnel to a higher EMT- Advanced certification. Commenting on this funding, Chief Walz stated that, “the St. John’s Fire District is committed to enhancing and improving its service to our constituents, and the generous grant from Kiawah will aid St. John’s to accomplish that mission.”

Charleston County EMS and the St. Johns Fire District have been working with public safety committee members Yvonne Johnston and Bill Thomae to explore additional improvements. Medical emergencies that require hospital transit still continue to be a concern for the Town, especially because of the long distance between Kiawah and the area’s hospitals and the current shortage of transport units. In the twelve months between May, 2014 and April, 2015, Kiawah had approximately 305 calls, with about half requiring transport to an area hospital.

In July of this year, the County increased its EMS budget and is in the process of ordering new QRV’s and transport units. As this additional equipment and personnel are placed in service, both Thomae and Johnston will continue working with CCEMS to identify ways to improve service levels to Kiawah.

Mayor Lipuma states “Seeing these emergency medical improvements has been a major goal for the Town. The fire district and county EMS organization have well trained personnel with a proven ability to provide outstanding emergency medical care. However, we need to ensure that the availability of those resources to Kiawah is expanded. We are committed to working with both entities to improve the level of service, especially response times, see more resources committed to Kiawah, and set and achieve aggressive targets for enhanced emergency medical care.”



# HURRICANE JOAQUIN - STATEWIDE FLOODING INCIDENT



Although Hurricane Joaquin missed the East Coast, it triggered the worst flooding in South Carolina history. “We haven’t seen this level of rain in the Lowcountry in 1,000 years” Gov. Nikki Haley said.

Certain areas of South Carolina had never before been deluged with such rainfall tallies: more than 24 inches in Mount Pleasant, nearly 20 inches in areas around Charleston and 20 inches on Kiawah. Some estimates say the state of SC received 4.4 trillion gallons of rain - 4 times the size of Lake Okeechobee in Florida.

## POST STORM BEACH REPORT



Town Biologist Aaron Given and Jim Jordan conducted a GPS survey of the dune line and a visual inspection of the beach on October 5, 2015. Erosion rates averaged 15-30 feet in most areas with the highest rates occurring on the eastern end of the island from Flyway Drive to the Ocean Course. Kiawah Island is blessed with a healthy, expansive dune system that allowed us to weather this extraordinary storm event with only minor damage. Kiawah’s beach and dunes will naturally recover and rebuild over the next few weeks and months. If you missed the post storm images and drone footage sent out by e-blast, you may view it at [www.kiawahisland.org](http://www.kiawahisland.org) | In the News.

### CAPTAIN SAM’S INLET TO BEACHWALKER COUNTY PARK

This area sustained 25-30 feet of erosion. There are no structures or boardwalks in this area. No Town action will be required.



**BEACHWALKER COUNTY PARK TO THE SANCTUARY** This area sustained 10-15 feet of erosion. A few boardwalks in this area need minor repairs. No Town action will be required.

**THE SANCTUARY TO 152 FLYWAY** This area sustained 5-15 feet of erosion. There were 5-6 small, 1 moderate, and 1 large breach in the primary dune in this area. All of these breaches occurred at low spots in the primary dune as a result of beach walkovers or foot paths. The small breaches extend less than 10 feet

beyond the primary dune and require no action. The moderate breach is adjacent to KICA Boardwalk 32 at the eastern end of Surfson Road. This breach extends 30-40 feet from the beach to the end of the boardwalk. The large breach is adjacent to Lots 128 and 129 on Flyway Drive. This breach is 90 feet wide and the resulting inlet of water extends 210 feet beyond the dunes. At the time of inspection, impounded water from behind the first tertiary dune was flowing out of this inlet into the ocean. Coastal Science and Engineering has been consulted and they recommend no action at this time. There are no homes threatened by this breach and impounded water should be allowed to dissipate before any repair actions are considered. CSE recommends reevaluating this area for possible later in October. No Town action will be required.

**152 FLYWAY TO 16TH TEE BOX OF OCEAN COURSE** This area sustained 25-30 feet of erosion. There are a number of walkovers in this area that will need to be repaired by homeowners. No Town action will be required.

**16TH TEE BOX OCEAN COURSE TO OCEAN COURSE CLUBHOUSE** This area sustained 40-100 feet of erosion. The beach adjacent to the 16th and 17th holes eroded approximately 60 feet. The beach adjacent to the 18th tee and fairway eroded approximately 100 feet. The short stretch of beach (250 feet) adjacent to the 18th green and practice green eroded approximately 75 feet. A large dune is still intact each of these areas and there is no imminent threat to the golf course. No Town action will be required.

**OCEAN COURSE CLUBHOUSE TO NEW DIKE** This area sustained 30-40 feet of erosion. Sand fencing installed after the East End project remains intact. Ocean Course Maintenance crews repaired 2 small areas that had washed out from heavy rains in this area. The new dike constructed during the East End Project was not breached and remains intact. No Town action will be required.

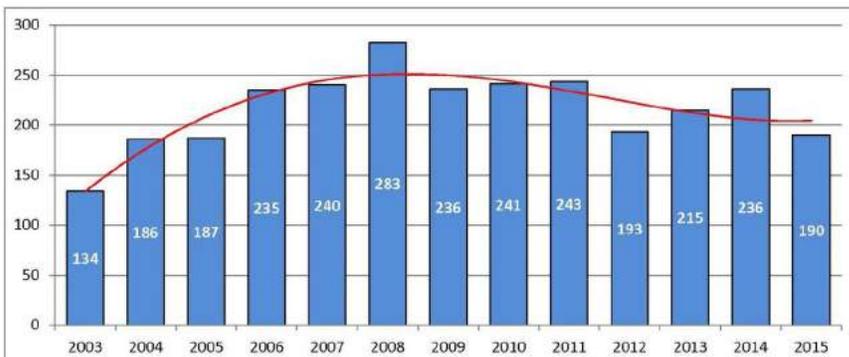
**NEW DIKE TO NEW INLET** This area sustained 80-100 feet of erosion. This section of beach is washed over by tides frequently. No Town action will be required.

## SEA TURTLE SEASON

Sea turtle nesting season has officially ended and the last nest was laid on August 8. A total of 321 nests were laid on Kiawah's beach this year, including 43 found by SCDNR personnel on the far eastern end of the island. This is the second highest nesting count recorded on Kiawah, topped only by the total of 402 in 2013. Most of the nests have hatched at this point and only 53 are still incubating. Volunteer hatching patrol teams are still actively checking unhatched nests and monitoring for signs of emergence. Once a nest hatches, the crew waits 3 days and then digs into the nest to count eggshells and hatchlings to determine nesting success. Coyote depredation of sea turtle nests has been a hot topic over the last few years. Coyotes depredated 7% of nests in 2012 and 2013 and rates peaked last year at 21%. This year coyotes depredated only 1% of nests. This is an encouraging sign and further indicates that Kiawah's coyote population has naturally declined and stabilized.

## ALLIGATOR RESEARCH

The 2015 Kiawah Island alligator spotlight survey was conducted on August 12-13. This survey has been conducted annually since 2003 and provides details on the density and distribution of Kiawah's alligator population. The survey was redesigned this year to make it more efficient and accurate. This survey is a joint effort between biologists from the Town of Kiawah Island and the Kiawah Island Community Association. Surveys are conducted each July or August for 2 nights and take approximately 3 hours to complete. Alligators are observed using spotlights and placed into categories based on their length. After completion of the survey, a conversion factor based on water temperature is used to generate the estimated total of alligators along the survey route. This raw estimate is converted to an alligator density based on the number of acres of water observed along the route. The graph below shows the estimated density of alligators per 100 acres on Kiawah Island beginning in 2003. As you can see, alligator numbers peaked around 2008 but have declined slightly and stabilized in the last few years.



## KIAWAH BANDING STATION

Each fall countless numbers of songbirds migrate from the forests and prairies of North America, where they breed, to their winter homes in tropical and subtropical forests. Kiawah Island sits along the Atlantic Flyway, which is one of the four major migration corridors in North America (the other flyways are the Mississippi, Central, and Pacific). During migration, birds must be able to find adequate food and water, and areas where they can rest. As habitat is lost or altered along the Atlantic coast, places like Kiawah Island become increasingly important "rest-stops" for migrating birds. Kiawah's lush habitat provides an oasis for these birds to rest and refuel so they can continue their southward migration.

To assess the importance of Kiawah Island as stop-over habitat for migrating birds, the Town of Kiawah Island, in partnership with the Kiawah Conservancy, created a long-term bird banding program in 2009 - the Kiawah Island Banding Station (KIBS). Birds are captured in fine mesh nets and fitted with a uniquely numbered aluminum band. If the bird is captured again, we can learn valuable information such as migration patterns and timing, survival, longevity, population distribution, and physical condition.

Now in its 7th season, KIBS has become one of the largest banding stations in the southeastern U.S. The 2015 fall season began on August 15th and will run until November 30th. Banding occurs every day, weather permitting, for 5-6 hours beginning at sunrise. We are only 3 weeks into the season but have already banded 650 birds of 37 different species. In addition, we have recaptured (birds that were already banded) 134 birds, some of which have been recaptured multiple times.

In addition to the banding site on the west end of the island, a new banding site on the east end of the island (Little Bear Island) was started this season. Both sites will be operated concurrently. The Little Bear banding site was started on September 7th and will run until mid November. It will be interesting to see how birds use the east end of the island in comparison to the west.

To follow along during the fall migration season, visit [www.kiawahislandbanding.blogspot.com](http://www.kiawahislandbanding.blogspot.com).



# FRESHFIELDS VILLAGE

For more information call 843.768.6491 or visit  
[www.freshfieldsvillage.com/events](http://www.freshfieldsvillage.com/events)



## DOGTOBERFEST

October 17 – (1- 5 pm)

Join Kiawah Island Community Association and Freshfields Village for Dogtoberfest. The pet expo event features a variety of pet vendor booths, a Meet & Greet with local pet rescue organizations, and live music from John Cusatis. Be sure to bring your pet for a costume contest at 2:00 pm with great prizes and Blessing of the Animals at 2:45 pm. Admission for the expo is free! Food and beverage will be available for purchase through a variety of local food trucks! Purchase a wine tasting ticket for \$20 to enjoy

specialty wines from Kiawah Wines (includes a commemorative wine glass). All proceeds of the event will benefit local pet adoption agencies in attendance. Pets are welcome on a non-retractable leash. For additional questions contact us at [dogtoberfest@kica.us](mailto:dogtoberfest@kica.us) or 843-768-3875.



## CARS & COFFEE (9-11 AM)

October 17 - (9-11 am)

November 21 - (9-11 am)

December 19 - (9-11 am)

Calling all car enthusiasts! Arrive in your favorite ride and join us for Cars and Coffee at Freshfields Village the 3rd Saturday of every month. The free event will feature antiques, classics, exotics, concepts and any other cool cars. Coffee and other refreshments available for purchase by Java Java Coffee House.



## SANTA VISITS THE VILLAGE

November 27 & 28 – Santa Photos (10 am – 6 pm)

November 29 – Santa Photos (1 – 6 pm)

Santa visits the Village every Thanksgiving Weekend. Families can visit Santa's Workshop throughout the weekend to meet the big guy himself, send their wish list to the North Pole and receive one free photo per family.

## HOLIDAY KID'S FESTIVAL

November 28 – (11 am – 3 pm)

The Holiday Festival is a full day of free activities including face painting by Cupcake the Clown, an inflatable obstacle course and jump castle and rides on the Mechanical Reindeer. Various craft booths are set up, including the North Pole Post Office to send your letters to Santa. The Big Bang Boom Band, an interactive children's band guaranteed to have the crowd on their feet, will perform. Food and beverage vendors will be on-site.



2015 - 2016  
SeasonTOWN OF KIAWAH  
**Arts**  
& CULTURAL  
EVENTS

Tickets are available online at [www.kiawahisland.org](http://www.kiawahisland.org) or at Kiawah Island Town Hall 843-768-9166. All events are open to public but Kiawah property owners have a 3 day lead time on tickets for Arts Council events. \*Cultural Events (in red) have only one release date.

## NOVEMBER

**HAOCHEN ZHANG, PIANIST**

Sunday, November 01, 2015  
4:00pm - Church of Our Saviour  
Ticket Release: Kiawah 10/13 Public 10/16

**FREDDY COLE QUARTET**

Wednesday, November 04, 2015  
7:30pm - Seabrook Island House  
Ticket Release: Kiawah 10/16 Public 10/21

**CHARLESTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Sunday, November 08, 2015  
6:00pm - East Beach Conf. Center  
No Tickets Required

**BRIA SKONBERG QUINTET**

Saturday, January 09, 2016  
7:30pm - Seabrook Island House  
Ticket Release: Kiawah 12/21 Public 12/24

**QUENTIN BAXTER PRESENTS  
CHANTALE GAGNE QUARTET  
WITH STEVE WILSON**

Saturday, January 16, 2016  
7:30pm - Turtle Point Clubhouse  
**\$20** Tickets via [www.baxtermusic.com](http://www.baxtermusic.com)  
or 843-766-8814 \* Ticket Release: 10/23

**LIQUID PLEASURE  
SUPERSHOW**

Friday, January 22, 2016  
7:30pm - East Beach Conf. Center  
Ticket Release: Kiawah 1/5 Public 1/8

## DECEMBER

**COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON  
MADRIGAL SINGERS & FEAST**

Sunday, December 06, 2015  
6:30pm - River Course Clubhouse  
**\$90 Dinner/Beverage Ticket**  
*Online tickets not available for this event*  
Ticket Release: Kiawah 11/17 Public 11/20

**BURNING RIVER BRASS**

Thursday, December 17, 2015  
7:30pm - Holy Spirit Catholic Church  
Ticket Release: Kiawah 11/30 Public 12/3

**ART FILM #2**

Friday, January 29, 2016  
3:00pm - Sandcastle  
No Tickets Required

**WASHINGTON SAX QUARTET**

with Young Artists Saxophone Quartet  
Sunday, January 31, 2016  
4:00pm - Church of Our Saviour  
Ticket Release: Kiawah 1/12 Public 1/15

## FEBRUARY

**ART FILM #1**

Friday, January 08, 2016  
3:00pm - Sandcastle  
No Tickets Required

**JOHN PIZZARELLI QUARTET**

Wednesday, February 03, 2016  
7:30pm - East Beach Conf. Center  
\* **\$10** Ticket Release: 1/20

TO SEE THE REST OF THE SEASON PLANNER VISIT  
[WWW.KIAWAHISLAND.ORG/SPECIAL-EVENTS](http://WWW.KIAWAHISLAND.ORG/SPECIAL-EVENTS)