

COMMUNITY NEWS

GYAC adjusts for children to attend camp

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Special to Treasure Coast Newspapers
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

VERO BEACH -- The Gifford Youth Achievement's annual Walter M. Jackson Summer Camp was scheduled to conclude Aug. 14. To say that this summer was different would be an understatement, but parents, staff and students adjusted to wearing face masks, daily temperature checks and no field trips.

"Yes, things were a bit different, but our passion for educating students and providing a safe learning environment is unwavering," said executive director Angelia Perry.

GYAC's summer camp teachers embraced the challenge of creating a safe and educational environment for students, so that children could recoup time lost in their classrooms due to COVID-19.

Aside from lessons in science, math, reading and language arts, campers created slime, built and flew kites, analyzed chemical reactions between soda and Mentos and started a garden revitalization project. Their afternoons were filled with games, walks along the nature trail, and recreation time in the gym.

Plans to offer an open house so parents could meet their child's teachers and see how campers spent their time shifted to a virtual open house. Ten short videos, available at www.gyac.net, showcase GYAC's teachers and provide an introduction to their class.

The GYAC also put on an end of camp bash as teachers manned eight stations, each with a unique activity.

Campers designed tie-dye T-shirts, created bubble blowing slime and competed in a variety of outdoor games. For lunch, staff fired up the grill and students were provided hamburgers, hot dogs and baked beans. The grand finale arrived in the afternoon when students were treated to freshly prepared popcorn, snow cones and cotton candy!

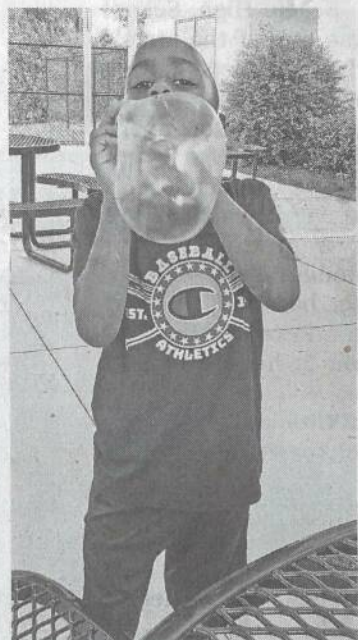
Throughout the summer GYAC adapted as needed. From converting the center's bi-monthly food giveaway and back to school supply distribution to a drive-thru format to extending camp by two weeks due to the school district's decision to shift the start of school, GYAC has remained a reliable resource for families in Indian River County.

The same will be true going forward as staff prepares for the start of the after-school program, which begins on Aug. 24.

For more information, please call 772.794.1005 or visit www.gyac.net.



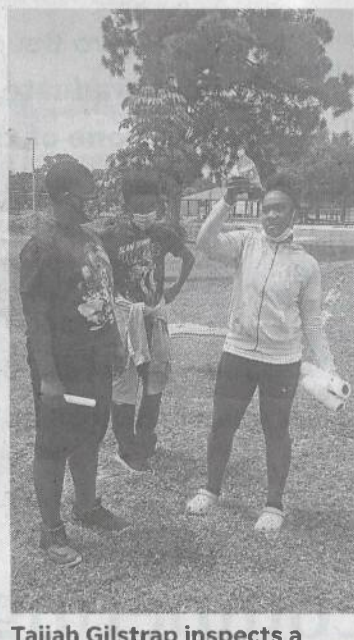
Johnecia and Jordan clear the garden. PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED BY GYAC



Chance James blowing slime bubbles.



Kendal Melton with freshly made cotton candy.



Tajah Gilstrap inspects a bottle of soda after a science experiment.



Samantha Rossbach and Makayla Feagin enjoy their snow cones.