

**CHILDREN'S FILM**  
**" *TURKLES* "**  
**To Be Produced in**  
**Palm Beach County by**  
**Local Veteran Filmmaker**

**WHO:** Frank Eberling, a veteran educator and Florida filmmaker for over thirty-five years, and owner of PALM BEACH FILM GROUP, Inc. since 1981.

**WHAT:** Eberling announced that he will produce and direct a children's film based upon his own script, geared to the eight-twelve year old audience demographic and their parents.

The full-length feature, *TURKLES* is about a group of eighth graders who monitor loggerhead turtle activity in the summer and join forces to solve the mystery of who is poaching turtle eggs.

An "environmental comedy" written to make both kids and their parents laugh, the kids encounter a group of adult knuckleheads similar to "the gang that couldn't shoot straight." A "G" rating will be sought.

**"Saving the Planet, One *TURKLE* at a Time."**

Two-page synopsis follows.

**WHEN:** Summer, 2009.

**WHERE:** Juno Beach and Jupiter, Florida

**WHY:** This highly underserved market is relatively easy to access using both traditional and Twenty-First Century marketing strategies.

**HOW:** Frank will utilize local actors and crews and plans to shoot 96% of the film in Palm Beach County, with one scene on the Ichetucknee River in North Florida. He is working in conjunction with the Motion Picture and Television Department of PALM BEACH COMMUNITY COLLEGE, and through the generosity of THE BURT REYNOLDS' INSTITUTE OF FILM & THEATRE.

**" *TURKLES* "**  
an original screenplay by  
Frank Eberling  
©2006, 2008

**"SAVING THE PLANET, ONE "*TURKLE*" AT A TIME."**

"*TURKLES*" is the story of a group of 12 year-old science geeks who spend their summer vacation volunteering their time at a place like The Loggerhead Marine Life Center in Juno Beach.

JENN and DAVID are the group leaders, and their band of friends consist of an off-beat and diverse bunch of 12 year-old misfits.

By night, along with the Staff at the environmental center, the kids help escort the tourists down the beach, hoping to witness and videotape a giant loggerhead turtle laying her eggs. The following mornings, the same group of kids and staffers walk the beach, marking the nesting sites from the night before, notating incubation progress, and reporting any irregularities. They make sure the hatchlings skitter back into the ocean after they hatch.

In the afternoons, the kids edit the videotape of their activities for an environmental documentary they are producing.

As the story opens, the daytime beach patrol discovers that a turtle nest has been looted by poachers. At one time, the theft of turtle eggs was a common practice. The eggs can be sold for great profit in the underground black market. Some South Florida cultures consider them delicacies and others use them for vitamin enhancement or mystical medicinal purposes.

When a second day's Beach Patrol discovers another looted nest, Jenn, David and their friends decide they are going to catch the poachers, even if it means sneaking out of their homes in the middle of the night to do it. The detective story begins for our young sleuths.

As the week wears on, the kids' daily routine continues, and after each night's walking tour, the next morning finds yet another turtle nest that has been looted. As the kids patrol the beach in the middle of their first night's surveillance patrol, they are mistaken for the poachers by local Rangers, arrested, and taken to jail.

The culprits in this story are actually four half-wits who have bungled their way through life on their way to adulthood. None of them has ever had a date or held down a job for longer than a week. They all live at home with their moms. In addition to providing the suspense and drama, these hapless knuckleheads provide the comic relief,

since they are like “the gang that couldn’t shoot straight.” Everything they do is a disaster.

As the kids narrow down the suspects, documenting the actions of the poachers in an attempt to build a case, we see an awakening, puppy-love interest develop between Jenn and David. Both are living in single-parent homes where money is tight and hopes for the future are dim. An already strong bond between them grows into something more.

Although their attraction is completely innocent, we see their affection build as they realize they share the same backgrounds, interests in marine biology, and their hopes for the future.

At the end, the kids capture the poachers, the poachers are sent to jail, the kids’ documentary wins an award, and Jenn and David are awarded college scholarships by the legendary “Turtle Diva,” who is a local philanthropist and environmentalist.

This heartwarming story, filled with Florida’s natural beauty both above and below the water, surprising off-beat humor, and some really neat characters, is partially based on true events that have happened in the Jupiter area.

A conscious attempt has been made to depict these kids realistically and not speak down to them in a condescending manner so common in kids’ movies. It is not “preachy” and does not hammer the audience with the overly-used, trite, “you-can-make-it-if-you-simply-follow-your-dream” bromides.

There is a surprise, bittersweet ending that lifts this story out of the Hollywood-style, sappy morass it could easily descend into.

Desired Rating is “G,” with a target audience of 8-12 year old kids and their parents. The parents can appreciate the humor as much as the kids in this story.

The title “*TURKLES*,” is derived from one of the kids. A near-mute because of a severe speech impediment, he has only one word of dialogue in the entire movie, when he tries to say “Turtles.” It comes out, “*Turkles*.”

**“SAVING THE PLANET, ONE *TURKLE* AT A TIME.”**

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## ***FLORIDA FILMMAKERS' SHOWCASE*** ***To Highlight Indigenous Florida Films***

Florida filmmakers wishing to produce low-budget, high-quality films set in Florida will soon find the job a little less daunting with the formation of The *FLORIDA FILMMAKERS' SHOWCASE (FFS)*.

Under that new banner Florida Filmmakers struggling to maneuver through everything from raising development funding to seeking production funding through marketing and distribution will work together to create feature films, documentaries, and television broadcast stage plays.

*FFS* seeks to streamline the process by developing and standardizing solutions to many of the common hurdles Independent Filmmakers face. According to Frank Eberling of PALM BEACH FILM GROUP in Jupiter and founder of FFS, "Currently, Florida independent filmmakers are all working on their own trying to overcome the obstacles encountered when trying to develop a low-budget film. It makes no sense for all of us to try to reinvent the wheel with each individual project. With *FFS*, we will seek out suitable films that fit our stringent criteria and help independent filmmakers work through the roadblocks."

Each film would remain in the hands of the directors, and *FFS* would help provide crews that would be a mix of professionals, recent graduates of Florida's film schools, and interns from Palm Beach Community College and The Burt Reynolds' Institute.

Once produced, the projects would utilize 21<sup>st</sup> Century marketing techniques for theatrical, cable, and DVD distribution. Then, they would be offered to Florida PBS for a broadcast premiere. A similar business model was used successfully by PBS' AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE series, which produced 150 low-budget films over fifteen years.

When presented with the FFS concept, Executive Officer Janyth Righter of Florida PBS said, "I loved AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE (model for *THE FLORIDA FILMMAKERS' SHOWCASE*) when it was on P.B.S. *THE FLORIDA SHOWCASE* concept, as presented, 'makes sense' for Florida P.B.S. stations."

Eberling added, "Because we want the films to be both commercially viable and suitable for PBS broadcast, we are currently developing very specific criteria for our content. In addition to being set in Florida and made by Florida filmmakers, it has to comply with other high standards, as well. I look to the films of Florida Filmmaker Victor Nunez as a role model. Enough people are making the drug-related violence and car chase films about Florida. We're about something different. Florida has many rich stories to tell, and we want to see those films and documentaries made. "

Eberling, a thirty-five year veteran of Florida filmmaking and producer of 100 Florida PBS documentaries, also wants to use new technologies to develop, produce, market and distribute films. "The entire business model is changing and the process independent filmmaking is in a great state of flux due to the technology and the marketplace. We want to develop a new paradigm for the Florida independent filmmaker, and offer something not currently being offered by any filmmaking community."

The first film on the slate is ***TURKLES***, a mystery comedy designed for 8-12 year olds and their parents.

According to Chuck Elder of the Palm Beach County Film & Television Commission, "The 'Florida Filmmakers' Showcase is a Fabulous idea! So is ***TURKLES***. You may add the Film Commission as a 'Moral Supporter' of (the) program.