

SEPTEMBER 2023 OIL LANTERN  
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P.O. Box 4323  
Ft Walton Beach, FL 32549

OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS  
ASSOCIATION

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Our September 2023 meeting will be held on **Monday, September 11** starting at 7 pm. For our September meeting, members will have the option of attending the meeting in-person at the Okaloosa Island Firehouse (104 Santa Rosa Blvd) or attending over the internet by Zoom. In a few days OILA members will receive a Zoom meeting invitation by e-mail, with instructions on how to join the meeting.

**IN THIS NEWSLETTER**

- Report from the President – **Brian Harrington**
- Brooks Bridge Ground Breaking
- Sept 11, 2023 Meeting Agenda
- Island News: Turtle Hatching And Crab Island Update
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- Draft Minutes – June 12, 2023 Report for August 2023
- Round About Photos of Brooks Bridge Construction
- Wuzzle Puzzle Answers
- Architectural Review Committee Report - Aug 2023



***Twenty containers of milkweed seedlings (in addition to seed packets) will be available (first come, first serve) for members at the September 11 meeting at the Firehouse. Plant Milkweed! Help bring Monarch butterflies to the Island!***



# THE OIL LANTERN- SUMMER 2023

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS ASSOCIATION, Inc  
P.O. Box 4323, Fort Walton Beach, FL 3254

Editor: Jim Simpson, (850) 585-2116 Association Website: [www.oilaweb.com](http://www.oilaweb.com)  
September 2023



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## REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT – Brian Harrington



I hope that everyone enjoyed the summer recess and was able to spend time with friends and family.

*I'd like to talk about membership.* The legitimate power of OILAs' voice resides entirely within its members. The will of our members is so important that according to our by-laws, OILAs' Board of Directors has virtually no authority to act without the approval of the membership. Our votes are the single most important asset to our organization in representing the will of island residents to our local government.

All of the 3,121 property owners on Okaloosa Island are associate members. However, in order to accurately represent the will of all islanders--all of the island's property owners need to become voting members of OILA.

Since our last members' meeting in June, the OILA Board of Directors has focused on facilitating the membership process by upgrading our online presence. Islanders now have the option to renew their membership simply by visiting [oilaweb.com](http://oilaweb.com). There's the ability to auto-renew and make donations as well. Additionally, we're reaching out to over 2,800 Island property owners via direct mail and encouraging them to become voting members of our organization.

*Voting membership still costs just \$12 annually and will remain as such until a time when--or if-- our membership votes to change it.*

Encourage your neighbors to become active in OILA—we're stronger together.

## GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY - NEW BROOKS BRIDGE



On August 23, 2023 the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) hosted a ground breaking ceremony for the Brooks Bridge replacement project in Okaloosa County. The \$171 million project includes constructing two new parallel bridges over the Santa Rosa Sound to increase bridge capacity and improve traffic flow for this primary east-west connector between downtown

Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa Island. To view a virtual video of the new bridge, click on the following Website: <https://youtu.be/dtuqx1x64uu>. Also featured on page 5 of this newsletter is a roundabout photo-rama of the current construction activity on the bridge project.

**September 2023 Meeting Agenda Date: Monday, Sept 11 Time: 7:00 p.m.**

- I. **PLACE:** For our September 2023 meeting, members will have the option of attending the meeting in-person at the Okaloosa Island Firehouse (104 Santa Rosa Blvd) or attending over the internet by Zoom.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. **Roll Call of Board Members:** Brian Harrington
- IV. **Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings:** John Donovan  
Draft minutes, June 12, 2023 Meeting (copy in this newsletter)
- V. **Treasurer's Reports for June 12, 2023 and September 11, 2023**  
Jim Simpson, Treasurer
- VI. **Standing Committee Reports:**  
Brian Smith: Architectural Review Committee Report for August 2023 (printed in this newsletter and for info only)

**VII. New Business**

- 1. The Board of Directors is requesting \$650 to retain the annual legal services of Moorehead Law Group.
- 2. The Board of Directors is requesting \$90 to reimburse Jay Waschak for the purchase of an updated web-hosting platform.

**Old Business**

- 1. Membership drive: The expenditure of \$3500 on postcards for distant property owners was approved in April. Postcards are to be finalized and mailed no later than December 31st.

**VIII. Announcements, Speakers and Programs:**

**XI. Adjournment**

**LOGGERHEAD TURTLES HATCH ON OKALOOSA ISLAND**

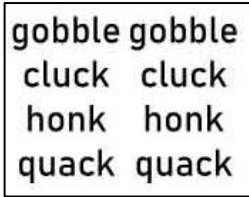


In late August a total of 158 loggerhead sea turtle hatchlings emerged from two nests on Okaloosa Island and made their way to the Gulf of Mexico. Emerald Coast Turtle Watch inspected the nests on Wednesday, August 30th, to evaluate the number of eggs and hatchlings from each location.

**CRAB ISLAND NEWS**

The National Parks Service *which claims jurisdiction over Crab Island as part of the Gulf Islands National Seashore*, is currently developing a Commercial Services Strategy and Environmental Assessment that could overhaul how vendors are allowed to operate in the area, and what services or goods would be permitted. Congressman Matt Gaetz and Destin Mayor Bobby Wagner both voiced strong opposition to the "proposed" changes, where at least 88 independent vendors could be replaced by a single concessionaire contract.

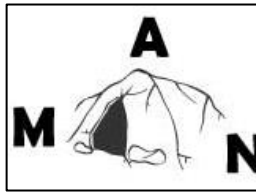
**WUZZLE PUZZLES** - What is a Wuzzle Puzzle? It is a puzzle consisting of combinations of words, letters, figures, or symbols positioned to create disguised words, phrases, names, places, etc. Are you ready to take the challenge and figure out the "disguised" meaning of these wuzzles? Good luck. The answers are available on page 5 of this newsletter.



**Wuzzle No. 1**



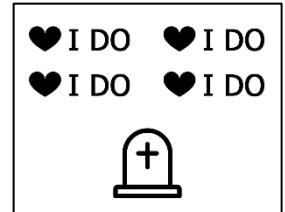
**Wuzzle No. 2**



**Wuzzle No. 3**



**Wuzzle No. 4**



**Wuzzle No. 5**

**THIS MONTH IN HISTORY – SEPTEMBER**

- September 4, 1888** - George Eastman patented the roll film camera for Kodak.
- September 8, 1994** - Microsoft gave Windows 95 its new name. Previously, the operating system had been referred to by its code name of "Chicago."
- September 9, 1776** - The United States came into existence as the Continental Congress changed the name of the new American nation from the United Colonies.
- September 16, 1940** - President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Selective Training and Service Act, which was another name for the draft. It required all men between the ages of 21 and 45 to register for the draft.
- September 17, 1862** – Civil War: The Battle of Antietam, the bloodiest day in U.S. history. Union and Confederate armies suffer a combined 26,293 casualties.
- September 19, 1876** - Melville Bissell patented a carpet sweeper.
- September 20, 1938** - Patent Number 2,130,948 was granted for "synthetic fiber" (nylon) to Wallace Carothers.
- September 24, 1980** - War erupted between Iran and Iraq as Iraqi troops crossed the border and encircled Abadan, then set fire to the world's largest oil refinery.

**AUGUST 2023 RAINFALL**

**3.5** Inches  
 Aug 4...**0.2** inches  
 Aug 5...**3.3** inches  
 Aug Avg Rainfall...**7.2** inches  
 Variance to Avg...**-3.7** inches  
 Sept Avg Rainfall.....**7.2** inches  
 Sept Record High.....**102° F**(1954)  
 Sept Record Low .....**37° F** (1967)  
 Sept Avg Water Temperature. **85° F**  
 Oct Avg Rainfall.....**4.3** inches  
 Oct Record High.....**99° F** (1954)  
 Oct Record Low .....**27° F** (1989)  
 Oct Avg WaterTemperature...**81° F**  
 YTD Variance ... **-17.0** inches  
 YTD Rainfall.....**29.1** inches  
 Avg Annual Rainfall: **65.1**

**DRAFT MINUTES:  
OILA MEMBERS' MEETING 12 JUN 2023**

LEGACY DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE: ED HENDERSON, LOUIS BELANGER, FRANK ADCOCK, DAVID JONES, JACK POUS

INCOMING DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE: BRIAN HARRINGTON, JEFF BOGGESS, CHRIS MILLER, STAN KING

This meeting was held at the firehouse and via ZOOM on 12 June at 1900CST. A quorum was established at 19:02 with 5 board members being present. The minutes from the May meeting were not available at the time and secretary John Donovan stated that the previous meeting's minutes would be briefed later in the summer. The treasury report was also not briefed.

Nick Hall rendered the ARC report for June with 3 projects gaining ARC approval. Ed Henderson introduced Brian Smith as a previous ARC member who was rejoining the ARC. Brian Smith mentioned his enthusiasm for ensuring that ARC approval process was done correctly. Dylan Hunt was invited to serve as an alternate ARC member. A member on Zoom questioned the status of the Beachview restaurant on Whelk Ct. Nick Hall stated that the ARC found that project not in compliance with the covenants and that the BCC had unanimously approved the project without discussion from the public. A discussion arose regarding Mr. John Dowd's challenging of the covenants by operating short term rentals out of a single family home located at 624a Pelican Drive. Further discussion regarding the logistic and traffic constraints arose regarding the Beachview restaurant, especially considering the BCC's intent to reduce traffic to 2 lanes in that area.

**New and Unfinished Business:**

Louis Belanger provided a progress report on the number of property owners on Okaloosa Island. After a thorough check, it was revealed that there are a total of 3700 properties on the island with a total of a little over 3,100 individual property owners. The intent is for these 3,100 owners to receive an informational postcard urging the to join OILA at their permanent residence. Jack Pous provided input regarding printing and mailing costs. Stan King mentioned the importance of following up with a personal contact following the postcard mailing.

Jack Pous led a discussion regarding the increase of membership dues primarily for the purpose of funding potential legal fees. He mentioned that the current dues structure is likely inadequate to support future litigation activities. He stated however, that a dues increase is at odds with OILAs goal of increased membership. Brian Harrington brought up the pending Dowd case v. the covenants and how the outcome of it impacts membership and OILAs future. The immediate need for an attorney to represent OILA was discussed. Brian Harrington mentioned that he already has an attorney looking into the relationship between the county and OILA.

Frank Adcock asked what single-family homeowners were willing to pay annually for dues. Brick Bradford brought up the fact that money spent for the purpose of litigation still requires membership approval. He stated that members need a sense of community and that there must be a value added to a dues increase. More discussion arose regarding assigning the appropriate balance between a dues increase and potential membership decrease with several members and directors providing input. Further discussion arose regarding voluntary donations to OILA and a method to facilitate these donations. Ultimately, it was decided not to cast a member vote on increasing dues at the time as the Board of Directors felt that there wasn't adequate representation of the membership to make a decision.

Jenny Harrison suggested that a committee be created for the purpose of surveying OILA members in order to determine an appropriate fee structure. She made a motion for 3-member sub committee to further investigate raising of the dues. Frank Adcock seconded the motion and Stan King agreed. Dave Sherry then stated that according to our by-laws, the president names the committees and the board ratifies the committee. President Henderson decided to leave this decision to the new board and the current board of directors concurred.

President Henderson then swore in the new members of the OILA Board of Directors: Brian Harrington, Stan King, Jerry Boggess, and Chris Miller. Ed Henderson then thanked the membership for their support during his tenure. Frank Adcock thanked Ed Henderson for his service and made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Ed Henderson.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42pm.

**ROUND ABOUT CONSTRUCTION PHOTOS OF THE BROOKS BRIDGE PROJECT AS OF SEPT 1, 2023**



**FORT WALTON BEACH SIDE**



**BROOKS BRIDGE**

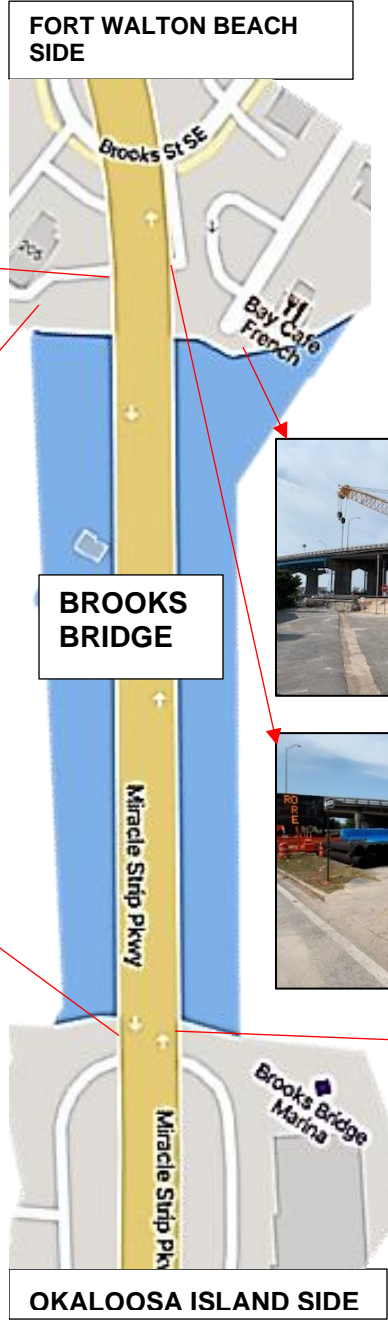


This photo collection of the current state of the construction work on the new Brooks Bridge is provided for the OILA members who live outside the Fort Walton Beach area. Those of us who are local see this construction every day. As noted in previous articles, eminent domain has been completed. All affected properties have been demolished. To date, the main lanes on the existing bridge are open without restriction. The estimated completion date is mid-2027, Improvements are:

1. Increase vertical channel clearings from 50 feet to 65 feet and the horizontal clearance from 140 to 150 feet
2. Six travel lanes – up from 4 lanes on the current bridge
3. Reconstruction of existing intersections to improve traffic. Upon completion, the only traffic light on Okaloosa Island will be found at the Convention Center - Boardwalk intersection.



Bridge Material and Equipment Storage. Site of the demolished Waffle House.



**OKALOOSA ISLAND SIDE**



Hope you find this photo-rama and this info up date useful.

Jim Simpson,  
Editor, the OIL  
Lantern

**WUZZLE PUZZLES ANSWERS**

**Wuzzle No. 1**



**FOUL LANGUAGE**

**Wuzzle No. 2**



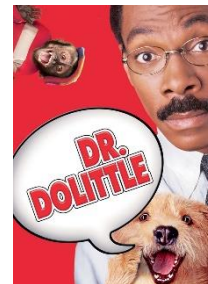
**ENGINEER**

**Wuzzle No. 3**



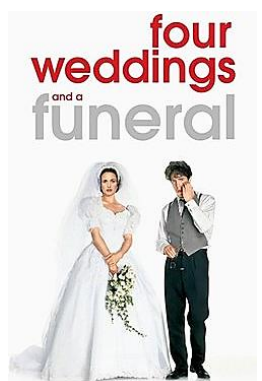
**MAN CAVE**

**Wuzzle No. 4**



**Dr. DOLITTLE**

**Wuzzle No. 5**



**Four Weddings & A Funeral**



**ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE REPORT FOR AUGUST 2023:** The OILA Architectural Review Committee (ARC) received and reviewed the following during June and July 2023 and upon review and adherence to the OILA Covenants, has approved the following project(s):

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Lot(s)</u> | <u>Block</u> | <u>Owner/POC/Address</u>      | <u>Description</u>   | <u>In-Compliance &amp; Approved</u> |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 9 Aug       |               |              | N. Hays<br>Courtyard Marriott | Sign Refurbishment   | YES                                 |
| 23 Aug      |               |              | D. Wright<br>Surf Dweller     | Exterior Restoration | YES                                 |

**Special Notes:** The OILA ARC instructions for your project are located on the OILA website:

[Okaloosa Island Leaseholders Association - OILA - Architecture Review](#)

Please read and follow the instructions for submission of an OILA ARC application:

3. OILA ARC review package:
  - 3.1. Completed OILA ARC application,
  - 3.2. Survey plat of the property,
  - 3.3. Overlaid illustration of the project on a copy of the survey plat.
  - 3.4. Other supporting documents\* (drawings, plans, specifications, etc.) (\*If these are large files, they can be submitted separately).

(Combine the files into one file for submission to the ARC, either in MS Word or Adobe PDF format.)

4. Email the completed ARC application file to the OILA ARC for review at [OILAARC@yahoo.com](mailto:OILAARC@yahoo.com).

The ARC applications will be reviewed in the order they are received and the review will be completed within 2 weeks of a completed application. (Note: The ARC no longer holds meetings in-person/zoom meetings the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday's of the month)