

JANUARY 2024 EDITION OF THE OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS NEWSLETTER, THE OIL LANTERN

Page 1 of 12 Pages



P.O. Box 4323
Ft Walton Beach, FL 32549

OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS
ASSOCIATION

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Our January 2024 meeting will be held on **Monday, January 8** starting at 7 pm. For our January 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.

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**First Place
Christmas
Decoration
Winner**

**709 Sailfish
Drive**

**Robert &
Michele Seitz**

2024
— HAPPY NEW YEAR —

THE OIL LANTERN

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
January 2024

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REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT – Brian Harrington

I'd like to begin by wishing all of our members a happy and prosperous New Year!

We closed out 2023 with a successful pantry food drive and OILA's annual Christmas decoration contest. The participants who adorned their homes did an amazing job and Okaloosa Island gets more festive with each passing year. Special thanks to our judging crew and all of the local businesses that donated prizes for the contest winners!

We're starting off 2024 on a positive note as the county is moving forward with a Jan 2nd public hearing and proposing a 3.5 million dollar multi-phased project to have Okaloosa County's Water and Sewer department replace the water transmission lines on the island from Bluefish Dr. to Tarpon Dr. I'm looking forward to this and other infrastructure initiatives that enhance the quality of life for all islanders.

As I mentioned in last month's newsletter I asked Brigadier General Geraghty, the commander of Eglin AFB, for the Department of Defense's position on the potential lane reduction on Santa Rosa Blvd. In his response, he indicated that *at this time the Department of Defense does not have an official position on what impact this project might have on our personnel or mission.* As the Santa Rosa Blvd improvement plan is still in its infancy, at the very least we now know that the leadership of Eglin AFB is now aware of OILA's concerns. As this plan continues to develop, we may see future USAF involvement.

As you may have heard, the plan for a ferry from Ft Walton Beach to Destin was abandoned last month. In its place, on Dec 18th the FWB City Council voted unanimously to consider a ferry route from the Landing Park downtown to the Okaloosa Island Boast Basin. The motion passed with a caveat that no city funds were to be committed. As of now, the county has not indicated support for this plan.

As a final note, last year we initiated improvements in OILA's online presence and technology. Online membership with automatic renewal is now a reality and we currently have about ½ of our members registered online. Encourage your neighbors to join online if they haven't already.

All the best for 2024!

OILA—We're stronger together



**January 2024 Meeting Agenda Date: Monday, January 8
Time: 7:00 p.m.**

I. PLACE: For our January 2024 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, November 13, 2023 Meeting (copy in this newsletter)

V. Treasurer's Report for January 2023 - Jim Simpson, Treasurer

VI. Standing Committee Reports: Brian Smith: Architectural Review Committee Report for November 2023 (printed in the December 2023 OIL Lantern and for December 2023 (printed in this Newsletter)

VII. New and Unfinished Business

1. Response from USAF regarding SRB plans
2. Results from the January 2nd Public Hearing
3. Island decoration committee & funding
4. FWB proposed ferry route discussion

VIII. Announcements, Speakers and Programs

XI. Adjournment

Dec 2023 Rainfall 7.6 Inches



Dec 1...**2.1** inches Dec 10..**0.3** inches
 Dec 2...**2.7** inches Dec 11..**0.6** inches
 Dec 3...**0.3** inches Dec 24..**0.1** inches
 Dec 8...**0.2** inches Dec 25..**1.0** inches
 Dec 9...**0.3** inches

December Avg Rainfall...**4.8** inches
 Variance to Average.....**+ 2.8** inches

Avg Rainfall for January.....**5.0** inches
 January Record High.....**80° F** (1957)
 January Record Low**4° F** (1985)
 Jan Avg Water Temperature....**64° F**

Feb Avg Rainfall.....**5.8** inches
 Feb Record High.....**80° F** (1980)
 Feb Record Low**11° F** (1951)
 Feb Avg Water Temperature. **64° F**

YTD Variance **- 14.3** inches
 Year to Date Rainfall.....**46.5** inches
 Avg Annual Rainfall**65.1** inches



ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE REPORT FOR DECEMBER 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 & Approved</u>
17 Dec			K. Gregory Blue Dolphin Condo	Exterior Reclad/Replace Windows	YES
29 Dec	144	4	C. Pumilia 417 Cobia Ave	Replace/Expand Deck	YES

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

<http://www.OILAwEB.com/ArchitectureReview.html>

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.)

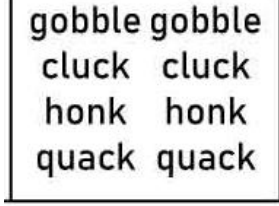
4. Email the completed ARC application file to the OILA ARC for review at OILAARC@yahoo.com.

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 1st and 3rd Thursday's of the month).

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 10 of this newsletter.



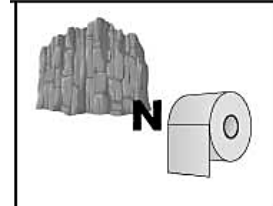
Wuzzle No. 1



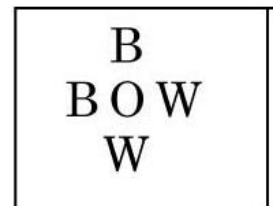
Wuzzle No. 2



Wuzzle No. 3



Wuzzle No. 4



Wuzzle No. 5



ARBOR DAY
JANUARY 19, 2024
10:00 A.M.

WOMEN VETERAN MEMORIAL
VETERAN'S PARK
OKALOOSA ISLAND
The tree planting ceremony of a bald
cypress commemorates the
100th anniversary of the Florida
Federation of Garden Clubs and the
22nd year of the Destin Garden Club.

Please join us in this statewide Florida
celebration of Arbor Day 2024.



OKALOOSA ISLANDERS DONATE 402 POUNDS OF FOOD TO THE SHARING & CARING FOOD BANK! - by Jim Simpson

I was very pleased to deliver 402 pounds of non-perishable foods and toiletry items to Sharing & Caring of Fort Walton Beach on December 26. Many thanks to the Islanders (and winter visitors) who contributed to this campaign and to the Okaloosa Island Fire Department for providing a drop-off collection point.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY – JANUARY



January 5, 1965 — The phrase "Home of the Whopper" was trademark registered by Burger King.

January 7, 1913 — Patent No. 1,049,667 was granted to William Burton for the manufacture of gasoline.

January 7 1906 — Campbell's soup was trademark registered.

January 15, 1861 — E.G. Otis was issued Patent No. 31,128 for "improvement in hoisting apparatus" (a safety elevator).

January 22,1895 — "Lifebuoy" soap was trademark registered.

January 26, 1875 — The first electric dental drill was patented by George Green.

January 31, 1851 — Gail Borden announced his invention of evaporated milk.

January 31, 1893 — Coca-Cola trademark for "nutrient or tonic beverages" was registered.

OILA MEMBERS’ MEETING 13 NOV 2023

Board Attendance:

BRIAN HARRINGTON	(BH)	Present
LOUIS BELANGER	(LB)	Present (Remote)
FRANK ADCOCK	(FA)	Present (Remote)
DAVID JONES	(DJ)	Present
DYLAN HUNT	(DH)	Not Present
JERRY BOGGESS	(JB)	Not Present
STAN KING	(SK)	Present
Secretary-John Donovan	(JD)	Present (Remote)
Treasurer- James Simpson	(JS)	Present

Agenda:

DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE: BRIAN HARRINGTON, LOUIS BELANGER (remote), FRANK ADCOCK (Remote), DAVID JONES.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: SECRETARY JOHN DONOVAN (remote), AND TREASURER, JAMES SIMPSON

This meeting was held at the fire station and via ZOOM on 13 November at 19:00 CST. A quorum was established at 19:00 with 5 board members being present. Absent was Dylan Hunt and Jerry Boggess.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited by OILA membership.

Brian Harrington made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 9, 2023. This motion was seconded by John Donovan and passed unanimously. No discussion.

Jim Simpson briefed November 13, 2023, and the November 2023 treasurer’s reports (copies attached to these minutes). Current OILA membership is 205 members. Brian Harrington made a motion to reimburse the Treasurer for expenses. This motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Brian Harrington provided the ARC report:

- Aqua Villa condo first floor stairs and landing for repair per code was approved.
- Replacement of trash shoots at the El Matador was approved.

New Business Agenda Items:

OILA Postcard Outreach Agenda Item:

Since April, OILA has discussed how to improve outreach for distant property owners about joining OILA. Board decided to improve the OILAweb.com site for members to respond to mailing and member registration. In addition, a new postcard has been created and mailed Nov 24th. Postcards have QR code directing recipients to the OILA website. Postcards were sent to over 3k owners, total cost was \$1,818. Also, have 500 blank cards to physically hand out. On the landing page of OILAweb.com, we have the current priorities of OILA shown on the site.

Brick B.: Approved of the strategy and appreciates the effort.

Frank Adcock Question: Wanted to confirm send date of the postcard was November 24th, 2024 (confirmed).

Questioned if there needs to be a vote by the board members on the content of the postcard. Frank had some comments on the postcard regarding the order of the issues on the landing page. The 6 issues listed on the landing page, Frank believes the issue related to the lane reduction to 50% for half of Santa Rosa Boulevard on the island should be listed first as it is the newest and most important item that owners need to be made aware about. Frank believes many Island residents may not be aware of the Counties intention to reduce lanes on Santa Rosa Boulevard as related to the longer existing issues. As the initiative has not been formally approved by the County, it is something they are pursuing.

Brian Harrington Response: proposed randomizing the order of the issues on the landing page. Also have the ability to add additional information on the page to prevent having to continually altering the printed post cards. Related to the priorities Brian explained that the idea was to list issues that impact all Island owners. Brian is open to having further discussions on the order in the Board of Directors meeting, and open to adjusting the order per the board feedback.

John Donovan Question: Is there a specific reason for having lane reduction #6 vs #1?

Brian Harrington Response: Wanted to emphasize protecting the environment first and have the last item be the lane reduction issue as it would leave a stronger impression. Again, emphasized he is not married to the current order. Pointed out that we need to follow procedures and have a motion from the floor to discuss this issue. Would need to have a board of director member discussion and vote on the issue order.

Frank Adcock Comment: Island fire department chief submitted opinion to County that 2 lanes of traffic will impede lifesaving response.

Motion from floor: Create a committee to investigate/study the work related to the OILA website. Proposes Brian H. and Jay W. would be on that committee. Motion was seconded.

Frank Adcock Question: Who has the authority to create and select members of the committee.

Brian Harrington Answer: Open to input on who can contribute on the committee. At the board meeting, additional members will be determined.

Environmental Impact Agenda Item:

Recently made aware of species of flower will be impacted by the government potentially developing the easements. This is the only flower the ground dwelling bee pollinates (gulf coast solitary bee) which is on the federal endangered species list. The government had 90 days to respond and did not, it is currently in litigation. These bees are harmless and pollinate this flower and only exist on Okaloosa Island and in two other counties. Brian, requests if anyone happens to see this bee and has ability to take a picture of them, please share with OILA.

Deer moss (subset) is on the endangered species list. Exists in Panama City, Henderson Beach. Has not been identified on Okaloosa Island, but again would impact government's ability to develop the easements.

Monarch Butterfly is also a species that will be impacted by easement development.

Food Drive Agenda Item:

Last year over 643lbs of food was collected. Pantry opens November 4th at the island fire station. Goal this year is to collect over 700lbs. Pantry accepts any nonperishable food. All goods go to the Sharing and Caring Food Bank that serves all of Okaloosa County.

OILA Website Update Agenda Item:

Jay commented they have made changes that address protecting owners' property. Also close to having ability for a member's portal, enabling real-time member voting, registration, and document retention.

BCC Code Enforcement Meeting Agenda Item:

Brian Harrington attended the BCC meeting. Outcome of the meeting was code enforcement board will adjudicate code violations of protective covenants on the island. The board will consist of unpaid members consisting of a regular citizen, architect, businessman, realtor, engineer, general contractor, and subcontractor. Instead of having to go to the BCC, violations will go to this code enforcement board hopefully expediting resolution.

Nancy Hunt Comment: When short-term rental issue was presented to code enforcement, the issue was sent to the County for guidance. County has never responded on how to enforce the covenants. The enforcement board does not know the covenants and looking for guidance from the County commissioners. Are they the appropriate entity to make rulings on the covenants if they do not have the expertise or authority to interpret the covenants?

Brian Harrington Response: Believes the change to the enforcement board will address this issue and prevent the issue from going back and forth between the County and code enforcement board. The previous discussion around

OILA creating a committee to interface with the County, this issue may be a topic that they address with the County. Right now, it's a wait and see to determine if the changes do address the inefficiencies with the current process.

Question from Susan: Is there a way to determine if the short-term rental homes are paying a bed tax?

Brian Harrington Response: Does not believe that it is possible identify where bed taxes are being paid. Something to research.

Comment from floor: Code enforcement does not proactively enforce the codes, there must be a formal complaint submitted.

Short-term Rental Case Update Agenda Item:

Plaintiff argues the covenants do not have language that prohibits short-term rentals, and the resolution of 1968 does not apply as it wasn't a proper amendment. Plaintiff argues they are not a leaseholder, rather a deed holder and the covenants do not apply.

OILA received a letter from Moorehead Law group that the 1955 covenants are still valid. Court will have to decide if short-term rentals is considered a business.

Case has yet to go in front of a Judge for judgement.

Regarding the 1955 covenants, the Island Authority in 1968 moved to make language changes to the covenants. Those changes are in bold/italicized on the current covenants. Those changes were never voted on by island home/landowners.

Question from Nancy Hunt: Who represents the island residents? Do we trust the County will protect the covenants? Covenants stipulate that transients are not permitted.

Brian Harrington response: The County is the defendant and will have to defend the covenants. OILA can request a friend of the court letter from Moorehead Law group on behalf of OILA and enter that into the docket stating the stance of OILA membership.

Question from floor: Can we have Carolyn Ketchel attend an OILA meeting to get her position on the short-term rental issue?

Comment from James Simpson: In 1975 when the state legislature abolished the Island Authority, the responsibility of enforcing the Island covenants was transferred to the County. In 1998 the first question was asked are short-term rentals allowed in B-1 zones. County responded, no.

In the future, there may be a membership vote to determine if OILA would like to proceed with the friend of the court letter.

Miscellaneous Item:

Comment from the floor: Regarding the Santa Rosa Boulevard Lane reduction, seems the island residents do not have much input into the plans the County has for reducing the road lanes.

Comment from Brick Bradford: County held a 3-month survey where 89% of respondents, with the majority living on the Island, said they did not want a lane reduction. Supported improving the roadway sooner rather than later, however, County officials rejected and did not honor the results of the survey.

Comment from Brian Harrington: This plan has not been finalized and will require state funding.

Comment from Frank Adcock: Barbara asked question does the County have a reason to reduce the lanes. Mel Ponder response to the lane reduction question was that's how the engineers drew it up. Otherwise, the answer was no.

Motion to fund Christmas decorations \$180: Seconded by John Donovan, no discussion.

End Business Agenda Items

Brian Harrington made the motion to adjourn the meeting and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 20:04 CST.

TREASURER'S REPORT: November 13, 2023

MEMBERSHIP TOTAL: 205

October 9, 2023 TOTAL BALANCE: \$27,762.13

ASSOCIATION DISCRETIONARY FUND BALANCE AS OF October 9, 2023.....\$ 26,252.80

RECEIPTS SINCE LAST REPORT:

Membership Dues.....	\$ 1,416.00
U.S. Mail Fees.....	\$ 144.00
*Donations.....	\$ <u>60.00</u>
Total Receipts.....	\$ 1,620.00



*Donations:	
Chris Miller.....	\$50.00
Robert Tassin....	\$10.00

EXPENDITURES:.....No Expenditures

EXPENSES PENDING APPROVAL FOR PAYMENT:

Reimburse Jim Simpson for the cost of postage to mail the October & November 2023 issues of The OIL Lantern.....	\$ 73.92
Reimburse Jim Simpson for the cost of postage for the special 2023-2024 membership renewal by U.S. mail effort.....	\$ 211.20
Reimburse Jim Simpson for the costs of envelopes and labels for the special 2023-2024 membership renewal by U.S. mail effort.....	\$ <u>64.20</u>
Total....	\$ 349.32

ASSOCIATION DISCRETIONARY FUND BALANCE AFTER RECEIPTS, EXPENDITURES & EXPENSES PENDING APPROVAL FOR PAYMENT AS OF NOVEMBER 13, 2023 \$ 27,523.48

BEAUTIFICATION FUND BALANCE AS OF October 9, 2023.....\$ 1,421.28

BEAUTIFICATION FUND EXPENDITURES SINCE LAST REPORTNo Expenditures

BEAUTIFICATION FUND BALANCE AS OF November 13, 2023.....\$ 1,421.28

CHRISTMAS DECORATING FUND BALANCE AS OF OCT 9, 2023.....\$ 88.05

CHRISTMAS DECORATING FUND EXPENDITURES SINCE LAST REPORTNo Expenditures

CHRISTMAS DECORATING FUND BALANCE AS OF November 13, 2023 \$ 88.05

SUMMARY: November 13, 2023 Fund Balances

-- Association's Discretionary Fund Balance.....	\$ 27,523.48
-- Beautification Fund Balance.....	\$ 1,421.28
-- Christmas Decorating Fund Balance (Donations).....	\$ <u>88.05</u>

TOTAL FUNDS BALANCE.....\$ 29,032.81

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Simpson, Treasurer

WINNERS – OKALOOSA ISLAND
CHRISTMAS 2023 DECORATING CONTEST



First Place, Bob & Michele Seitz, 709 Sailfish



Second Place, Jenniffer & Keith Brewer, 619 Pelican Drive



Third Place, Terry Aniballi, 841 Santa Rosa Court



Fourth Place: Zabrina & Scott Horne, 425 Caviar Drive



Most Artistic, Rudy Troutman, 710 Sailfish Drive



Griswald Award, Alan & Carmen Parker, 708 Sailfish Drive



Honorable Mention: Trieu & Jennifer Vo, 907 Santa Rosa Blvd



House Beautiful, Lee & Dawn Newton, 612 Pelican Drive



Honorable Mention – El Matador Condo

Hallmark Home

Sarrah Cumbie,
614 Pelican Dr



Most Whimsical

Deanna & Jesse
Hunt

702 Sailfish
Drive



WUZZLE PUZZLE ANSWERS

Wuzzle No. 1



Bad Influence

Wuzzle No. 2



Foul Language

Wuzzle No. 3



Double Agent

Wuzzle No. 4



Rock N Roll

Wuzzle No. 5



Cross Bow



Okaloosa Island Garden Club

The Island Garden Club ladies ended the 2023 season with a fantastic Christmas Party at the Wyndham Garden Inn on the Island.

We start the new year with a program on the

care of house plants presented on January 10th. starting at 9:30 with good food and fellowship. We meet at the hospitality room of El Matador on the island. Please join us .

For additional information please call Susan Wall at 205-907-0393.