

**JULY- AUGUST 2025 SUMMER SPECIAL EDITION OF THE OKALOOSA
ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS
NEWSLETTER, THE OIL LANTERN
Page 1 of 7 Pages**



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

OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS
ASSOCIATION

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

**Next Meeting: LOCATION: Okaloosa Island Fire Station, 2nd Floor
Meeting Room TIME: 7:00 p.m. DATE: Monday, Sept 8, 2025.**

IN THIS NEWSLETTER

- Message from the President
- Hurricane List for 2025
- Rainfall for June & July 2025
- Trivia Crawler: The First Social Security Check
- This Month in History – August
- Island Garden Club Annual Picnic and Installation of Officers
- Golf Carts on Okaloosa County Roads
- Update: Brooks Bridge Replacement Construction
- Master Gardner Lectures Series – Hydroponic Growing– August 18



Pedestrian/Bike Path Almost Completed

Construction of the 4 mile long, 12-foot-wide path is expected to be substantially completed this month.

SPECIAL NOTICE: THE ASSOCIATION DOES NOT HOLD REGULAR, MONTHLY MEETINGS DURING THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST. THE NEXT REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, SEPT 8, 2025.



The OIL Lantern

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OKALOOSA
ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS ASSOCIATION, Inc
P.O. Box 4323, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549,
Editor: Jim Simpson, (850) 585-2116
Association Website: www.oilaweb.com
July-August 2025 Summer Special



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By-Laws of the Okaloosa Island Leaseholders Association Article 1, Section 3

The general nature of the corporation shall be: to coordinate affairs between leaseholder members and the Board of County Commissioners in their role as heirs to the obligations and privileges of the Okaloosa Island Authority, to preserve the public lands on Santa Rosa Island, Okaloosa County, to advise and assist the county in the application of the protective covenants that affect leasehold members and to advise leaseholders and the public in general in their rights and obligations under said leases.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT – Brian Harrington

It's been a sweltering summer season and before the Island starts to cool off—here's an update on things that have happened since our last meeting.

Hail & Farewell:

I'd like to begin this newsletter by thanking the members of our outgoing Board of Directors—Dr. Frank Adcock, Mr. Louis Belanger, Mr. Dylan Hunt, and Mr. David Jones. Their passion for our Island's Community has been unsurpassed and it has been my pleasure to work closely with them as they worked diligently to improve the quality of life for all Okaloosa Islanders. I trust that they'll remain indispensable members of OILA whom the new leadership can rely upon for advice and mentorship. We're also enthusiastic to welcome our new directors—Jesse Hunt, Eddie Wall, Lori Waschak, and Steve Scott—all of whom are full-time island residents. Your new directors have all demonstrated a desire to make the Island the best place to live in Okaloosa County through their past performance and their involvement with both OILA and our county government. I'm truly fortunate to be able to work alongside them during my last year as president.



Water and Sewer Update:

The water and sewer upgrade is on track as the county works to repair and upgrade the sanitary sewers on the north side of the island using silicone-based liners. For those who were wondering, the blue 4-inch pipes that are sticking out of the front yards are the new sewer clean-outs for homes that didn't have them near the roadway. The water supply lines to the single-family homes are scheduled for installation following the tourist season, as this will involve substantial roadway work.

State Funding:

Gov. Ron DeSantis just approved Okaloosa County's request to receive \$7M in state funding following the signing of the State's \$115 billion budget. Part of the state budget is the approval of \$1M worth of state funding for the Santa Rosa Boulevard Improvement Project. Additionally, 1.46M was allocated to the Okaloosa County Coastal Storm water Retrofit Program which aims to keep sediment, bacteria and unwanted nutrients out of Choctawhatchee Bay.

East Pass Dredging:

Last week the county received 320k in matching funds from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to study supplemental dredging of the East Pass. Supplemental dredging aims to provide increased volumes of beach-quality material to balance erosion on adjacent beaches and extend the life of beach restoration projects. The expanded operation should extend the maintenance-dredging interval, and reduce potential impacts to the local economy and costs for both local and federal governments. ***In accordance with Florida Statute 161.142, the sand removed during dredging operations is to be placed on adjacent beaches—either east or west of Destin's East Pass in order to combat erosion.*** The project's construction phase is scheduled for in 2027-2028.

Bike Path:

It's been one year since last July's Bridge-to-Bridge bike path groundbreaking ceremony. At the time of this writing, the project nears its finish and will likely be completed in the next few weeks. --I'm looking forward to attending the upcoming ribbon cutting ceremony.

Stay in touch with projects that concern Islanders by visiting oilaweb.com.

OILA—One neighborhood, stronger together

HURRICANE LIST FOR 2025

Andrea	Humberto	Olga
Barry	Imelda	Pablo
Chantal	Jerry	Rebekah
Dexter	Karen	Sebastien
Erin	Lorenzo	Tanya
Fernand	Melissa	Van
Gabrielle	Nestor	Wendy

June 2025 Rainfall: 4.8 Inches

June Avg Rainfall.....**6.1** inches
Variance to Average.....**- 1.3** inches

July 2025 Rainfall: 3.1 Inches

July 1.....**0.2** inches July 23....**0.1** inches
July 15....**1.1** inches July 29....**0.2** inches
July 17....**0.5** inches

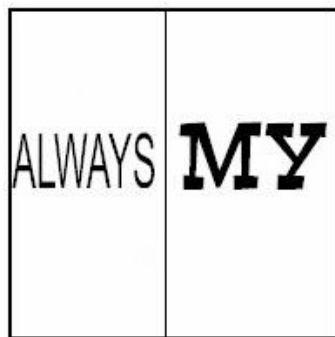
July Avg Rainfall.....**8.5** inches
Variance to Average..... **- 5.4** inches

Aug Avg Rainfall.....**7.2** inches
Aug Record High.....**103° F** (1980)
Aug Record Low **59° F** (1989)
Aug Avg Water Temperature....**85° F**

2025 Total Rainfall.....**21.6** inches
2025 Variance to Average....**- 16.3** inches

Avg Annual Rainfall**65.1** inches

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](#) of this newsletter.



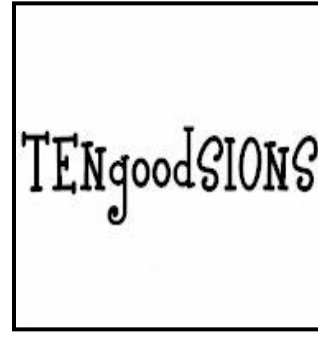
Wuzzle No. 1



Wuzzle No. 2



Wuzzle No. 3



Wuzzle No. 4

TRIVIA CRAWLER: THE FIRST SOCIAL SECURITY CHECK WAS FOR \$22.54

Ida Mae Fuller



Since Social Security has been in the news lately, it is only appropriate to do an article on the first person to receive a social security check. On January 31, 1940, the first monthly retirement check was issued to Ida May Fuller of Ludlow, Vermont, in the amount of \$22.54. Miss Fuller, a Legal Secretary, retired in November 1939. She started collecting benefits in January 1940 at age 65 and lived to be 100 years old, dying in 1975.

Ida May Fuller worked for three years under the Social Security program. The accumulated taxes on her salary during those three years was a total of \$24.75. Her initial monthly check was \$22.54. During her lifetime she collected a total of \$22,888.92 in Social Security benefits.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY – AUGUST

August is the eighth month of the year in both the Julian and Gregorian calendars, consisting of 31 days. It was named after Augustus Caesar the first Roman emperor and was originally known as **Sextilis**.



August 2, 1939 - Albert Einstein wrote a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt concerning the possibility of atomic weapons. As a result, President Roosevelt initiated the Manhattan Project to build a bomb.

August 8, 1911 - Patent Number 1,000,000 was issued to Francis Holton for a vehicle tire.

August 15, 1969 - Woodstock began in a field near Yasgur's Farm at Bethel, New York. The three-day concert featured 24 rock bands and drew a crowd of more than 300,000 young people.

August 20, 1866 - The Civil War is formally declared to be over by President Andrew Johnson.

August 21, 1959 - President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a proclamation admitting Hawaii to the Union as the 50th state.

August 21, 1888 - The first practical adding & listing machine (calculator) was patented by William Burroughs.

August 23, 1836 - The Texas Declaration of Independence was adopted, declaring Texas independent from Mexico.



August 31, 1997 - Britain's Princess Diana died at age 36 from massive internal injuries suffered in a high-speed car crash, reportedly after being pursued by photographers.



It was All Hands-on Deck for the Island Garden Club's annual picnic and Installation of Officers at Marler Park. Thank you to Navigator Susan Wall, Quartermaster Yvonne Earle, and Boatswain Connie O'Neal for taking on new positions. Captain Kathy Foster will continue at the helm with the help of all crew members.

After a summer hiatus, the club will meet on Wednesday September 10, 10:00 a.m., at El Matador's first floor meeting room. We look forward to welcoming our neighbors and friends. Questions? Give us a call.

Kathy Foster
fosterpk@gnt.net
850-244-4490

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GOLF CARTS ON COUNTY ROADS

(Editor's Note: This update on the impact of the revised County ordinance regarding golf carts on Okaloosa County roads provided by District 2 County Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel.)

On June 10 the County Commission adopted changes to our existing ordinance regarding golf cart operation on county roads to comply with updates to Florida Statutes. In the hope that we can clarify the questions that have been asked, here is a summary of the new ordinance as it applies to unincorporated areas of Shalimar, Fort Walton Beach and Rocky Bayou Estates Subdivision.



- A golf cart is defined as a motor vehicle that is designed and manufactured for operation on a golf course for sporting or recreational purposes and that is not capable of exceeding speeds of 20 miles per hour.
- Golf carts may only be operated upon a residential roadway with a posted speed limit of 25 miles per hour or less that is clearly posted for use by golf carts.
- Golf carts may not be operated on public roads or streets by persons under the age of 18 unless he/she possesses a valid learner's driver's license or valid driver license; or by a driver 18 years of age and older unless he/she possesses a valid form of government-issued photographic identification.
- Golf cart operators must obey all traffic regulations applicable to motor vehicles.
- The number of passengers shall be restricted to the number of seats on the golf cart. All passengers shall remain seated during operation and no person shall ride on the exterior of the golf cart.

The use of golf carts within the **Lake Lorraine subdivision, Meigs Drive, Dogwood Drive, 1st Avenue and portions of 8th Street** are also restricted as follows:

- A golf cart may be operated on county-maintained roads only between the hours of sunrise and sunset. A golf cart may be operated outside this timeframe if it is equipped with headlights, brake lights, turn signals, and a windshield.
- A golf cart may not be operated upon 12th Avenue, 12th Street, 4th Avenue, 8th Street north of 1st Avenue, 3rd Street, 2nd Street, or Old Ferry Road north of Meigs Drive. Signs shall be posted to notify drivers of this restriction.

The use of golf carts within designated areas of **unincorporated Shalimar** are also restricted as follows:

- A golf cart may be operated on county-maintained roads only between the hours of 30 minutes before sunrise and 30 minutes after sunset. A golf cart may be operated outside this timeframe if it is equipped with headlights, brake lights, turn signals, and a windshield.
- A golf cart may not be operated upon Poquito Road north of Holley Avenue nor upon Sunset Lane east of Hillcrest Drive.

The use of golf carts within designated areas of **unincorporated Fort Walton Beach** are also restricted as follows:

- A golf cart may be operated on county-maintained roads only between the hours of 30 minutes before sunrise and 30 minutes after sunset. A golf cart may be operated outside this timeframe if it is equipped with headlights, brake lights, turn signals, and a windshield.
- A golf cart may not be operated upon Carmel Drive, Denton Boulevard, James Lee Road, Lewis Street, Mayflower Avenue and Navy Street. Signs shall be posted to notify drivers of this restriction.

The use of golf carts within designated areas of **Rocky Bayou Country Club Estates Subdivision** are also restricted as follows:

- A golf cart may be operated on county-maintained roads only between the hours and sunrise and sunset. A golf cart may be operated outside this timeframe if it is equipped with headlights, brake lights, turn signals, and a windshield.
- A golf cart may only be operated upon a residential roadway with a posted speed limit of 35 mph or less that is clearly posted for use by golf carts.
- A golf cart may not be operated upon College Boulevard or Forrest Drive and signs shall be posted to notify drivers of this restriction.

Update: Brooks Bridge Replacement Project

Source: FWB Life, July 2025 Editon

Brooks Bridge Replacement Project Continues Progress -Major Upgrades Promise Smoother Travel, Safer Pedestrian Access and Scenic Views

Drivers and residents in Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa Island can expect significant changes in the coming years as the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) continues work on the long-anticipated Brooks Bridge Replacement Project.

One of the key features of the \$171 million project is the reconstruction of Santa Rosa Boulevard, which will pass under the new bridge. To maintain access and improve traffic flow between U.S. 98 and Santa Rosa Boulevard, two new connector roads are being built:

- **East Connection:** A new four-lane road linking Santa Rosa Boulevard to U.S. 98 eastbound. Westbound drivers on U.S. 98 will also be able to turn left onto East Connection to reach Santa Rosa Boulevard.
- **North Connection:** This new road will feature a ramp to U.S. 98 westbound, providing access to Brooks Bridge. It will also include a dedicated right-turn lane for reaching Santa Rosa Boulevard north of U.S. 98.

Recent construction photos show curb and sidewalk installation underway, with asphalt now being laid on the new lanes. When complete, the new Brooks Bridge will feature two parallel spans - each carrying three lanes of traffic in either direction.

This expansion will replace the existing four-lane bridge, which dates back to 1966. The new bridge will stretch 2,111 feet—nearly 800 feet longer than the current structure—and offer 65 feet of vertical clearance, meeting updated U.S. Coast Guard requirements.

Pedestrians and cyclists will also benefit. Each bridge will include a 12-foot-wide shared-use path with scenic overlooks, shade structures and protective barrier walls to separate foot traffic from vehicles.



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Additional improvements include:

- Intersection upgrades from Perry Avenue to Pier Road
- Elimination of the traffic signal at U.S. 98/Santa Rosa Blvd. for improved flow
- ADA-compliant pedestrian access at surrounding intersections
- New drainage systems and storm water retention ponds

The project spans from Eglin Parkway to Pier Road and is expected to be completed by summer 2027.



Photo of Progress of Bridge Construction (U.S 98 Westbound Approach) Taken in May 2025



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countyextinfo@myokaloosa.com, or 850-689-6850, at least 1 week in
advance. Advance notice is necessary to arrange for some accessibility needs.

Equal Opportunity Employer

**Monday
August 18
10 am**



WUZZLE PUZZLE ANSWERS

Wuzzle No. 1



ALWAYS BY MY SIDE

Wuzzle No. 2



DAY BREAK

Wuzzle No 3



HORSE BACK RIDING

Wuzzle No. 4



GOOD INTENTIONS

FIVE AND TEN YEARS AGO – OKALOOSA ISLAND TIMELINES

Five Years ago, OILA member Catherine Jones, age 82, passed away on July 23, 2020. Cathy served on the Okaloosa Island Fire District Board of Commissioners for 19 years (2001 to 2020). Her legacy in the Fire Department provided first class safety and security for the residents of and for visitors to Okaloosa Island.

Ten Years Ago: At the June 17, 2015 meeting of the Okaloosa Island Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners Eglin Air Force Base Fire Chief Mark Giuliano presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Okaloosa Island Firefighters for their assistance in responding to the search on March 11, 2015 for a missing U.S. Army HU-60 Blackhawk helicopter with 11 personnel aboard. Tragically, the helicopter crashed and none of the passengers survived.