

**FEBRUARY 2026 EDITION OF THE OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS
NEWSLETTER, THE OIL LANTERN**

Page **1** of **6** Pages



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

**OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS
ASSOCIATION**

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Our February 2026 meeting will be held on **Monday, February 9** starting at 7 pm. For our February 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

- Message from the President
- Meeting Agenda for February 9, 2026
- Rainfall for January 2026
- Architectural Review Committee Report for January 2026
- Draft Minutes – Jan 12, 2026 Meeting
- Wuzzle Puzzles
- This Month in History – February
- Okaloosa Island Fire Department Welcomes Firefighter & EMT **Collin McManus**
- Wuzzles Puzzles Answers



Saturday, February 14



Monday, February 16



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
February 2026



OILA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025-2026

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- Jesse Hunt**
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- Stan King**
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- Mark Waschak**
secretary@oilaweb.com
- Jim Simpson**
treasurer@oilaweb.com

**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



Parking Fees for Okaloosa Island?

Two weeks ago, Okaloosa County’s Facilities and Parks Maintenance Department requested that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) place a proposal to pursue Pay-to-Park Services on Okaloosa Island on their upcoming agenda. This would mean that beach goers would now pay to park at the Island’s 7 Beach Access Ways, Marler Park, and Beasley Park. Under the proposal’s guidelines, parking would be free to Okaloosa County residents—at least for now. One justification for this proposal is simply that *everybody else does it—so why not us?*

I can think of about 87 Million reasons not to do this that are directly related to the County’s Tourism Development Council’s dollars. I fear that pay-to-park lots will only encourage visitors to park their vehicles in vacant condo owners’ parking places and on residential streets as they attempt to avoid paying for something that has always been free.

...And Convert Beach Access #1 Into a Parking Lot?

Simultaneously, the Parks Department proposed an agenda request to the BOCC to convert the North side of Beach Access #1, which is a pedestrian beach easement located within a dune system, into an “overflow parking lot.” Half Associates’ engineers have already drawn up plans for this parking lot and they were presented to the County’s Office of Growth Management during a meeting two weeks ago. Both OILA’s Secretary and myself were in attendance and voiced our legal concerns.

What to do about it?

As paving Beach Access Way #1 is patently against the Island’s Protective Covenants and Restrictions, I have informed the Facilities Parks and Maintenance Department and well as Growth Management that they have yet to perform a legal and environmental review of this parking lot project. *In the meantime, I have contacted OILA’s legal council and requested a legal review with regard to the Island’s Protective Covenants.*

*Don't it always seem to go
 That you don't know what you got 'til it's gone?
 They paved paradise and put up a parking lot...*

*They took all the trees and put 'em in a tree museum
 And they charged the people a dollar and a half just to see them
 No, no, no*

--Big Yellow Taxi by Joni Mitchell

For quality of life reasons for Okaloosa Islanders, and in reverence to the long-standing protections afforded to the Island under State Law, I am respectfully imploring the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners to reject both of these proposals.

OILA—One Neighborhood, Stronger Together

February 2026 Meeting Agenda Date: Monday, Feb 8 Time: 7:00 p.m.

I. PLACE: For our February 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, President

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting: Mark Waschak, Secretary
Draft minutes, January 12, 2026 Meeting (printed in this newsletter)

V. Treasurer's Report for February, 2026 – Jim Simpson, Treasurer

VI. Standing Committee Reports: Nick Hall, ARC Chairman
Architectural Review Committee Report for January 2026

VII. New Business

- A. *Beach Access 1 Proposal and Plans*
- B. *Paid Parking Proposal*

Old Business:

VIII. Announcements, Speakers and Programs

XI. Adjournment



**JANUARY 2026
RAINFALL
2.6 INCHES**

Jan 3.....**1.0** inches Jan 22...**0.1** inches
Jan 16...**0.2** inches Jan 23...**0.1** inches
Jan 17...**0.2** inches Jan 25...**1.0** inches

January Avg Rainfall**4.8** inches
Variance to Average.....**-2.2** inches

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

March Avg Rainfall.....**5.8** inches
March Record High.....**80° F** (1957)
March Record Low**4° F** (1985)
Mar Avg Water Temperature..**66° F**

YTD Variance **-2.2** inches
Year to Date Rainfall.....**2.6** inches
Avg Annual Rainfall**65.1** inches



ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE REPORT JANUARY 2026

The OILA Architectural Review Committee (ARC) received and reviewed the following during the month of January 2026 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>
1/10	390	7	B. Smith 713 Sailfish Dr.	Front Fence w/Gates	Yes
1/13	390	7	B. Smith 713 Sailfish Dr.	Storage Shed	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:

1. OILA ARC review package:
 - 1.1. Completed OILA ARC application,
 - 1.2. Survey plat of the property,
 - 1.3. Overlaid illustration of the project on a copy of the survey plat.
 - 1.4. 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.)

2. 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).

Trivia Crawler: Coldest Temperature Ever Recorded

The coldest temperature ever recorded on Earth is an astonishing – 128.6 degrees Fahrenheit at the Vostok Station in Antarctica on July 21, 1983.

DRAFT MINUTES OF JANUARY 12, 2026 MEMBERSHIP MEETING

OILA Membership Meeting Minutes

Date: 1/12/2026

Directors: Harrington, Waschak, King, Boggess

Administrative Matters:

- Approved corrected November minutes
- Financial Report: Current membership at 247 members, fund balance of \$25,043.67

Property Issues:

- Discussed unpermitted construction at Fairfield hotel

Infrastructure Updates:

- Santa Rosa Boulevard project update provided
- Awaiting decision on underground power installation
- Construction tentatively scheduled for spring

Community Initiatives:

- Successful holiday decorations completed
- Food drive concluded successfully
- Firefighter program for children implemented

Action Items:

- Directors to review and select pop-up banner design for conference room
- President to attend January 20th South BCC meeting regarding Santa Rosa Boulevard Phase 1 project
- President to include Florida Power and Light contact information in next newsletter
- Treasurer to process reimbursements: \$100 to Nancy Hunt (sandwiches), \$124.80 to Jim Simpson (postage/membership expenses)
- Members to submit banner design ideas to Directors@OILAB.org
- President to monitor February BCC meeting agenda for project updates.

Meeting Minutes – January 12, 2026

Directors Present: Harrington, Waschak, King, Boggess

7:00 PM – Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance.

7:01 PM – Amendment to prior meeting minutes to correct a numerical error reported by Jim Simpson. Amendment approved unanimously.

7:02 PM – **Treasurer's Report** with Jim Simpson presented and approved.

7:09 PM – ARC Report:

- Projects reviewed at:
 - 439 Cardinal
 - Heritage Condominiums (balcony work)
 - 424 Caviar
- ARC also reviewed a deck under construction near **Beach Access #3**. A stop-work order was issued by the county due to safety and structural concerns. An engineering firm has been engaged to redesign the deck to meet required standards.

7:15 PM – **MSBU Report** with Paula Hudson:

- Net positive change of **\$3,000** since the last report.
- Funds are used for **street lighting** and **irrigation pumps**.
- Residents were reminded that timely reporting to Florida Power is important for maintenance and repairs.

(minutes continued)

7:18 PM – Agenda Item 1 – Santa Rosa Boulevard:

- Covered in detail in the President’s newsletter message.
- Discussion included project **planning, funding, and construction constraints**.
- Goal is to complete **Phase 1 before tourist season**.

7:22 PM – Agenda Item 2 – Holiday Decorations:

- Thanks extended to members who contributed.
- Reimbursement for new decorations acknowledged.

7:23 PM – Agenda Item 3 – Conference Room Banner:

- Discussion of acquiring a new banner for the conference room.

7:28 PM – Jim Simpson thanked the membership for strong participation in the **Christmas food drive** and for support of the **firefighter and foster children shopping program**, which saw particularly high engagement this year.

7:30 PM – Motion to adjourn passed; meeting adjourned.

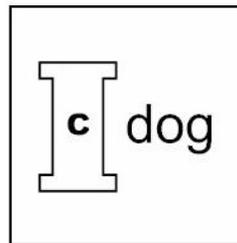
WUZZLE PUZZLES - What is a Wuzzle Puzzle? It is a puzzle consisting of combinations of words, letters, figures, or symbols positioned to create disguised words, phrases, names, places, etc. Are you ready to take the challenge and figure out the “disguised” meaning of these wuzzles? Good luck.



Wuzzle No. 1



Wuzzle No. 2



Wuzzle No. 3



Wuzzle No. 4

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY – FEBRUARY

The Roman month *Februarius* was named after the Latin term *februum*, which means "purification", via the purification ritual *Februa* held on February 15 (full moon) in the old lunar Roman calendar.

February 8, 1910 - The Boy Scouts of America was founded by William Boyce in Washington, D.C.

February 8, 1587 – Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots was beheaded at Fotheringhay, England after 19 years as a prisoner of Queen Elizabeth I.

February 11, 1847 - American inventor Thomas Edison (1847-1931) was born in Milan, Ohio.

February 12, 1924 First presidential radio address: Calvin Coolidge

February 14, 1929 - The St. Valentine's Day massacre occurred in Chicago as seven members of the Bugs Moran gang were gunned down by five of Al Capone's mobsters posing as police.

February 14, 1849 - Photographer Mathew Brady took the first photograph of a U.S. President in office, James Polk

February 21, 1972 - President Richard Nixon arrived in China for historic meetings with Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Premier Chou En-lai.

February 23, 1942 - During World War II, the first attack on the U.S. mainland occurred as a Japanese submarine shelled an oil refinery near Santa Barbara, California, causing minor damage.

February 27, 1950 – The 22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, limiting the president to two terms or a maximum of ten years in office

OKALOOSA ISLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT WELCOMES FIREFIGHTER AND EMT COLLIN McMANUS

Age: 21

Prior Service: Collin has 9 months of firefighting experience with 2 other local Departments, and 2 years of experience as a lifeguard for South Walton Beach Safety.

Birthplace: New London, Connecticut

Achievements: Graduated with honors from South Walton High School in 2022, excelling in academics, swimming and soccer. Graduated EMT school in 2023, and fire school in 2024 at NWFSC.



General: Growing up as the son of a Navy Veteran, Collin moved across the country to different duty stations with his parents. Even spending 3 years at the Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He finally settled down in South Walton in 2016, after his dad's retirement. He enjoys outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, surfing and swimming. He is also a regular at Comic-Con (a large comic book convention) where he cosplays as Goku from Dragonball Z, (his favorite character).

Welcome to "The Island" Collin McManus.

WUZZLE PUZZLES ANSWERS

Wuzzle No. 1



Pyramid Scheme

Wuzzle No. 2



Parallel Bars

Wuzzle No. 3



Seeing Eye Dog

Wuzzle No. 4



Multiple Choice