

MARCH 2026 EDITION OF THE OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS
NEWSLETTER, THE OIL LANTERN

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

OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS
ASSOCIATION

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Our March 2026 meeting will be held on **Monday, March 9** starting at 7 pm. For our March 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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TUESDAY, MARCH 17



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
 March 2026



OILA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025-2026

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- Lori Waschak**
vicepresident@oilaweb.com
- Jesse Hunt**
directors@oilaweb.com
- Eddie Wall**
directors@oilaweb.com
- Jerry Boggess**
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- Stan King**
directors@oilaweb.com
- 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

One Neighborhood—Stronger Together.

During my tenure as your President, I’ve thankfully watched our organization become more tightly knit. I am grateful to all of those who have—and *continue to work to unify OILA*. Our transformation hasn’t been a fast or easy one, and it’s far from complete. There will always be conflicting views on what is the best method to grow and maintain our island community. Some islanders are old school and want to see the Island kept in the same state it was 50 years ago. Others encourage the opportunities that come with growth and expansion. Everyone’s definition of “quality of life” is slightly different, however one thing remains. *We are all Okaloosa Islanders.*



Regardless of one’s personal feelings towards the Island’s restrictive nature, laws are laws until they are amended. For many years I have watched as our County officials ignore the nuisance that the Island’s Protective Covenants and Restrictions pose as an obstacle to their vision of “progress.” Whether this progress come in the form of increasing county revenue from beach vendor rentals, allowing businesses to be built in zones that aren’t permitted, or most recently—a proposal to turn natural areas into paid parking lots. *I ask myself, how do they get away with brazenly ignoring their own laws?*

According to Chapter 3 of the Okaloosa County Land Development Code:

3.01.03 Zoning requirements: Zoning requirements and all other matters regarding land development on the Island shall be in accordance with the plats on file in the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida together with the Protective Covenants and Restrictions and also together with all ordinances pertaining to this particular subdivision. Areas designated as parks, beaches and freeways (B04) ***will be maintained strictly in accordance with the leasehold covenants*** for public recreational purposes.

3.01.09 Covenants and Restrictions: Where this ordinance and the leaseholders’ covenants and restrictions conflict, the ***covenants and restrictions shall prevail.***

A possible answer to my question above...is it simply because they’ve never faced any real opposition?

I can assure you that they’re about to—as OILA’s attorney is currently reviewing the Island’s plat and protective covenants. OILA, in concert with private citizens, stands fully prepared to fight against ***any*** violations of the Protective Covenants.

Three OILA Directors’ positions are coming available in June:

As my term of office ends and a potential legal storm brews on the horizon, I strongly encourage only those members who are interested in taking on a thankless job that consumes hundreds of hours of time without pay to consider this: “If not you—than who?” The only reason people get away with ignoring laws is because someone else has allowed them a permissive environment to do so. Are you willing to pick up the mantle of leadership and deny them that environment?

OILA—Stronger Together!

March 2026 Meeting Agenda Date: Monday, March 9 Time: 7:00 p.m.

I. PLACE: For our March 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, February 9, 2026 Meeting (printed in this newsletter)

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

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

VII. New Business

- A. OILA Director Nominating Process
- B. *Legal Update*

Old Business:

VIII. Announcements, Speakers and Programs

XI. Adjournment



**FEBRUARY 2026
RAINFALL**

2.7 INCHES

Feb 4.....**0.1** inches Feb 21.....**1.0** inches
Feb 15...**0.6** inches Feb 27....**1.0** inches
February Avg Rainfall**5.8** inches
Variance to Average.....**-3.1** inches

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

April Avg Rainfall.....**3.7** inches
April Recor High.....**92° F**(1985)
April Record Low**20° F**(1987)
Apr Avg Water Temperature...**72°**

YTD Variance **-5.3** inches
Year to Date Rainfall..... **5.3** inches
Avg Annual Rainfall**65.1** inches

OKALOOSA ISLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT WELCOMES FIREFIGHTER AND EMT

Caleb R. Von Hammerstein

Age: 43 years old. Married and one daughter

Years of service: Caleb started as a firefighter at a neighboring department and worked for 7 months before starting his career at the Okaloosa Island Fire Department.

Birthplace: Memphis, Tennessee

Achievements: Graduated with honors from MTSU. 6 years Army service with a Combat deployment to Iraq.



General information: Grew up in rural Tennessee and played baseball, practiced martial arts, enjoyed fishing, hunting, riding dirt bikes, carpentry with his father, sky diving, SCUBA, and skiing. Joined the military and did his time. Exited the military and did some government contracting and DOD civilian work. Moved to the panhandle and went to NWFSC fire academy and earned his EMT cert. Worked for a neighboring department before starting his career at OIFD. His off-duty hobbies include woodworking, diving, landscaping, wildlife watching, and expanding his cooking skills

Trivia Crawler: WORLD'S WETTEST SPOT – ANNUAL RAINFALL OF 467.4 INCHES!

Mawsynram, a quaint village nestled in the northeastern Indian state of Meghalaya, holds the prestigious title of the wettest place on Earth. With an astonishing average annual rainfall of around 467.4 inches (around 12,000 mm), Mawsynram surpasses all other locations globally in terms of precipitation. This remarkable rainfall is primarily attributed to the region's unique geography and climate. The village is located on the windward side of the Khasi Hills, where moisture-laden winds from the Bay of Bengal collide with the mountains, resulting in heavy rainfall, especially during the monsoon season from June to September



DRAFT MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 9, 2026 MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Meeting Minutes – February 9, 2026

Directors Present: Harrington, Waschak, Scott, Hunt, Boggess

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

7:01 PM – Approval of prior meeting minutes. Motion passed.

7:02 PM – **Treasurer’s Report** presented by Jim Simpson and approved.

- Included reimbursement to Brian Harrington for annual legal fee renewal.
- Brief discussion regarding the retirement of the current Fire Chief (raised by Jim Simpson).

7:05 PM – **ARC Committee Report:**

- Work at **713 Sailfish** (shed and fence) approved.
- **MSBU Report:** Mrs. Hudson was not present; no report given.

7:06 PM – **Beach Access & Parking Discussion:**

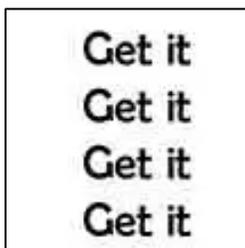
- Legal review underway regarding the proposed paving project at **Beach Access #1**.
- President summarized recent county meeting and steps OILA may take in response.
- Concerns raised regarding potential **legal and environmental impacts**.
- General sentiment among members was strongly opposed to the proposal.
- Discussion included whether outside departments or agencies could assist in protecting beach access corridors.
- OILA’s attorney has been engaged; potential litigation could exceed budget limitations.

7:58 PM – **Paid Parking Proposal Discussion:**

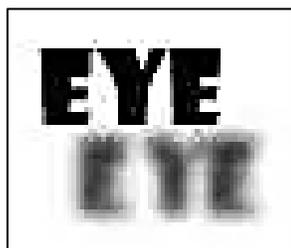
- Continued discussion regarding the county’s proposed plan to introduce **paid parking on Okaloosa Island**.
- Significant member opposition expressed.
- OILA exploring strategies to respond and push back on the initiative.
- County attorney has not yet responded.
- OILA anticipates further engagement with its own legal counsel if necessary.

8:20 PM – Motion to adjourn. 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.



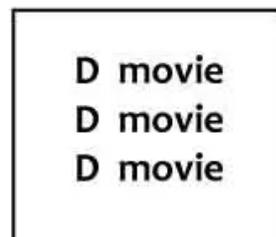
Wuzzle No. 1



Wuzzle No. 2



Wuzzle No. 3



Wuzzle No. 4



ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE REPORT FEBRUARY 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>
2/12	254	5	M. Lancaster 547 Dorado Ave.	Driveway Extension	Yes
2/24	254	5	M. Lancaster 547 Dorado Ave.	Storage Shed	Yes
2/25	380	7	J. Hunt 703 Sailfish Dr.	Demolition	Yes
2/25	459	8	J. Loftis 808 Tarpon Dr.	Seawall Replacement	Yes
2/27	225	5	R. Olson 518 Dorado Ave.	Fence Replacement	Yes
2/27	239	5	M. Schmieder 532 Dolphin Ave.	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: YEP! IT'S THAT TIME OF THE YEAR TO FILE YOUR INCOME TAX RETURN FOR 2025

Here is some background on the Federal income taxes. Congress enacted an income tax in October 1913 as part of the Revenue Act of 1913, levying a 1% tax on net personal incomes above \$3,000, with a 6% surtax on incomes above \$500,000. Also, all the tax liability was due by January 1 of the next tax year. By 1918, the top rate of income tax was increased to 77% (on income over \$1,000,000, equivalent of \$16,717,815 in 2018 dollars). The average rate for the (unspecified) "very rich", however, was 15%. The rate increased in 1917 during World War I. The top marginal tax rate was reduced to 58% in 1922, to 25% in 1925 and finally to 24% in 1929. In 1932 the top marginal tax rate was increased to 63% during the Great Depression and steadily increased, reaching 94% in 1944 (on income over \$200,000, equivalent of \$2,868,625 in 2018 dollars). During World War II, Congress introduced payroll withholding and quarterly tax payments.



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY – MARCH

The name **March** is derived from the Latin word *Martius*, the Roman god of war.



March 2, 1962: Wilt Chamberlain scores 100 points in an NBA game.



March 6, 1889: Aspirin is trademarked. Bayer trademarked the drug and began selling it worldwide.

March 12, 1894: Coca-Cola is bottled and sold for the first time. Before then, it was only available as a fountain drink.

March 16, 1802: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is formally established. President Thomas Jefferson established the Corps with the Military Peace Establishment Act.

March 23, 1775: Patrick Henry declares “Give me liberty or give me death”. He delivered the speech at the Second Virginia Convention in Richmond during debate over whether Virginia should send troops to join the Revolutionary War effort.

March 26, 1954: Nuclear detonation at Bikini Atoll. Operation Castle Romeo tested a nuclear bomb at the Atoll which had a nuclear yield of 11 megatons.



March 27, 1977: The Tenerife airport disaster kills 538 passengers. Thick fog was obscuring the runways at the airport in the Canary Islands when two Boeing 747 jets collided on the runway. It was the deadliest aviation accident ever to occur.

Island Garden Club, Cultivating Gardens and Friendships – est 1965 is the wording for our granite bench to be installed at the Women Veterans Memorial Park in October. The \$2500 cost is being covered by member donations and club treasury.

Since we weren't able to pick flowers in February, we made coffee filter hydrangeas and had a blast with this project.

Spring is almost here and we are impatient to be in our gardens – whether it is cleaning winter debris, removing dead plants or installing new ones. A fun and frugal way to grow your garden is to attend the Plant & Seed Swap on March 11 at the Island Garden Club's monthly meeting at El Matador, 9:30 gathering, meeting at 10:00 a.m. Come join us, share your favorites, and pick up some new ones. We look forward to welcoming you.



Kathy Foster, President

Island Garden Club – Celebrating our 60th Year

fosterpk@gnt.net

850.244.4490

WUZZLE PUZZLES ANSWERS

Wuzzle No. 1



FORGET IT?

Wuzzle No. 2



EYE SHADOW

Wuzzle No. 3



TENNIS MATCH

Wuzzle No. 4



3D MOVIE

OKALOOSA COUNTY MASTER GARDENER LECTURE SERIES

LECTURE SUBJECT: CREATING POLLINATOR GARDENS

DATE/TIME: MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2026 – 10:00 AM

LOCATION: 3098 AIRPORT RD, CRESTVIEW, FL 32539

TO REGISTER: EMAIL (YOUR NAME, PHONE NUMBER AND THE NUMBER ATTENDING
TO MGLECTURE@YAHOO.COM).

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



OKALOOSA COUNTY MASTER GARDENER LECTURE SERIES

CREATING POLLINATOR GARDENS

With Master Gardeners

Andy Donatelli &

Lee Vanderpool

Free Event:

To register, please email (your name, phone number, and the number attending) to MGlecture@yahoo.com

Where?

3098 Airport Road
Crestview, FL 32539

More Information

850-244-4490

MGlecture@yahoo.com

The University of Florida is committed to providing universal access to all of our events. For disability accommodations such as sign language interpreters and listening devices, please contact this office at countyextinfo@myokaloosa.com, or 850-689-5850, at least 1 week in advance. Advance notice is necessary to arrange for some accessibility needs. Equal Opportunity Employer

**Monday
March 16
10 am**

