

**MAY 2025 EDITION OF THE OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS
NEWSLETTER, THE OIL LANTERN**

Page 1 of 8 Pages



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

**OKALOOSA ISLAND LEASEHOLDERS
ASSOCIATION**

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Our May meeting will be held on **Monday, May 12, 2025** starting at 7 pm. For our May 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
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- Rainfall for April 2025
- April Architectural Review Committee Report
- Island Garden Club May Event
- Rainfall Blast from the Past, April 2014
- Billie Bowlegs Schedule of Events
- Draft Minutes – April 14 OILA Meeting
- This Month in History – May
- Sign Up for Okaloosa Island Community Connect
- Island Blood Drive Donation
- Okaloosa Island Fire Department Installs Plunge Cold Bath
- Okaloosa Master Gardener Lecture Series

**BILLIE BOWLEGS
FESTIVAL
May 16-19, 2025**

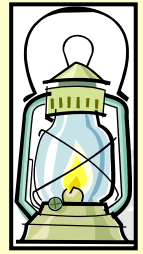


**Schedule of
Events Printed in
This Newsletter**



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
May 2025



OILA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024-2025

President:

Brian Harrington
604 Pelican Drive
Ft Walton Beach, FL 32548
850-420-8410
Haibiss01@yahoo.com

Vice-President

Louis Belanger
1800 Butternut Ave
Metairie, LA 70001
504-453-4575
Louis.belanger@bellsouth.net

Director

Jerry Boggess
8202 Persimmon Lane
Long Beach, MS 39560
228-323-0264
Jerry.w.boggess@gmail.com

Director

Stanley King
2485 Oakleigh Ct NE
Atlanta, GA 30345
404-931-9693
Skimg3@mindspring.com

Director

Dr. Frank Adcock
8596 Rockcreek Pkwy
Cordova, TN 38016
901-484-9391
fadcock1@comcast.net

Director

David Jones
P.O. Box 1029
Andalusia, AL 36420
334-488-1773
beachhaven203@gmail.com

Director/Assistant Secretary

Dylan Hunt
628 Pelican Drive
Ft Walton Beach, FL 32548
353-562-4700
dylan.l.hunt@gmail.com

Treasurer/Newsletter Editor

Jim Simpson
240 Brooks St, Unit B302
Ft Walton Beach, FL 32548
850-585-2116
sanleanna@cox.net

Secretary

Mark Waschak
716 Sailfish Dr
Ft Walton Beach, FL 32548
440-315-1682
mwashchak@gmail.com

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT – Brian Harrington

Sea Turtles-- Sea turtle nesting season runs from May 1st until October 31st. The patrol team will be on the beaches every morning looking for new nests, marking them and monitoring them until they hatch. Help protect nesting sea turtles by filling in holes, flattening sandcastles and removing all belongings from the beach at the end of the day. You can also help by shutting off external lights for beachfront properties. *Last season we had 20 turtle nests with 5 of them belonging to the endangered Kemp's Ridley species.*



Diver's Paradise—The SS United States is currently undergoing remediation in Mobile, Alabama, as part of its transformation into the world's largest artificial reef. This process, expected to take 6 to 12 months, involves removing hazardous materials like fuel, chemicals, and plastics. Once ready, the ship will be towed to a location about 20 nautical miles offshore and sunk to a depth of approximately 180 feet of water in a designated area for artificial reefs.

Located just 1 mile south of Henderson Beach State Park, construction has begun on the **Poseidon Memorial Reef Project**, an ecologically designed artificial reef that serves as a marine life habitat, dive site, artistic sculpture garden, and memorial for loved ones. This is a multi-phased project that should offer stunning views of vibrant and colorful sea life amid a sunken statuary garden.

Fencing along Hwy 98--Eglin Air Force Base is currently installing 17,000 feet of fencing along the north side of Highway 98 across Okaloosa Island in order to address illegal parking on the right-of-way and pedestrians crossing the highway from south side parking areas. Eglin says the project also aims to protect habitats and species. ***There will be no public access points within the work area on the north side of Highway 98.***

Those seeking access to Choctawhatchee Bay can still visit through managed recreation areas including the National Park Service Gulf Islands National Seashore and Marler Park.

Tourist Development Councils--Currently in legislation are Florida House Bills 1221 and 7033. If passed into law these bills would dissolve tourist development councils by the end of 2025. They would also require counties to use tourist development tax revenues to reduce property taxes for residents rather than funding tourism marketing and development projects. As of this writing, HB 1221 had passed the Ways & Means Committee, Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee, and State Affairs Committee. It is currently referred to the Florida Senate Appropriations Committee. *We'll keep you up-to-date on this legislation as it directly impacts both resident owners and tourism.*

OILA—We're stronger together!

- I. PLACE: For our May1 2025 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, April 14, 2025 meeting (printed in this newsletter)
- V. Treasurer's Report - Jim Simpson, Treasurer
- VI. Standing Committee Reports: Brian Smith, ARC Chairman Architectural Review Committee Report for April 2025 (printed in this newsletter and for info only)
- VII. New Business
 - A. Nominating Committee Results
 - B. OILA Directors' Election Procedures
 - C. Island Outreach and Community ActivitiesOld Business:
- VIII. Announcements, Speakers and Programs
- XI. Adjournment



APRIL 2025
Rainfall 0.4 Inches
April 7....0.4 inches

Avg Rainfall for April3.7 inches
Variance to Average..... - 3.3 inches
May Avg Rainfall.....4.0 inches
May Record High.....101° F (1953)
May Record Low8° F (1971)
May Avg Water Temperature... 78° F
June Avg Rainfall.....6.1 inches
June Record High.....102° F (1969)
June Record Low 48° F (1984)
June Avg Water .Temperature...81° F
2025 Total Rainfall.....7.9 inches
2025 Variance to Average.. - 12.4 inches
Avg Annual Rainfall65.1 inches

Rainfall Blast from the Past. In April 2014 the Island received 22 inches of rain. See article in this newsletter.



ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR APRIL 2025. The OILA Architectural Review Committee (ARC) received and reviewed the following building permits during the month of February and upon review and adherence to the OILA Covenants, has approved the following project(s):

Date	Lot(s)	Block	Owner/POC/Address	Description	In-Compliance & Approved
4/16	6		L. Gunter Aqua Villa Condo	Complete Stair Tower Replacement	Yes
4/24	396	7	C. McIntosh 719 Sailfish Dr	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:

- OILA ARC review package:
 - Completed OILA ARC application,
 - Survey plat of the property,
 - Overlaid illustration of the project on a copy of the survey plat.
 - 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.)
- Email the completed ARC application file to the OILA ARC for review at OILAARC@yahoo.com.

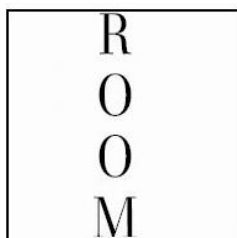
The ARC applications will be reviewed in the order they are received and the review will be completed within 2 weeks of a completed application. (Note: The ARC no longer holds meetings in-person/zoom meetings the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month).

TRIVIA CRAWLER: ALL ABOUT COFFEE

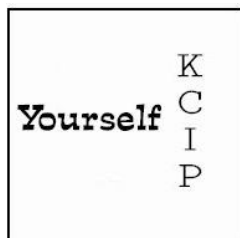
● In the 1820's a temperance movement tried to ban coffee -- and almost succeeded (think about it -- bootleg coffee?). ● Thirty-seven percent of U.S. coffee drinkers use milk and sugar. Twenty-one percent drink it black. ● When coffee first arrived in Europe from the Middle East, it was known as Arabian wine. ● The French writer Voltaire drank 70 cups of coffee a day. ● The average American drinks 3.4 cups of coffee a day. ● People who drink coffee are less likely to commit suicide than people who don't. ● A lot of coffee beans are exported from Indonesia. Up until the end of World War II, Indonesia was a Dutch colony named "JAVA".



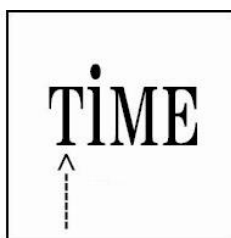
WUZZLE PUZZLES - What is a Wuzzle Puzzle? It is a puzzle consisting of combinations of words, letters, figures, or symbols positioned to create disguised words, phrases, names, places, etc. Are you ready to take the challenge and figure out the "disguised" meaning of these wuzzles? Good luck. The answers are available on [page 6](#) of this newsletter.



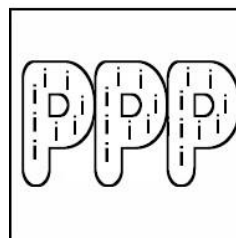
Wuzzle No. 1



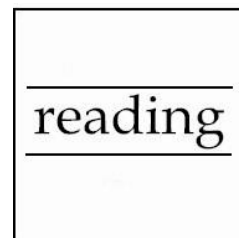
Wuzzle No. 2



Wuzzle No. 3



Wuzzle No. 4



Wuzzle No. 5

ISLAND GARDEN CLUB INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS & END-OF-YEAR BBQ PICNIC

Join us as we celebrate the installation of our new officers with the spirited theme "All Hands on Deck" and wrap up a wonderful year with good food and great company!



Date: May 14, **Location:** Marler Park, **Time:** **Event:** End-of-Year BBQ Picnic

We look forward to seeing everyone there as we honor our incoming leaders and enjoy a relaxing afternoon together! Please RSVP fosterpk@gnt.net

Kathy Foster, President

RAINFALL BLAST FROM THE PAST – ISLAND RAINFALL FOR APRIL 2014 – 22 INCHES



Sound side access – Lake Okaloosa?

During the month of April 2014 the Island received 22 inches of rainfall. On April 29 and 30, a total of 10.5 inches fell on an already saturated ground. The result is displayed in the photos on this page. Yes, it's called April Showers



Santa Rosa Blvd? Or, Santa Rosa River?

BILLIE BOWLEGS 2025 EVENTS SCHEDULE

On **Thursday, May 15** at 4 p.m., Captain Billy and his Krewe arrive on Ferry Road for the Pre-Invasion. Children will be greeted, photos taken and treasure given away until 6 p.m.



The Skirmish at the Landing Park follows on **Friday, May 16**, at 8 p.m. An Arts and Crafts Festival is planned for 5 p.m., followed by a performance by blues rockers Thin Ice at 6 p.m. Captain Billy and his scouting party are expected to land at 7 p.m., and make sure you stick around for a spectacular fireworks show at 8:45 p.m.

Saturday, May 17, the much-anticipated pirate invasion takes place at the Landing Park with Captain Billy and his Krewe landing around 3:30 p.m. Arts and crafts begin at 10 a.m., followed by live music from The Friskeys from 1 to 3 p.m. The celebration continues until 7 p.m. The band Duchess kicks off its first Bowlegs gig at 4 p.m. Duchess has performed at numerous Krewe of Bowlegs par ties, as well as the Concert on the Landing series. Duchess' Doug Bowers and Chuck Tidwell have played the festival before with the band 423. Bowers says festival goers can expect "high-energy Seventies and Eighties classic rock (from a) band that loves to interact with its audience." Learn more at duchessband.com.

The 2025 festivities wrap up with the Torchlight Parade **Monday, May 19**, beginning at 7 p.m. The parade route begins at First Street and Eglin Parkway and rolls northward to Hughes Street, with sea-worthy floats, eye-popping floats and non-stop entertainment. For registration information and more, visit fwb.chamber.org.

DRAFT MINUTES, APRIL 14, 2025, MEETING

Date: April 14, 2025

Time: 7:00 PM

Attendees: Directors Harrington, Jones, King, Belanger, Adcock, Hunt

1. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

- Led at 7:01 PM.

3. Treasury Report (Jim Simpson)

- **Insurance costs** have increased, particularly for **aggregate liability coverage**, which **renews on May 16th**.
- President Harrington will explore alternative insurance options.
- Discussion held on the **factors contributing to liability increases**.
- Report and reimbursement – **unanimously approved**. **See Atch 1 (next page) to these minutes for a copy of the April 2025 Treasurer's Report**

4. ARC Report

- **Fence at Dolphin** application – **Approved**.

5. Public Works Briefing

- OILA met with **Chief Strong** and other officials regarding:
 - **Santa Rosa Blvd improvements**
 - **Undergrounding power lines** (affects 9 of 10 storm outages)
 - **Street lighting responsibility** – FPL handles standard lighting and repairs from meter to street
 - **Community Connect Plan** with the **Fire Department** to collect and store life-saving data before emergencies

6. Santa Rosa Blvd Funding & Safety Concerns

- Director Adcock raised concerns about the **final funding** status for **Santa Rosa Blvd**.
- He requested that the record reflect his stance that **lane reduction is a dangerous idea**.

7. June Election of Directors

- Discussion of **election process, nomination procedures, and voting timeline**.
- **Nominating Committee Members:**
 - Director Belanger
 - Director Jones
 - Nick Hall
 - Gary Mann (who has since been replaced with Bonnie Bentley)
 - Richard Mihovilich
- Director Harrington repeated the **OILA oath** as a reminder of the commitment made by board members.
- **Four directors** are set to **step down** following this term.

8. Website Updates – Covenant Violation Reporting

- Review of **recent changes** made on **April 13, 2025**.
- Web designer was asked to **remove the word “photograph”** from the submission form after visitor feedback.
- These updates were not visible to the board before the meeting.

TREASURER REPORT: April 14, 2025

MEMBERSHIP TOTAL: 257

March 10, 10, 2025 TOTAL BALANCE: \$27,001.16

ASSOCIATION DISCRETIONARY FUND BALANCE AS OF March 10, 2025.....\$ 24,080.33

RECEIPTS SINCE LAST REPORT:

Membership Dues.....	\$	24.00
U.S. Mail fee.....	\$	<u>8.00</u>
Total Receipts:	\$	32.00

EXPENDITURES

No expenditures since last report.

EXPENSES PENDING APPROVAL FOR PAYMENT

Reimburse Jim Simpson for the cost of postage to mail the April 2025 issue of the OIL Lantern.....\$ 48.91

ASSOCIATION DISCRETIONARY FUND BALANCE AFTER ALLOCATION,
RECEIPTS, EXPENDITURES & EXPENSES PENDING APPROVAL FOR PAYMENT
AS OF April 14, 2025.....\$ 24,063.42

LEGAL FEE ALLOCATION BALANCE AS OF March 10, 2025.....\$ 1,500.00

LEGAL FEE ALLOCATION EXPENDITURES SINCE LAST REPORT.....No Expenditures

LEGAL FEE ALLOCATION BALANCE AS OF April 14, 2025.....\$ 1,500.00

BEAUTIFICATION FUND BALANCE AS OF March 10, 2025, 2024.....\$ 1,421.28

BEAUTIFICATION FUND EXPENDITURES SINCE LAST REPORTNo Expenditures

BEAUTIFICATION FUND BALANCE AS OF April 14, 2025.....\$ 1,421.28

SUMMARY: April 14, 2025 Fund Balances

-- Association's Discretionary Fund Balance.....	\$	24,063.42
-- Legal Fee Allocation Balance.....	\$	1,500.00
-- Beautification Fund Balance.....	\$	<u>1,421.28</u>

TOTAL FUNDS BALANCE... ..\$ 26,984.70

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY – MAY

May 3, 1937: American author Margaret Mitchell is awarded the Pulitzer Prize for "Gone With the Wind"

May 5, 1893 - The Wall Street Crash of 1893 began as stock prices fell dramatically. By the end of the year, 600 banks closed, 15,000 businesses went bankrupt and unemployment hit 20%.

May 7, 1915 - The British passenger ship Lusitania was torpedoed by a German submarine off the coast of Ireland, losing 1,198 of its 1,924 passengers, including 114 Americans

May 10, 1801: The Barbary pirates of Tripoli declare war on the U.S. (interesting side note: Because of the hazards of boarding hostile ships, Marines' uniforms had a leather high collar to protect against cutlass slashes. This led to the nickname *Leatherneck* for U.S. Marines.)

May 17, 1792 - Two dozen merchants and brokers established the New York Stock Exchange. In good weather they operated under a buttonwood tree on Wall Street. In bad weather they moved inside to a coffee house to conduct business.

May 24, 1844 - Telegraph inventor Samuel Morse sent the first official telegraph message, "What hath God wrought?" from the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., to Baltimore.

May 27, 1937 - In San Francisco, 200,000 people celebrated the grand opening of the Golden Gate Bridge by strolling across it.

May 31, 1889 - Over 2,300 persons were killed in the Johnstown flood in Pennsylvania. Heavy rains throughout May caused the Conemaugh River Dam to burst sending a wall of water 75 feet high pouring down upon the city.

SIGN UP FOR OKALOOSA ISLAND COMMUNITY CONNECT!

Please sign up for Okaloosa Island Community Connect for business and property owners. Community Connect allows the fire department to access vital information needed during and emergency. If you would like to make an appointment to come by the firehouse and help get set up, please call 850-244-5373.

Assistant Chief Sean Mast
Fire Marshal/AHJ
Okaloosa Island Fire Department
104 Santa Rosa Blvd
Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548
Office: 850-244-5373 ext 203



Okaloosa Island Community Connect

CREATE YOUR HOUSEHOLD LIFE SAFETY PROFILE TODAY

Together, Building a Safer Community Through Prevention,
Preparedness & Response

www.communityconnect.io/info/fl-okaloosaisland

WUZZLE PUZZLE ANSWERS

Wuzzle No. 1



Standing Room Only

Wuzzle No. 2



Pick Up After Yourself

Wuzzle No 3



The Beginning of Time

Wuzzle No. 4



Black Eyed Peas

Wuzzle No. 5

A	S	D	D	F	F	E	H	T	G	K	L
S	D	K	H	F	U	N	E	R	G	N	
M	S	D	R	E	A	D	S	Q	N	N	
S	D	G	S	J	T	U	M	U	T	J	
L	K	B	E	T	W	E	E	N	U	K	
W	J	E	F	A	S	K	S	D	J		
U	S	M	O	T	H	E	D	A	J	D	
Q	S	A	K	J	D	D	H	B	D		
G	D	G	L	I	N	E	S	D	V	B	

Read Between the Lines



Okaloosa Island Department Assistant Fire Chief, **Sean Mast**, donates Blood at the Blood Drive at the Fire Station on the ← Island on April 10. A tip of the hat to those who donated blood. Did you know that a single donation can save up to three lives.



↑ Okaloosa Island Firefighter **Ryan Usher** shows off the recently installed Plunge Cold Bath which was purchased with the proceeds from a "Fun-Raiser Pancake Breakfast" which was conducted at the Fire Station on October 19, 2024.

The Island Garden Club's efforts played a vital role in the success of the October Fun-Raiser which drew strong community turnout and enthusiasm. Thanks to the collective contributions and volunteer support, the event raised enough funds to enable the purchase of a cold plunge unit for the Okaloosa Island Professional Firefighters

The club is proud to stand behind the brave men of the OIFD and looks forward to future opportunities to support their mission.

Since our Firefighters are constantly exposed to physically and mentally demanding situations need to find effective methods to enhance their well-being and recovery. Studies have shown that cold plunge therapy triggers a rapid release of endorphins which can alleviate pain, enhance mood and boost the immune system.

UF IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



OKALOOSA MASTER GARDENER LECTURE SERIES

May 19, 2025, 10:00 a.m. with

Josh Criss, Santa Rosa Environmental Horticulture Extension Agent



Footprints on the

EARTH



Composting

Recycle organic matter, such as leaves and food scraps, into a valuable fertilizer that can enrich soil

Rain Barrels

Collect and store rainwater for watering lawns and gardens, reduce stormwater runoff, and save money on water bills



RSVP MGLecture@yahoo.com

Questions: 850-244-4490

Okaloosa County Extension Office
3098 Airport Road, Crestview 32539