

JANUARY 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 January 2026 meeting will be held on **Monday, January 12** 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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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 2026

**OILA BOARD OF
DIRECTORS 2025-2026**

Brian Harrington
president@oilaweb.com

Lori Waschak
vicepresident@oilaweb.com

Jesse Hunt
directors@oilaweb.com

Eddie Wall
directors@oilaweb.com

Jerry Boggess
directors@oilaweb.com

Steve Scott
directors@oilaweb.com

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

Welcome to 2026!



I am delighted to send my warmest wishes to all of our members as we celebrate the New Year. Through your camaraderie, enthusiasm and diligence, we've continued to improve our community over the past year. We closed out 2025 with another successful pantry food drive. Thanks to all who donated helped bring hope to those who are less fortunate. Thanks also to the volunteers who took the time to refresh the Christmas decorations that adorn Santa Rosa Boulevard—the new display in front of the fire station looked amazing!

Water and Sewer

Our members continue to advocate for improving the infrastructure on the Island and progress on the new water supply lines is moving along. There was a slight delay last month as the county had to ensure that water passed all the required quality tests prior to switching over to the new lines. The "P" streets, Pelican, Pompano, and Porpoise have the new water lines hooked up with roadway paving scheduled to begin this month. According to the work crews, the "T" streets are next in line.

Santa Rosa Boulevard (SRB)

As the Santa Rosa Boulevard improvement plan is funded by the 1/2-cent infrastructure surtax, we've reached out to the director of the sales tax advisory board and requested a timeline for construction of Santa Rosa Boulevard Phase One. You may recall from last meeting that in order for the county to receive state funding, that the county must comply with an Oct 31st 2026 deadline for completion of phase one which runs from 1st Beach Access to the Brooks Bridge. At the time of this writing, the county is awaiting a binding cost estimate for underground power from Florida Power & Light. Once this cost estimate is received, the Board of County Commissioners is expected to vote on its approval. A final decision and timeline announcement will likely be announced in February. Construction is slated to commence this spring—however, this is dependent on several variables.

Let's work together to make 2026 even better than last year!

OILA—One Neighborhood, Stronger Together

January 2026 Meeting Agenda Date: Monday, Jan 12 Time: 7:00 p.m.

- I. **PLACE:** 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.
- 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, November 10, 2025 Meeting (printed in this newsletter)
- V. **Treasurer's Report for January, 2025** – Jim Simpson, Treasurer
- VI. **Standing Committee Reports:** Nick Hall, ARC Chairman
Architectural Review Committee Report for November & December 2025
- VII. **New Business**
 - A. Santa Rosa Blvd Phase 1 Update
 - B. Reimbursement for Christmas Decorations
 - C. New Banner for Conference Room
- Old Business:**
- VIII. **Announcements, Speakers and Programs**
- XI. **Adjournment**



DECEMBER 2025
RAINFALL

3.5 INCHES

Dec 1..... 0.4 inches	Dec 6..... 0.5 inches
Dec 2..... 0.1 inches	Dec 7..... 0.1 inches
Dec 3..... 0.8 inches	Dec 18... 0.3 inches
Dec 4..... 0.5 inches	
Dec 5..... 0.8 inches	
Dec Avg Rainfall 4.8 inches	
Variance to Average..... -1.3 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 -28.7 inches	
Year to Date Rainfall..... 33.5 inches	
Avg Annual Rainfall 65.1 inches	



ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE REPORT DECEMBER 2025:

The OILA Architectural Review Committee (ARC) received and reviewed the following during the month of December 2025 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>
12/4	175	4	B. Bradford 439 Cardinal Ave.	Replace Rear Exterior Stairs	Yes
12/4			J. Clements Hermitage Condos 1330 Miracle Strip Pkwy	Replace Exterior Balconies	Yes
12/10	152	4	G. Wolff 424 Caviar Dr.	Home Demo and Lot Cleanup	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).

DRAFT MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 10, 2025, MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The meeting was called to order by the President. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

A quorum was established with the following directors present: Mr. Harrington, Ms. Waschak, Mr. Scott, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Boggess, and Mr. King.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

- Membership total: 255 (decreased from 260 at last report)
- October 13, 2025 total balance: \$24,745.52
- Association Discretionary Fund balance as of October 13: \$22,081.74
- Receipts since last report:
 - Membership dues: \$528
 - U.S. mail fees: \$104
 - Donation from Dave and Kathy Jones: \$100
 - Total receipts: \$732
- Expenses pending approval: \$63.80 to reimburse Jim Simpson for postage to mail the November 2025 issue of the Old Lantern
- Fund balances as of November 10, 2025:
 - Discretionary Fund: \$22,750.74
 - Legal Fee Obligation: \$1,242.28
 - Beautification Fund: \$1,421.28
 - Total fund balance: \$25,114.52

Motion made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's report and reimburse expenses. Motion carried unanimously.

Architecture Committee Report

The Architecture Committee reviewed and approved the following projects:

- October 12: 850 Tarpon Drive - pergola
- October 17: 304 Barracuda - fire alarm system replacement
- October 28: 670 Nautilus Court - re-roof

MSBU Report

Annual expenditure averages reported:

- Electrical service: approximately \$3,100/month
- Streetlights: approximately \$7.50/month
- County services: \$514/month average
- Revenue from water bill: approximately \$5,000
- Total revenue last year: \$61,716
- Total expenses last year: \$52,204
- Net growth: \$9,500
- Interest collected: approximately \$10,000/year
- Estimated fund balance: \$353,000

New Business

Agenda Item 1: Bylaws Amendment Vote

The President explained that the Board of Directors had reviewed the bylaws, which had not been substantially updated since approximately 1983. Proposed changes included:

- Clarification on voting and associate membership
- Board of Directors duties and scope
- Director qualifications
- Timeline for new voting eligibility
- Procedure for bringing resolutions to the floor
- Addition of member comments and forum section during regular meetings
- Allowing proxy voting

Feedback received from membership was discussed, including:

- Suggestion to keep "flip of a coin" for tie votes instead of decision by remaining board members
- Recommendation to specify OILA post office box for ballot returns
- Correction of typos in Sections 5 and 6

Extended discussion occurred regarding director qualifications, particularly whether residency requirements should be included.

Various perspectives were shared about representation of residents versus property owners.

Motion made by Director Steve Scott and seconded by Ms. Kathy Foster to vote on the amended bylaws with the following changes:

- Change "legacy" to "remaining" board members in Section 5
- Add OILA post office box information for ballot returns
- Correct typos in Sections 5 and 6

Vote results: 14 in favor, 3 opposed. The motion carried with the required two-thirds majority.

Agenda Item 2: Santa Rosa Boulevard Project Update

The President reported that the county received a \$1 million State Appropriation Local Transportation Grant Award for Phase 1 of the Santa Rosa Boulevard project. Key points:

- Phase 1 extends from the fire station to Beach Access 1
- Completion deadline is October 31, 2026
- Phase 1 does not include lane reductions but adds a turn lane
- Underground power is not included in this phase but is being coordinated separately with FP&L

Discussion included concerns about future phases, particularly Phase 3 and 4 which may include lane reductions. Members expressed frustration that previous community input opposing lane reductions had been disregarded.

Agenda Item 3: Holiday Decorations

Discussion regarding holiday decorations for the island, including:

- Need for volunteers to help with decoration creation and installation
- Storage challenges for decorations
- Transportation needs for moving decorations

Motion made and seconded to allocate \$1,000 for holiday decorations. Motion carried unanimously.

The annual food drive was also announced, with collection at the fire station until approximately December 20th.

Agenda Item 4: Member Interest in Forming New Committees

The President encouraged members to get involved in committees, including:

- Santa Rosa Boulevard Advisory Committee
- Public Relations
- Island Beautification
- Covenants Review

Member Forum

- Announcement that firemen at the fire department are taking children from Children in Crisis shopping; donations can be dropped off at the fire department
- Update on derelict properties: The property on Dorado has been fenced and cleaned up following letters from OILA's attorney and the county; the property on Sailfish is being sold
- Question about contacting new commissioners regarding their stance on Santa Rosa Boulevard

Next Meeting

No membership meeting in December. Next membership meeting scheduled for January 12, 2026. Directors will meet separately in December.

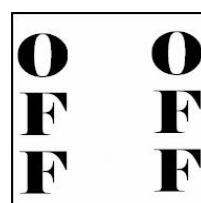
Adjournment

Motion made and seconded to adjourn. Meeting adjourned.

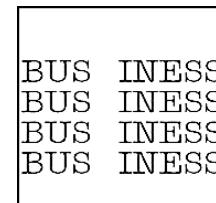
WUZZLE PUZZLES - What is a Wuzzle Puzzle? It is a puzzle consisting of combinations of words, letters, figures, or symbols positioned to create disguised words, phrases, names, places, etc. Are you ready to take the challenge and figure out the "disguised" meaning of these wuzzles? Good luck.



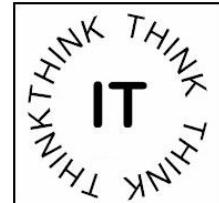
Wuzzle No. 1



Wuzzle No. 2



Wuzzle No. 3



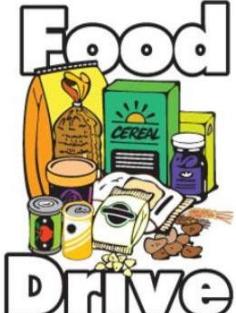
Wuzzle No. 4

OKALOOSA ISLAND FOOD PANTRY DRIVE - 360 POUNDS OF FOOD DONATED

This year's Okaloosa Island Food Pantry Drive achieved a total of 360 pounds of donated food. The food was delivered to the local Ft Walton Beach foodbank, Sharing and Caring, on December 22.



Tips of the hat to the Okaloosa Island residents and OILA members who donated and to the Okaloosa Island Fire Department or providing the use of the Fire Station as a drop off, collection point for donations.



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY – JANUARY

January 1, 1878: Emma M. Nutt becomes the first woman telephone operator.

January 7, 1610: Astronomer Galileo Galilei discovers four of Jupiter's moons.

January 12, 1966: Batman debuts on television.

January 14, 1973: The Miami Dolphins defeat the Washington Redskins in Superbowl VII and become the first undefeated team in NFL history.

January 15, 1943: The Pentagon opens. Construction started on September 11, 1941



THE ORIGIN OF EXPRESSIONS or WHY DO WE SAY THAT?

In the past it wasn't polite to use the exclamation 'God!' Instead, people said



Oh
My
Gosh

Gosh! In the same vein, sometimes they said 'heck' instead of Hell.



A Baker's Dozen - A baker dozen is thirteen. A very long time ago, bakers were made to pay a high fine if they gave short weight, so to avoid this, they would add an extra loaf.

My Two Cents. This comes from the two cents or two bits put on the table in order to enter a poker game.

The same idea goes with adding your two cents to the conversation, allowing you to enter the conversation.



Jeanne Calment: The Pinnacle of Longevity

Jeanne Calment holds the title for the longest verified human lifespan, having lived an astonishing 122 years and 164 days. Born on February 21, 1875, in Arles, France, Calment's life spanned three centuries, witnessing remarkable changes in the world around her. She attributed her longevity to a balanced diet, including olive oil, and indulged in a daily glass of port wine. Calment was also known for her vibrant personality and sense of humor, which may have contributed to her remarkable vitality.



Year 1895, Age 20

Year 1995, Age 120

WUZZLE PUZZLES ANSWERS

Wuzzle No. 1



Hi Rise A-part-ments

Wuzzle No. 2



Off Sides

Wuzzle No. 3



Open for Business

Wuzzle No. 4



Think About It

January 10, 1861 - Florida became the third state to secede from the Union in events leading up to the American Civil War.



January 24, 1935: Beer was first sold in cans.

January 25, 1858 – The *Wedding March* by Felix Mendelssohn became a popular wedding recessional after it was played on this day for the marriage of Queen Victoria's daughter and the Crown Prince of Prussia.

January 26, 1784 - In a letter to his daughter, Benjamin Franklin expressed unhappiness over the choice of an eagle as the symbol of America, and told her his preference was the turkey.

OKALOOSA ISLAND FIRE FIGHTERS TAKE 7 FOSTER CARE CHILDREN CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

- by John Kelly, Firefighter-Paramedic/Lifeguard/CPR Instructor, Okaloosa Island Fire District

Members of OIFD spent last week spreading holiday cheer to local children in need through our annual shop with a firefighter event. Our department teamed with Children In Crisis to bring a bit of Christmas magic to some deserving children. Firefighters, over the course of two days, took 7 different children on a shopping cart filling, joyful, and exciting shopping spree. We were so thankful to be able to do this event and help bring joy and happiness this holiday season. We would like to thank our Commissioners, Administrative Staff, Union, and our amazing firefighters for helping to make this event possible through fundraising and community/union member donations.

(Editor's Note: A special thanks to the Okaloosa Island Leaseholders who donated to this most worthy cause.)

