

THE CURRENT



**Weekly News & Events for
the Town of Oak Island, NC**

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**Week of
December 25, 2023**

WELCOME and *Merry Christmas* from **THE CURRENT**, the weekly digital newsletter for the **Town of Oak Island, NC**.

It's one of the busiest weeks of the year for travel, and spending time with family and friends. So the last thing anyone is probably thinking about is local government. However, your local government is made up of people just like you. Often your neighbors, friends, or even relatives. We are all invested together in the future of Oak Island, everyone woven into the fabric of our community. So from your fellow Islanders at the Town of Oak Island, we wish you the happiest of holidays, and the yuletide-iest of new years!

There's still some important items to review from last week, and a few exciting events to announce. So take a break from the assembly instructions for the kids' newfangled toys, and slip on into this week's edition of **The CURRENT**.

MEETINGS & CLOSURES

- **Upcoming Meetings**

- **Town Council: Meeting Action Report**
- **Grinding of the Greens: Christmas Tree Drop Off**
- **Toys-For-Tots Collection Results**
- **2023 Police Department Officer Awards**

SAFETY BRIEF

- **FIRE: Fireworks Foresight**
- **POLICE: Celebrate Responsibly**

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- **REMINDER: New Events & Programs Page**
- **PREVIEW: Mardi Gras By the Sea 2024**



COUNCIL & BOARD MEETINGS

There are **NO** Town Council or Board meetings *this week*.

Upcoming meetings next week:

- **Environmental Advisory Committee:** Thursday, January 4, 2024
- **Par 3 Advisory Committee:** Friday, January 5, 2024

All Council & Board meeting dates can be found on the Meetings Calendar of the Town Website at

[OakIslandNC.gov/CALENDAR](#).

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

CHRISTMAS: On **Monday - Wednesday, December 25 - 27, 2023**: Town Administrative Offices, Town Hall, the Community Center and Recreation Center will be **CLOSED** in observance of **CHRISTMAS**.

Next upcoming holiday closure:

- **New Year's Day:** Monday, January 1, 2024

NOTES:

- The **Disposal Convenience Site** will be **CLOSED** on **Wednesday, December 27..**
- **Garbage & Recycling** will NOT be collected on **Monday, December 25** (Christmas Day); that day's collection will instead be scheduled for Saturday, December 30. **Please be patient**, as the increased volume from the holiday could cause slow or delayed collection.

During any closure, Police, Fire, and emergency services are always available by **calling 9-1-1**. To view all the full Holiday Calendar on the Town Website, visit [OakIslandNC.gov/HOLIDAY](#).



Town Council: Meeting Action Report

On **Tuesday, December 19, 2023**, the Oak Island Town Council held a **Special Meeting** to address multiple items of business, which largely focused on updates to the **Paid Parking** program for the 2024 Season. [**CLICK HERE to watch the December 19 Special Meeting**](#)

Council began the meeting with a unanimous vote to release the Performance Guarantee for **The Orchards** at Oak Island development. This was followed by another unanimous vote to remain within the **Cape Fear RPO** for the next calendar year, declining the invitation to join the **Grand strand Area Transportation Study MPO**, originally presented to the Council during their [**December 12 meeting**](#).

From there, the meeting focused solely on the Paid Parking program, and its revision for the 2024 Season. Council voted on several motions including **maintaining permits rates, adding new parking spaces, increasing the number of available Seasonal Permits, and establishing new permit costs for businesses or individuals purchasing four or more Seasonal Permits**. Council also voted unanimously to issue a **Request for Proposals (RFP)** to have an engineering firm conduct a 60-day study, focused on improving parking efficiency and capacity. Council also approved a 50% / 35% / 15% **revenue distribution split** for the funds generated by the Paid Parking program.

As the final vote of the evening, Council approved the purchase of **TWO portable restroom units** to be used in emergencies, at Town parking areas, and/or at Town events.

These and all future updates to the Paid Parking program can be viewed on the **Parking Information** page of the Town Website at [**OakIslandNC.gov/PARKING**](#), or by clicking the link below.

[**CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE**](#)

Grinding of the Greens: Christmas Tree Drop Off

A quick drive around Town will show that many residents celebrate the Christmas holiday; and of those, many do so with the traditional, natural Christmas Tree. But to truly celebrate responsibly, rather than simply throw it away, it's best to find it a new purpose after its ornamental usefulness has faded.

That's where the Town's "Grinding of the Greens" program comes in! Starting on Christmas Day, the Public Works Department will be **collecting live trees** in the **Middleton Park Complex** parking lot at 4610 E Dolphin Drive.

The trees collected will be ground into mulch, for use in the Town's walking trails at the Nature Center and Recreation Center, as well as other various parks and Town properties. Trees **must be cleaned** of all non-vegetative decorations, lights, and ornaments. For those not wanting to participate in the Grinding of the Greens program, trees will still be collected from the right-of-way as part of the regular **Yard Debris Collection Schedule** but again, must be free of ornaments and decoration.

Whether participating in the the Grinding of the Greens, or simply waiting for streetside collection, be sure to dispose of your used Christmas trees properly, **using ONLY these two methods.**

Please DO NOT discard trees on the public beach areas, on the dunes, or in vacant lots.

For more information on yard debris disposal options or streetside collection schedules, Just visit the Solid Waste Division page of the Town Website at OakIslandNC.gov/YardDebris or click the link below.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE

Toys-For-Tots Collection Results

It wasn't a sleigh pulled by "8 tiny reindeer" that delivered these presents in Oak Island this year ... but it was shiny, red, and had plenty of horsepower! On Thursday, December 21, the **Oak Island Fire Department** wrapped up this year's Toys-For-Tots drive when they collected the 8 boxes distributed to the various Town facilities and community partners.

Having first received the boxes in late October, the donation drive ran throughout the months of November and December, and was even extended by an extra week towards the end. As usual, Town residents stepped up in strong fashion! Fire Department staff collected an amazing total of **THREE trailer loads full of toys; including at least 10 bikes, several stuffed animals, books, sports equipment, craft sets, dolls, monster truck sets and much more (PICTURED HERE).**

The Oak Island Fire Department and the Town's administrative staff extend a sincere **THANK YOU** to all Oak Island residents, visitors, area businesses, local community organizations, and surrounding communities. Together, this community worked to make the world a little brighter for many in need during the holiday season and beyond. To learn more about the Toys-For-Tots campaign, and how your donations will be used, just visit www.toysfortots.org or click the link below.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE

2023 Officer Awards

On **Wednesday, December 13**, the Oak Island Police Department took a few moments to pause and reflect on their achievements for 2023, and their goals looking ahead into 2024. While thankful for the equipment, technology, and training they have been afforded, Chief Charlie Morris and the administrative staff know that their best asset is always the PEOPLE who make up the Department.

In recognition of the most outstanding among them, the Department presented its Annual Officer Awards, to the following:

- **TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARD:** Corporal David Locklear has contributed greatly in our improvements to public safety, through his outstanding work in the traffic division.
- **OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEE AWARD:** *Theresa Tickle* consistently delivers a kind, superior level of service to both the officers and the public she interacts with on a daily basis.
- **HIGHEST ARREST AWARD:** Officer Matthew Watts showed great courage and commitment to safety, by successfully completing the highest number of arrests for 2023 by any officer within the Department.
- **OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARD:** *MPO Robert Phillips* displayed an unmatched commitment to overall excellence and dedication to the Department, Town residents, and the community at large.
- **TOP GUN AWARD:** This award is presented to the officer who has demonstrated a keen eye and steady hand, by having the highest Firearms Qualification score. this involves a rigorous scoring of marksmanship, through multiple rounds and varying firearm types. Unfortunately, **no single TOP GUN was awarded this year ... because there was A 5-WAY TIE of officers with a score of 99.7!!** An amazing display of consistent proficiency and marksmanship among all officers!

These individuals, as with the entire department, have certainly given Oak Island residents and visitors something to be proud of, and thankful for.

Photos of the Officers and staff with their awards can be found in the Photo Gallery on the town Website at OakIslandNC.gov/GALLERY or by clicking the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)



FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fireworks Foresight

Sometimes, people just like to send out the old year, or ring the new "**with a bang!**" However, as a general "*rule of thumb*" anything that "explodes or flies up into the air" is illegal in the state of North Carolina. Being so close to the State border, this is a rule we often have to remind folks of. Sharing an island space with houses so close together, it's also a rule that sadly we've seen the results of when not followed.

Fireworks such as firecrackers, roman candles, bottle rockets, and things that spin on the ground are **prohibited**, and can carry the consequences of a Class II misdemeanor. But to us, it's about so much more than just following a set of rules.

Consider the safety of your home. If you're knowledge of operating an aerial firework is simply "light it and run" – then there's a good possibility our fire engines could be showing up at your house ... **or your neighbors!** Trust us, sneaking across state lines and racking up hundreds of dollars in credit card debit - just to light off "the good stuff" - isn't something your family or neighborhood will appreciate when it ends in property damage or personal injury.

So remember, ***the best way to ensure a happy holiday season, is to have a safe one!*** For more safety tips or information on the Oak Island Fire Department, just visit our page of the Town Website at OakIslandNC.gov/FD or click the OKI-FD patch below.



POLICE DEPARTMENT

Celebrate Responsibly

Drunk driving: **DON'T DO IT!** It's a simple as that. When you decide to drink and drive, you are putting other families' husbands, wives, children, moms, dads, brothers and sisters lives at risk. Celebrate and enjoy the season with responsibility.

As the saying goes, "buzzed driving IS drunk driving!" Remember that **driving even slightly impaired isn't just taking a chance on your skill, it's forcing everyone else on the road to take a chance on you as well.**

If there's even the slightest concern of impairment, then use a taxi, friend, or ride sharing service to get you where you need to go. This is the season to celebrate with the ones we care about, looking back on the year we've had, and ahead for what's to come. Don't let one set of poor decisions steal that opportunity from you, or from someone else.

As always, the Oak Island Police Department will be working hard to ensure everyone's safety on the roadways all throughout the holidays. Help us, to help serve this community. For more safety tips or information on the services we provide, visit our page of the Town Website at OakIslandNC.gov/PD or click the OKI-PD patch below.



REMINDER: NEW Events & Programs Page

Quick reminder of an important update first announced in last week's edition of **The CURRENT**. The **Recreation Department** has transitioned to a **NEW** online interface for its **Events & Programs** management.

As a result, all of the old member accounts through the "RecDesk" page are no longer active. All **daily / weekly** gym users or fitness class attendees should **NOT** notice any difference, however those with **monthly / yearly** memberships will have to create a new account. For more information on account status, just email Recreation Director, Heather O'Brien at hobrien@oakislandnc.gov to let her know you have created an account, and staff will get your new card printed out.

To create an account or to simply view the listings on the **NEW Events & Programs** page of the Town Website, just visit OakIslandNC.gov/EVENTS or click the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

PREVIEW: Mardi Gras By The Sea

One of the most celebrated and anticipated events returns to the Town Oak Island! It is the best break from winter you'll see until Spring, as the **Saturday, February 24, 2024** is the date set for the annual **Mardi Gras by the Sea Parade & Festival**.

With a parade, artisan market, food vendors, kids zone and concert, it is sure to be a day of fun and excitement. No need to register, just come to the park ready to shop, play and eat!

This year's Mardi Gras by the Sea Parade & Festival flyer has been added to collection below, for you to download, print, and share your own copy! You can also check out the event listing on the **NEW *Events & Programs*** page for the Recreation Department at OakIslandNC.gov/EVENTS or by clicking the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

REMINDER: A full listing of all coming events can be found on the ***Events & Programs*** page of the Town Website at OakIslandNC.gov/EVENTS.

Click on the event flyers below to download, print, and share!



Mardi Gras Festival



Top Golf



Book Club



Striders Walking Club

THANK YOU

Thank you for reading this edition of ***THE CURRENT***, and choosing to stay informed on the News & Events happening in Oak Island, NC.

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PAST EDITION ARCHIVE

DID YOU KNOW? *The CURRENT*, hasn't always been a weekly publication. Originally produced as an award-winning digital monthly newsletter, *The CURRENT* published 35 editions, spanning a period of three years from December 2020 to 2023. As a monthly publication, *The CURRENT* provided longer form, "magazine style" reading, along with added commentary, and content contributed from community partners.

Past editions of both the weekly and monthly formats are available to view anytime, by clicking the tabs below.

[2023-12-18_The Current](#)

[2023-12-04_The Current](#)

Monthly Edition Archive (2023) +

Monthly Edition Archive (2022) +

Monthly Edition Archive (2021) +

Monthly Edition Archive (2020) +