

November 2022

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Welcome to November

WELCOME to the **NOVEMBER 2022** edition of **THE CURRENT**. Sandy sandwiches. While they may make for a simple and easy summertime snack, they just won't "cut the mustard" for the serious requirements of Autumn. Yes, for many the cool breezes of fall turn our minds to the landscape of feasts that await! Rolling hills of carved turkey, glistening with basted butter; giving way to mountainous portions of mashed potatoes, cradling small lakes of gravy in the valleys formed. The greenest fields of beans and peas, bordered by the small rocky streams of cranberry sauced stuffing. *Oh, and of course the family and friends to enjoy them all with!*

While it's fun to think about a soon-coming spoonful of starches, the real focus for November (and the holiday season it brings) should be less on our stomachs and more in our hearts. There's an old saying that goes "*Happiness cannot be far behind a grateful heart and a peaceful mind.*"

As both new and longtime residents can confirm, there is always something to be grateful for when the peaceful beauty of Oak Island is just outside your front door. Whether you're thankful for that time spent with family, or just a quiet walk on the sand, chances are it doesn't take much to find something deserving of your gratitude. And while a typical fall feast here on the coast may involve more *crab dip* than *cranberry sauce*, it doesn't mean the spirit of thankfulness

won't still apply! So tie on a napkin and grab your favorite ladle, 'cause we're about to serve a heapin' helpin' of good news to be thankful for in the NOVEMBER edition of THE CURRENT.



MONTHLY REVIEW

REMINDER: Information on all news items can be found on the Town Website at: www.OakIslandNC.gov/NEWS.

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Council Recap

The Town Council's regular meeting on **October 11, 2022** began with two public hearings. **(1)** Council approved the Proposed Text Amendments (with one additional amendment and one correction) to Sections 6.3 and A.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance - Planned Unit Development Special Zoning District. **(2)** Council denied the requested Proposed Amendment to the Town of Oak Island Unified Development Ordinance - Fence size and location on through lots.

PRESENTATIONS: **(1)** The Environmental Advisory Committee made a presentation on the Voluntary Elimination of Single Use Plastic Straws. **(2)** The Beach Ambassadors presented a year-end report on their activities for the 2022 summer season. **(3)** Mayor Elizabeth White read a Proclamation of Fire Prevention Week, followed by a brief presentation from Interim Fire Chief Lee Price about Fire

Department events and activities.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: Council unanimously

appointed Gail Burr to the Recreation Advisory Board

COUNCIL REPORTS: Councilmember Charlie Blalock

reported on the new sign for the Par 3 Golf Course.

Councilmember Bill Craft noted that he would be reaching out

to the Public Works Director for updates on the Davis Canal

Pedestrian Walkovers. Councilmember Sheila Bell thanked

Town Staff for work during Hurricane Ian. Mayor Pro Tem

John Bach seconded Bell's comments, and also noted that

continued work was being done for the Paid Parking

discussion.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS began with the Financial

Update from Finance Director, David Hatten which reviewed

the first three months of the fiscal year. Town Manger David

Kelly gave a brief report on the Stormwater Project for 801

Ocean Drive. **NOTE: Monthly Department Reports are**

available to view any time on the Town Website at

www.OakIslandNC.gov/DEPT.

OLD BUSINESS: **(1)**Discussion of Recreation Center

Renovation and Expansion Project: Recreation Director

Heather O'Brien discussed the results of the recent

Recreation User Demographics & Satisfaction Survey. Council

consensus was to consider financing a larger project rather

than move forward with the concept drawings provided.

(2) Consideration of Aspects of Paid Parking: Council

consensus was to include a tiered option for resident passes

(decal only, pass to park anywhere, use hourly paid parking

only). Discussions will continue. **(3)**Update on Ongoing Beach

Items: Sam Morrison, with Moffatt & Nichol, gave a

presentation, which will be summarized and included in the

Meeting Minutes.

NEW BUSINESS: **(1)** Consideration of Contract with Moffatt

& Nichol for Post-Storm Survey and Analysis: Council

approved the contract but asked for a more detailed scope of

work. **(2)** Consideration of Offering Lots on McGlamery Street

and Elizabeth Drive for Sale: Council tabled this

item. **(3)** Consideration of Awarding a Bid and Approving a

Contract for Custodial Services: The bid was awarded, and a

contract approved for A+ Pro Services. **(4)** Approval of Budget

Ordinance Amendment (A/C at Recreation Center): The

Budget Ordinance Amendment was approved as presented.

Council then moved into **CLOSED SESSION**, during which no

action was taken in Closed Session. Afterwards, the Council moved back into open session, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:03 PM.

To view the video, agenda, and minutes from this or any other Town Council meeting, just visit the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/MEETINGS, or click the link below.

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Paid Parking Program: Discussion & Information

As reported in the September edition of *The CURRENT*, a "discussion of paid parking" was presented as item for New Business during the Town Council's regular meeting on August 16. This formally restarted the discussion of developing and implementing a paid parking program within the Town.

In total, the paid parking program has now been the subject of five (5) special meetings, public hearings, or business items in regular meetings throughout the previous three (3) months. With the most recent development, Town Council directed staff to draft language on a Request for Proposals (RFP), that

if approved could be used to solicit bids from potential parking management providers. This would include a "tiered option" for resident passes (decal only, pass to park anywhere, or use hourly paid parking only).

To date, no RFP's have been published or potential providers solicited. No final program structure has been approved or implemented.

To help residents keep track of the ongoing discussions and any program development, a new **Paid Parking Program** information page of the Town Website has been established at www.OakIslandNC.gov/PaidParking.

The new page provides a complete timeline of program development, links to resource materials used in developing the program, and announcements about future discussion or implementation efforts. As noted above, the page can be viewed on the Town Website by

visiting www.OakIslandNC.gov/PaidParking, or by clicking the link below.

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"See You At The Station"

On Thursday, October 13, 2022, the Oak Island Fire Department held its first ever ***See You At The Station*** event ... and it was a HUGE success! The event was held as part of the department's activities for National Fire Prevention Month, and featured a *fully open-to-the-public* Station #2, located at 8510 E Oak Island Drive.

Dozens of residents and visitors answered the invite on the Fire Department's Facebook page, and brought their families out to "meet our family" for a firsthand look at department's facilities, equipment, and vehicles. Attendees got to learn about what staff do on a daily basis, as well as how they do it. Most importantly, they received valuable information on fire safety and prevention.

This effort kicked off a new initiative of increased public presence from the Fire Department. In fact, the month of October saw firefighter staff in attendance at several public functions, including the ***Big Toy Day*** event, hosted by the Kiwanis Club at the Cape Fear Regional Jetport, as well as the ***Halloween Spooktacular*** event, hosted by the Recreation Department at the Middleton Park Complex.

With important fire safety concerns coming up like Beach Bonfire season, holiday cooking, and winter home heating, the Fire Department is making every effort possible to be seen in the community, and get the messages of fire safety and prevention heard.

To keep up with the latest in their on-location efforts, just visit the Fire Department's page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/FD or click the link below.

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Spooktacular Season Success!

The last week in October proved to be a very spooky ... *and* SUCCESSFUL season for the Oak Island Recreation Department! The Town's Halloween adventures got off to an eerie start on the [Oak Island Pier](#) with the *Haunted Fishing Derby* on Tuesday, 25. Coastal families reeled in memories as youth cast their lines to compete in a variety of categories.

The [Oak Island Police Department Community Resource Officer](#) was also in attendance as well, offering assistance and encouragement while participants showed off their costumes and fishing talents.

The full week of "Halloween haunts" continued the following Friday night at the Middleton Park Complex, with the *EGG-stra Spooky Hunt!* Kids of all ages grabbed their flashlights, donned their best Halloween costumes, and came out to hunt for glow in the dark eggs and holiday treats, "scattered by mysterious forces."

Finally, the week's events were capped off in BIG fashion, as the *Spooktacular Halloween* event took over the Middleton Park Complex on Saturday, October 29. This free event (*pictured*) brought out hundreds of families, complete with monsters, superheroes, and all manner of creative costuming.

Beginning with the "Monster March Parade" along the Complex's recently installed perimeter walking path, kids of all ages got to show off their costumes as they participated in games, activities, face painting, and of course ... receiving CANDY! Spooktacular was held in conjunction with the final night of the [Live & Local: Market + Music](#) series, and offered something for attendees from all generations.

Just because Halloween is over, it doesn't mean the fun has to stop! To keep track of all the fun activities coming up from the Oak Island Recreation Department, be sure to check the **Events & Programs** page on the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/EVENTS or click the link below.

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Tree Planting Takes Root

Despite nature's browns and golds that arrive with the onset of Fall, passing through the middle of Town of E Oak Island Drive might actually look a little "greener" these days. That's thanks to the **Outdoors Club** from **Southport Christian School**, who came out to plant three new trees in front of the [Ocean Education Center](#) and Town Hall on **Wednesday, October 19, 2022**.

A total of 24 students participated in the planting, in which new live oaks were put in place. One of which even replaced a Bradford pear tree, which is non-native and structurally weak (NOTE: the NC cooperative Extension and the NC Forest Service teamed up to [offer a "bounty" on this species](#), and encourage North Carolinians to properly remove and replace them with invasive trees).

Landon Perkins, a science teacher at Southport Christian Schools and head of school's the Outdoors Club, worked with the Town's [Environmental Advisory Committee](#) and [Public Works Department](#) to coordinate the planting event. Public Works staff identified the locations and pre-dug the holes, allowing the students to plant the new trees and conduct a field-lesson on their importance to the native ecosystem.

"These kids get really exciting about getting to do physical work in their community" said Perkins. "I think once we do a debrief from today, we're going to see a sense of wonder when they realize how all of these trees far outlive their brief efforts here, and be enjoyed by many future generations to come!"

A full photo album from the tree planting can be found on the Town's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/TownofOakIslandNC](#) or by clicking the link below.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Each month, between the *MONTHLY REVIEW* and upcoming *NEWS & NOTICES* sections, you'll find **CONTRIBUTIONS**. This section features content contributed from various Town Departments and staff, as well as the Town's municipal and non-profit partner organizations. Regular contributing partner organizations include the [Oak Island Fire Department](#), the [Beach Preservation Society](#), the [Friends of Parks Foundation](#), the [Sea Turtle Protection Program](#), the [Friends of the Library](#), and [Oak Island Water Rescue](#), among others. For more information on the content presented in this section, please reach out to the contributing department or organization directly.



Fire Department Safety Brief: Beach Bonfire Season Starts

The cool air of Fall and the family gatherings of the holidays also mark the start of another important season here in Oak Island ... **Beach Bonfire Season!** For those more used to the rural "massive piles of burning debris" definition of "bonfire," Oak Island simply uses the term to refer to small fires (about 4 feet in diameter) for the purpose of warmth, located directly on the sand in public beach areas.

Beach Bonfires are allowed once Sea Turtle Nesting Season officially ends on November 15, and do require a permit from the Fire Department, which can be filled out online through the Town Website. As with previous years, there is **NO charge** for a permit, as the main purpose is to provide the Fire Department with a record of when and where to expect fires on the beach.

PLEASE NOTE: Even if someone else sets up your bonfire, YOU must fill out and submit the application yourself. Others cannot do this for you as part of a free or paid service.

As a reminder, Beach Bonfire Permits are not accepted **more than 72 hours before** a planned bonfire. This is to allow for accurate wind forecasts, where PEAK windspeeds must be forecasted **at or below 15 MPH** for the time of the bonfire.

Applicants will receive an email copy of the submitted permit, which will serve as their proof of permit copy. A digital (email) or printed copy of this should be kept at all times, as it may be requested on location at the bonfire. Finally, remember to always practice fire safety, and to please clean up after your bonfire!

Applications will begin being received on **Monday, November 14**, for bonfires scheduled on **Wednesday, November 16**. To learn more about Beach Bonfire Permits or submit one of your own, simply visit the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/BONFIRE, or click the link below.

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Oak Island Water Rescue: Open House November 5

(Contributed by **Carl Mauney, OIWR Information Officer**) On

Saturday, November 5, Oak Island Water Rescue will be celebrating its **25th Anniversary** with a special **Open House** event.

The Open House will be from **10:00 AM - 2:00 PM** in the Water Rescue Station, located at **4901 E Pelican Street** (near the intersection of SE 49th Street).

The event will feature:

- Free Food (Hot Dogs and Chips)
- Free Station Tours
- Free Raffle giveaways
- Trucks and Boats on Display

So make your plans to attend the Oak Island Water Rescue 25th Anniversary Open House!

ABOUT: Oak Island Water Rescue is a non-profit, 20-member volunteer emergency response team that aids swimmers and boaters in distress. They also assist the Oak Island Police Department, Oak Island Fire Department, and US Coast Guard, in addition to other agencies as able. For more information or to contact the team, visit their website at www.OIWR.org or click the link below.

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Friends of the Library: Meet the local authors

(Contributed by **FOLSOI Board Chair, Julie Paladino**) On

Tuesday, November 15 at 2:00 PM, the Friends of the Library will host a **Meet the Local Authors** event at the Barbee Library, located at 8200 E Oak Island Dr.

Carol Pearson wrote **10 Little Rules for a Blissy Life** after her

world was turned upside down by life altering events. Forced to come to terms with her own rules for living, she's come to believe that bliss is a state of mind, that happiness is a choice. And she knows first hand we all need a little help from time to time to remember this. Her original book has grown into a series of 10 Little Rules books and a tightly knit tribe of authors, including local authors Amy Hege Atwell, owner of The Painted Mermaid in Southport; and Micki Beach, owner of Tree of Life Yoga Studio on Oak Island.

Join Carol, Amy and Micki as they read from their books and share the forces that shaped their life views. They'll talk about sharing their truths and staying true to themselves in this often chaotic and confusing world, and offer journaling prompts for deeper reflection. We expect this to be a lively discussion, and welcome the audience to participate.

Registration is open, but seating is limited! Stop by Barbee Library to reserve your seat, or call 910-278-4283.

ABOUT: The Friends of the Library Southport & Oak Island (FOLSOI) is a non-profit organization that provides financial and operational support to the Southport and Oak Island libraries, enabling them to remain current, accessible, and appealing. For more information or to contact the group directly, visit their website at www.FOLSOI.org or click the link

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Beach Preservation Society: Second Public Seminar Scheduled

(Contributed by BPSI Board Member, Cindy Horrell Ramsey) The Oak Island Beach Preservation Society, Inc., (BPSI) will host its second public seminar of the season on **Tuesday, November 15**. Guest speaker, Mary Ellen Rogers, will talk about the history and work of the Seabiscuit Wildlife Shelter on Oak Island with a focus on pelicans. She may also bring one of her education pelicans, Tim or Tessa, to meet the attendees. The seminar will be held at the **801 Event Center, 801 Ocean**

Drive, at 7:00 PM.

Mary Ellen Rogers has dedicated her life to wildlife. On Oak Island, she has also dedicated her home. Prior to moving to Oak Island in 2005, Rogers led a sea turtle protection program in South Carolina for many years and volunteered at the Center for Birds of Prey. Finding a robust turtle program already established on Oak Island, but wanting to do something significant, she used her experience with birds to found the Seabiscuit Wildlife Shelter in 2007 in her basement and backyard.

Seabiscuit focuses on wild bird rescue, rehabilitation, and release. Thousands of wild birds have been saved through this nonprofit's hard work and dedication. Rogers is the founder and president, but she credits her volunteers and local island residents for the program's success.

"I want to make sure people realize that they are Oak Island. They are the ones who are on the beach and see the birds and help me help them," Rogers says. *"Island people do more saving than I do. I really appreciate the support of people out there looking and reporting."*

Financial help is also appreciated. From food to medicine to vet bills to everyday expenses, the costs are exorbitant, and Rogers makes sure the birds and other wildlife have what they need even if it comes out of her own pocket. Fortunately, about 90% of expenses are currently covered by donations. For information on the shelter and how you can help, please visit <http://www.seabiscuitwildlifeshelter.org/>

ABOUT: The Oak Island Beach Preservation Society, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to education and community engagement to enhance the Oak Island beach experience and leave the beach better for everyone now and in the future. For more information on BPSI, just visit their website at www.beachoki.org/register or click the link below.

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NEWS & NOTICES of the MONTH

Council & Board Meetings

REMINDER: All televised public meetings listed below will be broadcast live on OKI-TV (Spectrum Cable channel 8 / 122), as well as livestreamed on the Town Website. Meeting agendas, minutes, and any livestreamed or recorded videos are available at www.OakIslandNC.gov/MEETINGS.

TOWN COUNCIL (*televised*) will hold its regular meeting on **Tuesday, November 8, 2022 at 6:00 PM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of Town Hall at 4601 E Oak Island Drive.

PLANNING BOARD (*televised*) will hold a special called meeting on **Wednesday, November 9, 2022 at 10:30 AM** in

meeting on **Wednesday, November 9, 2022 at 10:30 AM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of Town Hall at 4601 E Oak Island Drive. The purpose of this meeting will be for the ongoing Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Audit.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (non-televised) will hold its regular meeting on **Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 8:30 AM** in the Police Department Training Room, located on the second floor of the Police Department adjoining Town Hall at 4621 E Oak Island Drive.

PLANNING BOARD (televised) will hold its regular meeting on **Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 10:30 AM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of Town Hall at 4601 E Oak Island Drive.

CLOSURES & HOLIDAYS

VETERANS DAY: The Town of Oak Island Administrative Offices, Recreation Center, and Community Center will be **CLOSED** on **Friday, November 11, 2022** in observance of **Veterans Day**.

THANKSGIVING: The Town of Oak Island Administrative Offices, Recreation Center, and Community Center will be **CLOSED** on **Thursday & Friday, November 24-25, 2022** in observance of **Thanksgiving**. **NOTE:** the Recreation Center will also **CLOSE EARLY** at 4:30 PM on **Wednesday, November 23**. Police, fire, and other emergency services are not affected during any holiday closure, and are always available by **calling 9-1-1**. The **Oak Island Pier** will be open during their seasonal

hours. All currently available **Parks** and public **Beach & Water Access Locations** and facilities will be open as well. All 2022 closure dates can be viewed in the *Holiday Calendar* on the Town Website at: www.OakIslandNC.gov/HOLIDAY.

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ELECTION NOTICE: Recreation Center Schedule Impacts

The Oak Island Recreation Center, located at 3003 E Oak Island Drive, will serve as a voting location in the upcoming 2022 General Election on **Tuesday, November 8, 2022**.

To accommodate voting activities, the following facility modifications are needed:

- All fitness classes have been cancelled
- Afternoon Knock Out has been cancelled
- The parking lot on SE 31st St. will be closed

Please note, both the cardio and weight rooms will be remain open for community use.

All questions specific to voting, or the use of the Recreation Center as a voting location, should be directed to the **Brunswick County Board of Elections**, which can be contacted by calling 910-253-2620 or through email at elections@brunswickcountync.gov.

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Oak Island Pier Now Operating on Fall Schedule

In addition to the warm summer temperatures, Autumn also brings to an end the extra sunshine of **Daylight Saving time** (*though, perhaps not for long*).

To adapt with the changing times, the [Oak Island Pier](#) has transitioned to its **Fall Operating Schedule**.

As of November 1, the Pier is open during seasonal hours from 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM daily.

Located at 705 Ocean Drive, the Oak Island Pier and Pier House are open 7 days a week, year round. The next seasonal change will come in December, when the Pier switches to its Winter Operating Schedule of 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

In addition to fishing passes, anglers and visitors alike will find the Pier House conveniently stocked with frozen bait, fishing tackle, sundries, snacks, ice cream, and drinks for purchase. Shirts, sunglasses and other souvenirs are also available. Even fans who aren't nearby can still visit the Pier anytime, *virtually* through the **[Oak Island Pier Cam](#)**. To view the Pier Cam, along with full details on the Pier and Pier House, simply visit the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.com/PIER, or click the link below.

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Backflow Prevention Testing: Billing Now Underway

Regular readers of *The CURRENT* may remember in August, when it was reported that the Town would begin testing of **Backflow Prevention Devices**. Property owners of nearly 1,000 total homes who have irrigation meters installed were given written notices, reminding them of the need to have their devices tested.

Owners had the option to provide testing themselves through a Certified Backflow Tester, or have the Town's Backflow Technician (ORC) perform the test on their behalf, and be charged a \$35.00 testing fee on their next water bill.

This testing performed by the Town's ORC was conducted throughout August and September, and the \$35 testing fee should now be showing on current billing as being combined with the base rate. In most cases, the regular base rate is usually \$25.22, so when combined with the testing fee would now show as \$60.22 (**NOTE:** the testing fee is a one-time charge).

Backflow Prevention Device testing is important, as it helps to ensure the safety of the Town's water, by preventing harmful

"backflow" into the system. In addition to safety, the test is also required by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Backflow Prevention Devices are installed either on the water service connection or within the homes plumbing system.

If property owners feel they are due for testing, but have not received a letter notifying them, the Backflow Technician within the Public Utilities Department can always be contacted at 910-201-8008 or by using the Contact Form on the Public Utilities page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/PU.

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Convenience Site Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday

Speaking of "changing schedules" and "backflow prevention" - some holiday operating updates are coming to the ***Oak Island Disposal Convenience Site*** as well.

The Convenience Site, which is located at 4110 Airport Road, will be **CLOSED on Friday, November 25, 2022** in observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday. The site will re-open regular hours the following week.

While the day after Thanksgiving (aka "Black Friday") is a day when many are more focused on tagging the best deal instead of tossing the leftovers, there will still be availability for those needing disposal options. The Brunswick County Landfill will be closed on Thanksgiving; but the will reopen on Friday, November 25, with the Convenience Sites operating on their regular schedule.

Please note, the curbside Garbage & Recycling Collection Schedule for the Town will **NOT** be affected by the Thanksgiving holiday; however, pick up may take longer than normal due to higher volume.

For full information on Garbage & Recycling Collection Schedules and Collections Zones, visit www.OakIslandNC.gov/COLLECTION or click the link below.

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COMING EVENTS & PROGRAMS

REMINDER: Information on all special events, recreation programs, and educational activities can be found on the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/EVENTS.

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Birding Basics

WHEN: Thursday, November 10, 2022 • 5:00 PM

WHERE: Oak Island Recreation Center • 3003 E. Oak Island Drive

REGISTRATION: www.OakIslandNC.gov/RecDesk

COST: Free

ABOUT: Becky Skiba, Education Specialist with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission will review birding basics! Learn about birds living on the coast, coastal habitats, and local birding around the Recreation Center, as she explains what coastal birds make this area home, and explain their habitat. Director Mary Ellen Rogers with the Sea Biscuit Wildlife Rescue will also have live coastal birds for viewing

and explain their habitats too!

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Black Bear Basics

WHEN: November 15, 2022 • 5:00 PM

WHERE: Oak Island Recreation Center • 3003 E. Oak Island Drive

REGISTRATION: www.OakIslandNC.gov/RecDesk

COST: Free

ABOUT: Come explore the fascinating world of North Carolina's most charismatic creatures! Join the Recreation Department in welcoming Becky Skiba of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, as she explains bear biology, history, and ecology! Packed with fun, games, and lots of amazing bear knowledge!

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Oak Island Christmas Tree Lighting

WHEN: Friday, December 2 • 5:00 PM (tree lighting shortly after sunset)

WHERE: Middleton Park Complex • 4610 E Dolphin Dr.

COST: Free

ABOUT: Celebrate with the Town of Oak Island at its Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony! Live entertainment, music, crafts, a letter to Santa station and a special visit from Santa himself are all on the agenda for this yearly anticipated event!

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Christmas By The Sea Parade

WHEN: Saturday, December 3, 2022 • 2:00 PM

WHERE: Oak Island Town Hall, 4601 E. Oak Island Drive - continuing to the intersection of E Oak Island Drive and McGlamery Street

COST: free

ABOUT: The Christmas by the Sea Parade is an event of the Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Oak Island. It is one of three events organized by the Chamber during the holiday season which include the Shop Small Southport-Oak Island and Youth Business Fair.

NOTE: *The Parade is now taking applications for parade entries!* The application deadline to enter the parade is November 28, and applications can be found at www.christmasbytheseaparade.com or by clicking the link below.

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PLEASE NOTE: There are **MANY** fun, educational, and exciting events and programs planned for the month ahead (way too many to list here)! For a complete list of upcoming activities, contact the Recreation Department at **910-278-5518**, or visit the **EVENTS & PROGRAMS** page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/EVENTS, or just click the link below.

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TOWN FEATURE: VETERANS PARK

Fun fact about the month of November, along with January it is one of the only months to hold **two** (2) federal holidays, Thanksgiving and Veterans Day. Although it is only a coincidence of history that these two fall in the same month, it is divinely appropriate that they do. Simply put, in **America it would be nearly impossible to have one without the other**. The sacrifices made by the Veterans honored in one holiday are what has preserved the abundant freedoms we give thanks for in the other holiday.

Like many other municipalities, the Town of Oak Island recognizes this through a public park dedicated in honor to the military service of our residents and their family members.

Formerly known as Waterway Park, this area at **1408 E Yacht Drive** was renamed in 2015 to **Veterans Park**, where it will remain as such for generations to come. Situated along the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW), Veterans Park features several amenities for fishing, wildlife viewing, and appreciating nature. Whether it's bird watching or boat watching, there's always interesting traffic humming along the ICW!

Throughout the years, the Town has added a 175-foot-long

boardwalk, along with a 40-foot "fishing T" that extends more than 60 feet out into the ICW. The Fishing T also features a fully handicap accessible shaded area on one end. The park also is home to the OKI Beautification Club Butterfly Garden, as well as a "living shoreline" marsh area with oyster reef. Community gatherings, public events, and even private occasions are all celebrated under the 20-foot by 20-foot covered picnic shelter at the center of the Park. Like most shelter structures at all other parks, this can be reserved for private use by Town residents at minimal cost.

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PROFILE: **Public Works Department** work hard to maintain the beauty and accessibility of Veterans Park, along with all other facilities within the Town of Oak Island.

Many communities have "Parks & Recreation" departments, which combine the maintenance and development of park facilities with the planning of recreation activities in them.

This is **NOT** the case in Oak Island however (**NOTE:** the Town officially has a "Recreation Department" and not a "Parks & Rec").

Several years ago, Oak Island took the initiative of assigning the **Public Works Department** to address park upkeep and maintenance concerns. This allowed our Recreation Department staff to do what they do best: *planning top-tier*

recreation programs and activities to be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike!

It also means that a dedicated Public Works staff and budget ensures concerns are addressed more quickly and efficiently than they would be in a traditional combined department.

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A Team Effort. In preparation for the 2022 Veterans Day activities, Town staff and the community have partnered together to provide both structural and visual updates to the park.

New lighting, landscaping, and other improvements were all recently made, thanks to the combined efforts of Town staff, community volunteers, private businesses and partner organizations.

Those who came together to include the Town's **Public Works Department, Police Department, and the 100 Hometowns Team** from the **Lowe's Home Improvement** in neighboring Southport, NC.

MORE than "just another brick in the wall." One of the most notable differences between Veterans Park and the other outdoor areas offered by the Town of Oak Island, is the 20-foot-long **Memorial Brick Wall**, located on the Park's northern facing side. Originally constructed as part of a park improvement project in early 2018, the Memorial Brick Wall provides an opportunity for residents and their family members to be honored for their military service. Much like veterans themselves, bricks provide a symbol of **individual strength** and **multiplied effort**. On their own they are sturdy and resilient, but when also combined as a whole, can build great structures which provide safety and convenience for their community, at a level far beyond "the sum of their parts."

As part of the park improvements mentioned above, the Memorial Brick Wall is getting its own facelift as well ... and you can be a part of it! The Wall's renovation is expected to be finished just in time for Veterans Day ceremonies on Friday

November 11, 2022. The completion of these upgrades also means the restart of the **Brick Purchasing Program**. To purchase a brick in honor or memory of your own special service member, just visit use the **NEW Memorial Brick Program Order Form** on the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/BRICK.

It's a special place. Did you know, *Veterans Park is actually one of over twenty different parks or outdoor facilities offered by the Town of Oak Island?* Even so, Veterans Park certainly doesn't get lost in the shuffle. True, other parks may offer more amenities or a greater number of activities, but Veterans Park has a unique atmosphere all to its own. There's just something about the way the quiet reverence of the park's dedicated

purpose, seamlessly blends with the opportunities to interact with and enjoy nature. There's a certain timelessness to it, that simply doesn't need the loud fun of a Splashpad, or the educational overload of a Nature Center. Like the veterans it honors, it remains steadfast, reverent, and confident in its own comforts.



Veterans Park has come along way throughout history to get where it is today. From early intentions of a possible boat ramp, to the greater good of a marine nursery; it would seem the current, and forever final iteration of the property at the corner of NE 15th and E Yacht Drive provides its true purpose. November is a time to be thankful, and it is also a time to honor our Nation's veterans. Sitting in quiet reflection near the memorial brick wall, looking out over the beautiful scenery of the Waterway ... one can easily accomplish both. To view or share location and amenity details about Veterans Park, or any of the parks and outdoor facilities within Oak Island, just visit the **Parks Information** page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/PARKS, or click the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)



PHOTO REVIEW

PLEASE NOTE: The *Photo Review* section contains reader-submitted photos, and allows for greater exposure of the artistic contributions made by members of the Oak Island community. Submissions are donated and not compensated by any means other than the courtesy credit below. Please view the captions for information on this month's contributors. To contribute a submission, please email the photo along with a description of the date, location, and photographer or business name to: photos@oakislandnc.gov.





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