

THE CURRENT

Your guide to current news & events from the Town of Oak Island, NC

February 2023

IN THIS ISSUE: Welcome / Monthly Review / Contributions / News & Notices / Coming Events / Feature Spotlight / Photo Review

Welcome to 2023

WELCOME to FEBRUARY 2023 edition of THE CURRENT. Love.

Sometimes, you feel that deep, burning feeling in your heart, and you look to your significant other and just know, that they were the one meant for you ... *as they reach into their bag and hand you an antacid, for the heartburn you just got from downing four (4) chili-laden hotdogs while sitting on the beach.*

Hey, the way it's expressed may look different to different people, but **love is love**. Whether shown through a *heart-shaped* box of chocolates, or a *heartburn-reducing* bottle of the pink stuff, the point is that somebody cares enough about you to show you they care. As anyone who's been in Oak Island for more than, oh say, **three seconds** can tell you, love doesn't just end with people.

The **places** where we make our memories can capture our hearts just as fiercely as the memories themselves. It's why dirt, grass, and sand, some of the most abundant materials on the planet, can become some of the most valuable if given the right location. As with anything that's loved, you value it, and invest in it's health and wellbeing. Like any good romance story though, Oak Island has a magical way of returning the appreciation, with a such beauty and natural wonder that no amount of human effort could ever match. The golden-hued sky, melting into the purple night of just one sunset, is enough experience to know this land gives so much more than it takes.

Even though February is a short month, there's still a lot to take in! No need to wait around for Valentine's Day, you can show Oak Island some love all month long, with plenty of activities to get involved in now. So whether it's *milk chocolate* or *milk-of-magnesia*, grab your snacks and heart shaped rafts, as we float down the river of love into the FEBRUARY 2023 edition of THE CURRENT.

MONTHLY REVIEW



MONTHLY REVIEW

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



Council Meeting Recap

The Town Council's regular meeting on **January 10, 2023** began with four Public Hearings. **(1)** Proposed Development Agreement for the area known as the *Williamson Tract*: postponed to a later date. **(2)** Proposed Modification to the Pine Forest Plantation Phased Conceptual Development Plan: Council unanimously approved the amended Special Use Permit. **(3)** Proposed text amendments to Articles 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the UDO: Council unanimously approved the amendments to Articles 2, 3, 4, and 5, with the exception of the proposed amendment to Section 3.3.3.5, and adopted the associated consistency statement. **(4)** proposed amendments to Sec. 7.43 of the Town's UDO: Council unanimously approved the amendments to Sec. 7.43, but to further amend those to include the 50-foot measurement as well as the certificate from the health department designation.

COUNCIL REPORTS: **Councilman Bill Craft** said that during the upcoming Council Retreat, he wanted to bring up issues that people have been talking about, including traffic on Yacht Drive, the Rec Center, crosswalks at SE 20th and SW 6th, kayak launches, and paving. **Mayor Pro Tempore John Bach** said that he was struck by some of the comments during the first public hearing, and that the next five years would see them dealing with managing growth, and that he would ask for their patience and their best thinking about how we adapt and evolve. **Councilman Charlie Blalock** agreed, and said they would have to work together to get things done, and he also asked people to be patient. **Councilman Mark Martin** said that the intent of the first retreat was financial planning, to set the tone for going into the budget workshop in the spring, and committed to focus on strategic planning at the meeting on the 31st. **Mayor Elizabeth White** said she was really proud of this Council, that they may not always agree but that they were willing to work toward compromise. She encouraged citizens to continue to stay involved and to reach out, and wanted to continue working to make sure the committees and boards were aligned with the work of Council.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: Council unanimously appointed Brendan Heffernan and Rhomni Williams to the Par 3 Advisory Committee (*terms ending January 2026*).

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS: *Manager David Kelly* reviewed a draft drawing for the Pedestrian Improvement Plan (NE 46th to NE 51st / the light at Publix), and noted that NCDOT now wanted a three-way crossing at that intersection. Crosswalks at Town Hall and The Cabana have been approved. Kelly also reported that the latest Streets Condition Survey was now available on the Town Website, and that the Town had received verbal notification for a \$5,000 grant toward the purchase of an LED light tower to be used by the Fire Department. **NOTE: Monthly Department Reports are available to view any time on the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/DEPT.**

OLD BUSINESS: (1) Proposed Amendments to Chapter 28 of the Code of Ordinances: Council unanimously approved the amendments to Chapter 28 and adopted the Parking Zone map. **(2) Consideration of Contract with Otto Connect for a Paid Parking Program:** Mayor Pro Tempore John Bach made motion with revised parking rate fees, and that the Administration be charged with finding an additional 182 Town Parking spaces, if possible. In a roll call vote, and the motion passed 4-1 with Mayor Pro Tempore Bach and Council members Bell, Blalock and Martin in favor and Councilman Craft opposed. **(ADDED)** Following a brief recess, Council unanimously approved a motion to reinstate Sec. 28-10.2, with the understanding that staff and the Town Attorney would bring back revisions next month.

NEW BUSINESS: (1) Resolution of Continued Opposition of HB 496 and in Support of Retaining Local Control over Tree Ordinances: Council voted unanimously to adopt the Resolution as presented.

Council then moved into **CLOSED SESSION**, during which no actions were taken. Council then moved back into open session, and adjourned the meeting.

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

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

Council Retreats Review

In addition to their regular meeting on January 10, the Town Council also held three Council Retreat meetings throughout the month of January. Council Retreats are essentially workshop style meetings, in which the Council is provided a general overview of current and projected financial health. The Council also takes this time to establish working goals and priorities for the coming fiscal year.

January 17: Initially designated as the first Council Retreat meeting, this was recessed early due to emergency absence from members of staff and the Council. Mayor Pro Tem John Bach led the meeting, in which council unanimously approved the revised contract for Paid Parking Services with Otto Connect, which reflected the language changes made during the January 10 regular meeting. After the vote, the remainder of the meeting and Council Retreat agenda items were postponed until January 26.

January 26: All members of Council and staff were present and resumed the meeting, which consisted of a series of budget reports from Town Manager David Kelly, and Finance Director David Hatten. Focusing on the Fiscal Year 2022-23, reports included a 6-Month Budget Review, Capital Items purchased to date, Capital Items remaining for purchase, and Capital Reserve Funds, among several other topics

January 31: The meeting began with a discussion of budget insights from Councilman Mark Martin and Finance Director David Hatten. Mayor Elizabeth White then provided review of the Council's priorities for the current Fiscal Year 22-23. following this, Mayor White hosted discussion on Council priorities, goals, and vision objectives for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2023-24.

The input received during the Council Retreat meetings will be used in the development of the Town's proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The priorities identified by the Council heavily shape the options presented in the budget workshops, to be held later in the spring.

As with any regular meeting of the Town Council, video and agenda copies of all Council Retreat dates can be found on the **Meetings Information** page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/MEETINGS, or by clicking the link below.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE



Town of
Oak Island
Council Meeting

January 31, 2023
Council Retreat



Paid Parking Progress

Since first reported in the September 2022 edition of The CURRENT, the development of the Town's Paid Parking program has been a regularly reviewed point of interest. Originally presented during the August 16, 2022 Town Council meeting, the program has now been a part of eight (8) special meetings, public hearings, or business items in regular meetings.

Almost immediately after the discussion began, the ***Paid Parking Information*** page was created on the Town Website. Since its creation, this page has undergone eleven (11) page updates, with 2 major revisions.

In January a comprehensive **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** was added, compiling answers to some of the most common concerns. A few days later, the **Program Outline** was created and affixed to the top of the page. This feature breaks down the differences in how the program will affect residents and property owners, non-residents and visitors, and right-of-way parking.

The page also helped to establish consistency with the terms used for the program, such as "TOWN PARKING PASS" (for Town residents and property owners) and "PAID PARKING PASS" (for anyone to purchase through the standard fee structure).

The most recent page update in early February, saw the FAQ also broken down by topic of interest, while the **Program Development History** section was condensed for easier navigation.

As a reminder, further developments in the program still remain, with some aspects still awaiting future action by Town Council. Rest assured, as these developments happen, information will be updated in near real-time on the Paid Parking Information page. Questions are still being received for the FAQ as well.

To view program developments or submit questions for the FAQ, just visit www.OakIslandNC.gov/PaidParking or click the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

Added Access

On **Monday, January 23, 2023** crews with the Oak island Public Works Department placed the final touches on renovations to the Town's Beach Access Location at the end of Keziah Street, one block east of the ever-popular Oak Island Pier. These renovations effectively turn the entire location into a Handicap-Only Beach Access. These spaces compliment and add to the "van and ramp" width accessible spaces already provided in the adjacent **604 Ocean Drive** parking lot.

"For a while now, we've been working towards identifying and creating a Beach Access Location exclusively for handicap parking," said Public Works Director, Scott Thornall. *"With a naturally easier slope onto the beach, and prime location next to one of our busiest features [the [Oak Island Pier](#)], Keziah was the obvious choice."*

ALL eleven (11) of the parking spaces at the street end are now marked specifically for handicap parking, with fresh gravel graded and packed. In addition, a 75' long mobility mat (Mobi-Mat) has been placed in the access, with the pathway slightly re-shaped for a smoother, less steep approach on and off the beach.

This renovation was the result of recent positive engagements with concerned community members, who saw an opportunity for expansion and improvement of the access provided to those with mobility impairments. It is part of an ongoing effort to evaluate and improve how the Town can provide a better quality of access, within the facilities currently available.

With the recently approved [Paid Parking](#) season set to begin on April 1, it is important to note that **marked handicap spaces will NOT be charged** as part of the Paid Parking Program. The renovation at Keziah Street, the addition of new Mobi-Mats, and any future expansion of available parking, are just a few of the ways the Town of Oak island is working to improve access for the limited mobility community.

This change has been updated in the interactive maps available on the **Beach & Water Access Information** page of the Town Website, which can be viewed at www.OakIslandNC.gov/ACCESS, or by clicking the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)





Grinding of the Greens

Shortly after the Christmas holiday, the Public Works Department launched the new **Grinding of the Greens** program. For the first two weeks in January, the department collected live Christmas trees at three locations throughout Town. The collected trees would then be ground into mulch, for use in the Town's walking trails at the Nature Center, Recreation Center, and other Town properties.

On the morning of January 24, crews with the Operations Division of the Public Works Department, fired up their monstrous Vermeer Model BC1000 chipper, and spent nearly 3 hours grinding away at the **257 trees collected!**

By the next day, the mulch rendered was already being put to use! As seen in the **PHOTO REVIEW** at the end of this edition, the Nature Center (located at NE 52nd street) was the first to receive the benefits of a fresh mulch bed in the walking trails. As beautiful as the new trails look, the Christmas trees they're made from have them smelling even better!

Those who didn't participate in the *Grinding of the Greens* program still had the option for trees to be collected from the right-of-way, as part of the regular Yard Debris Collection Schedule; provided they were free of ornaments and decoration. The Collection Schedule can be found by visiting the on the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/YardDebris or clicking the link below.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE

CONTRIBUTIONS



CONTRIBUTIONS

This section features content contributed from various Town Departments, as well as the Town's municipal and non-profit partner organizations.

Regular contributing 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, please reach out to the contributing organization directly.

Fire Department Safety Brief: Community Connect

(Contributed by Lee Price) In January, we talked about the **KNOX BOX**, an amazing tool that helps us get into your home safely and efficiently during times of emergency. In a true emergency however, just getting into your home is only the first part of a response.

For this reason, we are excited to announce the new **COMMUNITY CONNECT** program, to help better serve our residents and protect your property. Community Connect is a free, secure, and easy to use platform that allows you to share critical information about your property. This information can greatly assist all emergency personnel when responding to a call for service at your home.

Community Connect provides us with a single source for your critical information. You can list important details such as your medical needs, your home's floorplan and access layout, pets or animals we may encounter inside, and even emergency contacts we can reach out to for more information.

Creating an account is FREE and easy! Simply visit the Fire Department page of the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/FD and click on the Community Connect icon at the top of the page. Once redirected to the Community Connect website, you can provide your email, phone number, and address, along with any other information you think would be most important for us to know in an emergency.

That's it! Just be sure to keep the details updated as things change over time, so that we'll always have your latest information ... even if you're not physically present tell us (or present but unable to).

As mentioned above, the Community Connect app has been linked on the Fire Department page of the Town Website, but it can also be accessed directly by visiting www.communityconnect.io/info/nc-oakisland or clicking the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)



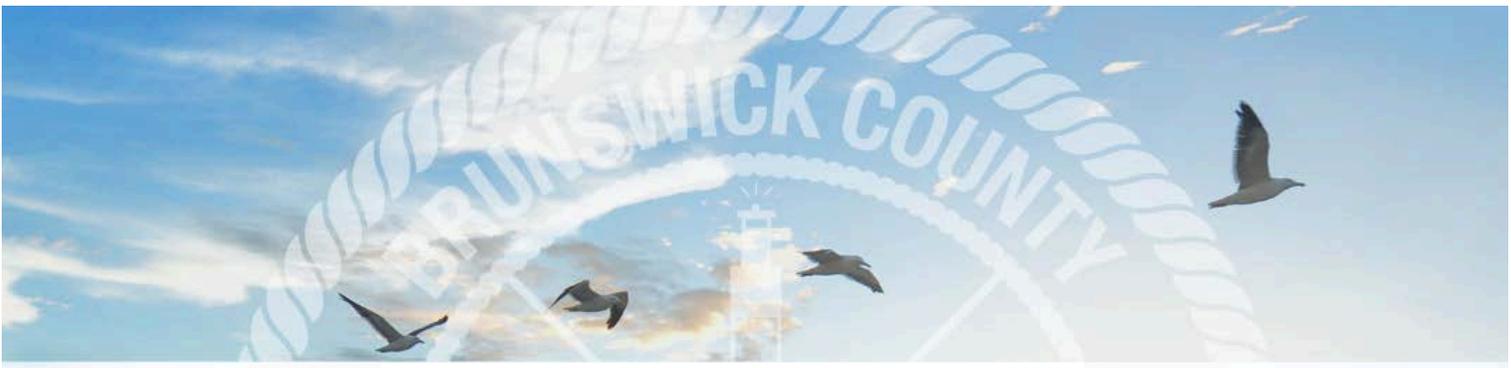
Oak Island Community Connect

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

Create or Update Your Profile Today

[RESIDENTS](#)

[BUSINESS OWNERS](#)



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Brunswick County

NORTH CAROLINA

brunswickcountync.gov



Brunswick County: NEW Significant Projects Page

(Contributed by Amber Merklinger) Have you ever wondered if there was a single location you could visit online, to learn about what development projects have been approved in Brunswick County? Well, there is! In the recently launched [Significant Projects page of the Brunswick County Website](#).

Simply visit www.brunswickcountync.gov/significant-projects, to find a wealth of development information, such as:

Approved Projects Map: An interactive map that allows you to see every project approved by Brunswick County since 2015.

List of Proposed Projects: A list of proposed projects that have been submitted and are currently under review by Brunswick County.

Map of Proposed Projects: A map of where proposed residential projects of significance are located in Brunswick County.

Development Approval Process: A summary of the approval process for major subdivisions and planned developments in Brunswick County.

The interactive Approved Projects Map is maintained by Brunswick County's Planning department, and allows you to view development projects that have been approved in the county since 2015.

Development projects include planned developments, major subdivisions, conditional rezonings, and major commercial permits. The projects displayed on the map may have a future start date, have already started, or have been completed. More information on the County's approval process for major subdivisions and planned developments can be found on the page.

While the map does not include development projects that fall within the municipal limits of Oak Island (unless it was approved by the County and then was later annexed), it does show surrounding development that could impact travel and economic progress for the Town. So if you want to keep up with the latest in development around you, remember to visit www.brunswickcountync.gov/significant-projects, or just click the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

Beach Ambassadors: NOW Recruiting

(Contributed by Skip Cox) On Wednesday, January 11, 2023 the **Beach Ambassador Program** got a real treat when we **tested our new UTV** for use in the upcoming 2023 Summer Season (*pictured*)! There's just one problem though. While we are getting new tools and equipment every day, we still have need for more of our most important resource ... **VOLUNTEERS!**

We love our beach and want to share its wonders with everyone. To help protect the beach and those who come here, as well as share information about Oak Island events and amenities, the [Beach Preservation Society, Inc.](#) and the Town partner together to support volunteer [Beach Ambassadors](#).

From May to September teams of Ambassadors patrol sections of beach to interact with beachgoers and monitor beach conditions. Their patrols cover about a mile of assigned beach, and are walked on weekends and some days during the week.

Ambassadors can choose their own schedules, but some weekend service is expected. A typical encounter might include answering questions about nearby places to eat, number of sea turtle nests identified to date, or what kinds of family activities are available. Beach Ambassadors are also the friendly face of Oak Island's serious beach ordinances

Between personal interactions, Ambassadors may pick up trash on the beach, fill in abandoned holes, and note beach conditions that might need the help of Town staff.

Ambassadors are people over 21 who apply for the program with a positive approach to the protection of the beach as well as the value of beach tourism. Applicants are subject to a background check and go through a training program before beginning their patrols in the summer. They must have stamina, mobility and maturity. Ambassadors are expected to commit to at least 20 hours of service in the tourist season [mid-May through Labor Day]. They report regularly to the Program Manager, and may also address concerns to designated Town personnel.

Ambassadors are not enforcers, but like other responsible citizens they may call police if an ordinance is being ignored after reminders are given.

INTERESTED? Contact Skip Cox, OIBA Program Manager at skipncsu@gmail.com or 910-880-0620. Protecting the beach and those who visit it is a job for everyone!

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE





PARABLES

Friends of the Library: Meet the Author Event

(Contributed by Julie Paladino) On Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 2:00 PM, the Barbee Library, located 8200 East Oak Island Drive, will host a **Meet the Author** event with Admiral Dennis Jones. Admiral Jones will be discussing his book, "**Parables of the Prairie**," sharing the fun and heartwarming story of growing up on a farm in middle America and how it taught him lessons that made him a strong leader during a distinguished career in the U.S. Navy.

Registration is required and seating is limited.

About the Author: Admiral Dennis A. Jones, USN (Ret.) grew up in landlocked Fairbury, Nebraska, in the middle of flyover country. It was an unlikely starting place for someone who subsequently spent 37 years in the Navy, serving on and commanding submarines.

Admiral Jones is a graduate of the US Naval Academy who commanded the submarine USS Birmingham during the Cold War, served on the staff of the Secretary of Defense, commanded all US and NATO submarines in the Mediterranean Sea during the Yugoslavian War, and served as Deputy Commander of the US Strategic Command.

"Every day of my career I made decisions that were based on lessons I had learned in Nebraska and on a farm in Kansas."

ABOUT: The Friends of the Library Southport & Oak Island (FOLSOI) supports the mission and programs of the Margaret & James Harper, Jr. Library in Southport and the G.V. Barbee, Sr Library on Oak Island. FOLSOI is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. For more information, call 910-278-4283, visit www.folsoi.org or click the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

NEWS & NOTICES

The CURRENT

News & Notices



NEWS & NOTICES of the MONTH

Council, Committee, Board Meetings

REMINDER: Televised public meetings are broadcast live on OKI-TV (Spectrum Cable channel 8), as well as livestreamed on the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/MEETINGS. For a complete schedule of all upcoming Council, Committee and Board meetings, visit www.OakIslandNC.gov/CALENDAR.

TOWN COUNCIL (*televised*) will hold its regular meeting on **Monday, February 13, 2023 at 6:00 PM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of Town Hall at 4601 E Oak Island Drive. ***NOTE:** *This is an alternate date from the Town Council's usual meeting time on the second Tuesday of the month.*

RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD (non-televised) will hold its regular meeting on **Monday, February 13, 2023 at 4:00 PM** in the Community Center, located at 4701 E Oak Island Drive.

ABC BOARD (non-televised) will hold its regular meeting on **Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 10:00 AM** in the Oak Island ABC Store, located at 5402 E Oak Island Drive.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (non-televised) will hold its regular meeting on **Thursday, February 16, 2023 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, February 16, 2023 at 10:30 AM** in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of Town Hall at 4601 E Oak Island Drive.

PAR 3 ADVISORY COMMITTEE (non-televised) will hold its regular meeting on **Friday, March 3, 2023** at **1:00 PM** in the Par 3 Pro Shop, located at 4188 Vanessa Drive.

CLOSURES & HOLIDAYS

GOOD FRIDAY: Administrative Offices for the Town of Oak Island will be **CLOSED** on Friday, April 7, 2023 in observance of **Good Friday**.

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, Beach & Water Access Locations](#), and facilities will be open as well. All holiday closure dates can be viewed in the *Holiday Calendar* on the Town Website at: www.OakIslandNC.gov/HOLIDAY.

Coffee With A Cop is BACK

Coffee with a Cop is BACK for 2023! Join our officers and your neighbors for a great time of coffee and conversation on **Wednesday, February 22, 2023** at **10:00 AM**, at the **Oak Island Sub Shop**, located at 5705 E Oak Island Drive.

Started in late 2022 by the Oak Island Police Department's Community Resource Officer, *Coffee With A Cop* (CWAC) has been a major success for the department and community! February 22 will mark the third CWAC installment, and the first event for 2023.

There's no formal agenda or presentations, just an opportunity to ask questions and get to know the officers who serve Oak Island. So mark your calendars now and plan to participate in our next Coffee With A Cop event!

As noted, this program is coordinated by the Oak Island Community Resource Officer, working to enhance the relationship between the community and the Police. To learn more, visit www.OakIslandNC.gov/CR or simply click the link below.

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OAK ISLAND SUB SHOP

*The Oak Island Police Department
along with the Oak Island Sub Shop
present ...*

COFFEE *with a* **COP**

WHEN: **Wednesday, February 22 • 10:00 AM**

WHERE: **Oak Island Sub Shop
5705 E Oak Island Drive**

***Coffee with a Cop* is BACK for 2023!**
Join officers and neighbors for a
community safety discussion!





Speed & Traffic Data Page Update

Two topics of discussion that always come up during the CWAC events is **traffic** and **speed**. For the upcoming CWAC however, there is no shortage of stats to mull over, as the Police Department's hardest working "non-human" resource has been on the job all winter long!

Avid readers of *The CURRENT* might remember the December 2022 edition, when the Oak Island Police Department announced their new **Speed & Traffic Data** page of the Town Website.

The page provides information on traffic safety and accident statistics, along with data from the deployment locations of the Department's SpeedAlert 18 mobile radar unit.

Since the midnight stroke of the New Year, the unit has been running non-stop, and has already been used to provide TWO location reports for 2023.

So no more guessing games about how busy your street is, or how fast (or slow) traffic is in your area. Just visit the **Speed & Traffic Data** page and click on the "2023" tab in the **LOCATION REPORTS** section to find the latest traffic tallies in Oak Island.

To view the new Speed & Traffic Data page of the Town Website, simply visit www.OakIslandNC.gov/SPEED, or click the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

New Skatepark Nears Completion

[**EDITOR'S NOTE:** While the work on the Skatepark may seem "complete" to the casual observer, **IT IS STILL AN ACTIVE CONSTRUCTION SITE!** To prevent personal injury or damage to park features, please **DO NOT** use, or allow children to use the Skatepark until it has been officially opened.]

Since starting construction in mid-September 2022, the long-awaited replacement for the Kevin Bell Skatepark is finally nearing completion. As of the first week in February, crews from Pillar Designs & Artisan Skateparks had all but completed forming and concrete pouring work (*photo from February 6*).

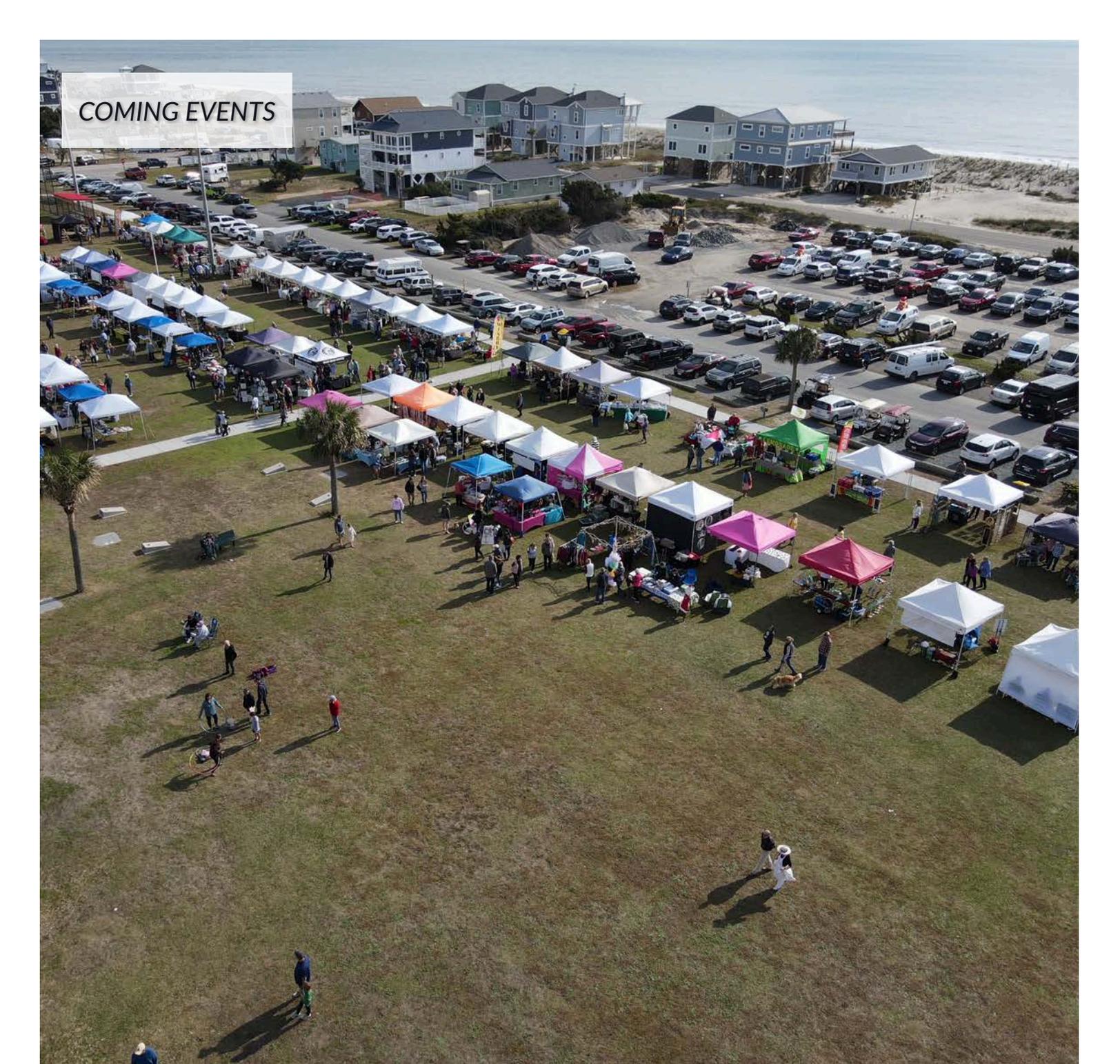
Finishing touches and the adding of other park features still remain, but with good weather and favorable conditions, the Skatepark seems poised for an on-schedule opening within the coming weeks.

For those who just can't wait to "*Fakie Five-O a Frontside off the Flatrail with a Flip into the Funbox*" (yes, those are **real** words), remember to stay informed on the progress through the Skatepark Rebuild Project page of the Town Website.

Announcements and details on any opening day events will be posted on this page, which can be viewed at www.OakIslandNC.gov/SKATE or by clicking the link below.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)





COMING EVENTS

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.

Mardi Gras By The Sea: Parade & Festival

WHEN: Saturday, February 25th, 2023 • Noon – 4:00 PM (Festival) • 1:00 PM (Parade)

WHERE: Middleton Park • 4610 E Dolphin Drive

COST: FREE to attend (*Vendor Applications are no longer being accepted at this time*)

ABOUT: The Mardi Gras Parade will begin on SE 64th Street, travel down E. Oak Island Drive, and end at SE 46th Street. Parade goers will celebrate the season as floats, stations, golf carts, and more parade by in Mardi Gras style! Celebrations will continue at the Middleton Park Complex with a Mardi Gras Market, outdoor concert featuring the *Cruise Brothers Band*, carnival type games, kids zone, food trucks, and more. Festival goers and vendors are encouraged to dress in their favorite Mardi Gras themed attire as the community comes together for an all day celebration by the sea!



Y Oak Island
Recreation



Mardi Gras By the Sea Parade & Festival

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2023



Presents

SPRING FLING MARKET & MUSIC

Saturday, March 25, 2023

Middleton Park Complex

Spring Fling Market & Music

WHEN: Saturday, March 25, 2023 • 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM (Market) • 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (Concert)

WHERE: Middleton Park Complex • 4610 E Dolphin Drive

COST: FREE to attend (vendor fees vary)

ABOUT: Spring into warmer weather with Oak Island as we say goodbye to winter and hello to Spring at the 2023 Spring Fling Market and Music Festival! This year's event is FREE to attend, and features live music, kids zone, and full farmers and craft artisan market. NOTE: A LIVE concert featuring *Parlay* will be held from 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM.

2023 Spring Adult Co-Ed Kickball League

WHEN: Season Organizational Meeting: Tuesday March 28, 2023 • 5:00 PM

WHERE: Community Center • 4701 E Oak Island Drive

WHO: Adult co-ed participants 18 years and older

ABOUT: Adult kickball is a great way to stay active and keep those feet moving! Teams will need a minimum of 8 players to play each game. Team Coaches can sign up online at www.OakIslandNC.gov/RecDesk.



Presents the...

2023

Spring Adult Co-Ed Kickball League

2023 Season Organizational Meeting:

Tuesday, March 28, 2023 • 5:00 PM

Oak Island Community Center • 4701 E Oak Island Drive

TEAM CAPTAINS & FREE AGENTS!

Recreation

PRESENTS THE 2023
SHELL & FOSSIL
SHOW

SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 2023

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

801 OCEAN EVENT CENTER

2023 Shell & Fossil Show

WHEN: Sunday, April 2, 2023 • 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

WHERE: 801 Ocean event Center • 801 Ocean Drive

ATTENDANCE COST: \$3 per person • FREE for ages 5 and under

VENDOR COST: FREE for display-only exhibitors • \$15 for exhibitors who sell their displays

ABOUT: Share your love of shells at Oak Island's first ever Shell & Fossil Show at 801 Event Center this spring! Along with the center's breathtaking ocean views, coastal residents and guests are invited to present creative displays of some of their favorite findings of sea shells and fossils from both the Oak Island coast line and beyond. This year's program will welcome both exhibitors as well as shell vendors of all ages. Exhibitor applications are currently available at the Oak Island Recreation Center, located at 3003 E. Oak Island Drive. For more information, reach out to Program Supervisor, Ryan Gordon, at rgordon@oakislandnc.gov or by calling **910-278-4747**.

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.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

TOWN FEATURE

May Moore Park

PARK CLOSSES
AT DUSK



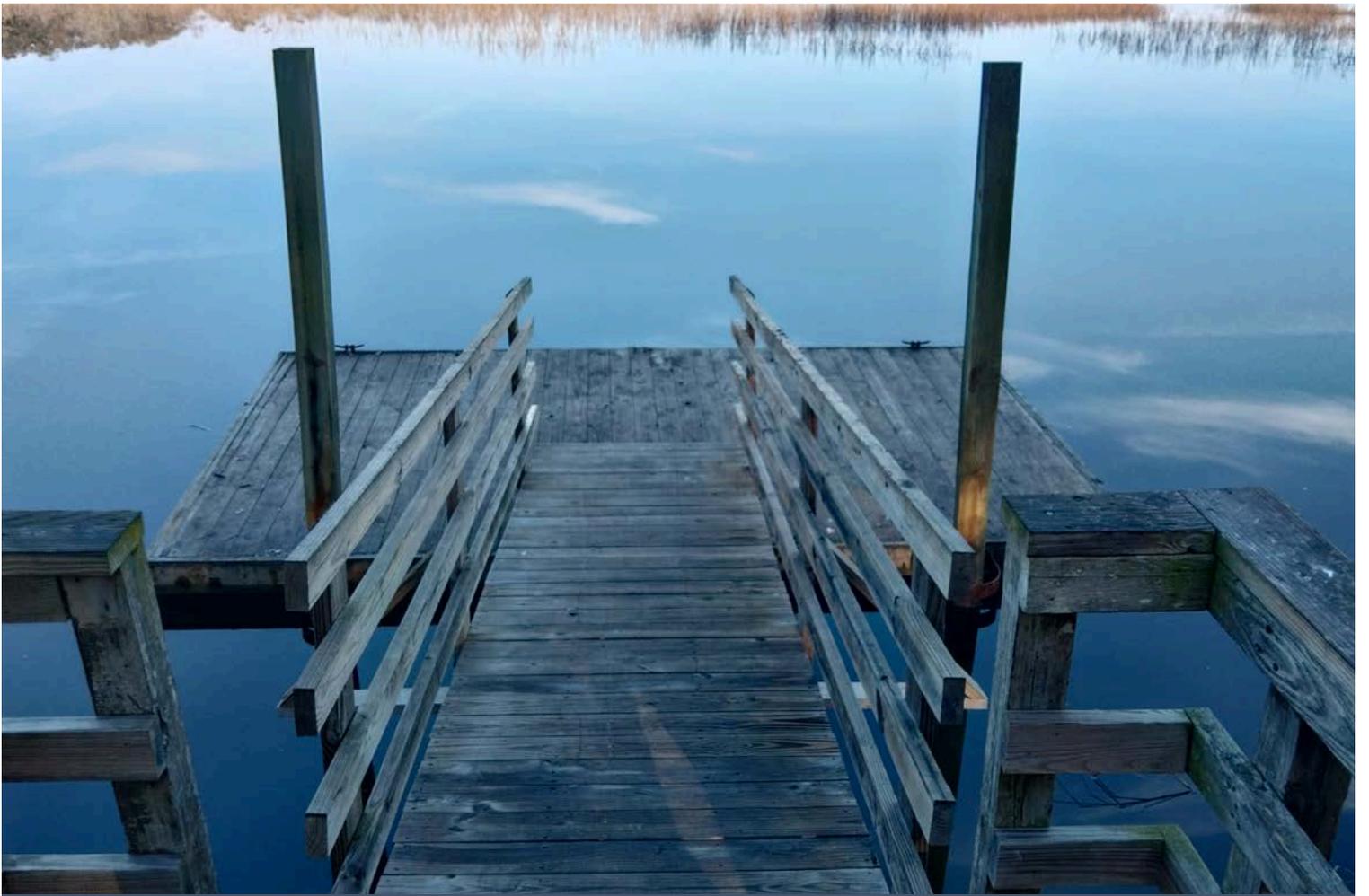
TOWN FEATURE: MAY MOORE PARK

Ask anyone with even a casual knowledge of Oak Island how to get around, and they'll probably break it down by one of three options: *Beach Drive*, *Oak Island Drive*, or *Yacht Drive*. Whether on their East or West sides, these three streets seem to be the route for accessing any amenity offered by the Town. On the northeast side of the island however, just before Yacht drive starts its colorful parade shiny new waterfront development, you'll find Elizabeth Drive. Winding its way around the curves of the ICW, Elizabeth Drive offers what some would call a "hidden gem" tucked in the seclusion of its old oak trees and yaupon holly bushes.

The **May Moore Park** only has a few parking spaces, yet it never seems crowded. Seamlessly blending with the trees and surrounding foliage, the park's 1/3 of acre footprint could be easily driven past, were it not for the large welcoming sign at its entrance. Once on the property though, you'll find the picnic tables, bench swings, and simply unbeatable views make a great spot for everything from family picnics to quiet reflection in nature.



Although the tables, swings, and old electrolier-style streetlamps offer a welcoming aesthetic, they also hide the park's headline feature; a boardwalk ramp that leads out to some of the most breathtaking views of the marshes and estuaries lining the Intracoastal Waterway. A small floating dock allows for a quick catch of shrimp, mullet, and menhaden, or "hand line" crabbing for the quick handed. The dock's stability and available cleats also make a great drop in spot for kayaking, to enjoy those fantastic 180° views from on the water.



PROFILE: *The Park's namesake*, May W. Moore's passions actually included kayaking, along with traveling and quilting, for which she was a multiple award winner. Having visited every continent except Antarctica, May More was a well-travelled, well-educated "hidden gem" of Oak Island in her own right.

Born in March of 1941, the Oxford, NC native loved Brunswick County. Since her first visit in 1947, she embraced the town then known as Yaupon Beach as her home, living here permanently since 1962.

Moore May believed strongly in service to one's community. She volunteered weekly at New Hope Clinic, worked to support Brunswick County fishermen through Brunswick Catch, and helped to establish the St. Philip's Beach Ministry. This heart for service even led to her 2010 induction into the *Order of the Long Leaf Pine*, North Carolina's highest civilian award given by the Governor.

Locally, May Moore is well remembered for a life dedicated to helping others, through public service and her career as a public educator. May served on the Brunswick County Board of Education, and as a Brunswick County Commissioner, as well as a Town Councilwoman and later Mayor of Yaupon Beach.

May Moore passed away in November 2017 at the age of 76. It was noted in her obituary that "*unfortunately May's service and travel adventures ended with an untimely battle with cancer, surprising family and friends.*" To honor her adventurous spirit and undying passion for helping others, it seemed most fitting to name this quiet little park, booming with such a volume of natural beauty, in her namesake.

A SHORT WALK TO THE SHIPWRECK!

May Moore loved a good adventure, and it doesn't get much more adventurous than a hurricane, a shipwreck, a century of buried history, and another hurricane to uncover it!

On the morning of October 13, 1893, the North / South Carolina border was rocked by what was only known to history as "Hurricane 9" in the 1893 Atlantic Hurricane Season. Unfortunately, just off the coast of Oak Island the crew of the Mary E. Morris, a 400 ton, three-masted schooner, could no longer handle the whirling winds and crushing waves. A long way from their home port of Philadelphia, the crew made the hard decision to abandon ship, with the only good news being that no hands were lost.

For over a century, the remains lay in the shallow sands just off shore from 13th Place W. Appearing occasionally from the tides, only to vanish again from view like the ghost it had become. Then in 1999, Hurricane Dennis drove the remains back onshore. After some additional battering, the ship was collected from the beach and held in temporary storage on SE 49th street while a display was planned and built. Eventually, 138 feet of the Mary E. Morris found her final resting place atop a custom built cradle in the median of Barbee Boulevard, next to the G.V. Barbee Library.

The **Barbee Trail** is a paved walkway that runs down the median, connecting the Mary E Morris' "Shipwreck Park" to the May Moore Park at the corner of Barbee Boulevard and Elizabeth Drive.



Mary E. Morris

The coast of North Carolina has been called the "grave yard of the Atlantic". The Mary E. Morris is one of approximately 5000 ships identified as lost in the Cape Fear Region.

The three mast, 400ton schooner Mary E. Morris was built in 1884 in Camden, New Jersey by Mathis and Morris Company.

The Mary Morris was carrying a load of phosphorous on what was to be her last voyage. The ship was enroute from Charleston, SC, to her home port of Philadelphia when the vessel fell victim to a hurricane seven miles south of Southport, North Carolina. The crew abandoned ship before the Morris sank on September 13, 1893.

Unknown to local residents, her skeletal remains drifted towards the beaches of Oak Island and were buried beneath the sands. As the beach eroded, the Morris' oak hull gradually appeared. Then on August 29, 1999, hurricane Dennis completely exposed the remains of the schooner, drifting her along the beach and destroying the access walkways of several beach homes. After the storm subsided, the 138 foot long boat was found on the beach between 10th and 13th Pines West.

The Town of Oak Island removed the vessel from the beach and has dedicated this exhibit to her memory.



It doesn't matter if you're stopping to watch the squirrels play in the pine trees, catch an ibis foraging for lunch in the marsh, or learn some history from a nearby shipwreck .. the May Moore park is proof that a "beach town" can be so much more than "just a beach town." It is both history and living nature, that can all be taken in over lunch enjoyed at a wheelchair accessible picnic table.



PHOTO: Wheelchair accessible picnic table at the May Moore Park.

As with all of the other parks highlighted in our recent **Town Feature** series in *The CURRENT*, a clean and well-maintained space is the top priority for any public recreation area. With heavy tree cover AND waterfront access, the May Moore park adds further challenges of facility structures to maintain. The park is overseen by the Operations Division of the Public Works Department, who regularly check to clean, repair, or replace items as needed. Like so many other features within the Town of Oak Island, the Public Works staff take a direct interest and personal pride in keeping these spaces neat and organized for public enjoyment.





Whether it's for a swing in the shade, some bait fishing, a family picnic, or a trail walk through history, the "hidden gem" of the May Moore park offers stunning views and unmatched serenity. And all within just a few blocks of Oak Island busiest streets.

To view or share location and amenity details about the May Moore Park, or any of the parks and outdoor facilities offered by the Town of 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](#)

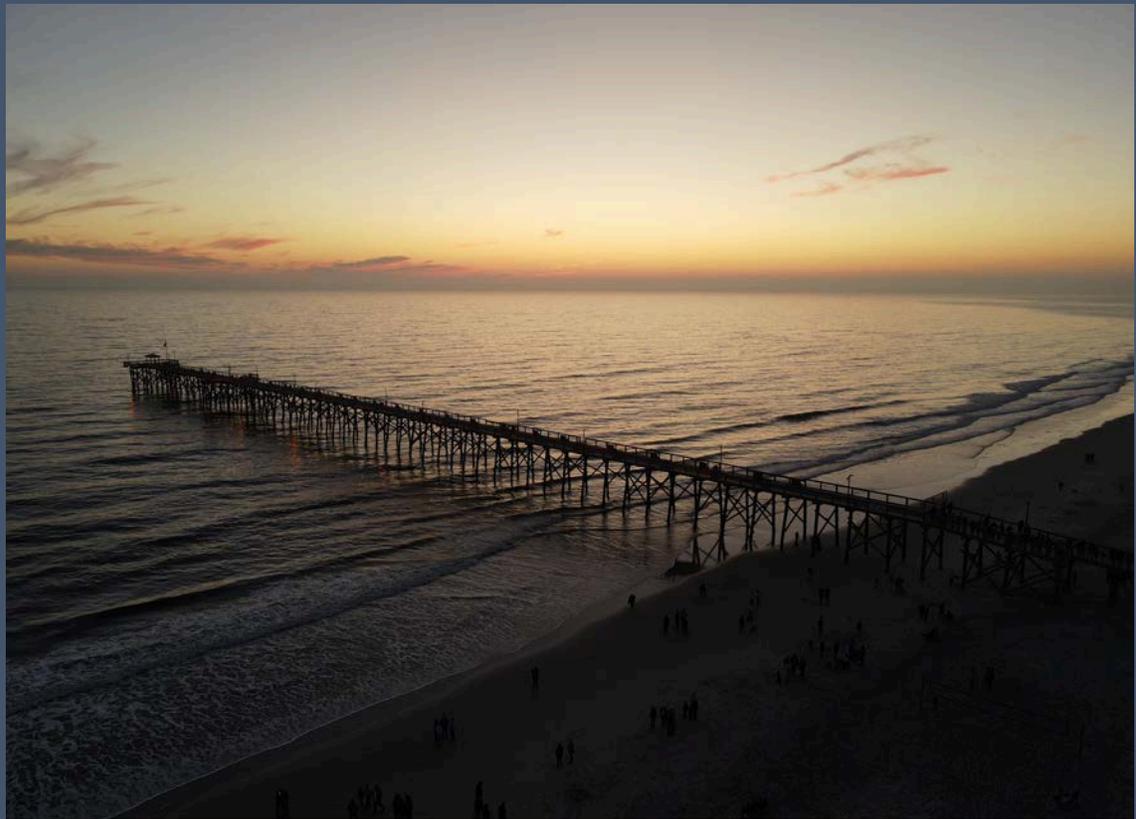
PHOTO REVIEW



PHOTO REVIEW

Provided below are examples of the visuals seen around Town throughout the past month. This section contains officially published AND reader submitted photos. Submissions are donated and not compensated, but are properly credited in the captions below. 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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