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Community Holiday Potluck at the Brewery

A Potluck Dinner is where people gather together for a social evening with participants bringing a dish from home. OVIS has hosted an event like this in December at the Hall for many years. Due to the damage of the Hall, that facility is temporarily not available for this event. However, the Ozona Brewing Company (OBC) is closed on Mondays and is receptive to providing their venue for a community holiday potluck. Derek and Courtney Klein, the owners of the OBC, graciously agreed to make their place available for our community potluck dinner. The potluck is set for Monday, December 7, and it will be conducted in the same manner as if it was in the Hall. This is where people will bring their dishes from home, and our restaurants will also participate with a selection of their signature food. Since OBC is closed that day, the Brewery will not be providing its menu of food and drinks.

OVIS is truly thankful to Derek and Courtney for their generosity and community support!

So, everyone in the community is invited to attend and participate in our **Holiday Potluck Dinner on Monday, December 7** starting at **6pm**. There is no charge for attending; just bring your holiday cheer!



Village Hall Improvement Status

The project to repair the Hall due to storm damage has been going through the necessary steps, so that activities can return to the Hall. OVIS has received approval from the County Historic Preservation Board, defining how the repairs can be accomplished within the context of the historic preservation designation. Following that action, OVIS then proceeded to appear before the Board of Adjustment to obtain variances to setbacks that are needed to balance the hall improvements within the environmental envelope, which is very common in Ozona. With those milestones accomplished, OVIS is now proceeding into the County permit process with the project as defined by those previous approvals. Once the permits are obtained from the County, the project will be able to proceed into construction. This whole process has been a challenge to balance the integrity of the historic structure against environmental issues, which had to be compromised somewhat in order to have the project move forward.



President's Message...

As we begin another year of activities in Ozona, the recovery activities from the storms of 2024 continue. The unique challenge for Ozona is that this is a coastal community. That means repairs and improvements must be done within the applicable coastal regulations.

This is especially true with respect to the Village Hall. In this case, we are not only dealing with coastal regulations, but also the historic designation of the Hall, which ramps up the challenges even more.

It is very gratifying to see members of the community coming forward to assist us in this major effort. I am looking forward to this year completing the Hall, so we can focus on adding amenities to the Hall based on its historic heritage.

— *Brian Smith, OVIS President*

Schedule of Events

While the Village Hall is being restored, OVIS will regularly meet on the fourth Monday of the month at 7 PM at the Ozona Brewing Company. Meeting Minutes will be sent out to the Ozona News email distribution list and posted on the OVIS Website. The 2026-2027 schedule of other community events are as follows:

OVIS Meeting — September 28 7PM

OVIS Meeting — October 26 7PM

OVIS Meeting — November 16 7PM

Holiday Potluck at Ozona Brewing Co — December 7 6PM

Holiday Golf Cart Parade — December 13 6-8PM

OVIS Meeting — January 25 7PM

OVIS Meeting — February 22 7PM

OVIS Meeting — March 22 7PM

OVIS Annual Meeting — April 26 7PM

Neighborhood Watch Workshop - TBA

Community Cleanup - TBA



2026-2027 OVIS Board Members

President—Brian Smith•781-8472

Secretary—Julie Longen•656-5154

Vice President—Todd Guarino•251-9333

Treasurer—James Wiesner•871-6901

Board Members:

Connie Rieben—787-9777

Skip LeFleur—743-7547

Susan White—793-8299

Barry Salus—871-5107

Steve Krout—771-8650

Ron Girard—(603) 361-2468

Standing Committees:

Neighborhood Watch—Open

Membership—Open

Hall Oversight—Open

Historical/Records—Terry Fortner•786-2837

Hall Rental (On Hold)—Donna Green•741-2904

Four Flavors of Ozona: A Delicious Tour of Our Hometown Icons Worth Celebrating - Written by Sam Ulmer

One of the many joys of living in Ozona is that some of Pinellas County's most beloved restaurants are just a golf-cart ride away. Each has its own story, personality, and loyal following, helping make our little village one of the area's best places to live.

Molly Goodhead's Raw Bar

A true Ozona landmark, Molly Goodhead's opened in 1985 when owner Laurel Flowers transformed a historic Cracker-style house on Orange Street into a quirky Key West-inspired restaurant. Nearly 40 years later, Molly's remains an Ozona classic, instantly recognizable by its colorful mermaid logo and laid-back Old Florida charm. Inside you'll find eclectic décor, friendly faces, and a menu that stretches well beyond seafood. Be sure to check out their **41st Anniversary Party on Wednesday, September 23rd**.

Don't miss: The legendary Grilled Grouper Sandwich (I prefer it as a wrap), paired with a fresh skinny marg.

Ozona Blue Grilling Co.

Ozona Blue brought waterfront dining to our southernmost point in 2003. Owned and operated by restaurateur Chris Fragale and family, the restaurant overlooks St. Joseph Sound and Home Port Marina, combining coastal dining with resort-style relaxation. Guests can enjoy poolside seating, live music, tropical cocktails, and some of the best sunset views in north Pinellas. The menu features fresh seafood, steaks, salads, and a variety of crowd-pleasing Florida favorites.

Don't miss: It's always a toss-up between the ultra-tender Steak Mudiga, fresh fried Calamari or Firecracker Shrimp (put this sauce on everything!). Top it off with a cold martini; **Happy Hour daily from 3 to 6 PM**.

The Ozona Pig

When The Ozona Pig opened in 2004, it quickly became the village headquarters for authentic Southern barbecue. Family-owned by the Painters and inspired by Memphis barbecue traditions, "The Pig" has built a devoted following through in-house slow-smoked meats *you can smell just driving by* and a welcoming neighborhood atmosphere. There's nothing fancy about it, and that's exactly the point. Comfort food and good conversation have been the recipe from day one. Catch the Ozona Roots playing live at their **22nd Anniversary Celebration on Friday, October 9th**.

Don't miss: The Boss Hog Special (great to share) and whatever is fresh on tap. Bring the kids! The dessert menu is insane.

Ozona Brewing Company

The newest addition to Ozona's restaurant scene, Ozona Brewing Company opened in 2022 when owners Derek and Courtney Klein transformed a former event hall into a community gathering spot. Part craft brewery, part backyard hangout, OBC offers house-made beer, **live music every Thursday through Sunday**, casual fare, and a relaxed atmosphere beneath the shade of Ozona's iconic oak trees. It's quickly become a favorite destination for locals looking to unwind with friends.

Don't miss: Try the namesake Ozona Pale Ale (OPA) IPA 6.3% or the Homemade Apple Pie cider from Tampa 5.5% with a mouthwatering Patty Melt. Catch **Trivia every Wednesday at 7 PM**.

These four homegrown favorites tell the story of Ozona itself: welcoming, unpretentious, and full of character.

The only question is, where are you eating next?

Golf Cart Rules Reminder

Ozona is lucky to have golf carts permitted for use on the streets within the community. When this program was put in place the authorizing ordinance contained the rules that had to be followed. The ordinance initiating this program was approved in February 2006 and was a result of several workshops held in the community. Those rules apply to the golf cart and to the driver of the golf cart. The golf cart requirements included headlamps, stop lamps, turn signal lamps, tail lamps, reflectors, parking brakes, a rearview mirror, a windshield, and a standard hip restraint or hand hold. Concerning the golf cart driver, the golf cart operator must possess a valid driver's license pursuant to Florida Statutes. These provisions were put in place to make the program safe not only the golf cart driver and riders, but also for the other people in the community. When this ordinance was put in place, OVIS made the commitment to the County that it would provide a reminder to the community about these requirements. Over the years, the biggest challenge is reminding the community that the driver of the cart must possess a valid driver's license.

The Story of the Ozona Village Hall

In 1888 there were enough people living in Ozona to justify the establishment of a post office on July 14 of that year. In 1895 Dr. Susan K. Whitford, working with a group of women in the community, established the Ozona Ladies Village Improvement Society. Their first project was the building of a wooden sidewalk on Bay Street. As the Society members worked on other community projects, they realized there was a need for a community hall to house their meetings and activities. They obtained a parcel of land on Bay Street that was at the center of the community at the time.

The Society members proceeded with fundraising activities such as bake sales, ice cream socials, and seafood dinners to acquire the financial resources needed to build the hall. They obtained donated materials and used volunteer labor for the hall construction. The hall was completed in 1900. The Articles of Incorporation for the Ozona Village Improvement Society OVIS were approved January 4, 1900, and were filed with the Clerk of Circuit Court of Hillsborough County, as Pinellas County was not established until 1912. The Articles, among other things, gave the Society the authority to own land and manage property. Therefore, once the hall was completed, the Society was in a position to manage it. The actual incorporation papers did not include the term “ladies” in the title, although the original board was composed of five women with Susan K. Whitford as the Founding President.

The Hall withstood the severe hurricanes of 1918 and 1921 and the Great Fire of 1933 on Bay Street. The original society managed the hall until 1936. At that point the Ozona Recreation Club was created in 1935. It was determined that this group could better manage the Hall, and the deed was transferred from the Society to the Club in 1936. In the 1990's, the Club membership was getting older and declining, while OVIS was becoming a robust organization in the community. For these reasons, the deed for the Hall and its responsibilities were transferred in 1999 from the Club to OVIS. Over many years the Hall has been utilized as: a polling place, library, meeting room, Townhall, dance hall, church, play house, recital hall and other such activities.

With the beginning of the 21st-century, the Hall turned its century mark and was showing signs of age. As a result of this, OVIS was able to receive a community block grant for much-needed improvements. This improving package included a new roof, selected siding replacements, refinishing the solid wood floors, general painting, restroom improvements, along with ramps to meet ADA requirements, reinforcement of the foundation pillars and air conditioning. This project was completed in September 2006.

The Village Hall continues to be a community fixture symbolizing the community heritage of Ozona. It should be noted that the Hall has been in continuous use by the community since 1900. In 2015, the Village Hall was recognized and designated as a historic structure by Pinellas County. In the Fall of 2024, the Village Hall received storm damage and is being repaired. That work is being done in the context of the Hall's historic designation. With the Hall out of action, the community is reminded of how integral the Hall is to the functioning of the community. The Hall has been referred to as the heart of the Ozona community.

Holiday Golf Cart Parade Sunday, December 13

The Ozona Holiday Golf Cart Parade is set to go on Sunday, December 13. This will be the 25th year that we have had this parade. The first parade had five golf carts in it, and now for the past few years we have had over 100 participating. With this large number of carts participating, it became necessary for our community to formally sponsor and organize this event. That meant that a permit was required. OVIS agreed to be the sponsor for this event, and to handle the various administrative functions connected with such a permit. Event insurance is required and will be obtained. Also, an agreement with the Sheriff's Office for traffic management will be put in place. Over the years, not only has the event improved in its function, but the golf carts have as well. In the beginning, the golf carts were limited in the decorations as the function of the carts at that time was basic transportation on a golf course. However, now there are retro-fitted packages available for people to upgrade their golf cart electrical system to handle this new décor functioning. This has opened the door for some elaborate decorations.

The parade starts and ends at the gathering area on Orange Street, where the restaurants are. To participate in the parade, a golf cart must be registered, and there will be a notice sent out about how to participate. The parade officially starts at 6 PM with a Sheriff's vehicle with its lights flashing, heading north on Orange Street. It has become a tradition also that County Commissioner Dave Eggers participates by riding in this Sheriff's vehicle. The parade participants with their carts then follow. Another Sheriff's vehicle is at the end of the parade. This parade has become a premier event for the Ozona community and is enjoyed by not only the residents of Ozona, but also our many visitors as well. There will be more information coming out next month.



OVIS Membership and Sponsorship



Ozona Village Improvement Society (OVIS) functions primarily from funds obtained through membership dues and sponsorships. OVIS membership is \$20 annually and a sponsor donation is \$100 annually. Also, if you are an OVIS sponsor, your business card is included in the newsletter and on the community website.

The membership and sponsorship run from January 1 to December 31, but OVIS begins open enrollment in September to allow for the logistics of the program. It should be noted, however, that membership or sponsorship actually start from the time of enrollment (there is no delayed effective date). There is also a page in this newsletter devoted as an enrollment form, or you can go to the OVIS website and enroll or renew there using PayPal. The website is <http://www.ozonavillagefl.us/membership>.

OZONA VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY 2027 MEMBERSHIP INVITATION

BENEFITS:

1. Get to know your neighbors.
2. Preserve the historic Ozona Village Hall building on Bay Street.
3. Participate in fun activities for families – golf cart parades, seasonal parties and potluck dinners.
4. Support the unique community identity of Ozona and our nature preserve.

PLEASE SELECT:**Society Membership**

☐ Individual & Family
Membership - \$20.00/year

Would you like to be more
involved in the Ozona
Community activities?

☐ YES ☐
☐ NO ☐

Donations

☐ Additional Donations help
restore the Ozona Village Hall,
do special projects, and host
village events

- ☐ \$10.00
☐ \$25.00
☐ \$50.00
☐ \$100.00
☐ \$_____

Ozona Newsletter Ad**Sponsorship**

☐ Business Sponsorship – 3
business card ads/year plus a
listing in the website
“Sponsors” section

☐ \$100.00/year

Additional donations are GREATLY appreciated!

Note: OVIS is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

PLEASE PRINT:

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Street Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Your contact information will not be shared, but enables us to keep you informed regarding news and events.

Please make your check payable to:

Ozona Village Improvement Society (OVIS)

Mail to: PO Box 81 • Ozona, FL 34660

To Join/Renew Online, Go To: <http://www.OzonaVillageFL.us/membership>

Celebrating 125 Years of the Ozona Village Hall!

Please help us celebrate 125 years of our beloved Hall. The Ozona Village Hall was originally built in 1900. Below are the sequence of events as we know them:

1895 – Ozona Ladies Improvement Society is created to improve things in the community – Nancy Whitford the founding president.

1900 – Ozona Hall was built by the OLIS using donated materials and volunteer labor.

1900 – Ozona Village Improvement Society was incorporated by the legislature to provide that organization the authority to own, and operate the hall.

1936 – Ownership of the hall was transferred to the Ozona Recreation Club a newly created and growing organization for the purpose of managing the hall and generating community involvement.

1950-60's – The Hall was used to hold dances for the local high school students.

1980's – The Hall was used for numerous functions including Halloween parties, karate classes, and other various small business and county activities.

1999 – Due to waning membership of the Ozona Recreation Club, Hall ownership was transferred back to the Ozona Village Improvement Society.

2005ish – The Hall went under some renovations and had a re-opening event, which we will re-enact in the near future.

The Hall has been through a lot over the last 125 years. In the hurricane of 1921 it was lifted off its foundation and moved to the east of the property, then was repaired and placed back on its original pilings. Sometime in the 50's there was an addition, which now serves as the restrooms and kitchenette. And of course, in 2024 Hurricane Helene came through and filled it with 3+ feet of water.

As you can see, there have been countless functions at the Hall, and the walls have heard a lot over those years. If the walls could talk, they would be asking us to fixer up and raise her up to protect her from potential future flooding. And that is what we plan to do!

Although, I don't know the names and roles of those from the past, I would like to acknowledge some folks that really stepped up over the last 30 or so years and helped continue the tradition of OVIS and its mission as we all know it today. People like Bobbie Painter, Peg Mahara, Don Conover, Bob and Terry Fortner, Donna and Dennis Green, County Commissioners Susan Latvala and Dave Eggers, our current long standing board members Brian Smith, Sue White, Jim Wiesner, and Connie Rieben as well as our newer board members Todd Guarino, Steve Krout, Julie Longen, Skip LeFleur, Barry Salus, and Ron Girard. Lastly, I'd like to acknowledge OBC and Courtney and Derek Klein for their financial support as well as opening their business to us as a meeting place while the Hall is out of commission, as well as hosting our Annual Potluck and most recent fundraiser. Without support like this, we would probably not have the organization and our Hall as we do today.

And now is the time we ask for MONEY! We are starting a 125-Year Club. With your donation of \$125, you will be a member and have your family name engraved on a plaque that will be displayed in the Hall once it's repaired. We will also have an exclusive party to present the plaque to all members of the club, and coming soon will be a 125 Club sticker, which can be placed on your car, golf cart, or beer fridge!

Thank you all for making Ozona the best community anyone could live in, raise a family, and/or own a business!!! And, please join our club on the following website:

<https://www.ozonavillagefl.us/fundraisers>

– Todd Guarino, VP

Events Around the Community

Friends of the Island Parks

A Citizen Support Organization serving Honeymoon and Caladesi Island State Parks

<https://www.friendsoftheislandparks.org/events>



Honeymoon Island Bluegrass Festival

Date: Dec 5, 2026
Time: 11 am to 5 pm

Honeymoon Island State Park
Dunedin, Florida

Find us on Facebook



Presented by Honeymoon Island State Park & Friends of the Island Parks

Honeymoon Island State Park

ISLAND FEST

Dunedin, Florida

October
10th & 11th
Sat. 10 am-5 pm
Sun. 10 am-3 pm



Events Around the Community

Palm Harbor Museum Presents:

<https://www.palmharbormuseum.com/palm-harbor-museum-presents.html>

Join us on Wed., Oct 7 at 6:30 PM at Palm Harbor Library as Palm Harbor Museum Presents Erica Lynford with *Creating a Sense of Purpose and Place: The Palm Harbor Community Services Agency*.

Wed., Nov 4, 6:30 PM - In honor of Veterans Day, Community Advocate and Researcher Susan Cobb presents *Beyond the Headstones: Honoring Those Who Served*. Hidden among the quiet rows of Palm Harbor's Curlew Pioneer Cemetery are stories that shaped a nation.

Wed., Dec 2, 6:30 PM - America250—A Musical Celebration! Joy Katzen-Guthrie and Deb Carson bring you a program of historic American music to cap off this year's American Semiquincentennial.

Palm Harbor Museum is excited to bring you their next 2026 Family Intergenerational Discovery Day on Saturday, December 12th from 11 AM to 2 PM.
<https://www.palmharbormuseum.com/family-fun-days.html>



Palm Harbor Museum's
2026

*Show your support
to the museum
on this vintage night!*

WINE Around
*Nov 7th
4-7 pm
Tickets \$45*

Palm Harbor

The poster features a black and white design with a large, stylized 'WINE' in a bold, sans-serif font. A black banner with the word 'Around' in white script is draped across the 'WINE'. Below this, the date and time 'Nov 7th 4-7 pm' and the ticket price 'Tickets \$45' are written in a black script font. To the right is a black silhouette of a wine glass with 'Palm Harbor' written inside. A red wine splash graphic is on the right side. On the left, the text 'Palm Harbor Museum's' is in a black script font, followed by '2026' in a large, bold, black sans-serif font with a red underline. Below that, the phrase 'Show your support to the museum on this vintage night!' is written in a red script font.

<https://www.palmharbormuseum.com/wine-around-palm-harbor.html>

Ozona Village Improvement Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 81
Ozona, Florida 34660-0081

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OVIS Website Information

The official website of OVIS can be found at www.OzonaVillageFL.us. On the website, you will find updates to current community initiatives, such as OVIS Programs, the Annual Holiday Golf Cart Parade, the Holiday Potluck Dinner, Community Cleanups, Community Workshops, and notice of upcoming events or other such community interests.

You'll also find:

- A link to OVIS membership information and how you can join, renew or be a sponsor.
- A page on the Village Hall and how to reserve the Hall for your upcoming event you might be planning.
- Historical photos of Ozona.
- OVIS meetings and downloads of previous Ozona News newsletters.
- You'll also find a link to our sponsor section where you can find contact information to our wonderful sponsors.

This website also offers a way to communicate comments you would like to make to OVIS concerning the community.





OVIS Proudly Supports Our Sponsors

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Don Mast
Office Manager



Palm Harbor Music

401 Orange Street, Palm Harbor, FL, USA

Email: sales@palmhabormusic.com

Phone: 727.204.4549



Palm Harbor Music



Andrea Bolender

Owner / Trainer

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