



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OKALOOSA COUNTY

I've heard from many of you how frustrating it is that we do not have a real community newspaper. I thought it might be of interest to have a few highlights of community projects from your Board of County Commissioners.

LAZARUS MEMORIAL SERVICE

On Monday, November 3, 2025, at 10:00 A.M. at the Beal Memorial Cemetery more than thirty-five clergy and members from various faith communities will gather to remember and say goodbye to the invisible members of our local community. The Lazarus Memorial Service is an ecumenical ceremony to bury individuals in our community who have died without means to provide for their own burial. The ceremony provides a dignified manner to memorialize the remains of those who otherwise would not have funeral services. It is our community's outpouring of respect and community spirit to provide the unclaimed deceased a dignified resting place.



The ceremony has become a much-celebrated event within the faith community, and in the life of our county, as a dignified way to memorialize those we have lost. Some of the deceased are senior citizens who have outlived their relatives, some are infants and children whose parents and families are without financial means, but many individuals are those members of our community who have become estranged from their families. This year we have 30 individuals.

FAIRGROUND RENOVATION

The renovation of the fairground facility, now known as The Rigdon Center, is in full swing. The County has almost completely renovated much of the inside of the buildings, ceilings, walls, lighting, electric, HVAC, and roofing and demolished several of the older, obsolete buildings. We are now working on flooring, technology, bathrooms, stormwater. We are now bidding out a project addition for two new catering kitchens, bathrooms, and a concession area. Behind this project will be a project to redo the entrances and façades.



BRIDGE TO BRIDGE BIKE PATH RIBBON CUTTING

The much-anticipated opening of the 12 foot wide Bike Path from Brooks Bridge to Destin (Marler Bridge) will be on October 23rd, 2025 at 10:00 AM. This project has been a partnership of the county and Eglin AFB using public funding as well as private. The roadway is open to walkers and bikes, not golf carts. We continue to work with Eglin to prevent cars from using it. A rope fence is being considered along the roadway to prevent any vehicles from accessing it.

The path will sparkle blue at night as the photo luminescent rocks added to the asphalt glow from the absorption of sunlight during the day. The pathway will be a community asset that is fun for recreation while protecting individuals from injury as it provides a safe pathway.



EXTENSION SERVICES BUILDING

The new south end Extension Services Building will soon be open for business and classes. This long awaited building at the Rigdon Fairgrounds will replace the old facility that was finished off by Hurricane Sally. Classes will be held for those who enjoy gardening, cooking and learning to grow flowers. Currently classes can only be held in the Crestview location.



My Sincere Thanks,

Carolyn N. Ketchel
Vice-Chairman
District 2
County Commissioner
Okaloosa County, Board of County Commissioners
1250 N Eglin Pkwy., Suite 100
Shalimar, FL 32579
850-651-7105
cketchel@myokaloosa.com

