

The Canopy

COVERING OUR COMMUNITY



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BRANCHES OF OUR CANOPY



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Kathleen Grabow, President

Goodbye 2025... Welcome 2026!

Belated wishes for a wonderful holiday season – and now, a heartfelt wish for a **healthy and happy New Year!**

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to our volunteer Board members for their dedication and hard work throughout 2025. Your commitment of time and energy on behalf of our community is invaluable. I also thank each of you for volunteering to serve another year and warmly welcome our newest member, **John Whitley**, to the Board.

The Trails is fortunate to have so many residents with diverse talents and professional experience. If you have time, expertise, or simply a willingness to help, please consider joining one of our committees or lending your voice to a future community project. Your participation truly makes a difference.

Membership & Proxy Participation – This year, we received only **43 returned proxies out of 990 homes**, a disappointing response that has prompted us to take a closer look at the cause.

To reduce mailing expenses, the **2025 Budget** and **Annual Meeting Notice** were combined into one packet, which also stated that there was **no need for an election** since only eight candidates submitted forms for nine available seats. Later, in the Fall newsletter, Secretary **Rob Bridger** announced the new positions and rescinded his candidacy, reinforcing that an election would not be held.

Unfortunately, this may have caused confusion, leading some to believe that returning a proxy was unnecessary. However, **your proxy is essential**, even when no election is required. It allows the Association to establish quorum – the minimum number of members needed to conduct official business – and demonstrates your ongoing support for those who volunteer their time to represent and serve our community.

Reflections on 2025 – The past year brought its share of challenges, though in new and different ways. As our community ages, the costs of **insurance, maintenance, and infrastructure replacement** continue to rise. Fortunately, The Trails maintains a **Reserve Study**, updated every five years (most recently in 2025), which guides our long-term planning and ensures that adequate funding is set aside for major repairs and replacements.

Despite these challenges, your Board accomplished several important goals established by the previous administration, including:

- Rebranding the HOA website from TrailsHOAOrmond.com to www.TheTrailsHOAOrmond.com
- Resurfacing sections of the bike path
- Sealing the Clubhouse and RV Storage lots
- Completing underground boring and rewiring of the Little Pond and Lake Walden pump houses
- Refurbishing the Nova Road monument entrance and replacing support columns on the clubhouse's second-story porch

Our committees also continued active discussions with the **City of Ormond Beach** on stormwater management and traffic control – and we remain hopeful that **FPL** will soon resolve the strobing streetlight in front of the clubhouse!

Looking Ahead to 2026 – The year ahead will focus on:

- Completing the **bike path sealing project** (weather permitting)
- Resurfacing the pool
- Renovating and updating the clubhouse kitchen to better serve the growing number of community and private events

Stay Connected – There is a wealth of information available to homeowners through **RealManage.com**. Once logged in, you can:

- Review your **account records**
- View the **community calendar** and **clubhouse rental availability**
- Stay informed with **announcements, meeting notices**, and more
- If you need login instructions, please email TrailsHO@ciramail.com for assistance.

As always, I thank you for your support, patience, and participation. Together, we continue to keep **The Trails** a welcoming and thriving community.

RealManage Central Florida Celebrating Excellence: Recognizing Our Q3 PARIS Award Recipients

Virginia Ochoa, RealManage Director Community Association Manager

RealManage is proud to recognize Brandie Hayes and Alexandra Wood as the Central Florida Quarter 3 PARIS Award recipients. Both managers consistently demonstrated our guiding principles of Personal Relationships, Always Improving, Respect, Integrity, and Selflessness throughout the quarter and year-round.

Brandie and Alexandra excel at building strong, positive relationships within their community, demonstrating professionalism, kindness, and respect in every interaction.

Their drive to improve and willingness to think beyond traditional approaches have strengthened how the community functions and enriched the resident experience, all while creating meaningful enhancements for the association.

Leading with integrity, they approach challenges with creativity and composure, consistently setting the standard for excellence and truly embodying the spirit of RealManage. They even manage to do it all with a sense of humor, proving that efficiency and a good laugh can absolutely go hand in hand.

Brandie Hayes and Alexandra Wood not only met expectations, they exceeded them. Their compassion, dedication, and leadership made a meaningful impact and set a high standard for onsite communities across Central Florida. RealManage is truly proud to have them as part of our team. Please join us in congratulating Brandie and Alexandra on earning the Q3 PARIS Award in Central Florida. Their hard work and character have made a lasting influence, and we are deeply grateful for all they have contributed.



MANAGERS' CORNER

Brandie Hayes, LCAM/Notary
 Alexandra Wood, LCAM/Notary
 Email: TrailsHO@ciramail.com



IT TAKES MORE THAN A VILLAGE
The Trails HOA by the Numbers

With nearly 990 homes and an estimated 2,600 residents, The Trails HOA in Ormond Beach isn't just a neighborhood – it's the size of a small Florida town. From managing amenities and landscaping to organizing social events, maintaining infrastructure, and planning, our community functions like a self-contained little city... with the clubhouse acting as a pseudo city hall.

Population Perspective – To put things in context, The Trails is roughly equal in population to a few officially incorporated Florida towns:

Town / City	County	Population	Comparison
Penney Farms, FL	Clay County	~2,600	Retirement-focused, civically active – a close match in spirit and size!
Montverde, FL	Lake County	~2,300	Scenic residential town with strong community feel.
Inglis, FL	Levy County	~2,300	Small but lively – think "everyone nowns everyone."
Laurel Hill, FL	Okaloosa County	~2,200	Rural charm and tight-knit community.
The Trails HOA	Ormond Beach	~2,600	Diverse, amenity-rich, and beautifully manicured.

So yes – it truly takes more than a village to keep The Trails humming. Every irrigation timer, pool filter, Bike Path, and flowering magnolia represents the work of dedicated vendors, board members, and management professionals working both in front and behind the scenes.

A Community as Diverse as It Is Dynamic – Part of what makes The Trails special is its diversity of residents. Our families include long-time Ormond locals, newcomers from around the country, and families whose cultural traditions and community engagement add richness, continuity, and a welcoming spirit to The Trails.

This blend means our average household size (around 2.6 residents per home) is slightly higher than the city average – a small but meaningful reflection of the multi-generational and family-oriented fabric that makes our neighborhood unique.

Efficiency on a Micro-City Scale – Managing The Trails is no small feat. With nearly 3 miles of Bike Paths, Retention Ponds, a "larger than most" community pool, RV Storage Facility, Maintenance Facility, Clubhouse and the landscape management of 398 encompassing acres, that 990 individually owned residences are member to – our HOA operates with the efficiency of a small municipality, yet relies on homeowner membership via assessment, professional management, and community collaboration rather than city tax revenue to maintain and provide the level of service the membership has come to expect.

Our success depends on teamwork, transparency, and thoughtful planning, ensuring every decision – from landscaping upgrades to community events – reflects both fiscal responsibility and the diverse needs of our members.

Neighbors Make the Difference – In the end, what truly sets The Trails apart isn't its size, but its spirit. We are a living example that when residents care, participate, and connect – a community can thrive like a well-run small town, powered by neighborly kindness and shared purpose.

DOLLARS & SENSE

Dan Gowen, Treasurer, Brandie Hayes & Alex Wood



As of the end of November, 172 owners are registered for ACH (17% of the membership), 160 owners (16% of the membership) are delinquent by some portion of their assessment for more than 30 days. This results in 84% of the community being collected through the 4th quarter, a bit less than our 2nd quarter's high.

2026 BUDGET Finalized and Approved: The Budget Committee presented the proposed 2026 Budget to the Board at the Annual Budget meeting, on Thursday, October 9, 2025. The Board members discussed the proposed budget and line items and the expected income and expense projections for 2026, as well as the reserve contributions and rationale for next five years.

The board approved the budget (including the \$13.00 increase for the quarterly assessments) and future reserve funding plan unannimously.

Delinquency Costs Everyone – As mentioned above, 160 owners were delinquent at the end of November. That means that each quarter, the HOA had at least \$44,000 less resources for managing our neighborhood than expected with no knowledge when the shortage would be filled.

Think about it. How would your household react to a sudden 16 percent decrease in income? Who is paying the bills? Everyone else. Further, managers and other administrative people must spend their time and your money settling the delinquent accounts.

Paying for your shelter is one of the top household budget priorities recommended by all financial gurus. Your association quarterly assessments are just like your mortgage in that you must pay on time or receive financial penalties from late fees to foreclosure. It is important to pay on time, as most due. Remember, if you can put your mortgage on ACH or autopay, you can and should do the same for your quarterly assessments.

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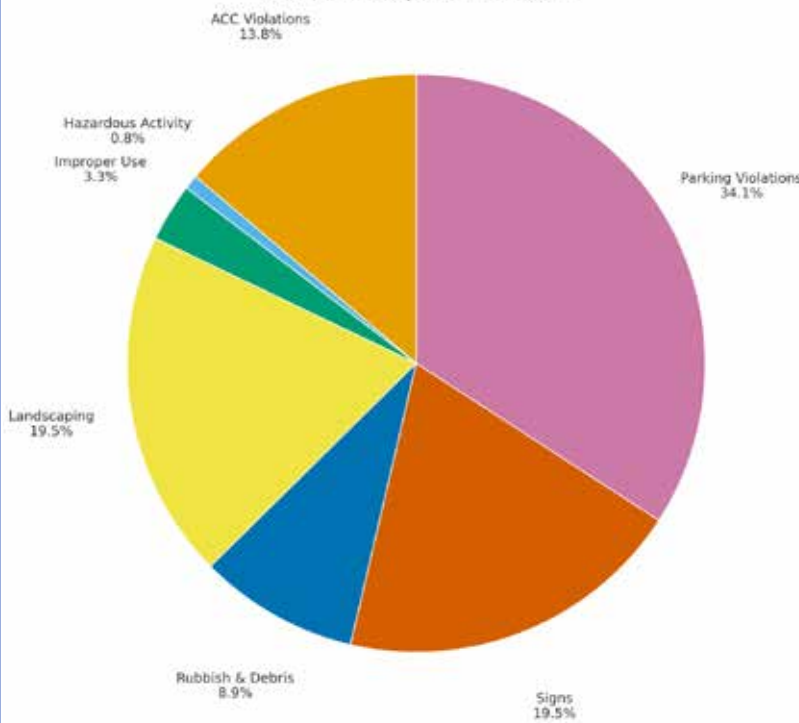
A Look Back at Covenant Violations in 2025 as We Move Into 2026

Brandie Hayes and Alexandra Wood

A required monthly (contracted) property inspections are conducted by the onsite management team to help maintain the appearance, safety, and compliance of our community. Violations visible from the public right-of-way – including properties on corner lots that can be seen from cross streets – as well as issues reported by neighboring residents are subject to enforcement under the HOA’s recorded Deed Restrictions agreed to upon purchase or occupancy. Residents may also report “neighborhood violations” by phone or email, and these third-party complaints are reviewed and addressed by the onsite staff as they are received. A growing number of neighborly concerns received on a regular basis relate to pet waste not being properly collected. Aside from creating an unsightly and unkempt appearance, unremoved pet waste can damage vendor landscaping equipment and contribute to increased maintenance expenses. Additional common issues include malfunctioning streetlights. Any light that is out or blinking should be reported directly at FPL.com via the Streetlight Outage tool by entering the pole number, or by emailing TrailsHO@ciramail.com with the nearest street address or pole ID so staff can assist.

We appreciate everyone who assists us with community compliance, and we appreciate the overwhelming support and pride in ownership that our members exhibit.

Violations Reported in 2025



The Trails HOA Board of Directors Annual Board Certification Class

Brandie Hayes & Alexandra Wood

January 19, 2026 • 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
201 Main Trail Ormond Beach FL 32174
2nd Floor Clubhouse

Presented by Jessica Safford ESQ Director of Business Development for Morgan and Morgan Business Trial Group.



With over 12 years of experience as a licensed attorney in Central Florida, she brings a wealth of legal knowledge and practical insight to her current role. Jessica began her legal career representing homeowners and condominium associations as general counsel, gaining valuable experience in real estate and construction-related matters.

Throughout her career, Jessica has demonstrated a strong passion for building lasting and meaningful relationships with clients and business partners alike. This focus on relationship-building has played a significant role in her success with Morgan & Morgan, initially joining the firm as a representative for the lawyer-to-lawyer referral network. In her current director role, Jessica combines her expertise in legal networking with a dedicated focus on construction defect and professional liability cases, helping to further the firm's reputation and success in these specialized areas of law.

Jessica is also an active and engaged member of the local legal community, continuously working to enhance both her professional knowledge and the impact of her work. Outside of her legal career, she enjoys spending quality time with her husband and two young children.

CLASS SCHEDULE

- 9:30 a.m. Sign in & Pastry Breakfast
- 10:00 a.m. Board Certification with Jessica Safford
- 12:15 – 12:45 p.m. Lunch Break with Vendor presentation
- 12:45 – 2:15 p.m. Board Certification 2nd half
- 2:25 – 4:00 p.m. Conclusion and Q&A

As in years past, this annual certification class is open to **all residents of The Trails HOA**, with a special invitation to **Board members of our Sub-Associations**. The session will include **important legal updates** relevant to HOA and COA governance.

If you currently serve on an **HOA or COA Board**, Florida law requires that you be **certified** and complete **continuing education**. This class is **free of charge** and includes **complimentary breakfast and lunch**.

HOW TO REGISTER

To enroll, please email: TrailsHO@ciramail.com

Subject Line: BOD CERTIFICATION 2026

In the body of the email, include:

- Your **full name**
- The **association** you represent
- Your **board position** (President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer, Director)
- Your management company, if applicable

Example:

John Smith, President
Mayflower Commons HOA
Managed by RealManage

INVITE OTHER BOARDS

If you serve on an HOA outside of The Trails, feel free to invite that Board’s members by sharing this registration information.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE

Friday, January 16, 2026 at 12:00 p.m. (EST)

This cutoff ensures timely submission of **Panera Catering** lunch orders.

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Introducing the 2025 - 2026 Board of Directors for the Trails

Alexandra Wood

Meet Your 2025 Board of Directors: The Brave Few Who Volunteered as Tribute

Running a community of nearly a thousand homes isn't for the faint of heart—it's for those rare individuals who hear "We need volunteers" and don't immediately hide behind the nearest shrub. This year's Board of Directors proudly steps forward as our very own champions of The Trails—armed with agendas, highlighters, and an unshakable sense of humor.

They've volunteered as tribute to face the trials of budgets, bylaws, and the occasional mystery violation with courage and composure. So, before you send that next email about the pool temperature or the elusive raccoon near the bike path, take a moment to meet the dedicated residents who keep The Trails running smoother than fresh asphalt after resurfacing day!



Dann Dragone has lived in Ormond Beach for over 30 years and owns Dragone P & L, providing pool and lawn services. He studied at Queens College and Seminole State and has served in multiple HOA leadership roles, including President of Arbor Trail HOA and as a current board member for Wildwood HOA. Dann is active in the Ormond Beach Chamber of Commerce, the Historical Society, and Ormond Beach Strong. A Board-Certified director, he serves on The Trails 2025-2026 Board and ran for City Commissioner, Zone 3 in 2024.



Daniel Gowen holds a Bachelor's in Economics from the University of Albuquerque and a Master's in International Relations from Troy State University. He retired after 42 years of military, diplomatic, and civil service in senior overseas leadership roles. Dan is also a certified scuba instructor and an active contributor to The Canopy as part of the Newspaper Committee. A current HOA Board member, he serves as Treasurer in 2025-2026 and chairs both the Budget Committee and the Facilities, Fixtures & Furnishings Committee. Dan is committed to working with "The Trails team" to uphold standards and enhance community life.



Kathleen Grabow LTC, U.S. Army (Ret.), holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Physical Therapy and completed advanced officer training through the Command & General Staff College. She retired from the U.S. Army Reserve after 20 years and has over 50 years of professional experience as a Physical Therapist. Kathleen serves on the Citizens for Ormond Beach Board and continues her service of over six years on the Autumnwood II HOA Board. A Trails Board member for seven and a half years, she made history as the Association's first female President for the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2023-2024, and 2025-2026 terms. She remains committed to serving and strengthening our community.



Chuck Harris holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Marketing from Carthage College in Racine, WI, and has been a Trails resident since 2004. He brings extensive experience in budgeting, employee relations, and capital project management from his 29-year career with Snap-on Tools, where he served in management roles across multiple countries. Chuck previously served on The Trails Board from 2005-2017 and again during the 2023-2024 and 2025-2026 terms. Highly skilled in technology, he collaborated with the Board President and the Technology Committee to help establish the community's presence on Nextdoor.com. Chuck remains committed to supporting The Trails' continued success.



Jeffrey Levinson attended Newton North High School and the University of Massachusetts Boston and currently serves as the Head of Airtime Sales for GOD TV. He brings valuable HOA experience, having previously served on the Bayshore Condos Board and on The Trails Board as a director (2016-2017), Vice President (2018), and President (2019-2020), as

well as returning as a director in 2021. Jeffrey is pleased to serve on the Board again as Vice President and looks forward to continuing his service to the community.



Lourdes McLean holds a degree in Business Administration from Utica College and brings a strong professional background in business management, accounting, and bookkeeping. She is also a certified Notary Public. Lourdes serves as the Secretary of The Trails HOA during the 2025-2026 term and as an officer on the Oak Village HOA. Within The Trails, she chairs the Landscape Committee, helping guide important community improvements. Lourdes finds Board service a meaningful way to stay engaged and believes in relying on professional property management expertise to support informed decisions that preserve and protect community property values.



Phil Rikas holds an Associate Degree in Computer Programming from Southern Ohio College and a Bachelor's degree in Business from the University of Cincinnati. A certified Project Management Professional (PMP) since 2007, Phil has spent 40 years in the IT industry, including 23 years with the Kroger Company. His extensive experience in technology, project coordination, and organizational leadership contributes valuable perspective to Board operations. Phil believes strongly in a service-focused approach to governance and brings to The Trails the philosophy that the Board exists to serve the community first.



Heather O'Neill joined The Trails HOA Board in December 2024 and has been an active contributor, completing Board Certification and serving on the Newspaper (Canopy) Committee. She is also the current President of the Wildwood Sub-association. Heather brings a strong background in education, community service, and marriage and family therapy, with over a decade of experience working with children and families through the dependency court system and as a Guardian ad Litem. A proud UCF alumna, Heather holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, as well as Master's Degrees in Humanities, and Marriage and Family Therapy. She enjoys learning, serving, and being an agent for positive change in the community.



John Whitley holds a Bachelor's degree in Accounting and is a Master of Divinity. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1968-1995, working as a navigator, air operations staff officer, chaplain, and executive officer in multiple commands. From 1995-1999, he worked in higher education as faculty and administrative staff, teaching religion and critical thinking. He later served as a senior minister from 1999-2006. John previously served as President of the Arrowhead Village II Sub-association (2022-2024) and has attended Trails Board and committee meetings for years. He has completed Board Certification and feels well prepared to serve the community.

What spring projects would you do with a Home Equity Loan?

- Home Equity Loans
- Home Equity Credit Lines
- Fixed Rate Home Equity Credit Lines

New Pool? New Addition? Family Vacation?

Ormond Beach Office
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Office: (386) 256-3813 • Emorkous@trustcobank.com

AMENITIES UPDATE - Clubhouse Rentals: The Holiday Rush

Brandie Hayes and Marra Mackenzie-Pranikoff

This past year end holiday season saw a party rush at the clubhouse. Every weekend Thanksgiving through the Christmas Holiday, was reserved Friday through Sunday. Make a note that if your intention is to book a year end party in 2026 consider early reservations of your preferred dates. The office can only reserve 6 mos. in advance of any event, as your date and damage deposit when paid by check expires at the 6-mo. mark. If you need a December 2026 date, see us in the office in July. However **NOW is the time to reserve the Class of '26 Graduation Parties!** It'll be May before you know it! If you use the RealManage resident portal, you can see the clubhouse calendar of available event dates.

Don't forget The New Rates were set in July (a.k.a. How We Say Goodbye to the '70s 3rd qtr. Canopy):

- **Monday-Thursday rentals:** \$250 deposit + \$250 rental fee (includes basic cleaning – because glitter never leaves on its own and will cost you a piece of your deposit).
- **Friday-Sunday Resident rentals:** \$319.50 for Homeowners (includes a basic cleaning fee and sales tax)
- **\$798.75 for non-homeowners** (includes a basic cleaning fee and sales tax) The \$250.00 deposit is required of both members and non-homeowners, with non-homeowners being required to pay by certified funds

Upcoming 2026 Save the Dates: Food Trucks, Trade Show, Movie Nights... Oh My!

January 19, 2026: Board Certification Class for Trails HOA and All Sub Association Boards 9:30 a.m. second floor Trails Clubhouse 201 Main Trail; Ormond Beach FL

February __, 2026: Sub Association Summit (This is TBD a Resident Portal Notice and Eblast with details is forthcoming. We are considering Presidents Day.)

March 26, 2026: First Food Truck Event Trails Clubhouse Parking lot 5:15p.m.-8:15p.m. DJ Rob will be jamming the jamz.

April 18, 2026: Trails Annual Trade Show Trails Clubhouse Parking lot 10:00a.m.-4:00 p.m. for registration information email TrailsHO@ciramail.com Subject line: 2026Trade Show.

April 18, 2026: SPRING COMMUNITY YARD SALE

May 21, 2026: Food Truck Event Trails Clubhouse Parking lot 5:15p.m.-8:15p.m. DJ Rob onsite.

June 19, 2026: Movie Night at the Pool Pizza and Snacks a Plenty! Movie begins at Dusk in the event of inclement weather the movie is shown in the clubhouse. Movie TBD Cost is free!

July 17, 2026: Movie Night at the Pool Pizza and Snacks a Plenty! Movie begins at Dusk in the event of inclement weather the movie is shown in the clubhouse. Movie TBD Cost is free!

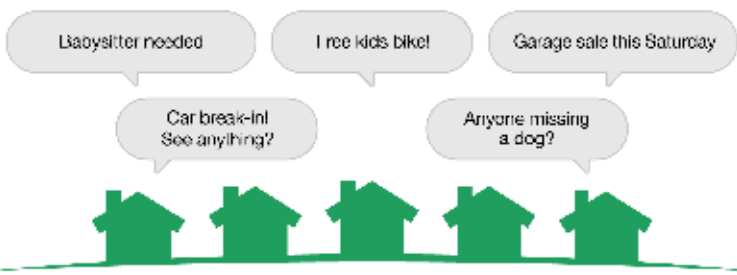
August 7, 2026: Kona Ice Back to School Dance Party at the Pool 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. DJ Rob, Kona Ice, Pizza ...in the event of inclement weather we will hold the dance party in the clubhouse. **Looking for Theme Suggestions...**Because the Amenities committee loves a good theme!

October 22, 2026: Food Truck Event Trails Clubhouse Parking lot 5:15p.m.-8:15p.m. DJ Rob onsite.

November 7, 2026: FALL COMMUNITY YARD SALE

The Amenities committee wants to thank the Residents of The Trails for their support and participation. You are creating a lasting sense of community by participating in these events. Also thank you to our Board of Directors for supporting the committee's efforts to celebrate the community. Have Happy and Healthy New Year, and we look forward to seeing you at our next event!

Please join us on Nextdoor The Trails - Ormond Beach



Nextdoor The Trails - Ormond Beach is the neighborhood hub for trusted connections and the exchange of helpful information, goods, and services. On Nextdoor, neighbors share crime and safety concerns, local events, recommendations, items for sale/free, ideas about how to make our neighborhood better, and more.

Our neighborhood is using an online platform called Nextdoor. Please join us to build a better neighborhood!

*- Brandie H.
Main Trl*

Please join us!



Don't miss out :)

LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE – Update

Marilyn Dorinson, Committee Member

2025 has been a productive year for our Yellowstone employees and the landscape committee, and we are especially grateful that we had no hurricanes to deal with.

Repaving and sealing of the paths have been done and the street names at the end of each path will be painted soon.

The holiday poinsettias and white petunias were planted at both entrances the day before Thanksgiving and the holiday lights were installed by Parks Electric at both entrances and at the clubhouse. Mulch from bags were applied to the flowerbeds for \$800.00 less than anticipated.

Plans for replacement of the tallow trees on Timberline Trail are ongoing and irrigation and removal were to take place in December. The cost for removal, irrigation and planting of crepe myrtles was to come from the 2025 budget, while funding for additional plants will come from the 2026 budget, if approved by the board.

Because so many Trails residents have outstanding holiday decorations from Halloween to Christmas, the Canopy staff voted to dedicate a full page to photos of them. In addition to individual homeowners, the Ramblewood Sub-association deserves special recognition for its beautiful display.

The landscape committee wishes you all a healthy, happy and prosperous 2026 and invites you to join us on the first Thursday of every month at 3:00 p.m. in the clubhouse conference room.



AROUND THE COMMUNITY

A FAREWELL & MUCH APPRECIATION HONORING ROB BRIDGER'S YEARS OF SERVICE

Alexandra Wood



The Trails community extends its deepest appreciation to Rob Bridger, whose leadership, dedication, and steady presence have helped shape our Association for more than a decade. Rob is a Vietnam-era U.S. Navy Corpsman and a proud veteran. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's in Counseling from Stetson University, along with a Master's of Public Administration from Florida State University.

Rob's professional life reflects the same commitment to service he brought to The Trails. He retired after 35 years with the State of Florida, where he held supervisory, managerial, and administrative roles across multiple health and human services programs, ultimately serving as Bureau Chief for statewide public assistance policy.

Since moving to The Trails in 1989, Rob has been an active and engaged leader. He previously served three terms as President and has been elected to the Board in an extraordinary number of years: 2013-2018, returning in 2020-2025. Most recently, Rob served as Secretary of the Association, Chair of the Newspaper Committee, and Editor of The Canopy—roles in which his thoughtful communication and commitment to transparency greatly benefited our community.

Rob's longstanding involvement has set a high standard for volunteer leadership. His guidance, institutional knowledge, and calm, measured approach have been invaluable to fellow board members, committees, and homeowners alike.

While Rob concludes this chapter of board service, he continues to embody his belief in civic engagement and community stewardship. His legacy will be felt for years to come in the policies, programs, and communication efforts he helped strengthen.

On behalf of the entire Trails community, thank you, Rob, for your unwavering dedication, your many years of service, and your genuine care for the place we all call home. We wish you the very best in your next chapter and look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood.



LAWN CARE TIPS FROM THE PROS

Guest Article contributed by Yellowstone Landscape



Create a Year-Round Landscape: Enjoy Your Yard All Year Long

People who live in cooler climates can take a page from our warm-weather friends who use their yards year-round. Just because it gets colder for part of the year, doesn't mean we should put away the lawn furniture after Labor Day and lock the back door until spring.

There are a variety of ways you can extend the use of your yard into late fall and even winter. Many patios, decks, and outdoor living spaces have fire features, such as fire pits, chimineas, and stone or brick fireplaces that come in all price ranges and are great focal points for outdoor entertaining in the fall and even into the winter. Add a grill or outdoor kitchen and you have a great space for fall-themed entertaining, dinner alfresco, or s'mores and hot cocoa party. Adding pergolas, gazebos, or covered patios creates a feeling of shelter and warmth in the winter, in addition to providing shade in the summer.

Planning for a year-round landscape extends to the plants themselves. Most of us are

probably guilty of choosing plants, trees, and shrubs for our yards with spring and summer in mind. If you begin to use your landscape in fall and winter, you will start to think about how you can incorporate plants and trees that add pops of color and texture in the fall and winter. It is easy to create gorgeous fall color in your yard with maple trees, birch and oak trees and Japanese maples, but it is sometimes harder to envision your landscape in winter.

One way to think about fall and winter landscapes is in terms of "bark and berries." Add color to winter landscapes by using plants with berries like holly trees, viburnums, and beauty berries. Birds are attracted to berries, so these plants may attract winter wildlife. Trees with lighter colored or papery bark such as river birch trees, crape myrtles, dogwood trees, and Japanese maple trees add texture and interest. There are also a variety of evergreen trees that come in different shades that can add visual interest.

Using, designing for, and appreciating your yard year-round can extend your entertaining options, help you connect with nature, get you outdoors for fresh air and help you create memories with friends and family.

This month's article provided by the National Association of Landscape Professionals.

FALL ART SHOW AT THE TRAILS: A Colorful Community Success

Maureen Bridger



The Ormond Beach Art Guild, which meets weekly at The Trails Clubhouse, wrapped up a very successful Fall Art Show this season. The gallery was filled throughout the event as residents, friends, and guests stopped in to enjoy an impressive variety of original works in oil, watercolor, and pastel.

This year's show was especially exciting for the artists: **four pieces were sold**—the highest number of sales the Guild has ever had at a Trails exhibition. The strong turnout and interest made the event feel vibrant and celebratory.

Adding to the atmosphere, member and accomplished artist **Marian Devore** also shared her talents at the piano, providing beautiful live music that made the afternoon feel even more special.

The show also included a heartfelt tribute to longtime member and artist **Alice Koselniak**, who recently passed away. Her son, David, traveled from New Jersey to display one of Alice's floral paintings in her honor. He graciously provided complimentary wine and delicious hors d'oeuvres for everyone attending, creating a warm and memorable celebration of Alice's life and work.

The Ormond Beach Art Guild welcomes neighbors who are interested in art, creativity, and community.

For more information about the Guild and upcoming events, please contact:

Marilyn Dorinson (386) 274-9963

Maureen Bridger (386) 846-5517

LONG-TERM CRUISING - WHAT'S IT LIKE? *Returning to the Familiar and Finding the New*

Dan Gowen and Companions

The Lion's share of our 60-day cruise was around Africa with planned visits to seven ports in West Africa, five in Southern Africa, and five in Eastern Africa which included several island states. After more than two decades away, we were anxious to reacquaint ourselves with our former home. Sadly, our visits did not venture inland, remaining near the coast. While our cruise was far-reaching, we only scratched the surface.

Africa is immense, and often mistakenly considered a single entity. In reality, Africa has 54 individual countries spread over 11.7 million square miles, making it the second-largest continent in the world. For visitors, Africa's disparate regions offer a varied ambiance, sometimes European-like, but mostly different and interesting in their own right.

Overall Observations: Africa is still an amazing place offering wonder, beauty, and hope and is worthy of repeated visits. Africans are masters of adaptation and resilience, they get on with doing and living, while maintaining traditions and their sense of humor and dignity. However, it was clear that development among the countries was unequal. Now as before, the most foreign investment seems to be where the donors saw opportunities for stability and commercial success. The



Modern Dares Salam and Traditional Market

favored countries have expanded greatly. The non-favored countries still struggle, but survive.

The main urban centers of several countries have experienced the complete spectrum of change from almost nil to quantum, from the old city centers to the far suburbs. Massive skyscrapers skylines are now common. With the modernization, however, came rapid growth of both the urban population and the vehicles which now choke the expanded, yet inadequate infrastructure making the thought of getting around a slow and depressing. Travel times have quadrupled and incomplete construction is everywhere. Yet, there is still plenty of charm to be found. And, mobile phones and the Internet are ubiquitous in even the poorest places. Wow, sounds like Florida; Carl Hiaasen and Dave Barry might agree.



Ancient Dhow Zanzibar

Fingerspizengefühl: Our goal was to learn as much as possible, as easy as possible. Our approach in each port was to take an organized tour if the place was new to us and the tour interesting, for example the Namibian Desert tour and the trip to Table Mountain in Cape Town. If we still had a contacts in the area, we arranged a rendezvous and private sightseeing. However, for most ports, we found that self-guided wandering the back streets and discovering off-the-beaten-path sites worked best for us.

We liked learning about our port city by assessing local conditions and attitudes on contemporary life. Our favorite way of doing so was to visit the places residents gather to shop, eat, and drink -- traditional markets, main-street shops, and beer



Namibian Desert Walvis Bay

stops. This approach had served us as well, now as in the past. The market ladies loved to chat about the economy and make recommendations; the market men talked football and know the beer stops. Using local greetings helped a lot. At a beer stop, relaxing while observing the flow of life and listening to the other patrons was fun and educational.



Departing Cape Town



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Indian Ocean Sunset

This is the final "Cruising" article. If there is interest in reports about Southeast Asia, South Asia, or the Arabian Peninsula, John K and I will voyage from San Diego westward to London in early 2026. Let us know. Breathe and enjoy.

Cranberry Mix-and-Set Pistachio Fudge



INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups white chocolate chips
- 1 can (14 oz) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ½ cup shelled pistachios

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line an 8x8 pan with parchment.
2. Melt white chocolate + condensed milk on low until smooth.
3. Stir in vanilla, cranberries, and pistachios.
4. Pour into pan and smooth.
5. Chill 2 hours; cut into squares.

Looks Gourmet — Take Minutes.

Lemon Berry Tartlets

MAUREEN BRIDGER

INGREDIENTS

- 1 - 14 oz, can of sweetened condensed milk
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 2 tps. grated lemon peel
- 1 cup whipped topping
- 6 mini graham cracker crusts
- ½ cup of raspberry (or other flavor/ berry) preserves



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk the sweetened condensed milk, lemon juice and peel until blended and begin to thicken. Fold in the whipped topping.
2. Divide in the six tart crusts and make a depression with a spoon. Refrigerate for 2hrs, or firm, and then fill each tart with a tsp. of preserves. May decorate a mint leaf.

Reindeer Chow



INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups Chex cereal
- 1 cup chocolate chips
- ½ cup peanut butter
- 3 tbsp butter
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1½ cups powdered sugar
- Holiday M&M's
- Mini pretzels

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Melt chocolate, peanut butter, and butter together.
2. Stir in vanilla.
3. Toss mixture with Chex until evenly coated.
4. Add powdered sugar to a large bag; add coated cereal; shake until covered.
5. Mix in M&M's and pretzels.
6. Store in festive bowl or jars.

Perfect for parties, movie nights, or gifting.

No-Bake 4-Ingredient Holiday Truffles

INGREDIENTS

- 1 package Oreo cookies
- 1 block (8 oz) cream cheese, softened
- 1-2 cups white chocolate chips (melted)
- Crushed candy canes for topping



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Crush Oreos into fine crumbs (food processor or zip-bag + rolling pin).
2. Mix crumbs with cream cheese until combined.
3. Roll into balls and freeze 15 minutes.
4. Dip each truffle in melted white chocolate.
5. Sprinkle crushed candy cane on top.
6. Chill until set.

Tastes like Christmas wrapped in a dessert.

MELT AWAY HOLIDAY STRESS

There's so much happening right now that, for many of us, it feels like too much: too much noise... the constant pings, YouTube ads and doom-scrolling... and the non-stop stream of things demanding our attention.

Finding moments of tranquility has become a precious commodity.

One of the easiest ways to find tranquility is to attend a Sound Bath. There's no water involved - the "bath" is in the sound.

During a small group Sound Bath (at the 7th Heaven Sound Baths studio), you recline in a zero-gravity chair while waves of soothing sound wash over you as crystal singing bowls, acoustic nature instruments, and chimes guide you into deep calm and inner balance.

As the vibrations and healing frequencies from the sounds begin to melt away stress, your body realizes it has permission to slow down and rest; to receive... without the need to respond or react.

A Sound Bath helps reduce stress, quiet the mind and promote deep relaxation. The calming sounds produced by the crystal singing bowls and other instruments activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for calming the body after stress. This leads to a reduction in heart rate, blood pressure and cortisol (the stress hormone), promoting a sense of relaxation that can last long after the session ends.

But, it's not only about what you hear, it's also about what your body feels. Sound travels 5 times faster in water than in air. And since our bodies are nearly 70% water, the sound waves and healing vibrations of the instruments played during an in-person Sound Bath are able to deeply penetrate the body, moving through muscles and organs, truly reaching every cell.

If nothing else, a Sound Bath presents the opportunity to fully relax and recharge. Many people experience deep relaxation and a profound peace - body, mind and spirit - that they haven't been able to reach on their own.

The 7th Heaven Sound Baths studio is located at 725 W Granada Blvd, Suite 11, in Ormond Beach. See the ad in this issue for a special limited time offer and visit the website for more information about Sound Baths: www.7thheavensoundbaths.com or www.7hsb.com.



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A RAMBLEWOOD HOLIDAY SPOTLIGHT: Celebrating John Paulsen & Caleb Young

Brandie Hayes and Alexandra Wood



In the heart of Ramblewood HOA, a special kind of neighborhood pride shines brightly—and this year, it sparkles more than ever. Longtime Ormond Beach resident John Paulsen, a jeweler and watchmaker who has served our Ormond Beach community for over 50 years, has always believed that beauty begins at home. His craftsmanship, attention to detail, and generous spirit have left an imprint not only on his customers, but on his neighbors as well.

Last year, John went the extra mile—and extra *smile*—by decorating the entrance of Ramblewood. His thoughtful touches delighted the Landscape Committee, the Trails Board of Directors, the onsite management team, the landscape detail crew, and his Ramblewood neighbors. His festive efforts were so memorable that they were featured in *The Canopy* newsletter.

This season, John is not working alone. His husband, Caleb a long time Trails resident—whose world revolves around the beauty and discipline of ballroom dance—has brought his own artistic flair and elegance to Ramblewood's holiday display. Together, John and Caleb have transformed their neighborhood entrance into a magical Holiday Wonderland, one so stunning it is worthy of this month's "Canopy cover".

Caleb's love for The Trails is deeply rooted. After renting in the community three years before purchasing their home a decade ago, Caleb knew this was the place he wanted to spend his life. Three years ago, he and John married, and since then, John has often shared how grateful he is to live in what he considers "the most beautiful place in the world."

Their dedication shows. Their creativity shows. And their pride in Ramblewood radiates throughout the community.

On behalf of The Trails Board of Directors, onsite management, the Landscape Committee, Yellowstone's landscape detail team, and Ramblewood HOA, we extend our heartfelt thanks to John, Caleb, and the entire Ramblewood neighborhood for fostering such warmth, charm, and community spirit. Your commitment does not go unnoticed—and your contributions make The Trails a brighter, more beautiful place for all who call it home.





HOLIDAYS AT THE TRAILS



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FREE copies of the Ormond Beach Observer are available at the Clubhouse every Thursday

IMPORTANT DATES & UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE CLUBHOUSE (CH)


Mondays 11:30 am - 3:30 pm Bridge Club-Every other week.
Girls Scouts & Brownies evening meetings

Tuesdays 8:30 am - 12 (noon) Ormond Beach Art Guild (CH)

Thursdays 11:30 am - 4:00 pm is available for Card club (each week). Note: Volunteer needed to host club.

Note: Watch Nextdoor.com for club dates to resume

TBD - These dates and times are standing for the clubs when they are comfortable meeting in groups.

 *When you see this flag on the calendar - display your flag at your mailbox.*

January 2026

01/01 - 1st qtr. assessment due \$274.00



01/01 - Happy New Year

01/08 - Board of Directors Meeting (CB 6:00 p.m.)

01/14 - ACC Meeting 9:00 a.m. 1st floor conf. room (CH)

01/19 - Martin Luther King Day 

01/19 - BOARD CERTIFICATION CLASS (2ND FLR CH)

01/28 - ACC Meeting 9:00 a.m. 1st floor conf. room (CH)

01/30 - Assessments delinquent late fees applied today

February 2026

02/01 - 1st qtr. assessment of \$274.00 past due




02/02 - Groundhog Day

02/05 - Landscape Committee meeting 3:00 p.m.
1st floor conf. room (CH)

02/06 - 02/22 - Olympic Winter Games 

02/11 - ACC Meeting 9:00 a.m. 1st floor conf. room (CH)

02/12 - Board of Directors Meeting (CH 6:00 p.m.)

02/14 - Valentine's Day 

02/16 - President's Day 

02/17 - Ramadan begins at sundown

02/18 - Ash Wednesday

02/25 - ACC Meeting 9:00 a.m. 1st floor conf. room (CH)

March 2026

03/01 - 1st qtr. assessment of \$274.00 past due

03/05 - Landscape Committee meeting 3:00 p.m.
1st floor conf. room (CH)


03/06 - 03/15 - Paralympic Winter Games 

03/08 - Spring ahead 1 hour 

03/11 - ACC Meeting 9:00 a.m. 1st floor conf. room (CH)

03/12 - Board of Directors Meeting (CH 6:00 p.m.)

03/16 - 03/20 - Volusia County Schools Spring Break

03/17 - St Patrick's Day 

03/19 - Ramadan Ends

03/25 - ACC Meeting 9:00 a.m. 1st floor conf. room (CH)

03/26 - 1st Food Truck Event 2026



03/29 - Palm Sunday

POOL HOURS

April 1 - 30

7 days a week 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

May 1 - September 30

Mon-Sat 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Sunday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m

October 1 - 31

7 days a week 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

November 1 - March 31

10a.m. - 4p.m

Pool will be closed during resurfacing project.

Did you know? 2026 = A Major Sports Year? Besides the Olympics, 2026 will also feature:

- Milan-Cortina Olympics (February 6-22, 2026)
- Paralympic Winter Games (March 6-15, 2026)
- FIFA World Cup (hosted in the U.S., Canada & Mexico June 29-July 19, 2026)

It's a Global year for sports fans!