

## OANA General Meeting Minutes — 8/17/2016

Over 40 people attended the General Meeting, held at the Maumus Center. President Mike Pechon led the Pledge of Allegiance to start the meeting off at 7:10 p.m.

The featured speaker was Richard Mayer from the soon-to-open Valiant Lounge and Theater, a new live performance venue in the old pawn shop building. The theater will seat 110-120 guests, and will offer a wide variety of shows. Richard told us a bit about his background and history in New Orleans, mentioning that he came here to attend Tulane two days before Hurricane Katrina and returned to open the Shadow Box Theater in Bywater. The new venture will have much more space, and the bar and lounge, run by his business partner, will eventually be open 7 days a week from 4 p.m. till midnight with live music, cocktails, and themed drinks linked to the performances.

A brief lineup of the first planned shows includes a dark comedy, a musical, burlesque acts, and a special Christmas show. Once the operation is on its feet and running smoothly, we can expect to see up to 10 shows a week. Prices will be affordable at \$10 to \$20 per show, as Richard's philosophy is to have as many people as possible come and enjoy live theater. A grand opening is scheduled for September 10th. Members were able to sign up for the Valiant's email list. Expect to see flyers and print ads, and follow the Valiant on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and their website.

The next order of business was the vote for our new logo. Members received a printed ballot with the three design choices picked by the OANA Board as finalists. The results were very close, with the winning design by Cliff Couvillon coming out just ahead for the \$100 cash prize. The runners-up were Brandi Rollo and Sara Felt.

Mike then explained that the Board is revising our Bylaws. Though we were unable to put them up on the screen for this meeting, as soon as the Board has finished making changes, aimed at bringing the current version (last revised in 2000) into line with what we are doing now, the document will be posted on our website for members to review. Changes, which will be highlighted in red, include: what happens if the OANA is dissolved, bringing meeting schedules into line with what we've been doing, clarifying membership categories and voting rights, and moving Officer and Board elections. Voting to accept or reject the revised Bylaws will take place at the October 18th meeting, a social gathering for Night Out Against Crime. Email reminders will be sent out.

The following events were announced:

- Sippin' in the Sunset will begin its fall series on Thursday, September 1st
- Sippin' on the Bayou is August 25th
- Blues in da Parish will be held at Docville Farm on October 1st
- Old Arabi Sugar Fest will take place on October 8th, together with a 2-block opening of venues along St. Claude

Lynda Catalanotto from Old Arabi Marketplace invited everyone to their one year

anniversary party the following evening. A present for each attendee, catering by The Rear Window and other local eateries, and wine, champagne, and cocktails highlighted the festivities. The business is expanding into the space next door, expected to open in mid-September.

Events in Old Arabi are attracting larger and larger crowds, and the OANA and neighborhood businesses and galleries are working to combine functions in the future in order to spread the fun around.

The meeting ended before 8:00 with the awarding of three door prizes: a gift certificate to Old Arabi Marketplace and two potted palms.