

OANA General Meeting Minutes 11-14-19

Just over 25 people attended the November General Meeting, which was held at the Maumus Center and convened promptly at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The first order of business was a recap of the 11th Annual Sugar Fest, held on Saturday, October 12th. As always, the Old Arabi historic tours were a big success; a video presentation can be found online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wgvl72WVbhE&t=342s>. Thanks to a pair of our volunteers, the baking competition was the best ever, with the baked goods selling out almost immediately. A huge list of sponsors insured that a sweet time was had by all. The event was also a financial success, with a profit of more than \$10,000.

Unfortunately, the last Sippin' in the Sunset had to be cancelled due to weather concerns. When our food vendors pull out, we feel that we can't put on a proper event without their participation. But we're re-thinking our options, and may come up with a solution to allow us to have at least some food available to avoid cancellation.

Thanks to another volunteer, the second annual Old Arabi Trick or Treat map was compiled, leading families to "houses with flashing lights & Halloween delights". Even more neighbors participated by listing their homes this year.

Guest speaker Danielle Martin, from the St. Bernard Economic Development Foundation, presented details about the third annual Shop Small Week in St. Bernard, Nov. 30th-Dec. 7th. Shoppers can pick up a "passport" at 35 participating locations, make purchases at 5 or more businesses, and be entered to win a number of prizes. Several events will take place during the week, starting with a breakfast kickoff at Cafe Aquarius, and including our very own neighborhood Popup Market on Dec. 5th at St. Claude Arts. From 4-7:30 that day, a host of local vendors will offer gifts, art & craft items, and more, while attendees will be able to fill out their passports and enter for a chance to win a special Old Arabi gift basket. Nearby businesses will also be open with special deals, and OANA will be selling libations at the market.

As part of the Shop Small event, and to contribute to the holiday spirit, OANA will be decorating a section of the neutral ground across from St. Claude Arts. Anyone who would like to help out, or donate ornaments or other holiday decor, was invited to see us after the meeting.

OANA will be making four philanthropic donations this year. As in the past, \$5000 in gift cards to Canseco's and Walmart will be given to Arabi Elementary School for families in need at Christmas time. Chalmette High Key Club will receive \$500 as thanks for their help during our events. The St. Bernard Community Center will be gifted \$300 to support 3 Arabi children in their Backpack Program, which provides food to students in need. Another \$300 will go to the Arabi Elementary Performing Group, a highlight of every Sugar Fest.

Beautification efforts saw just over \$4000 budgeted for holiday decorations, banners on

St. Claude (shared by Tourism), refurbishing of planters outside the Sugar Museum, and the long-awaited trash can at the levee at Mehle St.

Yards-of-the-Month over the past year were reviewed. Our totem pole at the Aycock Barn fell down this fall, but thanks to a volunteer member, the pole was replaced and the art work re-mounted.

Reminders:

- the OANA Members-only Holiday Party will be held on Wednesday, December 11th, 6-8 p.m. at The Kitchen Table Café. Food catered by the restaurant, cash bar.
- Annual dues of \$20 per household of 2 will be payable as of Jan. 1st, 2000, and can now be paid online at www.olderarabi.org/membership, in person at any General Meeting, or by mail. See the website for instructions.
- A shout out was given to Quitutes, the new Brazilian restaurant on Judge Perez at Mehle, which has already received great reviews from several members. Let's support them!
- City on the Hill, on Showtime and starring Ben Affleck, was recently filming at the Maumus Center. Nearby residents were hoping to get a glimpse of the actor.
- Upcoming events were reviewed: Election Day Nov. 16th, Shop Small Market Dec. 5th, the Holiday Party Dec. 11th, and the Jackson Day Race coming up on January 11th (this affects traffic in the neighborhood, as it begins & ends at the Aycock Barn and runs between Old Arabi and Chalmette Battlefield).

Thanks were once again given to our Board Members, attendees were urged to vote on Nov. 16th, names were drawn for door prizes, and members were thanked for attending. The meeting was adjourned at around 6:40 p.m.