

OANA General Meeting Minutes — 11/08/18

Around 35 people attended the November meeting, held at the Maumus Center and called to order at 6:06 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Guest speaker Danielle Martin, from the St. Bernard Economic Development Foundation, gave an overview of the parish's Shop Small initiative, taking place Nov. 24-Dec. 1 this year. Shoppers can pick up a "passport" at participating locations, make purchases at 5 or more shops, then turn in the passport for a parade of prizes, including a \$200 grand prize. Kickoff will be a breakfast event at Café Aquarius, and a "Sweat Local" session at Functional Health and Wellness will close out the promotion. Participating Old Arabi businesses were listed.

Danielle also works with the Old Arabi Community Garden, and invited members to volunteer on Saturday the 17th to finish the fence and help with chores such as turning the garden beds and putting them to sleep for the winter.

"ThanksSippin' in the Sunset", the last of the season, is scheduled for Thursday, November 15th, 6-9 p.m. So many vendors have signed up that there's currently a waiting list, so there will be a lot of opportunities for early holiday shopping. Music will be by Kenny Kerth Jass, and the sipping selections will include a seasonal sangria. [note: this event was cancelled due to weather-related issues]

The 10th Annual Sugar Fest was a huge success: the tour trollies were full, the music was great (fewer bands played longer sets), and LSU won! We honored our many sponsors (and OANA volunteers) with a pre-festival Sugar Soirée at the old Ford plant, where "Friend of Old Arabi" awards were presented to former Domino's liaison Tom Braniff, Office of Tourism liaison Faith Moran, and Sugar Fest Chairman Ray Lauga for their tireless efforts over the last decade. We'll be rethinking our recycling efforts at future events, since the bins got contaminated with too much food trash.

Our neighborhood Night Out Against Crime was once again hosted by Arabi Food Store, with food & drink on the patio, a visit from Sheriff James Pohlmann and Parish President Guy McInnes, and a pair of very timely citations issued by deputies to 18-wheelers illegally passing on Friscoville. Many thanks to the hosts, and to our Hospitality Chair for organizing the event.

Another very successful new venture, organized by two of our Board Members, was a neighborhood Trick-or-Treat map for Halloween night. Volunteer homes were listed on the map and given flashing lights to put on mailboxes or porches. A suggestion was made to recruit participating neighbors to join OANA.

The "totem pole" arrows are ready and should be installed at the Aycock Barn by next week's Sippin'. The various artists involved were named along with members who were instrumental in the project.

There will be a St. Bernard Veterans Day Parade on November 11th at 9:30 a.m., and a

Veterans Appreciation Fundraiser at Old Arabi Bar, 5-9 p.m. on Friday the 9th. Holiday Planetarium show dates were announced, with 4 showings scheduled for next week.

OANA's profits from our fun events help us give back to our community. This year we'll once again be partnering with Arabi Elementary School to provide ten needy families with Christmas gift cards to Walmart & Canseco's, as well as tree certificates to Renaissance Gardens. We'll also be making a monetary donation to the CHS Key Club as thanks for their volunteer efforts at many of our events.

We know that members continue to have complaints regarding illegal short term rentals. Reports should be directed to Jeff McClain, by phone at 504-278-4200, or even better by email to dmcclain@sbsp.net. Be sure to document the date and address of each problem, and provide details. Remember, the squeaky wheel gets the grease!

Our annual Holiday Party will be held at the Kitchen Table Cafe on Wednesday, Dec. 12th, 6-8 p.m. There will be plenty of food & fellowship, and a cash bar.

Members were thanked for attending & reminded of upcoming event dates, thanks were given to Gena Asevedo for hosting us again at the Maumus Center, and the meeting was adjourned at around 6:45 p.m.

(see the slide show below for a summary of this meeting)