

OTBA Minutes – MARCH 12, 2014

Our Meeting venue returned to our normal location with a sincere apology from the Bell brothers for the mix up last month. We invited the Public Works Department to breakfast to publicly thank them for their hard work in checking, replacing bulbs, fixing and making the Christmas lights atop the buildings once again functional. The city did look beautiful and inviting during the holidays.

Attendance was 45 members.

After introductions were made, Joanne Wunderly asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes from our February meeting. Ann Hempen and Mike Flynn, as a second, approved the minutes. Our minutes along with the Treasurer's report are always posted on line at the OTBA website.

Nury Mena, OTBA treasurer gave the treasurer's report. Our ending balance in Fulton Bank as of February 28, 2014 is \$ 8,7754.41.

Joanne also announced that there are current members of OTBA who have not renewed their membership and to please do so promptly.

The merchants' Sidewalk Sale will be on April 26th.

Our next meeting will be April 9th.

HMI – Debbie Haight announced the upcoming events for April. The Spring Cleaning day has morphed into a healthy living and living 'green' event. There will be the usual re-cycle offerings in addition to a mammography screening, a blood drive, and exercise instruction. The Farmers' Market returns to the Harris Pavilion and the water tower parking lot in April. For the First Friday in April, the theme will be 'Flowers'. The Old Town Ambassador program has been started, and passports delivered to businesses.

Manassas Museum – Doug Horta spoke about the temporary exhibit – Reflections – which will be art work from Osbourn High School students and exhibited from March 17 – April 21. Also at the museum is a restored Mosby Reunion Flag which is on permanent exhibit. After the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Old Town this Saturday, March 15th, there will be sheep herding by border collies and bagpipe music on the museum lawn.

Center for the Arts – Sally Lay spoke about the Rooftop Theater's upcoming production, "Don't Dress for Dinner" which will be performed at 8 pm on both Friday and Saturday nights the last weekend of March and the first two weekends in April. Rehearsals have begun for "Peter Pan" which will be held May 10 & 11 and 17 & 18 at Garfield High School. Summer camp/class brochure is almost ready for distribution.

Harris Pavilion – no report. Anna Marie did send word that ice skating has ended and that the schedule for warmer months is packed with events.

Manassas Art Guild –no report

Welcome Center – Kathleen Reilly introduced Kiley Wonn, who is the new Assistant Manager of the Welcome Center.

Hylton Performing Arts Center – Katy Campbell announced that April 1st is the deadline for application for the first juried exhibit to be held at the Hylton. New schedules announcing the new season will be out shortly.

Discover Prince William & Manassas (formally known as the CVB) – Wendy Vestfall mentioned that the nomination forms for the 2014 Tourism Industry Awards were on the table and to please take one. There will be a tourism luncheon on Friday, March 9th at the Old Prince William Courthouse (upstairs). The CVB applied for a tourism grant to capture the Canadian tourist market (“Snowbirds”) of travelers through the area to points south. In May, there will be 6 – 10 Canadian writers in the area.

Restaurant Alliance – Debbie Haight announced that the next Taste of Manassas will be the 1st Sunday in June. There is an opportunity for OTBA members to have a table at the event to showcase their businesses. There is no charge for this opportunity.

Manassas Fire and Rescue – no report.

Manassas City Police – no report. Joanne did note that there have been increased foot patrols in Old Town.

Featured Speaker – Doug Waldron, the recently elected Commissioner of the Revenue, presented the 4th Quarter report and answered questions from the group. Doug is interested in making the report more user friendly with each business category more easily able to compare trends. Debbie Haight said that she uses the reports to write grants. Marc Hempen brought up the fact that the differences in the Lodging figures from 2011, 2012 and 2013 really reflected the 150th Civil War tourism numbers versus the year when there was no scheduled celebration. A discussion ensued about the value of brochures placed in hotels, costumed interpreters at the Welcome Center and advertising in Civil War publications.

Business announcements: What's New?

Doug Horta of Manassas Museum mentioned he is at the Manassas Battlefield once a month ‘schmoozing’ and replenishing the brochures.

Debbie Haight announced the following new businesses in Old Town:

Man Cave Salon will be going into the building at the corner of Main and Center and will open this weekend.

Love Charley will be going in to building that housed Persnickety Cakes in April.

Black Swan Consignment Boutique had a ribbon cutting.

The Bones restaurant (bar-b-que) is expected to open in early May.

Chip Rohr announced that the recent Ducks Unlimited fundraiser was the best ever. Chip was President of OTBA for years and on the board of HMI and stated that historically, the two organizations worked together by having OTBA come up with ideas and the paid staff of HMI implement those ideas. He stressed that HMI needs to invest in the marketing to daily foot traffic in addition to event marketing. Chip also suggested that City Council and their spouses be personally invited to events such as the Gallery Walk, to the OTBA breakfast, etc.

Ricky Thompson announced that she has a male massage therapist in addition to a therapist who massages females.

Kathleen Reilly announced the winner of the 50/50 was Tim Fitzwater of Public Works and won \$38.

The meeting adjourned about 9:40 am.