

OTBA Meeting April 13, 2016 at City Tavern Grill

The meeting was called to order at 8:45 am by President, Joanne Wunderly. There were 23 members present. City council members present were Jon Way, Ian Lovejoy and Sheryl Bass.

March minutes were approved by Jean Harrover and seconded by Ann Hempen.

Treasurers' Report - Nury Mena reported that at present we have \$5,988.26 in our treasury. Nury thanked those businesses who have sent in their annual dues and reminded those present that dues are due now.

Brief Announcements - Joanne mentioned in her opening remarks that the annual Sidewalk Sale will be held on April 16 and encouraged shops and service businesses to participate. Also on that day will be the Wellness Festival from 9 - 2 pm at the Harris Pavilion. OTBA will try and partner with Historic manassas for a Media Blitz at the Welcome Center on Interstate 66. On April 25, Mayor Hal Parrish will make a proclamation of the importance of small businesses to our city. The ceremony will be held in Council Chambers at 7:15 on that day.

Historic Manassas (HMI) - Christina Smith from HMI announced that in addition to the seasonal opening of the Farmers' Market on Thursdays and Saturdays, the upcoming Wellness Festival April 16th, the 2nd Annual Bridal Show on the Museum Lawn on April 24th, and the Spring Gallery Walk on Friday, May 6th (First Friday in May). It will be the largest Gallery Walk we have had. HMI has partnered with the Prince William Arts Council and the Center for the Arts at the Candy Factory. In addition to the participating artists and performance art, there will be sculptures placed throughout Old Town.

Manassas Museum - Doug Horhorta mentioned several events at the museum. Upcoming in May (the 7th) will be a car show devoted to Mustang cars. On May 14th at noon there will be belly dancing at the museum! The Shimmy Mob is hosting a fun raising event.

August 26 - 28 will be the Civil War Weekend with featured exhibits, a Civil War parade, speakers, Civil War Trail Tour of Historic Downtown Manassas, military demonstrations of artillery, cavalry and infantry presentations, ice cream social with music of the era, and live music and dances on Friday and Saturday evenings.

As the weather warms, Doug will also be conducting costumed walking tours as well as bike tours of downtown.

Center for the Arts at the Candy Factory - Beverly Hess announced that the CFA's recently held Gala on April 2nd was a success and was particularly pleased that many 'new to the Center' were in attendance. Rooftop Productions of ***Little Shop of Horrors*** Friday and Saturday performances have been well received and several performances have been sold out. Last day to see this well loved gem is April 23rd. The Pied Piper Theater production of ***Mary Poppins*** will be held at the Hylton Performing Arts Center May 7 & 8th.

Harris Pavilion - no report but the season is fully booked with events.

Welcome Center on 66 - Kathleen Riley had travel booklets on the Garden Club of Virginia Historic Garden Week April 23 - 30th. Every area of the state has gardens open

for this glorious week. For information in case you didn't snag a book, go to www.vagardenweek.org.

Hylton Performing Arts Center - Carol DeVany announced that the 2016 - 2107 brochures are out and the upcoming season is diverse - everything from Chinese Acrobats to Chamber Music. A children's favorite, **Clifford the Big Red Dog** will be at the Hylton on April 30th. There are tickets still available for the 6th Annual Hylton Gala this year to be held on April 23

Discover Prince William - no report

Restaurant Alliance - no report, but comments from HMI that all went well with both the St. Patrick's Day Parade and Restaurant Week.

Police Department - Officer T. Hylton alerted us to on going scams - most recent one - The IRS scam. He assured us that if there are problems, the IRS **will not telephone you** and ask for personal information. You will be notified by letter. There is also a similar scam involving threats to terminate utilities. Under no circumstances, do you need to wire money or give personal information over the phone.

Marc Hempen (Manassas Junction Bed & Breakfast) added that vacation scams are popping up again. Again, wiring money to anyone not personally known by you is a sure way to get scammed.

Fire and Rescue - Brett Bowman said that we might see the new members of the Emergency Services doing their physical training in Old Town as they get in condition for their jobs. Brett also announced that CPR training to business owners, their employees and interested citizens is available from the department.

Manassas City Government - Patty Prince said that there are 60+ banners around town chosen from entries from all over the metro area. There has been much positive feedback from this effort, now in its second year. Brochures listing the locations of all banners and the artist's statement about their banner will be available from HMI before the Gallery Walk.

Nicole Smith announced that there will be a Business Appreciation Breakfast at the Center for the Arts at the Candy Factory on May 11th. The city also has business newsletter published on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. You can sign up online at www.manassascity.org.

Round Table Discussion on Social Media - Elizabeth Bailey (Bedrock Yoga) led a lively discussion on the merits of social media as it relates to our businesses. As with anything, the more you put into it, the more you will get out of it. Posting frequently, liking other posts and sharing on Facebook will increase your reach. Posting pictures or creating small videos for your page can be a real plus. However, make sure that the pictures you post are not only appropriate, but also your own. Posting pictures that someone else has taken can result in an expensive penalty from companies that own those pictures. Patty Prince (City of Manassas) said that the city has over 4,000 images that can be used for free.

The discussion pointed to the need for a more intense and involved workshop on this subject with a date, place and time to be announced.

What's New in Your Business?

Ann Hempen announced that an application has been made to add a cottage to *Manassas Junction Bed and Breakfast* so that they may be able to host more guests.

Jim Bolt of *Edward Jones Financial Investments* announced an Estate Planning Seminar to be held at Pierce Funeral Home on Tuesday, April 19th at 6:30 pm. There is no cost to attend and Jim stressed that the information at this seminar would be beneficial to all.

Elizabeth Bailey of *Bedrock Yoga* announced a new to yoga special - three class pass for \$24.

The 50/50 drawing netted \$44 collected and the winning ticket worth \$22 was won by Brittany Bowman of HMI.

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 am.