

OTBA Meeting November 9, 2016 at City Tavern Grill

The meeting was called to order at 8:45 am by President, Joanne Wunderly. There were 32 members present. City council member Ian Lovejoy was present and congratulated on his re-election bid for council.

October minutes were not approved as they had never been put on line. Shavonda Turner took the minutes for Jan Alten at that meeting and in the time since, has moved her business to her home. We will vote on the October and November minutes at our next regularly scheduled meeting in February.

Joanne addressed a concern expressed by Debbie Haight of HMI that OTBA had not followed our By-Laws at our August meeting and selected a nominating chairman to secure candidates for the election of officers at our October meeting. Joanne apologized for the oversight, stating that she simply forgot that this was the election year cycle. She has now appointed a Nomination Chairman who will seek candidates to run. A list of interested candidates for officers will be sent to the membership via e-mail and voting for officers will either be at our regularly scheduled February or March meetings (the second Wednesday of the month). Our next meeting is our January social/thank you meeting on January 25.

Treasurers' Report - Nury Mena was not present. We have \$9,290 in our treasury.

Brief Announcements - Joanne noted that much has happened in OTBA recently. Our September meeting featured six candidates for School Board positions, our October meeting featured the candidates running for City Council, the annual Haunted Happening co-hosted by OTBA and HMI saw more than 450 costumed children with their parents in the streets and shops of Old Town (we ran out of candy....again!), and the semi-annual Fall Gallery Walk was held the first Friday in November.

Historic Manassas (HMI) - Britany Bowman from HMI announced:

Saturday, November 26th is Shop Small Business, a program from American Express
December 2 is the Tree Lighting from 5 - 8

December 3 is the Annual Christmas parade beginning at 10 am

December 4 is the Merchants' Open House

December 4, 11 & 18 there will be free horse drawn carriage rides in Old town

Chocolate bars are going well and some locals have already re-supplied. The winning tickets will get to ride in the Christmas Parade in a horse drawn carriage.

Debbie Haight alerted us to changes for the ever popular Santa train. On November 21, tickets will go on sale at the Visitors Center at the train depot in Manassas. There will be two trains originating in Manassas and two trains originating at the Broad run VRE lots.

Debbie also noted that you may be getting emails from Huterra - a fun raising entity for non profits. The winner will receive \$5,000 and the winning participating customer will win a \$500 gift basket from businesses in Old Town. Debbie also stated that this year, in addition to the Gingerbread House contest, there is a Wreath contest. She urged all

businesses to put a decorated wreath on their door and participate. Entries in both contest will be judged.

Banner Art applications are on line.

Debbie reminded us about the Welcome Center Blitz that will take place at the Welcome Center on 66 all year long in an effort to promote Old Town. Contact HMI to be put on the schedule to exhibit, paint, or tell your story at the center.

Manassas Museum - Doug Horhorta mentioned several upcoming events: The Annual Veterans' Day Parade will be on Saturday, November 12, there is a display of flags on the Museum Lawn by the Bull Run Rotary, the exhibit, "Manassas Remembers 9/11" is closing in a week, opening after the close of that exhibit will be "Not for Glory" local veterans and their stories of Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Doug also had copies of a newly published quarterly newsletter for OTBA members and an invitation to join the Friends of Manassas Museum in the upcoming membership drive.

Center for the Arts at the Candy Factory - Beverly Hess announced that the CFA's Pied Piper Theater's production of "Oliver" had a great run at Metz Middle School. The weekend after Thanksgiving Day, "A Christmas Carol" will open and with additional performances added. Be sure to get your tickets early as this production has been a sell out!

The CFA will host a ever popular Model Train Show the first weekend in December in the third floor of the Center.

The Artisan Trail, a cooperative effort to promote arts of every kind in Prince William, Fauquier and Stafford Counties is gaining momentum and all who create - music, art, cooking, potables, dance, etc. are invited to participate. Contact the CFA for more information.

Harris Pavilion - no report but if the weather cooperates, ice should be made soon and the skating rink open for the season.

Welcome Center on 66 - Kiley Wonn said that this month at the center, museums are being featured.

Hylton Performing Arts Center - Jackie Conner announced that this week is full of events for and by veterans. Thursday, November 10 is an exhibit opening of Veterans; Art and reception beginning at 6 pm. On Friday, form 10 - 3 will feature bands, performances, hands on activities for Veterans and families. The Shanghai Acrobats will perform at the Hylton on Saturday night and on Sunday, Sarah Holt, Mandolin Player of the Year, will perform in the Gregory Theater.

If you need a push for the holidays, the Hylton schedule is full of Holiday Happiness Inducing performances that will surely get you in the holiday spirit and mood!

Discover Prince William - no report

Restaurant Alliance - no report.

Police Department - Officer Bill Hutchenson clarified some concerns about pedestrian safety that had been brought to the Police Department:

If a pedestrian has a foot in the crosswalk, cars are supposed to yield to the pedestrian. Motorcycle patrols have been in Old town and given a few tickets for this violation of Virginia law. The law also states “that a pedestrian must utilize the marked crosswalk if available”. This means that if you cross in the middle of the block, you could be cited for jaywalking and given a ticket for \$40. Standing at the curb, not in the crosswalk, and waiting for traffic to stop is not going to work. Be brave - step out!

Joanne related an incident whereas her store was unintentionally and mistakenly remained unlocked overnight and into the morning hours. A customer wandered in and was alarmed and notified Joanne’s neighboring businesses in an attempt to get in touch with her. The police were called. All ended well, but it brought up a need for ALL business owners to call the **703-257-8500 non emergency** Police number to check and see if your emergency notification information is up to date. At the very least, the Police should have your name, business name, home phone, cell phone. Check your contact info today!

Fire and Rescue - Chief Robert Clemons introduced newly appointed Deputy Chief, Todd Lupton to OTBA members. Chief Clemons also announced that seven recruits will graduate on Monday in a ceremony at City Hall.

Manassas City Government -Patrick Small announced that the first site at the Gateway Project should begin on or around December 1st at a cost of \$6M.

The Facade and Landscaping Grants have been awarded to Okra’s, Zandra’s, Shining Sol and Calico Jack’s for assistance in improving the appearance of their facades or signage. Monies are still available if one wants a face life for their business.

Patrick also opened the long on-going discussion of whether or not all businesses should be open on Mondays and later in the evening. There are complaints from potential customers that there isn’t enough open in Old town to come here. With the holidays approaching, please reconsider your hours. It will be a good trial run and might bring more business your way!

Elizabeth Bailey of *Bedrock Yoga* reported that Mondays are her busiest days and students often lament the lack of options after a class. Shining Sol reports that Mondays are also their number one day for business.

Definitely something to consider.

Doug Waldron, Commissioner of Revenue, went over 2nd quarter results with the membership. A big surprise was the diminished revenue from the restaurants. This is usually an area that is quite strong. It was remembered that we had an unusually long, cooler than normal Spring and these figures reflected that.

What’s New in Your Business?

Beverly Hess said that there would be 11 shows of “A Christmas Carol” and that for Old Town businesses, if you are open, let her know. Advertising in their program might bring some of those attending the performance into your business.

Pat Small noted that former City Treasurer, Robin Williams, has been named Woman of the Year. Robin recently retired after many years of service to the city.

Roy Cunningham said that he is open on Mondays and does see customers.

Anne Hempen said that patrons of the *Manassas Junction Bed and Breakfast* also have voiced disappointment that there isn't "more to do and see" on Mondays. Anne also noted that a newly almost finished bungalow cottage on the property will add more visitors to Manassas when finished.

Jim Bolt of *Edward Jones Financial Investments* announced a seminar on "Protecting your Retirement" will be held at the Jukebox Diner on November 18th. It is a free educational service offered by Jim

Elizabeth Bailey of *Bedrock Yoga* announced that the studio will be moving to a larger space above the *Social Butterfly* in January.

Patti Prince said that she is creating a video to play at the Welcome Center and that if anyone wants to add shots of their business or activities in their business to contact her.

Michael Whitlock, an ambassador with the Chamber of Commerce is working with the chamber to bring more exposure of the Old Town businesses to the public. The 50/50 drawing netted \$30 collected and the Jan Alten held the winning ticket. She donated it back to OTBA.

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 am.

REMEMBER!!!!!!

THERE IS NO MEETING IN DECEMBER

**OUR NEXT GET TOGETHER WILL BE JANUARY 25TH, 2017!!
IT IS OUR ANNUAL SOCIAL AND THANK YOU BREAKFAST MEETING**

WE FOLLOW THE CITY OF MANASSAS SCHOOL SNOW CLOSING