



In this issue:

- 2018 Ball Information
- Thank you to our Sponsors
- Parade HotSpot
- 2017-2018 Board Elections
- Upcoming Events

Krewe Holds Annual Meeting

On Monday, March 20, the Krewe of Omega held its Annual Meeting at the Hammond Police Union Hall. Members and their guests were excited to see each other and to catch up since it was the first time that many had seen each other since the Krewe's Mardi Gras parade on Friday, February 17.

Once everyone had gathered, Board President Ricky Howes led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance in front of the flag that the Krewe donated to the Hall last July. Mr. Howes and Captain Joyce Smith welcomed all guests and asked the new members and returning members to stand up for special acknowledgment from the Krewe.

The Krewe announced that the 2017 ball at Le Fleur de Lis Reception Hall in Ponchatoula was such a success that the Krewe is already planning its 2018 ball there, too. Attendees also enjoyed the music of the Domino's, so we will be inviting them back for next year, too. This year, the ball sold out, so, mark January 20, 2018 on your calendars for Omega's thirty-second ball. (We are recommending that people purchase their tickets early next year—don't worry, I'll give you several reminders!)

Captain Joyce invited Omega Queen XXXI Cathy Roberts to the front of the room so that the Krewe could acknowledge their 2016-2017 sponsors to whom the Krewe gave plaques. Omega member Ken Ross accepted a plaque on behalf of his firm Seale & Ross. The Krewe also acknowledged sponsors Gearon Insurance and Berryland Campers.

We are very grateful to First Guaranty Bank (FGB) for being a long-time sponsor. Each year, FGB has sponsored a buffet breakfast for the Krewe at the Kentwood branch on the morning of Omega's annual Trek. FGB also sponsors individual members and the Chamber After Hours. For the first time this year, FGB also sponsored a Deluxe Hotspot which includes a table at the ball and a set of bleachers in front of the Chamber for the parade. The bleachers seat fifty people, and there is also a "Porta Potty" and security guard provided with them. Tarez Arceneaux Cowsar accepted a plaque from the Krewe of Omega on behalf of FGB.

The Krewe also gave a plaque and a huge thank you to Blackened Brew owner Anthony Donze who came to the front to accept his plaque from the Captain and Queen. Mr. Donze was the Krewe's first ever "Hotspot" sponsor. As such, his business name and logo were on Omega's promotional materials and, on the night of the parade, Krewe members had been told to throw extra beads, trinkets, and the Krewe's signature plush Aligravs to paradegoers watching from Blackened Brew.

Mr. Donze said that he "had a great night" with a "packed house" because the word had spread that Blackened Brew was a Hotspot. His only fear was that a few windows in the front of his restaurant would be broken from the massive amount of throws that float members threw as the float rolled past Blackened Brew. Mr. Donze elaborated that he "loved being a part of it and would love to be a part of it again next year." In exchange for his sponsorship, the Krewe will also host an Omega Night at the Blackened Brew on Tuesday, April 25. Members and their friends will meet to eat, drink, and socialize. Krewe members are excited to go and support Mr. Donze and to thank him and the Blackened Brew for being such a wonderful sponsor this year.

As the meeting continued, Treasurer Vicky Theriot, gave a treasury report and declared that, despite the rainy parade night, the Krewe had a good year. Board member Linda Ross gave a report on t-shirt orders for the Krewe (and said that Krewe hoodies are also now available!)

One of the purposes of the Annual Meeting is to elect new Board Members. This year, three positions were open. Cathy Roberts and Leslie McKnight were each elected to a second term, and the Krewe is excited to welcome Sandra Cashe to the Board to fill the third position.

As the votes were being tallied, long-time member Ann Dwelle stood up and formally announced that she and her husband Bill are going to be moving to Arkansas this Spring after Ann retires from Springfield Elementary. They are moving to be closer to their grandchildren and family, but Ann said that she and Bill will maintain their membership in the Krewe of Omega and plan to come to Hammond for Krewe events. She elaborated that they hope to have a whole float of out of town members for next year's parade!

Captain Joyce again invited the new members to stand up for a round of applause because, as she said, "we are so proud to have [them]." The Captain also recognized the Board of Directors, the Float Lieutenants, and member Jo Troiani for putting together the Krewe's monthly newsletter. Before the meeting started, members had a chance to purchase raffle tickets for a 50/50 raffle. The Krewe collected \$200.00, and, later in the evening, Leslie McKnight won \$100.00.

Of course, an Omega event is never complete without food. The Smith, Billiot, and McKnight floats provided the food which consisted of at least six different kinds of red beans and rice and several different types of corn breads (including a bacon and jalapeno one!) There were also several different desserts available.

For the rest of the evening, Krewe members visited with each other. Although Carnival season is over, the Krewe is already busy planning upcoming events including Omega Night at Blackened Brew, a float in the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival parade, and a bi-annual litter abatement community service project along Omega's Adopted Road (Highway 51 in Ponchatoula near exit 23).