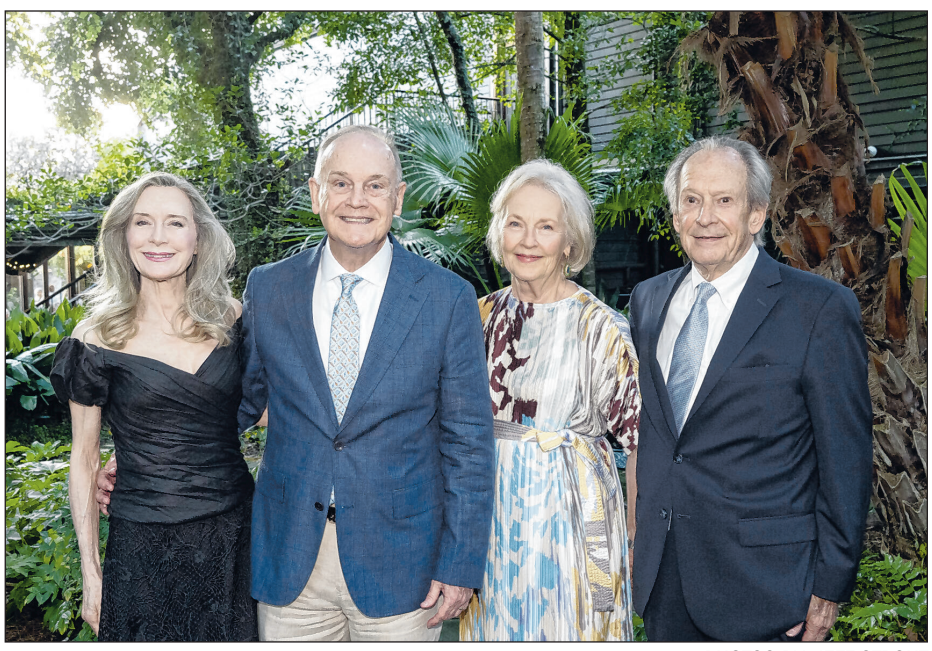
Nell Nolan SOCIETY



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TABLE TABLEAUX



PHOTOS BY JEFF STROUT

Carli and Frank Tessier, Weesie and Craig Ripley

Garden District Ado



Shaun and Katie Rafferty

Two score was the anniversary rally when the Garden District Association held its 40th annual Fall Affair at Commander's Palace, beginning with the one-hour Benefactor Reception in the patio and then moving on to cocktails in the same location and dinner within. The event co-chairs were **Louise "Weesie" and Craig Ripley** and **Carli and Frank Tessier.** Appreciation flowed their way.

Special thanks tapped the hosting force at Commander's, **Dottie Brennan, Lally Brennan and Ti Martin** – the latter two were in attendance and greeted their neighbors; executive chef **Meg Bickford**, who prepared the dinner menu of blue crab, mirliton and sweet potato velouté, Café Pierre painted Texas quail, and, for dessert, Mississippi Blueberry Buckle (along with wines from the Burgundy and Côtes-du-Rhone regions of France); and Joe Simon Jazz for the musical menu. **Katie Rafferty** designed the attractive invitation, program and door hanger. As for the floral embellishment, yellow roses and hydrangeas were artfully arranged by pameladennis (**Pamela "Pam" Georges**), whose shop is in The Rink, a block from Commander's.

The ranks were filled with benefactors, almost 200 in number, who relished the camaraderie and cuisine. Noted were GDA president **Andy Braun** with spouse **Joy,** immediate past president **Andrea Bland** (also, chair of the Profiles in Preservation program) and **David**, board secretary **Isabel and Moye Sanders**, and board members **Ronn Babin** with **Peter Jolet, Taylor Pospisil** with **Martin**, and **Julia Lennox** with **Rick Rizzo**. Julia co-chairs GDA's Joueurs de Jardin garden club.



Joy and Andy Braun, Chef Meg Bickford



Lally Brennan, David and Andrea Bland

Others were **Tina and Deryk Jones**, who host the annual GDA Halloween family party, as well as **Shaun Rafferty** with Katie, **Jenny and Robbert Vorhoff, Caroline Black and Louie Lamendola, Katherine and Tony Gelderman, Jane and Henry Casselli, Kathleen and Patrick Dennis, Michele Reynoir** (a dinner co-chair of last year), **Ann and Jim Geary, Olivia Manning, Lauren and George Brower**, and GDA executive director **Shelley Landrieu** with husband **David Spielman**. To mention a very few of those turned out to support the Garden District Association, which was founded in 1939. Socializing then came into the picture and made it a felicitous one at that.



PHOTOS BY JEFF STROUT

Donna Barnett, Walter Isaacson, Alon Shaya, Claire Jecklin

A Plate-d Date



Rebecca Sha, Augie Gallo, Missy Hopson

Billed "A Future on Every Plate – A Fundraiser to Benefit the New Orleans Career Center," the Saba-located event was packed to the hilt. Reflective of owner **Alon Shaya**'s roots in Israeli cuisine was the restaurant's décor of crisp blue and white features. At Saba's entrance, NOCC banners showed images of young people, whose lives would benefit from funds raised by the event. Ochsner Health was a major supporter; Fortune Fish & Gourmet, generous donors; and Mystic Vine and Vino, beverage sponsors. Many other sponsors rated gratitude.



Dana Peterson, Gary Sernovitz



Robert Senior, Rick Rizzo

Significant names were abundant, but, as one principal stated, "the real stars of 'Future on Every Plate' were NOCC alumni **Terrell Albert, Kennedy Dixon, Rashad Thornton, Ariel Toregano, Kearries Cooper** and **Warren Smith**," who impressed and touched attendees with their career journeys. Current Culinary Arts trainees **Kylah Ramirez** and **Jaydin Conway** related what they were learning and the skills they were developing.

Host and celebrity chef Alon Shaya, who was joined by spouse **Emily,** greeted guests, telling them how culinary instructor and mentor **Donna Barnett**, co-founder of the Shaya-Barnett Foundation, directed and inspired his career. Shaya then urged guests to further support the work of NOCC with a matching funds program. Listening attentively were **Gary Sernovitz, Cathy and Walter Isaacson, Rick Rizzo and Julia Lennox, Augie and Mirell Gallo, Missy Hopson, Rebecca Sha, Emily Wolff, Mark and Emily Nijoka, Katie and Christian Rodriguez, Robert and Logan Senior, Dana and Karen Carter Peterson, Ashley and Tim Francis**, state Rep. **Alonzo Knox, Cleveland and Rubi Spears**, and **Ben and Jordan Payton.**

After cocktails, and one named Dionysus Revival, NOCC attendees relished the menu that commenced with eight selections (including blue crab hummus) for the first course; five for the second; and a dessert finale of vanilla bean panna cotta. Raves capped the gustatory peregrination.



Sam and Sara Ford



Lane Washburn, Jordan Nixon

A Blind Taste

Yet another sold-out event, WRBH: A Blind Taste, filled La Petite Grocery Restaurant & Bar to benefit the 88.3 FM Reading Radio station for the blind and print handicapped. Welcoming cocktails filled the first time slot, followed a half-hour later by dinner and the live auction. Eight major sponsors, including individuals **Lane Washburn** and **Katie and Christian Rodriguez,** furthered the cause. Additionally, there were three dozen auction donors.



PHOTOS BY KENNY MARTINEZ

Jeff and Caroline Good, Jenny Lyons-Dash, Harmon Dash

The dining room, which is handsomely outfitted with cinnabar-colored draperies, received floral accents via the centerpieces of single white roses, greenery, and mint springs in Mason jars provided by La Petite Grocery. At the back of each chair was a royal blue apron; at the place settings, which had gold cutlery, an eye mask figured prominently. Aligned with the mission of WRBH, guests were asked to wear the masks while they ate.

Passed appetizers preceded the four-course dinner of beef carpaccio, tempura-fried mushroom, pan-roasted striped bass, and white chocolate pumpkin semifreddo. Cathead Distillery and Nola Wine Merchant were recognized for the drinks.

At 7 p.m., past board president **Charles Smith** greeted the diners with a welcome, an introduction of WRBH Executive Director **Zach Frosch**, and multiple thanks to La Petite Grocery's owners, chef **Justin Devillier**



Ben and Alexis Wicker, Brandon Benedetto

and spouse **Mia Devillier** (also **Freiberger-Devillier**). Smith then spearheaded the live auction, which had as top bidders above Lane Washburn and **Jordan Nixon, Peggy Demarest, Terri and Clinton Terry, Harmon Dash and Jenny Lyons-Dash, Graham Williams and Mason Kay,** and **Emery and Will Kirkikis.** A silent auction added more to the coffers.

From WRBH came board president **Sam Ford and Sara Guruswamy**, Zach Frosh and wife **Candace** (of Cathead Distillery) and board members **Brandon Benedetto** with **Lacey, Benjamin Wicker** with **Alexis,** Dr. **Lena Al-Dujaili,** and **Jim Nelson** with **Claudia.** Also, the Rodriguezes, Dr. **David and Tiffany Kennedy**, Drs. **Mallika Doss and Priya Sahu**, and **Michael and Amanda Calvo.** All for the "Taste" tribute.