

SoBoImCo

South Baltimore Improvement Committee • May 2006



PUPPY LOVE

By Lori Hardesty

Through word of mouth and a network of connected neighbors, Strummer, a Lab/Shepherd Mix, officially entered our home and our hearts as a 9-week-old puppy in April 2004.

Owning a dog, especially in the City, forces you to be social because you have to get out at least twice a day to walk them. Strummer loved meeting everyone on our walks - and his *favorite* people are our next-door neighbors! We had lived on our block for almost 2 years when we had gotten him, but some neighbors asked if we'd just moved there because some hadn't really seen us out and about. We met so many new people at the parks and in the neighborhood and coordinated play dates.

Proud parents, we attended puppy class at the SPCA on Falls Road, and talked with other dog owners regarding our frustrations and successes. After 6 months, Strummer was old enough for obedience training. Making sure that we

as parents were both on the same page was more than half the challenge.

Strummer also *loves* kids, who are often excited to see him, and interacting with animals can be a great way to teach youth empathy, responsibility, and self-confidence. How many of us had a pet in the classroom when we were in school? Students (and their parents) took turns feeding it, cleaning the cage, bringing it home during vacation, etc. These are lessons that we were learning, unbeknownst to us at the time. Some of us may have also had the wonderful opportunity to grow up in a home with animals. The impact of such exposure to other living creatures, be it a bird, hamster, cat, or dog, can decrease the violence demonstrated towards others. Animal cruelty can potentially be an indicator of youth heading down a dangerous path.

Does that mean that everyone

(Continued on page 5)

GET OUT!

Flower Mart

Friday, May 5th—Sat, May 6th
Mt. Vernon Place.

Federal Hill Spring Block Party Sunday, May 7th

11:00a.m.—7:00p.m.

East Cross Street, South Side of the
Cross Street Market

Ring in Spring with ten live bands
on two stages. \$3 Admission. See
page 6 for info.

Maryland Film Festival May 11-14

Multiple Venues

The largest annual gathering of
filmmakers on the East Coast fea-
tures unparalleled screenings and
filmmaker events. Call 410-752-
8083 or visit www.mdfilmfest.com
for more info.

Preakness Celebration Parade Saturday, May 13th

MLK Blvd and Eutaw St.

Pee Wee Preakness

Tuesday, May 16th
11:30a.m.

Federal Hill Park

Miller Lite Nites

Wednesday, May 17th thru
Friday, May 19th
11:00p.m.

Power Plant Live!

3 nights of free live music, featuring
Mr. Greengenes, Puddle of Mud &
Faded Image. No cover. Must be
21+ to enter.

REMINDER:

City offices will be closed on Monday, May
29th.

COMMUNITY MEETING

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, May 2nd, 2006

7:30 p.m. at Olive Branch

United Methodist Church

(corner of Charles & Fort Ave. S.)

Special Elections
for President & Treasurer
&

Guest Speaker:
Samuel Daniels, Jr.
Chief Liquor Inspector

RECYCLING DAYS

Paper recycling is the 2nd & 4th
Fridays, May 12th & 26th



Bottles, Cans & Jars
are the 2nd & 4th
Mondays, May 8th & 22nd
All recycling collected streetside



SoBoImCo

SoBoImCo is a monthly production of the South Baltimore Improvement Committee, Inc. whose mission is "to encourage, through regular meetings, the formal exchange of ideas; to work with local law enforcement in promoting safety; and to assist individuals and families in the continuing process of neighborhood renewal." We welcome articles, ads and photo submissions via mail or email:

South Baltimore Improvement Committee

P.O. Box 6364
Baltimore, MD 21230
eastenddesign@att.net

We reserve the right to edit or reject submissions. Articles represent the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of SoBoImCo. We believe all sources of information are reliable, however, we do not guarantee completeness or accuracy.

Membership

Residents of South Baltimore are encouraged to become members of SBIC. Just contact an SBIC officer for more information.

Meetings

Community meetings of SBIC are usually held on the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the Olive Branch United Methodist Church located at the corner of Charles Street and Fort Avenue.

Website

www.soboimco.org

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Lori Hardesty, Acting President

Hello, South Baltimore!

SPRING IS HERE! We've had wonderful weather the last few weeks, the days are longer, and the O's are in season! There's just something exciting about this time of year! Spring is definitely in the air!

This kind of beautiful weather also gets us all out and about. A bike ride to Fort McHenry, helping out with a neighborhood clean up, a walk down to the Inner Harbor, gardening, going out for dinner in the neighborhood with friends, or having some people over to do some grilling out back – just some of the activities that you're likely already busy with.

Newly appointed Social Chair Ugur Erickson is eager to coordinate some fun events within our neighborhood. She's currently *already* working with The Bicycle for an event in June, a great way to showcase their great food.

The first of the Historic Federal Hill Main Street Festivals is almost here! The Spring Block Party will be held on Sunday, May 7th, will be held on the south side of the Cross Street Market. If anyone is interested in volunteering to help out, contact volunteers@historicfederalhill.org. There have historically been great perks to serving as a volunteer for these events.

So this month, challenge yourself to do something different, help out, and have a great time in the process! If you don't already, get to know your neighbors, participate in various committee activities (such as Youth Council, COP Walks, clean ups, etc.), or simply get outside in your community! Take a chance! You'll never know what fun, learning, or opportunity awaits!

SANITATION & BEAUTIFICATION

By Amy Mutch

Between the April showers and dedicated volunteers who pick up trash from our streets/sidewalks we're LOOKIN' GOOD. The Mayor's Spring Sweep resulted in filling two dump truck loads of bulk trash.

A big thanks to Home Depot who donated 50 pairs of gloves to help with Spring cleaning. Come to the May meeting or clean up and receive a free pair. We appreciate all levels of involvement in keeping South Baltimore tidy. Recycling was discussed at the April meeting with Dale Thompson, Assistant Chief of Environmental Services. 20 years is the life span of our current landfill. Recycling extends the life of the landfill, provides the city with economic resources, and is environmentally responsible. Please make the effort to think globally and act locally. The schedule is always printed on the front page of the newsletter.

The sitting park at Light and Heath needs some loving attention. This appeal goes out to anyone living in the vicinity who can help with weeding/watering/planting flowers. Call Amy Mutch if you have any interest in getting involved.

The May dumpster will be located at W. Fort and S. Charles Streets on Saturday, May 13th. As always, we will have an organized effort to clean some needy areas. The early birds are out by 8am but feel free to join in anytime before 12noon.

I'd like to thank all my neighbors who planted flower bulbs. South Baltimore was delightful in April with the tulips and daffodils blooming around trees and in flower boxes. You gave us a jump start and now the annuals are being planted all over the neighborhood!

LOTS HAPPENINGS AT THE LIGHT STREET BRANCH LIBRARY

FAMILY READING CIRCLE

Mondays in May (1, 8, 15 & 22) & June (3 & 12), 6 pm

Bring your family & join us for a six-week series of book discussions. Read & discuss books over dinner! Books & dinner are provided. For children ages 9-15, accompanied by a parent or adult caregiver. Registration is required. Call 410-396-1096 to register.

PAJAMA STORYTIME

Mondays in May, 7 pm

Ages 3-5. Enjoy books, fingerplays and songs before bedtime. Registration required.

FRIENDS OF THE LIGHT STREET BRANCH BOOKSALE

Monday, May 1, 12-7:30 pm

Thursday, May 4, 12-7:30 pm

Saturday, May 6, 10 am – 2 pm

Stop by and purchase gently used books & videos. Support your local library!

SWING TIME/LIVE MUSIC

Thursday, May 4, 6 pm

Come listen to the sweet and mellow sounds of well-known, local group, the Baltimore Jazz Trio, led by Mr. John Alexander.

STITCHING B'S

First & Third Saturdays in May (6 and 20), 11 am

Socialize and knit or stitch with fellow needlework enthusiasts. This program is gaining in popularity and is a guaranteed good time.

A FLOWER FOR MOM

Thursday, May 11, 3:30 pm

Ages 5-12. April showers bring May flowers! Make a flower surprise for your mom for Mother's Day.

ELLA BAILEY REC CENTER ART EXHIBIT

Thursday, May 11, 7 pm

Those talented teens and tweens from South Baltimore have done it again! Join us as we celebrate the unveiling of their latest art creation. Everyone is welcome.

FRIENDS OF THE LIGHT STREET BRANCH

Thursday, May 11, 6:15 pm

Be a part of your community library. Join the Light Street Friends. Meetings take place on the second Thursday of each month.

POWER TOOLS FOR WOMEN

Thursday, May 18, 6:30 pm

Management Consultant, Joni Daniels, will present a workshop filled with humor teaching women how to be personally & professionally more effective and efficient at work and at home. Whether you are reentering the job market or striving to achieve your goals, this program is for you! Copies of her book will be available for purchase.

PROPOSAL WRITING AND BUDGETING BASICS

Monday, May 22, 6:30 pm

Are you new to proposal writing? This workshop will give an introductory overview of proposal writing for nonprofits. The discussion will include the key components of a proposal to a foundation or corporation, how to package the proposal, and what should be included in the budget.

Call 410-396-1096 to register for all programs

SBIC COMMITTEE CONTACTS

President

OPEN

Design Review Committee

Steve Zaleskiwicz
410.752.1799
sjz300@verizon.net

Vice President

Lori Hardesty
—Acting President
410.727.1169
lleonard@umbc.edu

Newsletter Editor

Julie Tice—Interim
410.547.7467
eastenddesign@att.net

Secretary

Marimargaret Reichert
410.244.7060
marimargaret@verizon.net

Police/Community Relations

Sharron McCulloch
410.659.5159
smcculloch@osiristx.com

Treasurer

OPEN

Sanitation & Beautification

Amy and Patrick Mutch
410.468.0118
amyemutch@yahoo.com

Grants & Fundraising

OPEN

Social Committee

Ugur Erickson
410.576.1020
uerickson@comcast.net

Parking

Cheryl Davenport

Youth Council

Marie Sennett
410.837.1132
msennett@believiewireless.net

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

By Steve Zaleskiwicz

During the Mayor's Clean Up April 22, I noticed that a lot of the houses under-going rehab had yards full of left over building materials, such as drywall, kitchen cabinet boxes, siding, broken concrete, tile, cement bags and many other items. This is RAT HEAVEN. The Design Review committee would like to remind our neighbors that this disrespect of our neighborhood should not be tolerated. City Inspectors consider a clean work site is part of the building process.

If you know of a problem property, neighbors should first try to make contact with the builder/investors of these properties to get them to clean up their work site. If this fails, I urge everyone to call 311 and make a report of the problem. Please get a confirmation number from the operator so that there can be a follow up if necessary.

This is our community and it is a great place to live and I encourage all builders, contractors and subcontractors to help us keep it that way.

POLICE/COMMUNITY RELATIONS

By Sharron McCulloch

COP Frequently asked Questions

Q: What is COP?

A: COP stands for Citizens on Patrol.

Q: What does COP do?

A: COP deters crimes of opportunity by reporting items that criminals consider attractive, such as vacant homes, dark alleys, etc. to Baltimore's 311 system and to the police who walk with the group.

Q: Who participates in COP?

A: Citizens and police from throughout the Southern District. All resident participants are volunteers.

Q: Where is the Southern District?

A: The Southern District is 1 of 9 districts in Baltimore City. The Southern District's boundaries are roughly Baltimore and Pratt Streets to the Inner Harbor to the north, the Patapsco River to the east, Anne Arundel County to the south and southwest, and Pulaski Street to the west. The Southern District is home to approximately 61,000 residents.

Q: How long are the walks?

A: Not more than one hour and 30 minutes in length. But you can come and go as it is convenient for you.

Q: Where do you walk?

A: In any neighborhood that requests a patrol. It's up to each individual neighborhood to determine where in their area they would like the walkers to go.

Q: Is COP safe?

A: YES. No one has ever been targeted for participating in a walk. If you are uncomfortable walking in your neighborhood for fear of reprisal, than simply walk in another neighborhood where you are not known. Also, we ALWAYS walk with the police.

Q: How can I/my community get involved?

A: email Shannon Sullivan at copsouthern@yahoo.com or Sharron McCulloch at sharron_mcculloch@yahoo.com.

Q: What is the Southern District Police Community Relations Council?

A: A non-profit organization designed to improve communication and understanding between the police department and residents. The Council holds meetings the 3rd Thursday of every month at 7:00 pm at the Southern District Police Station, 10 Cherry Hill Road.

C.O.P. WALKS

Are you worried about crime in the neighborhood? You can change things by getting together with neighbors who share your worries. Anyone and everyone can take the most basic actions, like reporting suspicious behavior or crimes in progress to the police. Whatever the contribution of time, energy, talent, and resources you can make, small or large, it will help! Citizens on Patrol (COP) is just one way you can help in making our streets smarter and safer. Take a stand and help protect your neighborhood!

Monday, May 1st at 7pm -

CHERRY HILL

Meet at the Cherry Hill Town Center, Cherry Hill and Terra Firma Rds.

Thursday, May 4th at 8pm -

FEDERAL HILL SOUTH

Meet at Porter's Pub, corner of Cross St. & Riverside Ave.

Tuesday, May 9th at 7pm -

RIVERSIDE/SBIC

Meet at the Riverside Park gazebo; 400 blk of Randall St.

Wednesday, May 10th at 7pm -

OTTERBEIN/SHARP-LEADENHALL

Meet at the corner of Sharp St. & Henrietta

Monday, May 15th at 7pm -

CHERRY HILL

Meet at the 3400 block of Round Rd.

Tuesday, May 16th at 7pm -

CARROLLTON RIDGE

Meet at the Samuel F.B. Morse Rec Center, Pulaski and Ashton Streets

Thursday, May 25th at 7pm -

BROOKLYN

Meet at old Wendy's parking lot; 600 blk Patapsco Ave.

Please visit the Southern District Police Community Relations Council website for the latest COP scheduled updates (www.sdpcrc.org), or call Sharron McCulloch at 410-659-5159.

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TAXATION & REPRESENTATION

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For your information, the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) is the agency that assesses the value of your property and enforces the property tax laws of Maryland. Counties and cities, including Baltimore City, issue property tax bills during the July/August timeframe. Your bill is based on 1) the assessed value of your property and 2) the property tax rate. If the property is your principal residence and there was no substantial change in the use or condition of the property, the assessed value on which your taxes are based may be capped, on a yearly basis, because of the HOMESTEAD TAX CREDIT. Baltimore City's cap is currently 4%. The cap on the State's portion of your property tax assessment is 10%. These caps help to mitigate the immediate impact of large assessment increases.

The City's property tax rate is subject to yearly review and debate. The CONSTANT YIELD TAX RATE LAW was passed by the State to help keep property taxes from rising as property assessments rise. Each year,

prior to February 15th, the State notifies all of the taxing Counties and municipalities of the property tax rate that would produce the same revenue as the year before. Baltimore's Constant Yield Tax Rate (CYTR) for the fiscal year starting 1 July 2006 is \$2.224/per \$100 of assessed value. If the City proposes a tax rate that is in excess of the CYTR, State law requires that a public hearing be held and that this meeting be widely and prominently advertised. The Mayor and the City Council President have proposed a tax rate for 2007 of \$2.288 (which is \$.02 below last year's tax rate). Per a representative of the City Council, a public meeting to address the CYTR has not yet been scheduled, but it will most likely be held in the early May timeframe. An announcement will be prominently displayed in the "Maryland" section of "The Baltimore Sun" and in other periodicals.

While individuals and community representatives will have an opportunity to speak at the CYTR meeting in May, you do not have to wait to make

your views on the subject known. The City Council Taxation and Finance Committee has the power to influence the tax rate. The Committee has two members whose names are familiar to us: Keiffer Mitchell, who is the chairman, and Edward Reisinger. If you are concerned about how property taxes are affecting your standard of living and your ability to remain in your neighborhood or move within Baltimore City, then write, e-mail or phone Keiffer Mitchell and Edward Reisinger. Ask them to take action on your behalf. Ask them to return the FY 2006 budget surplus to you in the form of a lower tax rate.

For more information on property tax matters, see "A Homeowner's Guide to Property Taxes and Assessments" published by the Maryland SDAT. It can be found on the web at <http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/hog.html>. You may also contact the local SDAT office at 301 West Preston Street, Baltimore, 21201-2395, telephone 410-767-1184; toll free 888-246-5941.

(Puppy Love, Continued from page 1)

should go out and get their kids animals? Of course not! If the time is *not* right, there can be creative ways to give youth exposure to animals, such as going to the zoo, the 4-H Club, or various county fairs. One can also bring their children by Lucky Lucy's Canine Café to meet Strummer, and/or stop by the what's now become weekly BARCS "Meet & Greets," on Saturdays from 12- 2 p.m.

This also applies to us as adults: I'd waited *for years* to get my own dog! I truly am an animal-lover! Before Strummer, I had several ways to get my "dog fix." There were a number of factors that played into my decision-making and the length of time it took to take the plunge:

1) Make sure you can afford this new member to your home. If undecided between cats and dogs, cats are typically cheaper. If already you're having trouble paying bills, pet ownership might not be the best for you now. It might be tempting, but think ahead!

2) It is an absolute lifestyle adjust-

ment! If you enjoy frequent traveling, staying out overnight, or working late hours that you are rarely home, dog ownership will be a challenge – consider getting a cat.

3) You must ALWAYS pick up the poop! You learn fast to keep extra plastic bags on you in all places, just in case! Get used to this aspect quick because if this makes you gag and you can't do it, then dog ownership is not for you!

4) If you are thinking about owning a dog, try dog-sitting for your friends who have one, perhaps the next time that they go out of town. Perhaps you foster one through Recycled Love, run by Sally Jennings, or Strummer's alma mater, the Humane Society of Calvert County.

It's a *huge* decision, so you want to make sure it's the right one...but oh, it's been so amazing! We're in the process now of coordinating a reunion with all of Strummer's siblings and his mom, perhaps at Lucky Lucy's or at HSCC – the adventures never stop!

BEAT THE BGE RATE HIKE!

BGE is currently giving away Energy Saving Kits that include energy saving shower heads, light bulbs, weather stripping, tape and something for your electrical outlets. Right now they are free but will be \$5 after the promotion.

You can call and order one at 410.685-0123. Wait for the first prompt and hit 1, then 2 and then 7. When someone answers tell them you want to request an Energy Saving Kit.

IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

SPRING BLOCK PARTY

Sunday, May 7th, 11am to 7pm

Cross Street on the south side of the Market

\$3 Admission

Festival season is upon us! Get ready for the Spring Block Party! This is the street festival that kicks off the festival season in Baltimore. The party will take place along the south side of the Cross Street Market in the heart of Federal Hill. And that's what it is, a party! Ten bands will play on two stages throughout the day as we celebrate the coming of Spring. (Once again, out of care and concern for our canine friends, dogs will not be allowed at the Spring Block Party.) For more details as the date approaches, including a list of bands, check out our website at www.historicfederalhill.org.



SPRING IS HERE — VOLUNTEER

Be a part of the excitement and volunteer at a booth at the Spring Block Party on Sunday, May 7th. Pouring beer, selling tickets, greeting people at the door — they are all unique ways to enjoy the festival and meet your neighbors. You'll be helping Federal Hill Main Street help the neighborhood, and it's fun. To volunteer, contact volunteers@historicfederalhill.org or call 410-727-4500.

Federal Hill Main Street, Inc., an IRS Code 501(c)(3) nonprofit Maryland corporation, is one of the seven nonprofit urban revitalization programs created in Baltimore City in October of 2000. Modeled after the National Main Street program, (created by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1977), Federal Hill Main Street's purpose is to revitalize this urban business community in ways that will preserve its unique and historic character. It is a comprehensive, common-sense process that deals with problems and takes advantage of opportunities to stimulate and maintain economic development.

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HELP WANTED: NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTORS!

Are you familiar with the SBIC area? If not, are you interested in learning more? Did you deliver papers when you were younger? Have you more recently delivered newsletters for SBIC or a previous community association? Or maybe you just enjoy taking a stroll around the neighborhood?

SBIC is always looking for volunteers to help deliver our monthly newsletter to residents and local businesses. For less than an hour a month, you can help spread the word and stretch your legs!

We are also looking for people to assist with some "behind the scenes" efforts, including creating and coordinating distribution routes.

If this sounds interesting, please contact Lori Hardesty at lorel_207@hotmail.com.

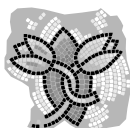
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A CIGAR FRIENDLY BAR

Sheba, kennel #3



Sheba, a short, lab mix, was found on 2/17 in a city park with a litter of puppies. Her puppies found homes, but she still is here after two months of waiting for a loving new family.

She is calm at 3 years old, loves to walk on leash, and knows sit and 'drop it' on command! Takes treats gently from your hands. She likes to

play with toys a bit and sniff other dogs -- but quickly loses interest and is content to lie by your feet.

Sheba does well at bath time and she especially loves leaning in to get towed off! She travels well in a car and is excited to meet all the new people and dogs and is polite once she got to sniff them and warms up to everyone she met. She does well with dog-savvy children.

Unfortunately she has had many litters of puppies leaving her with enlarged mammary glands from too many breast feedings. Most people have trouble overlooking Sheba's saggy belly and she needs someone special to love her despite her maternal-looking profile.

Peanut, kennel #103



This cute, little girl has all of the great kitty qualities. She is playful, curious and talkative. Peanut loves to give kisses and has lived with other cats. She is the type of cat who, with her tiny frame, will probably always look like a kitten.

The trouble with Peanut is that she is very understated and, in her kennel, she is quite and seemingly undemanding. However, if you go to her or talk to her she stands up, stretches and starts telling you her story, in the sweetest little voice.

Seeing that she is a young (1 year old) calico, it's amazing that she has been at BARCS since February 1st!

Come by so she can tell you her tale!

To learn how to adopt these orphans, stop by BARCS at 301 Stockholm St (near Ravens Stadium), phone 410-396-4688 or visit BaltimoreAnimalShelter.org



ADOPTION MEET & GREET!!!

Stop by Lucky Lucy's Canine Café at 1126 S. Charles St. from 12-2 PM on Saturdays throughout May to meet an adoptable dog from BARCS like those featured above. Call Lucky Lucy's for more info: (410) 837-2121

PLAY BALL!

Upcoming home games for May are as follows:

May 1—2 vs. Toronto
May 9—11 vs. Detroit
May 12—14 vs. Kansas City
May 15—17 vs. Boston
May 30—June 1 vs. Tampa Bay
June 2—4 vs. New York Yankees

Please be mindful of the stadium event restrictions for Area A and Area 30 parking.

THIRD THURSDAY

The Southern District Police Community Relations Council meets the third Thursday of every month. It is a non-profit organization designed to improve communication and understanding between the police department and residents. This month's meeting is scheduled for May 18th, 2006 at 7:00 PM at the Southern District Police Station, 10 Cherry Hill Road.

Agenda:

The Southern District Update with Major Eric Jordan & Deputy Major Michael McDonald

Guest Moderator:

Jim Isenberg, from the North American Family Institute with our District Planning Session III.

Board of Directors election:

You must be a paid member to vote.

Buffet:

Provided by Carrollton Ridge Community Association



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BRIAN K. McHALE
ECONOMIC MATTERS

Annapolis Office

310 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-841-3319

Baltimore Office

801 Light Street, 2ND Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21230
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Annapolis
410-841-3772

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To Our Neighbors