

SoBoImCo

A publication of SBIC—the South Baltimore Neighborhood Association



March 2009

A Call for Creative Submissions

Let your voice be heard by thousands of your neighbors — the neighborhood association wants to hear from you. Forward your opinion columns, article ideas, book, concert, restaurant, or movie review, favorite recipe, home improvement/repair advice, or even an issue you think needs to be addressed by our public officials.

Forward your submissions to larry.wargo@soboimco.org by April 15, 2009.

The Parking Spot

By Debbie Alt

Just a few notes here pertaining to Parking in Areas A and 30:

As of February 9th, the RPP office has run out of Area 30 decals and will be filling requests for decals with gray placards that are the same size as a visitor's pass. They should be displayed on the driver's side front dash.

Baltimore City has depleted its supply of metal needed to manufacture new parking signs. Therefore all Area A blocks that have been approved for the switch to Area 30 will have their current signs updated to Area 30 using stickers supplied by the Parking Authority. You will be notified when your signs are changed. Remember that it is your responsibility to secure Area 30 decals (placards) and visitor passes.

Please contact Debbie or Cynthia with any questions.

Community Meeting

General Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

The next General Meeting will be
Tuesday, March 2nd, 2009
at 7:00 p.m.

at Olive Branch UMC
(corner of S. Charles St. & Fort Ave.)

Recycling Days

All paper, cans, glass, and numbers 1-7 plastics shall be collected on the 2nd & 4th Fridays, February 13th & 27th.



All recycling collected streetside

What's Inside...

♦ Police/community relations update and neighborhood safety tips...

♦ A fun event at Riverside Stage...

♦ Design review and update on local development projects...

♦ February general meeting notes (for those of you who missed it)...

♦ A Silent Auction is Coming to the Neighborhood...

♦ March will be busy at the Light Street Library...

♦ The Green Pages!

♦ Keeping your pets healthy...

We want to hear from you!
Send your newsletter ideas
and submissions to:
larry.wargo@soboimco.org.



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 7:00 p.m. at the Olive Branch United Methodist Church located at the corner of Charles Street and Fort Avenue.

Website

www.soboimco.org

Police/Community Relations

By Ashley Cichowicz

Welcome the new Sergeant! Sergeant John Kowalczyk is certainly not a new face in the Baltimore City Police Department but he is now our new Southern District Neighborhood Services Sergeant. Before joining the BPD he was a Fire Fighter and Medic in Connecticut for five years. Sergeant Kowalczyk began his career with the BPD on foot in the Eastern District. He was then assigned to the South-Eastern where his assignments included Patrol, Operations, Vice and Neighborhood Services. After being promoted to Sergeant in 2007 he was assigned to the Southern District Midnight Shift and finally after over a year in Patrol he has been assigned to The Neighborhood Services Unit for the Southern District. Sergeant Kowalczyk brings a wealth of knowledge to the table including, but not limited to, his Vice expertise as well as being a National Highway Transportation Administration Instructor for the Standardized Field Sobriety Tests, more commonly known as DUI Instructor. Please join me in welcoming him to the Neighborhood Services Unit. I have the utmost confidence that the Neighborhood Services Unit will soon be a model for other Communities to follow!

BE AWARE, BE ALERT AND DON'T BE A VICTIM!

While overall reported crime in the SOBO grid is down compared to last year, there has been a significant spike in Robberies. Robberies for December and January of 2008 were at ZERO. For December and January of 2009 there have been SEVEN. This is cause for great concern! The majority of these robberies are being committed with firearms and force. The potential for someone to be seriously injured or killed during the course of one of these cowardly acts is very possible. These criminals are nervous, quick tempered and choose easy targets. The following are a few ways to reduce risk and protect yourself. They have been compiled with the help of BCPD, FBI and ATF.

- Avoid as much as possible, being alone on foot at night or in isolated places, even during the day
- Make brief but confident eye contact with other pedestrians. This shows you are aware of them as well as your surroundings.
- If out at night, stay in well lit public places.
- Walk briskly with your head up and don't distract yourself by wearing headphones or talking on your cell phone.
- Upon entering your car LOCK THE DOORS! Don't hesitate to use your horn loudly if you sense danger.
- Trust your instincts! If someone seems to be following you, making you uncomfortable or if a situation "just doesn't feel right", get out of the area, get help and get among other people!
- Practice being conscious of who is in your proximity and of a place to quickly go in the event of an emergency.

BE AWARE, BE ALERT AND DON'T BE A VICTIM!

SBIC Committee Contacts

President

Julie Tice
410.547.7467

President@soboimco.org

Vice President

Greg Blake

VicePresident@soboimco.org

Secretary

Joe Costa
410.539.1902

Secretary@soboimco.org

Treasurer

Dennis Plouff
410.385.9969

Treasurer@soboimco.org

Clean & Green

Marianne Armstrong
443.622.5141

Marianne.Armstrong@soboimco.org

Newsletter Editor/Business Liaison

Larry Wargo
215.205.2845

Larry.Wargo@soboimco.org

Social

Christine Simeone
443.629.8375

Christine.Simeone@soboimco.org

Design Review

Steve Zaleskiwicz
443.790.4520

Steve@soboimco.org

Parking & Traffic

Debbie Alt
410.576.1017

Debbie.Alt@soboimco.org

Youth Committee

Marie Sennett
410.837.1132

Marie.Sennett@soboimco.org

Liquor License Advisory

Tom Jones
410.528.1358

Tom.Jones@soboimco.org

Police/Community Relations

Ashley Cichowicz
410.949.4990

Ashley.Cichowicz@soboimco.org

Other Contacts:

Area 30 RPP Representative

Cynthia Griffin
410.446.5686

area30parking@gmail.com

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or just listen to a fabulous concert of big band hits

Swing ^{in to} Spring



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Food~Prizes
Merrymaking



Saturday, March 21 ~ Admission \$10
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Riverside Stage

MusicalArtistsTheatre.com ~ 1530 Battery Ave, Baltimore 21230 ~ 410-837-0971



Prudential
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PCR Home Services

835 E. Fort Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21230

Office 443.627.2910

HARBORVIEW-1242 Harbor Island Walk \$619,000 Luxury Townhouse w/incredible Harbor Views, 4 Story Solid maple flrs, roof deck. **Steve Murphy 443.627.2910**

DUNDALK-1905 Tolson Ave. \$179,000 All Brick Home w/large yard, 2 Rehabbed Full BA's, Brand new windows, driveway w/detached garage. **Chris Reda 443.627.2915**

GWYNN OAK-1800 Colonial Rd. \$384,900 3BR, 2.5BA Home sits on spacious corner lot, LR w/wd stove, Sunrm, LL rec. rm., 2 tiered deck. **Janel Burroughs 443.627.2916**

THORNLEIGH-8327 Cambridge Cir. \$449,900 Gleaming Hardwood flrs on main lvl, kitchen w/newer appliances, Large LL family room. **Janel Burroughs 443.627.2916**

CAMDEN CROSSING-404 Scott St. \$329,900 Beautiful Rehabbed 4BR, 3.5BA w/ parking pad and finished basement. **Josh Cornett 443.627.2961**

CANTON-510 S. Ellwood Ave. \$259,900 2BR, 1.5BA w/Brazilian cherry hwd flrs, amazing kitchen w/granite, breakfast rm. **Steven Murphy 443.627.2910**

BUTCHER'S HILL-2008 Pratt St. \$499,000 Bright & Spacious renovated home, huge master suite, 5 gas fireplaces, & roof deck w/amazing views. **Kim Smith 410.925.5354**

PIERSIDE AT HARBORVIEW-23 Pierside Dr. #316 175,000 Water view largest 1BR, 1BA w/all the amenities of resort living & 1car parking. **Kathy Stone 443.415.6287**

FEDERAL HILL-1613 Marshall St. \$284,900 Fully Renovated 2BR, 1.5BA Home w/ oversized 2 car parking pad, large LR & more. **Steven Murphy 443.627.2910**

PATTERSON PARK-133 Kenwood Ave. \$229,900 Original hardwood floors, Master BA w/Jacuzzi Tub. Patio & fenced back yard. **Patty Kallmyer 410.562.6815**

HAMPDEN-823 33rd St. \$309,000 Fully renovated 3BR, 2.5BA, Entire 3rd level is MBR, Multi decks & new front covered porch. **Keith Lambert 443.416.5043**

LOCUST POINT-1326 Decatur St. \$419,000 3 Bedrooms possible 4th on Main Level, 4 parking spaces, skyline views, Roof Top & large Deck. **Chris Reda 443.627.2915**

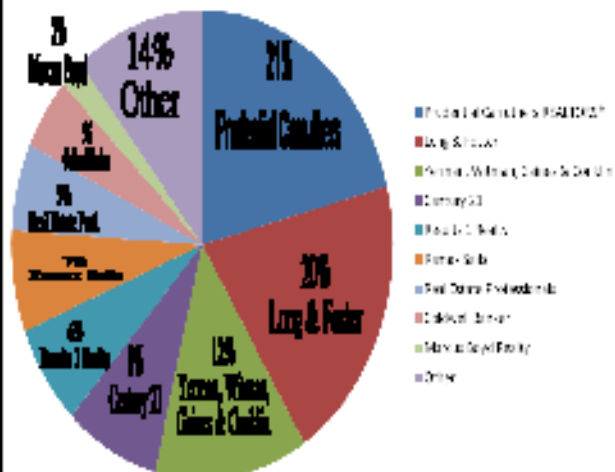
FEDERALHILL-1400 Webster St. \$399,900 3BR, 3Full 2Half BA EOG home w/parking unbelievable water views, 3 decks and more! **Steven Murphy 443.627.2910**

FEDERAL HILL-37 E. Henrietta St. \$299,900 Beautiful 3 Story, 2BR, 1.5BA historic home, sunlight galore, 2nd flr deck & fenced brick patio. **Steven Murphy 443.627.2910**

WINDSON HILLS-4028 Fairfax Rd. \$49,500 New kit. has been installed w/SS appl., bring your imagination & fin. what had been started. **Martin Prosper 443.804.9575**

CATONSVILLE-2 Moss View Ct. 425,000 Great 3BR, 3.5BA on corner lot, 1st floor freshly painted, just minutes to major commuter routes. **Jan Schaefer 443.762.3311**

Real Estate Market Share In 21230



Total Units Sold 01/01/08-12/31/08

REAL ESTATE CLASSES NOW FORMING

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Design Review

By Steve Zaleskiwicz

111 W. Heath St.- This project was approved for 29 apartments with parking and is now offered up for sale. Unable to get any information from selling agents at this time. I will report when information becomes available.

1201 S. Charles St.- Mr. Adam Smolen at our January meeting proposed to erect a Boutique Hotel with 93 rooms and no on site parking at this site. The overall height of this building at roof top level would be 85Ft. this is 35ft. taller then any building in the neighborhood. This will be 50ft. taller then any residential property in the area. Those impacted the most by this height will be the home owners in the surrounding area. The height of the building is the main contention of this project.

I urge everyone that lives in the surrounding area of 1201 S. Charles St., the intersection of S. Charles & West St. to be vigil of any posting of public hearings for this project. There maybe a sign posted in the near future concerning a Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) hearing for this project. The sign must have the date, time and location of the hearing and be posted 10 days prior to the hearing. BMZA hearings are held in Room 215, City Hall, 100 N. Holiday Street on alternate Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. Every citizen has the right to voice their opinions at these hearings. If you have concerns about this project this is a must hearing to be present and be heard.

1452 Light St.- This project looks like it just stalled. Unable to get return call from owner posted on permit, I will keep trying to get information and report on it.

1500 S. Hanover St.- Know as the Vine will soon have a new name and operator when construction is completed. Brian McComas, owner of Ryleigh's stated that there will be a great menu and that Chef Patrick Morrow will be in charge. New name will be Avery's Pearl. The transfer of the Liquor License is currently being sought. This sounds like it will be a great place to dine.

1901 S. Charles St.- This project was approved for 188 apartments with parking. Scott Benjamin one of the owners informed me that there was issues with CSX and everything has been resolved and that they look for demo work to begin in early spring.

In a Minute

By Joe Costa

Steve Zaleskiwicz's 70th birthday was celebrated with cake and ice cream. Amy Mutch briefly outlined Steve's background growing-up and living in Baltimore and his extensive contribution of time and service to the community.

Vice President—Greg Blake, a Charles Street resident, was put forth as a candidate for vice president of the association. He was duly elected by a general membership vote.

Michael Dannenberg of the Baltimore City Department of Social Services gave a presentation in support of foster care and adoption services. The State hopes to have 1,000 new foster care/adoption homes in operation in Maryland by 2010, with 600 of those in the city. The city provides weekly presentations, every Tuesday at 1910 N Broadway on foster care and adoption. There is an 8 week process for gaining approval to become a foster parent. If a person is approved for foster care, they are also approved to be an adoptive parent. The State provides stipends to foster parents, and does so in some cases for adoptive parents.

Ian Hines of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods reported on: the City budget; Be Fit Baltimore about physical fitness awareness; a form for entering the contest to name the city's coming free shuttle service; and Neighborhood Concerns: A Recipe for Success a flier with information for dealing with community issues. The proposed new trash collection process being considered by the city. He said that this would be a dramatic overhaul to the existing system intended to improve the quality and effectiveness of service, while also saving money. Meeting attendees provided feedback, regarding the effectiveness of the proposed changes and contingencies that should be considered in finalizing the new trash collection procedures. Providing trash cans has been tried before, but not all residents have an easy place to store the bigger trash bins. Elderly folks will have difficulty dealing with large trash bins as well. Quality of enforcement hearings on the proposed changes to trash collection will be open to the public.

Announcements—Amy Mutch announced the coming Federal Hill Main Street sponsored event "Festivals" to be held on March 14 at the Museum of Industry. Food, drink and entertainment will be provided. Tickets purchased beforehand from Amy (they will be available at the March GM meeting) or on the main street web site are \$60. They are \$75 at the door of the event.

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Federal Hill Preparatory School (#45)
1040 William Street

PTO Silent Auction
Saturday, May 2, 2009
1-4 PM



Silent Auction to Benefit Local School

On Saturday May 2, 2009, the Parent Teacher Organization of Federal Hill Preparatory School (otherwise known affectionately as "School #45") will be hosting its annual Silent Auction. FHPS is a public pre-kindergarten through 8th grade school in the heart of the Federal Hill neighborhood at 1040 William Street. Many local families are proud to be a part of the FHPS community.

When asked about the PTO and the purpose of this fundraising event, Hugh Bethell, PTO President states, "The PTO exists for the benefit of the students. We are parents, teachers, and neighbors who believe in the mission of public education, and are committed to supporting and extending the efforts of the teachers and staff entrusted with that mission. We raise funds for field trips, assemblies, landscaping, sports equipment, and a host of other "extras" that help make the school a better place to learn."

The Silent Auction will run from 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm on the afternoon of May 2, culminating with a Live Auction for some of the most sought after items at

3:45pm. According to Andrea Sommer, Silent Auction chairperson, many fabulous items are available for bid, including a wine tasting for ten at a local vineyard, a private sailing cruise, sports tickets and great items from favorite local establishments. "Bring your game face," she recommends. "Bidding can get quite heated for the popular items!"

The Silent Auction is also an afternoon of fun for the whole family, with activities for the kids, and information about the school displayed in the School's front lobby for those parents that may want to learn a bit more about a local public school option. "The kids LOVE the Mother's Day Room," remarks Maria Filardi, parent of two FHPS students. "They really get a kick out of shopping by themselves for a 50 cent gift for mom or grandma. My kids have shopped at the Mother's Day Room since they were 2 years old!"

So mark your calendars: May 2nd, 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm, Federal Hill Preparatory School, 1040 William Street. FHPS invites all its neighbors to come support a local public school and help MAKE IT HAPPEN!



BOOMER'S
on the hill

We would like to invite you to **Boomer's on the Hill** at 1749 Belt Street, a neighborhood bar. Come and meet your neighbor in our pleasant surroundings. We have upgraded everything with you in mind.

Bring this coupon in for a free bottled beer, rail drink or Miller Lite draft.

- ♦ We are the only bar with Nintendo Wii for you to play, come bowl, play golf or be a guitar hero, all on a large screen.
- ♦ You will find a wonderful selection of beers on tap, served at 36 degrees.
- ♦ Great Happy hour prices on Friday includes \$2 Miller Lite pints

Lots Happening at the Enoch Pratt Light Street Library!

MOTHER GOOSE ON THE LOOSE

Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

For children up to the age of three with their caregivers. An interactive nursery rhyme program with music and movement.

PRESCHOOL STORYTIME

Wednesdays, 11 a.m.

Ages 3-5. Stories, songs, and fun for preschoolers.

ARTS & CRAFTS

Monday, March 2, 4 p.m.

Ages 12-17. Teens create fun and exciting crafts.

SMALL BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

Tuesday, March 3, 12 p.m.

Unemployed? Looking to start your own business? Come discover how to finance your dream of becoming your own boss. Presented by Naomi Hafter, Pratt Library's Business Center.

LADIES' NIGHT OUT! Thursday, March 5! Refreshments will be served.

YOGA, NUTRITION, AND MEDITATION FOR "FLASHY" FEMALES

Thursday, March 5, 6 p.m.

Learn how to cope with mid-life issues through yoga, nutrition, and meditation. Renee Conway will demonstrate these tools and give an introductory yoga lesson. Come dressed to participate, if you wish.

WRITERS LIVE!

Thursday, March 5, 7 p.m.

Dr. Janet Horn will discuss her book, *The Smart Woman's Guide to Midlife and Beyond*, a no nonsense approach to staying healthy after 50.

CAREER MOVES

Presented by Rebecca Sullivan, Pratt Job & Career Information Center Manager. Registration required. Call 410-396-1096 to register.

JOB SEARCHING & NETWORKING STRATEGIES

Monday, March 9, 2-3:30 p.m.

Need a job fast? Learn about networking and the hidden job market.

RESUME 101

Monday, March 16, 2-3:30 p.m.

Learn how to create a resume that will get results!

INTERVIEWING BASICS

Monday, March 23, 2-3:30 p.m.

Going on a job interview soon? Learn how to ace the interview and ask great questions.

FRIENDS OF THE LIGHT STREET BRANCH

Monday, March 9, 6:15 p.m.

Everyone is welcome to join the Light Street Friends!

PIRATES, THIEVES & SCALLYWAGS

Monday, March 9, 6:30 p.m.

Scott Conway, a retired captain, discusses his encounters with characters on the high seas.

PRESS PLAY

Tuesday, March 10, 3 p.m.

For teens. Impress your friends and show off your gaming skills with Wii and board games.

HIP HOP, MODERN AND CLASSICAL DANCE

Wednesday, March 11, 4 p.m.

Ages 12-17. Teens learn the latest moves and steps from professional dancers.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY AND S.S.I. WORKSHOP

Thursday, March 12, 6:30 p.m.

Attorney Arthur M. Rubenstein will provide insight about applying for Social Security disability benefits.

SHAMROCK SHINDIG

Thursday, March 19, 7 p.m.

Live music by violinist Andrea Snyder to put an Irish jig in your step.

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Saturday, March 21, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Explore different art forms and learn to make original artwork using a variety of materials. Presented by Sandy Anderson.

READ ME

Tuesday, March 24, 4 p.m.

Teen forum to discuss book themes relating to everyday life.

CIRCUS! CIRCUS!

Thursday, March 26, 4 p.m.

Ages 6-12. Big top activities and a showing of *Calder's Circus*, a performance of the miniature circus created by Alexander Calder.

LIGHT STREET BRANCH BOOK CLUB

Thursday, March 26, 6:45 p.m.

An opportunity for adults to choose and discuss notable fiction and nonfiction reading selections.

STITCH-N-KNIT

Saturday, March 28, 11 a.m.

Calling all needle enthusiasts! Do you knit, crochet or cross-stitch? Come meet new people, trade tips and techniques.

ASTHMA CLASSES FOR PARENTS

Monday, March 30, 6:30 p.m.

Learn more about asthma, attacks, medication and helpful resources.

Local Green Events in March

Thurs, Mar 12th TRANSFORMING BLIGHTED URBAN SPACES – with Ben Nathanson of Community Greens; at St Francis Neighborhood Center, 2405 Linden Ave, 6:30pm. Third in this series, Ben Nathanson expertly provides tips and answers questions about how to transform your neighborhood and create beautiful, useable spaces.

Sat, Mar 14th CARRIE'S GARDENING TIPS: for March – with Carrie Engel; at Valley View Farms, 11305 York Rd, 10am. Spring is almost here!! That means it's time for planting early vegetables, cutting back some perennials and shrubs, general garden cleanup and early lawn tasks. Special guest Rick Hardie from Espoma will explain plants' nutritional needs in the garden.

Sat, Mar 14th VOLUNTEER: 2nd Saturday Projects – with Jones Falls Watershed Association; 9-12pm. Join the JFWA for a family-friendly restoration project in a city or county park. Call the JFWA for more info at 410-366-3036.

Tues, Mar 17th RAIN BARREL: Construction Workshop – with Parks & People Foundation; at 800 Wyman Park Dr, Suite 010, 6-8pm. Save water while adding an interesting and useful element to your yard or garden! Come construct your own rain barrel! All materials, instructions, and assistance will be provided. Cost is \$60. Please RSVP to Sabrina at (410) 448-5663x1111 or sabrina.hudson@parksandpeople.org.

Thurs, Mar 19th RAIN BARREL RODEO– with Ashley Traut of Herring Run Watershed Association; at Herring Run Park at Hall Spring, 6-7:30pm. Learn how rain barrels can save you money and also save our streams. Then build your very own barrel! Barrels cost \$40 for HRWA members and \$60 for non-members. Entrance to the park is on Harford Rd. *immediately* south of Argonne Dr.

Thurs, Mar 19th PRESENTATION: What We Are Finding In Maryland Homes – at Irvine Nature Center, 11201 Garrison Forest Rd, 7-8:30pm. Solving for comfort and improving air quality also controls energy bills. Come find out some of the most common issues and solutions, and learn practical approaches. This presentation is \$6 for Irvine members and \$10 for non-members. Please register by calling Courtney Sagal at 443-738-9224.

Sat, Mar 21st GROW LETTUCE IN A TABLE: Salad Table Construction Workshop – with Chrissa Carlson of Cooperative Extension; at Cardinal Shehan School, 5407 Lock Raven Blvd, 10-12pm. Learn about this school garden and then help build salad tables and trays for Baltimore City senior centers. You might even be able to build a salad tray to take home. Materials provided.

Wed, Mar 25th ADOPT-A-STREAM – with Ashley Traut of Herring Run Watershed Association; at Herring Run Watershed Center, 3545 Belair, 6-7pm.

Learn about the challenges faced by the watershed and how we can help City and County agencies protect and improve our local streams through regular monitoring.

Sat, Mar 28th CGRN VOLUNTEER DAY – at Whitelock Garden, 900 Whitelock St, 10-12pm. Come join us for a work day in one of our member gardens! Volunteer Days are open to every one of all ages. All tools and materials provided. Contact Sarah at (410) 448-5663x114 if your garden would like to host a volunteer work day!

Sun, Mar 29th GREAT SEEDING SHUFFLE – with Herring Run Watershed Association; at Herring Run Nursery in Mt Pleasant Golf Course, 6131 Hillen, 10-2pm. Help pot 4,000 seedlings for future greening projects around Baltimore. Learn proper planting techniques, enjoy some complimentary refreshments, and take home a free seedling!



The Maryland House of Delegates

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
410-244-8404

Brian_McHale@house.state.md.us



The Maryland House of Delegates

46TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

PETER A. HAMMEN

Annapolis Office

161 Lowe House Office Bldg.
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-841-3772

District Office

821 S. Grundy Street
Baltimore, MD 21224
410-342-3142

peter_hammen@house.state.md.us



EDWARD L. REISINGER

Tenth District
Baltimore City Council

Room 504, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
Phone: (410) 396-4822
Fax: (410) 545-7353

Email: ereisinger@baltimorecitycouncil.com



Clean and Green

By Marianne Armstrong

As many of you know, the City has announced that changes will be implemented to improve its trash and recycling collection programs. Celeste Amato, the Director for the Initiative for a Cleaner Greener Baltimore, or another representative from the Office of the Mayor will be present at our March General Meeting to discuss these changes in detail and address any concerns you may have. Please plan to attend. A summary of the information presented and any Q&A will be available to you if you cannot make it to the meeting.

For now, a summary of the proposed changes is as follows:

Operational changes include revising routes in a more rational way utilizing natural boundaries for greater efficiency and beginning collection at 6am, as opposed to 7am. All pick-ups will be scheduled between Tuesday and Friday – there will be no Monday pick-ups, but Saturday “make-up” collection days will be scheduled in the instance of a holiday. Operational changes are planned to be in effect on July 1st.

Changes involving the reduction of trash pick-up from twice to once weekly, and the increase in recycling pick-up from twice monthly to once weekly will require legislative approval. There will be a hearing in April which will be publicly announced.

As you have probably heard, it is proposed that City-owned 64-gallon trash bins be assigned to each residence. Because of the various types of residences in the City, this program will be established on a community-by-community basis. Personal and household preferences will not be honored, beyond choosing a smaller receptacle – 32-gallon trash bins will be available. For some neighborhoods, trash collection will continue as it is, although the program would become more stringent, and fines may be issued for trash disposed of in plastic bags, especially the night prior to trash collection. For communities or blocks to be waived out of the proposed changes, there must be no rear yard access, but front-of-house pick-up, so that the trash bin would physically have to be moved through the house.

As related to the can changes, the City would retrofit its current trucks to easily unload the garbage from the bin.

As a reminder, **NO TRASH** is to be stored outside in plastic garbage bags or placed outside in plastic bags on the night prior to trash collection. Anyone storing trash outside in anything other than a container with a tightly fitting lid will be subject to citation.

Looking forward --- Mark your calendar for the Mayor’s **Clean Up on Saturday, April 18th**, and give your block a nice spring cleaning! Bags, brooms, and other tools will be provided. Further details to be announced.



South Baltimore Pet Health

Thyroid Disease in Dogs and Cats

By Jill Shook, DVM, of CityPets Veterinary Care and Wellness

Thyroid disease is one of the most common endocrine diseases we see in our furry friends. The thyroid gland is located in the neck near the trachea ("windpipe"). The gland has two lobes, one on either side of the trachea. The thyroid gland produces thyroid hormone which regulates the body's metabolism. Thyroid hormone affects several different organ systems. Therefore, any abnormalities in the production of thyroid hormone can lead to many different symptoms.

Hypothyroidism occurs when the thyroid gland is not producing enough thyroid hormone. This syndrome is seen in dogs, typically middle aged to older. Symptoms include weight gain despite normal food intake, lethargy, reluctance to exercise, seeking areas of warmth, dull, dry and thinning hair, excessive shedding, high blood cholesterol and sometimes neurologic signs such as dragging feet and lack of coordination. Blood testing is required to diagnose hypothyroidism. Total Thyroxin level (TT4) is the most commonly used screening test. If the TT4 is low normal or below normal a second thyroid test called Free T4 by Equilibrium Dialysis is performed in order to make a definitive diagnosis. Hypothyroidism is treated by giving an oral form of replacement hormone. This treatment continues for the rest of the dog's life. Periodic blood testing is required to monitor the thyroid levels in the blood in order to make any necessary dose adjustments to the medication.

Hyperthyroidism occurs when the thyroid gland is producing too much thyroid hormone. This syndrome occurs in cats, typically middle aged or older. Clinical signs typically include weight loss despite an increased, even voracious, appetite, increased drinking, increased urination, vomiting, diarrhea, behavior changes, and unkempt haircoat. Hyperthyroidism often causes increased blood pressure and heart problems. Blood testing is required to diagnose hyperthyroidism. Blood chemistry, complete blood cell counts and urinalysis are used to assess the overall health of the cat. TT4 and Free T4 by ED levels are used to diagnose hyperthyroidism. If symptoms of heart disease are present chest x-rays, ECG and sometimes echocardiography are performed. Blood pressure is often measured as well. Different therapies are available to treat hyperthyroidism. Daily oral medication is available with periodic blood testing required to monitor thyroid levels. Radioactive Iodine therapy is another very effective treatment. It is given by injection and it destroys the abnormal thyroid tissue responsible for secreting too much thyroid hormone. This treatment is provided at veterinary hospitals licensed to administer radiation therapy. Surgical removal of the affected thyroid tissue is a third treatment option.

Treating thyroid disease in dogs and cats is typically very successful. Affected pets can live long, happy and healthy lives with regular visits to a veterinarian, periodic blood testing a dedicated pet owner willing to give medication on a regular basis.

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