



UNION SQUARE ASSOCIATION **BALTIMORE**

NEWS AND NOTES FROM AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD **FEB. 2016** WWW.UNIONSQUAREASSOCIATION.ORG



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Feb. Union Square Association Meeting

Monday, Feb. 1, 2015, 7pm – 9pm
1401 Hollins Avenue. All are welcome.

Agenda:

- Introductions of New Board Members
- Introduction of Committee Chairs
- Police Update
- Treasurer's Report
- Parks and People – New and Expanded Tree Well Project
- New Business
- Adjourn

AROUND THE SQUARE

By Bif Browning

The record setting snowfall we received during the blizzard has reminded me of what I admire most about our neighborhood. The first night with everything covered in a deep blanket of snow, reflecting an eerie white glow, you see the raw beauty of Union Square Park and the stark form of the houses against the grid of silent and motionless streets. The next day I awoke to the sounds of neighbors outside, covered from head to toe in multiple layers of clothing, working together to clear the sidewalks and dig out cars. There were families pulling children on sleds in the Park, neighbors building snowmen on the sidewalks, and old and new friends getting together to play games and socialize. These events are what make a neighborhood a community.

Despite the 29.8" of snow blanketing the area, more than 40 people came out from all over the neighborhood for Monday night's annual Union Square Association Board elections. The newly minted 2016 Board is Bif Browning – President, Khandra Sears – Vice President, Mary Sieling – Treasurer, Kathy Filosi Nelson – Corresponding Secretary, Homer Smith – Recording Secretary, Daniel Rodenburg – Historic Preservation, Dagmar Wehling – Development, Brenden Riggs – Annual Events, Jeff Thompson – Family/Physical Health, Gabe Auteri – Governance, Bernd Kiekebusch – Greening, Michael Johnson – Neighborhood Competition, and Sabriyah Hassan – Youth Programs. I want to thank the community for allowing us to represent you and to thank the Board members for volunteering their time to continue and expand the great work started by all those who have volunteered in the past. A special thanks to retiring 2015 Board members Brenden Jackson, Catherine Neely, Chris Martin, Sylva Lin, and Windy Blount for their time, service, and contributions to making this the amazing place we all call home.



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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Anyone can love a perfect place. Loving Baltimore takes some resilience." – Laura Lippman, New York Times Bestselling Author and Baltimore native

It is this spirit of community that drew me to Union Square initially, and why so many of you have been here for decades, and why we continue to attract wonderful new residents. I hope you are all enjoying the unique beauty of this historic weather event. We are looking forward to an exciting 2016!

UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVITY

The Union Square Association Newsletter and website is always looking for writers, photographers, cartoonists, and artists for upcoming editions. If you are interested in participating please respond to media@unionsquareassociation.org for more information.

FLOWER OF THE MONTH - THE CARNATION

By Catherine Neely

Carnations are native to the Mediterranean basin. The carnation's history dates back to ancient Greek and Roman times, when it was used in art and decor. The Latin name for carnation, dianthus, means "heavenly flower." or the flower of Jove. Christians believe that the first carnation bloomed on earth when Mary wept for Jesus as he carried his cross. Carnations have been cultivated for over 2,000 years.

The name carnation can be traced back to "coronation" or "corone" (flower garland), because it was one of the flowers used in ceremonial crowns worn by the ancient Greeks. Others think the name derived from either the Greek word "carnis" (flesh), referring to the original color of the flower, or "incarnacyon" (incarnation), a religious reference to the incarnation of God made flesh.

In France, carnations are grown commercially for their oil, which is used in skin creams, as a muscle relaxant, and for the treatment of hair loss. In Spain, the carnation is the primary flower used in many religious celebrations and national festivals. In addition, carnations have also been the official flower of Mother's Day since 1914.

Carnations in early times were predominantly found in shades of pale pink and peach, but over the years the palette of available colors has grown to include red (symbol of love and romance), yellow (during Victorian times symbolized disappointment with someone), white (innocent love and good luck), purple (capriciousness), and even green (health, resilience, good fortune and youth). Whatever your favorite color, enjoy this winter beauty!

SQUARE ROOTS: BALTIMORE SETS NATIONWIDE STANDARDS

By Daniel Rodenburg

In 1904, Baltimore suffered the third worst fire in the United States -- after Chicago's (1871) and San Francisco's (1906) -- when 140 acres and more than 1500 buildings over 70 blocks were destroyed. This fire burned for two days and prevailing winds spread it throughout the city as far east as the newly named Little Italy neighborhood and Howard Street, the Jones Falls stream, and down to the Inner Harbor piers off present day Pratt Street.

Fire fighters came from as far as New York City and Atlanta. One of the biggest problems with all the different crews and equipment converging in Baltimore, was that there was no national operational system in place, nor a unified equipment standard. Hoses were of different sizes and couplings could not be attached to hydrants. This contributed to the fire's extent and firefighters' difficulties, leaving many to watch helplessly as the city burned. As a result, the 1904 Baltimore fire brought about the creation of a city building code and national standards for all fire departments' procedures and equipment.

Even today, we are at greater risk for fires during the winter season.

Here are a few tips to observe:

1. Have qualified professionals clean & inspect chimneys and vents once a year.
2. Plug heat producing appliances, like space heaters, directly into electrical outlets. Do not use strips or splitters.
3. Keep heat producing appliances at least five feet from flammable items such as rugs, blankets or paper products.

For more tips, go to <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-249f.pdf>

INTERESTED IN ADVERTISING WITH US?

The Union Square Newsletter is will be running paid advertisements, starting in March, to offset costs and benefit community projects. If interested, please contact media@unionsquareassociation.org for rates. It's a great way to let people know about your company while supporting the neighborhood! Ask about our special rates for Union Square residents. Think about running a shout out for just \$10 an issue!

#CONNECTED IN THE SQUARE: SOCIAL MEDIA ETIQUETTE, PLEASE!

Social media is valuable in many ways. But like most technology, social media has been hoisted on our world with little or no instruction. So before communicating through Facebook or Instagram or Twitter or other social media, try asking yourself the following 12 questions before clicking post:

1. Should I target a specific audience with this message?
2. Will anyone really care about this content besides me?
3. Will I offend anyone with this content? If so, who? Does it matter?
4. Is this appropriate for a social portal, or would it best be communicated another way?
5. How many times have I already posted something today? (More than three can be excessive.)
6. Did I spell check?
7. Will I be okay with absolutely anyone seeing this?
8. Is this post too vague? Will everyone understand what I'm saying?
9. Am I using this as an emotional dumping ground? If so, why? Is a different outlet better for these purposes?
10. Am I using too many abbreviations in this post and starting to sound like a teenager?
11. Is this reactive communication or is it well thought-out?
12. Is this really something I want to share, or is it just me venting?

Run through these 12 questions in your mind *before* clicking post. Trust me—you'll be happy you double-checked before sharing with the world.



STREET BEAT: STEPPING UP PATROLS

By Catherine Neely

With an unusual increase in activity occurring in SOWEBO this past month, the Baltimore City Police have increased patrols in our area and apprehended several individuals in the last few days which seems to have broken the pattern of burglaries, according to Captain Sean Mahoney, Southern District.

The Community Coordinating Unit (CCU) has made a number of key arrests. This, along with the refocus of our Southern and Western district boundaries, as part of the newly named Tri-District team, is showing strong results. Major Brian Hance, Commander of the Southern District, reported his enthusiasm about the efforts of the Southwest Partnership and our continued goal to further address the concerns of the seven neighborhood needs with the newly formed Public Safety Committee. Meetings will be held the fourth Wednesday of every month at 7pm at the UMB Community Engagement Center at 1 N Poppleton Street.

As an added precaution, police suggest residents inventory their possessions by making a written and digital record of all valuables and their serial #s or distinguishing marks.

Please note: baltimorecitypolice.org has updated their site. You can now write incident reports which will update to police files within 48 hours. Please continue to be vigilant and, as always, if you see anything suspicious, call 911.

Remember to check the Union Square Association website for more information on events in the community. For information on Southwest Partnership Committee Meetings, please go to www.southwestpartnershipbaltimore.org

CULINARY ARCHITECTURE

By Chef Sylva Lyn



Winter weather and sever colds both call out for something hot and soothing. What could be better than a traditional Chicken Noodle Soup? Once the broth portion is complete and the soup has settled a little, you can skim any fat that's accumulated at the surface with a soup skimmer or spoon, to taste. If you're going to chill the broth before finishing the soup another day, it's easiest to take the fat off right before you use it; it will have solidified at the surface. P.S. Don't toss it, please! It can be used to make wonderful matzo balls or potato latkes.

Ultimate Chicken Noodle Soup

Broth

2 medium-large yellow onions, unpeeled, halved or 1 large onion plus 1 large leek, cleaned and cut lengthwise
 2 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed a little
 1 large carrot
 1 large parsnip (optional)
 1 celery rib
 4 quarts water
 4 pounds chicken bones (from about two carcasses leftover from a roast or rotisserie) or a combination of fresh chicken wings (my first choice), backs, necks or feet
 1 tablespoon kosher salt
 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme or 2 teaspoons chopped fresh
 1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes
 1 tablespoon tomato paste
 1 bay leaf

To Finish

3 bone-in skin-on chicken breast halves
 2 large carrots, peeled and diced or 1 large carrot and 1 large parsnip, diced
 1 large leek, trimmed and sliced into 1/2-inch segments
 1 to 2 celery ribs, chopped or diced
 9 ounces thin egg noodles or soup noodles of your choice
 2 tablespoons finely-chopped flat-leaf parsley

Make the broth:

[On the stove] Combine all ingredients in a large (6 to 8 quart) stock pot over high heat and bring to a boil. Once boiling, reduce to a gentle simmer, skim any unpleasant looking foam ("skim the scum" is kitchen parlance for this step, but I'm trying to be polite) and cover with a lid. Simmer for 2 1/2 hours.

Cook the chicken:

[Both methods] Add whole chicken breasts to simmering broth. Simmer for 20 minutes, until they're cooked through, then strain broth [for stovetop method] or simply remove cooked chicken breasts [from the slow-cooker method] and set them aside. Taste broth, and adjust seasoning if needed.

Finish the soup:

Add diced vegetables to simmering broth on stove and cook for 5 minutes, until firm-tender. Add soup noodles and cook according to package instructions, usually 6 to 10 minutes. Meanwhile, once chicken breasts are cool enough to handle, remove skin and bones and shred or chop into small chunks. Return chicken to soup and simmer for 2 minutes, until heated through.

Finish with parsley and serve to some very lucky people!

BEYOND THE SQUARE: THE SOUTHWEST PARTNERSHIP

By Khandra Sears

2015 was an exciting year for the Southwest Partnership! We officially elected and installed a board of directors with members from each of our seven neighborhoods and the anchor institutions. Our committees have since worked hard to better evaluate the needs of our neighborhoods and developing plans to meet those needs. Our most prominent success of the year was perhaps the city's Planning Commission adoption of our Vision Plan. Baltimore City planners and leaders see the hope we have for our neighborhoods and are ready to work with us to bring it to fruition. To hear more about the Partnership's first year, join us at the Annual General Meeting on January 30th at 5pm at the B&O Railroad Museum.

Full Steam Ahead! Southwest Partnership Annual Meeting January 30th 5pm

Join us at B&O Railroad Museum for food, fun, mingling with neighbors, and updates on the Southwest Partnership and our goals for the coming year. All are welcome and invited. RSVP via email or phone!



AS I SEE IT! THE SOUTHWEST PARTNERSHIP – CHRISTMAS PARTY

By Roger Miller

Good to have good friends and neighbors.



Photography by Roger Miller, Copyright 2015.

Roger is one of Maryland's most distinguished and most published photographers with 36 books to his credit and a long time residents of Union Square.

See more at www.rogermillerphoto.net.

ROOTS & BRANCHES CHARTER SCHOOL: COMMUNITY FIGHTS FOR RENEWAL AND WINS!

By Laura Bristow

Roots & Branches School, a West Baltimore K-5 school, has won its battle for renewal after previously being recommended for closure – an almost unprecedented occurrence in Baltimore City. Victory came with a grassroots effort from families, community residents, and local advocates who showered officials at North Avenue for two months with petitions, letters and testimonials. “We want families to know we are going strong and eager to enroll new students for September,” said Principal Anne Rossi.

It is unusual for a school that appears on the “to be closed” list to battle back with enough evidence and community support to warrant more time to develop its program. But Roots & Branches won the day. The school’s motto is “Creatively exploring the arts and sciences” and a visit to the school shows the motto in action. Students engage in their arts-integrated curriculum with teachers who put them through their paces in preparation for middle school.

“As a charter school, we welcome families from all over Baltimore,” said Rossi. “We are unique in West Baltimore and proud of what we have built. North Avenue finally agreed!”

Parents who want to learn more can contact the school at info@rootsandbranchesschool.org.

TRASH TALK

By Catherine Neely & Kristen Johnson

Soon, every resident is going to receive 65 gal. garbage can from the city. These garbage cans will belong to the city and no one will be allowed to mark the cans with their name, number or address. Stickers are allowed. Use your previous garbage can for recycling or if you wish to get rid of them by tagging them as garbage and putting them out with the new can and they will be taken away. The city also has a smaller 35 gal. container which is available by request. For more information, go to PublicWorks.baltimorecity.gov.

You need to prove that your request is based on 3 criteria:

1. There is no rear pick up possible
2. There is no room to store the container in the front of your residence
3. The street you inhabit is too narrow for a pick up.

We also encourage you to recycle. Not only does recycling save trees, protect wildlife habitat, reduce water pollution, and create jobs. It also makes it easier on garbage day as you will have lighter bags! Here’s a list of things we can (and should) recycle:

Acceptable Recycling Material:

- Aerosol Cans (empty)
- Aluminum: cans, beverage and food containers, foil (clean), and pie pans
- Books: hardbound, paperback and text books
- Bottles: narrow-neck bottles used for food liquids, soap, soda or water - (lightly clean if heavily soiled)
- Cardboard and paperboard boxes corrugated boxes, egg containers, food boxes (including cereal boxes and pizza boxes), frozen food packaging, mailing boxes and show boxes

Please remove plastic or Styrofoam packaging material from inside

- Cartons (waxed): used for a liquid such as juices, milk or soups
- Glass containers such as bottles and jars (brown, clear or green - please rinse)
- Juice Boxes (clean)
- Mail: envelopes with plastic windows
- Metal: beverage and food containers
- Paper (all colors and types): catalogs, folders, junk mail, magazines, mixed paper, newsprint (all types)
- Plastic: bottles and jars (narrow neck and screw top – lightly clean if heavily soiled) -e.g., detergent/bleach bottles, juice bottles, milk jugs, soda bottles, water bottles.
- Steel: beverage containers and food
- Tin: cans and foil.

MEET THE NEIGHBORS: JAMES SMALLS AND EMMANUEL KERAVEC

By Lucy Steinitz

James Smalls and Emmanuel Keravec spent two years looking for a brick house with character to renovate. They finally bought one on Stricker Street, facing Union Square Park, in early January, 2016. James explained: “We first visited this house in 2014 and we liked it, but it was too expensive. Afterwards, we looked at lots of other houses around the city but none of them suited us just right. Finally the price came down, and even though we have a lot of renovating to do, this house feels like it was meant to be ours.”



Emmanuel added that they were attracted to the architecture around Union Square, as well as to the many neighborhood activities. Both James and Emmanuel teach at the University of Maryland at Baltimore County (Art History and Design for James and Screenwriting for Emmanuel), so Union Square has the double benefit of being close to their work as well as downtown. With James being American and Emmanuel being French, they enjoy the fact that there are many neighborhood activities going on and the people who live here come from all over the world.

Bienvenue! Welcome James and Emmanuel!

KID'S CORNER

By Kai Hams

A lot of our neighbors travel out of this neighborhood to go to work, but who are the people that come here to work? To find out I interviewed one of them, Officer John Gregorio, a police officer in the Southern Police District.

How long have you been a police officer?

Almost 5 years now

Why did you choose this line of work?

My father's cousin was the police chief in my hometown, and I have always looked up to him. I can't stand injustice and have always tried to stick up for other people.

What is your favorite part of this job?

Every day is different. It never gets boring, you meet new people, there is always something new.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I like to go hunting and fishing, but it is hard to find time for that. I also like watching movies and baseball, and playing video games

What is your favorite part about Union Square?

The great old rowhomes and Union Square Park.

How do you stay awake during night shifts?

It helps to stay busy, and energy drinks of course.

What motivates you?

Always trying to help people that can't help themselves.

What are your suggestions for kids that want to become police officers?

Stay in school, listen to your parents! You need to be smart and have confidence you are making the right decisions.

What qualifications did you need?

I went to the police academy for one year, where you learn about the law and things like filing reports, self-defense, and the safe use of firearms etc.

Has your view of people changed since becoming a police officer?

No, not really. Maybe I have become a bit more skeptical.



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