

# UNION SQUARE

news and notes from around the neighborhood

MEETING: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 7 P.M., 1401 HOLLINS ST.

WWW.UNIONSQUAREBALT.COM

## BOARD NOTES

Hello, Neighbors. After a long, but luckily not so cold Winter, Spring is here! It's time to come out and help keep our neighborhood clean and beautiful.

Thank you to everyone who made Streetscape a success last year. Your continued efforts are greatly appreciated. Now, take a look around. Are there weeds to be pulled, litter to be picked up or a tree well that needs attention? If we all do one thing to beautify our streets, it will make a big impact. Small tasks become HUGE accomplishments.

### Streetscape Committee:

**Bloom Your Block:** Please join us as we kick off our second annual Bloom Your Block Project.

This is a community project that encourages and enables all residents of Union Square to have a beautiful flower pot on their front steps or sidewalk. Who will have the Bloomiest Block? Judging will take place in June, and donations of pots, plants and soil are now being collected. Last year, we put together and distributed 28 flower pots.

So, let's get started blooming and sharing and building community. There will be give-a-ways at the next USA meeting. Hope to see you there.

### Clean Community Competition 2012:

Baltimore City is having a clean community competition, and Union Square

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## A Community Canvas



**Bill Adler stands inside his home art gallery. Adler is gearing up for the annual Sowebo Arts Festival, held Memorial Day weekend on the Hollins Market plaza. Artworks and detailed festival information can be viewed at [www.soweboarts.org](http://www.soweboarts.org).**

## Curator hopes to use art to revitalize area

Bill Adler says Southwest Baltimore's resurgence begins with a resurrection of its image.

For over 20 years, Adler, leader of Sowebo Arts and organizer of its annual Memorial Day weekend festival, has tried to use art and youth involvement to paint a more positive view of the area.

"There's a group called the Creative Alliance in East Baltimore, and we were way ahead of them in terms of events and activities," Adler says. "But they had good fundraisers, and they had connections with people like [Senator] Barbara Mikulski. They were able to get enough money to redo the Patterson Theater.

Adler said there's no reason why the West Side of Baltimore shouldn't be able to do just as well.

"We don't have a permanent space right now, and that's what I'd like to get," he says. "We wanted to get the top of Hollins Market for years for arts and crafts and different programs for all age groups."

But, Adler says, politics with the city and market owners never got worked out.

"Mayor O'Malley gave support, but there was a lot of red tape, and it didn't go any further," Adler says. "When Shelia Dixon was

## Sowebo

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- The Sowebo Running & Walking Club of Baltimore is beginning a monthly group walk/run at Carroll Park. First Saturday of the month at 10 a.m., starting April 7th. All are welcome. Meet in the playground area at James and Bayard Streets. FREE.
- Digital Photography classes at Clay Pots, 1635 W. Pratt St., beginning this month.

**Mondays 1 to 3 p.m.**

**Thursdays 7 to 9 p.m.**

Call 410.233.1133 or email [claypots@claypotsbaltimore.com](mailto:claypots@claypotsbaltimore.com) for info or to register.

### Reiki Clinic

**Saturday, April 21**

Reiki is an energy healing approach using light touch. Everyone is encouraged to partake of this offering, so there is no set cost. However, a financial contribution according to your means is gratefully accepted. Contact us for details and to reserve your early afternoon appointment. For more info, email the center at [cswbaltimore@gmail.com](mailto:cswbaltimore@gmail.com) or call 410.566.4258. All Wellness programs held at Clay Pots, 1635 W. Pratt St.

### CCYD Bowl-A-Thon

**Saturday, April 28**

Chesapeake Center for Youth Development (CCYD) annual Bowlathon is set for Saturday, April 28 from 1:30 to 4 p.m. at AMF Ritchie Lanes in Glen Burnie. Proceeds benefit programs for children, youth and families. This year's event is being planned in collaboration with the University of Maryland School of Social Work, Social Work Community Outreach Services. Contact Megan Schulze to sign on for Union Square Team(s) at [schulzemegan@gmail.com](mailto:schulzemegan@gmail.com) or contact ivan at [ivanl@ccyd.org](mailto:ivanl@ccyd.org) for more information.

### Leadership & Community Engagement Training

**Saturday, April 14th**

9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
University of Maryland BioPark, 801 W. Baltimore Street

Learn the skills you need to advocate on behalf of our community, organize our neighborhood for positive change, or lead a community organization. Register for this FREE series of leadership classes at CPHA's website: [cphabaltimore.org/events/](http://cphabaltimore.org/events/) or call 410-539-1369 x104.

## Sowebo

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running for mayor, we had a fundraiser for her over at what's now Zella's.

"She was pretty excited. She had been on the board of the markets so she understood how to make things happen with that. It seemed like it was the right progression, then Shelia Dixon's term was cut short."

But through it all, Adler has continued to run the annual festival.

"As many as 10,000 people show up," he says. "We set an area aside on what's called Little Hollins, the side of Hollins where all the ceramic murals are up. And we also have places for kids to make art or play with paint. We're going to probably have some face painters there. We encourage any and everyone to be an artist for the day, make something creative."

The festival is over 30 years old. According to Adler, Jack Trimper worked out a deal with Steven Lowenthal, a real estate investor, in the early 1980s to have a space for local artists. Trimper got one of the storefronts on Hollins Street and used it to give art classes to kids. He called it the Free School. Kids would come after regular school hours and on Saturday mornings.

"So he was doing this, and he decided that he would have a party for the kids on Memorial Day weekend," Adler says. "So he went to Mayor [William] Schaefer and ordered a stage and a sound system. Pepsi-Cola or Coke-Cola donated a soda fountain. He got someone to donate hot dogs and rolls, and he had a party for the kids. And the kids were, at that time, break dancing on the stage and they were playing probably 8-track tapes or cassettes."

The festival was a success, so, Trimper decided to do it again the next year. The festival grew over the years, with Adler working always to maintain a focus on family and artists.

### Timeline Recap

**May 7**

Return posters for show deadline

**May 14 to June 1**

Poster show at The Charles

**May 27**

Return posters for auction deadline

**May 27**

Sowebo Arts Festival

**June 3**

Sowebo Poster Auction

## Notes

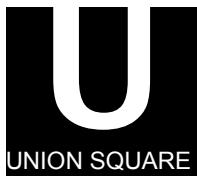
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is registered and ready to win. The competition is citywide and encourages recycling, clean ups, use of trash cans, etc. There are many ways to accumulate points, and we are already on our way to winning the top prize of \$5,000. Competition begins April 21 and ends Oct. 27. Please join us Saturday, April 21, 9 a.m. at Stricker and Lombard for the competition kick-off. We need everyone to join in this fun activity that benefits our neighborhood.

## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS | Ray Williams

We encourage submissions, story suggestions and comments from our community. We are always looking for writers, reporters, artists and idea people interested in volunteering for this publication.

Email [raywilliamsmedia@aol.com](mailto:raywilliamsmedia@aol.com) with your story and content ideas.



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