

Historic Federal Hill

main street news

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SHOFERS COMMITS TO FEDERAL HILL WITH STORE EXPANSION

By AMY Grace

Shofer's Furniture Store, a landmark business in Federal Hill for over eighty years, is about to change its beautiful window displays at its site at 930 South Charles Street. The very good news is that the change will expand the window displays to a new addition that will double the current building size. With a new center atrium entrance to join the two buildings, this elegant corner of Federal Hill will become even more elegant.

Shofer's was established in 1914 when seventeen year old Harry Shofer began the business in a modest storefront in the 800 block of South Charles. A frugal man who loved his work, Shofer was able to expand his furniture business in the 1930s to its current site where a failed department store had been abandoned. Shofer's Furniture has one of the most unique assortments of furniture styles – traditional, contemporary, and transitional – from over 200 manufacturers. The current showroom, 45,000 square feet, consists of five floors of beautifully displayed furniture. Shofer's also offers interior design services and helps customers with the extras: room layouts, window treatments, and giftware.

Current President Hank Shofer started working in the store during the summers when he was a college student. His father, Herb Shofer, had already joined his own father in the business but did not put any pressure on Hank to be the third generation to join the family business. But, Hank did and has no regrets. He likes running a business where challenges are different every day; he likes perpetuating the philosophy that his grandfather started: to treat people fairly and offer exceptional customer service.

In the past few years it became evident to Hank Shofer that, although successful, he needed to change the business in order to grow the business. The changes he wanted were to expand the floor space and re-arrange the displays for easier visibility; to add light and a central space so that customers wouldn't

feel lost; to add amenities such as a children's play area and a hospitality center with home theater so that spouses who grew tired of shopping could have a place to relax. Finally he wanted to expand the selections and better define the departments by category so that customers could more easily find the items they wanted. It has taken years to get to the construction stage ("feels like forever," he says) but the new building is now well under way and scheduled for a summer 2005 opening and a fall 2005 grand opening.

Through all the decisions about the renovation and expansion, Hank never considered leaving Federal Hill. He says that although he has seen many changes in the neighborhood over his long tenure here, he has always loved the area and felt safe here. He sees the new vitality in the business and residential community in the past few years as having very positive effects on his business. He likes the young professionals who are moving in and finds that they are attracted to his up-scale store. Most of his customers are from Baltimore though Shofer's reputation for quality extends throughout the whole mid-Atlantic region.

The Federal Hill neighborhood can surely celebrate the Shofer family's long-term commitment to quality merchandise, friendly service and investment in our neighborhood. Special thanks to Shofer's for those beautiful window displays too!

Contact Shofer's at 410-752-4212 or www.shofers.com



Shofer's construction site at 900 block of S. Charles Street

THE BENEFITS OF SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship of Federal Hill Main Street – both corporate sponsorship and festival sponsorship – benefits the sponsor as much as it does Main Street. And as Main Street increases its advertising and PR efforts, and the festivals grow in quality and popularity, the exposure available at the various sponsorship levels is remarkable.

A festival sponsor's logo may appear on large banners that hang on the four corners of the Cross Street Market, as well as in strategic intersections downtown, (like Pratt and President Streets, and Lee and Light Streets, next to the Science Center). Thousands, even tens of thousands of commuters drive under those banners – or sit at the red light staring at them for a few minutes – during the two weeks they are in place. Logos may appear on event signage prominently displayed at the new Baltimore Visitor Center in the Inner Harbor, which is seeing record numbers of tourists – over 30,000 last October when we held the Street Beat Festival, and well over 60,000 last June when we held the Jazz & Blues Festival.

Sponsor logos may appear in large, color ads in The Sun's Live section, the City Paper, the Baltimore Guide, the Towson Times, and more. Logos appear on event posters, plastered all over the neighborhood and beyond; the festival program, handed out to the thousands of attendees; and festival signage, displayed prominently on every admission booth, ticket booth and beer booth. A sponsorship booth at the festival provides the opportunity to make face-to-face contact with thousands of potential customers. And sponsor logos, articles, links to websites, and more may be displayed on Federal Hill Main Street's website, which received over 28,000 hits in the 10 days leading up to the last festival alone.

Working with a professional public relations firm last year, Federal Hill Main Street was able to attract Channel 13, Channel 11, Channel 2, Fox 45, and UPN 24 to the neighborhood for news shots or live interviews for some or all of the festivals. For the last two years, the Street Beat Festival has been the featured live event on Channel 11's Sunday morning show – cutting to a shot of Federal Hill at every commercial break, mentioning the festival during the weather reports, and conducting live interviews on the street – live TV time that may be

made available to one or more sponsors.

Perhaps most importantly is the market Federal Hill Main Street is reaching. There is no question that residents of the surrounding neighborhoods are well aware of Federal Hill events, (nearly 100 of those neighbors volunteer to work the festival booths each year). And over the last four years, Main Street has been steadily improving the quality of the festivals – with pricier musicians, higher-end vendors, family activities, etc. – to target the high-end market that is revitalizing Federal Hill. The market that will come back to shop in the area's stores and eat and drink in the area's restaurants and bars. Drawing primarily from Federal Hill/downtown and Towson, sponsorship opportunities are targeted to be the most beneficial to the sponsor and to the neighborhood.

For Federal Hill Main Street, the benefit is not only in sponsorship dollars, it is also an opportunity to work together with other businesses to improve and promote Federal Hill. Our sponsors enjoy remarkable exposure opportunities, while their charitable donations to Federal Hill Main Street, an IRS 501 (c)(3) company, are generally tax deductible. (Check with your tax advisor.)

Finally, your sponsorship helps support Federal Hill Main Street, Inc., which continues to pursue projects, solve problems and take advantage of opportunities to stimulate revitalization in historic Federal Hill – from capital public space improvements to beautification efforts to business development projects to promotional campaigns. Hundreds of business and neighborhood volunteers have invested thousands of hours to make the Main Street program work. The community believes in itself. Don't miss your opportunity to help your neighborhood during its amazing renaissance.

What is Federal Hill Main Street's Mission?

Federal Hill Main Street was formed to revitalize the business district of Federal Hill in ways that will meet the needs of the community and bring tourists into the area, while at the same time, preserving the neighborhood's unique and historic character.

Membership Benefits

As a member, you can have a voice in the development of Federal Hill businesses. Here's your chance to contribute your ideas and make a difference. Businesses and residents are encouraged to join. The membership fees are only \$10. For more information, email Bonnie Crockett at bcrockett@historicfederalhill.org.

Join Federal Hill Main Street for its
4th Annual Meeting
Election of Board of Directors and Officers
Wednesday, February 23, 2005
7:30 pm

The meeting will be held at the
South Baltimore Learning Center
28 E. Ostend Street

Call 410-727-4500 for more details.

THIS MONTH'S SPOTLIGHT:

Curves

As the new year starts and everyone in Federal Hill makes the usual resolution to start exercising more, a fabulous opportunity to meet that goal exists right on Cross Street. The local branch of CURVES, a fitness franchise for women with more than 8,000 locations, has been open less than one year and already boasts more than 300 members in the area.

The thirty-minute workout offers an affordable, one-stop gym experience with cardio, strength training and stretching. Using hydraulic resistance machines built especially for women, members enjoy the easy-to-learn routine and the equipment that adjusts to each person's ability.

Sarah Sandberg, manager of Federal Hill CURVES, says that the routine is a great workout for any fitness level. "Federal Hill CURVES is as diverse as Federal Hill itself. We have members of all ages and body types who enjoy CURVES' supportive, comfortable environment and efficient workout routine. This is what makes CURVES very special and different from other gyms."

With more than four million members worldwide, CURVES boasts a proven thirty-minute workout routine that works and, in the process, changes women's lives.

To find out more, drop in at 1100 Cross Street and talk to Sarah, call 410-332-4188 or visit the website at: www.curvesinternational.com

THE AVAILABILITY PACKET

One of the ways that Federal Hill Main Street helps promote business development and fill the vacancies in Federal Hill is by producing an Availability Packet for prospective new businesses. A list of available properties, including addresses, square footage, contact information and color photos, is maintained and updated regularly. It is available in the Main Street office and on our website, www.historicfederalhill.org. And it is available on the Baltimore Development Corporation's (BDC) website, www.baltimoredevelopment.com.

Representatives from Baltimore Main Streets and the Mayor's Office take Federal Hill's Availability Packet to local, regional and national business conferences, such as the Broker's Tour, and International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) conference, which attracts national chains, regional grocery stores, and others. The Availability Packet is available at the Small Business Resource Center and the Small Business Development Center. And it is provided to groups like SCORE and Enterprise. But, according to Charles Penny, development officer at the BDC and Baltimore Main Streets, the Availability Packet is "most effectively used when Baltimore Main Streets gets inquiries from other BDC employees about development opportunities," which happens "on an almost daily basis."

As a basic business recruitment tool, the Availability Packet is remarkably effective. If you know anyone who is considering opening a business, please direct them to the Federal Hill Main Street office or to our website for a copy of the Availability Packet. If you have an available property in the neighborhood and want to ensure that your property is listed and up to date, please contact Bonnie Crockett at bcrockett@historicfederalhill.org or call 410-727-4500.

Sponsorship Opportunity

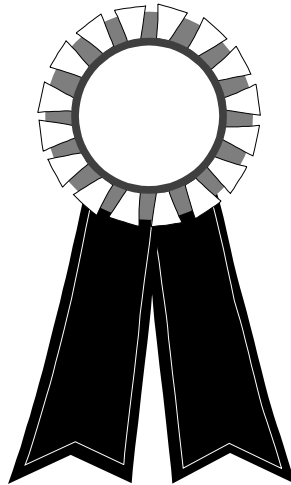
Looking for an easy (and inexpensive) way to get your name out to Federal Hill businesses and residents? Sponsor this newsletter. We will place your ad and feature you as the month's highlight.

Contact Federal Hill Main Street at newsletter@historicfederalhill.org or call 410.727.4500.

FEDERAL HILL MAIN STREET'S 2ND ANNUAL DESIGN AWARDS



BALTIMORE SEEN @ 1005 S CHARLES ST



HOME ON THE HARBOR @ 1014 S CHARLES ST

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

Our 2004 Winners Are:

Best Exterior Retail Design: *HOME ON THE HARBOR*

Best Interior Retail Design: *BALTIMORE SEEN II*

Best Exterior Restaurant/Bar Design: *THE GREEN OLIVE*

Best Interior Restaurant/Bar Design: *THE GREEN OLIVE*



THE GREEN OLIVE @ 26-28 E CROSS STREET

In an ongoing effort to encourage beautification and restoration in the business district, Federal Hill Main Street presents design awards for best interior and exterior design in both retail and restaurant/bar categories. All properties renovated or constructed within the year are eligible. There is no need to apply. All projects meeting the above criteria will be considered. For more information, contact: design@historicfederalhill.org.