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FEBRUARY 2012



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NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2012 AT 7:30 PM
CRISTO REY, 420 CHESTER STREET, BETWEEN BANK STREET AND EASTERN AVENUE

WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

Fells Prospect would like to welcome the following new committee chairs: Debbie Ritter (who will now head both the COP and our Crime Committee), Phyllis Fung (who serves as both the website and also Zipcar coordinator), and Jen Harrington (who has been our new newsletter editor for the past 6 months). Finally, we would like to welcome Rebecca German, who has stepped to become our new secretary. All have been very active in the community association these past few years.

It takes great people to give up their personal time and give back to the community, and we thank them all for joining the Fells Prospect board and team. Their time and commitment helps make the association successful.

Committee Chair contact information can be found on the back page of the newsletter.

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

Thank you to all of our delivery volunteers! The newsletter is the best way for the association to communicate updates or community concerns, so we greatly appreciate the work of our delivery volunteers! There are still two open delivery routes: 100 S. Chapel (west side) and 100-300 S. Regester. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Rhonda Cooper at coopwoL2@earthlink.net.

NOT HAPPY WITH YOUR TAX ASSESSMENT?

If you received an assessment notice and you feel the Total New Market Value on your notice (box 7) does not reflect the market value of your property, you may file an appeal and/or obtain information on this property from the State Department of Assessments and Taxation. Visit: <http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/petitrv.pdf> for the appeal form.

You have until February 10, 2012 to file this appeal; it must be postmarked by February 10, 2012.

Remember to gather supporting documentation to make your case for your appeal. Supporting documentation should include recently sold properties (COMPS) that are comparable to your property. This data can be gathered with the help of a local real estate agent. To look up other properties in the area, visit the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation site: http://sdatcert3.resiusa.org/rp_rewrite.

Tips & Warnings*

- Be prepared to support your argument with ample documentation.
- Pinpoint items that affect the value of your home.
- Bring any errors to the attention of the assessor such as the square footage of the home and the number of bedrooms or bathrooms.
- For best results, avoid focusing on a past value, the percentage amount of the tax increase, additional metropolitan costs, the amount of the tax bill, properties in other taxing jurisdictions, and services rendered or not rendered.
- Be persistent.
- Document your discussions, including dates, times, and person spoken to.

*Read more: [How to Appeal Tax Assessment in Maryland | eHow.com](http://www.ehow.com/how_2340548_appeal-taxassessmentmaryland.html#ixzz19ith5reE).

http://www.ehow.com/how_2340548_appeal-taxassessmentmaryland.html#ixzz19ith5reE

FREE TAX PREPARATION!

Don't you wish you had more money by the end of the month? Does your money just seem to fly out of your pocket? Then stop wishing and do something about it! The nonprofit Baltimore CASH Campaign ("creating assets, savings and hope") is here to help. Families who made under \$50,000 or singles who made under \$25,000 may be

eligible for free tax prep services by IRS certified staff. The Baltimore CASH Campaign can also help you get your refund directly deposited into a savings account or purchase a U.S. Savings Bond. To see if you qualify and to schedule your free appointment, visit www.bmorefreetax-es.org or call 410-234-8008!

FREE FILE ALLIANCE & IRS LAUNCH 10TH YEAR OF FREE ONLINE TAX PREPARATION SERVICES FOR MILLIONS OF AMERICANS

The Free File Alliance, a coalition of industry-leading tax software companies partnered with the Internal Revenue Service, today announced the launch of the 2012 IRS Free File program. Since its inception in 2003, IRS Free File has offered low-to-moderate income taxpayers free access to leading online commercial tax preparation software. This year, every taxpayer with a 2011 Adjusted Gross Income of \$57,000 or less may visit www.IRS.gov to prepare, complete and e-file their federal tax returns at no cost.

To begin, taxpayers should visit the IRS website - www.irs.gov/freefile. Users will find a list of Free File Alliance member companies and may either choose the one that fits their needs or utilize the "help me find a company" tool. After selecting a tax software company, users will be transferred to the company's website to prepare, complete and electronically file their federal income tax returns. The service is also available in Spanish. Free File Alliance member software will also be available on self-assist kiosks at VITA sites in 29 states across the country.

YOUTHWORKS SUMMER JOB APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Baltimore City's YouthWorks summer jobs program will match young people between the ages of 14 and 21 to six-week work experiences with private sector, nonprofit, and city and state government employers. The program will operate from June 25, 2012 to August 3, 2012. The YouthWorks slogan – summer jobs launch careers – describes the lasting effect that a productive summer job can have on a young person. Through targeted matching of jobs to older teens' career interests and an emphasis on effective work behaviors and financial literacy for all participants, YouthWorks is sure to be a success this summer and beyond as it helps prepare our future workforce. For more information about YouthWorks, please contact the YouthWorks office at 410-396-JOBS (5627) or summerjobs@oedworks.com.

WRAPPING PAPER AND ELECTRONICS RECYCLING

Residents should continue to recycle wrapping paper, tissue, colored paper, cardboard packaging, boxes, as well as any unwanted holiday cards and envelopes. Ribbons and foil cannot be recycled. Styrofoam material can ONLY be recycled at the Northwest Citizen's Convenience Center. Please put Styrofoam materials in a clear plastic bag.

If you received new electronic devices during the holiday, remember to take the outdated ones to one of DPW's five Citizen Convenience Centers for recycling. This service is free and available year-round. Citizens may drop off items for recycling or recycling at one of the following sanitation yards:

- Quarantine Road Sanitary Landfill
6100 Quarantine Road
- Northwest Transfer Station
5030 Reisterstown Road
- Western Sanitation Yard
701 Reedbird Avenue
- Eastern Sanitation Yard
6101 Bowleys Lane
- Northwest Citizens Convenience Center
2840 Sisson Street.

These drop-off locations are open Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with the exception of the Northwest Transfer Station, which is open Monday through Saturday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. For additional information, please call 311.

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT BED BUGS

1. What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are small brownish-red, oval-shaped bugs the size of apple seeds. They crawl and cannot fly, hop or jump. They hide near where people sleep in seams of furniture, mattresses and box springs, and in credit-card size spaces in just about anything - walls, floorboards, electronic devices, in kids toys, etc.

2. Are they dangerous?

Bed bugs have not been shown to spread disease but their bites can cause an allergic skin reaction in some people. This causes people to scratch the bites, which can cause secondary infections.

3. How do I know if my home is infested?

Check bed frame, mattress and box spring regularly and check any credit-card width cracks near sleeping areas.

Look for signs of live bed bugs, shed skins (look like popcorn kernels) and blood spots, which are rusty-red colored bed bug feces. During a bad infestation, bed bugs can be found away from areas where you sleep.

4. What are safe and effective ways of getting rid of bed bugs?

Sprinkle insecticide powder made of diatomaceous earth on the floor around your bed and in any cracks and crevices in the walls and floorboards. Pull bed away from the wall and place interceptors (or plastic bowls with 1/2" diatomaceous earth) under bed legs to kill bed bugs trying to crawl from the floor to the bed. Cover mattress and box spring with an encasement labeled "for bed bugs" for at least 1 year to contain and kill any bed bugs and eggs inside. You can find them in stores that sell pillows and mattress pads. Dry on high heat for 30 minutes (or 60 minutes if you wash clothes first) all bed linens and suspected clothes to kill 100% of bed bugs and eggs. Once dried, keep clothes and other linens in tightly sealed plastic containers to prevent contamination. Use a steam cleaner on fabrics to kill bed bugs or a HEPA vacuum cleaner to remove them.

5. How can I avoid an infestation?

Anyone can avoid an infestation by routinely checking your mattress and box spring and promptly using the methods above if you see signs of bed bugs. To reduce your chances of encountering bed bugs, do not buy used mattresses and box springs and avoid buying used clothing and toys (if you do, dry on high heat for 30 minutes before bringing into your home).

POCKETBOOK DRIVE

Hey Ladies! Do you have an extra pocketbook in your closet? If you have a gently used purse that you would like to donate to the community association now is the time! Donations are now being accepted at 223 S. Washington Street for the spring flea market. All proceeds will go to the Garden Club's beautification project of the Chester St lots. So ask your relatives, neighbors and friends if they have an extra pocketbook or two they would like to donate. For more information e-mail: FellsProspectGardens@yahoo.com.



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The next meeting of the Fells Prospect Garden Club is Monday, February 20th.
 Contact thin2LM@gmail.com for details.

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FELLS PROSPECT MAP



IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

President: Victor Corbin (410) 327-2427
Vice President: Alana Ridge (443) 562-5168
Treasurer: Jeffrey Rogers (410) 563-8547
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Newsletter Editor: Jen Harrington (410) 596-7002
Southeastern Police District: (410) 396-2422
Baltimore One Call Center: 311
 Sanitation Enforcement, Streetlights, Rodents, Housing Violations & Bulk Trash.

FELLS PROSPECT MEMBERSHIP

To become a member of Fells Prospect, send a check made payable to Fells Prospect, Inc. and mail to Fells Prospect, PO Box 38291, Baltimore, MD 21231. Or go online to www.fellsprospect.org to join. You can use PayPal to pay your dues. Dues are \$10 **per person** per calendar year.



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