

Proebstel Neighborhood Association Newsletter

Next quarterly Meeting: October 18th, Tuesday at 7pm

The Church in Proebstel

Speaker: Bob West from the PUD

Topic: Energy programs that are available

Proebstel Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes

July 19,2011

The featured speaker was Peter Van Nortwick. He is the Clark County Assessor. He discussed property taxes, how they are determined, and programs for appeal and *exemptions*.

Property taxes are figured according to various levies that are voted on by taxpayers. These levies include school districts, fire districts, parks, ports, etc. The Assessor's Department appraises property and mills it out to districts and divides it as per the budgets of the districts.

There is a 1% constitutional limit on property taxes in Washington. Taxpayers can vote to raise the limit above 1%. The Clark County Commissioners can vote to raise the established 1% limit on the tax rate.

January, 2010 property values were used to set the assessments that were recently mailed to property owners. These values lag behind current values. i.e. if a house is worth \$175K now, but sales in the area were \$190K in Jan, 2010, then the taxes today are based on \$190K.

There are special programs for property owners to get tax breaks. Agricultural property, senior citizens, and low income (Less than \$35,000) owners are eligible. Information is available from the Assessor's office. Make sure you understand the program you are using as a deferral plan and/or exemption plan. Rules do apply.

An owner can appeal their property taxes and assessed value. Peter listens to information with the Equalization Board. It is best to talk to a realtor or appraiser who understands that values are based on Jan, 2010 before filing an appeal. "Short sales" are excluded in assessments, as are estate sales. Sales of property after a divorce may be excluded, also, if the sale price is out of the norm. The Assessor's Dept. tries to use the best information available on neighborhood sales and make adjustments accordingly.

Vacant property (10 - 100 acre parcels) sale price may be 10 times the assessed value. Why? It may be in an exempt program or it may be based on land sales in the area. The "system" is not perfect. The Department is trying to make changes and be fair on assessments.

A lot of the department's time is spent on appeals. \$500,000 of taxpayer money is spent on appeals each year.

Assessor's office employees physically go to areas of the county every 6 years for assessments. The Proebstel Neighborhood area is due for appraisal in 2013. The office employees have a right to go on your property to do their job. MLS sales are the most reliable for property values in any given area. A program to audit agricultural exemption properties is slated to start soon. The reason is due to other taxpayers are paying more to offset the exempted property. Non-payment of property taxes is handled by the County Treasurer's office. The Treasurer is responsible to foreclose on property after 3 years of non-payment. Apartment complex properties are doing well now in terms of value because many people who lost their homes are now renting. Respectfully submitted.
Barb Repman, Secretary

October 2011

Wow! It feels like September simply dissolved into fall. I have to say this is my favorite season - the cool evenings and golden, crispy days. Please share this with anyone you think might find the contents useful.

If this email was forwarded to you and you would like to subscribe to this once-monthly listserve, please go to <http://www.clark.wa.gov/environment/index.asp> and enter your information toward the bottom of that page.

You can also visit the Clark County Environmental Services calendar to view updates to our activities calendar.

Follow us on Facebook! <http://www.facebook.com/clarkcountyrecycles/> and <http://www.facebook.com/CleanWaterBuddy>

Survey Results!

Thanks very much to all of you who took the time to give us your thoughts about naming our new residential sustainability program. The winning name is (drum roll please): Green Neighbors! Stay tuned for developments as we roll this exciting new program out to the community.

New Volunteer Website!

We've just launched a new website: www.volunteerclark.com. This is the place for citizens or organizations to list or seek environmental volunteer opportunities in Clark County. Help us get it up and running by visiting the site. Either list your upcoming volunteer event or, if you find a volunteer opportunity to participate in, please let the organization know that you found them through VolunteerClark.

SPECIAL WASTE COLLECTIONS:

Central Transfer Station : 11034 NE 117th Ave. Vancouver, WA 98662

360-256-8492 Household Hazardous Waste drop-off on Saturday & Sunday, 8am - 4pm. No charge.

West Van Materials Recovery Center : 6601 NW Old Lower River Rd.

Vancouver, WA. 360-737-1727 Household Hazardous Waste drop-off on Friday and Saturday, 8am - 4pm. No charge.

Washougal Transfer Station : 4020 South Grant Street, Washougal, WA 98671

360-835-2500 Household Hazardous Waste drop-off on the third Saturday of every month. 8am - 4pm. No charge.

Block Foam- also known as Styrofoam™ or polystyrene - can be recycled at Empower Up, computer education/reuse nonprofit organization; located at 5000 E. Fourth Plain Blvd. Drop off hours are from 9am - 5pm. Tuesday through Saturday.

Medications, Thermometers, Cell Phones and Eyeglasses, Tuesday, October 4, 9am - 12pm, Legacy Salmon Creek, 2211 NE 139th Street - at the main entrance.

Medications, Thermometers, Cell Phones and Eyeglasses, Wednesday, October 5, 1pm - 4pm, Peacehealth SW Washington Medical Center, 400 NE Mother Joseph Place - at the 92nd Avenue entrance.

HHW, Electronics and Block Foam, Saturday, October 8, 9am - 1pm, Clark County Public Works, 4700 NE 78th Street.

Unwanted Medications Collection Event, Saturday, October 29, 10am - 2pm, fisher's Landing Transit Center, 3510 SE 164th Avenue.

For more information on HHW collection events, contact 360-397-2121 or email

jim.mansfield@clark.wa.gov

Have items you want to recycle but aren't sure where to take them?

Check out www.RecyclingA-Z.com for a comprehensive resource guide.

WORKSHOPS

Saturday, October 8 - **Backyard Composting**

10am - noon at Columbia Springs, 12208 SE Evergreen Hwy. Want to learn how to cook compost right in your very own backyard? Attend this free workshop to get answers all of your composting questions! The workshop will include an intro in the classroom and an opportunity to see different styles of compost bins. For more information, contact mcr@columbiasprings.org, call 360-882-0936 ext 224 or register online at: <https://columbiasprings.wufoo.com/forms/fall-2011-master-composter-recycler-workshops/>

Wednesday, October 12 - **Wells and Septic Systems Maintenance Workshop for Homeowners**

Fire District #3 - Hockinson Fire Station, 17718 NE 159th Avenue, Brush Prairie. Attend this FREE workshop and learn how to properly maintain your septic system, prevent costly repairs, and protect your drinking water from contamination. Registration is free, but class size is limited; deadline for registration is October 10th. For additional information, email eric.lambert@wsu.edu.

Saturday, October 15 - **Family Wormshop**

10am - noon at Columbia Springs, 12208 SE Evergreen Hwy. Bring the family and build a worm bin to feed all your fruit and veggie scraps to. Learn the ins-and-outs of vermicomposting. \$35 per family material fee. For more information, contact mcr@columbiasprings.org, call 360-882-0936 ext 224 or register online at: <https://columbiasprings.wufoo.com/forms/fall-2011-master-composter-recycler-workshops/>

Wednesday, October 19 - **Creatures of the Night Family Workshop**

6:30 - 8:30pm at the Water Resource Education Center, 4600 SE Columbia Way. Participants will learn about bats, owls and other nocturnal creatures and how these animals interact with us and their environment. Includes a short, easy walk to locate bats. For more information call 360-882-0936 x223. Register online at <https://columbiasprings.wufoo.com/forms/x7w9z5>

Saturday, October 22 - **Fall Rain Barrel Classes**

9am - 11am at the Clark County Heritage Farm, 1919 NE 78th Street. Join the Watershed Stewards in making your own rain barrel. Learn how to use and construct a rain barrel then make your own in class and take it home. \$35.00 fee for materials. Questions can be sent to jenifer.naas@clark.wa.gov or call 360-397-6060 ext 5712. Register online at Brown Paper Tickets www.brownpapertickets.com/event/193024

EVENTS

Saturday, October 8 - Second Saturday at the Water Center: Gardens in the Fall

1pm - 3pm, Water Center, 4600 SE Columbia Way. Do you like the fall season? Colorful leaves, yummy fruits and vegetables. Join us for fun, hands-on activities with leaves, fruits, vegetables and much more. Learn all about gardens in the fall. For information call 360-487-7111.

October 8 & 9 - Birdfest and Bluegrass

Ridgefield. Get outside and play before winter sets in. You will find many choices of tours, presentations, walks and activities for the whole family! Make your reservations SOON for limited space on Sandhill Crane and other Tours. For an informative, fun-filled, enjoyable weekend learning about the NATURE and culture of our Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, see

<http://www.ridgefieldfriends.org/birdfestandbluegrass.php>

Saturday, October 15 - Small Acreage Property Tour

1 - 3pm. Conway Family Farms in Camas. Conway Family Farms received the Small Acreage program's merit property recognition in 2006 for the best management practices they have implemented on their property. Join the guided tour and learn about rotational grazing, pasture management, manure composting and more. To reserve your spot and get directions call Eric Lambert at the Small Acreage Program, 360-397-6060 x5729.

Bird Walk at Stiegerwald

The Columbia Gorge Refuge Stewards are presenting a guided birding walk at Stiegerwald National Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, October 15 from 8am - 11am. Birdwatchers, both novice and experienced, are invited to come out and get a closer look at the refuges and the nature show created by the changing of the seasons. Experienced guides will identify birds, explain why habitat areas on the refuges provide vital resting stops for migrating birds, and discuss how the refuges are managed. Unusual sightings can surprise and excite birders on any of the hikes. Guided walks are free and open to the public; however, space is limited to 15 people per hike. If you are interested in participating, please contact Eric Anderson at (360) 887-4106 or Eric_Anderson@fws.gov to register for a hike, obtain directions to the starting location and get additional information.

For more fun events be sure to check out **Fort Vancouver National Historic Site**. <http://www.fortvan.org/>, **Urban Abundance** <http://www.myurbanabundance.org/> or **Friends of the Columbia Gorge** : http://gorgefriends.org/event_calendar.php?event_type=hikes&brochure=true

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Saturday, October 15 - StreamTeam Leader Training

8:45 - 1pm, Salmon Creek Watershed. Learn how to lead a group of tree planters at events like Make a Difference Day and Earth Day. Leaders will learn to demonstrate event activities while educating volunteers and fostering an environment that is not only safe but enjoyable for both volunteers and crew leaders. Training, equipment, and lunch will be provided. Please contact StreamTeam@clarkpud.com to register.

Saturday, October 22 - StreamTeam Make A Difference Day

8:45 - 1pm, WSU Vancouver. Join StreamTeam for a national day of service, planting trees and celebrating the tremendous efforts of volunteers like you! Several types of volunteers are needed: tree planters, registration volunteers and food and recycling volunteers. Training, equipment and lunch will be provided. Please contact StreamTeam@clarkpud.com to register.

Stiegerwald Wildlife Refuge

The third Saturday of each month (except December) is a work party from 9am - 12:30pm. For details, visit the events calendar at <http://www.refugestewards.org/calendar.html>, call 360-835-8767 or email Jim.Clapp@fws.gov.

Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge

There are lots of great ways to get involved at RNWR. You can contact Lynn_Cornelius@fws.gov, 360-887-3883 x14 or visit their website at <http://www.fws.gov/ridgefieldrefuges/ridgefield/getinvolved.html>

GOOD TO KNOW

www.ParkHero.org is another great site to discover volunteer opportunities in Vancouver-Clark parks.
Take a moment to check it out - it is just a click away!
