

# Over the Fence

NEWS FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL...

## Fireside Homes

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"From Bierhaus To Your House"

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## March is:

**Optimism Month:** Research proves optimists achieve more health, prosperity and happiness than pessimists. Use this month long celebration to turn optimism into a delightful, permanent habit.

**Red Cross Month:** Being prepared for emergencies is crucial at home, school, work and in your community. The best way to make you and your family safer is to be prepared before disaster strikes, so get a kit, make a plan and be informed. For more information go to [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).

**Spring Forward on March 9, 2008!** Daylight Saving Time (DST) begins at 2 a.m. on March 9, so move clocks AHEAD one hour. DST ends at 2am on November 2, 2008.



## Change your clock, change a battery & change a bulb!

The National Fire Protection Association and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommend that consumers change the battery in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors when we change the clocks for DST.

While you've got the ladder out to check your smoke detectors, why not change a bulb? Switching to energy efficient bulbs in your ceiling fixtures could save you \$30 a year per bulb on your electricity bill.

## Poison prevention tips for National Poison Awareness Week, March 16–22

- zKnow what things in and around your home could poison you. Keep these products in their original packaging with the labels on them.
- Look at product labels for the words "Caution", "Warning", "Danger" or "Poison" on the box or bottle. Follow directions carefully when using these products.
- Be aware that fuels (such as gasoline), car fluids (such as anti-freeze), pesticides (such as bug killers), and lawn and garden products (such as fertilizer) are poison.
- Do not mix household products together because their contents could react with dangerous results.
- Install a carbon monoxide (CO) detector near the bedrooms and the furnace to warn you of high levels of CO, a deadly gas you cannot see or smell.
- Keep the Poison Control Hotline number by every phone or on the refrigerator. This number will connect you to emergency help in your area. You can also call the hotline if you have a question about poisons. It's free, private, and can save you a trip to the emergency room.

[www.poisoncontrol.org](http://www.poisoncontrol.org)

**Poison Control Hotline:**

**1-800-222-1222**

## First day of Spring is March 20!

Celebrate the first day of spring by throwing open your windows and letting the fresh air in and the stale air of winter out!

Spring clean your appliances the natural way with these green tips:

**Microwaves:** Mix 1/2 cup of water with a few teaspoons of baking soda in a microwave safe bowl. Put the bowl in the microwave and run it for 2 minutes. Take out the bowl and wipe it clean with just a rag; every last spot will come out!



**Coffee Makers:** When the coffee maker is empty pour in a mixture of 1 cup white vinegar and some hot water to fill up the reservoir to the top. Run the coffee maker as if you were making coffee, but without grounds in it. Once the cycle has finished, run it twice more with just plain water, which will rinse out the vinegar and any build-up left inside. The coffee will taste better the next time you make a cuppa Joe!

**Refrigerators:** Baking soda all the way... why would you want to spray chemicals in the giant box that holds your food? Make a nice paste from baking soda and water (equal parts of both) and scrub away. Wipe down with a clean cloth and all will be clean!



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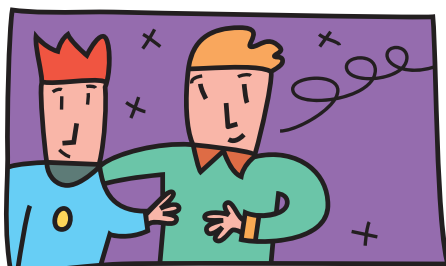
**Repair, Replace, Relax** with Fidelity National Home Warranty (FNHW). A home warranty from FNHW provides both the home buyer and seller with “peace of mind” when it comes to repairs and/or replacement of a home’s major systems and appliances. FNHW prides itself on superior customer service, including quick response time and efficient solutions for homeowners’ problems and needs. The homeowner only needs to make one call and pay one small service fee when a problem or a repair need arises.



*If you are thinking of buying or selling a home in the near future, please call for a personal interview and property assessment with no obligation.*



This is not intended as a solicitation if your property is currently listed with another agent. These materials contain information and articles obtained from third parties. FNHW does not endorse the recommendations of any third party nor guarantee the information provided is complete or correct.



## Helpful hints when choosing a tax return preparer

- Be cautious of tax preparers who claim they can obtain larger refunds than other preparers.
- Avoid preparers who base their fee on a percentage of the amount of the refund.
- Use a reputable tax professional who signs your tax return and provides you with a copy for your records.
- Consider whether the individual or firm will be around to answer questions about the preparation of your tax return months, or even years, after the return has been filed.
- Review your return before you sign it and ask questions on entries you don’t understand.

- No matter who prepares your tax return, you, the taxpayer, are ultimately responsible for all of the information on your tax return. Therefore, never sign a blank tax form.
- Find out the person’s credentials. Only attorneys, certified public accountants (CPAs) and enrolled agents can represent taxpayers before the IRS in all matters including audits, collection and appeals. Other return preparers may only represent taxpayers for audits of returns they actually prepared.
- Find out if the preparer is affiliated with a professional organization that provides its members with continuing education and resources and holds them to a code of ethics.
- Ask questions. Do you know anyone who has used the tax professional? Were they satisfied with the service they received?
- Reputable preparers will ask to see your receipts and will ask you multiple questions to determine your qualifications for expenses, deductions and other items. By doing so, they are trying to help you avoid penalties, interest or additional taxes that could result from an IRS examination.

www.irs.org

## SPRING SPINACH, KIWI AND STRAWBERRY SALAD

### Ingredients:

- 2 bunches spinach, washed and torn
  - 2 kiwis, peeled and sliced
  - 1 quart strawberries, hulled and sliced
- ### Dressing:
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds
  - 1 tablespoon poppy seeds
  - 1/4 cup cider vinegar
  - 1/4 cup granulated sugar
  - 1/2 cup salad oil
  - 1 teaspoon worcestershire sauce
  - 1/2 teaspoon paprika
  - 4 teaspoons minced onion

Combine dressing ingredients together in a jar. Cover and shake well. Let stand to blend flavors. At serving time, place spinach in a salad bowl. Add kiwis and strawberries. Toss with dressing. Serves 10.