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(/)

Friday, October 23, 2020

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Call to action: Brainstorming future programs with the Chestnut Hill Conservancy

Posted Friday, October 23, 2020 10:09 am

By Kim and Iain Dukes

Our family moved to Chestnut Hill because we were drawn to its strong sense of history, community, and culture. One of the first things we did once we settled in was to join the Chestnut Hill Historical Society, founded in 1967 and now known as the Chestnut Hill Conservancy. The Conservancy's constant efforts to preserve Chestnut Hill's unique architecture, open spaces and pocket parks make the area a vibrant and beautiful place to live and raise a family. Over time we have enjoyed becoming progressively more involved in the areas of fundraising, program development and historic preservation.

You might think this requires a lot of time and effort, but it is typically just 2-3 hours/month. We have found that offering help – not only to the Conservancy but to other local groups - not only benefits the community, but it makes us feel good as well. For us, having a positive experience despite the ongoing pandemic has been significantly tied to doing good for others.

With fall weather upon us, we are super excited about the annual Night of Lights community event now running through October 25. This year it takes place as a self-guided, interactive tour on view every night from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. But Fall also triggers the Conservancy's Public Program Development initiatives where any member of the community can participate in a brainstorming session targeted at developing program concepts, suggesting interesting speakers and experts, and if your schedule allows, helping the Program Committee make the programs happen!

In addition to the Night of Lights event, current programs include "Discovering Chestnut Hill" lectures and tours showcasing area history, architecture, and green space, and the "Ask the Experts" Home and Garden series. The latter provides practical information useful to renovating, restoring, and maintaining the area's beautiful homes and gardens. Such community-based efforts over time have helped earn Chestnut Hill the monikers of one of the nation's largest National Register Districts and Philadelphia's Garden District. Many programs are free or require only a nominal donation.

In these unprecedented times, community interaction and support are more important than ever. The Conservancy's Fall brainstorming session is scheduled to take place virtually in November 2020. Do you have some ideas you would like to share for future programs? If so, why not let your creative ideas be heard? Interested parties can register for participation by emailing info@chconservancy.org. Alternatively, you can send in your program suggestions and ideas to the same email address either before the meeting or any time thereafter.

Our "new normal" lifestyle offers great, new opportunities for social bonding and other ways of connecting to and helping people. Consider getting involved – at least give it a try! More community engagement now will only help the Conservancy and the Chestnut Hill area emerge in a stronger state after this pandemic ends. Something we can all look forward to.

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