

The Woodlands



Keeping You Informed For Over 40 Years

March 2009

The Woodlands Newsletter is Your Newsletter – Want to Write Something?

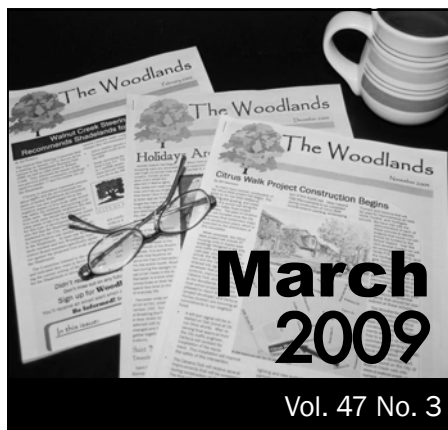
The Woodlands newsletter provides a community service by keeping neighborhood residents informed about issues and events of interest. In the past, we have run articles on a wide range of issues, including local history, home improvement, seasonal events, sports registration, scouting, Cabana Club updates, city planning, nearby development projects, schools, good neighbor suggestions, information on city codes, individual recognition, crime reports, and many other topics of interest. While some of these articles were written by board members, many were written by other neighborhood residents that have interest in the topics.

Often, we receive questions or suggestions from neighbors on topics they would like to see addressed in the newsletter. We try to accommodate these requests, but because of our size, we are limited in addressing everyone's concerns. We encourage and welcome articles by Woodlands residents addressing topics that may be of interest to our neighbors. If you would like to contribute an article, please contact us and we will be happy to work with you to help get it edited and published. Our publication guidelines are relatively simple – topics should be of interest to Woodlands residents, the newsletter can not be used as a forum to air issues between individuals, and articles may need to be edited to fit within available space. To meet our publication schedule for a monthly newsletter, we have established a closing date of the 10th of each month. To the extent that space is available, articles received and ready for print by the 10th of the month will be published in the next version of the newsletter.

We appreciate your help in making the newsletter as informative, useful, and relevant to Woodlands residents. If you're interested in submitting an article, please send an e-mail to woodlandsasn@yahoo.com

A Thanks to Carl's Jr.

The Woodlands Board thanks Carl's Jr. for their consistent hospitality to our organization. Starting several years ago, we began holding our board meetings in the Carl's Jr. Community Room on the first Saturday morning each month. We have consistently been welcome and the space has been made available. We appreciate your support and look forward to future meetings at your facility.



Free Tax Help Available

AARP-Tax-Aide will be offering free tax preparation assistance to low and middle income taxpayers of all ages beginning in February and ending April 9th at the following Walnut Creek locations:

- Thursdays beginning Feb. 5th from 9am-2pm at Civic Park Community Center, 1375 Civic Dr. For an appointment, please call 925-943-5851.
- Mondays & Tuesdays beginning Feb. 9th from 9am-3pm at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1924 Trinity Ave. For an appointment, please call 925-938-3387 (press#1).

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<http://www.woodlandsassn.org/boardmembers.htm>

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Be sure to bring all your tax records including W-2's 1099's, social security numbers of people to be listed on your return, your prior year tax return, as well as any other income or deduction support needed for your return.

Guest Article: Neighborhood Communication

By: Sid Hayes

My husband and I are privileged to have lived in Woodlands for 8 years. We know maintenance is necessary for our homes to remain beautiful. Maintenance, however, comes with a myriad of unattractive factors.

For instance, our recent kitchen remodel required the use of unattractive dumpsters. Recently, a City of Walnut Creek code enforcer handed me a "Community Enhancement Notice" stating our dumpster was a "Miscellaneous Nuisance." This was an anonymous complaint and no one had contacted us about the dumpsters previously. The dumpster removal date had already been scheduled.

Sometimes complaints must be made to the City, but this should be a last resort. Perhaps a more productive remedy would be to contact the other party to attempt a friendly resolution. This can give you the opportunity to get to know your neighbors better and to learn what they're working on to make our neighborhood a better place.

Woodlands Association Board of Directors

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- Joe Casey ~ *Member at Large*

Kay Ready ~ *Newsletter Distribution Manager*

Board email ID's can be found at www.WoodlandsAssn.org

Upcoming Board Meetings

Saturday, March 7th
 at 8:15 am
 and
 Saturday, April 4th
 at 8:15 am
 in Carl's Jr.
 Conference Room

Woodlands residents
 are encouraged to
 attend board meetings

March Means Girl Scout Cookie Time!!

This is the time of year many of us look forward to biting into that creamy, yet crunchy Thin Mint cookie or dipping that Trefoil in a hot cup of tea. Yes, Girl Scouts continue their long-standing tradition of selling their world famous cookies. Booth sales begin on March 6 and end on March 22. Please stop by to purchase a box or two in support of Girl Scouts. You can find us at:

Countrywood Safeway
 Broadway Safeway
 Nob Hill
 Trader Joes (downtown Walnut Creek)
 Peet's Locust
 Peet's Ygnacio Vly Road
 Starbuck's Locust
 Sports Basement
 Bank of America (Oak Grove Road)
 76 Gas Station (@ Civic & Ygnacio Valley)
 Autopia Car Wash (N. Main Street)



You can also support our Military Troops, The Food Bank or the Red Cross, by making a tax deductible donation. This program is called "Gift of Caring". You purchase boxes that will be delivered by Girl Scouts to your charity of choice. The charity wins, you win with your tax deduction and Girl Scouts wins by providing community service and making a small profit toward their campaign. You can talk about this with the troop at the booth or any Girl Scout you may know. Thank you for your support!

Keeping Your Kids Safe Around Dogs

By: Scott Secrest, K-9 Academy

Breed characteristics, socialization, temperament, age and health are some of the determining factors of how a dog reacts to any given circumstance. Dominance and prey drive are the instinctual triggers in dogs that kids pull.

A child that is scared will scream and run, much like a dogs prey would behave. This is the very reason they put squeakers in dog toys because it gets their attention. You squeak the toy and throw it and your dog chases it.

For the fearless child who is used to hugging and playing with their own dog or a dog they know well, teach them to not assume that they can treat all dogs the same loveable way you treat your own. They should never approach a dog unless a competent adult gives the ok.

Parents consider this advice. If your child finds themselves in danger (real or perceived) of being attacked or bitten, they should STOP whatever it is that they are doing. Do NOT run or yell. Stand still and silent while lowering their heads till they are looking at their toes. Do not make eye contact with the dog. Relax arms and hands down the side of there body, breath normally. Stay that way till the dog loses interest and there is aid from an adult.

Valle Verde Elementary Performs Aladdin Jr!

Tickets are \$5 each. Performance dates and times are: Thursday, March 12 at 7pm, Friday, March 13, at 7pm, Saturday, March 14 at 2pm and 6pm. Place: Valle Verde MUR. Please contact Gloria Bertolozzi at 944-7009 or at gbertolozzi@yahoo.com for tickets.

Woodlands Association Volunteers Still Needed - Welcome Joe Casey

In January we ran an article on open positions for the Woodlands Association and were very pleased with the positive feedback we received. Joe Casey has agreed to assist with the community/neighborhood relations position and we are very excited to have him join the group. We still are looking for volunteers to help with the roles and duties described below. All positions are voluntary and each takes about 1 to 2 hours per month, in addition to attendance at 1 monthly board meeting. They include:

Crime Report – this involves putting together the monthly Crime Report for our neighborhood newsletter. All of the information comes from the WCPD website. This takes less than an hour each month and is appreciated by many in the neighborhood.

Newsletter Coordinator – this involves compiling articles (most are written by other members) and coordinating with an outside contract printing company to assure they have all the information needed for the monthly newsletter.

Advertising Coordinator – this involves contacting regular advertisers to assure their ads are received in time. It also could involve contacting past advertisers or potential new advertisers.

Webmaster – this involves updating information on the Woodlands web-site (Woodlandsassn.org) and posting monthly newsletters and other information.

The Woodlands board is very flexible in how any duties are assigned to individuals and is very open to any and all interested people that want to help. We have experienced people that can provide training and encouragement to help you get started in any role you would like. Please consider helping out to make your neighborhood a better place.

Please contact us by e-mail at woodlandsassn@yahoo.com, call our Secretary Elsie Witt at 935-0463, or join us at our next monthly board meeting. Meeting times and locations are listed in the newsletter on pg. 2.

Bluebirds Need a Helping Hand

Bluebirds are being seen more frequently in Lime Ridge North because the habitat restoration work gives them more places to perch and hunt. However, they will not become permanent residents unless they have somewhere to nest and there are very few suitable old trees.

The WC Open Space Foundation would like to put up some bluebird nest boxes to help them. The boxes must be monitored every two weeks for about three months in the spring. Monitors keep records on nesting activity and fledging success. If you would like to help or get more information, please call Brian Murphy at 937-8835.



SCAMMED

By: Kay Ready, Woodlands Homeowner and Newsletter Distribution Manager

Yep, it happened to me right here in the Woodlands. Two young people knocked on my door & when I opened the door (which was a big mistake since I didn't know them & didn't ask to see their permit to solicit) they explained they were neighbors who lived on Citrus, whose father was retired military. They were home schooled & played on a soccer team that was attached to a larger school trying to earn money to go to London to play. They were selling books that would go to the Children's Hospital. Of course, I assumed it was Oakland's, but based on the internet, it probably was not. They said our neighbors up the street (had their name & occupation) said to come & see us. We wrote the checks & sent them merrily on their way.

After they left, I had a strange feeling, called my neighbor & nope, they had not seen them. I got in the car, found them & said we changed our minds & wanted our checks back. They said they had turned them in, but would return in a half hour. That was the last time I saw them. I went on the Internet and discovered they were based out of Phoenix & several reports confirmed I was one of many who fell for their sales pitch. I called the police to alert them.

We also went to our bank who advised us that stopping payment wasn't enough because they could make copies of the checks. The best way to protect ourselves was to close our account & open a new one.

I wanted to share this with the neighborhood because I thought we were scam savvy. Wrong! I trusted these young people because they said they were neighbors. If solicitors come to your door, be sure to ask them for their solicitation permit before giving them your hard earned money.

Mt. Diablo Unified School District Board of Education Meeting February 10

By: Joe Casey

What promised to be an emotionally-charged public hearing on the state of the MDUSD's budget reductions kicked off with the surprise announcement that Gary McHenry, District Superintendent since 1999, has resigned his position, and Dick Nicoll, a 30-year veteran of MDUSD and Assistant Superintendent since 1996, has been named Interim Superintendent. The standing-room only crowd was initially set back on their heels with the announcement. Mr. McHenry has been viewed by many to be an effective administrator during his tenure, and the board publicly stated their thanks for his years of service.

The meeting then moved to the results of a recent survey of district households on the question of a parcel tax. A parcel tax, whose roots date back Prop.13, is a tax on real estate parcels, not on the value of those parcels, and allows local governments to levy a "special tax" on district households. The term "special" refers to the fact that 100% of the monies generated are targeted to critical spending needs, such as class-size reduction, sustaining after-school programs, physical education, and the arts.

Six-hundred households were surveyed to gain perspective on the implementation of this tax. The surveys results showed that to meet the 2/3rd majority needed, keeping the tax to two figures (less than \$100 per parcel) was critical in gaining support for this measure. It also determined that the more educated the voter – understanding how state budget cuts would further curtail many of the programs described above – the higher the voter support was for the measure.

The remainder of the meeting focused on budget reductions. The district has slashed \$5.6 million thus far, with the mandate that they reach \$6.6 million by 2/24. Many impassioned speakers (Cambridge Elementary was particularly well represented) made appeals to the board to spare their school the cuts that are sure to come, but that may be all for naught as the MDUSD board must balance their budget every year. These cuts highlighted the need for a parcel tax for MDUSD.

School News

Source: e-Gazette 2/4/09

MDUSD Homework Policy

HOMEWORK



MDUSD staff are working on a new/revised homework policy. They provided one survey last fall and, based on those results, have developed a new survey for interested individuals to complete. The link to that survey is as follows:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/>

If you would like a voice in how this policy is written, please complete the survey and forward the link to others who may be interested.

Northgate High School Incoming 9th Grade Registration

Northgate High School invites you to the **Incoming 9th Grade Registration Night for Parents and Students.**

Last Name A - L - Wednesday, March 18, 2009

Last Name M - Z - Thursday, March 19, 2009

6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Northgate High School Gymnasium

Please join us for a presentation to help you and your student plan courses for the 2009/10 school year at Northgate High School. For more information go to <http://www.northgatehs-pfc.com/home/incomingfreshmen.pdf>

Math & Science for Girls



3rd Annual "Expand Your Horizons Science and Mathematics Career Conference" for Middle School Girls

The conference is scheduled for March 7th from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Diablo Valley College.

For more information about this conference please see the website www.dvc.edu/eyh or contact Carla Rosas at croasas@dvc.edu or 685-1230 ext. 2049.

A Day for Middle School Girls

The 10th Annual Sister-to-Sister summit open to middle-school girls

Saturday, March 7th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Orinda Intermediate School

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) - Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette and Walnut Creek branch, sponsors this summit for and about middle-school girls.

The event is planned and facilitated by volunteer high-school girls from the Acalanes Union High School District. Through fun activities, presentations, and small discussion groups, the middle school girls learn to become more supportive of each other, make healthy choices and develop leadership skills.

The cost is \$30. It includes a lunch, beverages, and a T-shirt. Parents are invited to drop-off their girls and stay for a one-hour parenting workshop on raising middle-school girls.

Registration is required and should be completed before February 28, 2009. For more information and registration go to www.aauwoml.org or call (925) 942-0102.

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A Midsummer Night's Midterm



Drama I and Stagecraft Present

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S MIDTERM

based on William Shakespeare's play adapted by Robert W. LaVohn

Thursday, February 26 and Friday, February 27, 2009

7:00 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. Foothill MU Room

Multi-Cultural Day

We are excited to announce that we will have our first Multi Cultural Day on April 23rd! We are planning to have a morning assembly with students dressed in native costumes, sharing native dances or traditions. We are also planning to have the same assembly in the evening for families as well as a pot luck dinner to share cultural food.

We have eight teachers coordinating the project but we would love to have some parent volunteers to help us. If you are interested in helping out in any manner please e-mail Ms. Iglesias at iglesiasn@mdusd.k12.ca.us or Patty Cochran in the office at cochranp@mdusd.k12.ca.us.

We are looking forward to an exciting day to celebrate our diversity at Foothill.

Patty Cochran
Office Manager
Foothill Middle School
939-8600 ext. 5701

Library Volunteers

We Need Foothill Library Volunteers!



Are you interested in helping in the library? For just an hour a week (or every other week), you can help keep the library open to students during brunch and lunch. This is an important resource for our children to do their homework, study for tests, take out books and print out assignments.

We especially need an additional volunteer during Wed. lunch (11:10 am-12:40 pm), Friday lunch (11:30 am - 12:50 pm) and Thursday brunch (10:04 - 10:14 am).

Please email me if you can help keep our library open during these times. Thanks!

Mary Hain Rinehart
mhr10@pacbell.net

938-8938
Parent Volunteer Library Coordinator

Student Poetry Contest

As part of its annual celebration of poetry, the WCLF, in partnership with the Lindsay Wildlife Museum, is sponsoring the first poetry contest for Walnut Creek students. The entry deadline is March 1st and the award ceremony will be held on April 25. Prizes will be awarded in four grade categories: K-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Visit www.wclibrary.org to download the Contest Entry Form or for more information, contact the WCLF at 925-935-5395 or info@wclibrary.org.

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Come and get splurged! The fabulous Walnut Acres Children's Theatre invites you to join them for a kid-friendly version of "Bugsy Malone Jr.," a night of rollicking, fast paced fun for the whole family that will leave everyone in stitches.

This year Walnut Acres has scheduled **Saturday, March 7th as the ALUMNI show for previous cast members**; come meet up with your old friends!

Show dates are: February 27 at 7:30 p.m., February 28 at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., March 6 at 2:00 p.m., and March 7 at 2:00 p.m (ALUMNI SHOW). and 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$5.00 for matinee performances and \$8.00 for evening shows. For tickets and information, please email bugsymalone2009@yahoo.com or purchase at the booth ticket table at Walnut Acres on February 19 at 2:15 and February 25 at 12:15. Last minute tickets will be available at the door as well while supplies last.

NORTHGATE NEWS

Save the Date! NORTHGATE'S

Campus Clean-Up Day March 21st, 9am-1pm

In October, we had over 450 people come to campus to work together to improve our school! The majority of the volunteers were students who worked inside and out to improve our campus.

Adult volunteers are critical to the success of Clean-up Day so please join your student to work for a few hours on March 21st and bring your tools!

Our goal is to improve the appearance of our campus, build community by working together, and foster a sense of pride and stewardship for the area that is like a second home for students and staff.

We are developing our list of projects for the day, and spreading the word to school clubs, teams, students, parents, and staff.

If you would like to help in any way, please email Donna Warnken-Brill at rhinojwb@astound.net



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**Letter from Monica Fitzgerald
PFC President 2008-09**

Dear Northgate Community,

This is such an amazing community. I continue to be inspired by how parents and students want to help make Northgate the best school possible. Through music boosters, athletic boosters, Northgate Pride and the Parent Faculty Club, so many people are working to improve the school. We also continue to work through issues that parents brought up in the school survey. To meet some of those needs, we are creating a new community fundraising event, as an opportunity to bring people together and to raise additional revenue for Northgate.

We are very excited to announce that the Northgate High School Parent Faculty Club will hold its first ever Spring Social and Live Auction on Saturday evening, April 4th at the Walnut Creek Marriott. The proceeds will benefit all of our students and enhance our school's educational programs. The theme of the event is "It's Time for a Change". During these challenging times of state and local school budget cuts, we feel it is necessary to ask for parent support. If NHS is to continue on with its quest to enhance its educational programs and maintain its standing as a California Distinguished School, we need your help. We are keeping the ticket prices low because we want as many families as possible to attend. This will be a great opportunity to interact with other parents and staff.

There are many ways that you can help. You can come to the event, make a donation in the form of goods or services, you can make cash donations to underwrite some of the expenses, or you can volunteer to help. All donations, regardless of size or value are welcome and appreciated. More information will be going out shortly via E-news with event details, donation information, etc. If you have any questions or would like to help, please contact Margo Chafetz at chafe97@aol.com. Until then, please mark you calendars for Saturday night, April 4th.

Please join us for a fun evening, and create the change we all desire.

Go Broncos!

Monica Fitzgerald (mldfitzgeral@gmail.com)

PFC President

PFC website

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MARC

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Please note: the actual sizes below allow for binding/bleed space. Size = height x width in inches

Full Page – 10 x 7.5 - \$80/month

½ Page – 5 x 7.5 - \$45/month

¼ Page – 5 x 3.5 - \$25/month

¼ Page on back cover - \$45/month

1/8 Page – 2.5 x 3.5 - \$15/month

Want Ads - line ad with 30 words or less:

\$5 Woodlands Residents, \$13 Non-Residents

Next Advertising Deadline

**Please submit all ads and
payments for the next issue by**

March 15, 2009

Submission Guidelines

- Please submit your ad in the actual size/dimensions listed above.
- Ad should be formatted with any artwork you want included at the time of submittal.
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