

# The Woodlands

Keeping You Informed For Over 40 Years

December 2009

## Traditional British Mince Pies

By Jessica Williams

If you would like to bring a different sweet treat to your table this holiday season, why not try baking some traditional British mince pies! These are a festive sweet pastry, traditionally consumed during the Christmas and New Year period. Mince pies have been eaten as part of a traditional British Christmas since as long ago as the 16th century. Back then they were made of meat but are now filled with sweet mincemeat; a preserve typically containing a mixture of apple, dried fruits such as raisins and sultanas, sugar, spices, and brandy. Mince pies normally have a pastry top, but versions may also be found without the top in which case they are known as *mince tarts*. Mincemeat pops up on supermarket shelves during the holiday season and should not be too tricky to find. Give them a try!



### Ingredients – makes 24

1 packet of bought puff/flakey pastry  
1 small jar of mincemeat  
1 egg beaten  
Powdered sugar

- Heat oven to 425F/gas 7
- Roll out pastry to 1/16 -1/8 inch
- Cut 2 ½ inch rounds with plain cutter
- Cut 2 inch rounds with plain cutter for tops
- Fit larger rounds in patty/muffin tins (the shallower the better)
- Put 1 teaspoon of mincemeat in each
- Dampen edges of pie bases with cold water and place smaller rounds on top and press to seal
- Make a small hole in the top of each pie with a small sharp knife to let steam out
- Brush with egg wash for a baked golden glaze
- Bake towards top of oven for 15-20 minutes until light golden brown
- Remove and cool on rack before sifting powdered sugar over lightly to decorate

\* To be decorative, cut stars or other fancy shapes for lids and omit the hole for steam

\*\* Suet may be an ingredient in the preserve, making mince pies unsuitable for vegetarians



# Illegal Postings in Our Neighborhood

By Jessica Williams

In recent months, there have been a number of illegal postings in our neighborhood, brought to our attention by one of our readers. Literature posted on telephone poles, street signs, transformers, and trees are not allowed under Walnut Creek City ordinances.

Though these postings may seem harmless, they aren't a positive reflection on our neighborhood and detract from the enjoyable visual experience of The Woodlands. They are also an invasion of people's privacy, especially as some postings have been stapled to the trees in the yards of residents.

If you are one of the posters, please be considerate of your neighbors and refrain from issuing these postings. With a little attention and proactive behavior, we can take care of this matter as a community, rather than involve the City officials. We all want to keep The Woodlands as one of the most desirable places to live in the East Bay.

Postings that are pleas for help to find lost pets would seem acceptable – as long as they are removed as quickly as they are put up once the pet is found. If you would like to promote your products or services, advertise in The Woodlands newsletter – then every household will see your offering, professionally presented.

You can call Walnut Creek City Code enforcement at 925-890-4763 to report illegal postings and for assistance. Thank you for your attention to this article.

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## Want to Write Something?



The Woodlands newsletter provides a community service by keeping neighborhood residents informed about issues and events of interest. We encourage Woodlands residents to submit articles for the newsletter and we regularly receive articles that are published in the newsletter.

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 (typical length is 200 words or less). To meet our publication schedule for a monthly newsletter, we have established a closing date of the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. To the extent that space is available, articles received and ready for print by the 10<sup>th</sup> 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. To submit an article, please write to [woodlandsassn@yahoo.com](mailto:woodlandsassn@yahoo.com).

Established in 1965, the *Woodlands Newsletter* is a monthly publication that is published by the Woodlands Association. Archived issues are located at [www.WoodlandsAssn.org](http://www.WoodlandsAssn.org)

**Newsletter Advertising:**  
 Marc Graves 336-6272 (Marc)  
[Woodlandsassn@yahoo.com](mailto:Woodlandsassn@yahoo.com)

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**Web Site Inquiries:**  
 Brian Rower ~ [Woodlandsassn@yahoo.com](mailto:Woodlandsassn@yahoo.com)

**Neighborhood Inquiries:**  
 e-mail a Board member @  
<http://www.woodlandsassn.org/boardmembers.htm>

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## Woodlands Association Board of Directors

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Board email ID's can be found at [www.WoodlandsAssn.org](http://www.WoodlandsAssn.org)

## Upcoming Board Meetings

**Saturday, December 12th**  
 at 8:15 am  
 and  
**Saturday, January 2nd**  
 at 8:15 am  
 in Carl's Jr.  
 Conference Room

Woodlands residents are encouraged to attend board meetings

# Giving Back at Christmas

By Jessica Williams

Who can believe that this year has only a handful of weeks left? I tend to be in a wrap-up-this-year mode once the holiday season starts but this year, more than ever, I want to be prepared and put my time and effort towards helping those who need it most.

Christmas is a time when giving can take on special meaning. There are many worthwhile organizations and opportunities that provide needed services and support. With the state of the economy, it makes the concern even more pointed. It doesn't matter how much or how many you help, a little can easily go a long way. I just hope you give my suggestions some consideration. *\*Please be sure to read the websites carefully before sending anything.*

- **Classroom Wish Lists**

Practically every classroom needs supplies, and every teacher has a list of items needed in class. Pop into a local school you'd like to help out and ask what can be replenished.

- **Adopt-A-Family programs**

Most communities have an office that lists families in need and specific items that can be purchased for them. Google the many options and be a helping hand.

- **Operation Christmas Child** [www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org)

Benefits children around the world. As a family, fill, wrap and send shoe boxes with fun and useful gifts. Next year, collect throughout the year.

- **Salvation Army Bell Ringers** [www.ringbells.org](http://www.ringbells.org)

Volunteers are always needed at donation kettles and to greet shoppers donating to this organization. Wrap up warm and volunteer with family and friends.

- **Neighborly Love**

Cheer up an elderly neighbor with a stocking full of teas, gourmet cookies and a kind, handwritten note or card. A simple gesture will be greatly appreciated.

**Soldiers' Angels:** You can adopt a soldier from a branch of the military who is serving overseas and make sure they get a nice holiday care package. This organization is about giving back to the women and men who sacrifice so much; they are the ones that make my life so comfortable as I sit here and write this. There are over twenty different facets that the Soldiers' Angels Fund helps with so you can review those at their website: [www.soldiersangels.org](http://www.soldiersangels.org). One hundred percent of the proceeds will go to the particular project it was meant for.

**Any Soldier:** For years I have wanted to use this source to write to a soldier overseas and become one of its world-wide supporters. Any Soldier Inc. started in August 2003 as a simple family effort to help the soldiers in one Army unit. Due to overwhelming requests, the Any Soldier effort has been expanded to include any member of the Armed Forces in harm's way. [www.anysoldier.com](http://www.anysoldier.com)

The important thing is that we give. That we give back to those less fortunate than ourselves so that lives can be lifted up and given hope. After all, that is what the Christmas season is all about, faith and hope for a better tomorrow and thankfulness for all we have — no matter how bad it may seem right now.

*Merry Christmas!*

# School News

Valle Verde Elementary School

Source: Valle Verde e-voice Nov. 09

## STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS: Lost & Found, Spirit Days

### LOST AND FOUND:

Our lost and found is growing out of control! Please retrieve your items from the lost and found currently located in the MUR. Items will be on display in the quad or hosted at VVCC from 12/7 - 12/11. They are set to be donated to One Warm Coat by 12/18.



### SPIRIT DAYS and VIKINGS:

Student Council's upcoming spirit day will be on 12/4, Backwards Day. Sports Day will be on Friday, January 8. Please continue to wear your Viking spirit wear each Friday. And, speaking of Vikings, Student Council has contributed money towards buying more prizes so that we will be able to have a Viking exchange before the end of the calendar year! Be on the lookout for your opportunity to cash in your Vikings.

## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC NEWS:



### Congratulations to our outstanding music students!

- Euna P., Violin: Neck medal**
- Gavin R., Trombone: Ribbon medal**
- Alyssa A. , Clarinet: Ribbon medal**
- Karen M., Viola: Ribbon medal**

Parents, did you know that instrumental music, (band and orchestra), has been cut for next year? Unless there is a parcel tax, or miraculous stipend from the federal government, there will be no band or orchestra offered in the school day for elementary students!!

What does this mean? 99.9% of students currently playing in high school, started their instruments in 4th grade. The result of this cut would be devastating. Imagine a high school football game with no marching band, pep band, half time show., music for cheer-leaders, spirit, and enthusiasm the musicians provide. Not only that, but did you know playing an instrument is the only activity that engages BOTH sides of the brain simultaneously? AND that being in band/orchestra is a wonderful, unique social group that helps with those major transitions: elementary to middle school, middle to high school? Lastly, playing an instrument equips students to be successful in life: the focus, discipline, team work they receive is unparalleled.

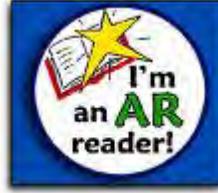
What can you do to reverse this trend? Contact government officials to let them know this is not O.K. Join the foundation set up to keep music in our district: [www.mtdiablomusic.org](http://www.mtdiablomusic.org)

## LOST AND FOUND:

Check out the lost clothing hanging on the rolling racks in the MUR. There is also a box that is holding lost lunch bags and small items next to the stage. All items that are still there on Friday, December 18 will be donated to a charity. We do this again at Spring Break and Summer Break.



## ACCELERATED READER PROGRAM:



The Accelerated Reader program encourages our children to read by testing their comprehension for classic and current books that they read everyday! We have over 3000 tests in Valle Verde's AR program with many popular titles that kids love!

That said, we're always looking for more titles! If your child is reading a book, and they find that there is no AR test in our computer system, simply fill out an order form (found in the office), or email Karen Brajkovich at [brakenship@astound.net](mailto:brakenship@astound.net). There are still PTA funds available to cover the cost of these tests! After funds are gone, tests are only \$ 3.00!

You can scan the list of titles on Valle Verde's website at <http://www.mdusd.k12.ca.us/valleverde/VVSITE/ar.html> The AR list is now sorted by title, by author, AND by book level! It's easier than ever to find a book your child will love! Keep those kids reading - order an AR test today!

## INTRADISTRICT Transfer for the 2010-2011 School Year

The window has opened for parents to apply for an Intradistrict Transfer. The application is available in the Foothill Office and must be turned in the District Office by January 15, 2010.

Who should apply for an Intradistrict Transfer?

- \* 8th graders who are currently on an Intradistrict Transfer and wish to attend Northgate or another high school that is not in their residence area
- \* 8th graders who do not live in the Northgate attendance area
- \* The forms must be turned into the MDUSD Administrative Office at MDUSD Student Services, 1936 Carlotta Drive, Concord, CA 94519.
- \* The application deadline is January 15, 2010

As per the Intradistrict Transfer agreement, students on Intradistrict Transfers can be displaced prior to September 15th of each school year IF student's residing in the Foothill attendance area cannot be scheduled.

## ANNUAL SPELLING BEE IS COMING: 1/26



It's time to start studying for Valle Verde's annual Spelling Bee. This year it will be held on Tuesday, January 26, 2010 in our MUR.

This competition is open to all 4th & 5th graders. Each class will select 6 students to compete, with 2 alternates per classroom. Most classes will give a special test to see who wins the honor of representing their classroom. To start improving your spelling, go to [www.spellingbee.com](http://www.spellingbee.com). The user id is: [mckimmiem@mdusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:mckimmiem@mdusd.k12.ca.us) and the password is [vikings](#).

Note: A paper copy of tips and tricks to improve your spelling skills is in each classroom.

## IT'S ALICE IN WONDERLAND: 3/11-13



Auditions for Valle Verde's annual school play have begun...and starting in January, our 4th and 5th grade thespians (and their parents) will work very hard to surprise you with a fantastic production!

Mark your calendars now to join us for...

**ALICE IN WONDERLAND**

**MUR**

**MARCH 11TH, 12TH & 13TH**

We are thrilled to welcome back our experienced & professional theater crew from the years past: Tracey Garber as director, Diane Kamrin from Diablo Light Company as choreographer, and Kathy Frattini for vocals. Denise Bird and Sara Wade will be the producers.

If you have any questions, please contact our parent coordinator Sabine Kroeber (292-0948) ([skroeber@astound.net](mailto:skroeber@astound.net))

## CONTINENTAL BASEBALL & SOFTBALL REGISTRATION:

Softball Registration Time!

Are you looking for a Spring sport for your daughter?

Continental and Walnut Creek Softball Leagues have combined to bring you a bigger and better softball program!



Register at Ygnacio Valley Elementary:

Saturday Nov 14 10am - 1pm

Wednesday Dec 2 7pm - 9pm

Saturday Dec 12 10am - 1pm

Or register online at [www.ContinentalBaseball.com](http://www.ContinentalBaseball.com)

CLL Boundaries:

Can your child play for Continental Little League? Check out the boundary map by checking the following URL: <http://mdusd.k12.ca.us/valleverde/Flyers/boundary%20map.pdf>.

## SANTA IS SKYDIVING INTO CONCORD: 12/5

Contra Costa County Airports, in conjunction with Bay Area Skydiving and the Crowne Plaza Hotel, are pleased to announce the return of Skydiving Santa.

Santa will be descending upon Buchanan Field and Byron Airports on Saturday, December 5, 2009. This event benefits the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.

### GENERAL INFORMATION:

- SANTA SKYDIVE IS FREE!!
- The jump at Buchanan Field Airport is at approximately 11:00 a.m. behind the Crowne Plaza Hotel (45 John Glenn Drive, Concord).  
The jump at Byron Airport is at approximately 3:00 p.m. across from Bay Area Skydiving (6900 Falcon Way, Byron).
- Anyone who would like to take a picture with Santa Claus is encouraged to bring a non-perishable food item for and/or donation to the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.
- In the case of inclement weather, Santa will be greeting the kids inside the Crowne Plaza Hotel at Buchanan Field and in the Bay Area Skydiving hangar at Byron Airport.





# WOODLANDS CRIME REPORT

*Thank you to Kathy Master  
for compiling this report from the WCPD website*

The information in this Crime Report is taken from the Police Daily Bulletin as posted for public viewing on the Walnut Creek Police Department's website. The entire Walnut Creek police daily bulletin can be viewed at: [www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/police/bulletin.asp](http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/police/bulletin.asp). The Woodlands Newsletter typically includes the highlights of the monthly police activity in our neighborhood, as available print-space is limited. The website is a useful resource for keeping apprised of activity generating a police response in the Woodlands, in our adjacent neighborhoods and in the rest of the City.

09-23502 (*incident number*) 10/11/09 13:20:20 (*date and time*) **Auto Theft** 500 block Fireside Court. 2003 Blue Jeep Cherokee taken during the night. All keys accounted for, payments current. Ofc. Clemente

09-23602 10/12/09 17:46:36 **Suspicious Circumstance** Peachwillow Lane/Peppertree Rd. Subject approached RP's daughter and another female and asked strange questions. Last seen going towards Oak Grove Rd 1 minute ago. Subject described as white male adult in his 60's wearing purple shirt and blue jeans. Dispo: Unable to locate, unable to reach RP to determine what was suspicious. Ofc. Donleavy

09-23609 10/12/09 20:49:10 **Suspicious Person** Bayberry Drive/Perada Drive. Suspicious male walking up and down the street. Just got into an old Ford, light blue with silver, partial plate 8E5. Dispo: Gone on arrival: Ofc. Donleavy

09-23709 10/13/09 22:06:19 **Hit and Run** 3300 block Perada Drive. Occurred 25 minutes ago. Unknown suspect-vehicle hit brown 1997 Buick Park Avenue causing major damage. Dispo: Suspect vehicle blue in color, no other leads. Ofc. Hurlbut



## LOW COST TEETH CLEANING

My name is Amanda Rogan. I am in the Dental Hygiene Program @ Chabot College in Hayward. I am looking for people who have not had their teeth cleaned in a while who are interested in receiving a complete dental cleaning. This includes an oral cancer screening, fluoride treatment, polishing, a toothbrush, floss, toothpaste & oral care instructions under the supervision of faculty made up of licensed dentists & dental hygienists. The very low clinic prices range from \$20-\$60 depending on patient need, but other financial arrangements may be made. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call (925) 951-7254 or email [amandayourhygienist@yahoo.com](mailto:amandayourhygienist@yahoo.com)

09-23929 10/16/09 18:31:46 **Noise Complaint** 3200 block Peachwillow Lane. Approximately 12-15 juveniles in the parking playing loud music. Associated with white Nissan Altima. RP thinks juveniles are under the influence. Dispo: Gone on arrival. Ofc.

## TZIPAY HOME IMPROVEMENT & REMODELING

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References Please Call **Paul Fleck 676-6607**

**MCS Painting and Design** [www.mclovekraft.com](http://www.mclovekraft.com)

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- Specializing in unique art murals for children's bedrooms.
- Please call Mike Staples for more information or any questions you may have. 925-300-6586

**MONEY MANAGEMENT FOR TEENAGERS**

- Individual and small group instruction available
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- E-mail [rggross@astound.net](mailto:rggross@astound.net) or call 925-876-0492 for more information.

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## **Advertise With Us!**

To Advertise in the Woodlands Newsletter,

Contact **Marc Graves 925-336-6272** or **Woodlandsassn@yahoo.com**

### **Advertising Rates & Sizes**

MARC

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**

**December 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.
- If your ad needs layout/design or artwork, there is an additional \$10 design fee.
- We love DIGITAL FILES! If you can provide a digital file of your ad, please email it to Woodlandsassn@yahoo.com. We accept PDF, Microsoft Publisher, and MS Word documents.
- If you only have a paper copy of your ad, please mail it and the payment to:  
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