

The Woodlands



Keeping You Informed For Over 40 Years

January 2010

MDUSD Schools Need Additional Funding

By Joe Casey

On December 13, I attended the latest in a series of community meetings sponsored by the Mount Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD). This standing-room only audience heard from a number of school board members and community organizers, including incoming superintendent Steve Lawrence, board president Paul Strange, Northgate HS principal John McMorris, and many concerned parents. Word has finally reached deep into the community that the fiscal crisis the district faces is here to stay, and the ability of district schools to provide a quality education and life experience to students of all levels will be severely impacted unless the community organizes and finds additional means to keep all variety of school programs funded.

The meeting focused on improving on the strategy to build community support for a local funding measure in the form of a \$99 per parcel tax. The MDUSD is severely hamstrung relative to other school districts when it comes to their share of state funds. Why? It's a complicated issue, but local funding is determined by a formula created back in the 1970's when Proposition 13 was passed, when the population of certain Walnut Creek neighborhoods was very small relative to other nearby towns. That formula hasn't accounted for the dramatic growth in our districts population, and the school board has been fighting an uphill battle ever since to "equalize" funding. In the meantime, other districts whose population hasn't risen nearly as fast are enjoying a higher per-student funding by the state, and many have additionally passed parcel taxes to complement state funds.

Meanwhile, the MDUSD teachers and administrators are doing an outstanding job providing quality education to our children, as evidenced by four schools being designated as California "distinguished" schools. The school board plans to build on this reputation of academic excellence, and is focused on more community education, involvement, and communication. Though there are over 34,000 students in the MDUSD, only 20% of adults have children in the school system. How to stress the importance of a parcel tax to the other 80% is a challenge that was discussed passionately at the meeting. The figure of \$99 per parcel is still the focus, and effective communication to the public about what they will get for this tax is a key focus of the strategy. More AP classes at the high schools, more tutoring, focus on improving test scores, more teacher training, and emphasizing that school sports and after-school programs that keep kids engaged, productive, and off the streets help homeowner property values. These factors should assist with a local funding measure that supports the MDUSD the next time it appears on your ballot.



Street Sweeping Schedule

By Jessica Williams, thanks to Carol Gross for the suggestion

To keep our environment clean and healthy, the City has adopted a new street sweeping schedule. Residential streets are now swept once a month. A guide has been prepared to help you know when your street will be swept by City crews. Our neighborhood is in Zones 6 and 7 which would be the second Monday and the second Tuesday of the month, respectively. How you can help...

- Move vehicles off the street into the garage or driveway.
- Remove items off the street, such as trashcans, basketball backboards, recycled material receptacles, and other obstructions.

Please check your street sweeping schedule for your street (Zone #) in the guide located on the City website. Go to <http://www.walnut-creek.org/> and on the right-hand side click the "Quick Links" drop down tab, and then scroll down the list to "Street Sweeping."

If you have any questions about the City's street sweeping program, please contact Streets & Drainage Maintenance Division at 925-943-5854.

Note: There is NO street cleaning on City holidays or rainy days. If your sweeping day falls on a holiday, it will be made up the next business day. There are no make-up days due to rain.

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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

Newsletter Advertising:
 Marc Graves 336-6272 (Marc)
Woodlandsassn@yahoo.com

Newsletter Delivery:
 Kay Ready ~ 937-6824

Web Site Inquiries:
 Brian Rower ~ Woodlandsassn@yahoo.com

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

Woodlands Association
 P.O. Box 31085
 Walnut Creek, CA 94598

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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 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. To submit an article, please write to woodlandsassn@yahoo.com.

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

Upcoming Board Meetings

Saturday, January 9th
 at 8:15 am
 and
Saturday, February 6th
 at 8:15 am
 in Carl's Jr.
 Conference Room

Woodlands residents are encouraged to attend board meetings

Cabana Club News

By Nancy Holian

Our general member's meeting was held on Saturday December 12th at the Ygnacio Library Branch. The meeting began with a "state of the club" address and ended with a productive hour of suggestions and ideas for improving our club. The following is a summary of the update on the club and the Cabana Club board positions, look for more information soon from the *We are Woodlands* committee regarding the long term vision for our club. Thanks to all for turning out during busy December to make our neighborhood a better place to live.

As our diving pool is long overdue for a maintenance to the plaster and electrical and to ensure it meets federal standards, the Cabana Club Board has signed contracts with Burkett's Pool Plastering to perform the necessary updates. Our wading pool sprang a leak at the end of the season, and Burkett's is donating the cost of repairing this pool for us as well. Both pools should be completed in early 2010.



The scope of work includes the following:

- * re-plastering the pool
- * new tile and coping
- * new electrical for the inoperable pool lights
- * work to bring it into compliance with the 2007 Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act
- * replacement of uneven decking surrounding the diving pool

The necessary permits from the board of health have been obtained, and as soon as the City issues the required permits, the work will begin. We are working closely with the contractor to ensure that the neighborhood remains peaceful and tidy during the remodel.

We are very excited that the club will be a safer, more pleasant place to relax, swim, and connect with friends and neighbors next season and beyond. We will be launching a new website complete with easy access to forms, membership information, lesson schedules and our ever growing social calendar to help keep you informed.

We are also pleased to announce that Paul Sibley has volunteered to extend his term as Vice President for the club, which means another wonderful Fourth of July party for our entire community. Nancy Holian is also extending her tenure as President to help our club through this time of transition. Look for both names on your ballot when it arrives in January. As always, our board of volunteers is happy to have anyone join in, whether to head up a social event or learn how to run a pool club!

For any questions related to the pool renovation, membership for the 2010 pool season or volunteer opportunities, please contact Nancy Holian by emailing WoodlandsCabanaclub@gmail.com

Mince Pies Recipe Revised

By Jessica Williams

I hope you tried the recipe I suggested in the December newsletter. My apologies if you had an issue with the pastry. I had a bit of a mix-up with pastry types. My mum and I make British shortcrust pastry from scratch (see recipe below). A fellow board member suggested people use pie crust dough/pastry instead of my original suggestion.

Shortcrust pastry recipe:

- 8 oz. flour
- 1/2 level tsp. salt
- 4oz. butter or margarine
- Some cold water to mix

Sift flour, salt into bowl. Cut small cubes of butter into flour then rub in with fingertips till no lumps of butter remain. Add just enough water to bind the mixture, mixing with round bladed knife till evenly distributed. Draw pastry together with fingertips to form a stiff dough; knead lightly till smooth. Turn onto lightly floured board and roll out to use.

School News

Foothill News

Source: eGazette 12/3/09

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.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Wednesday, January 27, 2010 - 7:00-9:00 PM

Diablo View Middle School MUR presenter Pat Brands, the College and Career Counselor for Northgate High School.

This talk is open to all parents of MDUSD middle school students and was a huge hit when offered at Willow Creek in years past. Seating is limited so please register early.

Contact PamandLeonHall@comcast.net if you have any questions about this very informative talk which will help you prepare your students for college before they sign up for those first high school classes.

A comprehensive workshop for the parents of middle school students will provide:

- guidance through the often confusing, always exciting process of selecting and applying to the colleges of choice
- ways to identify and put together the pieces of the puzzle to find a good fit for your child
- answers to questions on admissions, testing, financial aid, summer opportunities
- practical suggestions for managing the process to alleviate some of the stress

Put time and organization on your side.

To reserve your spot: Please send your name, phone number and check for \$10 per person or \$15 per couple to: Tami Smith, 5213 Keller Ridge Drive, Clayton, CA 94517

Please include contact information in case the event is sold out.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION MATERIALS FOR REVIEW

Instruction in Family Life/Sex Education is included in the curriculum in 7th grade Life Science Classes. You may request that your child be excused from any instruction in which Human Reproductive Organs and their Functions are described, illustrated or discussed, or from instruction about Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

Materials being used are available for inspection and preview at the District Instructional Media Center, Willow Creek Center, 1026 Mohr Lane, Concord, Tuesday through Friday, January 26, 2010, through January 29, 2010, 8:00am to 4:30pm and 6:00pm - 8:00pm. Please contact the district, (Curriculum & Instruction, 682-8000, ext. 4041) or your child's science teacher if you have any questions.

Valle Verde News
Source: e-Voice Nov. 09

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. 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 schoolplay 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 at skroeber@astound.net [<mailto:skroeber@astound.net>]

NORTHGATE BRONCOS Men's Varsity BASKETBALL (January)

Day	Date	Time	Visitors	Home	Venue
Tuesday	12/29/2009	6:00pm	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	California	California High School
Tuesday	1/5/2010	BYE	BYE	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	BYE
Friday	1/8/2010	7:00pm	Mt. Diablo	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	Northgate High School
Tuesday	1/12/2010	7:00pm	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	College Park	College Park High School
Friday	1/15/2010	7:00pm	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	Ygnacio Valley	Ygnacio Valley High School
Saturday	1/16/2010	TBA	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	Dublin - Piedmont MLK Jamboree	Piedmont High School
Monday	1/18/2010	TBA	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	Hayward - Haas Pavillion	Haas Pavillion - UC Berkeley
Tuesday	1/19/2010	7:00pm	Concord	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	Northgate High School
Friday	1/22/2010	7:00pm	Berean Christian	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	Northgate High School
Tuesday	1/26/2010	7:00pm	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	Clayton Valley	Clayton Valley HS
Friday	1/29/2010	BYE	BYE	Northgate Broncos - Boys Varsity	BYE

General Admission - \$5. Seniors/Boosters/Students with ID - \$3. Children under 12 - no charge
There is also a snack shack with pizza, drinks and baked goods.

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

MONEY MANAGEMENT FOR TEENAGERS

- Individual and small group instruction available
- Enrollment now open
- Taught by Richard Gross, MBA, CMFC, CFP
- E-mail rggross@astound.net or call 925-876-0492 for more information.

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Advertising Rates & Sizes

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**

January 15, 2010

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:
Woodlands Association, PO Box 31085, Walnut Creek, CA 94598
- Payment is due when you submit your ad. Please make checks payable to “Woodlands Association” and mail to:
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