

Newsletter



Forest Pond

Volunteerism

Volunteerism is the willingness of people to work on behalf of others without the expectation of pay or other tangible gain.

Volunteers may have special training as rescuers, guides, assistants, teachers, missionaries, amateur radio operators, writers, and in other positions. But the majority work on an impromptu basis, recognizing a need and filling it, whether it be the dramatic search for a lost child or the mundane giving of directions to a lost visitor.

In economics, voluntary employment is unpaid employment. It may be done for altruistic rea-

sons, for example charity, as a hobby, community service or vocation, or for the purpose of gaining experience.

Some go so far as to dedicate much of their lives to voluntary service. One way in which this is done is through the practice of getting involved with your HOA, as a Board Member or a Committee Member.

The majority of the Forest Pond volunteers serve on the HOA Board of Directors, the Neighborhood Watch committee,



Caption describing picture or graphic.

and the newsletter committee.

Most volunteers spend one hour per month on performing

their respective duties.

Others spend many hours, it all depends on what you want to do and how you use your time.

Volunteering is both a labor of love and a love of labor - you get something very rewarding out of your personal commitment - personal and professional achievement - this compliments your confidence, your pride, and your love for others in the world.

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Special points of interest:

- Brining the Bird!
- Prepare for 2008
- Relax—Don't Worry

Inside this issue:

Annual HOA Meeting 2

Flavor Brining 2

Relaxing Holidays 3

Flavor Brining Con't 3

Are You Ready for 2008? 4

Thanksgiving (By Patricia Thompson)

The exact date of the first Thanksgiving is not known but was probably a community feast done in late September or early October in 1621. Thanksgiving day for the Pilgrims was a time of spiritual devotion. It was similar to an English Harvest Festival.

Fowl was abundant, crops

of corn, squash, beans, barley, and peas had been harvested and were brought by the Pilgrims to the feast. The Indians brought deer, fish, turkey, corn and tobacco to the feast. There was also the Pilgrim's brewed beer which they could not live without; but, alas, no pumpkin pie nor cran-

berry sauce.

If it were not for the Indians, their crops, game and survival knowledge of New England winters, the Pilgrims would have not survived to celebrate this Thanksgiving day. This is another example of how much we depend upon one another.

Annual HOA Meeting

The Forest Pond HOA Board of Directors will hold the next Annual Meeting on 8 January located at the Derita Baptist Church, 2835 W. Sugar Creek Road (across from the old Food Lion). Refreshments will be provided by the Board for all attendees.

The current agenda will include opening remarks by the FP President Mehl Renner, then introduction of our guests and Board of Directors. The evenings agenda will include a brief presentation by our



Everyone should attend the Annual Homeowners Meeting

CMPD Community Officers Jeff Miller and Zeru Chickoree, followed by an interactive PowerPoint presentation of the pertinent data topics that all of you will want to see and hear.

The action items that will be considered for vote by all homeowners will be announced and

discussions held on the necessity for the vote.

All current Board Members who are going to volunteer their services for the upcoming year and all new volunteers will be given an opportunity to voice their reasons for wanting to be elected to the Board of Directors.

A vote will then be taken on all action items and the meeting will be adjourned.

Please plan to attend this meeting it is the most important one you will attend at the beginning of the new year!

Flavor Brining

The following information was obtained from the web site: <http://www.virtualweberbullet.com>. It has been modified to fit within the space available in this newsletter. Flavor brining is a wonderful way to add a distinctive twist on your holiday meals main meat dish. Unleash your taste buds and brine it up!

If this is your first time trying to flavor brine a cut of meat - I would recommend using a small amount of meat until you get the hang of flavor brining, no matter what cut of meat you use take your time and enjoy the results with gusto!

While traditional brining was meant to preserve meat, the purpose of flavor brining is to improve the flavor, texture, and moisture content of lean cuts of meat. This is achieved by soaking the meat in a moderately salty solution for a few hours to a few days. Flavor brining also provides a temperature cushion during cooking--if you happen to overcook the meat a little, it will

still be moist.

At a minimum, a flavor brine consists of water and salt. Other ingredients may include sugar, brown sugar, honey, molasses, maple syrup, fruit juices, beer, liquor, bay leaves, pickling spices, cloves, garlic, onion, chilies, citrus fruits, peppercorns, and other herbs and spices. Many recipes call for bringing the ingredients to a boil to dissolve the sugars and bring out the flavor of herbs, then cooling the mixture to below 40°F before use.

It's important to point out that not everyone likes the effects of brining on meat. Some people don't like the texture that results, while others complain about the flavor, saying that it makes everything taste like ham (especially if sodium nitrite or Morton Tender Quick has been added to the solution) or that the meat tastes too salty. You'll have to judge the results for yourself.

Flavor brining does not preserve meat. The meat and brine solution must be kept below 40° at all times.

If storing the meat in the refrigerator during brining, check to make sure that the container will fit in your refrigerator! A container large enough to hold a whole turkey might be too big for your fridge.

If storing the meat in a cooler during brining, you must keep the meat and brine cold without diluting the mixture. Put the meat and brine directly in the cooler, then place Ziploc bags filled with ice or reusable gel packs into the brine solution. Another approach is to put the meat and brine into a turkey oven roasting bag inside the cooler, then pack ice or gel packs around the bag. Monitor the temp of the cooler to make sure it stays below 40°F at all times.

The length of time meat soaks in a flavor brine depends on the type of meat and its size, as well as the amount of salt used in the brine - the saltier the brine mixture, the shorter the soaking time. Here are common brining times found in recipes:

Relaxing Holidays

The holiday season is fast approaching and to think just a few short weeks ago we were all wondering if the heat was ever going to let up!

Well, it has and it seems like just in time for the silly season to hit us head on with the usual hustle and bustle of shopping, eating, drinking and shopping and, of course, more shopping.

Before that reality sets in like a whirlwind of unrelenting activity that demands more of your time than you think you have - stop, look around, smell the air, take a walk in a park, or



in the woods. Get up early one morning—fix yourself a hot cup of your favorite drink and enjoy that moment of quietude that surrounds you.

Put your thoughts in order or forget all about the coming days - all you have at that moment is you, your hot beverage, and the morning sun creeping up over the horizon beckoning you to remember who and what you are before the demands of our crazy world turn you inside out.

To really get the most out of this joyous effect you have to be willing to sacrifice an hour of sleep at least once a week - who knows it may change the way you look at the world and, in turn, the world around you!

Flavor Brining (Con't)

Whole Chicken	3-8 hrs
Chicken Pieces	1-2 hrs
Whole Turkey	12 hrs-2 days
Turkey Breast	4-8 hrs
Cornish Game Hens	1-2 hrs
Pork Chops	2-6 hrs
Pork Tenderloin	2-8 hrs
Whole Pork Loin	1-3 days

It is possible to end up with meat that's too salty for your taste, so you may want to brine on the low end of the time range to see how it turns out. You can always brine longer next time, but there's no way to salvage a piece of meat that's been brined too long.

Discard the brine solution after use. The brine will contain proteins, blood, and other stuff from the meat that soaked in it. From a food safety standpoint, it is not advisable to reuse brine, even if it is boiled first.

Good Eats Turkey Brine:



1 gallon vegetable broth
1 gallon heavily iced water
1 cup Diamond Crystal Kosher Salt
1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
1 tablespoon peppercorns
1/2 tablespoon allspice berries
1/2 tablespoon candied ginger

Use regular vegetable broth, not low- or no-sodium varieties. Substitute 3/4 cup Morton Kosher Salt or 1/2 cup table salt for Diamond Crystal.

Combine all ingredients except ice water in a large pot. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring to dissolve. Remove from heat, let mixture come to room temperature, then refrigerate to 40° F.

In a large non-reactive con-

tainer, combine the mixture with 1 gallon heavily iced water and stir. Place rinsed, drained whole turkey into the brine. Use a heavy weight to keep the bird submerged, if necessary. Refrigerate for 6-8 hours. Turn the bird over once during brining.

Rinse turkey and pat dry with paper towels. Apply a thin coat of oil before cooking.

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As a Board Member for the Forest Pond HOA, I have recently had the opportunity to reflect on the past nine years of our community and I want to put a few things in perspective for next year.

I have to ask, do we have all our ducks in line for the new year? As the holidays are fast approaching, it's easy to be distracted with the myriad of activities and functions. However, it's important to take the time this month to look beyond December 31, and determine if our programs are ready.

Association Calendar - One of the best ways to prepare your association for the new year is to create an Association Calendar and include, at a minimum these items listed below.

Annual meeting - Read through the by-laws to determine the annual meeting date; schedule the notification mailing. The next one is scheduled for 8 January 2008 as mentioned in another article in this newsletter.

Board meetings - Does the Board meet on a regular schedule? For instance, the first Monday of each month at 7pm. Some HOA's will skip a board meeting during the summer months. Plan for such seasonal adjustments on the monthly schedule.

Committee meetings - When do the committees meet? Generally, it is best to schedule those meetings in advance of the board meeting so reports and recommendations from the committee can be brought forward to the board.

Tax filings - Unlike personal tax filings, associations must follow the "corporate" tax filing dates. For instance, federal in-

Are You Ready for 2008?



come tax returns for associations are due on March 15 - not April 15.

Maintenance and Reserve Study - Is there a maintenance schedule and/or calendar in place? If so, it's time to review those dates. If, in the upcoming year, a major reserve project is scheduled (i.e., front entrance), you'll want to have your ducks in row well in advance of the project.

Significant events - Community events centered around bringing members together play a major role in your association. Perhaps there is an Easter Egg Hunt in the works. What about a community-wide garage sale? Whatever you are considering, include it on the calendar.

Newsletter schedule - Many associations have a newsletter that is distributed on a regular schedule (monthly, quarterly, semi-annually). Contact the newsletter team members who are preparing the newsletter and set calendar deadlines for completing the newsletters.

Budget schedule - One important item that always sneaks up on your association is the budget cycle. Working backwards from December, make certain that there are enough planning days on the calendar for developing the budget, seeking homeowner input, discussing the budget at a board

meeting, approving the budget, and finally notifying the members about the budget. For some large associations, this process can take 4-5 months. It is not surprising that some associations begin the process in July or August.

Audit plan - Is your association considering an audit or review of the financial reports this year? Generally, most audits cover an ending date of 12/31/XX. As such, most auditors like to be involved in January and February, prior to completing the tax filings. If an audit is one of the goals for the association, plan on work beginning as soon as possible after the year end financials are wrapped up.

Management Plan - In conjunction with your Association Calendar, it's imperative that the Board members and the Community Manager develop a management plan. The plan includes the tasks to be performed by the management team and sets the goals for the new year. A typical management plan would include:

Rules Enforcement

Property Maintenance

Association Services

Communications

Finances

Administration

Policy Development

At regular intervals, usually at board meetings or board study sessions, the management team should monitor, adjust, and review the Association calendar and management plan. Both of these, when used in combination will help in operating the association as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The real hard question to answer is: "Are we on target? That will remain to be seen as the year unfolds!