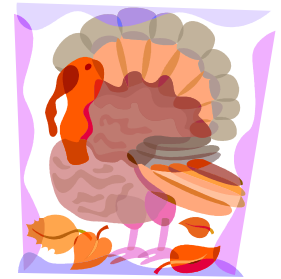


# Solano Verde Ranch Homeowners Association



Newsletter

November 2007

### After Hours Emergency:

In the event there is an after-hours emergency, please call (818) 907-6622 and our after hours emergency line will assist you.

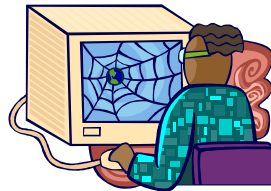


### Questions, Concerns & Complaints:

If you have any complaints, questions or concerns, please address it to your Community Manager, Michelle Atkinson. Please send your written request via fax to (818) 363-4477 or email Michelle at matkinson@rossmorganco.com.

### New Website

Homeowners, please be advised that the Association now has a live website. Please be advised that the new website is [www.solanoverde.org](http://www.solanoverde.org). We would appreciate it if you could please take a moment to review and let us know your thoughts.



### Board of Directors

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## FENCING PROJECT

The Board of Directors of the Solano Verde Ranch Project would like to inform you that the steps were taken to repair the fencing throughout the project. As all of you are aware, fencing is the responsibility of the individual Homeowner. The Board of Directors will be seeking reimbursement from the Homeowners Association shortly. All owners in the community will be billed individually at a later date. Your cooperation with this matter is greatly appreciated.



# **WINTER MAINTENANCE TIPS FOR YOUR HOME**

Remove screens from windows and install storm windows  
Clean out gutters and downspouts  
Insulate pipes in your home's crawl spaces and attic  
Store firewood at least 30 feet away from your home  
Familiarize responsible family members with the gas main valve and other appliance valves  
Clean the clothes dryer exhaust duct, damper and space under the dryer  
Make sure all electrical holiday decorations have tight connections  
Check the attic for adequate ventilation  
Clean the kitchen exhaust hood and air filter  
Check the water hoses on the clothes washer, refrigerator icemaker and dishwasher for cracks and bubbles  
Test all ground-fault-circuit-interrupter (GFCI) outlets

## **Remove the screens from the storm window frames and install storm windows.**

Storm windows help reduce the cost to heat your home and help prevent windowsills from rotting.

## **Clean out gutters and downspouts.**

Cleaning debris and fallen leaves reduces the chances of an ice dam forming. One good step is to spray water down the downspouts to wash away leaves and other debris. A good tip is to place gutter screens over gutters. Read more about ice dams at [attic ventilation and water damage](#).

Extreme caution should be exercised when working on or around the roof. Consider hiring a professional.

## **Insulate pipes in your home's crawl spaces and attic.**

These exposed pipes are most susceptible to freezing. Remember: the more insulation you use, the better protected your pipes will be.

## **Store firewood at least 30 feet away from your home.**

This will reduce a home's fire load and the chance of attracting termites.

## **Familiarize responsible family members with the main gas valve and other appliance valves.**

Responsible family members should be familiar with the location and operation of valves. If you are unsure of the location and operation of these valves, contact a qualified plumber.

## **Clean the clothes dryer exhaust duct, damper and space under the dryer.**

Poor maintenance allows lint to build up in the exhaust duct and may cause a fire.

## **Make sure all electrical holiday decorations have tight connections.**

If possible, use 3-prong plugs and cords. The use of 2-prong adapters, which permit 3-prong plugs to be used in 2-prong outlets, doesn't always provide grounding to protect against shock. Unplug decorations when not in use. Use of extension cords should be temporary. To help reduce the chances of overheating, electric cords, including extension cords, should never be bundled together or run under rugs and carpet.

## **Check the attic for adequate ventilation.**

Check the exterior wall to be sure the ceiling insulation is not blocking the outside air from the soffit vents from getting into the attic. Make sure the attic has plenty of vents. Caution should be taken in all attic spaces that are unfinished. Read more at [Attic ventilation and water damage](#).

## **Clean the kitchen exhaust hood and air filter.**

Keeping this clean of cooking grease will help keep a stovetop fire from spreading.

## **Check water hoses on the clothes washer, refrigerator icemaker and dishwasher for cracks and bubbles.**

Replace hoses that show signs of leaking. Read more about [Preventing water damage in your home](#).

## **Test all ground-fault-circuit-interrupter (GFCI) outlets.**

These need to be tripped and reset once a month. If they do not trip or reset, have the outlet changed by a qualified electrician. These types of outlets are required around wet areas like bathrooms and kitchens to offer protection against shock. Only a qualified electrician should make changes in your home's electrical system.

# HOW TO THROW A THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION

Thanksgiving is traditionally known as a time to gather with friends and family--usually over a big meal--to give thanks for all that you have. But whether you're hosting a Thanksgiving celebration for two people or 22, it can be a lot of work if you don't have a plan in place. Here are some tips on how to throw a great Thanksgiving celebration:

1. **Starters.** Because the Thanksgiving meal is usually a big one, you don't need to go overboard with the snacks and appetizers beforehand. Still, it's always nice to offer guests a little something to nibble on while they're waiting for the main meal to be served. Consider serving a fruit and cheese platter with some crackers or bread sticks. Fruits like strawberries and pears, paired with gourmet cheeses, are always a hit. An antipasto platter, with sliced meats, cheeses, olives and roasted peppers is another good appetizer idea--and best of all, it can be assembled ahead of time.

2. **Special Drinks.** It's always a good idea to have a few bottles of wine on hand if you are hosting a large Thanksgiving celebration--pick a good assortment of red and white wines to offer to your guests.

If you're in the mood for a cocktail, try concocting a Fall-inspired drink like a cranberry martini. A cranberry martini can be made by combining equal parts of vodka and cranberry juice in an ice-filled martini shaker. If the combination tastes too strong, just add more cranberry juice. You can also add a spritz of lemon or lime juice.

You can also try making an apple martini by combining vodka, sour apple schnapps and apple juice. Once again, make it to taste and add more juice as needed. If making drinks from scratch isn't your thing, check the liquor store for a pre-made apple martini mix.

3. **Main Course.** Does the thought of cooking a turkey intimidate you? Well, it's not nearly as difficult as it seems. Most supermarket turkeys even come with a built-in timer that will pop up when the turkey is thoroughly cooked. Still, it's wise to invest in a meat thermometer so that you can check the turkey's internal temperature as it cooks. If you have purchased a frozen turkey, it will take several days to thaw out before you can cook it--allow 24 hours of thawing time for every five pounds of turkey. Once it's time to cook the turkey, make sure you take out the giblets and the other goodies that are packed inside of it, then rinse the turkey with cool water and pat it dry. If you plan to stuff your turkey, do so right before cooking it (a stuffed bird that sits too long can harbor bacteria). Keep in mind that a stuffed turkey will take longer to cook than an un-stuffed turkey, so allow extra time if you're planning to fill your turkey with Grandma's cornbread stuffing recipe. Preheat your oven to 325 degrees and cook the turkey for as many hours as it needs, based on its weight (usually anywhere from three to seven hours, depending on the weight and whether or not it's stuffed). Use a turkey baster to baste the turkey with its pan drippings about every half hour. Once the internal temperature of the turkey is at 185 degrees, it's done. You can take the turkey out of the oven and cover it with aluminum foil--let it sit for a while before carving it to allow the juices to drain through and to keep the turkey from drying out.

4. **Side dishes.** Thanksgiving side dishes run the gamut from mashed potatoes to green bean casserole. Combine those traditional family recipes with a few new recipes. Some popular Thanksgiving side dishes include scalloped or mashed potatoes, sweet potato casserole with marshmallows, corn pudding, homemade cranberry sauce, green beans almondine and, of course, stuffing. If making homemade stuffing seems like too much work for you, use a boxed mix and jazz it up by adding dried cranberries, chopped dapples or raisins.

5. **Dessert.** The all-important dessert completes a Thanksgiving celebration. Traditionally, people dine on apple, pumpkin or pecan pie after their Thanksgiving meal. Give your dessert tray a modern twist by serving a pumpkin cheesecake or a chocolate pecan pie. Have whipped topping and vanilla ice cream available to serve on the side--and don't forget to start brewing a pot of coffee.

6. **Setting the table.** If dining room table space is at a premium, set up card tables and chairs in other rooms for extra seating. Young children love having their own table, so set up kid-size tables if you have them. Don't have enough matching plates for everyone? Set each table with its own individual color scheme. Make simple centerpieces with miniature pumpkins and fall leaves, or just put out some votive candles.

7. **Serving the meal.** For a large crowd, it is wise to serve the meal buffet-style. Set the food out on the kitchen countertop and let your guests serve themselves. Passing the various dishes around the table is a nice idea for small groups.

8. **Make your celebration kid-friendly.** Kids love games and crafts, so give your celebration a kid-friendly edge by having some activities for the kids to do either before or after the meal. A Thanksgiving craft, like making a construction paper turkey or a cornucopia, will keep the kids busy while the adults mingle. Thanksgiving trivia games or a bingo game are also fun ideas for the kids. Get the children in the spirit by reading them Thanksgiving themed stories--Alice Dalgliesh's "The Thanksgiving Story" and Eve Bunting's "A Turkey for Thanksgiving" are two favorites.

9. **Some final tips.** Putting together a Thanksgiving celebration is a big undertaking, so don't try to do it all by yourself. Delegate responsibilities to other family members--even young children can help out with such chores as setting the table. Prepare ahead-of-time as much food as you can and take guests up on their offers to make or bring something. With proper planning, coordination and a little help, your Thanksgiving celebration will be a memorable one for you and your entire family.

# THANKSGIVING DINNER MENU

## **Rosemary Garlic Roast Turkey**

If Italians had invented roast turkey, it would turn out something like this. Wonderfully fragrant with garlic and rosemary, this savory roast turkey makes an impressive holiday feast that's sure to wow your guests.

### **Ingredients**

- 8 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) chopped fresh rosemary (or 2 tbsp./30 mL dried)
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) olive oil
- 1 tbsp. (15 mL) coarse salt
- 1 tsp. (5 mL) black pepper
- 12 to 15 lb. (5.5 to 7 kg) whole turkey, fully defrosted if frozen



### **Cooking Instructions**

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F (160 degrees C).
2. In a small bowl or food processor, mash together garlic, rosemary, olive oil, salt and pepper so that it forms a thick paste.
3. By hand, gently pull the skin away from the turkey breast at the front of the breast (near the neck opening) to form a sort of pocket. Rub some of the rosemary garlic paste onto the breast meat under the skin, reaching in as far as you can without tearing the skin. Rub the remaining rosemary garlic paste all over the skin of the turkey and in the cavity. Add the stuffing, if you're using it, and place the turkey, breast side up, on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Tuck the wings underneath the bird and tie the legs together with kitchen string.
4. Place the turkey into the preheated oven. Do not cover the pan. Roast, basting every 15 to 20 minutes with the pan juices, until a meat thermometer inserted into the inner thigh reaches 170 degrees F (77 degrees C) and the juices run clear when the thigh is pricked with a skewer. This will take anywhere from 3 to 4-1/4 hours (depending on the size of the turkey and whether it is stuffed or not). The only definite way to know if the turkey is cooked is by using a meat thermometer. Remove roasting pan from the oven and let the turkey rest at room temperature for about 15 minutes before carving.
5. Serve turkey with pan juices or use the juices to make gravy (recipe follows).

### **Rosemary garlic gravy:**

1. 1/4 cup (50 mL) fat from the roasting pan
2. 1/4 cup (50 mL) flour
3. 2 cups (500 mL) defatted turkey pan juices, turkey broth, water, or a combination
4. In a saucepan, combine the fat from the roasting pan and flour. Cook, stirring to eliminate any lumps, for just a minute or two. Whisk in turkey juices, broth or whatever liquid you're using and cook, stirring constantly, until the gravy thickens. Let simmer over low heat, whisking occasionally, for 6 to 8 minutes. Serve hot.

Servings: turkey: 12 to 18, gravy: 2-1/2 cups

## **Maple Pecan Pie**

Pecan pie is a decadent dessert on its own, but this buttery sweet dish is made even richer drizzled with fragrant vanilla and sticky maple syrup for a tasty twist on this traditional Thanksgiving pie.

### **Ingredients**

- 1 cup (250 mL) maple syrup
- 2/3 cup (150 mL) sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) melted butter
- 1 tsp. (5 mL) vanilla
- 1 cup (250 mL) coarsely chopped pecans
- 1 9-inch (23-cm) pie shell, unbaked

### **Cooking Instructions**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (180 degrees C).
2. In a mixing bowl, beat together maple syrup, sugar, eggs, melted butter and vanilla with an electric mixer until slightly thickened, about 2 or 3 minutes. Stir in chopped pecans and pour the mixture into the prepared pie shell. Bake for 55 to 60 minutes or until a knife poked into the center of the filling comes out clean.
3. Let cool completely or serve slightly warm with whipped cream or ice cream.

Servings: 6 to 8, or one 9-inch (23-cm) pie