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December 2025

# The PONY EXPRESS



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Nellie Gail Ranch

Community Newsletter



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

NEW SWIM CENTER RULES • ARC FAST TRACK FOR HOME HARDENING



HIGHER STANDARDS | BETTER RESULTS

## FEATURED LISTINGS BY THE **BRAD FELDMAN GROUP**



FOR SALE

**24852 BUCKBOARD LANE**

**LISTED FOR \$5,500,000**

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34,848 SF LOT



FOR SALE

**25761 HIGHPLAINS TERRACE**

**LISTED FOR \$4,495,000**

5-BR | 7-BA | APPROX. 5,805 SF  
19,350 SF LOT



FOR SALE

**25281 DERBYHILL DRIVE**

**LISTED FOR \$4,250,000**

5-BR | 4.5-BA | APPROX. 5,018 SF  
20,000 SF LOT



FOR SALE

**24992 BUCKSKIN DRIVE**

**LISTED FOR \$4,195,000**

5-BR | 3.5-BA | APPROX. 4,444 SF  
30,928 SF LOT



FOR SALE

**25611 RANGEWOOD ROAD**

**LISTED FOR \$3,600,000**

5-BR | 4-BA | APPROX. 4,049 SF  
28,400 SF LOT



FOR LEASE

**26421 BROKEN BIT LANE**

**\$8,500/PER MONTH**

4-BR | 4.0-BA | APPROX. 4,600 SF  
12,760 SF LOT

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Partner | 949.678.5198  
Brad.Feldman@elliman.com  
DRE#: 01437125

#### JACCI PEARCE

Partner | 949.529.6924  
Jacci.Pearce@elliman.com  
DRE#: 01910578

#### TRENT MASON

Partner | 949.322.6977  
Trent.Mason@elliman.com  
DRE#: 02018104

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 **Douglas Elliman**

Broker #01947727





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## Save The Date



**12/6/2025**  
Holiday Rock 'n' Ride  
Dressage Show & Equestrian  
Event @ The Equestrian  
Center 12:00pm

**12/7/2025**  
Christmas Party with Santa  
and Mrs. Claus at The  
Watering Hole  
4:00 pm - 6:30 pm

**12/10 & 12/11/2025**  
Holiday Home Decorating  
Contest - Enter to win!

**On The Cover:**  
2024 Home Decorating  
Contest Winner  
26172 Mt Diablo Rd.

# Community Contacts



25211 Empty Saddle Drive, Laguna Hills CA 92653

Phone: (949) 425-1477

**Brian Mitchell | General Manager**  
bmitchell@nelliegailranch.org

**Rob R. This | Operations Manager**  
rthis@nelliegailranch.org

**Jeff Hinkle | Facilities & Compliance Manager**  
hinkle@nelliegailranch.org

**Diane Goodchild | Community Associate**  
goodchild@nelliegailranch.org

**Brenda Weber | Financial Transactions Coordinator**  
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**Molly Weber | Events Coordinator**  
mollyw@nelliegailranch.org

**David De La Mora | Communications Coordinator**  
ponyexpress@nelliegailranch.org

www.nelliegailranch.org



25281 Empty Saddle Drive, Laguna Hills CA 92653

Phone: (949) 831-6660

**Clubhouse Reception**  
clubhouse@nelliegailranch.org



25202 Nellie Gail Road, Laguna Hills CA 92653

Office: (949) 425-1477

Cell: (949) 371-1595

**Nikki Garcia | Equestrian Center Manager**  
ngarcia@nelliegailranch.org

Equestrian Center EMERGENCY: (949) 533-7282

## Board of Directors


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The Pony Express publishes articles that are relevant to the community or are directly related to property maintenance and community activities in NGROA and are in support of the Association's purpose to preserve property values within the community. The Editor reserves the right to refuse, edit or modify any submitted material and the editor's decision is final. Submissions selected for publication by the Editor may be edited according to the space limitations of each specific issue. Publisher cannot be held responsible for copyright breaches arising from any materials supplied by a third party. NGROA Board of Directors and employees are not responsible for any errors, inaccuracies or claims in articles or advertisements printed herein. Any opinions stated herein are solely those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of NGROA or its representatives.

NOTE: When community events take place, photographers may be present to take photos that may be used in this publication.

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## Important Numbers

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(949) 831-6660	Nellie Gail Ranch Tennis and Swim Club
(949) 533-7282	Nellie Gail Ranch Equestrian Center
(949) 533-7282	Equestrian Center (Emergency)
(949) 439-2251	Quezada Professional Landscape
(877) 728-0446	CR&R (Trash Pickup)
(949) 831-2500	Moulton Niguel Water District
(800) 411-7343	SDG&E
(800) 427-2200	Southern California Gas Company
(949) 470-3045	Animal Control (Mission Viejo Shelter)

## County of Orange

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211	County Service Information
(949) 770-6011	Sheriff's Dispatch - Non Emergency
(949) 707-2600	City of Laguna Hills
(949) 707-2650	Laguna Hills City - Weed Abatement
(800) 611-7343	SDG&E Emergencies/Outages
(714) 573-6000	Fire Authority
(714) 971-2421	Vector Control

## Assessment Remittance Address

Please remit all assessments to:  
P.O. Box, 30354, Tampa, FL 33630-3354  
or drop off at the Association Office.



## Mission Statement

To take all reasonable and necessary steps to preserve and improve the unique value of living in Nellie Gail Ranch and to enhance the overall sense of community.

## Board of Directors Meetings

There will be no board meeting in December, the next board meeting will be scheduled for **January 20, 2026**.

### Executive Session starts at - 6:00 pm and Open Session - 7:30 pm

The agenda will be posted in the Association Office and on the NGR website on the Friday prior to the meeting, or you may contact the Association Office to obtain agenda information. All homeowners are welcomed and encouraged to attend the meetings.

## Architectural Review Committee

Architectural Review Committee meetings are generally held the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm. Completed applications must be submitted to the Association Office at least 10 business days prior to the ARC meeting. Please check the calendar in each issue of the Pony Express for exact submittal deadlines and ARC meeting dates.

## Association Committees

The Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association has several committees comprised of Homeowners that provide support to the Board of Directors on selected Community topics. For more information or to join any of our Committees, please contact the Association Office at (949) 425-1477.

### Architectural Review Committee

### Emergency Preparedness Committee

### Equestrian Committee

### Events Committee

### Fire Prevention Committee

### Historical Committee

### Landscape Committee

### Security Committee

### Trails Committee



# MANAGER'S MESSAGE



## 25 YEARS IN THE MAKING: HONORING OUR PAST, EMBRACING OUR FUTURE

*By Brian Mitchell*

Before I start looking forward to 2026 I want to look back a bit. As we approach the end of 2025 it was nice to reflect on last year at this time as many of us were celebrating a 2024 LA Dodgers World Series win. And how this year really hasn't changed that much as many are again enjoying a 2025 LA Dodgers World Series win!

But looking further back, within the next few weeks the first quarter of the 21st century will be behind us. Since this centuries start January 1, 2001 we have witnessed an explosion of technology that has changed the way we conduct our lives every day. 2001 saw the launch of the iPod which became an integral part of our lives until streaming overtook that ground breaking technology. Wikipedia was founded January 2001 and has become a wealth of information responding to our searches for information.

### **Here are some more milestones we have experienced:**

- MySpace was introduced in 2003 as a start-up Social Media platform.
- Facebook launched in 2004.
- You Tube debuted in 2005.
- Twitter's first tweet was 2006.
- The I-phone was introduced in 2007.
- For those of you who are anti i-phone, the first Android phone was October 2008.
- Bitcoin was invented in 2008.
- Instagram became part of our social media lives in 2012.
- AI went mainstream in 2016 and its explosion in use is reshaping our society today.

Some of the above products and social media have become such a large part our lives it's hard to believe we ever didn't have them.

But what may be even more important to us is the answer to what hasn't changed?

The cover of the 2001 issues of the Pony Express had an image of a tennis player, equestrians riding horses and a swimmer. Nellie Gail Ranch homeowners continue to participate in these recreational activities enjoying the clubhouse and community trails with family and friends.

Also in the category of things that don't change, the Managers Message in the first issue of 2001 addressed recent rains, sandbags, trails and tree replacements. There was a group photo of the Nellie Gail Gardeners who met at the Clubhouse parking lot to carpool to a tour of the Fullerton Arboretum Orchard. Still advertising in this December 2025 issue of The Pony Express, Jerry LaMott (his phone number was to a pager in 2001) was advertising a record year of sales in 2000. The Finishing Touch advertising in this issue was also marketing carpet, tile and wood flooring services to 2001 homeowners. The Swim Team was scheduled for lap swimming and scuba lessons were offered at the pool. Equestrian Center Trainer Mickey Hayden was heading to a show in Indio, CA to compete. Still in Nellie Gail Ranch, homeowner Rebecca Zomorodian was leading The Mothers of the Nellie Gail Play Group on playdates at Gallup Park.

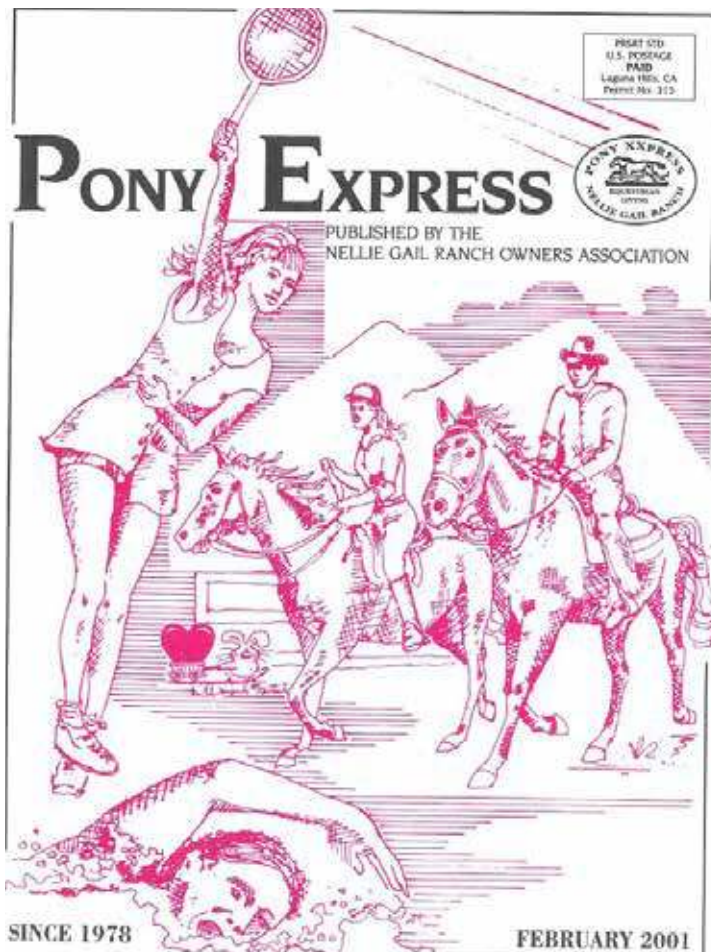
So much of the technology in our lives has changed, but what matters most hasn't. A safe community to raise families and spend time with friends. A number of current homeowners today were children living

in Nellie Gail Ranch in 2001 who have grown up, married, started families and purchased Nellie Gail Ranch homes. Nellie Gail Ranch remains an equestrian community with long held work ethic and values. We can look even further back to Lewis and Nellie Gail Moulton, the founding Nellie Gail Ranch family. Heritage is not just a thing of the past. It is a legacy we each carry forward in our own way to pass on to future generations.

Here's to the next **25 years!** I wish you all a great finish to 2025. **Happy Holidays and Happy New!**



*Nellie Gail Moulton*



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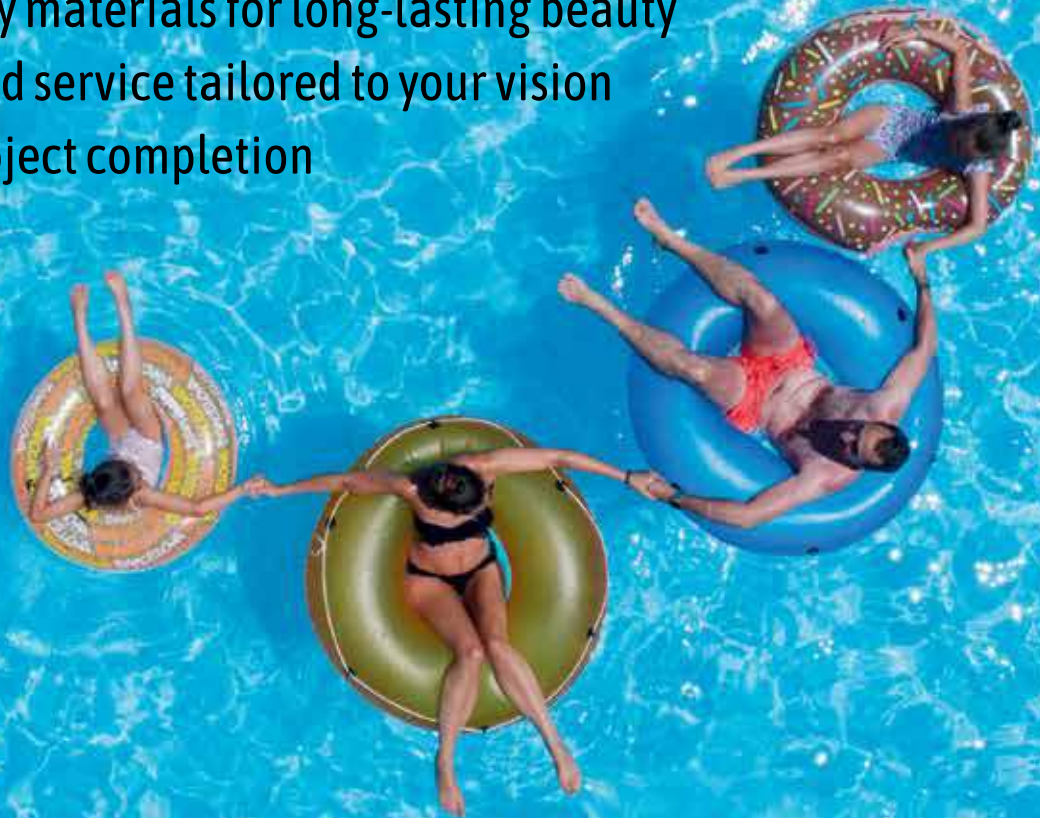


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# IMMEDIATE (NONCOMBUSTIBLE) ZONE

Why is it important to create and maintain 5 feet of noncombustible space around the exterior of a building?

Wildfire risks are on the rise, but there are ways home and business owners can take control of their vulnerabilities. Changes made to a structure and its surroundings within 100 feet can make a big impact. Research from the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS) shows that the first 0 to 5 feet around the structure, known as the immediate zone or noncombustible zone, has the greatest impact on your risk. IBHS and the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®) recommend keeping this zone well-maintained and clear of combustible materials.

## IBHS Research

The main objective of the 0-to-5-foot zone is to reduce the potential that embers landing near a building will ignite fuels and expose the area around a home to a direct flame (Figure 1). Removing anything that can ignite from embers is critically important. To verify how effective a 5-foot noncombustible zone is around a building, more than 180 tests were conducted in 2018 at the IBHS Research Center to evaluate fire behavior and heating of buildings (Figures 2a & 2b).

## Key Observations

- For combustible landscaping, such as wood mulch, the thickness of the mulch bed, wind speed, and location of the flame and building all impact the potential of mulch to ignite and how quickly fire can spread to the building.
- Burning mulch generates embers that can ignite nearby mulch, increasing the chances of direct flame contact spreading to the building.
- When flames are 5 feet away, a building's surface temperature is below temperatures that could cause ignition. However, corners of a building (45-degree angles) experience a higher temperature when exposed to flames, even when a 5-foot space is present. Testing showed that corners can be more vulnerable due to fire spread through fuel (such as mulch) on the ground, because at the same wind speed, wind blowing directly at a wall (90-degree angle) will result in taller flames and more radiant heat, while wind on a corner (45-degree angle) will result in longer flames that are closer to the ground.

## Recommendations

- Keep the corner areas of a building clear of combustible materials due to the higher probability of having direct flame touching the surrounding ground.
- Keep gutters free of debris and use metal gutters.
- Install hard surfaces, such as a concrete walkway, or use noncombustible mulch products, such as rock.
- Keep the lawn well irrigated and use low-growing herbaceous (non-woody) plants. Shrubs and trees are not recommended in the 5-foot zone.
- Remove dead vegetation and implement a maintenance strategy to keep the 5-foot zone clear of dead plant materials.
- Mitigating home ignition zones shouldn't stop at 5 feet from the building. It should be combined with the footprint of an attached deck and area that extends away from the building up to 100 feet or to the property line.



**Figure 1** – Creating and maintaining home ignition zones (defensible space) around your property are proven ways to reduce risks of property damage during a wildfire, as tests at the IBHS Research Center have shown.



**Figure 2a** Experiments conducted at the IBHS Research Center to study the effectiveness of creating a noncombustible space around buildings.



**Figure 2b** Embers impacting a building: left side with combustible (wood) and the right with noncombustible (rock) mulch.

© Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety

## Learn More

- ▶ For online training and other resources, see [nfpa.org/firewise](https://nfpa.org/firewise).
- ▶ Access the latest research from IBHS at [ibhs.org](https://ibhs.org).



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# FIRE PREVENTION COMMITTEE

## ARC FAST TRACK AUTONOMY FOR HOMEOWNERS TO IMPLEMENT FIRE SAFETY HOME HARDENING

BY DAVID ROBBINS

The Fire Prevention Committee ("FPC") is meeting monthly to articulate and publicize through the Pony Express steps Nellie Gail Ranch ("NGR") residents can take to make their homes more fire safe. Please see the last three Pony Express editions for fire prevention information put out by the FPC.

Last month the FPC collaborated with NGR's Architectural Review Committee, which reviews resident home changes in accordance with the NGR CC & Rs, to identify home fire prevention improvements residents can make without ARC review and approval in order to expedite desired improvements a resident may wish to make.

The source of fire dangers often can be identified in old wooden structures on a property and various other conditions. Below we identify the changes

homeowners can make without ARC review in accordance with FPC/ARC collaborations last month:

- **Roof**

Remains an ARC approval requirement. Enclosing eaves (and caulking) – important fire prevention measures, however, can bypass the ARC process

- **Wooden Gates**

Can bypass the ARC process if the replacement is the same color and solid, in addition to being fire-proof

- **Patio Covers/Gazebos**

If the homeowner only wants to remove the cover or gazebo, no ARC review is needed





- **Decks**

If the homeowner only wants to remove the deck, no ARC review is needed

- **Fences**

If the homeowner wants to remove a fence, no ARC review is needed

- **Auxiliary Structure**

If the homeowner only wants to remove the auxiliary structure, no ARC review is needed; but a replacement structure necessitates ARC approval

- **Landscape**

Any landscape or trees within 5 feet of the home can be removed without any review. Otherwise, Jeff Hinkle ([hinkle@nelliegailranch.org](mailto:hinkle@nelliegailranch.org)) should be contacted to review other removals to assure that neighbors are contacted and mollified.

- **Barn**

If the homeowner only wishes to remove a barn, no ARC review is needed; but a replacement structure necessitates ARC approval

- **Corral**

If the homeowner wants to remove a corral, no ARC review is needed; but a replacement structure necessitates ARC approval

**As an aside:**

The ARC meets once a month and, in accordance with the NGR CC&R's makes decisions on various home improvements submitted by residents for review. Members of the ARC understand that homeowners wish their applications, including those with fire prevention implications, be handled expeditiously. During my three year service on the ARC, not once has an ARC monthly meeting been cancelled due to a lack of quorum. Accordingly, homeowners who wish to make changes to their properties for fire prevention reasons, and which are not outside of ARC review per the foregoing, should do so as quickly as possible. **Thank you.**

A Viking Cruise advertisement featuring a stone castle and a Viking ship. The top half shows a large stone castle on a hill overlooking a body of water with a Viking ship. The bottom half contains promotional text and logos.

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A portrait of Caroline Swift, a woman with dark hair, smiling and holding a credit card.

# ARCHITECTURAL REVIEWS & MINUTES

## THE MINUTES & ARCHITECTURAL REVIEWS RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE ON-LINE

The Minutes and Architectural Review results are accessible online for your convenience. You can easily view them by scanning the QR codes provided below:

### Architectural Review October 2025 QR Code



### Minutes October 2025 QR Code



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# EQUESTRIAN CENTER NEWS

## A STRONG START AT SANTA ANITA DESPITE A RAINY OPENING WEEK

The first week at Santa Anita kicked off under grey skies and steady rain, but that didn't slow down our riders or dampen their competitive spirit. Despite challenging weather conditions, the team delivered an outstanding start to the circuit, showcasing skill, determination, and impressive consistency across divisions. Congratulations to all of our riders and their exceptional horses on a successful opening week!

Montreal GBL and Lane Clarke set the tone early with multiple top results, including a 1st place finish in the **\$500 1.30m Speed**, followed by another **1st in the \$500 Zycosan 1.20m Speed**. The pair continued their strong performance with a **2nd place in the \$2,500 ESI Footing 1.35m Power/Speed**, demonstrating their versatility and competitive edge in both speed and power classes. Campotonia Z and Lane Clarke also added to the week's highlights with a victory in the **\$500 Zycosan 1.20m Speed**.

Natalie Banis and her mounts delivered consistent results as well. Kingstone and Banis secured **3rd in the \$500 Zycosan 1.20m Speed**, while Clinton's Girl earned a strong **3rd in the 1.0m Speed**. VDL E-Cecilia and Banis capped off their week with an impressive **7th place finish in the \$125,000 CSI3 1.50m Grand Prix\***, standing out in a highly competitive field.

Estella Lindsey and Invincible added to the team's success, taking **2nd place in the 1.0m Speed**, while Reagan Mientka and Cecile Beauty dominated the Junior/Amateur divisions. The pair claimed **1st in the \$4,000 Standlee NAL 1.20m Jr/Am Final** and **4th in the \$500 Standlee 1.20m Jr/Am Speed**, highlighting their consistency throughout the week.

Destiny Stewart also had a standout start to Santa Anita, putting in top trips with multiple mounts. Clavius earned **2nd in the FarmVet 1.0m Jr/Am**

**Speed** and 3rd in the FarmVet 1.0m Jr/Am Final, while Show Bill secured **2nd in the \$4,000 NAL/WIHS 1.10m Jr/Am Final**. Stewart rounded out her strong performances with Jewel de Beaufour, placing **4th in the \$500 Zycosan 1.20m Speed**.

Rounding out the team's achievements, Dublin's Rubin Z and Melina Nasab delivered a fast and clean ride to take **3rd in the \$500 Horseflight 1.40m Jr/Am Speed**, adding another notable result to the week's successes.

Despite the rain, our team's spirit and performance shined brightly. Congratulations again to all of our riders—we look forward to an exciting and successful season ahead at Santa Anita!







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## HALLOWEEN PICKLEBALL ROUND ROBIN WINNERS

### WOMEN'S 3.0 50+

Gold: Natasha Taormina & Raksha Shah

Silver: Eileen Mahdi & Dawn Quinn

Bronze: Patti Cantanzaro & Erin Hayes

### WOMEN'S 3.5 50+

Gold: Marianne Mullen & Ali Daniels

Silver: Linda Roth & Danell Duran

Bronze: Mai Vu & Sara Platte

### MIXED 4.0 50+ – GROUP A

Gold: Achilles Young & Brie Silberman

Silver: Kirk Porter & Lisa Sigaty

Bronze: Russ Roach & Margot Fordonski

### MIXED 4.0 50+ – GROUP B

Gold: Ryan Hart & Sarah Singleton

Silver: Tony Pierce & Leigh Hutchins

Bronze: Kevin Villa & Carol Roberts

### MIXED 3.5 50+

Gold: Roger Basa & Gina Basa

Silver: Percy Mistry & Sabrina Low-DuMond

Bronze: Dean Kakuda & Anne Suzuki

### MIXED 3.0 50+

Gold: Horn Luong & Julie Baker

Silver: Mark Scheele & Theresa Dodson

Bronze: Frank McGervey & Keri Priolo









*Nellie Gail Ranch*



# ADULT TENNIS MATCH PLAY

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- WOMENS DOUBLES

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- ROUND ROBIN
- 1/4 FINALS
- 1/2 FINALS
- FINAL

DATES  
PRICING  
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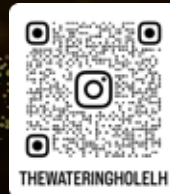


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# *Holiday Rock 'n' Ride* *Dressage Show & Equestrian Event*

**At Noon**

**SATURDAY, DEC 6, 2025**

**Nellie Gail Ranch Equestrian Center**

*Hosted by Cassie Cherry Nolte & Cherry EquiSports*

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Gorgeous ribbons and prizes for every rider! We have classes for everyone - including Equitation, Prix Caprilli Jumping, Eventing Dressage, Western Dressage, Walk / Trot, and Leadline - as well as all the standard USDF/ USEF/ FEI Dressage Tests & Freestyles. All riders are welcomed and encouraged to participate! Stick horse class at 12pm during the lunch break for little 'riders' - no fees or sign ups required just bring your stick horse!

***Holiday themed attire encouraged!***  
***Spectators welcomed!***

**Judges Jan Curtis (S) & Nicole Bhathal (R)**

*Special Awards for Bravest Rider, Best Turn Out, Best Holiday Turn Out, Rising Star Young Rider, High Score, Reserve High Score, Sportsmanship and more!*

**FOOD TRUCK \* MUSIC \* FUN**

Full class list, show information, and entries:

[www.cherryequisports.com/ngrdressageshow](http://www.cherryequisports.com/ngrdressageshow)

*All entries are due and must  
be received no later than  
Saturday, Nov 29th*

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# THE WATERING HOLE

## HAPPY HOUR

M-F 3:30 PM - 6:00 PM

SAT 8:00 PM - 10:00 PM

## TACO TUESDAY

3:30 PM - CLOSE

## OPERATION HOURS

10:30 AM - 2:00 PM

3:30 PM - 9:00 PM

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9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

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## HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



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DRE 01882269

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DRE 00469045

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**SWIM CENTER RULES**  
**(Adopted November 18, 2025)**

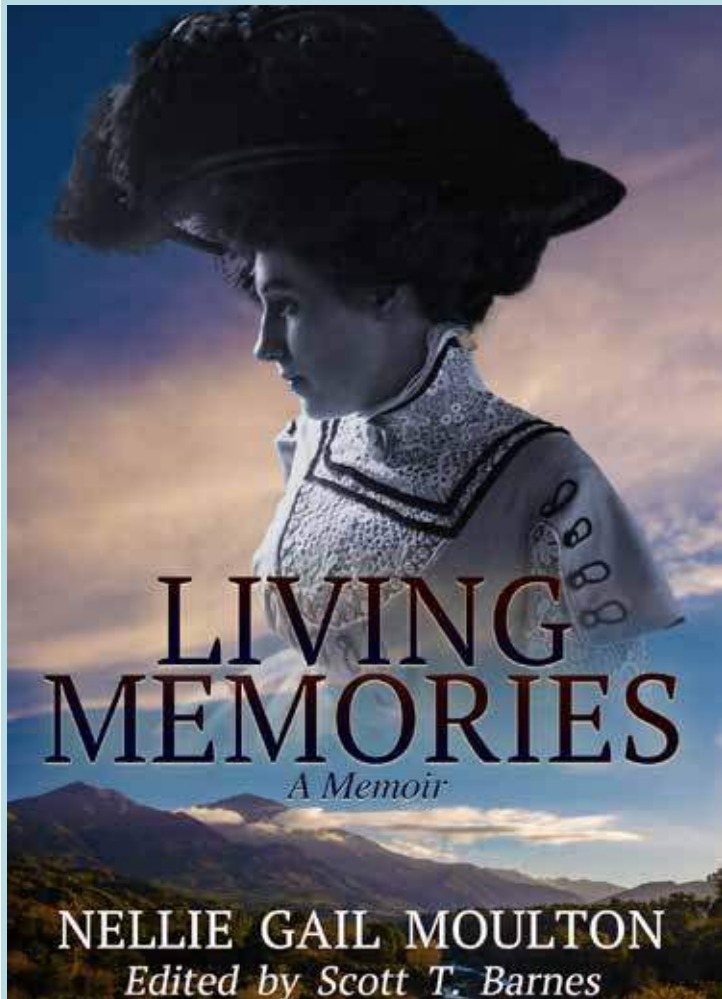
**The rules governing the Nellie Gail Ranch Swim Center are to ensure the safety and comfort of our members and their guests.**

**THERE IS NO LIFE GUARD ON DUTY AT THE SWIM CENTER.**

Swim at your own risk. For safety reasons, it is strongly recommended that swimmers do not swim alone.

1. All Nellie Gail Ranch residents and Swim Club members must be able to provide proof of residency or Swim Club membership prior to entering the Swim Center.
2. Residents/Members are limited to four (4) guests per day unless reservations are made in advance. Guests must be accompanied by an adult Resident/Member at all times. Groups of five (5) or more people must make a reservation at least 2 hours in advance and admittance is not guaranteed.
3. Children under the age of 13 should be accompanied by an adult eighteen (18) years of age or older at all times while at the Swim Center, unless participating in a supervised swim program.
4. Children under the age of 13 should be accompanied by an adult eighteen (18) years of age or older when using the spa.
5. The Wading pool is intended for children under 6 years of age. Adult supervision is strongly recommended at all times.
6. Parents/guardians are responsible for their children/guests.
7. All members, residents and guests should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times.
8. Showering is required before entering the pool.
9. Absolutely **NO** running or any type of rough activity (i.e. dunking, pushing, splashing, flipping, or throwing of objects) permitted.
10. **NO** playing or hanging on the lane lines.
11. No diving or jumping permitted. Starting blocks are to be used only under supervision of authorized aquatic staff.
12. Stay in designated open swim areas, unless lap swimming.
13. For safety reasons, please keep at least a five foot (5') clearance from the pool edge.
14. Return all patio furniture back to its original location.
15. Only food sold from the on-site concessionaire is permitted in the pool area. Please use designated tables located around the pool deck and dispose of any food and drinks into the designated trash receptacles when finished.
16. Absolutely no glass containers are permitted in the pool area at any time.
17. No gum or sticky candy is allowed in the pool area.
18. Notify the Nellie Gail Ranch staff of any spills, maintenance issues, or safety hazards.
19. Permission must be obtained from a Nellie Gail Ranch staff member before using NGR owned kickboards or equipment. Equipment must be returned to the appropriate storage bin when finished.
20. No toys or floatations allowed. Only floatation devices used to assist in swimming safety are permitted.
21. Only designated swim monitors are permitted on swim monitor chairs.
22. Do not obstruct pump room door, eyewash station, gates or emergency exits.
23. No smoking or illegal drugs allowed anywhere near the Swim Center. Only alcohol beverages sold from the on-site concessionaire are permitted in the pool area.
24. Swim lessons are not permitted without obtaining written authorization from Nellie Gail Ranch staff.
25. Proper swim wear must be worn in the pool (i.e. no cut off pants or tennis shorts).
26. Incontinent members must wear a fresh swim diaper and tight fitting plastic pants covering the diaper. No diaper changing in pool area. Please use provided space in the restrooms.
27. Shirts and shoes must be worn in the Clubhouse. **NO** wet suits are allowed in the Clubhouse.
28. In accordance with Health Department regulations, no pets are allowed in pool area. Service animals are permitted.
29. The door/gate shall remain closed at all times and shall not be propped open.
30. If an Owner elects to lease his/her residence and gives right of access to the Swim Center and other facilities to the lessee, the Owner relinquishes his/her access rights, unless he/she purchases a swim membership.
31. Swim monitors and other NGR staff have full authority to remove anyone who does not abide by these rules from the facilities. Violations of these rules may result in suspension of Swim Center use privileges.





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# TEAM DARKHORSE

## REMEMBERING ROSE BUSTA LAGUNA HILLS' PUMPKIN CITY JOINS FORCES WITH TEAM DARKHORSE AT THE FALL OKTOBERFEST

BY KAREN L. ROBBINS

Owner and operator Will Derentz is deeply invested in what he does, and this is no doubt one reason for his success. At South Orange County's premier pumpkin patch, PUMPKIN CITY, Will and his family provide a place for other families to do more than choose their pumpkin. Kids can play carnival games, climb and slide down a monster slide, ride a merry go round or visit a petting zoo at the annual month-long OKTOBERFEST.

In 2020 Will added a traditional Beer Garden, complete with grilled bratwurst and a German Folk Band. The mood is lively, tables fill with happy laughing families, and the Band, dressed to the nines, entertains all.

Will Derentz is also an admirer and supporter of our country's military and the families who stand by them. In line with that mission, in 2021 he contacted Team Darkhorse and invited us to hold a fundraiser together at the Beer Garden.

For the past 5 years, our volunteers can be found there assisting with the pouring, serving and cleaning up during the month of October. On a designated "Team Darkhorse Night" our members, supporters and invited veterans gather there to share camaraderie, stories, Bratwurst and Beer.

This year we invited and were honored to be joined by 4 Darkhorse combat veterans of the Iraq/Afghanistan Wars — **Cpl Eric Rodriguez**, **Sgt Dominic Esquibel**, Navy Corpsman Red Ramos and Cpl Colbey Yazzie — all of whom have recovered from serious injury, including amputations — and thrived in remarkable ways. All are married, three with children, one being the recipient of the nation's second highest military honor, the Navy Cross; another now works as a forensic analyst for Homeland Security, another earning a spot on the US Wheelchair basketball Team and just completed

University of Missouri. Their stories will be among several others featured in the coming book about injured and recovered veterans, **PROMISES KEPT**, by award winning author Bob Hamer. Although these young men, and those who love them, have given far more to our country and community than most every dream of, each of them arrived with smiles and hugs and expressions of gratitude to everyone at PUMPKIN CITY that evening. It was tremendously rewarding to all of us volunteers to see how much joy, and camaraderie they shared with us that night. I cannot over emphasize the tremendous reward all of us on TEAM DARKHORSE have felt when among these remarkable Americans.





**TEAM DARKHORSE** - 3D Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Division Support Committee is the (all volunteer) IRS 501 (c) 3 non profit org formed in 2010, following the Laguna Hills City Council formal vote to adopt this Camp Pendleton Infantry Unit. For more information, to volunteer, or make a donation please contact President, Vanessa Kon at [vanessakon@cox.net](mailto:vanessakon@cox.net).





# Holiday Gift Drive

For our

**Dark Horse 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines**

**Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> – Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>**

Team Darkhorse is collecting new unused toys for our newest babies

- Onesies and Baby clothing, Hats, Booties, Bibs, Socks, Caps
  - Infant Toys and Books
- Baby Toiletries and Diaper Rash Ointment, Powder, Lotion
  - Blankets and Burp Cloths
  - Diapers and Wipes
- Bottles, Teethers and Pacifiers

Donated new, unwrapped toys and gifts will go directly to the newborns and babies of our 3/5 Marines at Camp Pendleton. Our Focus this year is to Welcome Babies to the Dark Horse Family with gift baskets to the new and expectant 3/5 Marine Moms and Dads. It has been a difficult few months for our Marines and we would like to show them some love and appreciation for their service. For information please contact [35robbins@gmail.com](mailto:35robbins@gmail.com)

## Team Darkhorse Collection Sites:

- Nellie Gail HOA Office
  - Heidelberg Pastry Shop
  - Big Bad Wolfe Fitness
- 31 Journey, #270, Aliso Viejo



LAGUNA HILLS  
TEAM DARKHORSE

3rd Battalion 5th Marines 1st Division Support Committee  
dba Team Darkhorse  
Tax Identification #27-4526336 501- (C) - (3) IRS organization



# Nellie Gail Ranch

## Holiday Pickleball Round Robin

SUNDAY DECEMBER 14

MEMBERS & NON MEMBERS / \$35pp

### BRACKETS

- Ladies 3.0 (50+)
- Mens 3.0 (50+)
- Ladies 3.5 (50+)
- Mens 3.5 (50+)
- Ladies 4.0 (50+)
- Mens 4.0 (50+)

### FORMAT

- 8 teams per bracket
- Fixed partner Round Robin
- Games to 11, win by 1
- Gold, Silver, & Bronze Medals
- Prizes – Paddles and more!

*Need a partner or for more info:*

Contact: Bruce Lupin (949) 677-4058

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FIRST SHOP**  
DANA POINT

Donate a toy!



## SERVICES

### TWO FOR THE SHOW – MUSIC DUO

Planning an event? TWO FOR THE SHOW offers customized playlists, from soft rock to dance hits. Visit "Two For The Show Orange County" on YouTube for samples. Contact at 949.643.0949 (no texts) or [twofortheshowsocal@gmail.com](mailto:twofortheshowsocal@gmail.com).

### COMPLETE OFFICE AND BUILDING CLEANING

Trustworthy, insured, and with 30 years of experience, offering janitorial services, building maintenance, floor care, carpet cleaning, and more. Nellie Gail Resident Owned Business. Call 949-310-4996.

### SPANISH TUTORING AND LESSONS

Maria provides Spanish tutoring for all ages and levels. With 15+ years of experience, offering services for elementary, high school, college, conversation, and translations. Call or text at 949-836-0846 or email [mparser@yahoo.com](mailto:mparser@yahoo.com).

### EXPERIENCED AND PATIENT MATH TUTOR

A lifelong Nellie Gail resident with a Master's in Aerospace Engineering, offering math tutoring for high school, community college, and ACT/SAT. One-on-one tutoring for better understanding. Call 949-231-0977 or email [ecalusa@yahoo.com](mailto:ecalusa@yahoo.com).

### PIANO INSTRUCTION IN YOUR HOME

Learn the music you love from Popular, Classical, Jazz, and Blues. Children and adults welcome. I have B.A. Degrees in Music and Child Psychology and have been teaching 25 years. My website is [www.thekeyboardlady.com](http://www.thekeyboardlady.com). Email me at [marshyvonne13@gmail.com](mailto:marshyvonne13@gmail.com) or call 949-637-8208.

### CARING FUR ANGELS

Professional pet/house sitting, dog walking, and pet taxi services in South Orange County. Vickie Reyes, caregiver, ensures purrfect care for your companions. Licensed, bonded, insured, with pet CPR and first aid certification. Visit [www.caringfurangels.com](http://www.caringfurangels.com) or call 949-525-1670.

### PET SITTING

Seeking a loving, reliable, flexible resident for house/pet sitting. Call 805-714-6153 for active lifestyles and travel. Flexible for visits and stays.

### PIANO IS FOR PRESCHOOLERS, TOO!

Piano lessons for children aged two and up, enhancing concentration, memory, brainpower, and listening skills. Develop diligence, perseverance, and confidence for success in school and life. Visit [www.PianolsForPreschoolersToo.com](http://www.PianolsForPreschoolersToo.com) or call 949/246-6492.

### CALLING ALL EQUESTRIANS

Explore Equivont.com for a one-stop solution to equestrian needs. Find horses for sale, supplements, grooming products, trainers, clinics, and more. A Nellie Gail Resident Owned Business.

### BEAUTY COUNTER CONSULTANT

Contact Michelle Hudgins at 949-874-4466 for Beauty counter consulting. Visit <https://www.beautycounter.com/michellehudgins> for Clean and Vegan products.

### WRITER NEEDED

Part-time science fiction graphic novel writer sought. Pay:

\$15/hr. Attend weekly Zoom meetings, write 2-3 pages weekly, and email progress. Apply at [bettsm15@gmail.com](mailto:bettsm15@gmail.com) with name, contact info, availability, resume, and writing samples.

### LICENSED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST

Grant, a licensed therapist, specializes in teens and young adults. Call (714) 276-8957 for a free consultation or visit [www.grant-waggoner.clientsecure.me](http://www.grant-waggoner.clientsecure.me). Office in Dana Point. License: California / 125452.

### DOG TRAINING | NO PAWS LIKE HOME

Getting a puppy for the holidays? Looking for assistance dog training to aid with a disability? Kaiden is the OC's Best Trainer. Kind, confident training from a certified trainer. (949) 297-6848 [nopawslikehome.com](http://nopawslikehome.com)

### SPRAY TANNING – MOBILE!

EverTan provides mobile spray tanning services in Orange County. Natural, even tan with top-quality organic formulas. Call/text Kaydance at 951-355-8044 or email [myeventan@gmail.com](mailto:myeventan@gmail.com). Visit [www.myeventan.com](http://www.myeventan.com).

### DOG WALKING

April, a loving, reliable Nellie Gail resident, offers dog walking services. Call 949-310-4996 for a meet and greet.

### BABY SITTING

I am a high school student and live in Nellie Gail and would love to babysit. Please contact Beeta at 209-981-5667

### BABY SITTING

My daughter who's a junior in high school and lives in Nellie Gail would love to babysit and/or pet sit. She is responsible, good with kids, and loves animals. \$20/hr. Rosemary (949)-633-4194.

### FLOWER POWER

Vine + Dandy, a Nellie Gail floral design studio, creates unique arrangements for same-day delivery, weddings, and events. Check IG: @vinedandy or [www.vinedandy.com](http://www.vinedandy.com). Contact Michelle at 714-756-0412.

### COMPUTER SCIENCE AND PROGRAMMING TUTOR

AP Computer Science and programming tutor with UC Berkeley background. In-person and remote tutoring. Text Elaine at 949-300-8985 or email [ocstutoring@gmail.com](mailto:ocstutoring@gmail.com).

### SPRING-CLEANING HELP

Is your spring-cleaning project too big to tackle? Let me help take the stress out of your decluttering and organizing project. I provide a patient, judgement free process that will help you see all that is possible at an affordable price. Call Lisa at 714-337-9624.

### CPA WITH 20+ YEARS' EXPERIENCE

In tax and accounting for small to mid-size businesses and high-net-worth individuals. Services include tax planning, preparation, and consulting across CA, NY, TX. Clients include law partners, doctors, dentists, real estate investors. Contact Juliezzhu@yahoo.com or call (949) 627-7688.

### BABYSITTER

Ability to thoughtfully connect with and care for children of all ages. Early retired HR professional and live nearby. Excellent references. Please contact Kimber at (949) 836-6742



### **PREMIUM PET & IN-HOME SITTING SERVICES**

Including drop in and overnight stays. Serving Orange County for 20+ years. Referrals upon request. Contact me at (949) 338-4696 - lorilewis2812@gmail.com

### **PET SITTING**

Experienced graduate student offering pet sitting: in-home, overnight, and walking. Rates tailored to based service and frequency. Contact for reliable care: (949) 573-2992 or jeritretter@gmail.com

### **VIOLIN LESSONS**

Patient, outgoing and kind violin instructor for ALL ages. Studying violin @UCLA and available until late September. No experience needed. Please text Leo at 949-899-2245

### **SKATEBOARDING LESSONS**

Patient Nellie Gail resident is offering beginner skateboarding lessons at his skate ramp, your house, or a park. Helmet required and pads are recommended. Please text or call Dante at (949) 374-0145.

### **MATH/PHYSICS TUTOR**

High School math/science teacher, 30 years of experience. AP, Honors and Standard classes for math and physics including: Algebra I/II, Geometry, PreCalculus, AP Calculus AB/BC, and Physics A/B. AP/SAT. BSEE, UCLA. Call 714-296-2544 or email dkrucik@gmail.com, ask for Dave.

### **BIKE GURU: BIKE BUILDING AND REPAIR.**

Nellie Gail resident offering bicycle repair, custom builds, bike boxing. Electric Bikes, trikes, and scooters. Specialize in mountain bike suspension and performance. Fair prices, quick turn around. Ask for Jeff, 949-285-8663.

### **TUTOR 4.0 GPA**

Chemistry/Biology/English/Writing/Math. Local Nellie Gail resident and college student who will best understand and connect with your child to help them succeed. Call or text 949-416-3726

### **HOME IMPROVEMENTS, SERVICES & REPAIRS.**

Autocad design and Advice with 30 years experience provided by retired Construction Engineer at 949-342-5885 Nellie Gail resident

### **PET ACCESSORIES AND CUSTOM SHIRTS**

Create the perfect gift! I make bandannas embroidered with your pet's name. I can also make custom embroidered shirts or iron-on-vinyl shirts. Nellie Gail Ranch resident. See examples at natureknitted.com or contact: natureknitted@gmail.com Text: (949) 683-0154

### **HANDY MAN**

Local, reliable, insured, and experienced. Longtime Aliso Viejo resident with a strong mechanical and maintenance background. Detail-oriented, professional, and honest. I provide informed advice, only take on jobs within my scope, and refer out when needed. Call or text John at (949) 527-2210.

### **SOFTWARE/C++ DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

Need a software developer? Email services@alignofcode.com, text or call (949) 216-4146

### **HONEY-DO HEROES OC AFFORDABLE HANDYMAN SERVICES**

From plumbing to electrical repairs, we are here to tackle the small jobs that make a big difference in your home. Providing door & lock installs, drywall patching, painting touch-ups and kitchen / bath fixture upgrades and much more. Call William today at 949-329-8779 for a free estimate

## **FOR SALE**

### **FRESH HONEY FOR SALE**

Local honey at \$15.00 per 12 oz jar. Contact Alberta at Hey Honey 949-646-2606 for honey sales, backyard hive rescues.

### **SWEETS DOODLES**

Supreme Golden doodle breeder in South Orange County. Standard size puppies (50-75 lbs) born and raised at home. Professionally trained with a two-year health warranty. Visit [www.sweetsdoodles.com](http://www.sweetsdoodles.com) or call Mark at 949-228-4606.

### **GOLDEN RETRIEVER PUPPY FOR SALE.**

AKC Champion dog and is a female and born June 19, 2023. The sister has been adopted by a Nellie Gail homeowner, and the Breeder would like to keep the sister dogs together. Paperwork is available. If interested please call Floyd at 562-884-4566. The puppy is a kind and gentle dog.

### **DYMEK'S FREEDOM PLUMBING**

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Save on Pacific View Memorial Park Newport Beach crypts. 2 side by side in Ocean View Cemetery. \$15,000 each. Call 949-215-2728.

### **KAUAI OCEAN VIEW LOT**

Long time Nellie Gail residents. We have a beautiful rim lot in Kauai for sale, that is rarely available. It has an unobstructed ocean and Kauai Coffee fields view. We have plans or build your own custom home. Check it out here: <https://redf.in/NR06B5>

### **1948 FORD DELUXE CONVERTIBLE FOR SALE**

Red, 350 Chevy engine, Chrome under hood, 28,000 miles contact me for more information Sue, 949-533-3705

### **QUARTER SHARE IN 39' SEA RAY**

Newport Beach - \$45K. Luxury boating via LLC partnership; shared slip, maintenance, and insurance costs. Prime Newport Harbor location. Training available. Enjoy boating without full ownership hassle or expense. Contact Tony@IncTek.com

## **HEALTH**

### **A DIFFERENT WAY TO DEAL WITH PAIN**

Veterans battling Gulf War Syndrome and chronic pain face PTSD, anxiety, depression, and disc issues. Traditional meds cause side effects. One Veteran found relief through microcurrent therapy. Learn more: <https://intellbio.com/equiscope-therapy-gulf-war-syndrome/> ContactDiane@HealthnCookies.com for info.

### **QIGONG ENERGY SESSIONS AND CLASSES**

Craig Cooke, Doctor of Chinese Energetic Medicine provides qigong energy optimization and healing sessions in Nellie Gail. Online qigong classes are also available. Qigong is a powerful healing and self-transformation modality. Visit [C2energymedicine.com](http://C2energymedicine.com) for more information.

### CROSS TRAIN FOR TOTAL BODY WELLNESS

Train at home with Debra. Combining ballet barre, Pilates, and stretch for toning, lengthening, and flexibility. Call or text Debra at 949-350-5411 or email mcm623@cox.net.

### NUTRITIONIST & PERSONAL TRAINER

Master mind and body at home with Iden Shahir. Functional weight training for weight loss/muscle gain. Contact at (949)633-5410 or www.livefitwithiden.com. Instagram: @livefitwithiden.

### SWIMMING LESSONS

Learn to swim or improve skills with CPR-certified coach. 2+ years coaching experience and 12+ years in water polo. Text/call Donnie at 949-771-4044.

### KURE IT WOMEN'S GUILD

Support cutting-edge cancer research with the KURE IT WOMEN'S GUILD (www.kureit.org/women-s-guild) through fundraising, education, and community outreach. Contact Kerri Hatfield at kckhatfield@gmail.com to learn more about how YOU can make a difference.

### PRIVATE YOGA LESSONS

Expand yoga knowledge with Brittney Trujillo. 200hr Yoga Teacher with 10+ years experience. \$80 per person for an hour session. Contact at 714.234.7627.

### PRIVATE SPEECH-LANGUAGE THERAPY

Speakeasy Speech Therapy offers speech-language therapy at home or clinic. Improve language, speech, and cognitive skills. Contact (949) 287-8385 or rachel@speakeasy-speech.com.

### ANY LADIES INTERESTED IN PLAYING BASKETBALL?

We meet at a park in Nellie Gail Saturdays mornings. We would love to expand our group. No experience needed. We just love the outdoors, socializing and getting some exercise. Text me with any questions or to be added to the group. Rose (949) 633-4194.

## RENTALS

### CARIBBEAN ISLAND VACATION RENTALS

The beautiful Island of Roatan, very safe, English speaking, easy to get to in only 6 hours. Popular for Scuba Diving & snorkeling in turquoise crystal clear warm water. Three properties to choose from. Plenty to do. www.roatanislandvacationrentals.com or call Debbie at 714-801-4257. Mention N.G. for discount.

### OPEN HORSE STABLE

Large indoor/outdoor stall available for the right horse at our beautiful privately owned stable in Nellie Gail Ranch. The stall comes with trail access, full care and feedings in the morning and evening, large barn, tack room, bathing area, and nearly three fenced acres of pasture to explore. Please inquire with owner/operator - Heidi Codorniz (949) 246-3460

### NELLIE GAIL HOME FOR RENT

Estate on 1.5-acre equestrian-zoned land with mountain and city views. Quiet cul-de-sac, solar, EV charger. Remodeled 5-bed, 4-bath open floor plan. Oversized family room, formal dining, updated master bath. \$10k-\$15k/month. Call Patrice 949-813-3938 or Martin 951-288-6098.

### AUTOS FOR RENT

2023 Ford Transit, homed in Nellie Gail, for rent, seats 15 or can haul things around after removal of seats. Please contact Patrice 949-813-3938 or Martin 949-813-3938 2019 Lincoln Navigator in red, homed in Nellie Gail, for rent. Please contact Patrice 949-813-3938 or Martin 949-813-3938

## MISCELLANEOUS

### HOST FAMILY - FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENT

Open your home to a French, Italian, or Spanish exchange student this summer for 3 weeks. Stipend available. Contact Alex at alex@oui-connect.com or 415-395-6160.

### BRIDGE PARTNER WANTED

Bridge partner wanted to play social bridge from 12:00 - 3:00 on Mondays Please call (949) 395-6000 if interested

### DOG WALKING

I provide top-tier dog walking and sitting services made for your furry friend's needs. I have a great passion for animals and have been dog walking and sitting for two years, I will guarantee a safe, enjoyable experience for your beloved pet. Contact me today for dependable and loving care. Best regards, Alaeaya Hendricks (949)-416-6300. 26116 Red Corral Rd.

### THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY OF CULTURAL JEWS

Secular Humanist Jewish Holiday celebrations and other activities. Low cost annual membership includes group events. Nonmembers welcome to gatherings for a nominal fee. www.pccjews.org

### ANY LADIES INTERESTED IN PLAYING BASKETBALL?

We meet at a park in Nellie Gail Saturdays at 8:30am. We would love to expand our group. No experience needed. We just love the outdoor, socializing and getting some exercise. Text me with any questions or to be added to the group. Rose (949) 633-4194.

### NEWCOMERS CLUB OF SADDLEBACK VALLEY

is a nonprofit, nondenominational Women's Club. Groups include book clubs, gadabouts (excursions), cards, walking, golfing, and potlucks. Monthly luncheons at different venues feature speakers or entertainment. Attendance is optional. We'd love you to join us, regardless of residency or duration in the area. Learn more at ncsvonline.org.

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# HOLIDAY HOME DECORATING CONTEST

*Enter!  
to Win!*

Judging takes place Wed & Thu  
**December 10-11, 2025**

**Enter your home or nominate a home  
to be included in the contest!**

**Please have all lights and decorations on during judging.**

All winning homes will receive a special prize with a yard sign to proudly display and will be featured in January's Pony Express. GOOD LUCK!



**ONLINE ENTRY FORM**



Scan QR code to fill out the entry form online or go to  
[nelliegailranch.org/holiday-decorating-contest-2025](http://nelliegailranch.org/holiday-decorating-contest-2025)

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## REMINDER NO BIKES ON TRAILS

This is a friendly reminder that **bikes are not allowed on the trails due to concerns from residents and horse riders**. Biking on the trails can cause disturbance to the local residents and wildlife, and it can also scare horses that are being ridden. We kindly ask for your cooperation in adhering to this policy and encourage you to use the designated bike trails in the area. Thank you for helping us preserve the peace and tranquility of the surrounding area and maintain a safe environment for all trail users.

# BUSINESS CENTER

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# CAPTURE THE BEAUTY OF NELLIE GAIL RANCH

## SUBMIT YOUR TRAIL PHOTOS!

Nellie Gail Ranch's trails offer a serene and picturesque escape, from peaceful, tree-lined pathways to wide open stretches with sweeping views. These trails remain one of the most cherished features of our community—perfect for walking, riding, or simply taking in the natural beauty around us.

The photos below, submitted by resident **Fred Barker**, beautifully capture the charm and tranquility of the trails along the Sweetwater Trail. We extend our sincere thanks to Fred for sharing these stunning images with us. His photos remind us of the unique landscapes and quiet moments that make our trail system so special.

We invite all residents to help us continue celebrating the beauty of Nellie Gail Ranch by submitting your own favorite trail photos. Whether it's a peaceful morning stroll, a glowing sunset ride, or a scenic lookout across the hills, your images help showcase the outdoor spaces we are so fortunate to enjoy.

Please send high-resolution photos to [ponyexpress@nelliegailranch.org](mailto:ponyexpress@nelliegailranch.org) for a chance to be featured in a future issue of The Pony Express. Let's continue to highlight and share the natural wonders that make our community such a remarkable place to live.





# Nellie Gail Garden Group

*By Tina Corso & Pamela Fraser*

## **December is a beautiful time here in Nellie Gail.**

So many people light up their homes with decorations and holiday lights. So, what can we do to incorporate the holidays into our gardening? One fun idea is to make your own holiday wreaths for your front door. I just love the ones that smell of pine leaves and cones. With so many pine trees here in Nellie Gail, you can cut a few branches and make one yourself. I like to pick up acorns over at the Lost Colt Horse Corral and trail, and I've also added some that I collected from Lake Tahoe to make a nice wreath for my front door. I scatter a few acorns around the house too, to give it a more earthy look.

One great thing about our local plants is that they benefit from pine needles, which help control our high-alkaline soil. So those branches won't go to waste—just place them around your fruit trees and let them compost naturally. This helps balance your soil's pH. We want that number around 6.5 for our fruit trees.

Now is also the time to spray your peach trees with fungicide, and again in January. Just a light spray will help kill the spores that cause peach curl. I love my peach and nectarine trees. I use a copper fungicide

and a small spray bottle to do the job. They're the only trees I spray. Please also cover the base of your trees with straw, mulch, pine needles, or compost—almost any kind of organic matter that will break down and protect your trees this winter. The important thing is to keep moisture around the canopy and the young roots warm.

This is also a good time to plant bulbs, right before the earth gets cooler. In my garden, I have lilies, paperwhites, bearded iris, and calla lilies that come up yearly. The spider lily I grow doesn't die back but does grow from a bulb. It's also a great time to plant garlic, onions, and other root vegetables, along with tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, irises, and crocuses. You'll find bulbs in every nursery.

This is also the time to deadhead your roses. And cut all the thin branches along with trimming the majority at least 50% shorter in height. Don't be afraid to give them a good haircut. Make sure you sharpen your tools and clean with alcohol. To prevent disease to your roses.

This month, the Garden Group visited the Ecology Center Farm and Stand in San Juan Capistrano. We







had a very interesting tour of the farm, ate at the café, and shopped at the stand. Our tour guide shared the history of this 28-acre farm in the heart of San Juan and gave us information about crop rotation, experimental crops (what works here and what doesn't), the importance of composting, and more.

More than just a farm and stand, the Ecology Center offers classes, workshops, and volunteer opportunities for both children and adults. After the tour, we went to the café, which offered everything from yogurt (with lots of goodies on it) to pizza and frittatas. We also celebrated the birthdays of three of our members. After lunch, we shopped at the stand, which carries fresh fruit and vegetables, along with jams, honey, and a variety of teas.

If you haven't been there, it's definitely worth a trip!

**The Ecology Center**  
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[theecologycenter.org](http://theecologycenter.org)

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# PUZZLE PADDOCK

Which one is missing

Can you find the ball  
from the Christmas tree  
that was broken  
by funny cat?





# RANCH RECIPE



## CHRISTMAS SUGAR COOKIES

### INGREDIENTS:

1. 2  $\frac{3}{4}$  CUPS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
2. 1 CUP UNSALTED BUTTER, SOFTENED
3. 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  CUPS GRANULATED SUGAR
4. 1 LARGE EGG
5. 1 TEASPOON VANILLA EXTRACT

### PREPARATION:

1. PREHEAT YOUR OVEN TO 350°F (175°C).
2. CREAM THE BUTTER AND SUGAR TOGETHER UNTIL LIGHT AND FLUFFY.
3. MIX IN THE EGG AND VANILLA EXTRACT UNTIL FULLY COMBINED.
4. GRADUALLY ADD THE FLOUR AND MIX UNTIL A DOUGH FORMS.
5. ROLL INTO BALLS OR CUT SHAPES, PLACE ON A BAKING SHEET, AND BAKE FOR 8–10 MINUTES UNTIL EDGES ARE LIGHTLY GOLDEN.

# December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Taco Tuesday at The Watering Hole	3	4	5	6  Holiday Rock 'n" Ride  @ The Equestrian Center at Noon
7  Christmas Party with Santa and Mrs Claus @ The Watering Hole 4:00 pm to 6:30 pm	8	9  Taco Tuesday at The Watering Hole • ARC Meeting at 6:00pm @ The Association Office	10  Home Decorating Contest Judging Day 1	11  Home Decorating Contest Judging Day 2	12	13
14  Holiday Pickleball Round Robin	15	16  Taco Tuesday at The Watering Hole	17	18	19	20
21	22	23  Taco Tuesday at The Watering Hole	24  Christmas Eve	25 	26	27
28	29  ARC Submittal Deadline for December 9th meeting	30  Taco Tuesday at The Watering Hole	31 			





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