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February 2026



The **PONY EXPRESS**

Nellie Gail Ranch

Community Newsletter

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

NEW PICKLEBALL STAND COVER • COMMITTEE VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION • BOARD CANDIDATE APPLICATION

HIGHER STANDARDS | BETTER RESULTS

FEATURED LISTINGS BY THE BRAD FELDMAN GROUP



24852 BUCKBOARD LANE

LISTED FOR \$5,500,000

7-BR | 4.5-BA | APPROX. 5,075 SF
34,848 SF LOT



25281 DERBYHILL DRIVE

LISTED FOR \$4,125,000

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



25761 HIGHPLAINS TERRACE

LISTED FOR \$3,999,900

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



25901 NELLIE GAIL ROAD

LISTED FOR \$3,500,000

6-BR | 4.5-BA | APPROX. 4,700 SF
10,496 SF LOT



25152 ANVIL CIRCLE

LISTED FOR \$16,995/MONTH

5-BR | 5.5-BA | APPROX. 5,576 SF
20,656 SF LOT



26421 BROKEN BIT LANE

LISTED FOR \$8,000/MONTH

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

**CURIOS WHAT YOUR
NELLIE GAIL HOME IS WORTH?**

Scan the QR code for a free
comparative market analysis on
your property today!



BRAD FELDMAN

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

**BRAD FELDMAN
GROUP**

AT DOUGLAS ELLIMAN REAL ESTATE

Douglas Elliman

Broker #01947727



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do some
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committee /kə'mit̬u̬/ a group of people to plan or organize
bers of the club every year 5



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Save The Date

02/14/2026

Valentine's Day Dinner Event
at The Watering Hole
at 5:30pm

02/20/2026

Live Music Friday
The Welcome Matts
at The Watering Hole
6:30pm - 9:30pm

03/13/2026

Live Music Friday
DJ Daniel Arthur
at The Watering Hole
6:30pm - 9:30pm

03/27/2026

Trivia Night
Music Mania the 80s
at The Watering Hole
6:30pm - 9:00pm

On The Cover:

New Pickleball
Stand Shade Cover

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
weber@nelliegailranch.org

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

Mark Fisk	PRESIDENT
Loree Blough	VICE PRESIDENT
Dan Sparks	SECRETARY
John Park	CO-TREASURER
Holly Perneh	CO-TREASURER

DISCLAIMER: The paid advertisements contained within the Pony Express magazine are not endorsed or recommended by Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association (NGROA). Therefore, NGROA may not be held liable or responsible for business practices of these companies. Any use of the "Nellie Gail" name in said advertisements is not affiliated with Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association. Opinions expressed within are not necessarily the views of NGROA and takes no responsibility for content or claims made within.

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.

Renovation

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Studio

6 ARCHITECTS

Important Numbers

(949) 425-1477	Association Office
(949) 831-6660	Nellie Gail Ranch Tennis and Swim Club
(949) 533-7282	Nellie Gail Ranch Equestrian Center
(657) 825-8930	The Watering Hole
(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

911	Emergencies
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

The next Open Session Board Meeting and Open Homeowner Forum is scheduled for **February 17, 2026**, and will be held at the Association Clubhouse.

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

GENERAL MANAGER'S MESSAGE



CELEBRATING THE VOLUNTEERS WHO STRENGTHEN NELLIE GAIL RANCH

By Brian Mitchell

This edition of The Pony Express is dedicated to the many homeowner volunteers who serve on Nellie Gail Ranch Committees. The Board of Directors had an opportunity to personally acknowledge those efforts at a Committee Recognition Event this past January 10th. It was truly amazing to see the room full of volunteers, each of whom exhibit an interest in their respective committee and a passion for Nellie Gail Ranch. Nine separate committees were represented with 32 committee members and their significant others invited to celebrate a year of accomplishments and service.

The following is a brief summary of each Committee's 2025 focus and accomplishments.

Architectural Review Committee (ARC)

This committee reviewed 215 plan submittals in 2025. They also oversaw the Wine & Design Program that allows homeowners who are considering home improvements to meet with the Nellie Gail Ranch architect consultant to present their ideas and receive feedback on how to best submit their project to the ARC. This program in its third year is offered at no cost to the homeowner and has helped many homeowners complete their submittals with all required information. If you want to attend a future meeting reach out to Diane Goodchild at admin@nelliegailranch.org.

Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC)

The 2025 EPC focus was on Block Captain Recruitment and training of Area and Block Captains.

Equestrian Committee

The Committee provides support to the Equestrian Center Manager, Instructors and Trainers at the Equestrian Center. They monitor clinics held at the Equestrian Center and they partnered with the Trails & Safety Committee on the renovated Moulton Park Arena.

Events Committee

The Committee creates the vision for signature community events like the Easter Egg Hunt, Summer Concert Series and Christmas Party with Santa and Mrs. Clause. They also schedule Watering Hole live music and trivia entertainment and special events like the upcoming Valentines Day Dinner. And oh so much more!

Historical Committee

Nellie Gail Ranch turns 50 in November 2026. The Committee has been interviewing long-time residents capturing stories of the first 50 years of Nellie Gail Ranch. Celebrations are being planned in 2026 to commemorate this community milestone.

Landscape Committee

Each year the Committee prioritizes the landscape replacement budget to implement aesthetic and functional improvements. Last year the focus was on adding shade trees around walking paths, renovating old landscape areas such as the Gallup Park perimeter and use of California native landscape species where appropriate.

Security Committee

The 2025 focus was on increasing the number of Block Captains with a focus on neighbors getting to know neighbors. They have doubled coverage with 47 Block Captains covering 466 homes. They really want to cover the rest of the community in 2026. If you are interested in supporting your street please reach out to Norm.Dangelo@cox.net. The Committee also recommended the Board fund video cameras at the Nellie Gail Ranch entries to supplement the license plate recognition cameras. The video cameras in place now record pedestrians as well as better detail on vehicles and passengers. Nellie Gail Ranch cameras are accessible to the OC Sheriff in real time at their command center in Tustin which the Security Committee members toured.

Trails & Safety Committee

In coordination with the Equestrian Committee, the Moulton Park Arena was completely renovated incorporating a round pen, new footing and arena layout. The arena re-opened in February 2025 and has been a big hit with Equestrians! Additionally, this Committee walks and rides the trails reporting necessary maintenance to the management team.

Fire Prevention Committee

This new Committee was chartered in April 2025. They met with OCFA to determine current standards of fire prevention maintenance recommended and have provided resources to NGROA homeowners for home hardening. These resources are available on the Committee web page at the following link: <https://nelliegailranch.org/fire-prevention-committee/>. In 2026 they are combining resources with the Emergency Preparedness and Events Committees to co-host a Fall Festival with fun fire prevention related activities, vendors, resources, giveaways and music!

Ad Hoc Gallup Park Playground Committee

Ad Hoc Committee's are occasionally chartered for special projects. This special committee was tasked

with evaluating and selecting new playground equipment at Gallup Park. The new playground with spinner and zip line opened in June 2025 just in time for the summer concert season. It was an immediate hit with the young members of our community!

At the Volunteer Recognition dinner, Director Loree Blough displayed the Non-Profit of the Year Award received from the Laguna Hills Chamber of Commerce February 2025. Thank you to all who served last year and are serving this year whose efforts contributed to earning this award. And finally, Board President Mark Fisk shared with the volunteers, Nellie Gail Ranch is not its CC&R's or Corporate Charter, Nellie Gail Ranch is the sum of its families who call Nellie Gail Ranch home and the passion of those who volunteer.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

NEW PICKLEBALL STAND SHADE COVER

This issues Pony Express cover shows off our newest recreation center amenity installed December 2025. The 32' x 12' fabric shade cover on cantilever structure offers shade over the pickleball viewing stands. This new amenity was fully paid for using pickleball and recreation center membership fees adding member comfort and value to our sports programming and recreation center. Homeowners who want to participate in the great sport of pickleball can bypass the wait list and join our pickleball program at a discounted fee. Check the Nellie Gail Ranch website for current membership fees.



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ARCHITECTURAL REVIEWS

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEWS RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE ON-LINE

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

Architectural Review

January 2026

QR Code



Minutes

November 2025

QR Code



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CFG is a family-run practice owned by local Nellie Gail residents. We specialize in working with business owners, executive professionals, and families. Our areas of expertise include:

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Tax Mitigation Strategies
Estate Planning & Wealth Transfer
Wealth Management

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25211 Empty Saddle Drive
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

www.nelliegailranch.org

September 30, 2025 Year End Financial Statements

January 30, 2026

Nellie Gail Ranch Member,

Each year the Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association Board of Directors retains a CPA for purposes of auditing the financial records of the Association. The auditor's report for the year-end September 30, 2025 is available on our website via the following link:

<http://nelliegailranch.org/wp-content/uploads/09.30.2025-FINAL-AUDIT-NELLIE-GAIL-RANCH-OWNERS-ASSOCIATION.pdf>

You may also scan this QR code for a pdf copy:



If you prefer to have the year-end financial statements e-mailed to you, please request via an e-mail to admin@nelliegailranch.org.

If you prefer to receive a paper copy in the mail, please advise and we will mail.

Additionally, the audit of the financials is also available at the Association business office at 25211 Empty Saddle Dr., Laguna Hills, CA 92653.

Should you have any questions regarding the financials, please contact me at bmitchell@nelliegailranch.org or 949-425-1477.

Sincerely

Brian J. Mitchell
Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association
General Manager

FIRE PREVENTION COMMITTEE

IS MY FAMILY IN DANGER FROM A WILDFIRE NEAR MY HOME?

By Paul Scholtes

Have you ever worried that there may be a wildfire near your home – and if it's heading your way? Fortunately, there's a robust, reliable and free app that answers that question: Watch Duty.

What is Watch Duty?

Watch Duty is a non-profit 501(c)(3) and non-governmental organization providing real-time wildfire tracking and an alert platform that utilizes its proprietary app and technology to monitor wildfires and send out timely notifications to those in possible danger of a wildfire. Watch Duty is used by over 16 million users. It has grown to cover all of California and 22 states west of the Mississippi. Members of the Fire Prevention Committee ("FPC") use Watch Duty as one of our most important wildfire alert tools.

Why Was It Developed?

John Mills, co-founder and CEO of Watch Duty, personally faced devastating wildfires while living in Sonoma County. He was frustrated by the fragmented and slow disaster information produced and communicated by the government. Mills, a financially successful tech entrepreneur, decided that there

had to be a better way - so he used his own money and tech skills to produce Watch Duty.

Who Makes Watch Duty Possible?

A staff of about 15 full-time employees and approximately 140 volunteers comprise the core supporters of Watch Duty. The volunteers include active and retired firefighters, dispatchers and first responders.

How Does It Work?

The staff and volunteers use automated monitoring systems to diligently monitor radio scanners and other data sources to keep Watch Duty up-to-the minute current with lifesaving information. If the Watch Duty staff and volunteers determine that a wildfire incident has become a threat to life and/or property they send out a targeted notice to the public in the area near the incident using the Watch Duty app.

Next Step: Download the Watch Duty App!

Watch Duty provides its information so fast that new wildfires can be tracked within one minute of the fire starting before they spread. The app has interactive maps allowing users to track evacuation zones, shelter locations, live camera feeds and fire perimeters, as well as information about containment on specific fires.

Stay Safe From Wildfires When Seconds Count

Watch Duty, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, alerts you of nearby wildfires and firefighting efforts in real-time.



Live Music at THE WATERING HOLE with *Two for the Show*



Nellie Gail Ranch residents enjoyed a lively evening at the Watering Hole with live music by **Two for the Show**, creating the perfect backdrop for great company, conversation, and community fun. The upbeat performance kept the atmosphere energetic and welcoming, making it a memorable night for all who attended. A special thank you to **Loree Blough**

for the wonderful photo submissions that captured the spirit and enjoyment.



SECURITY COMMITTEE

**SEE SOMETHING,
SAY SOMETHING!**

Call the Orange County Sheriff's Department
when you see suspicious activity.

OC Sheriff's Dispatch:
(949) 770-6011

Press **#1**, then **#9** to skip the phone tree.

Save this number in your phone!

What's considered suspicious?

- Unknown vehicles circling or parked for long periods
- Individuals peering into homes, garages, or cars
- Someone knocking on doors without a clear reason
- Strangers walking through yards or side gates
- Unfamiliar people checking mailboxes
- People taking photos of homes, cameras, or entrances

Trust

Help keep Nellie Gail Ranch safe!

Make



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REGISTRATION ONGOING

SPRING SWIM TEAM
REGISTRATION ONGOING

SUMMER SPORTS CAMP
REGISTRATION ONGOING

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FOR PROGRAM SPECIFIC START DATES AND FOR PRICING INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE

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THE WATERING HOLE

WHERE NEIGHBORS GATHER



LIVE MUSIC *Friday*



THE WELCOME MATTS

MATT BRISLAWN & MATT CLATTERBUCK

Foot-Tapping Fun

Join us at THE WATERING HOLE for a great night of feel good, upbeat, timeless music!

For more information, call 657.825.8930

FEB
20
6:30-9:30



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LIVE MUSIC FRIDAY

DJ DANIEL ARTHUR

MARCH 13TH, 2026 | 6:30PM - 9:30PM

THE WATERING HOLE
WHERE NEIGHBORS GATHER

For more information, call 657.825.8930

THE WATERING HOLE
WHERE NEIGHBORS GATHER

For more information, call 657.825.8930

THE WATERING HOLE
WHERE NEIGHBORS GATHER

LIVE MUSIC

Friday

Two for the Show

MARK GALLUZZO & DALE ERKEL

Timeless Pop & Rock Classics

Join us as this talented duo performs a unique musical experience for all ages!

For more information, call 657.825.8930

APRIL 10
6:30-9:30

Back for the New Year!

THE 80s

TRIVIA NIGHT

Join us at The Watering Hole for a fun night of trivia with thought-provoking questions, great music, fun prizes, and entertaining hosts!

FREE TO PLAY!

FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2026 | 6:30-9:00PM

FOR NELLIE GAIL RANCH RESIDENTS, MEMBERS, AND THEIR GUESTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
657-825-8930

THE WATERING HOLE
WHERE NEIGHBORS GATHER

LIVE MUSIC

Friday

JEFF SISIL

Jeff Sisil is a professional conductor and musician featured in a Disney+ Original with Billie Eilish and the LA Phil, television productions, and elite live events. He also brings decades of international conducting experience and works on major TV and film productions as a certified safety diver and set medic.

MAY 8
6:30-9:30

Nellie Gail Ranch
X
DP TENNIS ACADEMY



SUMMER TENNIS & SWIM CAMP

2026 REGISTRATION OPEN!

MONDAY - THURSDAY

Little Hitters | 5-8 years

10.30am - 2.30pm

\$280

Week 1 - June 8th

Week 2 - June 15th

Week 3 - June 22nd

Week 4 - June 29th

Week 5 - July 6th

Week 6 - July 13th

Week 7 - July - 20th

Week 8 - July 27th

Week 9 - August 3rd

Challengers | 9 years+

10.30am - 3pm

\$315

Week 10 - August 10th

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Nellie Gail Ranch

Pickleball Spring Smash!

FEBRUARY 21st & 22nd

Members & Non-Members

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- Women's Doubles 3.5 (50+)
- Men's Doubles 4.0+ (50+)
- Women's Doubles 4.0+ (50+)
- Mixed Doubles 3.0 (50+)
- Mixed Doubles 3.5 (50+)
- Mixed Doubles 4.0+ (50+)

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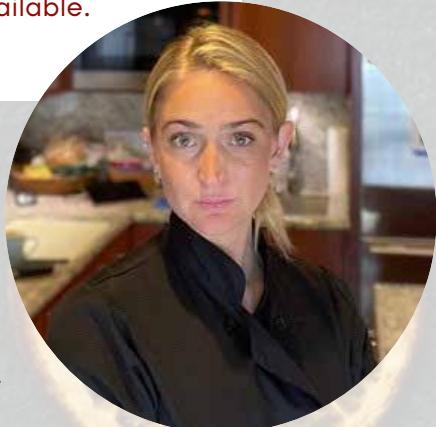
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NOMINATING COMMITTEE



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Consistent with Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association By-Laws Article VI, Section 1, the Board of Directors will be appointing a Nominating Committee at the February 17, 2026 Board Meeting. This letter is a solicitation for Nominating Committee candidates. If you have an interest in serving, please complete the below form and return by Monday, February 9, 2026. Attached is the adopted Charter that describes Nominating Committee responsibilities.

Application for Nominating Committee Appointment

I wish to be considered for appointment to the Nominating Committee:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers: (W) _____ (H) _____ (C) _____

E-mail: _____

If appointed I pledge to do my best for the benefit of the Association as a whole and will abide by the Committee Charter, Election Rules and Procedures, Bylaws and applicable California laws.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

You may submit your application and request for appointment to the Association Clubhouse office or send by e-mail to admin@nelliegailranch.org .

You may also submit your application via the following QR Code:





Nominating Committee Charter

Purpose

The Nominating Committee ("Committee") shall solicit and recommend candidates to fill vacancies for election to the Board of Directors of not less than the number of vacancies that are to be filled.

Committee Function

1. The Committee shall be comprised of a chair person, who shall also be a member of the Board of Directors, and two (2) or more Members of the Association appointed by the Board of Directors.
2. Members of the Committee shall not also be candidates for election to the Board of Directors (during their time of service on the Nominating Committee).
3. Members of the Committee shall be in "good standing" with the Association. A member who is not in "good standing" for purposes of this Committee shall mean that the Member is more than ninety (90) days late in the payment of assessments to the Association, is currently in violation of the Association's governing documents which remains unaddressed for more than thirty (30) days following notice of the violation, and/or is currently, or within the past three (3) years, has been in litigation with the Association in which the Association was the prevailing party.
4. The Committee shall solicit and recommend candidates to fill vacant positions to the Board of Directors of not less than the number of vacancies that are to be filled.
5. Nominations to fill vacant positions to the Board of Directors shall consist of qualified Members who are in "good standing" with the Association as outlined above.
6. The Committee shall determine whether any and all candidates meet the qualifications for candidates as set forth in the Election Rules.
7. Nominations shall be made by the Nominating Committee prior to a ballot printing deadline to be set annually by the Board of Directors.
8. Quorum for each Committee meeting is established by the attendance of at least a majority of the Committee members.

Budget Allocation

There is no budget associated with Nominating Committee functions.

Term of Office

The Board of Directors makes Committee Member appointments annually.

Adopted February 21, 2017



**SOLICITATION FOR BOARD CANDIDATES AND
NOTICE OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION
(NOTICE DATE JANUARY 30, 2026)**

Annual Meeting Date: Wednesday, June 3, 2026

Location: 25281 Empty Saddle Drive, Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Registration & Call to Order: 6:30 PM

Solicitation For Board Candidates:

The Association is soliciting candidates for the upcoming 2026 Board of Directors election to be held on **Wednesday, June 3, 2026**. Candidate applications must be received by the Association by 5:00 p.m. Monday, March 23, 2026 to be nominated and listed on the pre-ballot notice that will be posted prior to April 1, 2026. The pre-ballot notice will include all names that will be included on the ballot to be mailed by May 1, 2026.

Candidates whose nominations are received after 5:00 p.m. Monday, March 23, 2026 may still run for election but will not be included on the ballot.

1. Subject to Civil Code §5105, all Candidates for the Board must meet the following qualifications:
 - a. The Candidate must be an Owner. If title to a separate interest is held by a legal entity, such entity may appoint a natural person to serve or vote on such entity's behalf by delivering evidence of an appropriate written appointment to the Association;
 - b. The Candidate must be current in the payment of all regular and special assessments. For the purposes of these election rules, "current" means no regular or special assessment is past due by more than thirty (30) days, or such period of time as is specifically defined in the Association's collection policy;
 - c. The Candidate may not hold a joint ownership interest in the same separate interest as any other candidate or incumbent director; and
 - d. The Candidate is not eligible to run if the Association is aware or becomes aware of a past criminal conviction that would, if the Candidate were elected, either prevent the Association from purchasing the fidelity bond coverage required by Civil Code §5806 or terminate the Association's existing fidelity bond coverage.

Additional information regarding the Associations Election Rules and Procedures is provided in the Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association Election Rules adopted March 15, 2022 and are available on-line at nelliemailranch.org or by request to admin@nelliemailranch.org.

Notice of Board of Directors Election

The Annual Meeting of the Members and Election of Board of Directors is set for **Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.** If there are more candidates than positions open (three) the meeting will be held at the Nellie Gail Ranch Clubhouse at 25281 Empty Saddle Drive, Laguna Hills, CA. If the number of candidates are less than or equal to positions open, the counting of ballots will be conducted via Zoom. In order to achieve quorum, at least fifty percent (50%) of the Homeowners (i.e. 703 out of 1405 members) must vote. In the event that less than 50% of the membership participate in the Annual Meeting, either by returning their ballot or appearing in person, then those in attendance may adjourn the meeting to a date not less than 5 nor more than 30 days thereafter, and the quorum at such adjourned meeting shall be lowered to twenty-five percent (25%) (i.e. 351 out of 1405 members). The Reconvened Election meeting date, if necessary, will be **Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.**

This year three (3) seats are up for election. The pre-ballot notice listing candidate names to be included on the ballot will be posted prior to April 1, 2026. Check the May 2026 issue of The Pony Express for candidate bios and information. For any questions regarding the Annual Meeting and Election of Board Directors, please call the Association office at (949) 425-1477.



2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATE RESUMÉ / NOMINATION APPLICATION

The Association is soliciting candidates for the upcoming 2026 Board of Directors election to be held on **Wednesday, June 3, 2026**. Candidate applications must be received by the Association by 5:00 p.m. Monday, March 23, 2026 to be nominated and listed on the pre-ballot notice that will be posted prior to April 1, 2026. The pre-ballot notice will include all names that will be included on the ballot to be mailed by May 1, 2026. Please provide a full face, digital photograph to be published in the May 2026 issue of The Pony Express. Below word totals per category may be adjusted by the candidate, however, the total statement may not exceed 350 words. Please return this application by mail to 25211 Empty Saddle Dr., Laguna Hills, CA 92653 or e-mail to the Association's office at admin@nelliegailranch.org. Attention: Nominating Committee.

Property Owner's Name: _____

Address: _____ Homeowner Since: _____ (year)

Current Occupation or Occupation at time of Retirement: _____

Civic Activities – Organizations, Positions, Etc. (50 words or less): _____

Nellie Gail Ranch Activities – Organizations, Positions, Etc. (50 words or less): _____

Biographical Information (100 words or less): _____

Statement – Why do you want to serve on the Board (150 words or less): _____

If elected I pledge to do my best for the benefit of the Association as a whole and will abide by and enforce the Association's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and CC&R's, Architectural Guidelines, published policies and all applicable California and Federal Laws.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Happy Holidays and best wishes for the New Year



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SECURITY COMMITTEE

SMART HOMES, SMARTER SECURITY IN NELLIE GAIL

By Chantal Wulf

Did you know that you can now turn your TV on and off even when you are not home? With today's smart home technology, many Nellie Gail Ranch residents are using simple devices and apps to make their homes look lived in while they travel, adding an extra layer of convenience and security.

If you own a newer smart TV from brands like Samsung, LG, Sony, Roku, Apple TV or Fire TV, your television is already connected to WiFi. Most of these TVs come with a mobile app that allows you to control power, volume and channels remotely from your phone, as long as the TV is connected to the internet. This means you can turn the TV on in the evening while you are away, creating activity in the home that can help deter unwanted attention.

For older TVs or homes with multiple devices, there are also smart remote hubs such as BroadLink and similar systems. These small hubs connect to your WiFi and mimic your physical remote control using infrared signals. Once set up, you can control your TV and other devices from anywhere in the world through an app, even if the TV itself is not technically smart.

Another simple option is a smart plug. A smart plug allows you to cut or restore power to a device remotely. Some TVs automatically turn on when power is restored, which means you can schedule your TV to turn on and off at certain times while you are away. This works especially well for basic setups and is one of the most affordable ways to add remote control.

The real benefit for Nellie Gail residents is not just convenience, but security. Turning lights and TVs on and off remotely helps create realistic activity patterns in the home. Combined with smart lighting, cameras and door sensors, this can significantly reduce the appearance of an empty house during vacations or extended travel.

At the end of the day, these small, easy upgrades are really about peace of mind. Whether you are away for a weekend or an extended trip, knowing you can check in on your home and create a sense of everyday activity can make traveling more relaxing and coming home even sweeter!





KNOW THE FLOW

A new exhibit at Moulton Museum!
~ OPENING FEBRUARY 2026 ~

LEARN & PLAY!

Join us during our regular open hours on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and the first two Saturdays of the month from 11-3 PM, and enjoy the Moulton Museum's newest interactive exhibit, created in partnership with Moulton Niguel Water District! This new permanent feature of the museum will put visitors in control of a fun, responsive, virtual water system.

Get ready to Know the Flow!



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Congratulations to the 2025 Holiday Home Decorating

WINNERS!

It was another year of amazing holiday light displays! Countless homes in the neighborhood were adorned with stunning decorations, with 21 of those homes entering into the competition. Each year our judges have the difficult task to name 12 winners, and this year was no exception. A huge thank you goes out to all our neighbors who participated in this year's event!

26192 Bridlewood



25326 Gallup



27796 Hidden Trail



27492 Hidden Trail



Special thanks to the Brad Feldman Group as our Contributing Sponsor. The team will be congratulating this year's winners with some special prizes!

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25041 Nellie Gail



Committee Recognition Dinner

The third annual Committee Recognition Dinner was held on January 10, 2026, featuring live entertainment by Jeff Sisil. This special evening celebrated the importance of volunteering and extended heartfelt thanks to all the dedicated volunteers who make our community committees possible, with special recognition to Chantal Wulf for capturing the night through her photography.



"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart. They are the people who step forward not because they are required to, but because they care—giving their energy, compassion, and commitment to strengthen communities and improve lives in ways that truly matter." — **Elizabeth Andrew**



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

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My name is Jessica. I am a preschool teacher with 9 years experience that lives in Nellie Gail. I offer occasional and overnight babysitting services. Contact 949-295-2602 or jjayess9418@gmail.com.

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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.

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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. Contact Michelle at 714-756-0412.

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ANY LADIES INTERESTED IN PLAYING BASKETBALL?

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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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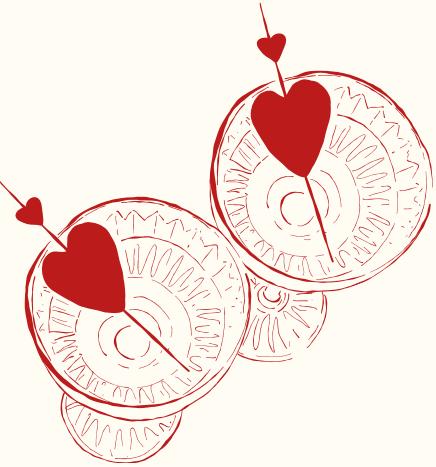
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PLEASE JOIN US FOR A

Valentine's Day DINNER EVENT



SATURDAY
FEB 14

SEATING FROM
5:30PM - 7:00PM
7:30PM - TO CLOSE

4-COURSE PREFIX MENU
& LIVE MUSIC
at The Watering Hole

\$95 per person

Including Gratuity & Tax

*Optional Wine pairing can be purchased
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**Tickets Available Online
Through February 6th**

21+ Only Event

Nellie Gail Garden Group

By Tina Corso

I breathe a sigh of relief every year we don't flood. The hillsides are intact here in Nellie Gail. Planting your hillside is the answer to increased rainwater absorption. Every year, I add more rosemary. It's the most drought-resistant plant that will grow into the hillsides, and the flowers bloom almost year-round for our bees. Ice plants also help a great deal, and bumblebees love their flowers.

One good thing about allowing your hillside to grow wild is that many small animals find shelter. This, in turn, feeds our hawks and owls—a necessity for keeping our rodent population at bay. All animals have their part in the circle of life, but we can't allow them to overrun our population. Planting small shrubs is key for nesting grounds. Rabbit manure feeds the soil, and in turn, our birds of prey feed on rabbits and other small rodents.

We can't allow the squirrel population to grow too large, as they will eat all our fruit. Our crows also seem to attack our hawks. Crows are very aggressive and will eat almost anything, but they specifically go after birds of prey.

Living with nature is not easy, as many people complain about coyotes. Owning cats is very difficult here; coyotes will come after them, as well as chickens. Everything has to be contained with fences and secure areas to live in. Even small dogs are at risk.

Recently, our two dogs passed away. They were almost 15 years old and were very good at chasing animals away. Our chows scared away many rats and skunks over the years. Now we are babysitting a shepherd which I hope it will chase the squirrels away as well.

Just last month, I heard an owl close to my house. I was so excited as I tried to find him in the dark. Owls are an extra help in rodent control. You can buy or build an owl house and place it high in the trees. We really need more of them in our neighborhoods.

February is also a time for bare-root trees and shrubs, which are dormant plants that are not growing during the winter months. Last year, I bought two new plum trees and one Asian pear tree. Every year, I plant something



new. Always ask your nursery professional for advice. Plum trees need two trees, as do cherry trees. Planting out your yard takes time, but it is so rewarding.

This winter, my Mexican cream guava is producing very heavily, and we are harvesting our avocados now. Avocados only ripen off the tree, so you can leave some varieties hanging longer—but of course, the squirrels want them as well.

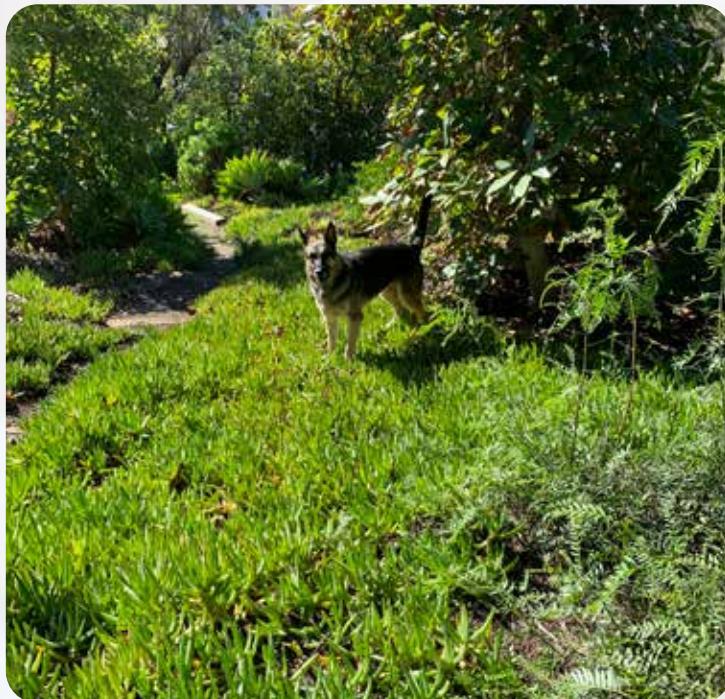
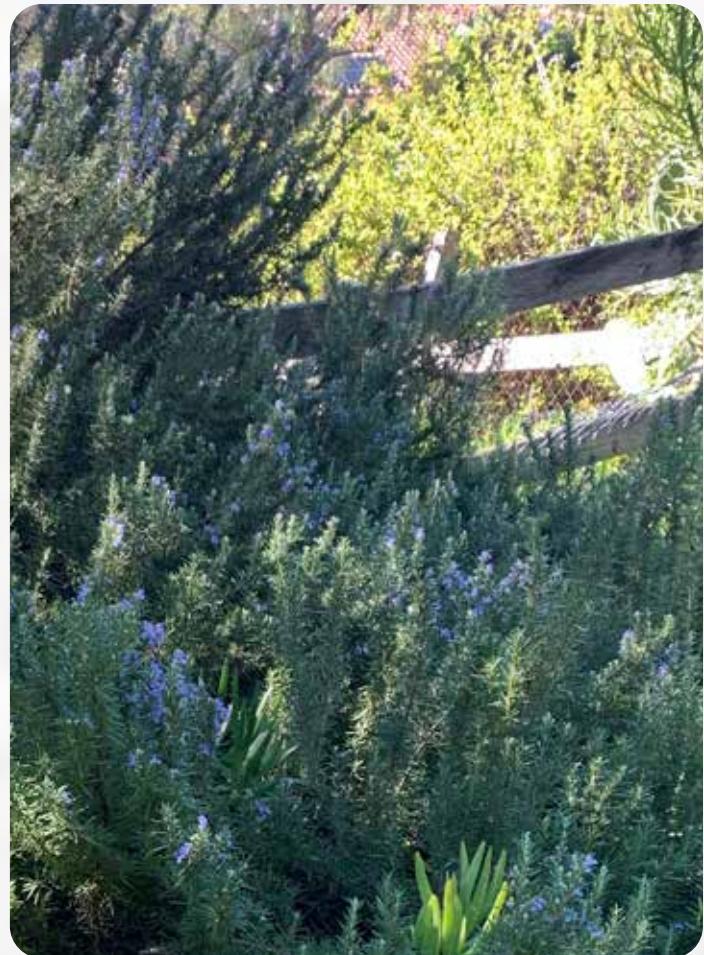
Mine are starting to bud already, so I am picking them all. This past year, I probably harvested a hundred or so. The Fuertes were alternating production, so that was about 100 fewer. Most of my trees are mature now, so I should get 300 to 400 next year—fingers crossed that the wind doesn't blow off too many blossoms.

February is a great time not only to buy bare-root plants but also to plan your garden. Spring will be here soon, and it will be time to fertilize again. Keep adding compost and mulch on top, raking leaves back onto the canopy and base of the trees. We should have a great spring thanks to all this rain.

Happy gardening! The garden group will resume meetings the last Friday in January and February.

Send us photos of your garden if you can.

Tina Corso • tlc8386@gmail.com



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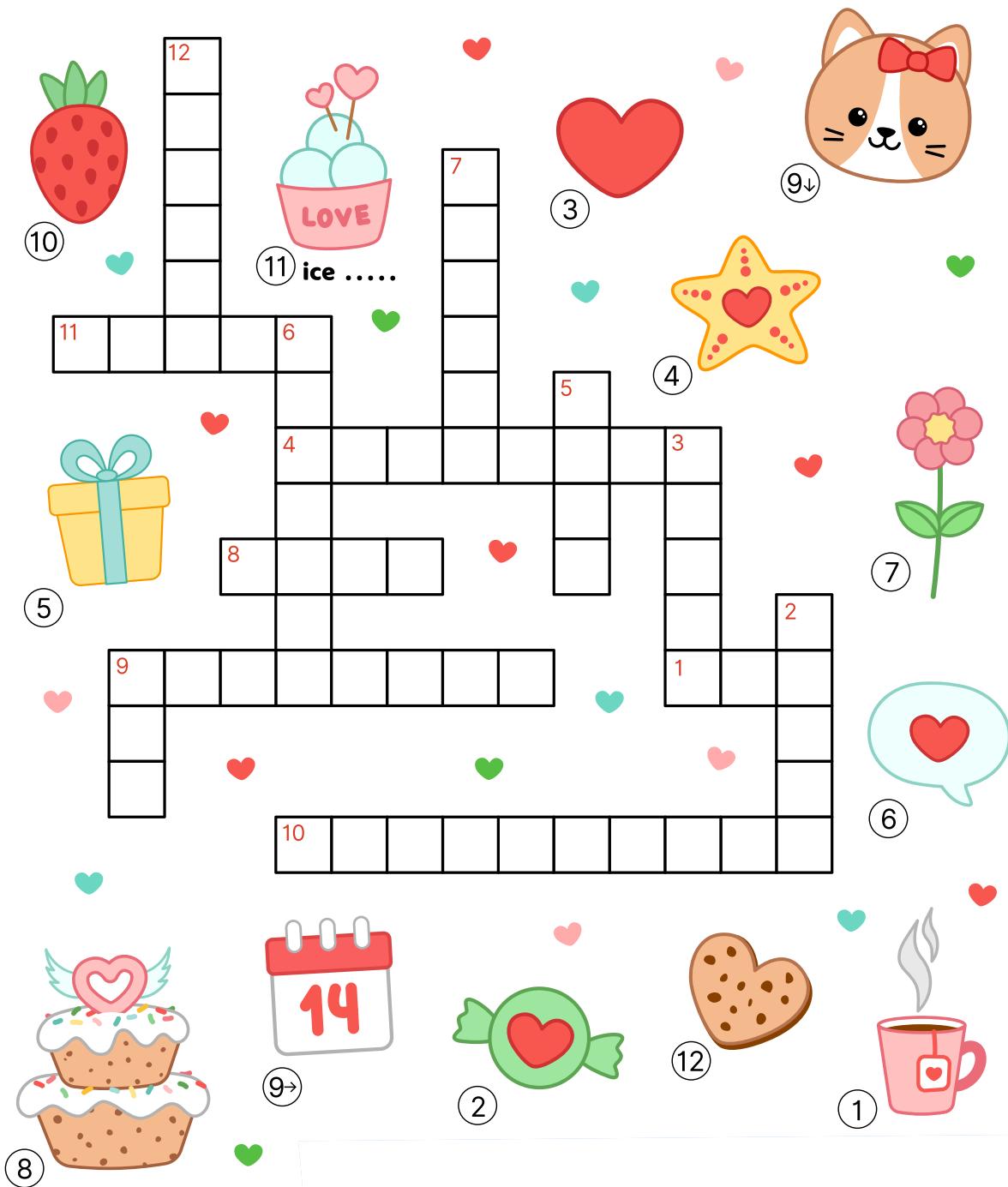
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VALENTINE'S DAY crossword



RANCH RECIPE



CHOCOLATE-COVERED STRAWBERRY HEARTS

INGREDIENTS:

1. FRESH STRAWBERRIES
2. SEMI-SWEET CHOCOLATE CHIPS
3. WHITE CHOCOLATE CHIPS
4. COCONUT OIL
5. VALENTINE'S SPRINKLES

PREPARATION:

1. WASH AND THOROUGHLY DRY THE STRAWBERRIES.
2. MELT SEMI-SWEET CHOCOLATE WITH A SMALL AMOUNT OF COCONUT OIL UNTIL SMOOTH.
3. DIP EACH STRAWBERRY INTO THE MELTED CHOCOLATE AND PLACE ON PARCHMENT PAPER.
4. MELT WHITE CHOCOLATE AND DRIZZLE OVER THE STRAWBERRIES FOR DECORATION.
5. ADD VALENTINE'S SPRINKLES AND LET SET BEFORE SERVING.

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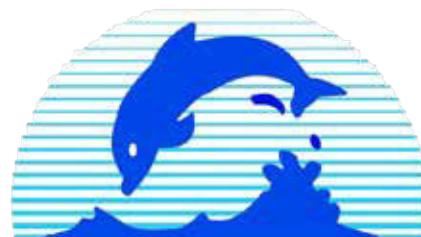
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February 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Taco Tuesday at The Watering Hole	4	5 Wine & Design by appointment only	6	7
8	9	10 Taco Tuesday at The Watering Hole • ARC Meeting at 6:00pm @ The Association Office	11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day Dinner Event @ The Watering Hole at 5:30pm
15	16  HAPPY PRESIDENTS DAY Business Office Closed	17 Taco Tuesday at The Watering Hole • Board Meeting 7:30pm @Club- house	18	19	20 Live Music Friday The Welcome Mats @ The Watering Hole 6:30pm - 9:30pm	21 Pickleball Spring Smash Day 1
22 Pickleball Spring Smash Day 2	23 ARC Submittal Deadline for March 10th meeting	24 Taco Tuesday at The Watering Hole	25	26	27	28



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