

December 2023



The PONY EXPRESS



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Nellie Gail Ranch

Community Newsletter

2009



2009



2013



2013



2013



2013



2013



2013



2017





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Celebrate the Holidays with these Local Events:

Sunday Afternoon Boardgame Meetup • Every 4th Sunday
Join us at GameCraft Brewing for a most excellent, marathon afternoon of gaming, great food, and craft beer! Enjoy playing a selection of modern board and card games! We will have part of the adult section of the event floor reserved for our group, toward the back and on the left side of the main space. No experience necessary to attend!
GameCraft Brewing 23301 Avenida De La Carlota, Laguna Hills, CA

Christmas Mini Skate Camp • December 27 - December 29
Basics of Skateboarding is a hands on camp designed to bring kids together within the community. Children develop and enhance their skateboarding skills while creating new friendships. Skate camp runs from 9am-11am.
Laguna Niguel Skate & Soccer Park 27745 Alicia Pkwy, Laguna Niguel

Hikari - Festival of Lights • Through December 29
Santa will be at Hikari every night from 4:30pm to close. Entry Gates open at 4:30pm. Entry Gates close at 8pm. The Produce Market Stand and Gift Shop will be open 9am to 9pm on the days Hikari is open, and 9am-5pm on all other days.
Tanaka Farms 5380 3/4 University Dr., Irvine, Ca 92612 949.653.2100

Fashion Island Holidays • Through January 2
Fashion Island helps you celebrate the holidays. The 90-foot live holiday tree will be up for photo ops, as will holiday photo stations around the Neiman Marcus - Bloomingdale's Courtyard. Also, don't miss the Augmented Reality photo experiences with Santa & Friends throughout Fashion Island. In the Atrium Garden Courtyard, celebrate Hanukkah with the Menorah Lighting Display.
401 Newport Center Drive, Newport Beach



IN ESCROW



29841 Weatherwood, Laguna Niguel

SOLD - \$1,835,000



241 Calle Empalme, San Clemente

SOLD - \$1,305,000



25091 Woolwich St, Laguna Hills



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Save The Date

12/10

CHRISTMAS PARTY with
Santa and Mrs. Claus at
The Watering Hole
(4:00-6:30pm)



12/13 to 12/14

HOLIDAY HOME
DECORATING CONTEST



3/30/24

EASTER EGG HUNT at
Gallup Park



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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) 371-1595	Nellie Gail Ranch Equestrian Center
(949) 533-0241	Equestrian Center (Emergency)
(800) 696-0678	Sunset Landscape (Irrigation Leaks)
(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
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(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 **January 16, 2024** 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
- Landscape Committee
- Security Committee
- Trails and Safety Committee
- Committee to Evaluate Feasibility of Gating

MANAGERS MESSAGE

CELEBRATING OUR EQUINE COMPANIONS

By Brian Mitchell



In 2004 Congress designated December 13th as National Day of the Horse in recognition of the importance of horses to the security, economy, recreation, and heritage of the United States. The Congressional designation encourages us to be mindful of the horse as a living link to the history of the United States.

Nellie Gail Ranch was developed by Presley Homes in 1976 as an Equestrian community described in the LA Times as "an island of calm amid the bustle of the OC". It is in large part due to its equestrian heritage that forty-seven years later Nellie Gail Ranch still feels like a haven from a county growing in density. And with 25 miles of equestrian trails interspersed behind and alongside homes, Nellie Gail Ranch maintains its ongoing link to an equestrian and ranching history. As we celebrate this holiday season let us also celebrate our Equine companions and the place they hold in our hearts and the Nellie Gail Ranch culture. On December 10th the Equestrian Center is hosting a celebration of "Senior Horses" age 20 or older. Please RSVP (see flyer below) to confirm your participation and details regarding the special companion you will be attending with.

"There is much we can learn from a friend who happens to be a horse."

— Aleksandra Layland



Whiskey
30 Years old



Honoring Our Senior Horses & Celebrating Nellie Gail Ranch's Equestrian History

When: Sunday, December 10th at 2pm
Where: Nellie Gail Ranch Equestrian Center
Who: All Residents & Community Members
Welcome! Bring your Senior Horses!!

All senior horses age 20 or older are invited to come to the NGR Equestrian Center for a professional photo celebrating the senior horses in our community! Each senior horse in attendance will receive a goodie bag.

Please RSVP to caseybuller@hotmail.com

ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION OF DOCUMENTS

Nellie Gail Ranch has 1,405 homes. Annually we provide each homeowner with the new fiscal year budget (August) and a year end audit of financial statements (January). Other important information regarding the Association is available weekly via our "End of Week" Friday e-mail blast. In 2016 we switched from mailing paper copies of the budget and began mailing CDROM disks resulting in a reduction of mailing over 106,000 paper pages annually. This change resulted in savings of thousands of dollars annually. This year with improving technology we provided access to the budget via web links and a QR code. We still have an opportunity to let technology save our resources as mailing a hard copy of the links still costs the Association over \$2,000 per mailing and with postage going up again in January it will keep climbing.

Please sign up for electronic distribution of documents using this QR code to receive information via e-mail. You will benefit by saving the Association (and you) money. You will also receive important and timely information regarding your home and the community.



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THE WATERING HOLE

WHERE NEIGHBORS GATHER

At **The Watering Hole**, the celebration of life events takes center stage, making it a vibrant hub for birthdays, anniversaries, book clubs, and baby showers. The venue has become synonymous with joyous occasions, providing a welcoming space for diverse gatherings marked by laughter and merriment. Whether it's a lively Taco Tuesday, a delightful Saturday pancake feast, or a leisurely Sunday brunch, The Watering Hole invites everyone to partake in the festivities, promising a warm and inviting atmosphere for all.

Amidst the lively events, The Watering Hole fosters a sense of community and camaraderie, creating an environment where patrons can share memorable moments with friends and family. The diverse array of occasions hosted reflects the venue's commitment to being a gathering place for all, where the spirit of celebration is embraced wholeheartedly. Come join in the festivities and create lasting memories at The Watering Hole – an inviting haven for good times and cherished moments.

Masoud Vahidi and Sameh Mosaed celebrating a birthday with "the best butter cake I have ever had!"



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3

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MODELO ESPECIAL
PACIFICO

5

CLUB MARGARITAS AND MOJITOS

6



TACO TUESDAY

WHERE NEIGHBORS GATHER

JOIN US EVERY
TUESDAY AT THE
WATERING HOLE FROM
4PM TO 8PM

MINUTES & ARCHITECTURAL REVIEWS

OCTOBER 17, 2023 BOARD MEETING MINUTES AND NOVEMBER 14, 2023 ARCHITECTURAL REVIEWS AVAILABLE ON-LINE

As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance convenience and save space, the Minutes and Architectural Review results will be accessible online for your convenience. You can easily view them by scanning the QR codes provided below:

The Minutes QR Code



Architectural Review QR Code

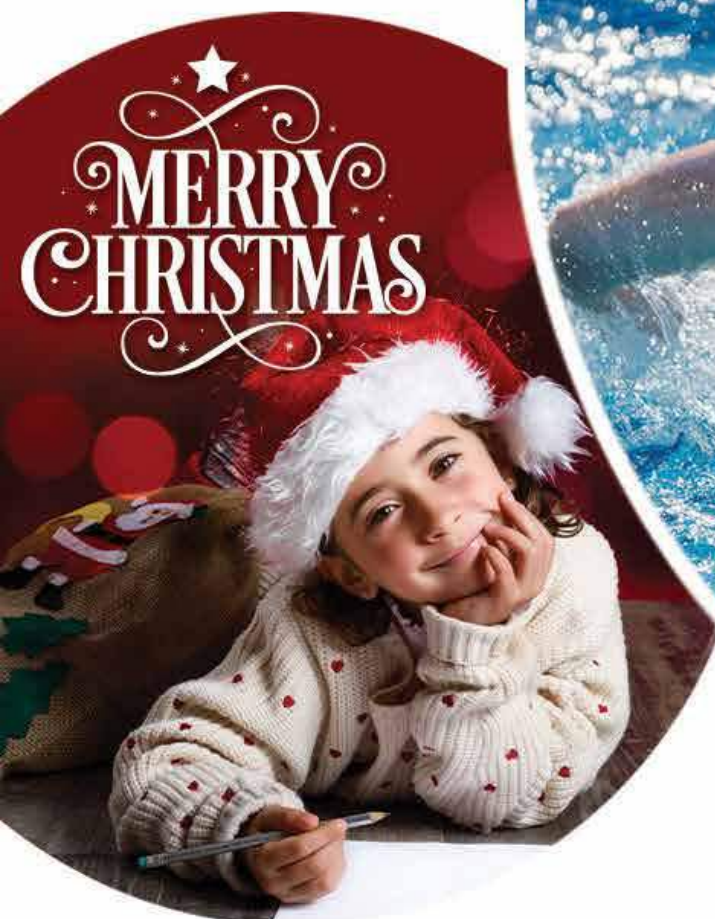


By utilizing these QR codes, you can conveniently access the information and view both reports online. Thank you for embracing this digital initiative, and we hope that it contributes to a more efficient and eco-friendly way of accessing important information. Should you have any questions or encounter any issues while using the QR codes, please feel free to reach out to us.

To receive your 2023-2024 budget and other important information by e-mail instead of printed mailed copy please complete this authorization via the QR Code below...



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COMPETITION NEWS AND UPDATES

In a dazzling display of equestrian prowess, the recent horse show saw Nellie Gail Ranch riders achieve remarkable success across various divisions. Lane Clarke, riding Venom, claimed victory in the \$30,000 1.45m classic and secured a commendable 6th position in the Grand Prix, showcasing an impressive performance. Natalie Banis and Mayfield soared to triumph in the \$10,000 National Hunter Derby, highlighting their exceptional skills in the hunter arena.

Destiny Stewart exhibited her mastery with Clavius, emerging triumphant in the Children's Classic and sharing the limelight as Champion alongside her other mount, Comanchero, in the division. Natalie Banis continued her winning streak, steering Landstrasse to victory in the .90m class and earning the title of reserve champion in the division.

The success story continued with Lane Clarke and Christer claiming the top spot in the USHJA Hunters 3'0, outshining a field of 80 competitors. Stella Saunders, paired with Cody, showcased a stellar performance, clinching victory in the children's hunters division. Natalie Banis and Clavius secured another win in the open 1.10m category.

Melina Nasab and Kings Fairy Tail demonstrated their skill in the Low Adult Classic, securing an impressive 4th place. In the Low Jr Hunters, Stella Saunders and Liam showcased their talent, earning a noteworthy 2nd place. The Nellie Gail Ranch riders' outstanding achievements underscored their dedication and skill in the equestrian arena, bringing honor to the community.



"Horses change lives. They give our young people confidence and self-esteem. They provide peace and tranquility to troubled souls. They give us hope!"

- Toni Robinson



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Adopt-A-Family

Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association in coordination with Family Assistance Ministries (FAM) in San Clemente, invite Nellie Gail Ranch residents to adopt a family for Christmas. A list of families in need for the Christmas holidays has been provided by FAM.

*"Remember that the happiest people are not those getting more, but those giving more."
— H. Jackson Brown Jr.*



Please help support a family in need this holiday season:

- Stop by the Association Clubhouse after December 1st to select a family from the Christmas Tree and commit to give.
- Purchase gift(s) and wrapping items for your selected family.
- Place unwrapped items in bags and label with family information.
- Deliver items to Association Clubhouse by Sunday, December 10, 2023.
- FAM distributes the gifts to selected families via their drive-thru program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.NELLIEGAILRANCH.ORG
OR CALL THE ASSOCIATION OFFICE AT (949) 425-1477



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HOLIDAY HOME DECORATING CONTEST

**Judging takes place
December 13-14, 2023**

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

Please have all lights and decorations on for the 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!



Scan this QR code to fill out the entry form online or go to
<https://nelliegailranch.org/holiday-decorating-contest-2023>

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TENNIS CENTER NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS TO NELLIE GAIL RANCH PICKLEBALL CLUB MEMBERS, SUE MORGAN, MARY & MAGGIE BRASCIA!

The ladies competed in the USA Pickleball Biofreeze National Championships in Dallas, Texas last week. Sue Morgan and her partner Annabel Rogan won the Gold Medal in the 4.5 Women's Doubles 70's division. Each match was tight with the ladies knocking off all challengers including the two top seeded teams. The sister duo of Mary and Maggie Brascia won silver medals in the Women's Pro Doubles division. On their way to the title match, Mary and Maggie beat world #2 Anna Bright and her partner, Jade Kawamoto in a thrilling five game match that had the entire crowd of 5,000 on their feet! USA Pickleball's largest-ever tournament ran from November 5-12 at Brookhaven Country Club in Farmers Branch, an inner-ring suburb of Dallas. Nearly 3,500 players competed and over 10,000 attendees took part in the pickleball action on Championship Sunday and enjoyed the festivities.

Congratulations ladies for a job well done and to all Nellie Gail Ranch club members who competed at many levels in this National event.

Sue Morgan and partner Annabel Rogan



Mary & Maggie Brasci



Nellie Gail Ranch

HOLIDAY TENNIS CAMP 2023



DATES

Week 1 - December 26th - 29th

Week 2 - January 2nd - 5th

10.30am - 2.30pm

LITTLE HITTERS

(5- 8 Years)

CHALLENGERS

(9 years+)

\$210 pp/pw

- \$25 Non refundable deposit due at registration
- Please bring a pack lunch

(949) 302-8281

THE PICKLEBALL HALLOWEEN CALCUTTA

Pickleball has been a great addition to the Nellie Gail Tennis Club. It has given members a chance to learn the game, improve their skills, or have some good competitive matches. They can also participate in fun events, like this year's Halloween Calcutta! Many of the 32 participants had not played in a Calcutta-style tournament before, which is a team format, with top 4 teams winning prize money!

Team Formations, Bidding Party & Dinner

The tournament started with a dinner event on Friday the 13th – for forming and bidding on teams. During this dinner in The Hideaway back room of the Watering Hole, the eight chosen captains did blind drawing for their teammates. The teams consisted of 4 players with a varying range of experience, with a goal of closely balancing the levels. After the teams were formed, the bidding process began with team members buying a portion of their teams and having an option to purchase others. After the bidding closed, George Nakamura ended up owning 5 of the 8 teams, which proved to be very profitable for him at the end of the tournament! Dinner was served by the new management of the Watering Hole and it was an outstanding Italian Extravaganza.

Preparation and Practice

During the next two weeks before the October 29 tournament, teams chose a name and theme. They

also had a chance to practice and learn how to play together. They were also practicing singles play because of the Dreambreaker component of the matches (in the event of a tie).

Tournament Day

Tournament day was fun and festive! Eight teams with eight different themes arrived early to decorate their team tables. After the team introductions, the players made their way to the courts for some tough pickleball action. Many matches ended with a tie, which lead to a total of 9 Dreambreakers, most of them being really close.

1st Place: "Pickleball Smashers" with Captain George Nakamura, Amy Hayes, Preston Romm and Meredith Kappel.

2nd Place: "The Pickled Pirates of Nellie Gail" with Captain Tia Wood, Steve De Hart, Julia Coleman and Valarie Stam

3rd Place: "Dead Ball Bangers" with Captain Mike Wold, Beth Arkin, Robert Belmonte and Shannon Woolgar

4th Place: "Team Barbie" with Captain Mark Kring, Tracey Reeve, Veronica Jamriska and Sally Grevenberg.





Christmas Lights

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HOLIDAY PICKLEBALL ROUND-ROBIN

Join us for a festive day of Pickleball fun!



MORE INFO

17 DECEMBER - 11AM - 2PM

Followed by Social Mixer 2pm - 4pm

- Round-Robin Tournament for All Skill Levels
- Best Holiday Attire Contest with Exciting Prizes
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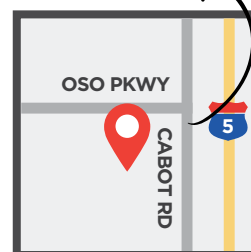
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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

HOME SECURITY, PART II

Written by Dr. Kenneth S. Cheng

Reports of crime, as well as recent concerns expressed by residents have prompted numerous questions around the topic of home protection. The roving security, as well as the Automatic License Plate Readers, will both act as an extra set of eyes and ears for our community. Many have asked, however, "what else can I be doing to protect my home and family." This month's article will attempt to answer some of these questions.

In 2020, there was one reported armed robbery and ten reports of residential burglaries in our community of Nellie Gail Ranch. Although relatively rare, having this occur in our community is still concerning. Crime, no matter how rare, can increase our fears and affect our property values. Crime statistics are collected by the Orange County Sheriff's Department. This data can be obtained by going to ocsheriff.gov, scroll down and clicking on "crime stats by area". Below, we discuss some of specific actions (in addition to the general recommendations in last month's article) to better protect yourself, your family, and your home.



HOME PROTECTION

It is worth re-iterating that the constant and vigilant awareness of your surroundings is the single most important tool you have to combating criminal activity. Criminals are opportunists; they generally seek unoccupied, poorly lit homes, and those who are inattentive and vulnerable. Victims of armed encounters often state that the perpetrator "came out of nowhere," yet we know that this is not possible.

Inattention is a better explanation; it is more likely that we didn't know where that perpetrator came from because we weren't paying attention. We also must never have the attitude that "it can't happen to me." Denial, coupled with a lack of awareness, are attributes that put you at higher risk of being a victim.

BEFORE YOU GET HOME

Recent convictions of "follow home" criminals highlight the importance of awareness. It is common for these criminals to follow their victims from the bank, malls or shopping areas and confront homeowners in their own garage or driveway. If you believe you are being followed, don't pull into your driveway. Professional driving instructors involved in protection detail will teach you to make "three left turns" to determine if you are indeed being followed. The likelihood of any random person behind you making three consecutive left turns is low. If you are being followed, continue driving but stay on well-traveled streets, call 9-1-1 and let law enforcement know of your location and direction of travel. Do not try to evade them. If nearby, drive to the sheriff's substation (Laguna Hills Civic Center) or other law enforcement facility. Even if you are not followed, be aware of areas around the exterior of your home where criminals can hide and gain entry into your garage when you arrive home. Keep the areas around your garage well lit and well trimmed from vegetation. Again, being aware is your tool of choice.

ALARMS

Despite being an effective first line of defense, FBI studies show that over 80% of homeowners do not use their home alarm system. Regular use of your alarm will be an effective deterrent. Additionally, home alarm systems often have remote panic buttons and/or disarming codes that will still notify law enforcement if you enter the "panic" code. Contact your alarm company or review your alarm system's manual to utilize these important features. Another potential panic alarm one can use is on their

car keys. Most key fobs have a panic button that can be used to set off the car alarm. Homeowners can keep their car keys on their nightstand, ready to set off their car alarm should it be needed. Many of the residential crimes occurring in South Orange County are from gangs from the Los Angeles area and from criminal organizations from Central America. These gangs often enter homes from the second floor, bypassing motion detectors and door/window contacts, often only on the first floor.

ELECTRONIC CONTROL DEVICES

Electronic Control Devices ("Tasers") are available for civilian use. There are basically two types of Tasers: one that shoots wired barbs a distance of 15 feet providing a 30 second shock, and the other is a contact device that must be applied to the body of an intruder. The contact devices come in a variety of sizes, from smaller devices that can fit in a pocket or purse, to larger prod-like sizes that are often advertised as safety devices to be used on coyotes or other animals when outdoors. Regardless of whether you get the device that shoots the barbs or you get the contact devices, both require training and re-training. Law enforcement trains with the Taser annually; civilians should do so more frequently.



CHEMICALS

Pepper spray (oleoresin capsicum) is the most common chemical device for self-protection. These personal sprays are generally only effective at distances of 3-6 feet. One should be aware that when one deploys pepper spray as directed, it is common to have the spray splash back into the sprayer's face causing the same burning sensation as the intruder being sprayed. Be prepared. Another alternative is

to use "bear spray," which also contains oleoresin capsicum but at a lower concentration. Bear spray has a distinct advantage in that it can spray a distance of 25-30 feet and is available at most camping stores.

FIREARMS

A firearm can be an effective home defense tool in the right circumstances. Typically this is a tool of last resort, when other tools have failed, are unavailable, or if exigent circumstances warrant immediate use of a firearm. It is recognized, however, that this can also be a controversial subject. It is not the author's intention to persuade or dissuade the use of a firearm for defensive purposes, but to emphasize that when one has a legal right to own a firearm, that person should be well-trained and well-versed on the concept of the use of firearms for self-defense before considering its use. Training is critical as use of a firearm is an extremely perishable skill; shooting at cans or a paper target once a year is recreation, not training. Should this be your home defense tool of choice, you should obtain professional opinions and training on what is best for your situation as there are many options, more than can be discussed in this article.





SAFE ROOM.

A safe room, where one can securely hide, can be an effective and a life-saving self-defense tool. This is usually a secure room in your home that you can quickly access and safely secure from an intruder. Details of an effective safe room are too numerous to mention in this article. Suffice it to say that a safe room will likely require significant planning and structural changes to an interior room in your home. These can be minimal changes to a walk-in closet or elaborate changes in an entire bedroom. Those that are interested can consult a contractor or the numerous websites available on how to build an effective safe room.

In summary, we have identified many potential tools to use for home and self-protection in the Pony Express these last two months. The most important tool is a heightened state of awareness. Maintaining this awareness can be an effective deterrent helping you avoid a confrontation, which is ALWAYS the best option. When a confrontation can't be avoided, then one should have alternative tools available, but whichever tool you choose, you MUST constantly practice with that tool. Having the tools but not being able to use them effectively can be worse than not having the tools at all.

About the Author:

Dr. Kenneth Cheng is a 24-year resident of Nellie Gail Ranch and a member of the Nellie Gail Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC). For the past 13 years, he has also been a volunteer deputy sheriff with the Sheriff's Department where he has also received the designation as an Expert Pistol Marksman. The opinions expressed by the author are his alone and do not represent the Nellie Gail Homeowner's Association, any committees of the HOA, or any specific law enforcement agency. Additionally, the contents of this article are for informational purposes only and should not be construed to be complete or comprehensive for the reader's individual security and protection needs.



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Horse-O-Ween

The Nellie Gail Ranch Equestrian Center embraced the Halloween spirit with its festive Horse-O-Ween event, drawing a lively and spirited crowd. Attendees immersed themselves in the Halloween atmosphere, relishing in themed snacks, partaking in exciting horse rides, and indulging in spine-tingling fun. All attendees were winners, highlighting the joyous nature of the celebration. It was an enchanting occasion where both young and old created lasting memories and enjoyed a scary good time!





TEAM DARKHORSE

“WHO IS TEAM DARKHORSE?” A PRIMER!

By Karen Robbins

In 2007, during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, South OC communities began “adopting” individual Marine Battalions based at Camp Pendleton. The “adoptions” were both symbolic and practical.

Symbolic “Adoption” implied our city considered the Marines as sons of our own hometown. As a practical matter, the City Council’s formal statement of adoption established a way forward for our city to provide “support and encouragement to the Marines. Commanders at Camp Pendleton welcomed and were grateful for this unique form of civic support, and together worked to enable smooth bonds and official interactions with their adoptive cities.

Laguna Hills’ adopted unit is 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, in short referred to as 3/5, or often by the unit’s nickname “Darkhorse.”

Team Darkhorse is the all-volunteer, non-profit 501 C-3 created in 2010 by a group of citizens, in order to build and forge bonds with the unit that continue to this day. Military service is clearly more stressful, and dangerous during times of war. Though now the stress of combat deployments has ceased, the relationship continues to be important and rewarding for both the Marines we support, and volunteers who interact with them.

Nellie Gail residents have been faithful and generous supporters either through giving of their time, or filling our collection boxes during the Holiday season with gifts for the children; our baby shower collection boxes with annual baby shower drive; monetary donations for programs that assist prior wounded in action, and current active duty. The Marines continue to tell us that the level of support and love and caring they receive from

Laguna Hills is legendary among the Corps!

We encourage newcomers to become part of our mission in showing our adopted Marines how much this town appreciates them. Contact: 35robbins@gmail.com if you’d like to learn more!

“If not me, then who?” Is the question these young people asked and answered when raising their hand to take the oath of service. Semper Paratus!





MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM TEAM DARKHORSE!

Some may of our neighbors may have noticed we were not collecting toys for the Marines' families this year. The Battalion has been deployed and did not have returnin time for the a holiday party. We know they missed this annual gathering, and we did too! You can see by this photo from a few years back, the event is full of love and laughter!



Meanwhile, we were able to collect baby items, and assemble 36 diaper bags filled with items for the newborns, and deliver them to Camp Pendleton in November. We thank our neighbors for your donations to the collection box we set up in the HOA!



Lexie and Ethan, our youngest volunteers, helped for hours sorting, counting, and taking packaging off items before separating into the diaper bags. We were told that "Lexie and Ethan were very excited.

And they said the babies are going to love the bags!"



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.

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The Value of Honeybees and other Pollinators

By Pamela Fraser

The Nellie Gail Garden invited Pamela Fraser a California Master Beekeeper, Journal Level, to speak late last month about the value of pollinators, including honeybees, native bees, birds, bats, flies, wasps, moths, beetles, and butterflies.

We learned that honeybees are the primary pollinators in commercial agriculture, primarily in the



Central valley, and that California generates billions of dollars in revenue, or crop yield. It is also the most important agricultural area in North America. Over a third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of the country's fruits and nuts are grown in California.

Bees evolved millions of years ago from carnivorous wasps. When flowering plants appeared on Earth, wasps became vegetarians, eating only nectar and pollen taken from flowers. Nectar is a sweet liquid which provides energy. Pollen is a well-balanced protein with many of the essential nutrients' bees need to survive. Female bees have a structure on their legs that no other insects, including wasps, have: a pollen basket or corbiculae.

Honeybees are considered a superorganism because they are Eusocial. Eusocial - The colony

itself functions like a single organism. Eusocial animals express complex behaviors, like group decision-making. They live in a colony with overlap of generations. The worker bees provide cooperative care of juveniles, and there is reproductive division of labor. There is only 1 Queen in the colony, and she can lay up to 1200 eggs/day. The hive itself is comprised of between 50,000- 70,000 honeybees, of which ~ 90% are worker bees, which are all female. Only 10% of the bees in the hive are males (drones), that can't sting. His ONLY JOB is to mate with a Queen. Drones are reared during the early spring.

Worker bees have a short life span - between 4 & 6 weeks. During that time, she will spend the first 21 Days working different jobs inside the hive as a House Bee. This entails the following: feeding older bees, caring for the queen (including grooming, feeding & removing her waste), feeding the brood (eggs, Larvae & pupa), by converting pollen, nectar & enzymes into bee food. She also stores food (nectar & Pollen), makes wax, builds comb, converts nectar to honey, converts tree resin into propolis (bee glue), cools, warms & ventilates the hive (to 95°), acts as undertaker and guards the entrance to the hive.

From ~ day 21 of her short life until she dies, she is a forager bee. During this time, she collects nectar, pollen, Resin - (AKA propolis or bee glue). They also collect water to ventilate the hive and fight invading bees that could try to take over their hive and all its resources.

What are some of the other benefits provided? Honey not only possesses antibacterial properties but also exhibits antiviral effects, which help protect the body and boost the immune system. It is suggested that honey has a dual role in inflammation control: It can downregulate anti-inflammatory factors, thereby reducing inflammation damage, and stimulating the



- Share your garden with them, they are very good company.

Flowering plants that attract Native Pollinators: Lavender, Clover, Buckwheat, Borage, Black-eyed Susan, Coneflower, Lantana, Lupine, Salvia, Sunflowers, Thyme and milk weed.

Below is a list of reputable Bee Rescues in this area. NO! Beekeepers do not rescue bees for free. But generally, they are less costly than exterminators, and you're doing the Right thing by hiring a Bee Rescuer.

Dan the Bee Man
We save Bees

858-230-0351

Any type of rescue. Inside walls of your home or roof, Under sheds, or simple swarms that land on a tree or under the eaves of your home. Included in the price is all repairs to walls, stucco, and roofs.

Alberta the Beekeeper
Hey Honey

949-646-2606

Removes swarms from trees under 15', remove hives under sheds, inside sprinkler boxes. Also sells local, Raw honey.

Jon Vesely
Keeper of the Bees

562-335-3053

Any type of rescue. Inside walls of your home or roof, Under sheds, or simple swarms that land on a tree or under the eaves of your home. Included in the price is all repairs to walls, stucco, and roofs.

Pamela Fraser gave the Garden Group of Nellie Gail her bee presentation in early October at our clubhouse. She has devoted much of her life here to being a beekeeper. She has shown her presentation to many of our schools, teaching our children about Honey bees. We are fortunate to have her speak to our club.

production of inflammatory mediators, promoting wound healing. Generally, raw honey tends to have more robust efficacy.

Commercially honey, found on supermarket shelves differs from raw honey sold by local beekeepers or at local farmers markets, because most store-bought honey is pasteurized.

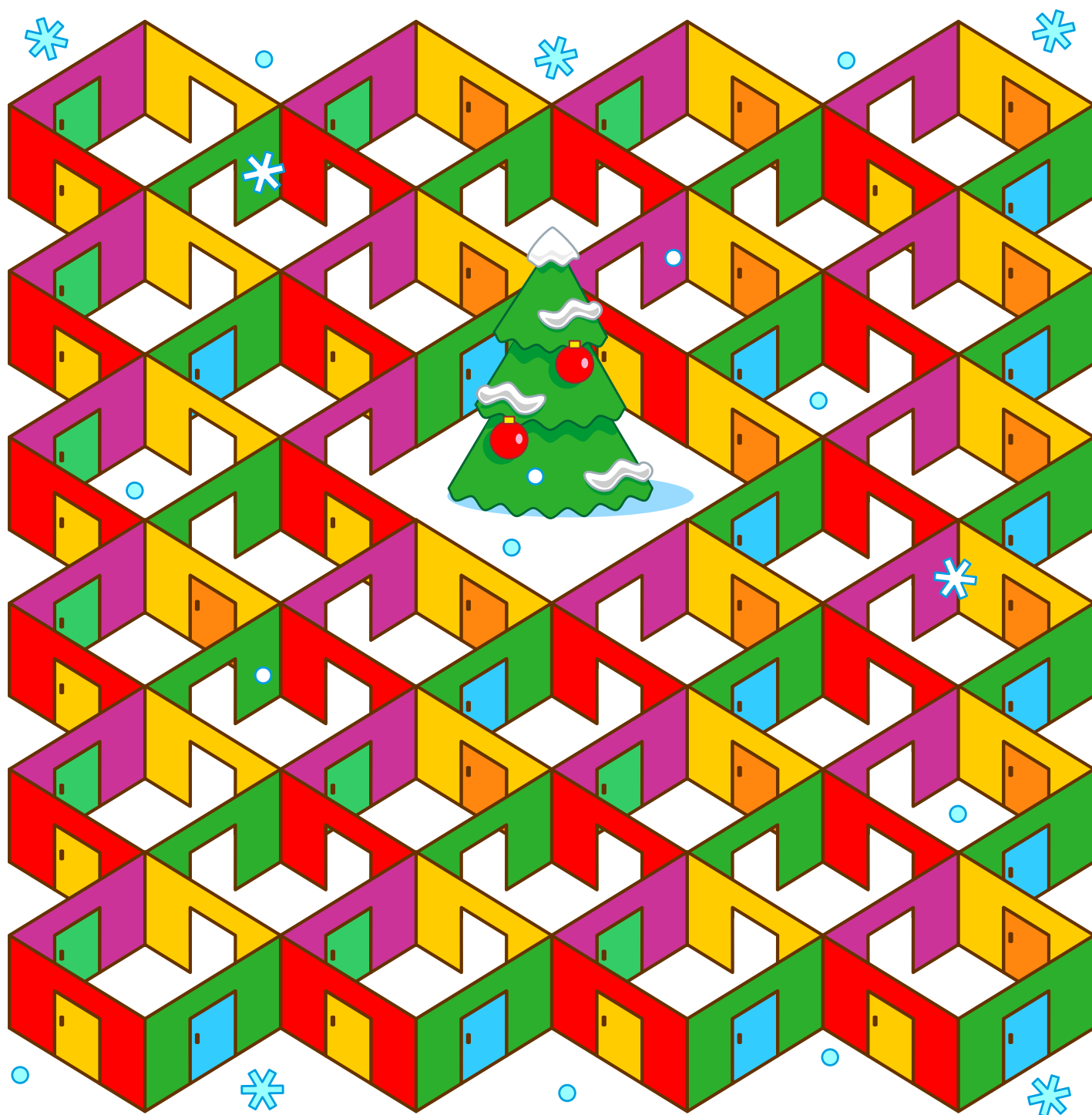
Research has shown that heat processing can lower the antioxidant capacity of honey by 33.4 percent.

What can we do to help the Bees?

- Provide a water source for bees – Fill a planter dish with stones and water for bees to land and get a drink from.
- Plant flowers and vegetables – Bees will pollinate them, and you'll have a hardy garden.
- Plant Native vegetation to encourage Native bees and other pollinators.
- Don't use pesticides. There are many homemade or organic pest control products available that work.
- Bees are not good swimmers. Use a stick, leaf or even a flip flop to lift them out of the water slowly. It
- S recommended not to use your hand.

THE PUZZLE PADDOCK

Can you get to christmas tree using the open doors?



RANCH RECIPE



CHRISTMAS MASHED POTATOES




INGREDIENTS:

1. 6 LARGE RUSSET POTATOES, PEELED AND QUARTERED
2. 3 TABLESPOONS KOSHER SALT
3. 1/2 CUP COLD UNSALTED BUTTER, CUT IN PIECES
SALT TO TASTE
4. 1 PINCH CAYENNE
5. 3/4 CUP MILK
6. 4 OUNCES COMTE, GRUYERE, OR CHEDDAR
CHEESE, SHREDDED

PREPARATION:

1. PREHEAT THE OVEN TO 450 DEGREES F (230 DEGREES C). BUTTER A 13X9-INCH BAKING DISH.
2. BOIL QUARTERED RUSSET POTATOES, MASH WITH BUTTER, SALT, AND CAYENNE, THEN MIX IN MILK AND 4 OUNCES OF SHREDDED CHEESE.
3. SPREAD THE MIXTURE IN THE DISH, TOP WITH SLICED AND FANNED HALF POTATOES, SALT, BRUSH WITH MELTED BUTTER, SPRINKLE WITH 2 OUNCES SHREDDED CHEESE, AND BAKE AT 450°F UNTIL THE TOP LAYER IS TENDER, ABOUT 1 HOUR.

December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Santa & Mrs Claus @ 4:00 pm • Adopt a Family Deadline • Celebrating Senior Horses @ 2:00pm • Pickleball Round Robin 11am-2pm	11	12 ARC Meeting at 6:00 pm @ The Association Office	13 Home Decorating Contest Judging Day 1	14 Home Decorating Contest Judging Day 2	15	16
17	18 Wine & Design @ 3:00 pm	19	20	21 Winter Begins 	22	23
24 Club Facilities Close @ 2:00 pm	25 	26	27 ARC Submittal Deadline for January 9th Meeting	28	29	30
New Year's Eve  31						



AT DOUGLAS ELLIMAN REAL ESTATE

Wishing you the
Happiest of Holidays



We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support throughout this year. May your holiday season be filled with joy and laughter, and may the upcoming year bring you countless blessings. Thank you for being a valued part of our journey in 2023!

- Brad Feldman Group

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A MOVE IN THE NEW YEAR,
CONTACT US AT 949.678.5198.**

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**Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year**
Wishing you a Happy & Healthy 2024

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Cabanas
Pools / Spas
Outdoor Living Rooms
Fireplace / Firepits
Outdoor Kitchens
Barns
Equestrian Facilities
Flag Poles
Driveways
Fountains
Barbecues
Sport Courts



Decks
Walls
Fencing
Retaining Walls
Precasts
Demolition
Grading
Drainage
Irrigation
Aviaries
Planting
Lighting
Pavers

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