

September 2021



The PONY EXPRESS

Nellie Gail Ranch

Community Newsletter



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INSIDE:

Delgado's Olympic Journey
Blenheim Summer Classic
Team Darkhorse



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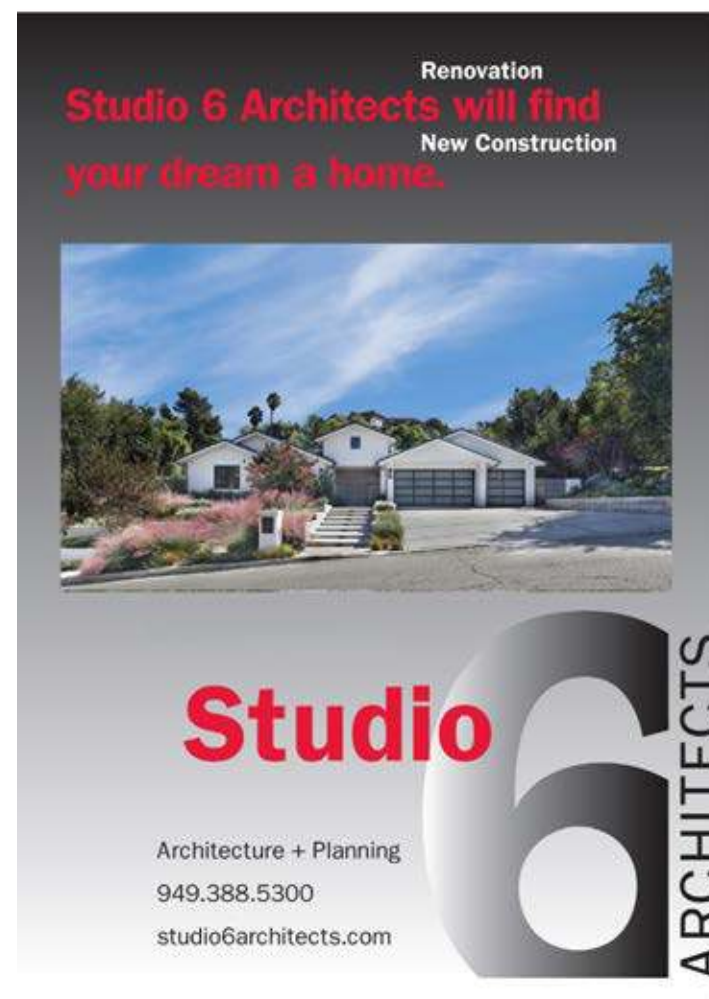
Board of Directors

Mark Fisk	PRESIDENT
Joyce Taylor	VICE PRESIDENT
Paul Holland	SECRETARY
John Park	CO-TREASURER
Loree Blough	CO-TREASURER

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



Important Numbers

(949) 425-1477	Association Office
(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)
(714) 971-2421	Vector Control
(877) 728-0446	CRandR (Trash Pickup)
(949) 831-2500	Moulton Niguel Water District
(800) 411-7343	SDGandE
(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	SDGandE Emergencies/Outages

Assessment Remittance Address

Please remit all assessments to:

P.O. Box, 62053, Newark, NJ 07101-8060

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 September Open Session Board Meeting and Open Homeowner Forum is scheduled for September 21, 2021 and will be held via ZOOM

Board Meeting September 21, 2021

Executive Session - 6:00 pm

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.

Zoom Meeting Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85603937329?pwd=STFCcUZSZ292SzFMcyt2NVlmcGJhdz09>

Dial in #: 669 900 6833

Meeting ID: 856 0393 7329

Passcode: 084449

Architectural Review Committee

Architectural Review Committee meetings are generally held the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Association Office. 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

Hidden Trail Park Playground Ad Hoc Committee

Director's Message

By Loree Blough

Hi,

I hope everyone remembers me. My name is Mia, and Loree Blough is my mom. I have been a little unhappy lately, as she has been spending so much time working for the HOA. She said she is working on something called "the Budget". I am not sure I understand but she tried to explain it to me.

Mom said every year the Board analyzes the previous years projected budget & actual costs. Then they try to project what next years costs will be. After hours of independent studying & group discussion, the Board members vote on what next years budget will be. That number is divided by all 1407 homes in NGR and next year's monthly dues are set.

My Mom was worried because she said it looked like the Board was going to have to make a large dues increase. Mom said that homeowners voted to put cameras at the entries & keep the security patrol even though they were going to raise rates. Those 2 items alone caused the dues to go up by \$3.22/month. Then, she said that because when minimum wage went up, it affected everything else and that gas, water, electricity, pest control, insurance all were projected to increase a lot. Something called "cost of living" went up 5%. Mom said that the Board doesn't like to raise the dues because it makes everybody unhappy. That usually means less treats for me.

Then, she found out that our janitorial cleaning costs were projected to go down. Also, because there were no ongoing legal issues, that our legal costs were going down too. Additionally, some crazy thing called Pickleball has made the tennis center break even. Where do humans get these names? She said that these items helped to offset, whatever that means, the increases. She seemed happy about that! I listened to the zoom meeting and the other Board members seemed happy too. I like it when everybody is happy-I get more treats!

Mom said there were plans to refurbish bathrooms and install kitchen appliances at the clubhouse. Mom explained that the budget year ends on Sept 30th & the new one starts Oct 1. She said the Board will start the project in Sept, which is in this budget year & finish it in the next budget year. This way the costs can be spread out over 2 years and the Board would not have to increase dues for that part of the budget! She said the work should start very soon. My mom wanted to be sure every homeowner understands that the board has kept it's promise, and no portion of this years dues increase AT ALL will be coming from anything related to the clubhouse remodel!



I hope this goes fast because other Board members animals & I are still wanting to have a Yappy Hour at the clubhouse!!

I told Mom that I was getting bored listing to all of this. She said the entire budget report will be sent to all homeowners with lots of details. Sure glad I don't have to read that!

Anyway, during the meeting the Board added everything up & said that the dues would be going up by \$ 4.80/ month which is a 3% increase. They all seemed to think that was really good! Joyce Taylor's dog, Micha, even ran around the house celebrating. Joyce had to leave the meeting to calm her down. I am proud to say I was much better behaved!

Well, that is it for me this month. I hope I get to write another message that is more fun. I didn't like this one that much-I had to learn too many things. It is hard for a little dog like me.

I'll see everyone at the park!



Architectural Reviews

The following properties submitted plans to be reviewed by the Architectural Review Committee on August 10, 2021.

The Submittal Deadline for the October ARC Meeting is September 28, 2021.

ADDRESS	PROJECT	RESULTS
27182 Westridge	Patio cover	Approved
25511 Rapid Falls	Resubmittal Garage door	Denied
27746 Hidden Trail	Pavers	Approved
25902 Nellie Gail	Painting, Garage Door	Approved with Conditions
26571 Stetson	Painting & Exterior Finishes	Approved with Conditions
25451 Wagon Wheel	A. Hardscape, Landscape	Denied
	B. Painting, Doors & Windows	Approved
25662 Dillon	Resubmittal Sport Court, Hardscape, Landscape	Approved with Conditions
27122 Lost Colt	Solar	Approved with Conditions
25442 Gallup	Patio Enclosure, Windows, attic remodel	Denied
25111 Anvil	Outdoor Bathroom	Approved with Conditions
24961 Mustang	Painting	Approved
27261 Lost Colt	Solar	Approved with Conditions
26282 Hitching Rail	Completion Extension & Revised plans	Approved
27471 Maverick	Artificial Turf	Approved
27101 Hidden Trail	Addition to House, Painting, Roof	Denied
26076 Waterwheel	Pavers	Approved
26121 Red Corral	Fence Replacement	Approved with Conditions
27382 Lost Colt	Landscape	Approved with Conditions
25432 Nellie Gail	Doors	Approved with Conditions

Any exterior change to your home or property requires approval. Please consult the Architectural Guidelines available at www.nelliegailranch.org. Submissions for approval are due by 5:00 PM ten business days prior to the meeting date. Please see the calendar at the back of the Pony Express or contact the Association Office at (949) 425-1477 for specific meeting dates and deadlines or with any questions pertaining to your proposed project.

ADDRESS	PROJECT	RESULTS
25042 Buckboard	Tree House	Pending
25136 Stageline	Windows	Approved with Conditions
26041 Horseshoe	Garage conversion, Patio with 2nd floor deck	Denied
26562 Saddlehorn	Roof	Denied



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SOUTH MISSION VIEJO CHARMER, FABULOUS LOCATION, OFFERED AT \$875,000
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Easy access to shopping and dining at the Shops At Mission Viejo.



Marty Samuel
(949) 643-1321



DRE #00452321

**Want to stay updated on all Nellie Gail listing & sales activity?
Email me for a free personalized MLS Portal: marty@martysamuel.com**

NELLIE GAIL RANCH OWNERS ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
OPEN SESSION | TUESDAY, JULY 20, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Open Session meeting of the Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Loree Blough
Joyce Taylor
Paul Holland
Mark Fisk
John Park

MANAGEMENT

Brian Mitchell, General Manager
Dennis Moss, Operations Manager, Parks & Recreation Facilities

II. BOARD VACANCY / APPOINTMENT & COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

A. CONFIRMATION OF VACANCY ON THE BOARD DUE TO SALE OF HOME

Motion: Fisk
Second: Park

Resolution: To acknowledge Alex Presley and her contribution to the community through her dedicated service as a member of the Board of Directors June 2017 through June 2021. As she has recently closed escrow on her home and transferred title, there is now a vacancy on the Board of Directors.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENT TO FILL VACANCY ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Motion: Fisk
Second: Park

Resolution: To appoint Paul Holland as a Member of the Board of Directors for the remainder of the vacated term through June 2023. Paul Holland will be appointed to the officer position of Secretary.

The motion carried unanimously.

C. ACCEPTANCE OF COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

Motion: Fisk
Second: Holland

Resolution: To accept the resignation of Pamela Fraser from the Trails & Safety Committee and to express appreciation for her three years of volunteer

service.

The motion carried unanimously.

D. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENT OF TRAILS & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Motion: Park
Second: Holland

Resolution: To approve appointment of Ed Leard, subject to signing the Community Leader Code of Conduct Acknowledgement, to serve as a Member of the Trails & Safety Committee through January 31, 2022.

The motion carried unanimously.

E. CONSIDERATION OF PLAYGROUND AD HOC COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

Motion: Blough
Second: Taylor

Resolution: To appoint the following homeowners to serve on the Hidden Trail Park Playground Ad Hoc Committee to assist in the evaluation and selection of new playground equipment.

Aysegul Berenson
Carol Chen
Emiko Miyamoto
Joe DePillo
Leslie Waggoner
Sam Nielson
Susan Caskey

The motion carried unanimously.

III. HOMEOWNER FORUM

Nineteen (19) homeowners attended the Open Homeowner Forum in person and via the ZOOM link.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION REPORT

The regularly scheduled Executive Session meeting was held on June 15, 2021 via Zoom Conference Call.

Actions taken include:

- Approval of the May 18, 2021 Minutes
- Reviewed the June 2021 legal report.
- Authorized limited use of the Nellie Gail Ranch Service Mark to specified advertisers.
- Approved a contract with Flock Safety for License Plate Recognition cameras and software and

services.

- Reviewed and filed the delinquency reports.
- Approved a lump sum settlement with account #0825-01.
- Denied a request for revision to payment plan by account #0504-02/04.
- Reviewed proposals for lockers, benches and partitions for the restrooms
- Authorized Team Darkhorse to coordinate the July 16th Summer Concert with Brad Feldman to serve drinks, with sales donated to Team Darkhorse.
- Reviewed and filed the Violation Report.
- Approved the purchase of a replacement spa filter.

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF MAY 18, 2021 OPEN SESSION MINUTES

Motion: Park
Second: Blough

Resolution: To approve Consent Calendar resolutions for agenda items V-A through V-C.

B. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF JUNE 15, 2021 OPEN SESSION MINUTES

Resolution: To approve the Open Session Minutes dated June 15, 2021 as presented.

C. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE MAY 31, 2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Resolution: To approve the financial statements for the Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association dated May 31, 2021 reflecting the following:

The Consolidated Balance Sheet reflects \$3,118,805 in reserve funds, \$1,944,111 in operating funds, \$8,400 in Petty Cash, and \$593,161 in Stall, Trail and Architectural Deposits for a total cash balance of \$5,664,476.

Year to date Assessment Revenue totals \$2,007,245 compared to the budgeted \$1,988,091.

Year to date Total Consolidated Revenue is \$3,159,053 to the budgeted \$3,083,477.

The consolidated Net Decrease for the **month** prior to adjustments for depreciation is (\$97,886) compared to the budgeted decrease of (\$153,763). Consolidated Net Income **year to date** prior to adjustments for depreciation is \$437,745 compared to the budgeted increase of \$224,278. Year to date reserve funding is \$365,380 compared to a budget of \$344,700. The variance is reserve interest income.

D. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF DELINQUENCY POLICY FOR MAILING WITH THE 2021-22 BUDGET AND \$20 ASSESSMENT CREDIT FOR FULL ANNUAL ASSESSMENT PAYMENT BY OCTOBER 31, 2021

Resolution: To adopt the Delinquency Policy effective October 1, 2021 for mailing to the membership with the 2021-22 Budget and associated disclosures.

and,

To approve an assessment credit of \$20 for homeowners who pay the full years assessment by the firm no exception deadline of October 31, 2021.

The motion carried unanimously.

End of Consent Calendar

VI. ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

A. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF EQUESTRIAN EASEMENT PLANTING GUIDELINES

This item was deferred to the August 17, 2021 meeting.

B. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF 2021-22 RESERVE STUDIES

This item was tabled to the August 12, 2021 Budget meeting.

C. CONSIDERATION OF 2021-22 FISCAL YEAR DRAFT BUDGET AND ASSUMPTIONS

This item was tabled to the August 12, 2021 Budget meeting.

VII. REPORTS

The following reports were received and filed by the Board: Architectural Review, Communications, Community Events, Emergency Preparedness, Equestrian Center, Landscape - Sunset, Solar, Swim Center, Tennis/Pickleball Center, and Trails/ Common Area.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was received and filed.

IX. NEXT MEETING

The next Regular Open Session Board of Directors meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 20, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. A Special Open Session Budget meeting will be held on Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 6 pm.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

NELLIE GAIL RANCH OWNERS ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
 OPEN SESSION | THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Open Session meeting of the Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Loree Blough
 Joyce Taylor
 Paul Holland
 Mark Fisk
 John Park

MANAGEMENT

Brian Mitchell, General Manager
 Dennis Moss, Operations Manager, Parks & Recreation Facilities

II. ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

A. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF 2021-22 RESERVE STUDIES

Motion: Blough
Second: Holland

Resolution: To approve the 2021-22 Reserve Studies and funding reflecting 96.6% funding compared to 95.5% last year.

	% Funded	Approved 2021-22 Monthly Contribution
Association	119.9%	\$16,200
Equestrian Center	81.2%	\$10,850
Swim Center	97.2%	\$ 5,200
Tennis Center	54.3%	\$ 7,000
Consolidated	96.6%	\$39,250

The motion carried unanimously.

B. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF 2021-22 FISCAL YEAR DRAFT BUDGET

Motion: Park
Second: Taylor

Resolution: To approve the 2021-22 Association and Cost Center Budgets for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2021.

- The approved budget will incorporate a new assessment level at \$485.40 per quarter, an

increase of \$14.40 per quarter (3.1%) above the current \$471 level. The monthly increase is \$4.80.

- The driving factors for the increase are as follows:

1. Consistent with the June 2021 homeowner vote the license plate recognition cameras have been included in the budget at a rate of \$2.84 per homeowner per month.

2. Consistent with the June 2021 homeowner vote the mobile patrol security remains in the budget and was increased \$0.38 per month.

3. The insurance expense line item increased \$1.36

4. The Tennis and Equestrian Center budgets are funded by boarding and club membership income with no assessment allocation.

5. The Swim Center allocation from assessments remains at \$9.30 per month with public membership fees offsetting 36% of the overall operating and reserve expense.

Note: The Board approved increasing the trailer storage fees at the Equestrian Center by \$15 per month to balance the Equestrian Center budget.

The motion carried unanimously.

III. NEXT MEETING

The next Regular Open Session Board of Directors meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 20, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

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Nellie Gail S.M.A.R.T.

What a difference a year makes!

By Brian Mitchell

Sometimes change is so gradual you hardly notice. Then you look at an old photo and realize your children have grown, you look a little more mature, or in the case of our Clubhouse, the landscape has established. We planted the Clubhouse entry and parking lot planters the summer of 2020 and we thought it would be fun to share the progress after one year of great California weather and a little water.



Summer Concert Series

Hot August Nights & Jumping Jack Flash

July 30, 2021 & August 13, 2021



WE HAVE BEEN ROCKIN' THROUGH THE SUMMER with great bands and outstanding food and dessert trucks! Hot August Night gave us the full Neil Diamond experience on July 30, and contributing sponsor Melody Smith & Associates poured a generous amount of free beer for the adults and handed out glow necklaces to the kids. Jumping Jack Flash had the huge crowd singing and dancing to Rolling Stones hits on August 13, and contributing sponsor Tate|LaMott|Group gave out free ice cream and water, as well as a custom cornhole set for their contest winner.



Up Next

9/10 MARK WOOD & THE PARROT HEAD BAND

Jimmy Buffett Tribute Band

Contributing Sponsor: Tate | LaMott | Group

9/24 SURF CITY ALL-STARS

Beach Boys Tribute Band

Contributing Sponsor: Brad Feldman Group

We hope to see you and your family mingling, eating, and dancing under the stars at the remaining summer concerts!

Swim Center News

Anicka Delgado's Olympic Journey

19-year old Anicka Delgado made our Nellie Gail Ranch community proud this Summer when she swam in the Tokyo Olympics for Ecuador - where she holds a dual citizenship. Coached by her two-time Olympian father and owner of Evolution Racing Club, Felipe Delgado, Anicka swam in the Women's 50m and 100m Freestyle.

Training

Training for the Tokyo Olympics was a test of mental strength. 7 weeks before the South American Qualifiers, Anicka chose to stop practicing with her team, and begin training solo with her dad, Felipe, practicing every morning at 6 AM at the Nellie Gail Ranch Swim Center. When she was just 1 week away from the qualifiers, COVID hit, delaying the event for 8 months. To ensure her progress was not lost, she chose the difficult path, continuing to train solo, and she decided to red shirt her first year at USC. She spent her first year of college taking classes online from home, while swimming with her father/coach every morning. Her training began to take a toll on her mentally, but with the support of her dad, family, and friends, she persevered.



Qualifying

When it was finally time to compete at the South American qualifiers, her goal was to earn 3 bronze medals to qualify for her first Olympics, with her real sights set on the 2024 Paris Olympics. Not only did Anicka qualify, she took home 3 golds, placing her in the lead for South America entering the Olympics.

Results

At the Olympics, Anicka swam in the Women's 50m and 100m Freestyle, where she broke two national records for Ecuador! Her time in the 50m Freestyle was the fastest out of all Latin American swimmers at the Tokyo Olympics, and her time in the 100m Freestyle was the second fastest for South America.



Olympic Highlights

Opening Ceremony: Anicka shared that the reality of the Olympics truly hit her once she walked out for the Opening Ceremony. Up until then, it had felt like just another competition, then suddenly there were cameras all around her and she was pulled into the moment of that once in a lifetime experience. As her coach, her dad was at the Olympics with her, recording every moment on his Instagram (@felipe_delgado_10



Dining Hall: Full of food from every culture, Anicka loved the dining hall because she was able to learn about so many different countries and see everyone come together in one place. To accommodate the varieties of cultures and athlete diets, the dining hall offered a taste of just about everything!

What's Next

After a year of training solo, Anicka is headed off to USC for her sophomore year, where she will swim for Coach Jeremy Kipp and study Business Administration. With the new rule changes, she can also seek sponsorships as she prepares for the Paris Olympics in 2024. We know great things are in store for Anicka!



Equestrian Center News

Hayden Clarke Sport Horses at Blenheim Summer Classic

Hayden Clarke Sport Horses spent many exciting weeks winning ribbons and championship titles at this summer's Blenheim Equisports Summer Classics Show in San Juan Capistrano.

All these riders spend months training for this series of competition classes to show their riding skills, while always demonstrating "Horsemanship comes First".

We wanted to share our excitement with these photos of all our summer riders.



Tauren Price



Emma Coultard



Lauren Wilson



Lane Clarke



Kimberly Williams



Stella Saunders



Lauren Katzenellenbogen



Rachel Torok



Taylor Redhour

Stella Lindsey



Ashley Terrell



Natalie Banis



Tate | LaMott | Group Featured Property



27501 BOOTHILL COURT
Currently Offered
\$4,600,000

Arguably one of the finest estates and view lots in Nellie Gail Ranch. This masterful space features a resort like backyard with an oversized pool/spa, outdoor room with built-in BBQ. Plus a large usable lower lot that could accommodate a sport/tennis court, equestrian facilities and much more!

The active listing inventory is at an all time low. If you or anyone you know is interested in selling, please give us a call for a market analysis.

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COMPASS



25042 Buckskin
In Escrow | Representing Seller



27 South Peak
In Escrow | Representing Seller



890 Greenway
Just Listed | \$969,000



9 Chaleston Lane
Just Listed | \$1,399,000



31146 Via Colinas
Currently Offered | \$5,249,999



8 Havenhurst
Currently Offered | \$3,550,000



6 Addington
Currently Offered | \$3,099,000



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Tennis Center News

BALLERS NEEDING BALLERS

For those of you who might be new to the Tennis Center or just haven't used your membership as much as you might like, we are sharing this new way for you to match up with players of like ability skill levels.

Just call the front desk at (949) 831-6660 and ask the staff member to put you on the "Baller" list. We will ask for your name, email address and cell phone number to share with other Tennis Club members.

It is also very important to give them as accurate an evaluation of your level as possible. Review the Tennis Skill Level Guidelines below.



Tennis Skill Level Guidelines

Beginner to Advanced Beginner

- Able to get serve in most of the time.
- Getting comfortable in where to stand and score keeping
- Attempts to dink, but not always successful
- Has basic stroke knowledge but needs consistency

Intermediate

- Has a full knowledge of keeping score, where to stand, and strategies
- Serves and returns are consistently deep
- With varying consistency can: hit forehands, backhands, dinks, lobs, overheads, and volleys
- Has a moderate number of unforced errors in games.
- Is displaying enough control to find opponent's weak side

Advanced

- Primarily plays in offensive mode
- Very comfortable playing in the volley zone. Can turn hard shots into soft
- Consistently hits the third ball dink, while selectively using power groundstrokes
- Has good footwork, moves forward and backward easily
- Hits overheads consistently with placement and power
- Can effectively poach, put volleys away either hard or angled
- Communicates well with a partner



Fall Women's League

Our Fall Tennis Season is here and with it comes opportunities to compete up to 5 days a week. Call the Tennis Desk at (949) 831-6660 to learn more.

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Team Darkhorse

GOING FROM 70 TO 80 | PART 2

By Evan Gost

These articles are not about keeping up with traffic on the I-5, but are about my rewarding experiences while serving on Team Darkhorse over the past decade. Hopefully, the sharing of these experiences will inspire other volunteers to join the noteworthy efforts of the Laguna Hills Marine Support Committee. The first article focused on interaction with Gold Star families and wounded veterans. This article will address experiences while supporting the active duty Marines, Sailors and families of Laguna Hill's adopted Marine Battalion, known as "3/5" or as the "Darkhorse Battalion."

Some of the early interaction that I had with the Darkhorse Battalion was shortly after they returned to Camp Pendleton from the difficult 2010-11 deployment to Afghanistan. Team Darkhorse was able to present the battalion with a Fallen Hero statue that honors the twenty-five Marines who were killed in action. The Commanding Officer from the deployment, Lieutenant Colonel Jason Morris (now a Brigadier General), graciously thanked us for the statue and told us that it serves as a reminder to the currently active Marines of the sacrifices made by their predecessors. General Morris continues to send Team Darkhorse notes thanking us for our support of the Darkhorse Battalion. The statue remains on the quarterdeck of the battalion headquarters where it represents Team Darkhorse's commitment to the Darkhorse Battalion.

In recognition of our support, members of Team Darkhorse were invited to participate in "Jane Wayne Day" in 2011—an event that allowed Marine spouses to experience Marine training on the obstacle course, rifle range and in other activities. Even though I was approaching age 70, I decided to participate. As I pulled my way up the first eight-foot structure on the obstacle course, I realized that this event was going to be far more challenging than the obstacle courses that I ran 48 years earlier during Navy flight training. Eventually I fell when jumping from telephone pole to telephone pole. The Marines insisted that I be taken to the



dispensary for examination by a Navy doctor. I knew that the only damage was bruised pride, but I agreed to be examined. When the Navy doctor asked my age, I responded 69 and 11/12th. He laughed and said, "You are in great shape for your age, but I think that we need to place an age limit on the obstacle course."

The highlight of the day occurred after I caught up with our group on the rifle range. I was recognized as the most proficient shooter in that event. However, a close review of my target revealed that it had more holes than the number of bullets that I had fired. Apparently, the Marine wife next to me had been missing her target and hitting mine. I thanked her for her assistance.

Late in 2011, Team Darkhorse began collecting toys for the Battalion Christmas party. Nellie Gail residents quickly filled toy collection boxes that year and continued to do so in subsequent years. I wish that these generous donors could witness the joy that I see when the toys are given to the children of the Darkhorse battalion.

A nice surprise occurred at the 2012 Darkhorse Battalion Christmas party--a monkey pod bar that I had given to the Battalion was



prominently on display. The bar was purchased in the Philippines in 1966 and had served as favorite "watering hole" through the years for my Navy friends from Hawaii, Florida, Italy and California. It needed a good home in a military environment, so gifting it to the battalion seemed appropriate. The 3/5 Commanding Officer made certain that it was highlighted at the Christmas party that year. The bar continues to be used today and I get to tell Navy stories to Marines when I visit the club in Camp Pendleton where it resides.

There is an historic chapel in Camp Pendleton named after Father Vincent Capadanno, a Navy Chaplain who was killed in Vietnam while comforting wounded Marines on the battlefield. He received the Medal of Honor posthumously. In 2012-13, Mike Bland, the founder of Team Darkhorse, constructed a 24 by 16 foot Memorial Deck in front of the Vincent Capadanno Chapel. After the deck was completed, the Battalion Chaplain told us that the deck had been used for a wedding. Because the bride had difficulty getting over the rough terrain surrounding the deck, the Chaplain asked if we could improve access to the deck.



Grants from the Kroger Company and Masco provided for the purchase of materials to improve the area surrounding the deck. I was one of the Team Darkhorse volunteers who provided the labor. Fortunately, we received some assistance from some young physically fit Marines. As we worked installing a retaining wall, laying pavers and improving landscaping, Marines often stopped by to thank us for our efforts. I thought about the contrast between the support of the military that we were providing that day and the prevailing negative response to the military during my Vietnam era. It felt good to be part of the more appropriate civilian response that exists today.



The Memorial Deck which honors the 25 Marines from the Darkhorse Battalion who were killed in Afghanistan has been visited by Gold Star families and is used frequently for cook-outs and other activities. I feel proud to have participated in this project.

One of the ways that Team Darkhorse supports the Battalion is to have welcoming parties on site every time the Battalion returns from deployment. A memorable moment at one of these homecomings was related to a "first kiss" event that the Marine wives had organized as a raffle to raise funds for the Marine Corps Ball. The winner of the raffle was entitled to be first in line at the door of the bus carrying the Marines returning from a seven-month deployment. Her Marine would be the first one coming off the bus and she would get the first kiss.

Anticipation grew as the bus made its slow journey across the parade deck towards the wife who was holding her four month old daughter—a daughter who was born during the deployment. The bus finally stopped, the door opened and an excited Marine jumped out to kiss his wife and hold his daughter for the first time. Once again, I witnessed an event that was heart-warming.

Another memorable moment occurred when I dressed as Santa Claus for a small party intended to bring some joy to children who were missing their fathers. As the party progressed, a young boy tossed a nerf football in my direction. I picked it up and passed it to him. He shouted, "Mom, I'm playing football with Santa Claus." It felt good to bring a little joy into the life of a boy who missed his father.

Team Darkhorse members often are rewarded when Marines thank us and express their gratitude for our sponsorship of baby showers, welcome home events, pizza parties, gifts sent to deployed Marines and emergency assistance. Our support certainly appears to be vital.

I have developed a lot of respect for the United States Marine Corps. The Commanding Officers are capable, well-educated and well-spoken. The Master Sergeants have consummate leadership skills. The officers and non-commissioned Marines are dedicated professionals. The social function that the Marine Corps performs for our society is not always well understood. Young individuals often come out of high school with a lack of direction. The Marine Corps provides discipline and gives these young people direction which proves helpful when they return to civilian life.

As stated in the last article, I am approaching age 80 and reflecting on the past decade of wonderful experiences while working with Team Darkhorse. My hope is that a group of younger volunteers will step forward when I become too old to participate in Team Darkhorse activities. They will find wonderful experiences that are intrinsically rewarding. Email 35robbins@gmail.com to learn more.

Evan Gost was a Navy pilot who served on active duty for 8 years and retired at the rank of Commander after 20 years of service with the Navy Reserves. He was awarded an Air Medal for flying in Viet Nam. Evan also was a commercial airline pilot, a real estate broker and an author.



REFLECTIONS ON A SUMMER NIGHT

By Karen Robbins

Late afternoon sun dipped below the trees, and with that a welcome cool spread across the thick green grass. The band warmed up, food trucks pulled into place, and soon a delicious aromatic promise of southern barbecue wafted through the air. The first summer concert since 2019 was about to begin!

On the far side of Gallup Park Brad Feldman and his group prepared tables of beverages on offer, intended to encourage donations to Team Darkhorse. Early arrivals walked through the park, carrying picnic blankets and beach chairs and choosing their spots.

I parked my car next to the entrance and sidewalk, popped my trunk, and started to unload some gear for Team Darkhorse — then stopped.

My eyes rested on two women who'd pulled from their SUV a wheelchair, set it up and now helped an elderly gentleman into the chair. He wore a cap with the words "US VETERAN - and NAVY" across the front. I walked over to say hello, and asked the gentleman about his service. Based upon what I guessed to be his age, I asked if he was a Korean War Veteran. "No," he said, "WWII!".

"Wow!" I expressed surprise and awe. I told him he was a national treasure. He smiled modestly, grew serious and said only "It was hard." But then he quickly regained his cheerful grin.

His daughter joked, "Be careful! He might ask you out." We all laughed, then he said, "Well I AM looking for a wealthy woman tonight if you know of one." I let him know that I was married, and not wealthy, but was sure

there were some who fit the wealthy category that night. His sense of humor and bright cheer were delightful.

As his daughter and granddaughter moved on toward their spots on the lawn, awe of the men who fought in WW2 rose up in my heart again. Now we see the remaining few as elderly, ancients from a generation long ago. But, they were once young, vital and full of hope and dreams. Their mothers loved them and worried as do all mothers across time. They stepped forward into the fire when their country and the world needed them to do so. Let us not ever forget.



Will the world ever witness such massive wars again? Let us hope not! But, meanwhile, our nation builds and maintains a defensive force, and young men continue to volunteer to join it, and even in peacetime they make sacrifices of time and physical risks. These are the men, and women, who have and would put their lives on the line if called. I am reminded of why Team Darkhorse was formed, how much our community has done for the adopted Marines we support, how grateful the young Marines always are, and the importance of appreciation.

After watching his daughter and granddaughter accompany the gentleman across the grass and set up their spot for the night, I turned back to my task at hand.

In my trunk is a large resin sculpture of a black horse head. The 3rd Battalion/5th Marines nickname "Darkhorse" sprang from the radio call sign it used during the Korean War, chosen by Colonel Robert Taplett, who as the Battalion Commander (CO) of that time had the call sign "Darkhorse Six". The nickname stuck and the 3/5 Marines now use it on their unofficial patches. Marvel Comics gave permission to the Battalion to use their drawing of a horse head, its mane wild and flowing, as their iconic image. The sculpture we spotted one day in an art store is the perfect replica.



I now pull this out of my trunk.

The large black horse head is both awkward and heavy. As I grapple it with both arms, its heft requires respect. I think that is good. It is not taken lightly!

Once we place the solid sculpture on our booth table, wherever we are, Darkhorse Marines will know who we support, and we know where and why. Strength, determination, commitment are what Marines live and breathe, what we appreciate, and what it might take to get the horse head across Gallup Park!

Look for the horse head next time Brad Feldman and his Group sponsors Team Darkhorse!

We are honored to represent and support Darkhorse Marines, and grateful for all your faithful help!



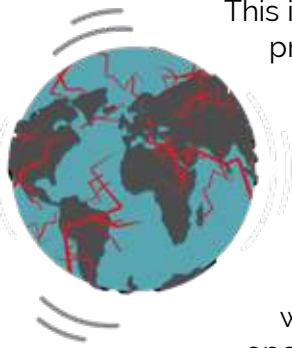
TEAM DARKHORSE

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 Chairman Karen Robbins, 35robbins@gmail.com

Emergency Preparedness

Surviving the Earthquake, Steps to Take BEFORE It Happens

By Dr. Kenneth S. Cheng



This is one article in a series written by your Emergency Preparedness Committee to help you prepare, be self-reliant and be of assistance to your neighbors in the event of a regional emergency. Every month we see and hear in the news of natural disasters (earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, and hurricanes) that should remind us of the importance of preparation. By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail (Benjamin Franklin).

The information provided is not meant to be exhaustive or complete, but instead is a good starting point in your planning process of preparation. These articles, and additional information, can also be accessed and downloaded through the Nellie Gail website (www.nelliegailranch.org) by signing in, clicking on the Resource Center tab, and opening the Emergency Preparedness Folder.

Last month we described the likelihood ("inevitable" according the USGS) and possible magnitude (7-10 times stronger than Haiti) of an earthquake striking the Southern California area. Despite that devastation, earthquakes are very survivable with simple preparation. You can minimize the damage within your home and improve your chances of rescue and full recovery by taking some very simple steps. This month's focus will be an overview of what should be done BEFORE the earthquake occurs. The Boy Scouts say it best in their motto, "Be Prepared." In order to minimize injury and inconvenience, we must prepare ourselves, our home and our community. Below are some basic, yet essential steps to becoming prepared.

Most of us have our water heater strapped to the wall, but are the straps sturdy and attached to studs? Water heaters weigh anywhere from 600 lbs to over 900 lbs. Check your water heater straps to make sure they can support this weight (the old "plumber's tape" and nails are woefully inadequate.) This is important for several reasons: it lessens the chance of a gas leak and fire, it minimizes your chances of flooding from broken water pipes, and it preserves 75-100 gallons of usable drinking water should you need it. Water heater straps are available at any hardware store and can be easily installed with minimal effort. If you are not sure how to do this, a handyman can easily accomplish this in about an hour.

Attach a gas and water shut off tool on your gas meter and practice how to use it. Attaching it to the meter with a lightweight chain or thin cable is important so it won't get lost nor will you waste time searching for it through the mess and devastation in your garage while gas is leaking from your water heater (which is probably in your garage as well.) Practice shutting off your water from the meter (at the street) and/or from the entry point in your home (usually found at the base of your front yard hose bib.)

ALL unsecured items on your walls and shelves WILL BE on the floor. Most of our homes have a hallway or two with family pictures hanging on it. The floors in these hallways will be littered with broken glass. Secure your pictures (especially ones over or near your beds) so that they can't fall off. This is easily done by placing two or more finishing nails into the wall immediately above the frame of the hanging picture. These nails will prevent the picture from coming up and unhooking from the picture hanger. Kitchens are also notorious for being extremely vulnerable to earthquakes. Contents from your cabinets and drawers will likely be on your floor, including food, cooking utensils, pots and pans, broken jars, etc. This can be minimized by having childproof locks on the cabinets. Yes, this is inconvenient and most will not do this but at least consider this for lesser used cabinets and glass containing pantries. It is strongly recommended that the cabinets containing household chemicals (cleaning supplies, etc.) be childproofed as the chemicals can be hazardous by themselves, possibly fatal if mixed with other chemicals. The lock will prevent these chemicals from spilling and mixing with each other.

Tall furniture, book shelves and refrigerators should be attached to the studs behind them. Rescue teams have seen refrigerators that have "walked" from their location, travel 6 feet across the kitchen floor and take

out large chunks from a granite counter top (Northridge Earthquake, magnitude 6.7, 1994.) These furniture attachment straps are easy to install and readily available at Home Depot or other hardware stores.

With all the broken glass described above, you should have closed-toed shoes under your bed (some also recommend that you store one of your emergency flashlights in these shoes so that it will always be nearby.) You do not want to be running down a dark hall in bare feet or slippers with broken shards of glass on the floor as one of the most common injuries from earthquakes is from victims cutting their feet on broken glass within their own home. Avoid the temptation of running to different rooms or running outside; FEMA research shows that most earthquake injuries happen when one is entering or exiting a structure.

Prepare by having adequate food, water and supplies. This is a whole topic in itself and will be thoroughly covered in a future article, but to summarize, one should have one gallon of water per person per day, canned or dried foods that require little or no preparation, and shelter (tents, tarps, blankets, etc.) in the event your home is uninhabitable.

An Earthquake Fault In Our Own Backyard?

On Monday, April 23, 2012, a 3.9 earthquake struck much of south Orange County. This quake's epicenter was located in Laguna Niguel (specifically near the corner of Crown Valley Parkway and La Paz). Most of the readers of the Pony Express won't remember this earthquake, and although no injuries or property damage occurred and having startled only a few residents, it definitely startled the geologic community. This small earthquake brought to light a little known "thrust" fault, the San Joaquin Hills fault. Thrust faults are difficult to identify because unlike the San Andreas Fault where the fracture of the earth's crust is visible and on the surface, thrust faults have fractures deep beneath the surface. One might ask, "Since these faults are under the surface, aren't they less dangerous?" Geologists feel that these blind thrust faults are likely more dangerous since their boundaries can't be identified. Geologists were not aware of the faults that caused the 6.7 magnitude Northridge Earthquake (1994) and the 6.0 magnitude Whittier Narrows Earthquake (1987) until the ground started shaking as both were caused by these blind thrust faults. We now know a blind thrust fault lies literally in our backyard. All the more reason to be prepared.



New Earthquake Kit Option

As many of you know, I have assembled a very extensive earthquake kit that should easily sustain my family in the event of an emergency. I chose to assemble my own (vs. purchasing a pre-made kit) because I could customize it and to insure that I had high quality items in my kit. All too often, pre-assembled kits cut costs by using inferior products (and you certainly don't want inferior products when your life may depend on it.) Additionally, these kits often contain items that sound good, but are of limited usefulness. For these reasons, I have always directed our readers to sites to assemble your kit (using the previously published list of items for an earthquake kit), but I have not recommended pre-made earthquake kits.

Recently, I had a chance to evaluate a high quality, pre-assembled earthquake kit that made its debut at the Los Angeles County Fair. The company is actually a local Orange County company, Emergency Case (www.emergencycase.com). It should be noted that my evaluation below of Emergency Case is done so without their knowledge or input, and that this author and other members of the Nellie Gail Emergency Preparedness Committee have no financial interest in Emergency Case, nor do we receive any financial considerations from them.

Most impressive is that much thought went into developing this particular kit. The items in the kit are of high quality (including some Stanley-branded tools that I want to include in my current kit.) They have designed this emergency kit around five basic components: Food and Water, Shelter and Sleep, Advanced Medical, Tools and Safety, and Health and Hygiene. Each of these five components



Attention: Mark Your Calendars!

October 21, 2021, 7:00 PM

Nellie Gail Clubhouse

The Emergency Preparedness Committee will be holding a live training on "How to Put Together your Home Emergency Kit." Come learn what goes in your kit, why certain things are needed during an emergency, and how to easily put this kit together over time.

We look forward to seeing you!

are packaged separately within the case and easily identified as such. These kits include a sleeping bag and bivouac sac, shelter/tent, water filter, head lamps and a number of items not found in the cheaper pre-made kits. Of particular interest to me was the Advanced Medical component. The supplies found here are more robust than your basic first aid kit. These "advanced" items include a SAM splint, hemostatic gauze, burn relief ointments, etc.

One of the inherent difficulties with pre-made kits is that one size doesn't fit all. Emergency Case addresses this by allowing you to purchase additional components based on your needs. One can purchase a "food vault" for additional food and water, and/or purchase a 2 person add-on kit (the standard kit accommodates a family of four). There are still items that one will need to add to have a fully ready emergency earthquake kit, but these items (toilet paper, eating utensils, etc.) are minor and not difficult to acquire.

The other impressive part of this case is the case itself. This is not a bucket or soft-sided bag; Emergency Case uses high quality, hard sided, waterproof cases that can be wheeled along much like luggage (in the event you need to move.) On their website is a video showing the ruggedness of their case. Another plus is that these cases are made in "rescue orange" for easy identification and are stackable in your garage.

In summary, this kit is ideal for the non-do-it-yourself individual but still desires a high quality, ready-made earthquake kit. It should be noted, however, that having even a high quality earthquake kit alone does not make you truly prepared. You will need to add knowledge; something that you will continue to receive from your Nellie Gail Emergency Preparedness Committee and these articles in the Pony Express. Future articles will address what to do DURING and AFTER an earthquake, as well as how to turn off utilities, if necessary. As always, please feel free to contact us with your questions at emergencypreparedness@nelliegailranch.org.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

Dr. Kenneth Cheng is a 9 year member of the Emergency Preparedness Committee and a resident of Nellie Gail Ranch for over 22 years. He is also an emergency preparedness instructor at the Orange County Sheriff's Department, where he is also a reserved deputy sheriff. Dr. Cheng can be contacted at kennethscheng@gmail.com.

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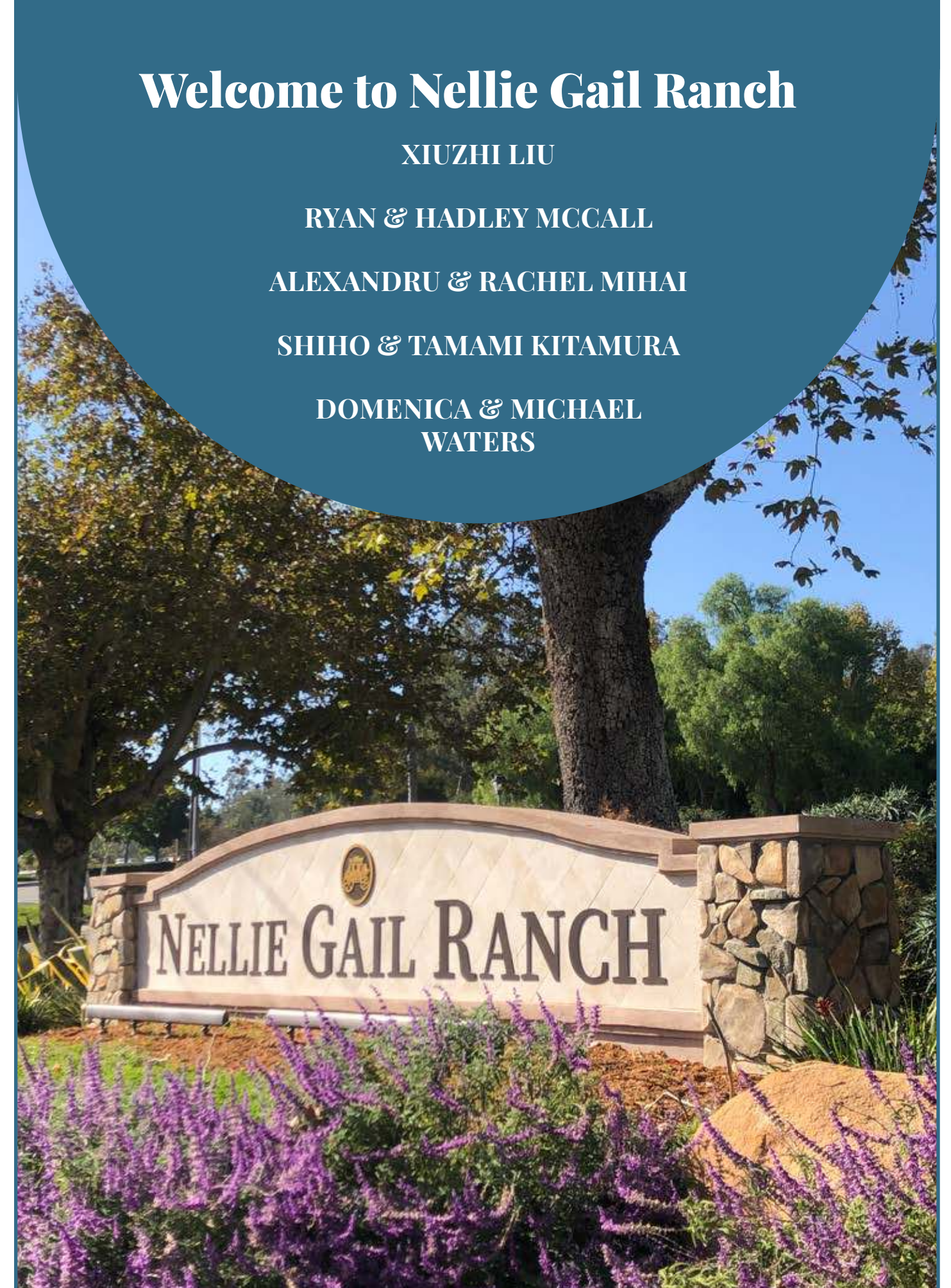
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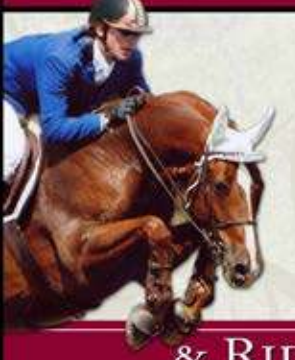
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TWO FOR THE SHOW – MUSIC DUO | NEW

TWO FOR THE SHOW was formed by seasoned musicians Mark Galluzzo and Dale Erkel (both long-time NGR residents) in 2018 with the goal of providing a unique musical experience that features a wide variety of timeless pop and rock classics appealing to audiences of all ages. Their recent performance at the NGR Club House/Emergency Preparedness Center Grand Opening was enjoyed by all who attended. If you're planning a private party or event TWO FOR THE SHOW will entertain with a customized playlist – from soft rock to popular dance songs. Check out our YouTube channel at "Two For The Show Orange County" to see promo samples along with a variety of full recordings of songs we cover. For more info, contact us at 949.643.0949 (no texts) or twofortheshowsocal@gmail.com

PET SITTING

If you need pet sitting and you live in Laguna Hills look no further. My name is Emily and I've pet sat for over 25 animals in NG. Contact me at emuleard@gmail.com OR (949) 887-2361

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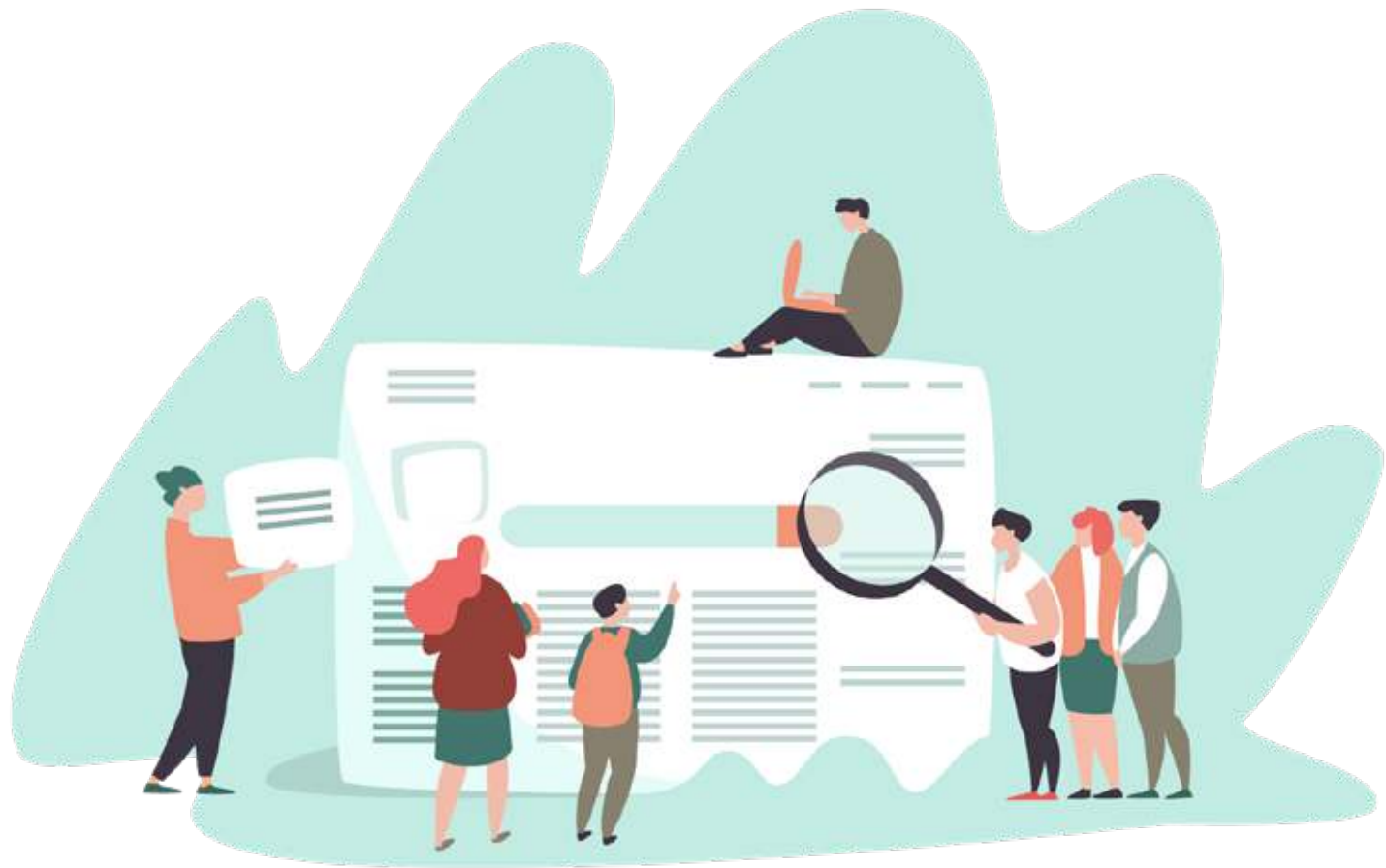
RENTALS

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Meet Your New Neighbors: Farzad & Parvaneh






My wife, Parvaneh, and I grew up in SoCal, around Long Beach and Palos Verdes. I graduated from Long Beach State in 1986, and we moved up north to Bay Area in 1990. I continued my education at UC Berkeley. We have two wonderful daughters (no grandkids yet). My profession has been in software Industry developing systems for several large companies, and my wife works in the retail industry.

We both love real estate activities and projects. We are nearing retirement and have a few friends who live here in Nellie Gail Ranch. We love the community, the neighborhood, and going to the beach. We are looking forward to meeting our Nellie Gail Ranch community members, walking around the trails, visiting the club house as often as we can, and participating in the festivities.

We wish everyone a safe and healthy time and cannot wait to be your neighbor!



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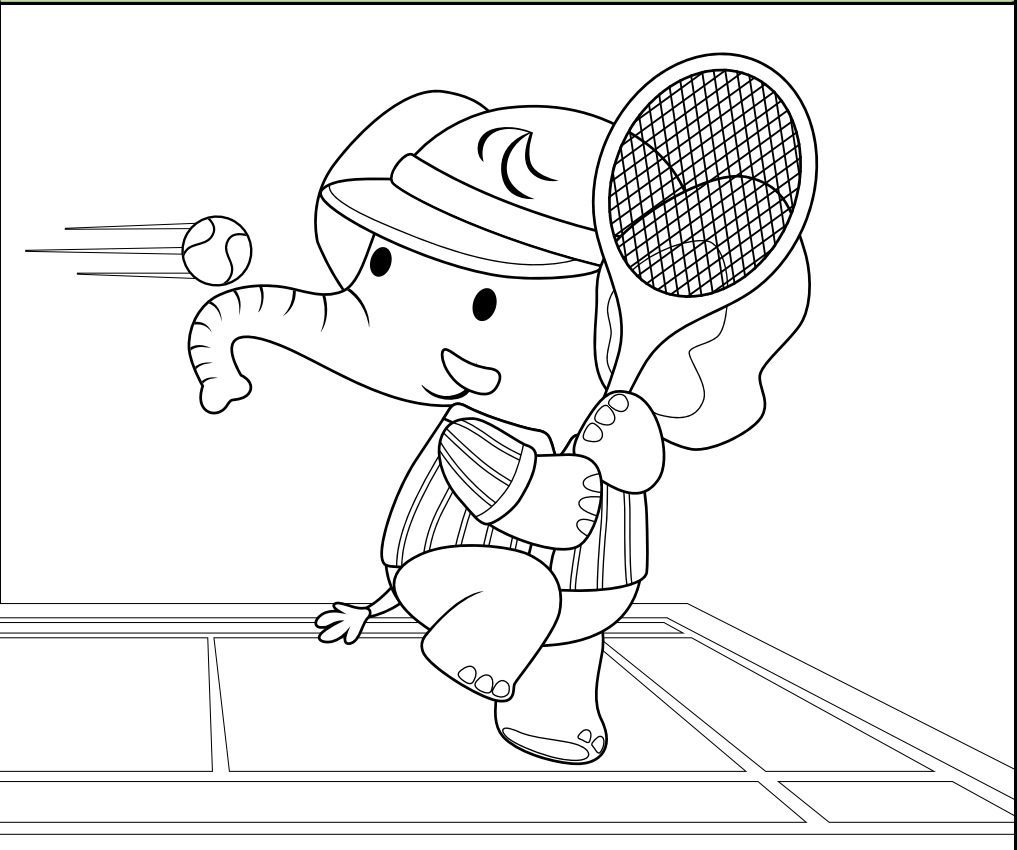
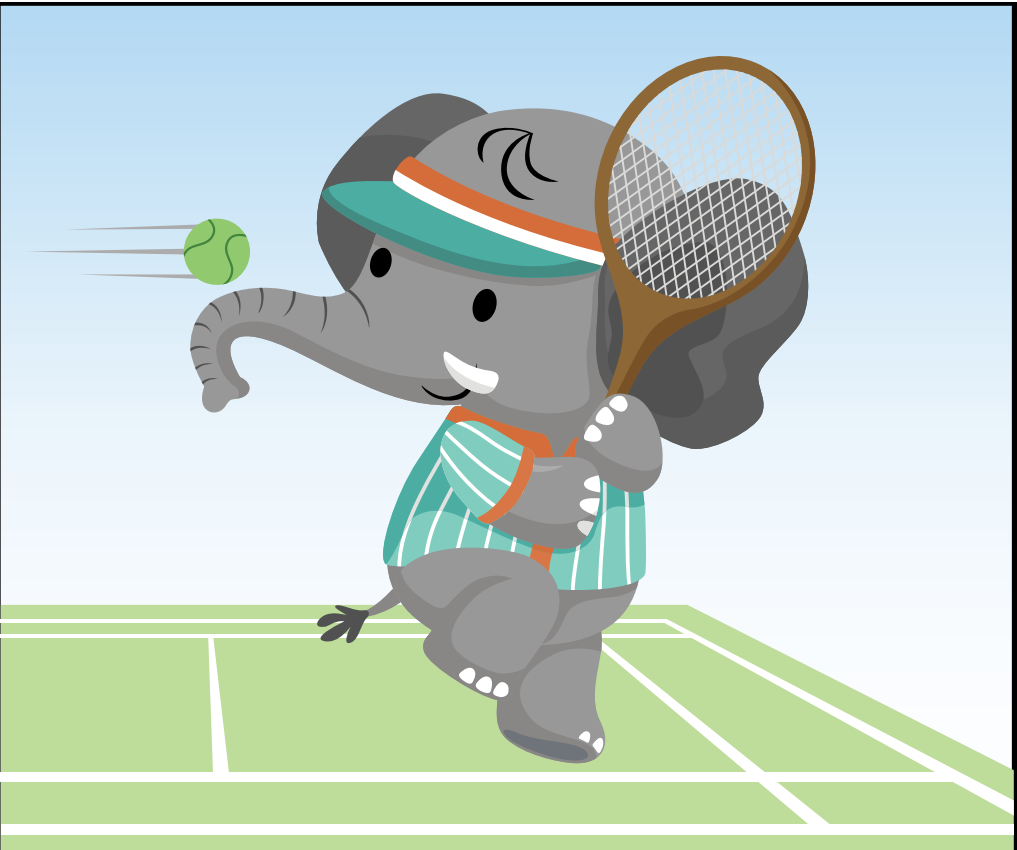
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Prep Time: 10 Minutes
Cook Time: 15 Minutes
Servings: 4 - makes about 8 large pancakes

Ingredients

- Pancakes**
¾ cup milk
1 ½ tablespoons vinegar
1 cup flour
3 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon (if you really love cinnamon you can add another ½ teaspoon)
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
1 egg
2 tablespoons oil
- Apple Topping**
2 tablespoons butter
2 apples peeled, cored, and diced
2 tablespoons brown sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon
⅓ cup maple syrup

Apple Cinnamon Pancakes

Change up the same old pancake and make these Apple Cinnamon Pancakes! Fluffy cinnamon pancakes with an ooey, gooey apple topping make the most perfect cozy breakfast.

Directions

- Step 1:** Preheat a skillet to medium-high heat (275 degrees).
- Step 2:** Whisk together the milk and vinegar and allow to rest for 5 minutes.
- Step 3:** While milk is curdling, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a large bowl.
- Step 4:** Whisk egg and oil into milk. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and stir until combined (don't over-mix, it should still have some lumps).
- Step 5:** Spray skillet with cooking spray. Use a 1/4 cup measuring cup to pour batter onto skillet. Cook about 2 minutes until bubbles form and the edges start to look "dry". Use a spatula to flip the pancake and cook another 1-2 minutes on the other side. Set pancakes aside and repeat with remaining batter.
- Step 6:** Add butter, apples, brown sugar, and cinnamon to a medium sauce pan. Stir over medium heat 3-5 minutes until apples are very tender. Stir in syrup. Serve apple topping over warm pancakes.



September 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Labor Day	7	8	9	10 Summer Concert Mark Wood & the Parrot Head Band 7:00 PM @ Gallup Park	11
12	13	14 ARC Meeting 7:00 PM Via Zoom	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 Board of Directors Meeting 7:30 PM Via Zoom	22	23	24 Summer Concert Surf City All-Stars 7:00 PM @ Gallup Park	25
26	27	28 ARC Submittal Deadline for October 12 Meeting	29	30	1	2

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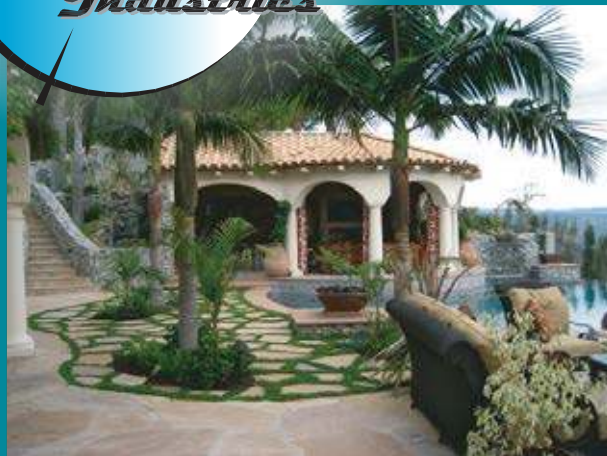
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