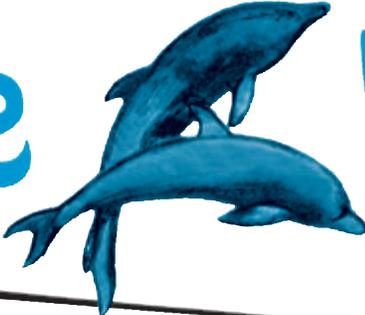


Seashore News



November 2025

Published Monthly by Niguel Shores Community Association

Issue 623

FROM THE HELM

As Board President, I understand that my “From the Helm” column is meant to keep our community informed about projects, updates, and association matters. But if I’m being honest, those updates can sometimes feel a bit repetitive. So this month, I want to take a different approach. Instead of talking about construction, gates, or landscaping, I’d like to share something more personal — a reflection on gratitude, perspective, and the importance of loving our neighbor, our community, and our country, no matter our individual beliefs or worldviews.

I recently returned from a two-week trip through Europe. As beautiful as it was, the experience reminded me that there’s simply nothing like home. Nowhere else offers the freedoms, diversity, and opportunities we enjoy here in America. Yes, we may feel divided at times — but disagreement has always

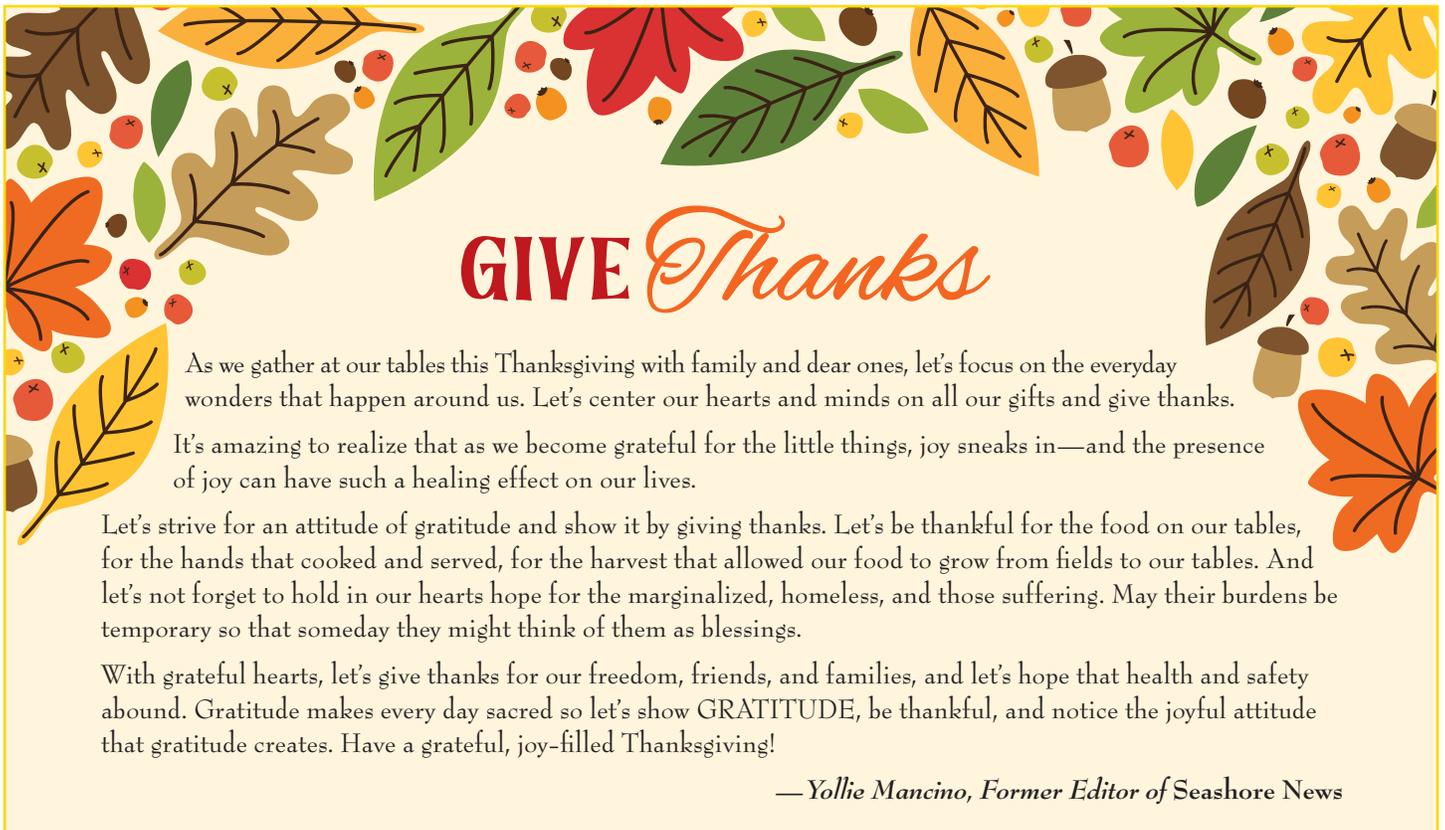
been part of our story. The good news is, we’ve always found our way forward.

It’s easy to get caught up in the noise of today’s world — the 24-hour news cycle, the internet, and social media all tend to magnify our frustrations and differences. The same can happen here in Niguel Shores. But when we pause and take a step back, many of our “problems” are really just small inconveniences of living together in a close, caring community.

As we approach Thanksgiving, let’s take a moment to appreciate how fortunate we truly are—to live by the ocean, surrounded by neighbors who care, in a place that feels like family. A little patience, a little grace, and a little gratitude go a long way.

See you around the Shores.

—Mark Russell



GIVE Thanks

As we gather at our tables this Thanksgiving with family and dear ones, let’s focus on the everyday wonders that happen around us. Let’s center our hearts and minds on all our gifts and give thanks.

It’s amazing to realize that as we become grateful for the little things, joy sneaks in—and the presence of joy can have such a healing effect on our lives.

Let’s strive for an attitude of gratitude and show it by giving thanks. Let’s be thankful for the food on our tables, for the hands that cooked and served, for the harvest that allowed our food to grow from fields to our tables. And let’s not forget to hold in our hearts hope for the marginalized, homeless, and those suffering. May their burdens be temporary so that someday they might think of them as blessings.

With grateful hearts, let’s give thanks for our freedom, friends, and families, and let’s hope that health and safety abound. Gratitude makes every day sacred so let’s show GRATITUDE, be thankful, and notice the joyful attitude that gratitude creates. Have a grateful, joy-filled Thanksgiving!

—Yollie Mancino, Former Editor of Seashore News



KATHY SAMUEL LUXURY REAL ESTATE

TOP 1%

Real Estate Agents in California

#1

Monarch Beach Homes Sold

349+

Keys Handed Over

\$360+ MILLION

Closed Transactions

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Don't Forget to Donate to Niguel Shores Canned Food Drive

*Over the years we have donated **50,000+** meals, let's continue the great work!*

Virtual Donation: Now through November 23, 2025

Physical Pick Up: November 17-23, 2025

AS ALWAYS I WILL MATCH YOUR CONTRIBUTION AND PROVIDE A CASH DONATION OF \$500.

Together we CAN make a difference!



KATHY SAMUEL

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Kathy@KathySamuel.com

www.kathysamuel.com

Work with my powerful
network for top results!



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NSCA is not responsible for any work done nor are we recommending any of the advertised companies

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Go Access—As you have noticed, Dwelling Live has been deactivated, and the barcode readers removed. All residents should have created a new account with Go Access and swapped the barcode tag for the new RFID tag.

Next steps include installing kiosks at each gate so you can communicate with the staff at the Mariner gate if you are having an access issue. The license plate reading cameras are being integrated into Go Access. They will help to identify guests and vendors quickly to keep the Mariner gate running smoothly.

Turf Reduction—In coordination with the South Coast Water District, we entered another round of turf removal. The rebates SCWD is offering will cover all costs to remove and replace both turf and irrigation. We have submitted our applications and are currently in the approval process.

The state of California has given all homeowner associations in California until January 1, 2029, to remove all non-functional turf to reduce water usage. Working with the SCWD, the association will be able to meet that deadline with no out-of-pocket cost. We have posted a map on our website showing the locations of turf removal for the first phase.

Events Committee—The Events Committee is recruiting for volunteers to help with upcoming holiday events. As the holidays fast approach, our annual holiday event schedule is being created. The committee is sending out a call for helpful volunteers at the following events:

- **Santa at the Bluff**—12/6: We need at least five volunteers to assist with this event at the Bluff.
- **Holiday Lights Contest**—12/12: Kathy Samuel will be sponsoring the holiday lighting contest but she needs volunteers to assist with the judging.

If you would like to put on your Elf hat this season, please email Blayne at bmiller@niguelshores.org.

New Accounting Firm—The Board has retained KBF Advisors as our new accounting firm to prepare the monthly financial statements and assist our outside auditor with the annual end of year audit. With this change we are bringing accounts payable and receivable back in-house. This means your quarterly assessment payment should be mailed to the NSCA office address at 33654 Niguel

Shores Drive, Dana Point, CA 92629. If your bank sends out your quarterly assessment, please make sure the address on the check is updated. With ACH accounts we will need to set up new accounts with you in the name of the association. More information is to follow.

Annual Tree Trimming—The community-wide tree trimming by Harvest Landscape has begun. This will continue through February of 2026. We ask for your cooperation in moving your cars away from areas scheduled for trimming. This will help keep the project on schedule.

—John Muller

OFFICE CLOSED
NOVEMBER 11 – VETERANS DAY
NOVEMBER 27 & NOVEMBER 28 –
THANKSGIVING DAY

BOARD ACTION SUMMARY
See niguelshores.org

SEA TERRACE I
 Anyone interested in being on next year's **Sea Terrace 1 Board**, there will be an opening. Contact Jeff Paige at jpaige3149@aol.com if you wish to be on the ballot.

NOVEMBER EVENTS



CHANGE CLOCKS

November 2



Salute Our Veterans
VETERANS DAY

November 11



Uncle Niguel wants YOU!
 See the Maintenance article on page 5 for details.

VOTE
 November 4



Give Thanks
THANKSGIVING DAY

November 27



COMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

By now you've made a note to turn back your clocks on November 2 and submit your election ballot by November 4—so we won't remind you about those items. However, we'd like to tell you about some projects where you can contribute to the Niguel Shores community. Here are a few:

Views Views Views—We hope you enjoyed the beautiful sunset views on the cover of last month's issue. Our homes look out to all kinds of views—ocean, hillside, garden, city lights, trees, play areas, patios, courtyards, etc. Would you share a photo of what you see out your window? Send to seashorenews@hotmail.com.

Newsletter Neighborhood Ads—You can advertise personal items for sale or rent in the *Seashore News*. Cost is \$5 for 30 words. Check the office for details.

Website Marketplace—Post your items for sale on niguelshores.org. Click "Marketplace" at the top of the website screen. Also check this feature if you are looking for household items, furniture, appliances, clothing, electronics, vehicles, and more.

Website Comments—Go to niguelshores.org to post a comment about something relevant to our community. You will receive a reply from a member of the Communication Committee in addition to any other replies from neighbors. Give it a try!

—Sandy Homicz

EVENTS COMMITTEE

Happy Thanksgiving to All!

COMING EVENTS:

Holiday Lights Contest—Start decorating the day after Thanksgiving on November 28. Judging to be announced. Look for insert in this issue of the *Seashore News*.

Santa at the Bluff—Saturday, December 6, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Take your photo with Santa and enjoy cookies, hot cocoa, snow and more.

—Events Committee

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

The Historical Committee had its inaugural meeting on October 7 at which **Mary Crowl** was elected temporary chair contingent upon Board approval. The Committee agreed to meet quarterly with the next meeting to be on January 26, 2026. **Karen Decker** is our staff representative, and **Heather Harding** is our Board Liaison.

The Committee adopted a Collections Management Policy that covers a Mission Statement, responsibilities, and the development and care of its collections. All collections



COLLECTING NIGUEL SHORES HISTORY

The NSCA Historical Committee is compiling a history of Niguel Shores for our website and a booklet for residents and those interested in the community.

If you have stories, photos, or print material about our clubs, committees, events, or activities from past years, please let us know by sending an email to NSHistoricalCommittee@hotmail.com. We can write what you tell us or scan whatever photos or documents you want to share. Be sure to include your name and phone or email in case we need to reach you.

will become the property of the Niguel Shores Community Association.

Projects—Our initial project is to begin identifying and cataloging the Committee's large collection of photographs to include those that have been lent by various organizations.

A second project is to begin a series of interviews with long-time residents to create an Oral History Collection of the early days of Niguel Shores. These recordings will be transcribed, edited and, after approval and release by the person interviewed, will become property of the Community and available for public use.

Additional projects are being planned to include research into original architectural firms and developers of the various parts of Niguel Shores, organization of the many records that we have of past administrations, boards, renovations, etc. and, always, to record current events.

Participation Welcome—Residents interested in participating in these projects are encouraged to contribute relevant information and photographs or documents. Personal participation in the Committee would be doubly welcomed. Contact us: NSHistoricalCommittee@hotmail.com.

—Mary Crowl

LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE

With the fall season upon us, the Landscape Committee is busy working with Harvest and Matt Northrop to get things looking good for the upcoming holiday season. As mentioned in a recent Board Report, the community is moving forward with updating key planting areas to a more cohesive and consistent look. This is a phased program that extends throughout 2026 and beyond, and will target high impact areas such as the main gate, ancillary gates to the

COMMITTEE REPORTS



Garibaldi Monument



Selva Gate

different community areas, the Clubhouse entrance, and key intersections within our neighborhoods.

Harvest's landscape designer has developed attractive and contemporary designs that maximize use of drought-tolerant plants and minimize maintenance costs. As examples, we have included two color renderings of different areas, so be on the lookout for improvements there! More to come as this program advances over the coming months.

In addition to major projects like these, Landscape Committee members, representing each area of the community, present monthly reports identifying landscape maintenance issues. These reports are then used as checklists by Harvest, who report back to the committee on progress. Since the 'portfolios' of our committee members are living things, it keeps all of us on our toes!

—Vicki Sheff

MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Pumps Are Working—Well, the Halloween festivities are over and we are into fall, but I'm betting we will still be

treated to some warm weather so keep the sunglasses and flip flops ready. Speaking of weather, we had a little rain and it was a great test for the new sump pump system on our pathway from the park to the Selva gate steps. **Facilities Manager Bob Everson** tells me he checked during the rainstorm and the system worked flawlessly with no water build up anywhere along the pathway that normally has some water buildup during heavy rain. By the time of this printing the sub-panel, controller and second pump should be approved and in the process of being installed.

Pickleball Courts—The completion of the pickleball courts is in process. In addition to the new court, steel braces have been installed at the bottom of the fences to help protect from objects getting under the fence in critical areas. Because the court is a foot higher, the net posts will be extended to be regulation height and the gate to the sitting area will be removed as it has proved to be unnecessary. Several residents, "most likely inquisitive Picklers," have wondered why there were so many cracks on the newly poured concrete prior to the resurfacing. Mr. Everson has the answer. Any cracks are part of the normal curing process, are non structural, and have been filled. He assured me that the new court is sound and is reinforced with #4 rebar. Worry not ... the new court will be in fine shape when completed. A new walkway has been installed next to the revamped court, as well as a new walkway ramp between courts 3 & 4, and both are ADA compliant.

Uncle Niguel Wants You!—We need volunteers not only for ongoing projects like painting curbs and street signs, but also—after years of spending tens of thousands of dollars on renting Christmas lights—the Board approved purchasing our own lights and installing them ourselves. Yes, this is where you could come in. After installing your winning lights on your own house, call the office and report for duty helping our community be the lightest and brightest in all of South Orange County. Make it a fun event and enjoy some neighborly good cheer with others in the community. Perhaps a beverage might be in order!



Uncle Niguel wants YOU!

Note: No AI was used in the creation of this article but I did use AI to create Uncle Niguel.

Hope you like him!

—Geoff Dunlevie

CLUBS

WOMEN'S CLUB

October Meeting Recap

At our October 9 meeting, we had the pleasure of hearing from **Danielle Desimone**, Founder of **HOM Dana Point** on Del Prado in the Lantern District. More than just a retail shop, HOM is a vibrant community hub where creativity and connection thrive. Danielle regularly hosts engaging in-store events—such as cooking demos, cocktail classes, wreath design workshops—that bring people together and spark creativity.

Upcoming Event: Sip & Shop at HOM—We're excited to continue our connection with Danielle at our Women's Club **HOM Sip & Shop** on **Thursday, November 6 from 4 to 7 p.m.** Enjoy beverages, bites, and beautiful finds as you browse Danielle's thoughtfully curated collection of home décor and gifts. Bring a friend and shop local in the heart of Dana Point! To attend, you must pre-register and pay \$10 using the QR code shown here. Registered guests will receive 10% off all purchases made that evening. For questions or assistance, please contact **Karey Palmer** or **Gigi McDonnell**.



October luncheon highlights: Guest speaker Danielle Desimone of HOM with club officers Laurel Yocca and Carole Daly; Toni, Karey, Suzanne and Sylvia with raffle tickets for a shopping spree at HOM; Emeritus members Betty French and Ceacy Johns are awarded birthday flowers by Jeannie Sticher of the Membership Committee.



November Speaker: Chris Barry—Looking ahead, we'll welcome **Chris Barry** as our **November 13** speaker. Chris is a community educator, reserve firefighter, and drone operator for the **Orange County Fire Authority**, where he has served for seven years. He will share valuable insights on disaster preparedness and fire safety, illustrated with personal stories and firsthand experiences from his work with OCFA. You won't want to miss this engaging and informative presentation!

A Note of Thanks—A special thank you to **Randa Memo** and **Dot Wall** for collaborating with local restaurants and caterers to provide our wonderful lunches. Last month, we enjoyed a delicious meal catered by Heather Testerman's company **The Midnite Baker OC**, featuring curry chicken salad, grilled vegetables, Mediterranean salad, tomato basil mozzarella salad, and mini churro cupcakes for dessert.

Save the Dates

- **HOM Sip & Shop**—Thursday, November 6
- **Women's Club Walk to the Ritz**—Tuesday, December 2
- **Women's & Men's Club Holiday "Pinkmas" Party**—Thursday, December 11

—Karey Palmer

SAVE THE DATE

Niguel Shores Women's Club

Pinkmas Holiday Party

When: **Thursday, December 11**
Time: **6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**
Where: **Niguel Shores Clubhouse**

All Women's Club and Men's Club members, along with a guest, are invited to join us for an evening filled with food, signature drinks, music, a holiday game, and prizes for the best dessert!

Cost: \$20 per person. Tickets will be on sale starting Monday, December 1, at the Niguel Shores office. *Space is limited—please purchase tickets in advance!*

Note:

- * Women's Club members should bring an appetizer.
- * Men's Club members should bring a bottle of wine.
- * The Dessert Contest is open to the first twelve who sign up by December 1 to participate, with a \$100 prize for the first-place winner. Flyer and sign-up information are available in the Niguel Shores office.

CLUBS

MEN'S CLUB

The Niguel Shores Men's Club had two outstanding programs last month. At our October 7 meeting, **Dana Point Mayor Matthew Pagano** and **Assistant City Manager Kelly Reenders** joined us for an engaging discussion about city projects and community initiatives. They shared updates on the city's ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of life in Dana Point and took time to answer questions from the membership. Their visit provided an excellent opportunity for an open exchange between city leadership and our residents.

Our October 21 meeting featured **Gary Edkins**, who brought several pieces from his **marine art collection** and shared fascinating stories behind his work. His presentation blended history, art, and personal experience, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

Looking ahead, the Men's Club will hold two **breakfast meetings, November 4 and 18**, both beginning at **8:00 a.m.** in the Clubhouse. Our November 4 speaker is **Mike Davis** of **The Wine Experience** in Dana Point's Lantern District.

In **December**, we will have **one special meeting on December 2**, featuring a performance by the **Dana Hills High School Choir**, led by **Ray Medina, Director of Vocal Music**. This is our **annual holiday celebration**, and **spouses are warmly invited** to join us for breakfast, music, and holiday cheer.

The Men's Club welcomes all men who live in Niguel Shores to join us. Our meetings offer a great way to meet neighbors, enjoy a hearty breakfast, and stay connected with what's happening in our community.

—John Yocca

GARDEN CLUB

October was a very busy month for the Garden Club! Starting with our monthly meeting, we welcomed **Ashley Irene**, founder of the Heirloom Potager and a Culinary Garden Designer, who talked about creating practical yet attractive edible gardens

that welcome visitors and taste good as well. Her motto is "Grow what you love—eat what you grow." She demonstrated how to grow a 'salad bowl' of different lettuces and herbs all in one pot—amazing!

October also featured our much-anticipated annual **Lobster Fest** for members and guests. Preceded by a cocktail hour with drinks and appetizers prepared by members, the delicious lobster was grilled on the patio and accompanied by all the traditional sides. It was a fun and memorable evening for all.

Our next meeting is **Monday, November 10 at 11:00 a.m.** in the **Clubhouse**. We will kick off the 'giving season' at a creative workshop with members making beautiful shell holiday ornaments to give to **Meals on Wheels** recipients during the holidays.

The Garden Club is growing. We've added 12 new members since the start of the club year in September and are currently at 79 members. New members can join at any time ... no gardening expertise required. Dues are \$25 per person per year, and \$5 per guest visit. We meet the second Monday of each month at 11:00 a.m. in the Clubhouse. To join, sign-up forms are in the Niguel Shores office.

—Judi Palladino



A happy group gathered at the Clubhouse in October for the annual Garden Club Lobster Fest. Members are shown here enjoying a good time and great food with friends.

VETERANS DAY – Remembering Those Who Served

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War following the fall of Saigon in 1975. Memorials to the brave men and women who served during that era are being held across our nation this Veterans Day, November 11.

In Washington D.C. the tributes will take place at the **Vietnam Veterans Memorial** – the most-visited memorial on the National Mall, attracting more than 5 million people each year. The **Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall** was dedicated on Veterans Day in 1982, fulfilling a promise never to forget those who served and sacrificed. The massive black granite wall lists names of more than 58,000 servicemen and women who gave their lives during the conflict.



The memorial also features the **Three Servicemen** statue (1984), the **Vietnam Women’s Memorial** (1993), the **Memory Plaque** (2004), and a flagpole etched with the insignia of the country’s military branches.



Three Servicemen statue, Vietnam Women’s Memorial, In Memory plaque

Seashore News asked two Niguel Shores U.S. Navy veterans to share some thoughts about serving in medical facilities during the Vietnam Era. **Madelyn Baladi** was a Navy Nurse and **Bruce Blakley** was stationed aboard the hospital ship *USS Repose*.

NAVY NURSE

A popular recent novel, *The Women*, brought long overdue attention to the role of women in the Vietnam conflict. More than 265,000 military and civilian women served around the world during the Vietnam Era in professional, technical, medical, leadership, and humanitarian roles. One of these was Niguel Shores resident **Madelyn Baladi**, a member of the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps from 1971 to 1974.

Madelyn was nineteen when she enlisted in the Navy with a classmate while in a Baccalaureate nursing program. She remembers the opportunities and experiences the military provided: “The program paid for our last two years of university ... tuition, books, medical and dental expenses. We received a monthly salary commissioned as Ensigns while in school. After graduation there was



Madelyn (right) at training in Newport, Rhode Island.

With gratitude to All Our Niguel Shores Veterans for Their Military Service

Officer Training in Newport Rhode Island and further training at Great Lakes Naval Hospital in an amputee ward. I then served for three years, primarily in the ICU at the former Naval Regional Medical Center in Long Beach, and was discharged with a rank of LTJG.” Madelyn received a medal for meritorious service during the Vietnam War and, as a veteran, went on to earn a Master’s Degree in Nursing at UCLA under the GI Bill.

She added a note about another veteran, her father: “He earned his M.D. in a similar program in the 1940s and served as a Flight Surgeon on Aircraft Carrier *Leyte* in the Mediterranean during WWII.”

To keep in touch with other veterans, Madelyn said, “I joined Oasis Senior Center in Newport Beach and attend their monthly Veterans Social Group which has interesting topics (ICBMs, Helicopters in Vietnam, Air Force Spouse Adventures). They have a good turnout at the meetings and also visit places of national interest, military museums, and presidential libraries.”



LTJG Bruce Blakley

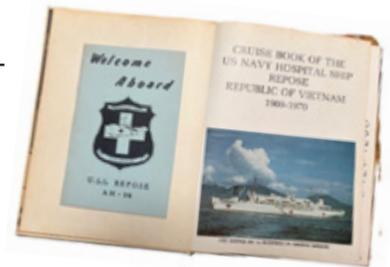
HOSPITAL AT SEA

Shores resident **Bruce Blakley** served in the U.S. Navy as a LTJG, from 1967 to 1971 during the height of the Vietnam War. This service included a year aboard the *USS Repose* (AH-16), one of two hospital ships operating off South Vietnam’s northern coast in support of US Marines and other forces. With a degree in accounting, Bruce was assigned as the officer responsible for paying all the crew, but he also stood bridge watches and acted as an LSO landing helicopters on the flight deck.

The *Uss Repose*, nicknamed “Angel of the Orient,” was a fully outfitted hospital with a large staff of medical specialists, surgeons, nurses, and support personnel. The ship treated more than 9,000 battle casualties and admitted over 24,000 patients for care during its time in Vietnam. Whenever possible, the medical team also cared for injured locals and children with defects curable through surgery. In keeping

with terms of the Geneva Convention, *Repose* was protected from enemy fire as a humanitarian vessel carrying no armaments, and could be identified by its white hull and medical cross.

Amid the serious nature of the work aboard ship, there were also activities providing a break when needed. Bruce showed us the ship’s yearbook with photos of musical entertainment, talent shows, game time, a library, and a gym.



Thinking back over his time in the Navy, Bruce shared this: “Many in my family had served in WWII and my two brothers were active in the National Guard. I had a strong feeling about the need to serve even when many friends disagreed about the conflict in Vietnam. One personal benefit was being posted to the *Repose* and put in command of two divisions of sailors, many of whom were career Navy and much older than I. A humbling experience. Plus, the constant influx of helicopters with wounded troops brought serious reflection and significant personal growth in that one tour.”

—Sandy Homicz

Dana Point Veterans Day Remembrance

Presented by the Dana Point Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9934, Ladies Auxiliary, and the City of Dana Point.

This service recognizes all Veterans for their service and sacrifice for America.

Tuesday, November 11
10 to 11 a.m.
Strands Vista Park

For more information visit
vfwpost9934.org.



AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Pumpkins and Prosecco

Women's Club members had a fun afternoon decorating pumpkins, snacking on desserts, and sipping favorite beverages at their October Social Event organized by Karey Palmer and Gigi McDonnell.



Movie Nights

On October 17, the NS Historical Committee screened a classic movie written by former Niguel Shores resident **William Wister Haines**.

Thanks to **Kathy Samuel** for sponsoring the canned food collection and providing the tasty refreshments.

On October 24, the Events Committee held a **Halloween Party Movie Night** showing "The Goonies" with snack options and a chance to show off some crazy costumes.



Lobster Fest

What a happy turnout and mouth-watering feast at the **Garden Club Lobster Fest!** Thanks to grillers **John Chis, Al Glatt, Rob Schreiber, and Gary Tinnes** for their heavy lifting and great work over the hot coals, as well as kudos to the kitchen staff behind the scenes.



Turkey Day 5K

In addition to the traditional Dana Point Turkey Trot, for the past five years some Niguel Shores neighbors have been getting together early on Thanksgiving morning for a **Turkey Day 5K** to benefit charity. This year, the event is celebrating neighbor **Richard Drewelow**, who is fighting brain cancer. Follow his journey on Instagram @Richard_Drewelow. If you would like to participate, donate, or help with the event, call **Carey Smith** (949-636-2857).



Block Party on Brigantine Drive

hosted by **Vicki and Dave Sheff**.



Women's Club New Members Party

hosted by **Toni Mitsch and Sylvia Collins**.



ACTIVITIES

BRIDGE

November is sometimes called the Thanksgiving month. It is a time to be thankful for all the blessings we have received during the year.

This year we had the privilege of meeting many new players and making new friends. Birthday parties are always an excuse to bring a cake or even wonderful cupcakes. Did I mention that one of our players' granddaughter is a Girl Scout? Yes, we have Girl Scout cookies. We are also blessed by Muriel. She is known for her banana bread, and now other players have been giving her their cherished recipes.

We had some wonderful close games during the months of September and October, and I look forward weekly to relating who took 1st, 2nd and 3rd place.

September 17: Karen Murphy squeaked ahead of our Fearless Leader by 20 points leaving Betty French in a solid 2nd place followed very closely by Jim Pinola who landed on 3rd.

September 24: Maria Garcia totally dominated 1st place while Sallyann King was a distant 2nd and Mike Oliva 10 points behind her.

October 1: Mary Biegel came in 1st, while our Fearless Leader Betty was close on her heels for 2nd, and Patty Hollis came in a very very close 3rd. (If there was a 4th place it was reserved for Bob French, husband of our Fearless Leader, who was 10 points behind.)

October 8: Freyd Rad secured 1st place, while our hostess, Betty French came in 2nd and Glenda Wilson brought in 3rd.

October 15: Our favorite purveyor of Girl Scout cookies, Patti Liebman, came in 1st, not to be outdone Bob Ruben came in 2nd, while fearless Betty French joined them for

3rd, thereby placing in the top 3 for the last five weeks in a row. Way to go Betty!

Join us, if you are interested in playing. Please give a call to **Bob** or **Betty French** at (949) 312-2556 or visit us on Wednesdays after 2:00 p.m.

—Mike Oliva

PAGE TURNERS

Page Turners book club members will be reading *The Weekend* by Charlotte Wood this November. This short novel describes how “three elderly female friends reunite to clear out the home of a fourth, who recently died, in a short meditation on relationship bonds and the wisdom—and other traits—accumulated over a lifetime.”

One reviewer states that most novelists avoid writing about old age viewing it as a “hinterland” between life and death. He states that “the temptation to reduce ageing to a condition experienced en masse rather than by individuals is a trap that snares only lesser writers. The better ones have avoided it—writers such as Nora Ephron and Penelope Lively, and, most recently, Elizabeth Strout. Joining their ranks is Australian Charlotte Wood, whose novel *The Weekend* conceives of old age as a state of mutiny rather than stasis, a period of constant striving against the world, but also against oneself.”

Having read this book myself I have to agree with the following statement: “What gives this novel its glorious, refreshing, forthright spine is that each of its protagonists is still adamantly (often disastrously) alive, and still less afraid of death than irrelevance.”

According to Goodreads, “*The Weekend* explores growing old and growing up, and what happens when we’re forced to uncover the lies we tell ourselves. Sharply observed and excruciatingly funny, this is a jewel of a book: a celebration of tenderness and friendship from an award-winning writer.” I am really looking forward to our group discussions of this book.

If you are considering joining a book club and would like more information, please contact one of the coordinators of our three groups—Thursday afternoon (two separate groups) **Lisa Buchner** at lisabuchner47@gmail.com or **Steve and Ann Morris** at samwrsi@cox.net or the Monday afternoon group myself at fzimec@cox.net. We always welcome new members.

—Frances Ozimec



**You Are Invited
to Join
Our Watercolor
Painting Group**

**Mondays
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

**At Meg Wilson's Home
33601 Windjammer Drive
Call (714) 742-4387**



ACTIVITIES

FRIENDS OF DANA POINT LIBRARY

Grand Opening!

The Library Bookstore invites you to its official opening on **Thursday, November 11** from **11 a.m. to 12 Noon**. Come see our new redesigned space and meet our new **Branch Manager, Zoe Yun** and the library staff. We are so fortunate to work with such a dedicated, knowledgeable and caring group.

To thank you for visiting, we would like to give each of you a \$2.00 gift certificate to use at the bookstore.



Please join us in the **Community Room of Dana Point Library** on **November 11** from **11 a.m. to 12 Noon**. We look forward to seeing you there.

—Lisa Buchner

SPORTS

PICKLEBALL

Level Up the Pickleball Game

While we wait for our courts to reopen, it may be worthwhile to reflect upon our Pickleball skill level so when we get back to playing, we all endeavor to go up a level.

Per the Professional Pickleball associations, player levels range from beginner to professional, typically on a scale of 1.0 to 5.0 or 5.5+, with distinct characteristics at each level. Key factors that differentiate these levels include shot versatility, court strategy, footwork, and the consistent execution of various shots.

Player Level Breakdown

- **1.0–2.9: Beginner:** Learning the basics of the game, including holding the paddle, rules, and scoring. Can sustain short rallies but often struggles with rules and positioning.
- **3.0: Novice:** Understands fundamental rules, basic strategy, and court positioning. Can construct limited points.
- **3.5: Intermediate:** Knows the difference between hard and soft play (dinking), gets to the non-volley zone (kitchen sink) consistently, and understands basics of teamwork.
- **4.0: Intermediate-Advanced:** Can identify and attack opponents' weaknesses, is aware of partner's position, and moves as a team. Serves and returns are more purposeful.

Key Takeaways

While researching for this article and talking to a few advanced players at *Laguna Niguel Regional Park*, my key takeaways are:

- **Master the soft game:** A 3.5 player has decent dinking skills, but a 4.0 player has mastered the soft game with greater consistency and purpose.
- **Dink with a purpose.** Instead of just dinking to keep



Pickleball friends at Happy Hour.

the rally alive, consistently place the ball in strategic areas, like at an opponent's feet or backhand, to force a weak return.

- **Master the reset.** A 4.0 player can neutralize their opponent's attacks by hitting a soft shot from the transition zone or kitchen line, allowing them and their partner to recover and regain an offensive position.
- **Patience is key.** Unlike 3.5 players who might attack too early, a 4.0 player patiently waits for the right moment to speed up the ball and put the point away.
- **The third shot is crucial.** A 4.0 player uses a more controlled and thoughtful third shot to take control of the rally.
- **Get to the kitchen.** The third shot is no longer just about getting the ball over the net; it's about executing a shot that allows you and your partner to move safely to the kitchen line.
- **Minimize unforced errors.** A 4.0 player is consistently more reliable. While mistakes still happen, a 4.0 player can handle rallies of 20 to 30 shots or more without making an easy mistake.

In closing, develop your skills but remember to play for fun—ignore the doctor's orders and 'keep dinking'!

—Tarun Anand

Wellness – Fomites

Unfortunately, my phone has taken on the role of dominion over me. When I wake up in the morning the first thing I want to do is pick up my phone, right after racing to the bathroom of course. (Well, I don't actually *race* to the bathroom because I can't seem to *race* anywhere at this point in my life.) Let me just say that I've known for a long time that my phone was ruling too much of my life, even when it comes to acquiring various contagious diseases. You see, our phones, like many things around us, are **fomites**.

Oxford Languages defines fomites as "Objects or materials that are likely to carry infection, such as clothes, utensils, and furniture." That's a very short list of objects in my opinion, but when you're writing dictionary entries, space is limited. Nevertheless, when you think about where cell phones go, they need to be at the top of the list when it comes to fomite status.

I never knew the word *fomite* until I went to nursing school. Learning about it changed how I looked at everything around me. Think of a public restroom in a gas station on, say, Interstate 40 in a desert town of 357 people with the wind blowing dust and sand all over. The gas is cheap, so the station is busy and so is the bathroom. Just imagine the many unwashed hands that have touched that door handle? Boggles the mind, doesn't it?



To Your Health! Sharon Stewart RN, Wellness Coach, Sharon@SharonStewartRN.com

What about computer keyboards in a library, school, university, or workplace? Countless dirty hands have been pounding away on those keys leaving behind germs that are just waiting for you to come along and give them a ride to your immune system!

Things like adenovirus, which causes a variety of maladies, including respiratory infections, *E. coli*, and even strep can be transmitted via fomites. A lunch table at an elementary school is one giant fomite covered in partially eaten food, stray saliva, and dirty little hands. Kids set their half-eaten food on it, share it with their friends and—well, you get the idea. We won't even begin to go into the interiors of a hospital. Fomites are everywhere.

The key is staying aware of the fact that inanimate objects can carry disease. Keeping kitchens and bathrooms clean, along with giving your cell phone a daily **careful** bath with isopropyl alcohol is important too. However, we would have to clean nonstop (and who wants to do that?) to deal with fomites. The best solution is to refrain from touching your eyes and nose (easy portals for infection) and wash your hands with soap and water after using the restroom and before you eat to avoid picking up a contagion and spreading it to others. And now, if you'll excuse me, I think I heard a text message coming in on my decontaminated cell phone!

IN MEMORIAM

John Curie

With great sadness, we report the passing of John Curie.

John moved to Niguel Shores after his retirement as Partner with Price Waterhouse Coopers. He was an avid sailor and loved being near the ocean.

John is survived by his wife Linda, an active member of Niguel Shores, who joined him in all his adventures.

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Editor's Note: This is our final article in our series on the development of Niguel Shores home neighborhoods.

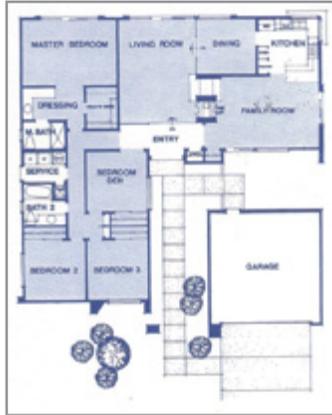
Niguel Shores Past, Present, Future

Niguel Shores consists of eight different neighborhoods built from 1969 through 1978. In 1969 a development of 15 tracts of land opened up and began what would eventually become Niguel Shores, with homes on 960 lots.

- The first development, the **Broadmoor Homes**, consisted of 67 homes, honoring their ocean setting by naming streets nautical terms.
- By 1971 a second development began in two phases to become 144 one-story **Garden Homes**.
- The next two developments quickly followed, situated closer to the ocean. The first of these was the **Custom Homes**, consisting of 56 homes, on streets named for famed explorers and locales.
- Then, in the early 1970s, land was offered to individual owners with the right to commission their own designed home. This area became the 23 homes on **Breakers Isle**, each with a white water view.
- After that, vacant land for further building lay up the hill from the ocean, where the **Berkus Homes** were constructed from 1972 to 1973 and covered nine streets consisting of 105 one and two story detached homes.
- At the top of the hill was **Sea Terrace I**, consisting of 94 attached townhouses. A second development, **Sea Terrace II**, stretched across Selva Road and comprised 77 additional townhouses. completed in 1974.
- The last area to be developed was the **Villas**, also off Selva Road, up the hill from Sea Terrace II. The Villas, all single story homes, were built on 75 lots and were completed in 1978.

More than a half-century has passed since Niguel Shores' beginning. In those years much has changed—from a Monarch Beach address in the early days, to becoming a possible Laguna Niguel neighborhood later, and eventually to being part of the newly incorporated Dana Point in 1989. As time moved forward, the City of Dana Point expanded and modernized, and Niguel Shores evolved as well.

The designs and settings of the original neighborhoods reflected the styles and building codes of the 1970s. But



through the decades, nature and time left their mark. Foundations and sidings began to reflect the years of salt, wind and rain. As happens in any home, interiors needed refurbishing, fixtures required replacing, and the wear and tear of daily living called for a renewal. So, owners started to modernize, and homes changed in many ways—from different colors of paint, to roofs with fire resistant materials instead of wooden shake, to double-paned folding glass doors in place of small windows and walls, and to expanded floor plans consistent with new building codes and newer building materials.

Today, remodeling construction, both interior and exterior, dominates each of the original developments. Some homes have been torn down to the foundation and rebuilt. Others have focused on smaller projects like new roofs or an air conditioning unit. Fire retardant materials and modifications with trees and plants are

part of each remodel plan. Safer roofing and interior sprinkler systems build added protection. Better materials are available to aid rebuilding. With upgrades and improvements, the value of each home in the Shores has changed, climbing beyond six and seven figures in some cases.

Growing better and better over the years, Niguel Shores has become one of the most desirable locations on the Orange County coast. The community projects the vitality and vibrance of friendly neighbors, modernized homes, upgraded amenities, lovely greenbelts, and a grassy bluff above the beach. The roots run deep, from those who grew up here and are now watching their next generation share the Shores, to today's new homeowners planting roots of their own. The key to Niguel Shores appeal is the community-minded people who appreciate living here and strive to keep that closeness a part of our heritage.

Our homes may undergo change as time goes on,, but there always will remain what draws people here: access to a sunset or sunrise from the bluff just steps away; carts decorated for the 4th of July with the next generations tossing out candy; helping hands at fun activities throughout the year; and sharing in the well-being of this unique beauty known as Niguel Shores. Our community has aged well ... no one would ever guess that we've been here more than five decades, and we're well-primed to continue for many decades more!

—Susan Courtney



DANA POINT THIS MONTH

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS
Saturday, November 1
3 to 8 p.m.



La Plaza Park

A time to honor loved ones that have passed and celebrate their lives with ofrendas, live bands, mariachi, folklorico dancers, crafts, food, beverages, chalk art, and more! To apply for an ofrenda display, or for more information, contact the City's Recreation Division at (949) 248-3530 or recreation@danapoint.org. For this event, the Dana Point Trolley will run from

2 to 10 p.m. between the Dana Point Harbor Parking Structure and La Plaza Park. The first four hours for parking is **FREE** and each additional hour is \$6.

VETERANS DAY REMEMBRANCE
Tuesday, November 11
10 to 11 a.m.



Strands Vista Park

This service recognizes all Veterans for their service and sacrifice for America. For more information visit vfwpost9934.org.

SENIOR THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON
Saturday, November 22
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.



Dana Point Community Center

Monarch Beach Sunrise Rotary and the City of Dana Point sponsor this annual **FREE** luncheon for seniors featuring traditional Thanksgiving food and entertainment. To register, call the City of Dana Point Recreation Division at (949) 248-3530.

48TH ANNUAL DANA POINT TURKEY TROT

Thursday, November 27

7 to 11 a.m.

Dana Point Harbor

Run the Race Before You Stuff Your Face! Join us Thanksgiving Day for this USA Track & Field-certified event that offers a 5K, 10K, Combo 10K/5K, and Kids' 1-Mile Gobble Wobble.



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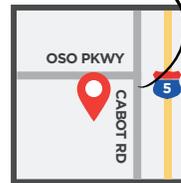
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HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

MARKET UPDATE



ACTIVE LISTINGS

The active listing inventory in the past couple of weeks decreased by 182 homes, down 4%, and now stands at 4,576. Last year, there were 3,666 homes on the market, 910 fewer homes, or 20% less.



DEMAND

Buyer demand, the number of pending sales over the prior month, increased by 18 homes, up 1%, and now stands at 1,609, its highest level since the end of March. Last year, there were 1,591 pending sales, 3% lower than today.



EXPECTED MARKET TIME

With inventory falling and demand rising, the Expected Market Time, the number of days to sell all Orange County listings at the current buying pace, decreased from 90 to 86 days in the past couple of weeks, its lowest level since June. Yet, it is still the highest end-of-September level since 2019. Last year, it was 71 days, slightly faster than today.



CLOSED SALES

There were 1,875 closed residential resales in August, nearly identical to August 2024's 1,877 sales, and down 3% from July 2025. The sales-to-list price ratio was 98.5% for Orange County. Foreclosures accounted for 0.2% of all closed sales, and short sales accounted for 0.1%. That means that 99.7% of all sales were sellers with equity.



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