March 2024

Published Monthly by Niguel Shores Community Association

Issue 603

FROM THE HELM

Retirement Announcement

A mong the updates I'd like to share this month, most notably is the decision on behalf of our **General Manager**, **Marla Miller**, to retire effective July 5, 2024. As a Board member I've had the distinct pleasure of working with Marla over the course of nearly two years. Let me tell you, her shoes will be difficult to fill. Marla has been at the helm for almost 11 years. During her tenure, Marla has kept a watchful eye on expenses, which I know we all appreciate, and has been a tremendous communication conduit for the Niguel Shores community at large.

In life, you always want to leave a position in a better situation from whence you started, and, in my opinion, Niguel Shores has definitely thrived under Marla's leadership. When my family moved to Niguel Shores over 23 years ago, I can recall a tag line that Niguel Shores was a 'hidden jewel.' Well, thanks to Marla and her management staff, 'hidden' is no longer the proper descriptor. We *are* the 'jewel' of South Orange County.

While we'll certainly miss Marla, retirement will undoubtedly unfold many exciting new and exciting adventures for her. **Marla, thank you** for all that you have contributed.

The Board of Directors will be engaging in an aggressive search to find Niguel Shore's next General Manager. We've identified qualified third party search firms to assist

us in our search, and it's our hope that in short fashion we'll identify strong candidates to fill the General Manager role following Marla's retirement.

Proposed Apartment Development—At the February Board General Session Meeting, the topic of the adjacent, neighboring Monarch Villas Project surfaced during the Public Forum segment. While this project lies outside the confines of Niguel Shores, there will be potential 'impact' concerns and questions our residents may have for the developer and the City. Our management has posted a link to the project on the Niguel Shores website *niguelshores*. org and also an information update on Page 3 of this issue. We will continue to post updates as we learn of them. I would encourage you to stay informed and educate yourself on the project per the link provided by the project development team as well as staying tuned into updates at the City of Dana Point.

Amenities Progressing Forward—Despite the torrential rainstorms we've encountered, the Recreation Amenities Project forges ahead. The sports court, bocci courts and playground are starting to really take shape. The additional installed drainage will serve us well in the future. At 'press time' more storms lie in the forecast and we'll do our best to work with, and around, Mother Nature.

—Jim Cobb





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64,796

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2024 Annual Meeting and Election Dates

please be prepared to attend Meet the Candidates Night, which will be scheduled in April in the Clubhouse. You will be able to ask questions of the candidates running for the NSCA Board. If you have questions for the candidates, please complete the questionnaire form in advance and email it to me at mmiller@niguelshores.org. The questionnaire form can be found on the website niguelshores.org. We have scheduled Meet the Candidates Night close to the mailing of the ballots so everyone can hear what the candidates have to say and be prepared to vote.

The NSCA Annual Meeting is scheduled to be held in the Clubhouse on Tuesday, May 21 with registration beginning at 5:00 p.m. and the meeting starting at 6:00 p.m.

Candidate Submissions—We have five (5) individuals that submitted forms and wish to run for the three (3) open positions on the Board of Directors. We have received completed nomination forms and the following members of the Association are running for the Board of Directors during the May 2024 Election:

- Bob Berkery
- Doug Robinson
- Rick Palmer
- Sandi Stauffer
- Brian Porter

Bicycle Safety—There are lots of electric bikes (eBikes) throughout the community, and I am happy to see people out and enjoying themselves. However, with everything that is fun there is a factor of safety that we all must respect. These bikes go fast and should always be ridden with safety in mind. Everyone, please wear a helmet and watch for vehicles and pedestrians. Use caution when entering the gates and remember that the gate arm comes down after each entry. I have seen many near misses in which a bicycle rider almost gets hit in the head with the gate arm. As a final note, please do not ride these bikes through the parks on the sidewalks. Sidewalks are reserved for walkers in the community and not for bikes. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Smile! You Are on Niguel Shores Video (and Audio) Cameras—We have High Definition cameras at various locations throughout the community. They are located around the pool and spa area, office parking lot, gate entrances, beach bluff, along the bridge, at the gatehouse and in the office. In addition to the cameras, there is audio recording at the gatehouse and in the office. These recordings have been very beneficial in various situations. We also have signs posted both at the gatehouse and in the office stating that video/audio surveillance is in process.

Dogs at Bluff-We all love our pets and want them to enjoy the outdoors, but remember the Bluff is not a dog park. Keep dogs on a leash.

Lock Up—Although this is a beautiful community, with gates and patrol service, that does not mean you can leave your cars and doors unlocked. It is surprising how many people believe that because this is a gated community no one can enter unless they live here or are called in by someone that lives here. This is simply not true. Several of our gates are opened by cars, and people walk in all the time. I have also watched people hop the block wall along Stonehill and not where the gate is located. I have seen surfers push their board under, then slide under the gate at Cabrillo. This all happens frequently.

Remember that you are your own best protection. Lock the doors in your home and cars and do not leave items in your car that are visible to someone else. If you see someone that you believe does not belong in the community, notify the police.

Please feel free to call or email me any time with questions or contact the Association staff. We will be happy to help you. HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY AND WELCOME SPRING! -Marla Miller

UPDATE: PROPOSED APARTMENT COMMUNITY ON NIGUEL ROAD

On January 31, 2024 a revised preliminary application was submitted to the City of Dana Point for construction of 708 apartment units at Niguel Road and Mariner Drive, in the spot where the current Monarch Villas apartments are located now.

Proposed plans on the developer's website show buildings 45 to 90 feet high (8 stories) with an additional rooftop amenity in the highest building. This is much higher density and several stories taller than the developer originally presented when explaining the project to our community.

The next step in the approval process is for the developer to

deliver a formal entitlement application to the City by June 29, 2024, and then the City will commence an environmental review. There will be public hearings before the Dana Point Planning Commission prior to any approval. No date has been set for this, but likely to be in early to mid 2025.

To **inform yourself** about the proposed plans and exterior renderings, visit the developer's website at imaginembvillas.com. If you wish to make your voice heard at the City level, contact Dana Point Community Development Director Brenda Wisneski at BWisneski@DanaPoint.org.

BOARD ACTION SUMMARY AVAILABLE ONLINE

See the Niguel Shores website at niguelshores.org for a summary of the February 21, 2024 Board of Directors General Session and Executive Session Meeting. Board Actions are posted soon after the meeting. The next Board Meeting is scheduled for the 2nd WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M.

ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

Roofs and Roof Colors—Due to the continuing volume of remodel and construction projects in Niguel Shores, our attention has been drawn to the impact roof colors have on neighboring homes. Shake shingle, asphalt and asphalt composite roof materials are no longer permitted for safety reasons, and the height of new house roofs are limited to protect existing views.

However, the color and finish of a roof can dramatically impact surrounding homes and homes above your project in our terraced community by causing uncomfortable glare and even unwanted heat. Flat roofs may be covered with gravel or non-reflective synthetic material. For pitched roofs, clay, concrete and dark colored metal or simulated wood material may be used. White or light grey colors are not permitted in any circumstance. Silicone, commercial grade material and similar materials cannot be used because they can also cause intense reflection. Metal roofs are required to have a matte finish and a minimal Light Reflective Value (LRV) rating. The Architecture Committee will only approve an LRV of 15 or less.

If you have questions about this or any aspect of your construction project, please don't hesitate to contact Karen Decker, Architectural Manager, in the Association Office at (949) 493 0122.

—Mike Stively

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

Call for Niguel Shores Photos and Memories-Do you have something to share about "the past" in Niguel Shores? The Communication Committee hopes to expand the history of Niguel Shores that appears on our community website. You can help us compile a more complete Story of Niguel Shores with your pictures and memories from all our five decades as a community.

If you would like to take part, please share some of your photos and memories that show how Niguel Shores has grown and changed since its beginnings in the 1970s. You will be contributing to a valuable community resource. Some newer residents may have never heard about the Sunday potluck dinners, the babysitting club, the square dances, the volleyball games, the macrame workshops, the kids' camp, the ballet lessons, watercolor classes, or the dozens of other activities that once were popular here in the Shores.

Were you here before the new community center was built? Maybe you were on the swim team, or in the exercise group, or you competed in one of our early tennis tournaments. Perhaps you remember the dirt path from the bluff to the beach, or you built a sandcastle for a 4th of July competition.

Send to Us—Whatever photos or memories you have from the 1970s, 80s, 90s, or 2000s we hope you will share them. Whatever you send us, we can use it!

If you submit something, remember to add your name, address, and phone so we can get in touch for more information, or return items to you.

- **Photos:** Send to seashorenews@hotmail.com. Digital pictures are preferred in JPEG or PNG format. For older prints, we do not need your actual original photo. If you only have a print copy, you can simply take a picture of it and send that picture to us. If that won't work, drop off the photo in the office addressed to Seashore News and we will scan and return it to you.
- Written Thoughts: Send an email to seashorenews@ hotmail.com or drop off written notes in the office addressed to Seashore News.
- Brochures or Flyers: Drop off items in the office addressed to Seashore News. We will return these to you.

Need Help?

If you cannot send items by email or drop off in the office, please leave a message at (949) 218-6488 and someone from the Communication Committee will reach out to you. Thank you for your help in preserving our history!

—Communication Committee

RECREATION COMMITTEE

Be on the lookout for upcoming events here in Niguel Shores brought to you by the Recreation Committee.

Events for March:

St. Paddy's Party - Sunday, March 17, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. It's your lucky day! Get your Irish on and join us for corned beef sandwiches, potato salad, and Irish tunes in the Clubhouse and patio. Bring your own beverages to enjoy, water provided.

—Recreation Committee

SEA TERRACE II HOMEOWNERS

Ready to Volunteer?

Sea Terrace II is looking for a few volunteers to run for Board positions in 2024/2025.

If interested or have questions, contact Erica at (310) 880-0051 or Jeannie at (773) 241-4705 by March 16. Elections will be held in April, with an Annual Meeting in May.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

RECREATION AMENITIES ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

Spring is almost in the air, and we are elated to be wrapping up the Amenities project. While we love rain, it has caused some recent delays. The playground equipment has been installed and we hope the new surface will be poured by March 1.

Despite the rains, the sports court, bocce courts and picnic area should be nearing completion. The grass area

Bocce and sport courts ready for artificial turf and tiles.

will be seeded once all the work is complete and will be accessible 90 days after the initial seeding. Look for announcements for our upcoming celebration once the grass is ready to enjoy.

Thank you again for your patience as we near completion. If you have questions related to this project, please email NSAmenities@gmail.com.

Happy March!

—Debi Berk



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WOMEN'S CLUB

The Niguel Shores Women's Club welcomed guest speaker Katrina Foley, Orange County Supervisor, at their February meeting. Supervisor Foley updated attendees on issues facing the County and ways in which the issues are being addressed. She shared information and timelines for the revetment project at Strands Beach and the Harbor Revitalization Project. The revetment project will begin in February and be completed in May. When completed, the beach will have a digital coastline monitoring system to collect data on beach conditions and erosion. In addition to restoring the revetment and importing larger rock and sand, the stairs and ramps will be repaired to enable safer beach access. More information about the revetment project can be found on niguelshores.org. Construction on the Harbor Revitalization Project has begun and is expected to conclude in 2028. In addition, construction is beginning at the Dana Point Library, which is undergoing a facelift, drainage improvements, and modernization of technology. Supervisor Foley encourages her constituents to visit her website d5.ocgov.com/ to stay updated and informed about our district.

This month, the Women's Club will be welcoming Niguel Shores residents Mary and Dan Solomon to speak at the luncheon meeting on March 14. The Solomons will share their passion for art and philanthropy, as well as their many collections of fine art and photographs.

The Annual Fashion Show will be held on April 11. Marnie Olia and Cathy Burgner are planning the event County Supervisor Katrina Foley (center) at **February** luncheon.





Cheers! Members at Five Vines Outside Activity in February.

themed "Fashion by the Sea." Members, remember to purchase your tickets to enjoy a delicious box lunch and to see our very own Women's Club models shine on the runway! Purchase your ticket at the March meeting or at the NSCA office for \$25 before it sells out!

-Karey Palmer

Women's Club Outside Activity

EVENT: Join us for an **Ocean View Breakfast** at Fisherman's Restaurant in San Clemente!

Then, after breakfast, pick your path and choose to join those who want to:

- Walk to the end of the pier and back (½ mile round trip)
- Walk or drive to the shopping district on Del Mar (1 mile round trip)
- Drive to the Outlet Mall
- Hike the Beach Trail any distance and turn back when you choose (up to 5 miles round trip)
- Stay longer for Bloody Mary's or Mimosas

DATE & TIME: Thursday, March 21– Our Reservation is at 9:30 a.m.

WHERE: Fisherman's Restaurant on the San Clemente Pier

COST: Breakfast ranges from \$11 to \$25

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: Please reserve your seat by signing up at the Women's Club March Luncheon or by emailing Jennifer at 4jennyrose@ gmail.com or Gunjan at tarlav@yahoo.com no later than Monday, March 18. Niquel Shores Women's Club presents

Fashion by the Sea

Thursday, April 11 12:00 Noon Niquel Shores Clubhouse

\$25 per registration (cash or check)

Member Registration — March 1 thru March 24

Guest Registration (based on availability) — March 25 thru March 29

Members, check your email for registration information and lunch options.

> You do not want to miss this fabulous event!



MEN'S CLUB

The Men's Club's second meeting of 2024 took place as scheduled at 0800h on February's first Tuesday, the 6th. After a fine breakfast prepped and served by the gastronome extraordinaire team **Roberts/Wall**, those assembled got down to business.

Club VP John Yocca chaired the meeting. John began by introducing a new member, Steve Michaud of Hobart Bay. Steve stated that he and his two pups are happy to be full time residents Niguel Shores. Welcome Steve. VP Yocca then took a moment to recognize the recent passing of long time member Boyd Van Ness who will be remembered fondly by all.

Yocca reminded us we are in the process of surveying our membership regarding the Men's Club annual scholarship awards. We are using a web tool, **Survey Monkey**, for the first time. We hope to maximize input from the member-

ship on the scholarship topic. The survey results will guide us in our 2024 scholarship awards. John also mentioned the discussions and team meetings going on regarding possible changes to our Club's meeting content and scheduling practices for the balance of 2024. Stay tuned for details.

Club Treasurer **Eric Eckes** took the floor next. Eric provided a brief but detailed presentation on the Club's 2023 year-end financial standing. He distributed a 2023 balance sheet that indicated the Club's financial status is strong. It would be better with more members. Eric explained the Club's membership had declined somewhat in the COVID 19 era, and is still in recovery mode. Perhaps a re-design of meeting times and content will help us achieve that goal of increased membership.

The balance of the hour featured a unique presentation by **Andrea Esty**, an Orange County resident active with **UkrainianChildren.org**. Andrea was with us in our meeting room, while **Elena Aleksandrova** joined us live via Zoom from the war zone in Nikopol, Ukraine. The two speakers made a powerful presentation in behalf of the









Mary and Dan Solomon speak at the Men's Club about their experiences enjoying, collecting, and donating art.

suffering people in Ukraine, with special emphasis on a program to help replace thousands of broken windows in the sub-zero temperature of Nikopol. They described an active and ongoing program to provide this practical and life saving project. They need all the support they can get. Go to PROJECT WINDOWS at *ukrainianchildren.org*. Read about their efforts. Chip in a few bucks.

At our "Third Tuesday" meeting in February, we enjoyed a fine breakfast and heard from long time Shores residents **Dan and Mary Solomon**, who spoke about "The Art of Collecting." The Solomons are widely recognized and published experts on this topic, with their art donations displayed at the National Gallery of Art, the Getty Museum, and other significant galleries.

If you are not yet a member of the Niguel Shores Men's Club, there is no time like the present.

We meet on the first and third Tuesday of each month. We always have a guest speaker of interest. Good eats too. Come check us out.

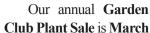
—Tim Moore

GARDEN CLUB

Our next meeting is **Monday, March 18,** from **11:00** to **12:30,** in the **Niguel Shores Clubhouse.** Our speaker, **Cassie Jarold-Jones** of **Wildflower Florist**, will speak on **Flower Arranging**. Her floral creations will be raffled off to meeting attendees.

The art of flower arrangement dates back to Ancient Egypt (2,500 BCE), and has gradually evolved over time. Egyptians regularly placed cut flowers in vases, and made arrangements for burials, processions, and table decorations. The Greeks and Romans also used flowers, not often in vases, but instead in garlands and wreaths. Ancient China, as early as 207 BCE, used flower arrangements as integral to religious teaching and medicine. Flower arranging arrived in Europe around 1000 CE, and was particularly popular in churches and monasteries. The crusaders brought back new and interesting plants from the Middle East, which Europeans began experimenting with. Floral design in Europe started in Italy, and grew across the continent. Depending on the time period, arrangements were formal and symmetrical to asymmetrical with no definite style, looking almost unplanned. In the Americas, early Colonial arrangements were created with wildflowers, grasses, and seed pods, then evolved to reflect, primarily, the European ideals of the time.

Last month, our speaker **Kathy Monge**, an Orange County Rose Society master rosarian, was very informative and covered the basics of rose selection, planting, fertilizing, pruning, and pest management.





February Rose Presentation

23, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon in the Niguel Shores Clubhouse. Everyone is welcome to come to this popular fundraising event and browse the extensive array of plants and garden supplies for sale.

The Garden Club continues to **welcome new members**. Membership is open to all residents of Niguel Shores. You do not need to be a gardening expert to join. Our meetings are varied and may comprise a speaker, workshop, garden-related projects or a field trip. Refreshments are served at each meeting. Dues are \$20 per person per year, and \$5 per guest visit. Sign-up forms are in the Niguel Shores office. Please contact **Sandi Stauffer** at *sandistauffer@comcast.net* with any questions. We hope that you will join us.

—Judi Palladino

GARDEN CLUB PLANT SALE

SATURDAY, MARCH 23

9 a.m. to 12 noon—Niguel Shores Clubhouse

Come and see the beautiful plants from our sponsoring local nurseries:



Dana Point Nursery
Harvest Landscaping
Plant Depot
Seaside Nursery
Laguna Beach Nursery



You'll find plants and cuttings from our members' gardens, plus other garden-related items, too. Everyone is welcome to attend.

We accept payment in cash and by credit card.

This is our club's major fundraiser! Plant Sale proceeds will be used for: Horticultural Academic Scholarships, Penny Pines Reforestation Program Non-Profit Conservation-Focused Organizations

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

arbara and Dr. Gary Ward had been looking for a part time home near their son, **Brian**, and his family for several years. Since their daughter-in-law, Sari, is a local realtor, she called them in Oregon immediately when she found the "perfect home" for them on Capstan Drive. Sari suggested they fly down right away and check it out. They concurred

that the home "checked all the boxes," and they purchased the property in September of 2019. They had only used the house for two weeks in October when the COVID 19 shutdown occurred in 2020. Fortunately their son and his family made use of the house as a getaway while many were sheltering and working from home. Post COVID, Barbara and Gary now feel very fortunate to have chosen Niguel Shores as their second home. They appreciate so many things about our community, including having met "wonderful, kind, inviting people with vast life experiences and great senses of humor."





The Wards met in Portland,

Oregon at the Portland Veterans Administration Hospital where Barbara was working as a Ward Administrator on the post trauma rehabilitation unit for patients with spinal cord injuries, strokes, severe head injuries, and other serious problems. Gary was making rounds when he noticed Barbara did not have a candy jar on her desk as there were on other floors. When he asked her about the absence of a candy jar, a very sweet romance began, and they have been married for forty-eight years.

Gary is a native of St. Louis Park, Minnesota and attended the University of Minnesota, where he finished his graduate work in Microbiology and attended the University of Minnesota Medical School. "He moved to Portland to complete his residency in Neurology and Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation through the Oregon Health and Sciences University in conjunction with the Portland Veteran's Administration Hospital and Good Samaritan Hospital/Rehabilitation Institute of Oregon (RIO). Post Residency, Gary joined Rehabilitation Medicine Associates (RMA) where he specialized in Neurological Rehabilitation (stroke, traumatic head injuries, electrodiagnosis, spine and spinal cord injuries); as well as Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation (motor vehicle accidents, on-the-job injuries, sports injuries.)" Dr. Ward has developed stroke programs and spine programs still in current use today. He is now retired from RMA, but remains active doing medical evaluations for hospital systems, insurers and attorneys.

Barbara is a native Oregonian. She graduated from Portland State University with a biology major and chemistry minor. However, her passion was in the Arts which she would later pursue. While in school, she volunteered as the buyer, bookkeeper and display designer for the RIO Women's Guild which supplements insurance for patients and provides outings for in-patients. In 1982, Barbara started her Portland interior design firm, Nan Welling Ward Interior Design, where she continues to use her talents, but these days more on a part-time basis.

Their son, Brian, attended Jesuit High School in Port-



land and graduated from Santa Clara University with a degree in marketing with minors in international business and Japanese, later receiving his MBA in management at Santa Clara. "He is a former corporate executive that recently started a micro private equity firm that acquires exceptional small businesses in Southern California." Their daughter-in-law, Sari, is a realtor with Sari Ward and Team and is in the top 50 ranked agents in Orange County. Barbara and

Gary have two grandsons. Pierce, age 15, attended St. Anne School and is presently at Santa Margarita Catholic **High School** and is on the water polo team. **Beckett** attends St. Anne School and plays Lacrosse. Barbara and Gary love the fact that their grandsons are nearby and can spend time with them here in the Shores.

When asked what they enjoy about Niguel Shores, they readily share that they like walking the trails, oftentimes with their son's English bulldog, Hoagie. They take advantage of the amenities here with their family and frequent the great restaurants nearby. After experiencing our July 4th activities, they decided to participate in the parade, and their entire family had such fun decorating their golf cart. As first time participants, they were pleasantly surprised to win the Second Place trophy in the "Most Patriotic" category.

The Wards participate in several Niguel Shores activities, including Water Aerobics, where they say, "We have met warm, friendly people, both men and women, interested in staying fit. We have also learned where the good restaurants are and what people are reading and what is new to watch on streaming through this group." (See page 9 of this issue for Gary's informative article on the benefits of water aerobics.) Gary is a member of the Men's Club and enjoys their meetings and speakers. Barbara recently joined the Women's Club and the Garden Club, and also plays **Pickleball** three times a week.

Welcome to our community, Barbara and Gary. We hope you'll spend more and more time here enjoying the good life that Niguel Shores has to offer, along with the amenities of beautiful Dana Point!

-Michelle Ralph





APPLAUSEFOR A GOOD CAUSE

On February 14, the women of **Vera's Sanctuary** were embraced with an outpouring of affection and support at a **Valentine's Day Brunch**. Niguel Shores resi-

dent **Heather Harding** and a team of volunteers transformed the sanctuary's outdoor space into a field of red, white and pink filled with hearts, teddy bears and gnomes to create an atmosphere brimming with love and joy.

The goal of the brunch was to impress upon these incredible women—survivors of human trafficking—that they have the support of our community. The dedicated staff and volunteers at Vera's surround and protect these ladies as they rebuild their lives.

Each of the women received a commemorative butterfly bracelet, donated by volunteers, as a reminder they never have to return to the darkness of their past—they are forever liberated. The smiles on their faces added an extra touch of magic to the day.

The **Niguel Shores Garden Club** has supported Vera's Sanctuary for several years by donating funds from the **Garden Club Annual Plant Sale**, which will be held again this month.

Local volunteers teach Sanctuary residents how to garden, and have created **Vera's Gardens**, an onsite oasis testifying to nature's beauty and resilience. The sustainable vegetable gardens are adorned with bird feeders, fountains, winding paths, California native plants, and a flourishing vegetable garden. Funded by the team that maintains it, situated atop the hillside, the gardens offer inspiring views of the valley from every vantage point.

Vera's Sanctuary stands as the only licensed residential drug treatment facility in Orange County offering solace and support to victims of human trafficking. Vera's commitment lies in the rehabilitation of these courageous women through therapeutic services and workforce retraining, paving their way toward a future filled with healing and success. The staff, including many women who are trafficking survivors and who have successfully completed the programs

at Vera's, echo a resounding message that hope and love possess the extraordinary power to heal and triumph.

Since inception, Vera's Sanctuary has provided rescue and rehabilitation to over 740 women. Once they complete













the programs at Vera's, they are further aided with transitional housing while maintaining access to ongoing support from Vera's, their forever family. With the support of groups like **Niguel Shores Garden Club**, and the help of volunteers, Vera's hopes to continue its profound impact and save even more lives each year.

To learn more about Vera's Sanctuary and the upcoming annual fundraising event, **Hot August Nights**, we invite you to visit *theteenproject.com/han2024/*.

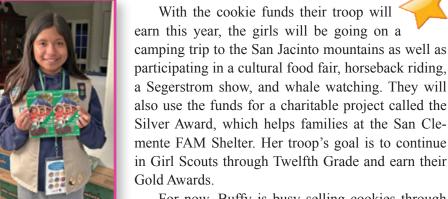
ccolades

IT'S GIRL SCOUT COOKIE TIME!

We want to acknowledge all our resident Girl Scouts for the work they do to support their troops. One of these is Buffy Hicks, a Shores resident who is currently selling Girl Scout Cookies right here in the neighborhood.

Buffy is in Seventh Grade at Johnson Academy and is a Girl Scout Cadette. Her troop, based at St. Anne School, has been together since they were in First Grade as Daisies. They are

active with charity work, cultural experiences, learning outdoor skills, building strong friendships, and of course, selling Girl Scout Cookies!



For now, Buffy is busy selling cookies through the end of March to anyone interested in buying a box.

She would be happy to deliver them to your house. You can contact her mom, Lainey, at (714) 612-8574. Accolades to Buffy for doing a great job supporting her troop.



Editor's Note: In August of 2022, Seashore News featured Emilia, who was then a seven-month-old puppy in training to be a service dog for someone with a disability. Now her Niguel Shores handler, Lorraine Campanaro, gives us an update.

Emilia, the black labrador/golden retriever mix from the Canine **Companions** organization, lived with our family on Capstan Drive from the time she was eight weeks old until she reached eighteen months old. Then, last May, Emilia returned to the **Oceanside Canine Companions Regional Center** to continue her training with professional trainers who taught her the skills needed to become a service dog.

Because Emilia had a high energy level and willingness to learn, she was put into a specialized Hearing Program to learn skills to help people who are hard of hearing.

In early December, Emilia was matched with Tony. After two weeks of intense training together, Emilia and Tony graduated from

the program on December 14, 2023. Tony took Emilia to her new forever home in Northern California, where she will assist him with daily tasks that relate to his hearing loss. She alerts him to his phone ringing or buzzing, the doorbell, his name being called, the smoke alarm, and other common sounds. Tony says he feels more comfortable in public having a service dog and Emilia gives him that security. She also provides him with endless hours of playing fetch and lots of cuddles and kisses.

Canine Companions is a nonprofit organization that provides service dogs free to people with disabilities. Their mission changes lives one dog at a time. Stay tuned for the next little bundle of cuteness coming this spring to Niguel Shores!

—Lorraine Campanaro







ACTIVITIES

BRIDGE

I dislike passwords, but due to hacking, we need them. In Bridge we have passwords that are essential between partners. These allow partners to make the best possible bid, but the other players probably know those passwords so they can make a higher bid or stop bidding. Bob French said



Bob French had a hot winning streak at Bridge, and also at the Men's Club Thursday afternoon poker game.

to a Thursday group of players, "You can't Bluff in Bridge." Well, with inexperienced players, you might get away with it, but in our Wednesday Bridge Group you probably wouldn't. I do have to say that we have some really interesting faces when partners return their partners' bids. Look around you next time.

Recent winners:

January 24: Bill Imbriale after a short dry spell came in first; Terry Liebman hit a home run for second; Bob and Betty French together, in a very loving manner, came in third.

January 31: Bob Ruben stepped up to bat with a first; Bob French and Glenda Wilson tied and split second and third place down the middle.

February 7: Bob French disliked playing second so this week came in first; followed closely by 40 points short Bill Imbriale for second; Patty Hollis upped her game to third.

February 14: Bob Ruben came in first again this month; the dynamic duo of Terry Liebman came in second while his wonderful wife Patti came in third.

Please remember to sign in for the following week's play, and remember we now start at 10:30 each Wednesday in the Clubhouse. If you are interested in playing, please call **Bob** or Betty French at (949) 312-2556 or visit us on Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m.

-Mike Oliva

PAGE TURNERS

This month, Page Turners Book Club members are reading author Geraldine Brooks' latest novel Horse. A review from the Boston Globe follows:

"Geraldine Brooks is one of our most gifted historical novelists ... Her pellucid prose, quiet vet compelling style, and facility with both nuanced historical detail and vibrant characterization have brought her critical acclaim ... Brooks is herself an ardent horsewoman, and her knowledge of and personal investment in the topic shine through Horse ... Anyone who grew up loving horses, anyone who dearly loves an animal, will find a cornucopia of riches in this novel ...

"One must admire the good intentions of Brooks's novel: its commitment to laying bare the horrors of racism, its insistence on animal intelligence, its anger at climate change and man's desire to control and exploit nature and animals. But the messaging feels at times heavy-handed ... The present-day story is satisfying in parts but unfortunately proportioned. The thrill of historical discovery, the painstaking way that animals are articulated, the detective work Jess and Theo do to uncover what happened to Lexington and the artist who captured him on canvas — Brooks brings all this to vivid and fascinating life ...

"By contrast, every scene and section with Jarrett is uncannily beautiful, wise, and true. His story, and the relationship between him and Lexington, are the heart of this novel and should have been its clear focus. Ambitious, well-meaning, and beautifully written in stretches, while labored or overwrought in others, *Horse* is an uneven offering by a great novelist."

Page Turners consists of three groups of approximately ten members each. One group meets the fourth Monday afternoon of the month and the other two groups meet, separately, the fourth Thursday afternoon. If you are thinking about joining a book club, please feel free to contact me at fozimec@cox.net.

—Frances Ozimec

GERALDINE

POINT THIS MONTH DANA

FARMERS MARKET AND CRAFT VENDORS

Saturdays March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 9 a.m. to 1 p.m—La Plaza Park

53RD ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF WHALES

Weekend of March 1-3

Dana Point Harbor

Parade: Saturday, March 2 starting at 10 a.m. Celebrate this iconic Dana Point tradition featuring giant floats, marching bands, school groups, nonprofit organizations, and military units.

Concert: Sunday, March 3 starting at 12:00 noon. Bring beach chairs and blankets for an afternoon of music, food, and spirits at Baby Beach,

Parking and Trolley: Park free at most Dana Point Harbor lots. Doheny Beach hourly and day parking passes available at automated payment kiosks. Visit dptrolley.com for trolley information.

Questions: Email recreation@danapEmoint.org or see festivalofwhales.com.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY HABITATS

Build habitats in Dana Point parks and learn how to create your own at home. Water, tools, and snacks provided.

9 a.m. to 12 noon.

- Lantern Bay Park: March 9
- Creekside Park: March 17
- Sea Canyon Park: March 23

EASTER EGG HUNTS

Hunt for hidden treasures of candy and plastic eggs

of goodies for children age 10 and under. Bring an empty basket to collect the candy and eggs.

Saturday, March 30

Easter Bunny visits from 9 to 10 a.m. Egg Hunts start at 10 a.m.

• Pines Park

Sea Canvon Park

Pancake breakfast available at both locations from 8 to 11 a.m. with proceeds benefiting Monarch Beach Sunrise Rotary's charitable efforts



SPORTS

TENNIS

This month the eyes of tennis are on the BNP Paribus Open, celebrating 50 years of tennis in California's Coachella Valley.



Indian Wells Tennis Garden in 2024

The BNP Paribas Open is an annual tennis tournament usually held in early and mid-March at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden. The tournament is a Masters 1000 event on the men's tour and a WTA 1000 event on the women's.

The tournament was founded by former tennis pros Charlie Pasarell and Raymond Moore. It has had many names, as shown below.

Previous Men's Tournament Names

- The American Airlines Tennis Games (1974–1978),
- The Congoleum Classic (1979-1980, 1982-1984),
- The Grand Marnier/ATP Tennis Games (1981),
- The Pilot Pen Classic (1985–1987),
- The Newsweek Champions Cup (1988–1999),
- The Tennis Master's Series Indian Wells (2000–2001)
- The Pacific Life Open (2002–2008).

Previous Women's Tournament Names

- The Virginia Slims of Indian Wells (1989–1990),
- The Virginia Slims of Palm Springs (1991),
- The Matrix Essentials Evert Cup (1992–1993),
- The Evert Cup (1994, 1999),
- The State Farm Evert Cup (1995–1998) in honor of Chris Evert.
- The Tennis Master's Series (2000–2001)
- The Pacific Life Open (2002–2008)

In 2009, the tournament and the Indian Wells Tennis Garden were sold to Oracle founder Larry Ellison. The BNP Paribas Open has become one of the largest events on both the men's and women's tours. Dubbed the "Grand Slam of the West," it is the most-attended tennis tournament in the world other than the four majors.

Penni and I are planning to attend this year. Perhaps we'll see you there. "Keep your racquets moving and live life, happy, wild and free."

—Don and Penni

PICKLEBALL

Thank You and Welcome Aboard—The Niguel Shores Pickleball Committee is having a changing of the guard. We thank outgoing committee members Art Staudenbaur and Jenny Rose for their work to make pickleball a fun and welcoming sport here in the Shores. We welcome Gigi McDonald and Barb Barber who are joining Susie Smith,







(top left) Bob Hochstader gives tips at the pickleball clinic. (above) New pickleball seating area. (left) Join our happy group!

Bob Hochstadter and Chris Horpel on the committee going forward.

New Seating Area Completed—We now have a brandnew seating and socializing area safely tucked away from the play on our courts. Similar to a dugout, the area is complete with four benches, wind and sun screens, and enough room to access the courts with ease. The Recreation Amenities Committee asked all the right questions and addressed our pickleball needs to perfection!

Pickleball Clinic—One of our Niguel Shores picklers, Bob Hochstadter, former long-time tennis pro at Nellie Gail Tennis Ranch, volunteered to conduct two pickleball clinics in January – one for beginners and the other for intermediate players. Both clinics filled up quickly and helped grow the sport in Niguel Shores. Kudos, Bob!

Brotherly Love-My brother Tony, introduced me to pickleball six years ago when he was playing in Spokane, and I finally joined a game when I went up there to my niece's wedding. Tony has since moved to Costa Rica and started both locals and expats playing the sport. He even organizes tours for visitors to Costa Rica who wish to play pickleball as they see the sights.

In 2019, when my wife Sandi and I moved to Niguel Shores, we soon noticed people taping temporary pickleball lines on one of the tennis courts. I got Sandi to try the game and then we were both hooked! Now, five years later, Niguel Shores has one of the best set-ups in the area. Permanent nets and lines, a great seating area, lots of players (about 180 on our email list) and monthly Happy Hour socials at the clubhouse when the weather is warm.

Join Us—Pickleball is a lot easier than tennis and a little harder than ping pong. Come on off the sidelines and give it a try. Everyone is welcome! Send your name and email to niguelshores.pb@gmail.com to receive our pickleball emails.

—Chris Horpel

SPORTS continued on page 16

Wellness - Down Syndrome

ou want to go to Scotland with me?" he asked. "To visit the Armstrong Clan?"

"Sounds good," I said. "We can dig into their history."
He smiled with delight. "Good! How long will we be gone?" And so it went. A conversation many years ago with my brother-in-law, **Bruce**, a young man with **Down Syndrome**. Scotland and Abraham Lincoln were his two

favorite subjects to discuss, at length, with anyone with whom he felt comfortable, and evidently that was me! He was an impressive storehouse of details about Scotland and his family's Scottish heritage as well as mine. Bruce and I never went physi-



cally to Scotland, but we visited there many times in conversation. Usually the same places and the same stories, but each filled with his childlike hope that soon we would board that plane and embark on the trip of a lifetime.

Down Syndrome is not uncommon in the United States. According to the CDC it occurs once in every 707 births. We humans are born with 46 chromosomes that carry our genetic material, but with Down's there's an extra copy of chromosome 21. When an extra chromosome happens, it's called "trisomy," which is why the Down's condition is called Trisomy 21. It represents 95% of all Down's cases. For more information, here's a helpful link from the CDC: bit.ly/49BYyuR

Due to the common occurrence of Down Syndrome and also the increased awareness of the benefits of early intervention and mainstreaming, most of us know someone, have seen someone, or have worked with someone with Down's. They are wonderful additions to our society and culture, and are open to education and many

kinds of employment. Upbeat and ready to help, they're eager to assist wherever they may be.

Raising a Down Syndrome child, or any child with a disability, is a journey that

many of us may not have experienced, leaving us unable to understand or empathize with those families' daily challenges. Right here in Niguel Shores there are families who have raised or are raising children with a wide range of special needs requiring courage, wisdom, and love in order to provide an environment for them to thrive. Our neighbor, Dot Wall is one of those who inspired me to write this month

about Down's. She and her husband Gary, along with their other children, have a beautiful story of their love and determination to make a rich life for their son which speaks to the challenges, growth, and joys of raising a Down's baby to adulthood.

Dot's story on the following page in this newsletter reminds us of the power of love to transform a daunting challenge into a rewarding beautiful life. A job well done!

World Down Syndrome Day on March 21 is a time to educate and raise awareness of Down's. To learn more, see worlddownsyndromeday.org/ Also—and this is exciting—Dot will present the story of raising her remarkable son at the Dear Mom Conference in Laguna Beach on April 13. For information, visit dearmomco.com/conference and also see dear-mom.betterworld.org/events/ to learn about the 3rd Annual Awareness Ride and Lunch featuring adults with Down Syndrome. If you would like to donate locally here's a link to the Down Syndrome Association of Orange County for their World Down Syndrome Day fundraiser: classy.org/give/560810/#!/donation/checkout

As we go through our days and notice someone who is just a little different, but enjoying the gift of life while helping others, let's stop, take a deep breath, and say, "Thank you." Thank you for differences in our world, and thank you for the opportunity to embrace and love those differences that make our lives and our community all the richer.

—Sharon Stewart

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

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY — ONE FAMILY'S STORY

On August 11, 1982, I gave birth to our second son, Creighton. He looked just like his big brother who was 22 months older, except right away I knew things were different. He was not able to nurse and he barely opened his eyes.

I was in and out of the doctor's office twice a week with no answers. Finally, three months after our son's birth, the doctor called to ask if he could come over to our home. I hung up the phone and felt like I had been stabbed. The doctor joined us in person and confirmed the news I already knew in my heart ... that our son had Down Syndrome.

My husband embraced the news very positively where I, on the other hand, thought my world was shattered. I did everything possible to stimulate our baby, to the point of making us all crazy. However, one day out of the blue, God spoke to me and said, "Just love your baby!"

At that point, I decided to discard anything negative and only focus on the positive. I surrounded myself with people who were encouraging, loving and optimistic. You soon realize who to keep on the journey with you, and who you need to let go.

The early intervention teachers were my lifeline. They were upbeat and reassuring that our son was like us, was one of us. Together, our family decided we would grow better because of Creighton, not bitter.

We lived on a street with lots of children, and that was a benefit as he had others to play with along with a big brother and eventually a younger sister. I always commented, "He has one pulling him up and another one pushing him." They insisted he should do everything they did from sports to activities and entertainment—and for the most part he was right there with them, only moving at a slower pace.

I believe I overdid the stimulating part, because at age 4, Creighton was diagnosed with ADHD. This proved almost more difficult than the Down Syndrome. The specialist explained that the child knows his decisions might be the wrong choice, but doesn't have the brakes to stop doing the things he does. And, OH MY, the things he did! He was an escape artist, not only from our home, but from daycare, elementary school, or any confined situation. He could always find a way out!

He would crawl in bed with us in the mornings with ice cold feet. We figured out why, when our neighbor said, "You know it's sweet of Creighton to give us our newspaper early every day in his underwear with snow on the ground. But we're really not ready to get up at 5:30 in the morning!"

Creighton was a pioneer in our small Nebraska town. He was the first Down Syndrome person to enter regular kindergarten. In first grade, they said they probably couldn't afford an aide in the classroom, so I said, "Well,

then you'll get me." They did get an aide after all.

Please keep in mind, YOU are your child's best advocate.

Creighton's education was of most importance to me. Each spring I was already thinking about the next fall and who would be his teacher. I gave luncheons for the faculty and would hand deliver a letter to his new teacher stating all the wonderful things he was capable of, with a few bullet points at the bottom of what difficulty they might face with him. He had a behavior notebook that followed him to school each day, with consequences at home if he had a bad day at school. In twelfth grade, he demanded we take away the behavior notebook because he was, in fact, a senior! I'm happy to report that by his late 20s he did outgrow his ADHD too.

Creighton also passed his Nebraska driver's test and was granted an official driver's license. It had been on his IEP for years. When I called his brother in California with the good news, he said, "Mom, you're actually going to let him drive alone in a car?" My reply was, "Oh my goodness. I never really thought about that." However, Creighton actually did drive a sporty red Volkswagen Bug and got along fine. He loved driving around our town, and he would go extra slow.

Nine years ago, Creighton moved on his own from Nebraska to a group home in Laguna Beach to be closer to his brother and live his "California Dream." He has made an incredible life for himself, his social network is vibrant, and his days are never boring. The group home didn't prove to be a good fit for him. We missed him terribly and determined he still needed us, and we needed him. We ended up moving from Nebraska to California and haven't looked back.

Creighton has been employed at Trader Joe's for the past eight years. He is a valued and respected crew member who continues to get pay raises and positive reports. He loves his job, he loves all people, and so assumes they all love him! I wish we all could have that mindset. I can't tell you the countless lessons he has taught us. He is more loving, more forgiving, more accepting than any person I know.

Nowadays, Creighton continually says he's "living the dream." I feel like through all the twists, turns, and bumpy uncertain times, he's now living his best life.

Please don't measure yourself or your child against other families. Measure the growth within your own. The only way to measure the distance you've traveled is by measuring where you were back at the start.

Thank you for allowing me to share our story. I feel blessed to be a part of this extraordinary community.

—Dot Wall

WATER AEROBICS

Niguel Shores Water Aerobics Club, the **Dippy Dol-phins**, is a group of women and men with a variety of ages, shapes, sizes, and abilities. Sessions are held at the pool on **Monday, Wednesday** and **Friday from 9 to 10 a.m.** Swim attire can be anything from swimsuits to swim capris with tankinis, and might include rash guards, wetsuit jackets, water shoes, and water mitts if desired.

Water Aerobics is:

- Easy and safe
- Fun
- Low, minimal impact
- A whole body balanced workout
- Great exercise, but without the joint stress
- Good for osteoporosis, arthritis, and posture

Water Aerobics Does Improve:

- Heart health
- Strength, endurance, coordination, and flexibility

- Muscle soreness
- Joint health, range of motion, and pain

Water Aerobics Can Improve:

- Blood pressure
- Sleep
- Weight management
- Energy
- Muscle definition
- Mental health (stress,
- Recovery from injury
- anxiety, depression,
- Back pain and neck pain
- irritability, loneliness)

References:

- National Institutes of Health
- Mayo Clinic
- Harvard University
- Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago
- Rehabilitation Institute of Oregon (Legacy)

—Gary Ward, MD

CUISINE CORNER

Dining Out: Restaurant Week

Our editors asked for an article on the upcoming **Orange County Restaurant Week 2024.** The event's website gives the dates **March 3-9**, and a list of participating locations

from Santa Ana and Huntington Beach in the north, to San Clemente in the south. One might say it's an underwhelming list, perhaps available to any establishment paying to be included. Several have multiple locations because they're franchise operations. Not trying to sound like a foodie (which we are not) but Avila's El Ranchito, Blaze Pizza, Lucille's Smokehouse Bar-B-Que, Taco Mesa? And not to say we

haven't been there, but would a return to such places provide something unique and special?

There *are* several places worth a mention: AVEO Table + Bar at the Waldorf Monarch Beach, CUCINA Enoteca in Fashion Island and Irvine Spectrum, FLEMING's Prime Newport Beach, HABANA in Costa Mesa and Santa Ana, HARBORSIDE Restaurant Newport Beach, Il FORNAIO Irvine, SAPPHIRE and STARFISH, both in Laguna Beach. These are places we have enjoyed and to which we would return, if just to see if there was something special, even if only a new cocktail.

—Gary Tinnes

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NEIGHBORHOOD ADS

Monthly Newly Furnished Niguel Shores Rental. Updated, very clean one story 4BR/2BA garden home w/ remodeled pool & spa, A/C, fireplace. 1870 sq.ft. New large driveway & 2 car garage. Call Amy (949) 677-4131 for photos & more info.

SEASONAL RENTAL – Furnished, single-story Villas home. Available June 1st. Two month minimum. Retired single/couple preferred. Pet considered. Call (949) 234-8445.

FOR SALE: 1). Portable SPA – Sundance – 2021 and 2). Used ClubCar Golf Cart – 4 seat. Call Laurie @ (949) 395-7364.

BUNCO! Looking for people to join our Bunco group. We play the 4th Wednesday every month, 3-5pm, in the Clubhouse lobby. Interested? Contact Sandi Stauffer, text (253) 290-0471, email sandistauffer@comcast.net

March 1 is Down Syndrome Awareness month. March 21 World Down Syndrome Day. Support Creighton Wall by saving your plastic bottles and aluminum cans. My dad will help me pick them up! Call (308) 991-2079 or 23881 Taranto Bay drop off.

Ads for the Seashore News must be submitted by the 15th of the month. Include a check payable to NSCA, \$5 for a maximum of 30 words. Advertisers must fill out a form available at the Association office. Neither NSCA nor the Seashore News assumes responsibility or liability for quality of goods advertised.









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

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MARKET UPDATE





ACTIVE LISTINGS

The active listing inventory in the past couple of weeks increased by 42 homes, up 2%, and now sits at 1,942. It is the second-lowest initial February reading since tracking began in 2004, only behind 2022. In January, 35% fewer homes came on the market compared to the 3-year average before COVID, 1,072 less.



DEMAND

Demand, the number of pending sales over the prior month, soared higher by 280 pending sales in the past two weeks, up 28%, and now totals 1,290, still the lowest initial February reading since tracking began. Last year, there were 1,300 pending sales, 1% more than today. The 3-year average before COVID (2017 to 2019) was 2160, or 67% more.



EXPECTED MARKET TIME

With demand soaring compared to the smaller rise in supply, the Expected Market Time, the number of days to sell all Orange County listings at the current buying pace, plunged from 56 to 45 days in the past couple of weeks. It was 56 days last year, slower than today.



CLOSED SALES

There were 1,310 closed residential resales in December, down 6% compared to November 2022's 1,393. December marked an 8% drop compared to November 2023. The sales-to-list price ratio was 98.1% for all of Orange County. Foreclosures accounted for 0.1% of all closed sales.











Take Advantage of a Dynamic Market Today!

Whether you're looking to buy your dream home or sell at top dollar, the current trends present a unique window of opportunity.

Contact us now to start your journey with a trusted partner who can guide you through every step of the process. Let's make your real estate goals a reality in this thriving market!



Chris & Kathy Zoch

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☐ ☐

BEACH CURRENTS

REAL ESTATE REPORT FOR NIGUEL SHORES BY CONNIE MCKIBBAN

NIGUEL SHORES ~ 2024

- 2 Homes Currently on the Market Priced at \$2,100,000-\$11,995,000
- HOME CURRENTLY IN ESCROW PRICED AT \$3,198,000
- HOMES SOLD TO DATE PRICED AT \$2,225,000 \$6,700,000 The average sales price to date is \$4,462,000

🗼 DATA FROM MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE AS OF 2/15/2024 🗼

HOW IS THE REAL ESTATE MARKET?

MONARCH BEACH ~ 2024

- 28 Homes Currently on the Market Priced at \$1,580,000 \$55,000,000
- 5 Homes Currently in Escrow Priced at \$2,550,000 \$4,500,000
- Homes Sold to Date Priced at \$1,600,000 \$13,350,000

THE AVERAGE SALES PRICE TO DATE IS \$6,075,000

🙀 DATA FROM MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE AS OF 2/15/2024 💥

CONNIE MCKIBBAN, 949.280.3078

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HELP! I have buyers waiting for their dream house in Niguel Shores. Please call me if you are thinking about selling or for a confidential and complimentary report outlining THE NEW CURRENT VALUE of your home.