

THE ISLAND

BRIDGE

OCT - DEC
2025

The Only Official Balboa Island Newsletter - Published by the Balboa Island Improvement Association since 1919

2025
Memberships
Expire Dec. 31st.

Please Renew
for 2026



BALBOA ISLAND

Holiday

HOMETOUR WALKING

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As Summer comes to a close it is time to look forward to 2026. It is also that time of year to review membership for the BIIA. I think it is best to begin with a recounting of what the BIIA does for Balboa Island.

Every year we host a series of **Classical Concerts** at St. John Vianney Chapel, followed by a reception to meet the musicians at the Balboa Island Museum.

Our annual **Parade** in June is standing room only for those in attendance. Also in June, our free to members **Pancake Breakfast** is always a hit (we had the largest attendance ever this year).

Every summer we host several free **Concerts in the Park** at the Beek Center, and the **Snow Day** that includes live reindeer in front of the fire station is another free BIIA event in December.

The BIIA is also responsible for beautification efforts such as the **flowers on the bridge** and **Christmas tree lighting** at the end of Marine Avenue.

The December **Holiday Home Tour** is one of the most popular events in Orange County and is December 13th this year. There are other things that the BIIA does for the island that are perhaps not as well recognized. The **marquee** at the entrance to the Island on the bridge posts a happy, informative or humorous message to help brighten your day every time you come onto the Island. We also maintain the **flags on the bridge**. Most importantly, through **Lee Pearl** our relationship with the City of Newport Beach is very strong and always puts us in a good position for support from the City.

It is very important that you know that all these activities are created, maintained and paid for by the BIIA. The majority of our budget comes from our membership dues. So, if somehow you are not currently a member or if you haven't renewed your membership, please go to **BIIA.org** and under membership join or renew. If you are a frequent visitor or renter and take advantage of some of the activities we offer, please do the same; go to **BIIA.org** and contribute to helping support your organization. If you're already a member, thank you! Please consider elevating your membership level to show even more support.

As this is my last message as President of the BIIA, I want to say thank you to all of you for the support you have given and the participation you have shown in the BIIA activities. — **Dan Abbott, BIIA President**

THE ISLAND BRIDGE

OCT-DEC 2025



EDITOR / ART DIRECTOR

Jon Remy

CONTRIBUTORS

Dan Abbott
Clint Burns
Ellen Goodman
Huse Skelly Gallery
Larry Kallestad
Alan Morcos
Cynthia Shafer
Kristine Taft

OFF-ISLAND DISTRIBUTION

Clint Burns
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PROOFREADERS

Sue Sibley
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PHOTO

Dennis Bress
Michelle Mayo
Jon Remy
Renee Sanders

BALBOA ISLAND IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION



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Dan Abbott abbottedmd@gmail.com

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TREASURER

Tom Neal tommmelissas@yahoo.com

SECRETARY

Laurie Sloan lauriesloan74@gmail.com

DIRECTORS

John Cecil cecilmedia@gmail.com

Larry Friday akula1313@aol.com

Vicky Hare vickyhare3@gmail.com

Terry Janssen fullfender32@aol.com

Larry Kallestad balislelarry31@gmail.com

Scott Mehlberger scott.mehlberger@gmail.com

Penny Rodheim penny@boats4rent.com

Sue Sibley suesibley55@yahoo.com

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DIRECTOR EMERITUS

Jack Callahan jcjackcallahan@gmail.com

ALTERNATE DIRECTOR

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ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Heather Arnold finalnet1@aol.com

Clint Burns cburns@thenextup.com

Leslie Friday fvester@aol.com

Annette Giermann balboalover@gmail.com

Neil Goudge neilgoudge@hotmail.com

Sandy Keedy sandykeedy@gmail.com

Phillip LaPlante philp.lplnt61@gmail.com

Jon Remy jremy@yahoo.com

Ed Siebel edsiebel@me.com

Kathy Tierney kathy.n.tierney@gmail.com

ISLAND BEAUTIFICATION

Georgie Fenton georgiefenton@msn.com

CERT EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Kristine Taft ktaft1018@yahoo.com

WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA

John Cecil cecilmedia@gmail.com

MARKETING

Gail Vasterling gailvasterling@sbcglobal.net

MERCHANT LIAISON

Jack Callahan jcjackcallahan@gmail.com

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LIAISON

Lee Pearl smartpearl1@yahoo.com

For the current
Calendar of Events &
Activities for 2025,
please go to:



BIIA.ORG

BIIA INFO LINE:
949.384.8580

EVENTS • MEMBERSHIP • INFORMATION



JOIN TODAY FOR 2026





*Can one person really make a difference?
Can one person motivate others to get involved?
Ask anyone who knows marine biologist Nancy Caruso,
and the answer will be a big, resounding...*

YES!

— By Ellen Goodman

In the fourth grade, long before she saw the ocean in person, Nancy realized that she wanted to become a marine biologist. She says, “It just took one lesson on oceanography and an amazing, caring teacher, and I was set on my path for life. I knew exactly what I was meant to do.”



Nancy with volunteer divers

Nancy began her work in ocean restoration in 2002, and founded the nonprofit organization Get Inspired in 2009. She has been living her passion ever since. Just as she was encouraged by an incredible teacher, Nancy has affected thousands of kids, creating programs to instill curiosity, while teaching the importance of being good stewards of our oceans and environment. Get Inspired has worked in 37 Orange County and Los Angeles schools, bringing ocean restoration education to over 15,000 students.

“We teach kids, in their classrooms, to grow the species we are restoring, and then we train volunteer scuba divers to plant it and monitor it. Our community is truly changing the world. We started by restoring the kelp forests that were gone for 25 years. With the help of 5,000 kids and 250 volunteer divers, we restored it!”



Ecology field trips

**Balboa Island
museum**
NEWPORT BEACH

And this is just the tip of the iceberg, to use an appropriate idiom! Nancy's work has been praised in *Forbes Magazine*, *Orange County Register*, *Los Angeles Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Scuba Diving Magazine*, and more. She has been recognized and honored with numerous awards, including induction into the Women Divers Hall of Fame.

Perhaps most importantly, testimonials from former students, mentees, scouts, teachers, and volunteers all point to her dedication and love for conservation and the preservation of our ocean environment. She has truly inspired young people to get involved, nurturing an interest in science and making a positive difference in their communities.

Learn more about Get Inspired by visiting <https://getinspiredinc.org/>



In the lab studying Plankton



Student releasing a juvenile White Seabass



Looking for Abalone



Divers releasing White Seabass



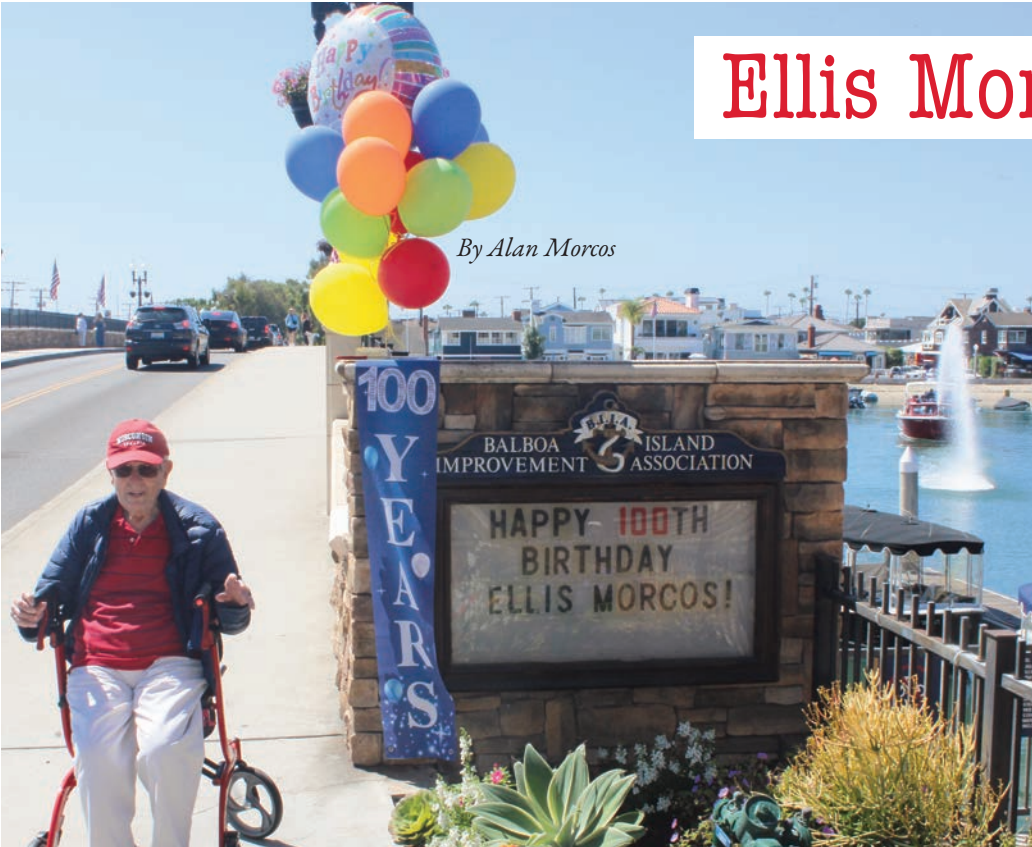
Volunteer collecting Macrocystis Kelp

**Balboa Island
museum**
NEWPORT BEACH, CA



210 Marine Ave., Balboa Island
Open daily • Free admission
Become a member
For more information visit:
balboaislandmuseum.org

Ellis Morcos turns 100!



By Alan Morcos

Ellis on his birthday. Thanks to Sue and Lee Pearl for arranging a Fire Engine escort down Marine complete with lights and siren, and the OC Sheriff Fireboat's water cannon display and PA announcement!

Longtime Balboa Island resident **Ellis Morcos** was born on September 3 in 1925, in a small town on the Mediterranean scattered with orange groves called Jaffa, Palestine (many of you have probably heard of and eaten a Jaffa orange!) He shares his birth year with some very famous people: Richard Burton, Margaret Thatcher, Malcom X, Paul Newman, Gore Vidal, Barbara Bush and Angela Lansbury to name a few!

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ELLIS' LIFE:

His parents were Olga and Farah Morcos. He had 4 sisters (Theodora, Euphemia, Rose and Heyam) and 4 Brothers (Tony, Michael, Attallah, and Sami). Rose, Michael, Attallah, Sami and Heyam are still alive and live in Orange County.

He came to the US in 1947 to attend Baylor University and graduated in 1952 from University of Missouri, School of Journalism. He was naturalized as a US Citizen in 1955.

Ellis worked as a staff reporter for the *Port Huron Times Herald* and went on to work in the Public Relations Department of Aramco Oil Company in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia until 1958, when he returned to the US to found *The Toluca Newspaper* in Toluca Lake, California. *The Toluca* still exists and is now called *The Toluca Times*.

He married Lorraine Stickney (whom he met in Beirut, Lebanon) in 1960 and had three kids: Alan, Laila and Lance. He has a wonderful son-in-law, Dave and four Grandchildren: Dara, Ruby, Samantha and Charlie! Over the years he practiced as a Real Estate Broker and has enjoyed living on Balboa Island where he's a longtime volunteer and past President and Board Member of the Balboa Island Improvement Association (BIIA). **Congrats Ellis!!!!**

Please visit Balboaislandmuseum.org to watch his Legacy Video on Utube.



Aramco Oil, Dharan Saudi Arabia



Family members Laila, Lance, Ellis, Alan, and Dave



The Toulucan Newspaper - 1958



Volunteer of the Decade - 2025 Parade

ALWAYS LOOK FOR THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE...

We are coming into the most exciting time of the year on our Island. The days will get shorter but the lights will shine brighter all over our island.

Soon it will be the holiday season....and no one does holidays like we do on Balboa Island. We may not have snow or ice, thankfully, but our houses will be decked out glistening and shining soon enough. Reindeers will visit, boats will parade, choruses will be singing and sure enough Santa will be here to bring us gifts and good cheer. All thanks to the amazing residents and merchants who take pride in making this place we call home especially magical this time of year.

This holiday season I wish to thank every business, resident and Island Association for their dedication, hard work and enthusiasm to make this a special place for us all to live and others to visit. We appreciate every business on the Marine and Agate business districts as they give Balboa its unique special charm. We have the amazing opportunity to walk, golf cart or Moke to enjoy delicious food and drink, unique treats, mail our gifts, buy our presents and find festive holiday outfits without having to ever go off island. I truly encourage you all to take advantage of the convenience of having these places right before your doorstep and support these unique businesses this season.

Balboa Island truly does shine bright and I wish you all a happy holidays full of joy and good health.

Cynthia Shafer, President
Balboa Island Merchants Association



Holiday

HOME



WALKING

TOUR

Saturday,

BALBOA

The Holiday Home Tour is more than a beloved island tradition, it is deeply tied to the mission of the Balboa Island Improvement Association. Proceeds from the event support projects that keep the island beautiful, safe, and welcoming all year long. From vibrant flowers on the bridge to community security cameras, and from festive holiday décor to summer concerts, every ticket purchased helps keep the spirit of Balboa Island alive.

This year marks the 27th Annual Holiday Home Tour, a cherished celebration that ushers in the holiday season for residents and visitors alike. And for the first time ever, the tour will be held on a Saturday, December 13, 2025, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Every year, guests from Newport Beach and beyond step through festively decorated doors, experiencing the warmth, beauty, and unmistakable charm of island life during the holidays.



SCAN FOR HOME TOUR TICKETS & INFO



Among the many generous homeowners who have shared their homes, one name stands out: **Heather Arnold**. Heather recalls her very first tour experience with a smile. “I wasn’t sure what to expect,” she says, “but from the moment the first guests walked through the door, I felt such joy. The tour is about more than just showing a home, it’s about welcoming people into the magic of the season.” She adds, “We just love it on the island during that time of year, and to know that sharing our home helps support the BIIA and holiday décor makes it even more special. It truly adds to the festive spirit.” Considered an “all-star” of the event, Heather has participated three times and says she would happily do it again if asked.

December 13th 11am-4pm

“I wasn’t sure what to expect,”
but from the moment the first guests
walked through the door, I felt such
joy. The tour is about more than just
showing a home, it’s about welcoming
people into the magic of the season.”

— Heather Arnold

Other homeowners share her enthusiasm. The **Salsburys**, who also opened their home for the tour, joked afterward that “our house was even cleaner when we returned than when we left.” Their remark reflects the thoughtful care of the volunteers and the respect shown by guests, reassuring homeowners their homes are always in excellent hands. **Jeanne Lewand**, another past participant, laughed that “the committee members and docents even figured out how to help me fix my Sonos music throughout the house last year.” Stories like these highlight the dedication and resourcefulness of the volunteers, who go above and beyond to ensure every homeowner feels supported.

It takes nearly 150 of these volunteer docents to make the seamless experience possible, lending their time and energy to keep the event running smoothly. Each year, the committee curates a lineup of around eight distinctive homes that reflect the creativity and spirit of Balboa Island.

If you’ve ever thought about opening your home for the tour or would like to learn more about getting involved, the Balboa Island Improvement Association would love to hear from you. Please call 949-384-8580 for details.



If you would like to attend, the tour is Saturday December 13th, 2025. Tickets for the Home Tour are available online on **BIIA.org** or at the following on island locations: **Balboa Island Museum**, **Crush Balboa Boutique** and **Sunny days**. Off island locations are **Bliss Home and Designs** in Corona Del Mar, **Seaside Gallery and Goods**, and **Where’s the Party** in Costa Mesa. Tickets are \$50



Huse Skelly Art Gallery

20th Annual

JUST PLEIN FUN - A Huge Success!



The 20th annual "Just Plein Fun" event hosted by the Huse Skelly Gallery on Balboa Island (July 28 – Aug 1) was a wonderful success! Eleven award-winning artists from across the country painted scenes around Balboa Island during the week, resulting in close to 100 new paintings of the local area. The culmination was Friday's "brush off" competition on Marine Avenue and the Awards Gala and Reception.

The 2025 participating artists were: Suzie Baker, Greg Barnes, Aimee Erickson, Mark Fehlman, Tim Horn, Debra Huse, Daniel Marshall, Terry Miura, Mark Shasha, Calvin Liang and Cleo Vilett. The event was judged by Rick Delanty, an accomplished California coastal and landscape painter.

1st Place and the Plein Air Magazine Award was awarded to "Transit of Venus", a 16"x12" oil painting by artist Aimee Erickson.

2nd place and the Dennis Vitarelli Award of Excellence was awarded to "Candy Corner", a 10"x10" watercolor painting by artist Daniel Marshall.

3rd place and the Mayen Olson Award and the Rosemary Brushes Award was awarded to "Balboa Reflections", a 12"x12" oil painting by artist Suzie Baker.

The winner of the "Brush Off" competition and The Edge Pro Gear Award was Calvin Liang. Numerous raffle prizes were awarded to community participants who handed in their completed artists' passports.

Paintings from the event will be on display and available for purchase through the summer.



*Lisa Skelly with 1st Place winner
Aimee Erickson*



*"Brush Off" winner - Calvin Liang
painting an iconic island scene*



*Daniel Marshall awarded 2nd Place
by Dennis Vitarelli*



*3rd Place winner Suzie Baker with Lisa
and Judge Rick Delanty*

X

2025 TO DO List

Holiday

HOME TOUR WALKING

Saturday, December 13th



11am-4pm

Join BIIA
for 2026

BIIA.ORG



2025 BIIA Memberships
EXPIRE on December 31st

Renew!



*Holiday Home
Decorations
Contest*

Dec. 11-14

St. Vianney Chapel
Fall Holiday Boutique
November 23rd

At The Royal Hen

SUNDAY, DEC. 7TH
4:00pm

Santa, Snow Day, Tree Lighting,
All American Boys Chorus



*St. Vianney
Classical Concert*

DEC 2nd



Olimos Trio

B I I A M E M B E R S H I P

by Larry Kallestad

If you're a current member of the BIIA, thank you! Note that your current membership expires at **the end of 2025**, so please renew for 2026 now, we need your continued support.

If you're not a member, **please** join your neighbors in support of our island.



By the time you're reading this, summer on Balboa Island has been over for about a month. That familiar thought, "We've got our Island back," has probably crossed your mind. It's nice to see fewer cars and more available parking—except in the areas affected by the ongoing undergrounding construction.

Still, take a look at the North Bay Front alley—it's a good preview of how the rest of our alleys will look once the work is done. The improvements can't come soon enough!

As mentioned in previous columns, the Summer Concerts in the Park were once again a big success with great attendance. Before the concerts began, **Dan Abbott**, President of the Balboa Island Improvement Association (BIIA), took the opportunity to invite non-members to join the Association and support not only the concerts but all of the BIIA's year-round efforts for residents and visitors. His efforts led to at least 10 new memberships—possibly more that weren't directly credited to his outreach.

On a personal note, I'll be completing my third and final two-year term as a member of the BIIA Board at the end of this year. It has truly been a pleasure to serve, contribute ideas, and help bring both major and behind-the-scenes projects to life. Many of these—like the doggy waste bag stations—go unnoticed until they suddenly aren't there. While the City supplies the bags, it's our volunteers who keep the boxes

filled. Thank you to everyone involved—you make a real difference.

Since I'm also the Director of Membership, here's an update: as of early September, we have 615 members for 2025. In November, we'll send out renewal invitations to current members for 2026, memberships for 2025 expire on December 31. If you missed joining for 2025, we warmly encourage you to sign up for 2026 by visiting our website at BIIA.org. Choose the membership level that suits you best—we appreciate your support in helping us serve the Island community.

Lastly, in the previous *Island Bridge Newsletter*, I asked for someone to take over the festive light displays on the palm trees at the South Bay Front end of Marine Avenue. I'm happy to report that a local Island resident with artistic flair has volunteered to continue this beloved tradition. While a few final details are still being worked out, you'll be seeing new displays soon. I'll introduce the new designer in the next column. A big thank you to **Scott McGee**, who has been creating these displays for over 25 years—your work has brought joy to many.



-Larry

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CERT NEEDS YOUR HELP!

— Kristine Taft

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) is potentially a vital service to our community in the event of several of many disasters which might occur in our area and plays a vital role in ensuring the safety and well-being of our community during such emergencies.

Historically our CERT team has maintained a critical supply of emergency equipment and supplies at three (3) strategic locations at residence properties on both the Little and Big Islands. Recent changes have necessitated relocating two (2) of such supply units.

I have scouted several possible locations, including city property, which I propose would suffice for this purpose. However I have yet to receive a response from our City Leaders. That being said, I am asking for community assistance in locating space on the Big Island where we could place a Tough Shed approximately 6' x 7' x 8'. Please contact Kristine Taft via email ktaft1018@yahoo.com or via text **310-502-1058** with suggestions.

\$1,000

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 Abrams, Don & Gwen
 Abrams Coastal Properties
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 Canarelli, Heide & Lawrence
 Cayanni, Jean
 Cooper, Wilfred & Kay
 Godfrey, Rich & Susan
 Grimm, Barbara & Marshall, Darcy
 Gudim, Lissa & Sheard, Phil
 Hueston, John & Maybelle
 Janssen, Terry & Patti
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 Landon, Marv & Jill
 Lopez, Ulysses
 Luce, Jim & Gale
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\$125

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 Mocciano, Chloe
 Morales, Anthony

Morcos, Ellis, Laila, Alan & Lance
 Mortimer, Wendell
 Munroe, Dorothy
 Neal, Tom & Marisa
 Nece, Ted & Cathyleen
 Nelson, Rick & Diane
 Newman, Christina
 Nichols, Joni & John
 Nicola, Fred & Barbara
 O'Brien, Dennis
 O'Keefe, Patricia & Smakula, Andy
 O'Neill, Michael & Susan
 Qwens, Russ & Katy
 Ostercamp, Terre & John
 Parkhurst, Jim & Phyllis
 Peskind, Craig & Barbara
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 Pickford, Dave & Karen
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 Romo, Mike & Mary
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 Rooten, Joan
 Rose, David & Arlene
 Rubeli, Paul
 Saliba, Tom & Betty
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 Schisler, Jon & Shaun
 Schnider, Robert & Valerie
 Scudder, John
 Seat, Bob & Sandra
 Selson, John & Karen
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 Smith, Tim & Jenean
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 State Farm Insurance, Paul Ricatto
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 Sutherland, Hollie
 Taft, Kristine
 Torrey, Mike & Valerie
 Tucker, James
 Vander Hulst, Leo & Robin
 Vanis, Mary
 Vanker, David & Susie
 Veeh, Sharon & Robert
 Visser, John & Grace
 Wagener, Kenny
 Waters, Laughlin & Sue Ellen
 Waters, Sue Ellen
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 Wetherington, Lee & Caroline
 Wood, Linda
 Zimmerman, Erik & Katy

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 Blaine, Andy & Leigh
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 Borella, Chris
 Borland, Pat
 Bress Sr, Dennis & Sol
 Bress, Jr. Dennis & Summer
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 Bromberg, Donna
 Brooks, Dana & Carl, Robert
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 Burton, Dea
 Butcher, Jeffrey
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 Glockner, Susan, Bill, Katie, Will
 Goodwin, Judi
 Groves, Marilyn & Geoff
 Hadley, Vivien
 Hammond, Richard & Lisa
 Hartwell, Lois

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Hasbrouck, Richard & Carolyn
Hemstreet, Kristie
Henle, Christy & Tom
Herold, Rosemarie
Hewitt, Les & Betsie
Hofer Family
Hoffer, Scott
Howard, Lynda & Walter
Hunt, Mary Anne
Iliescu, Cornell & Neilsen, Helen
Island Marine Fuel
Jaeger, Cindy
Jenkins, Julie
Jennison, Gary
Jinkens, Robert
Johannsen, Ken, Kathy, Kollin, & Katy
Johns, Christe & Rick
Jones, Craig & Katie
Jones, Jeffrey
Josten, Robert & Barbe, Mary Bresnahan
Kelley, Lisa
Kelsey, Barbara & Jan
Kennedy, Leslie
Ker, Mary C
Keresteci, Aydan & Fatma
Kimball, Jeff
Kinton, Sandi & Hefner, Doak
Knapp, Pam
Knight, Joyce
Kupper, Bob & Cindy
LaPlante, Phillip & Kristina
Lawler, Micael & Barbara
Lenihan, Maureen
Lev, Michael & Carla
Lincoln, Linc & Carole
Lobl, Catherine & Rick
Lovenduski, Michele & DiNunzio, Bob
MacDonald, Lynne
Macke, Barbara
Maly, Maxine
Mang, Tim
Marks, Alan & Cheri
Markss, Joel
Marsh, Cindy

Mason, Joseph & Barbara
Mastos, Shawn
Maxson, Rod & Liz
Mayo, Michelle
McCaffrey, Robert
McCarthy, Terry & Talley, Curtis
McClary, Molly
McClellan, Christina
McComb, Marian
McEwen, Bill & Florence
McLaughlin, Suzy
Meyers, Bruce & Carol
Michna, Magda & Goncalves, Daniel
Mondini, Diane
Morris, Steven & Erin
Munroe, Dorothy
Nagler, Jim
Nance, Joyce
Neglia, Larry & Julie
Nielsen, Barbara
Nielsen, Lis
Noble Cause Foundation
Nord, John & Sherry Marron
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Olson, David & Bobbi
O'Keefe, Thomas & Lindy
O'Rourke, Leslie
Osbourne, Judy
Palmer, Heidi
Parks, Kathleen
Pene, Tracy & Jef
Penoyar, Lynn
Perry, Mark & Carol
Perry, Nilo & Daniel
Peters, Patrick & Maureen
Podany, Sue
Pond, June
Poppellwell, Tom & Lowther, Debbie
Price, Dennis & Kathy
Prickett, Gregg & Laura
Raab, Jeanine
Raney, Michele
Raney, Nan
Reinhart, Suzanne

Rhone, Dick & Gail
Richardson, Sue
Rohrer, John & Andi
Roman, Anita
Romero, Linda & Tony
Romo, Kevin & Taylor
Rudie, Shannon
Ruffell, Dave
Saari, Cathy
Sandberg, Jeanette
Sanders, Renee
Schechtman, Kristen
Schwartz, Keneth & Mary
Scolinos, Connie
Selby, Barbara
Selmi, Dan & Ann
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Sherwood, Johnny & Anna
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Smith, Helen
Smith, Nancy
Smoot, Colleen
Snyder, Stan & Candy
Starr, Dean
Stefano, Kathy
Stapilton, Donna
Steele, Charles & Janice
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Stipe, Dave
Swain, Johnn & Moma
Theis, Joe & Jill
Theriot, June
Thomas, Kelly
Thompson, Jay & Cheryl
Tierney, Kathy
Tift, Allison & Wade
Tillett, Christine
Tiss, Jeff & Gayden
Trainor, Shelly & Ed
Vandeman, Bruce
Vanker, David & Susie
Vasterling, Gail
Veden, Vicki

Viel, Milon & Earla
Walters, Shawn
Wayt, Tina & Bill
Webber, Tom & Diane
Whipple, Carol
Whipple, Sharon
White, Kathryn
White, Shirlee Ann
Wickett, Geof
Williams, Craig & Susan
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