



2025 | Vol. 1

# Rancho Living

Connecting the Community

## IN THIS ISSUE:

NEW YEAR, NEW OPPORTUNITIES  
VOLUNTEER WITH US  
YOUR ASSESSMENTS AT WORK  
EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



# SAMLARC 101

SAMLARC is dedicated to ensuring that our community runs smoothly and operates flawlessly. From the Beach Club to the parks and pools, Members can count on amenities being maintained and repaired promptly. We understand that both new and current residents may have questions about picnic shelters, pools, or even how to have home improvement projects approved. No matter the question or concern, we want our residents to stay informed and connected.

## BUSINESS OFFICE

The Business Office handles various administrative services, including assistance with account assessments, and the review and approval of home improvement projects.

22342A Avenida Empressa, Suite 102A  
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688  
949-709-0010  
Open Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

## BEACH CLUB OFFICE

The Beach Club manages reservations for all resident amenities and is the go-to place for replacing or obtaining new access cards.

21472 Avenida de Los Fundadores  
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688  
949-858-1390  
Open daily  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

SAMLARC is professionally managed by FirstService Residential. For any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to give us a call at 949-858-1390 (Beach Club, 7 days per week) or 949-709-0010 (Business Office, Monday - Friday). We can also be reached via email at [info@samlarc.org](mailto:info@samlarc.org).

For after-hours inquiries, please contact the FirstService Residential 24/7 Customer Care Line at 800-428-5588.

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**CUT-OUT CALENDAR  
ON PG. 9**

# WELCOME HOME

Whether you're a new neighbor or a long-time friend, SAMLARC is the perfect place to call home.

SAMLARC was created as a lifestyle village, where thoughtful urban design and intentional lifestyle programming form an exceptional living experience. Framed by the Saddleback Mountains and O'Neill Regional Park, SAMLARC is a destination set apart from the bustle of city life: a sanctuary where families focus on intentional connections with loved ones and neighbors. Whether strolling alongside the Lago Santa Margarita, dancing the night away at SAMLARC's annual Wine & Cheese event, or celebrating at the Independence Day Star Spangled Spectacular, we invite you and your family to explore new environments and experiences together.

SAMLARC's guiding philosophies emphasize our responsibilities in building a dynamic community. The multi-year Strategic Plan outlines tangible goals to improve our community — stay tuned throughout the year for updates on projects, initiatives, and opportunities to connect. Our community partnerships foster strong connections in the broader Rancho Santa Margarita area. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita, Chamber of Commerce, and RSM Cares work hard to create a thriving social culture, and we are happy to support their signature initiatives.

Over the years, Rancho Living has also played a special part in keeping our Members connected, and we are excited to welcome its return! This edition explores the vision and values that keep SAMLARC humming, the mutual benefits of volunteering, and the fun events and programs around the corner! The Board of Directors looks forward to extending a warm welcome to many SAMLARC neighbors in the future.

As your neighbors and friends, we look forward to serving alongside you in our community.

Warmly,  
The SAMLARC Board of Directors

Paul Persiani | Jeff Halbreich | Deborah Christensen  
Greg Wieckert | Nate Farnsworth | Greg Schnieders | Kyle Wolack

## *Save the Date* **SAMLARC 2025 Annual Meeting**

Thursday, February 20, 2025  
6:00 p.m. | Lago Santa Margarita Beach Club

SAMLARC's Annual Meeting is an opportunity for Members to learn about SAMLARC's 2024 accomplishments and future goals, meet the 2025 Board of Directors, and connect with the SAMLARC team. On years when an election is necessary, votes are cast to determine SAMLARC Members who will serve alongside existing Directors. This year, SAMLARC did not need to host an election as the number of candidates (4) did not exceed the number of seats open for election (4). At the January 28, 2025 Board of Directors Meeting, the Board will declare an Election by Acclamation, then will seat its Cabinet of Directors at the February 20, 2025 Annual Meeting. We invite you to attend this informative meeting and meet your 2025 Board of Directors: Jeff Beardsley, Deborah Christensen, Jeff Halbreich, Paul Persiani, Greg Schnieders, Greg Wieckert, and Kyle Wolack.





# OPPORTUNITIES AWAIT

## A NEW YEAR AT SAMLARC

### EDITH LOVEJOY PIERCE

Poet and pacifist

*"We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day."*



These words, by poet Edith Lovejoy Pierce, are an encouraging reminder of the possibilities ahead of us in 2025. No matter if you're a steadfast believer in New Year's resolutions or prefer to take things one day at a time the start of a new year is a wonderful time to pursue intentional moments — personally, socially, and in your community.

One common goal in January is improving fitness and health. Some people hope to use the new year to improve their range of motion, keep up with young family members, or start crossing items off their bucket list. The eight pickleball courts at Altisima Park are popular for drop-in play and challenge games, while the new turf at the Central Park soccer arena is perfect for pickup games. SAMLARC's recreational programs can also help you accomplish your goals! From toddler soccer programs to 55+ yoga, we invite you to explore the range of programs for children and adults on page 11. If your first step is simply to get outside and enjoy the sunshine, take a stroll around the Lake — one lap spans 1.1 miles! You'll be in good company with hundreds of visitors walking the Lake each day.



Creating shared experiences also strengthens our community. Be sure to cut out the 2025 SAMLARC event calendar on pages 9 and 10 — there are nearly 30 events planned for you and your family! We also invite you to build new friendships through SAMLARC Clubs. The Board Game Night club plays every Friday at the Beach Club, bringing together hobbyists and beginners. We are looking for passionate Members who would like to create new clubs — connect with us to learn more!

In addition to sharing hobbies, serving the community is a rewarding way to leverage your personal and professional skills. Later on in this edition, you'll learn about ways to volunteer your time and skills at SAMLARC. We also encourage you to explore philanthropic initiatives through the RSM Cares Belltower Foundation, such as the Food Pantry and the Zero Trash Initiative.

If you would like a quiet place to contemplate the coming year, head to the parks! Mesa Linda Park is planted with peaceful Santa Barbara pepper trees. Estrella Vista Park offers sweeping views of the Saddleback Mountains and the canyon below. Finally, one of SAMLARC's most charming resting spots is the butterfly garden at the Lago Santa Margarita. Here, you can admire the reflection of clouds in the water and smell the flowers in bloom.

As you write the story of your 2025, we invite you to share in SAMLARC's vision to connect the community from generation to generation. Our original Members began their family legacies here; nearly forty years later, their grandchildren are establishing their own homes here — strengthening SAMLARC's unique commitment to living well together. This year will bring plenty of opportunities to enjoy SAMLARC's lifestyle village, and we hope you will share your stories with us!

# Share WITH SAMLARC

SAMLARC has been a cherished part of the community since 1986, creating nearly 40 years of memories. With over 13,000 homes filled with families and friends, there are countless moments of joy — whether it's laughter at the Beach Club, fun at the pool, celebrating the Independence Day, or capturing a breathtaking sunset by the Lake. Whatever the occasion, we want to provide residents the opportunity to share those special memories.



**SCAN ME!**

Scan the QR code to the right and fill out the text box with your favorite memory at SAMLARC. We'll share these stories on our website for the whole community to enjoy.



# SERVING WITH VISION



One of SAMLARC's key priorities is fostering a community where residents build strong relationships and a culture of service. Volunteering allows individuals to share their time, skills, and energy while meeting practical needs. Studies show that communities with active volunteers have safer neighborhoods, stronger bonds, and greater pride. SAMLARC supports this value by offering three avenues for volunteering.

## EVENT VOLUNTEERS

SAMLARC hosts nearly 30 events annually, from intimate Gardening Workshops to the Star Spangled Spectacular, which draws over 10,000 attendees. Each event focuses on creating a warm, welcoming atmosphere, and volunteers play a vital role in making them special. Volunteering opportunities vary to suit your skills and schedule — help with event setup or cleanup at Carols 'Round the Lake, or lead a friendly game of Capture the Flag at the Great Rancho Campout. These events are also perfect for high school students earning service hours or families looking to serve together!

## COMMITTEES

In addition to events, SAMLARC offers Members the opportunity to contribute to the community through its Committee program. Each Committee serves a specific role in maintaining SAMLARC's value and relevance over time. The Community Lifestyle Committee focuses on events, clubs, and programs, while the Communications Committee works to improve the organization's print and digital platforms. The Architectural Review and Covenant Committees uphold the harmony of SAMLARC's design, and the Landscape and Facilities Enhancement Committee oversees the maintenance and enhancement of its amenities. Recommendations from these Committees help the Board of Directors set future goals. SAMLARC accepts Committee applications year-round, with applicants interviewed and appointed by the Board in early spring each year.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors oversees SAMLARC's operations at large, from fiscal health to common area maintenance. The volunteer members of the seven-person Board are elected by SAMLARC Members, and each hold two-year terms in service. Directors devote countless hours to leveraging their professional skills and personal insight in making decisions on behalf of the community. As fellow homeowners, neighbors, and family leaders, each Director is invested in protecting SAMLARC's long-term success.

Event volunteers can sign up for upcoming opportunities at [SAMLARC.org/volunteer](https://www.samlarc.org/volunteer). Members interested in joining a SAMLARC Committee can learn more by visiting [SAMLARC.org/committees](https://www.samlarc.org/committees).



## MEET CAMILLE PRATT

*A 20+ year SAMLARC resident and a seasoned Communications Committee member, Camille volunteers her marketing expertise to enhance SAMLARC's community connections!*

## SAMLARC STORIES

### **Q: What is your favorite part about living in the SAMLARC community?**

We truly live in one of the most beautiful communities. I'd say my favorite part of living here is the Lake. It's out of a picture book with the backdrop of the mountains.

### **Q: What surprised you about serving on the Communications Committee?**

How much direct input we as committee members have on behalf of our neighbors, and that our input is heard. It's such a wonderful honor and privilege!

### **Q: What is your favorite SAMLARC event and why?**

The 4th of July "Star Spangled Spectacular" fireworks show is my favorite event because it's one of those community events that brings families together for all ages, it's always a super fun day, and the fireworks show is magical!

### **Q: What is one of your favorite family memories in the community?**

One of my favorite memories is taking my daughter to the Halloween festivities when she was younger (back when it was held at the Lakeshore Amphitheater). The kids would parade around in their costumes and there was always a magician or great family entertainment for the community and an opportunity to mingle with our neighbors. I will treasure those memories forever!

# SAVING FOR THE FUTURE

Do you remember saving for your first car? For many of us, purchasing our first car wasn't a simple decision – we saved up for years, considered the options, and calculated how many miles a car would give us before we needed to replace it. Some car enthusiasts may still be driving their first car from 50 years ago; other owners may change their models based on expanding family needs. Appropriate planning before, during, and between vehicles is the best way to ensure you travel safely everywhere from Central Park to Altisima Pool.



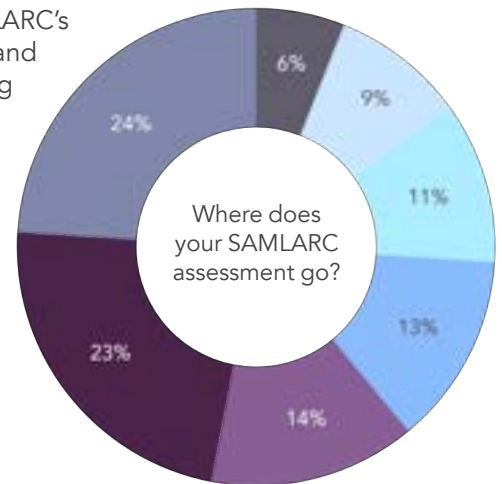
In the same vein, SAMLARC prepares for the eventual replacement of assets through reserve funding. A reserve study outlines the components of SAMLARC's assets (from pool heaters to swing sets), the original cost of purchase, and how long each component is expected to last. Then, funds are set aside each year to cover its replacement or improvement. A portion of your monthly assessment is allocated to reserve funding to ensure that SAMLARC can maintain its amenities without levying a special assessment.

As the community grows older, components need replacement more frequently – often at significantly higher costs than when the community was built in the 1980s. For example: playground slides may need repair or replacement due to regular wear and tear, but as models are phased out by the industry, like-for-like replacement becomes more costly. Over time, SAMLARC is updating the reserve funding allocations to reflect current valuations. SAMLARC monitors and manages the savings amounts appropriately throughout the year, and a professional reserve study analyst conducts thorough on-site inspections every three years. SAMLARC has a funding policy that requires funds be set aside to cover at least 90% of the scope of the reserve study. Reserve contributions are critical to not only maintaining the functionality of SAMLARC amenities, but also ensuring that our amenities and assets remain relevant to our Members as needs and interests evolve.

## YOUR DOLLARS MAKE A DIFFERENCE SAMLARC ASSESSMENTS

When a family purchases a home within our community, they enjoy the privileges of SAMLARC membership which include common areas, facilities, and amenities. These assets are paid for by the monthly assessments (dues). Beginning January 1, 2025, SAMLARC's assessment rate is \$87 per month, allocated across a variety of operations and services. The yearly rate is determined through a comprehensive budgeting process which incorporates fixed/anticipated expenses; services and programs; community enrichment; Civil Code requirements; and fiscal best practices. Balancing business needs, community services, and proactive maintenance leads to a flourishing and attractive community.

Paying your assessments promptly protects SAMLARC's fiscal health and prevents late fees and interest charges from accruing on your account. SAMLARC is professionally managed by FirstService Residential, who makes it easy to securely manage your assessments online! You can view your monthly statement online through WelcomeLink and pay each month through ClickPay. Registering is easy — head to [SAMLARC.org/financial](https://SAMLARC.org/financial) to learn more!



- LIFESTYLE/COMMUNICATIONS
- PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
- COMMUNITY SERVICES/ADMINISTRATION
- RESERVE CONTRIBUTIONS
- LANDSCAPING (ALL OTHER, INCLUDING IRRIGATION WATER)
- LANDSCAPING (SERVICE CONTRACTS)
- COMMON AREA OPERATIONS







# LIFESTYLE

## COMING SOON...

### ANIMALS EVERYWHERE

Take a field trip to the animal kingdom – right here at Central Park! Enjoy an exciting day at Animals Everywhere, featuring a variety of animals, both big and small, furry and scaly. Get up close and personal at the petting zoo, where you can interact with farmyard friends. Play in bounce houses, purchase treats from local food trucks, meet neighborhood businesses, and more! Educational animal shows throughout the afternoon will show off some wild and wonderful creatures, and young children can enjoy a classic pony ride. Plus, don't miss the chance to meet Peter Rabbit, who will be making a special appearance for family photos. Come and join the fun on **April 12**, at Central Park! This event is free for Members with a nominal guest fee — more info at [SAMLARC.org/events](http://SAMLARC.org/events)!

Discover a new way to engage with your community by volunteering for Animals Anywhere with SAMLARC! Enjoy a behind-the-scenes experience while making a meaningful contribution to this event. Sign up at [SAMLARC.org/volunteer](http://SAMLARC.org/volunteer). We invite everyone to join in, make a difference, and have fun!

### GARDENING WORKSHOPS

Mark your calendars for our upcoming Gardening Workshops! On **February 1**, children can get creative with **Solar Art**, using sunlight-reactive paper and natural objects to make their own framed artwork. On **February 8**, adults will make a bird feeder and learn how certain plants and seeds will **Bring Birds to Your Garden**. On **March 8**, children will explore the fascinating world of butterflies, learning about their life cycle and local species, making a craft, and taking home a Painted Lady caterpillar to watch it grow into a butterfly. Finally, on **March 15**, adults will dive into the **Sweetness of Strawberries** — discover California varieties and care tips while planting a double-decker strawberry pot to bring home and harvest! Each workshop includes all materials and a light breakfast! Sign up at [SAMLARC.org/events](http://SAMLARC.org/events).





# EVENTS

More information on the fun at [SAMLARC.org/events!](http://SAMLARC.org/events!)



## FAMILY

**APRIL 12**

### **ANIMALS EVERYWHERE**

Animals Everywhere on April 12 will let you meet and learn about fascinating animals up close.

**AUGUST 1 - 2**

### **THE GREAT RANCHO CAMPOUT**

The Great Rancho Campout on August 1-2 offers a night under the stars with fun activities for the whole family.



**OCTOBER 31**

### **HALLOWEEN FAMILY FESTIVAL**

Celebrate Halloween Family Festival on October 31 with spooky fun, costumes, and treats.

## ADULT



**MAY 3**

### **WINE & CHEESE**

Adults 21+ are invited to join us for Wine & Cheese on May 3! Indulge in an evening of fine wines, delicious cheeses, and great conversation with fellow community members. It's the perfect night to relax and unwind.

**SEPTEMBER 20**

### **END OF SUMMER**

This special gathering promises an exciting twist to celebrate the season's end — details to come, so stay tuned! Don't miss out on this memorable evening!

## BEACH CLUB & LAKESHORE



**MAY 10**

### **BEACH CLUB OPENING DAY**

Join us for Beach Club Opening Day on May 10 to kick off the summer season.

**MAY 31**

### **FISHING DERBY**

Bring your fishing gear for the Fishing Derby on May 31 for a day of friendly competition and family fun.

### **JUNE 13, JULY 18, AND AUGUST 15 MUSIC ON THE LAKE**

Enjoy live performances at Music on the Lake on June 13, July 18, and August 15.

### **STAR SPANGLED SPECTACULAR**

Celebrate patriotic fun at the Star Spangled Spectacular.

# EVENTS

More information on the fun at [SAMLARC.org/events!](https://SAMLARC.org/events!)



## GARDENING WORKSHOPS

**FEBRUARY 1, MARCH 8,  
OCTOBER 11, AND NOVEMBER 1**  
**CHILDREN WORKSHOPS**

Join us for engaging gardening workshops designed for all ages!

**FEBRUARY 8, MARCH 15, OCTOBER  
18, AND NOVEMBER 15**  
**ADULT WORKSHOPS**

Grow your skills, nurture your creativity, have fun, and connect with nature in a hands-on gardening experience.



## NEW MEMBER WELCOME



**MAY 15 AND NOVEMBER 6**  
**NEW & NOW**  
**MEMBER WELCOME**

Join us for New & Now Member Welcome receptions on May 15 and November 6! This special event is designed for new (and current) Members to get acquainted with the community, meet your neighbors, enjoy light refreshments, learn about local programs, and more.

## HOLIDAY EVENTS



**DECEMBER 6**  
**CHRISTMAS TREE  
LIGHTING**

Join us for the Christmas Tree Lighting on December 6.

**DECEMBER 13**  
**CAROLS 'ROUND  
THE LAKE**

Enjoy Carols 'Round the Lake on December 13.

**NOVEMBER 10 -  
DECEMBER 15**  
**HOLIDAY HOME  
DECORATING CONTEST**

The fun kicks off with the Holiday Home Decorating Contest from November 10 to December 15.

**DECEMBER 2 - 3**  
**NORTH POLE HOTLINE**

Kids can connect with Santa through the North Pole Hotline on December 2 and 3.





# WINTER 2025 PROGRAMS

## PROGRAMS AT SAMLARC

SAMLARC's lifestyle programs offer a variety of opportunities to get moving and try something new, with classes designed for all ages and skill levels. Young athletes can explore Skyhawks Basketball, where fun, safe, and positive lessons emphasize teamwork, respect, and sportsmanship; or Soccer Shots, which introduces children to the joy of soccer through engaging games and positive reinforcement. For a family-friendly experience, try Sweet Spot Tennis or Evolve Pickleball — both programs offer knowledgeable instructors, friendly competition, and a range of classes, making it easy to find the right fit. Adults 55+ seeking relaxation and rejuvenation can join Gentle Yoga, which helps improve flexibility, balance, and range of motion. For more details on start dates, registration, and more, visit [SAMLARC.org/programs](https://SAMLARC.org/programs) or scan the QR code!

### OC SOCCER SHOTS WINTER & SPRING SESSIONS

Saturdays & Sundays 9 AM - 12 PM, 12/7/24 - 2/16/25  
Saturdays & Sundays 9 AM - 12 PM, 3/15/25 - 5/18/25

### EVOLVE PICKLEBALL 6-WEEK WINTER SESSIONS

Pickleball 101 Learn to Play: 1/27 - 3/10, 5:30 - 6:30 PM  
Pickleball 201 Drills and Skills: 1/27 - 3/10, 6:30 - 7:30 PM  
Pickleball 301 Next Level: 1/27 - 3/10, 7:30 - 8:30 PM  
Pickleball 401 Advanced Strategies: 1/27 - 3/10, 7:30 - 8:30 PM

### SKYHAWKS BASKETBALL WINTER SESSIONS

#### (Ages 4.5-5)

Mondays 4:30 - 5:10 PM  
1/13 - 2/24

#### (Ages 9-12)

Mondays 6:10 - 6:50 PM  
1/13 - 2/24

#### (Ages 6-8)

Mondays 5:20 - 6:00 PM  
1/13 - 2/24

### SWEETSPOT TENNIS: YEAR-ROUND

#### Beginner Classes:

Wednesdays 9:30 - 11:00 AM  
Saturdays 10:30 - 12:00 PM

#### Senior Tennis Clinic:

Fridays 10:00 - 11:00 AM

#### Intermediate Classes:

Mondays 9:30 - 11:00 AM  
Saturdays 9:00 - 10:30 AM

#### Cardio Tennis:

Tuesdays 9:00 - 10:00 AM  
Thursdays 9:00 - 10:00 AM  
Fridays 9:00 - 10:00 AM

### GENTLE YOGA: YEAR-ROUND

Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00 - 10:15 AM  
Mondays 5:30 - 6:45 PM



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**NEXT EDITION: COMMUNITY PROJECTS, EVENTS, BEACH CLUB INFO & MORE!**

