

DANA LIFE

Issue #5 | May 2021 | Dana Point, CA



Scan with
your phone camera

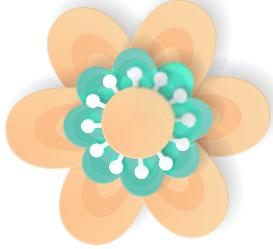


Digital Version

- New Home Listings
- Home Loans
- Featured Local Businesses
- Dana Point, a Whale Heritage Site



Hello Spring



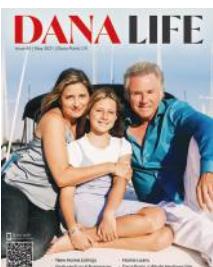
Spring, 2021 is here and what an amazing, hopeful spring it is! It feels as though a dark cloud is finally lifting. Do you feel it? I certainly do. It's also a beautiful, exciting time in real estate, especially when you live in Dana Point.

My fifth issue of Dana Life magazine is all about the beauty we have at our fingertips right here in Dana Point. My family realized a few years ago how much joy and tranquility we got out of being out on the ocean, having amazing experiences with dolphins and whales and simply enjoying the expanse and power of the ocean. For several years, every Mother's Day, we would take a whale watching cruise with Dana Wharf Sportfishing and Whale Watching and then go to Waterman's for a seafood brunch (their oysters are my favorite). Our family's Mother's Day tradition led us to ask ourselves, "Wouldn't it be great to own our own boat and take it out whenever we had a spare moment?" Well, that led us to an intent search and soon we were at the doorstep of Mariner's Yacht & Ship Brokerage where we instantly bonded with a wonderful and extremely knowledgeable broker, Dave Markley, who educated us quickly on what to look for in our first boat. I grew up on boats in Hawaii, and being familiar with the "ahhhh" feeling that boating brings, couldn't wait to find our own vessel. Shortly thereafter we were the proud owners of a clean, pre-owned Monterey 262. We took all of 2 seconds to name her the Kailani (our daughter's middle name). "Kailani" means "ocean and sky" in Hawaiian and nothing resonated more with us than that being the perfect name. Now, weather permitting, we are on our boat, enjoying sunset cruises, trips to Catalina and Newport, whale and dolphin watching and simply lounging in our slip while soaking up the SoCal sun and our favorite beverages. Since introducing friends to our little whale and dolphin expeditions they, too, are ready for boat life. It has now become such a big part of our life you can almost always find us at the harbor when we're not selling homes. And every lovely day on the boat reminds us that we are, indeed, living our best Dana Life.

LEILANI SERRAO-BAKER

Leilani Serrao-Baker

BAKER
REAL ESTATE GROUP
AT DOUGLAS ELLIMAN REAL ESTATE



Cover photo credit

Bodie Kuljian
www.together-creative.com
Instagram: @togethercreative

LEILANI
SERRAO-BAKER



BAKER
REAL ESTATE GROUP
AT DOUGLAS ELLIMAN REAL ESTATE



PERFORMANCE
REVIEW

34.85

Average days on market

100.98%

Average list to sales price

100%

OF APPRAISALS AT
OR ABOVE LIST PRICE

100%

SOLD LISTINGS

949.444.9175

DRE 01908226

Leilani@leilanibakerhomes.com

leilanibakerhomes.com



JJ MAZZO

AND THE MAZZO GROUP



DOING THINGS OTHERS JUST CAN'T

For most of us, our home is the most expensive thing we'll ever buy. And for most of us, we need one big loan to do it — a mortgage, which is not something to be taken lightly. You want a lender that offers great rates and a wide selection of products, plus a knowledgeable and competent mortgage staff to help take the stress out of this stressful event in your life.

Cue the Mazzo Group and Senior Vice President JJ Mazzo, with CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC.

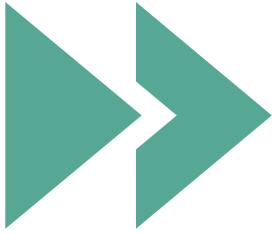
Whether you're purchasing or refinancing, with an offering of virtually every

mortgage product on the market, the Mazzo Group, at CrossCountry Mortgage, guarantees competitive rates and a staff of professionals that will help you make the most informed decision when navigating various loan options. What sets this group apart from others, though, is not its competitive rates; JJ Mazzo was the first in his region to create the 10-day escrow close guarantee, which allows borrowers to have the same advantage as cash buyers when competing for an accepted offer on a home purchase. "On about 95 percent of our products, we're able to close a loan in 10 days, and that allows

people to be competitive, especially in a multiple-offer situation," JJ says.

Another thing that makes this group special is its execution; everything is done in-house, including the docs, funding, underwriting, and processing. When choosing the Mazzo Group, at CrossCountry Mortgage, for lending needs, consumers aren't forced to sacrifice the speed with which their loan is processed. Simply put, JJ Mazzo, at CrossCountry Mortgage, runs a small company within a larger one, reporting only to the CEO, allowing the group to do things others just *can't*. And the





“I HAD A LOT OF GREAT MENTORS TO HELP ME WITH THAT. BEING ABLE TO PAY THAT FORWARD, WHICH IS WHAT I’M DOING NOW, IS PROBABLY THE PINNACLE OF SUCCESS FOR ME.”

perks don’t stop there. “When our clients release loan contingencies, we protect their deposit up to \$100,000. We also offer a per diem guarantee program that people can take advantage of, up to \$500 a day, when written in the client’s contract,” JJ said.

So how did it all start for JJ Mazzo? In 1996, JJ was 19 years old, working two jobs, going to college, and considering career options that would allow him to control his own destiny. A career in real estate was attractive, so he began seeking out opportunities that would allow him to start as an assistant for someone in the industry. One of his very first mentors opened that door for JJ and gave him an opportunity, and the rest is history.

“What I love about this business is helping other people obtain the dream of building wealth in real estate,” JJ said. Because he understood the mortgage business from

a young age, JJ was able to purchase his first property at just 20 years old, and since then has strived to pay it forward to others. In addition to his leadership role with the Mazzo Group, JJ is a Senior Business Coach with The CORE Training, Inc., the number one mortgage coaching company in the country. “I’ve been able to help change other people’s lives because I wasn’t so fortunate,” he said. “I grew up at 10 different schools, and lived in hotels and cars at times, so it wasn’t all peaches and cream for me growing up; I had to claw my way to the top, and I had a lot of great mentors to help me with that. Being able to pay that forward, which is what I’m doing now, is probably the pinnacle of success for me.”

With running 10 business locations from Southern California to South Dakota to Las Vegas, plus his role as a CORE coach, JJ travels quite frequently. How-

ever, he still very much has his hands in the everyday operations of his group. “I still do personal production — I’ve done loans every single day since I was 19 years old,” he said. “I still take loan applications today, which allows me to have a better understanding of the business for my salespeople and my operations people. And it’s just what I love to do. I love helping people.”

JJ is married to his wife, Kimberly, who also helps in the business, and together they have two children, Brooklyn, 15, and London, 11. When they aren’t at work or in school, the family is firm in their faith and can be found at Saddleback Church, gymnastics tournaments, biking on the beach, traveling, or on the boat in Dana Point. They love supporting the Orange County Rescue Mission, helping to provide the second chance with which they have been blessed.



MAZZO GROUP
CROSSCOUNTRY MORTGAGE™

877.237.9694
support@mazzogroup.com

JJ Mazzo - Senior Vice President/Originating Branch Manager NMLS186548

In Escrow

28521 Avenida La Mancha, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

\$3,300,000

4 bd | 5 ba | 5,095 sqft

In 5 days with multiple offers over asking



Welcome home to your gorgeous, Old-World, Santa Barbara-styled single-level estate, nestled in the rolling hills of San Juan Capistrano. This masterpiece underwent a \$1.3 million renovation 3 years ago and sparkles with timeless touches throughout while providing modern amenities. From the ornate front entry, arches, hand-hewn doors, wooden beams and Turkish travertine to the breathtaking hills and vista views throughout, this 4 bedroom, 4.5 bath, 5,100 square foot home on an almost one-half acre lot stuns at every turn. This home features 4 en-suite bedrooms, including the lush, spacious master suite with fireplace, sitting area and double doors leading to the patio, a huge walk-in closet with built-in shelves and luxurious master bath with large, tiled shower, double shower heads and heated and lighted infinity Jacuzzi tub.



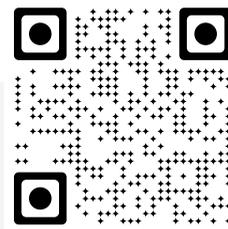
LEILANI
SERRAO-BAKER

949.444.9175

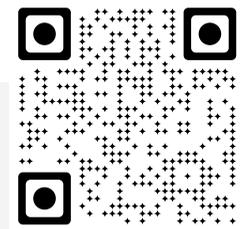
DRE 01908226

Leilani@leilanibakerhomes.com

leilanibakerhomes.com



Scan HERE with your smartphone camera to view a complete property website with photos and 3D walkthrough



Scan HERE with your smartphone camera for a high-definition MOVIE featuring this gorgeous home from sunrise to sunset



Also featured are formal and informal dining rooms, a grand office, a family room featuring a 6-foot tall stone fireplace, arched windows and double doors leading to the back yard, a professional chef's kitchen with alder wood cabinets, island with butcher block and Subzero, Wolf and Bosch appliances, a 500-bottle Vinotemp wine closet, a spacious laundry with farmhouse sink and ample storage and a huge 3-car garage with brand new epoxy flooring. The outdoor spaces include multiple sitting/entertainment areas, built-in gas rock fire pit and Bocce ball court, all with views of equestrian trails, rolling hills and magnificent sunsets.



If you would like to see your home featured here, contact Leilani.

JUST SOLD

8 Saint Moritz St
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656

\$790,000

3 beds | 1,386 sqft
3 baths | Year Built 1990

This beautiful 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath is move-in ready and located in highly desirable California Reflections. You will love the abundance of natural light in this home, provided by a grand wall of windows in the living room, along with vaulted ceilings and a cozy fireplace as the focal point. Open to your living and dining is your spacious kitchen.



22876 Montalvo Rd
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

\$815,000

2 beds | 1,369 sqft
2 baths | Year Built 1976

Enter through a private, gated, beautifully landscaped courtyard complete with a shaded awning and tranquil fountain. Once inside you'll find an inviting, open, airy and sunny living and dining area with vaulted ceilings and a cozy fireplace. There is a large beautifully remodeled kitchen with granite counters, direct access to your 2-car garage and a pass through to the dining area.



LEILANI
SERRAO-BAKER

949.444.9175

DRE 01908226
Leilani@leilanibakerhomes.com
leilanibakerhomes.com



BAKER
REAL ESTATE GROUP
AT DOUGLAS ELLIMAN REAL ESTATE

If you would like to see
your home featured here,
contact Leilani.



5 TIPS TO PREPARE YOUR GARDEN FOR SPRING

1. Inspect Garden Beds

Check garden beds for any damage.
Repair any bowed or split wood on the frames.

2. Check Your Garden Tools

Give garden tools a good wipe down and if rusty, soak the tool in 50% water and 50% vinegar. Then, give them a good scrub with steel wool. If your tools with wooden handles have any splits or cracks, rub them down with boiled linseed oil.

3. Turn Your Compost

It's time to turn your compost pile and check for any that is ready to use. Add compost to improve the soil by scratching finished compost into the top one inch of soil. This will give your soil plenty of nutrients to house new seedlings.

4. Top Dress Garden Beds

If you run short of home-grown compost, you can still give your soil a nutrient boost. Use well-seasoned manure to top-dress your garden beds in preparation for planting. If you planted a winter cover crop, now is the time to till it into the soil in preparation for planting the beds.

5. Plan to Protect Seedlings

As much as we try to predict the weather, a late season frost or freeze can happen anytime in the spring. Make sure you have enough cloth and plastic to protect tender plants. If a frost is predicted, just a cloth over your plants will suffice. For nights when the temps are forecast to dip below freezing, it's better to put a layer of cloth on first, then lay plastic on top. Condensation on the plastic can freeze and damage foliage.



#getyourtitledright

JOSHUA MEADOR

Sales Executive

📞 714.293.0798

✉️ Joshua.Meador@LTIC.com

 **Lawyers Title**
www.joshmeador.octlic.com

Getting to know...

Captain Mike O'Connor, C.P.Y.B. President/ Broker of record at Mariner's Yacht & Ship Brokerage in Dana Point Harbor

Mike grew up just south of Boston in the early 1950s where he says, "We didn't have a great deal of money growing up, but I spent time with my dad working on things around the house, and boats always fascinated me, especially the articles in Popular Mechanics. There were always detailed drawings of how a boat was built and color pictures of people having fun on the water." When Mike was about 12 years old one of the articles that influenced him was "How to Build Your Own Sailboat." Mike begged his dad to help him build one. And once he got him to finally agree, they got a couple of pieces of ¼" plywood and some 1"x 3" fir and went to work. His dad, being a machinist at the time, came up with the boom and mast from scrap aluminum from his shop. Mike recalls, "Mom put together a small canvas sail. It was a great family project!" Once the excitement of building wore off they realized the only problem was, no one in the family knew how to sail. "Seriously, for the first two years I thought sailing was all about swimming and bailing! Eventually I realized it had to do with wind." This was his introduction that would become his lifelong passion!

In his late 20s Mike moved to Sothern California after time in the Air Force. Looking for a change, he got his degree in Audio Engineering and worked and traveled all over the world. "Whenever we were near any body of water with a little time to spare, I would charter a boat and go sailing." He had his own Catalina 30 in Dana Point at the time and one day, in late September, when returning home from a tour he had this nagging urge to go sailing; not knowing why, but just knowing he had to go. Around 3 p.m. that day he finally gave in and headed out to the harbor. "Heading south I noticed this colored sail way off in the distance. I watched that sail come straight at me for about an hour. As the tiny Hobie Cat passed I turned to wave and realized there was no one on the boat! I knew then why I had to go sailing. Realizing I would find whoever was on it eventually, I just was not sure what shape they would be in. I continued on the same course for a while and decided I would need to take a bearing and radio my position to the Coast Guard to start the search. As I was headed down below to the radio; I heard a very faint 'Help, Help!' I looked off and spotted two kids in the water about five miles off Dana Point. I did get them in the boat and safely back to shore and it was at that moment I realized that too many people were out on the water with little or no experience. Right then and there I decided to get my Captain's License and try to educate just some of the boating public." Mike went on to get his 100 ton Master's license and was asked to Captain a very famous 1928 Schooner in Dana Point called Kelpie. He jumped at the chance.



Soon after, he joined Dana West Yacht Club. "It's a wonderful place full of interesting people. It seemed every time I walked into the club, there were always two or three people that would have a question about boats." He was soon fielding questions like, "I have this problem or that problem, what do you think? I want to sell my boat how much do you think it is worth? I'm looking for a new boat, what should I buy?" As the questions continued to come in, Mike thought to himself, "Well, if all these people are asking for my advice and keeping me from my 'adult beverage', my 30+ years of knowledge must be worth something!" About that time, he was approached by a small brokerage firm to come onboard and try his hand at selling yachts. Once again, he enthusiastically jumped on board.



Mike shares that, "After participating in hundreds of sales I have so many memorable moments and have made many, many friends. People start out as clients and because of the personal nature of yacht sales (you are participating in their dreams) you become a part of their life. To me the most memorable and rewarding part of all yacht sales transactions is when the new buyer gets to cut the Mariner's Yacht & Ship Brokerage sign off the bow of their new boat. When they hand my sign back to me, the look on their face says it all! It never ceases to amaze me to see the joy in their eyes. On the other side of the transaction it becomes just as rewarding to hand the seller his big fat check and hear him say, 'now Mike let's go find my new boat!'" His favorite part about being a boat broker is summed up in one word, "relationships", and strives to continue building them on trust and mutual respect.

Mike works with all types of clients. "Whether it is a first-time buyer or an old salt, I will guide everyone through each step of the process. Each transaction takes on a life of its own. Typically, it is a combination of the buyer, the seller, the personality of the boat, surveyor, shipyard, lender and insurance company. Each situation it is very different and just as challenging as rewarding."

With over 50 years of boating experience and having a great deal of experience with anything mechanical, Mike is quite comfortable aboard any type of boat. "I have raced hydroplanes, sail boats, captained fishing boats and spectacular wooden schooners, but sailing will always be my first love."

When Mike reflects on why he chose Dana Point to call home he can't help but compare his Boston-to-Dana Point move to Richard Henry Dana's (the author of "Two Years Before the Mast") who called Dana Point "the most romantic port on the west coast." Mike highly recommends reading the book and explains, "It's the story of another boy from Boston's adventures and falling in love with this magical place we call home." He also makes it very clear that his love for Dana Point has much to do with the fact that he can sail 363 days of the year and will never shovel 10' of snow in "partly cloudy", twenty degree weather again!

You can find Mariner's Yacht & Ship Brokerage on Yacht World, Boat Trader, Yachts for Sale, and of course www.MarinersYachts.com.

Or just stop by their waterfront office located between J & K docks on the cove side next to Coffee Importers.

Or better yet, look for him at Dana Point Yacht Club. He'll be the one with the "adult beverage" surrounded by others, answering sailing and boating questions with a genuine smile on his face.

Would you like to be a featured business for free?

Contact us to learn how:
support@MaginTouch.com



On Point with Donna Kalez

General Manager of Dana Wharf Sportfishing and Whale Watching

As one of the first businesses in Dana Point Harbor, DWSF is celebrating 50 years in business. Family-owned since 1971, DWSF was started by Don Hansen and has been passed on to his children Mike, David and Donna. Donna says she has been “immersed in the business since I was born” and is now involved with her brother, Mike, in the day-to-day operations of the company, while their brother David runs yachts and social media platforms dedicated to fishing. Donna remembers fondly going whale watching as a young girl with her father and fishing with the Dana Wharf Lady Anglers, and now shares that her favorite part of running DWSF is “giving back to the community! We love to donate fishing trips, whale watching trips and private charters to children as well as military families. We are very well known for our philanthropy.”

Through that charitable dedication, Donna, along with Gisele Anderson, co-owner of Captain Dave’s Dolphin and Whale Watching Safari, both leaders in their industry, trademarked Dana Point, the Dolphin & Whale Watching Capital of the World ® and also got Dana Point designated as the first Whale Heritage Site in the Americas. With assistance from World Cetacean Alliance (WCA), the world’s largest marine conservation partnership dedicated to the promotion of safe and sustainable whale watching, they achieved their goal of putting Dana Point on the map. A Whale Heritage Site is an outstanding location where cetaceans (whales, dolphins, or porpoises) are embraced through the cultural, economic, social, and political lives of associated communities, and where people and cetaceans coexist in an authentic and respectful way. Donna explained, “To have Dana Point recognized as a Whale Heritage Site is a dream and has been a goal of mine for some time. Dana Point has historically been an incredible destination to watch and to learn about whales and dolphins and now we are happy to share this with the world.” The process and criteria for acceptance is incredibly difficult and challenging and we have Donna and Gisele to thank for this exciting recognition.

DWSF has 27 boats in their fleet with everything from fishing boats to Catamarans to the classic schooner sailing ships and they even offer parasailing. Another of Donna’s joys is that they have clients from all over the country and the world. “Watching many of these people see a whale or dolphin in the wild for the first time is certainly a privilege and it is very rewarding to be a part of that experience and memory!”

And now what’s to come? “The harbor is 50 years old, and we have been here the whole time. And while it needs revitalization, we are very excited, can’t wait for construction to start this fall and look forward to continuing exceptional service to the community of Dana Point!”

For more information or to book your tour today go to Danawharf.com or call 888-224-0603



When is the best time to sell?

In this hot seller's market, many home owners are considering selling, but are not sure about the timing.

Summer is traditionally believed to be the best time to sell a home, but statistics show that it may really be spring. You can expect to sell 18.5 days faster in the spring than in any other season and for a 5.9% greater closing price. And this spring may be the best time of all. Here are a few reasons to consider selling your home this spring:

1. There's high demand from homebuyers.

Buyer demand is strong right now and buyers are active in the market. ShowingTime, which tracks the average number of buyer showings for residential properties, recently announced that buyer showings are up 51.5% compared to this time last year.

2. There aren't enough houses for sale.

According to Orange County Housing Report, "Last year at the beginning of April there were 4,183 homes on the market, 1,943 additional homes, or 87% more than in other seasons. The 5-year average from 2015 to 2019 is 5,552, an extra 3,312 homes, or 148% more homes available during the spring season compared to all other seasons.

3. In spring, traditionally, homes sell faster.

You can expect your home to sell faster during the spring season. According to Realtor.com, on average, homes listed in spring sell 9% faster. Homes that close in April, May and June show the lowest days on the market.

4. During the spring, the list-to-sales price ratio is statistically higher than during the rest of the year.

Based on Realtor.com's statistics, the list-to-sale price ratio is HIGHEST in the spring, closing 6% higher compared to homes listed during other months of the year.

5. Curb appeal improves as trees, flowers and grass bloom.

Homes with high curb appeal tend to sell for an average of 7% more than similar houses with an uninviting exterior, according to National Association of Realtors.

6. You can get ahead of summer competition and beat the rush.

Realtor.com reports that July and August show the highest level of inventory, as many potential sellers believe they should wait until summer to list their homes for sale.

7. Tax refunds come in the late winter or early spring, making more funds available for repairs and renovations.

8. Homes are currently selling over asking price.

In California, fully 60% of homes sold last month garnered more than their asking price, according to research by the National Association of Realtors. It's important to note, however, that homes still need to be presented well and priced right if the seller wants to cash in on their highest possible return. In addition, getting into escrow is only part of the picture. You need to complete the entire transaction smoothly and close to receive that large deposit. Even in this market, pricing right, marketing, negotiations, strategy and presentation can make all the difference in your overall profit. Many agents sign a contract, take photos, pick a price out of the blue, stick a sign in the ground and call it good. While yes, a home will still sell, it may take longer and you may be leaving money on the table. Be a part of the 60%, not the other 40%.



Just Listed

322 W Avenida Gaviota, San Clemente, CA 92672

\$8,450,000

7 bd | 8 ba | 7910 sqft on a 0.67 acre lot



Capturing whitewater ocean views from nearly every vantage point, this expansive bluff-top estate offers unparalleled privacy & state-of-the-art construction in one of San Clemente's most coveted locations. Built in 2008 on a 27k sq ft lot, the ICF-constructed James Glover masterpiece blends Spanish revival architecture (complete with Santa Barbara smooth plaster and 100% mud roof!) with ultra-modern functionality. Once you step foot on the cobblestone motor court, complete with a 4.5 stall garage suitable for all the cars & toys, you are transported to your own private resort! Accommodating multi-generational living, the main level hosts a master suite & living areas that flow to multiple ocean view patios & a Pebble Tec pool/spa.



LEILANI
SERRAO-BAKER

949.444.9175

DRE 01908226

Leilani@leilanibakerhomes.com

leilanibakerhomes.com



BAKER
REAL ESTATE GROUP
AT DOUGLAS ELLIMAN REAL ESTATE

Contact Leilani for more
information



The great room & chef's kitchen transition through a collapsible 16' Albertini doors to a generous sunset view deck. Custom features include walnut woodwork, teak Albertini windows & exterior doors and Yucatan limestone flooring. A floating spiral staircase leads to 2 en suite bedrooms, game room, custom raw-wood bar & outdoor shower downstairs. Upstairs a penthouse master, office/flex space, library, 2 en suite bedrooms & an 800 sq ft bonus room which offers potential for separate living quarters with a private entrance and deck. Whether you're hosting lavish events, relaxing on the roof deck or blufftop fire pit, or playing games on your private peninsula shaped yard, there are dozens of settings to take in stunning views of the Pacific Ocean.



Photo credit Josh Gunter @joshguntercreative



(949) 289-3979
support@magintouch.com
www.MaginTouch.com

PRSR STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM RETAIL

Local
Postal Customer

BAKER
REAL ESTATE GROUP
AT DOUGLAS ELLIMAN REAL ESTATE



LEILANI
SERRAO-BAKER

949.444.9175

DRE 01908226

Leilani@leilanibakerhomes.com

leilanibakerhomes.com

