David Schapiro, Editor
Date: October 22, 2026

EXCHANGE
THE EXCHANGE CLUB OF NEWPORT HARBOR, CA

Ph: (949) 300-5449
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MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Last Thursday's Serving with Honor Awards Luncheon celebrated the men and women of the Newport Beach Police and Fire Departments, recognizing this year's employees and volunteers of the year from both departments. There was a total of 50, including 25 of our members, the remainder including the award recipients, their families and friends, and City and Community leaders. The latter included **N.B. Mayor Lauren Kleiman; Steve Rosansky,** President and CEO of the N.B. Chamber of Commerce; **Chief of Police Dave Miner;** and **Fire Chief Ken Boyles.**

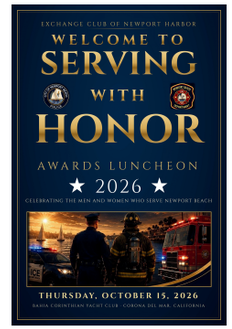
ECNH President Leo Fracalosy opened the meeting, and **Claudette Mekalian** offered a special prayer for our fire and police officers. She thanked our Heavenly Father for the many blessings He has given us in our lives, and for the brave men and women we are honoring today; for their dedication and selfless service to keep our community safe. She asked that He protect them and their families. She also asked that He remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. She asked that He bless our gathering, our fellowship, and the wonderful community that we are dedicated to serving. **George Lesley** then led us in honoring the American flag with the Salute to Old Glory.

SERVING WITH HONOR – Leo introduced **Cynthia Strasmann** and **Richard Swinney** as co-emcees of this year's program. **Cynthia** began the program by stating that the luncheon is "our Club living out its mission, to thank those who serve with honor so that the rest of us can live, work and raise our families in a community that we're proud of." **Richard** followed by giving credit to **Cynthia** for organizing the event, thanking those who were in attendance, and giving a brief synopsis of Exchange: who we are and what we do. He mentioned that we are the oldest service club in Newport Beach, and that the Field of Honor (FOH) is our largest fundraiser, a substantial portion of net proceeds of which is donated to the Marines 1:1 Foundation at Camp Pendelton; and to the O.C. Child Abuse Prevention Center, a.k.a. Priority Center. At the FOH, we have always had police and fire department employees assist us; and that we couldn't do it without their help…..Both **Mayor Kleiman** and **Steve Rosansky** made brief presentations thanking the police and fire department award recipients for their service, and to ECNH for honoring them.

Each year, both the N.B. Fire Department and the N.B. Police Department nominate individuals whose work exemplifies real dedication to this community.
Richard presented the awards for the **Fire Department** personnel:

- **Civilian of the Year: Walid Harding** – A city employee for 8 years who has served as a fiscal specialist, managing the Department's Fire Medics Program, EMS Billing, and statistical reporting.
- **Seasonal Lifeguard of the Year: Rhoads Rosenthal** – His 9th year with the N.B. Lifeguards, an avid surfer spending his off-seasons traveling the world.
- **Lifeguard Supervisor of the Year: Rob Marienthal** – 20-year employee of the N.B. Lifeguards, hired as a full-time employee in 2022, serving as Safety Officer for the Junior Lifeguard Program, and as President of the N.B. Ocean Lifeguard Association, supporting the department's 250 seasonal lifeguards.
- **Firefighter of the Year: Dustin Suppe** – 14-yr. employee of the Fire Department, holding the title of Firefighter/Paramedic. He serves on the department's EMS Committee and is a member of the newly formed SWAT Paramedic Team.

Cynthia followed with the presentation of the **N.B. Police Department** awards. (The department has provided a short video for each honoree):





- **Volunteer of the Year**: **Pam Parker** – She has dedicated over 300 hours to the NBPD in 2025 and serves as mentor for some of the newer volunteers. She assures that the residents' homes are safe and secure when doing vacation checks.
- **Civilian of the Year**: Sara Verschueren – Sara has consistently furthered the department's central mission of disrupting criminal activity. She assists residents in providing home security inspections to try to prevent their homes from being burglarized. She organizes dozens of committee meetings every year.
- **Civilian Supervisor of the Year: Thomas Encheff** – In aligning with the department's requirement to keep pace with technology's advances and improvements, Thomas has been responsible for overseeing the drone program for the City.
- **Sworn Supervisor of the Year: Michael Fletcher** - A mentor and father figure for the younger officers in the department, before and after their graduation.
- **Officer of the Year: Samuel Nilsson** – A Use-of-Force Instructor, First Aid Instructor. And Firearms and Defensive Tactics Instructor, Samuel has had a phenomenal year in 2025.



All award recipients gave thanks for the support given to them and their respective departments by the Exchange Club as well as the community that they serve. Richard presented a surprise Special Recognition Award to Fire Chief Ken Boyles. Chief Boyles was honored this year with the Ronny Jack Coleman Award at the CA Fire Chiefs Association Conference, "one of the highest distinctions in California's fire service, recognizing exceptional leadership, vision, and commitment to advancing the fire profession."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Claudette reported that Mike Gertner was at home and currently doing well; he is getting physical therapy at home and has shown dramatic improvement. His wife, Jan, expressed her gratitude for keeping them in our thoughts.

- **BUDDY BENCHES -** On October 16, our Club and Patrick's Purpose Foundation dedicated a new Buddy Bench at Woodland Elementary. Our next dedication is at Lincoln Elementary on October 23, and everyone is welcome to attend. Please arrive by 7:50 AM.
- **JOHN KRUSE MEMORIAL GARDEN DEDICATION - O**n October 23, Back Bay High School will dedicate its garden to Mrs. Kruse in honor of her late husband, John, whose $6,000 bequest made the garden possible. If you'd like to attend, please arrive at the school by noon.
- **FOOTBALL POOLS** – Current football coordinator Garry TeWinkle, substituting for Mike Gertner during his absence, announced the results of last week's Football Pool. The booby prize of $3 for the lowest score (7 right) went to Ken DuFour; the winning score of 13 right answers was a tie between Roy Shlemon and Claudette Mekalian, with Claudette getting the $19 prize after having the better tiebreaker number…..Lydia Ledesma Reese thanked all the first responders and announced our campaign for attracting sponsors for the 2027 Field of Honor in May of next year.

OPPORTUNITY DRAWING

This week's raffle tickets were both held by guests: Sara Verscheuren and Police Sergeant Eric Little, who each took home $35.

THE EXCHANGE CLUB OF NEWPORT HARBOR
UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	SPEAKER/SUBJECT
Oct 22	Dr. Andy Gerken, Candidate, NB City Council (w/ Campaign Mgr. Teray Stephens)
Oct 29	Patricia Wenskunas from Crime Survivors
Nov 5	Robyn Grant, City of NPB City Council Member
Nov 12	One Nation Under God | America250 Celebration | Keynote Speaker, Cory Vigil



President
Leo Fracalosy

Lunch will be served at next Thursday's meeting at 12:20 p.m. You will be emailed an invitation before the meeting. Please notify Lisa Jelke by Sunday evening if you are planning on attending.

Please visit our website:
www.exchangeclubofnewportharbor.org

Spindrift

EXCHANGE CLUB OF NEWPORT HARBOR
Box 1022, Newport Beach, CA 92659-0022
Newport's First Service Club,1926 * Re–Chartered January 18, 1959

National Club Achievement Award 2009 * National Service Award 2001, 2004, 2009, 2010, 2011
National Big E Award 17 Years * District Best Club Newsletter Award 2001—2006, 2009, 2010 2011
National Club Membership Achievement Award 2005, 2009 * National Excellence Award 2009

National Awards
FirstPlace
Best ClubBulletin Editor, 2001
Best Club Web Video 2011
Best Club Public Relations 2017

CA/NV District Awards
Outstanding Club Awards
Dare to Dream Award 2026

Meets at Bahia Corinthian Yacht Club
1601 Bayside Drive, Corona del Mar
Thursdays | 12 Noon

OFFICERS
President - Leo Fracalosy
President Elect.- Richard Swinney
Vice President, Programs- Mitch Mitchell
Secretary - Lisa Jelke
Treasurer - George Lesley
Immediate Past President - Ross Stewart

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

One Year Term	Two Year Term
Marianne Amerine	Barbara Kirkham
Michael Newcomb	Gina Lesley
Lauretta Stansfield	Claudette Mekalian

AMERICANISM - TBD
Field of Honor. - Richard Swinney
Freedom Shrine - Gale Demmer
Proudly We Hail- George Lesley

COMMUNITY SERVICE - Leo Fracalosy
John Crean Book of Golden Deeds - Garry TeWinkle
Crime Prevention - TBD
Fire Prevention - Jerry Strom
Service to Seniors - Ed Romeo
Adopt a Family - TBD
Child Abuse Prevention - Richard Swinney

FUNDRAISING - Ken Dufour & George Lesley
Movie Benefit - George Lesley
Budget Committee - George Lesley/ Ken DuFour
Sports Books - TBD
Football Pool - Mike Gertner

SOCIAL COMMITTEE - TBD
Birthday Recognition - Fran Murphy
Christmas - Cynthia Strasmann
Member Welfare - TBD
Social Events/Fellowship - TBD

MEMBERSHIP - TBD
Education - Mike Gertner
Club Roster - Cynthia Strasmann
Inductions - Past Presidents
Membership Badges - Ken Dufour
New Member Orientation - Sponsors
Recruitment - All Members

YOUTH PROGRAMS - Cynthia Strasmann
Youth of the Year - Lydia Ledesma-Reese
A.C.E. Program - Cynthia Strasmann
Young Citizenship Award - Cynthia Strasmann
Patriotic Art - Cynthia Strasmann
Buddy Bench - Cynthia Strasmann
Freedom's Legacy Student Program - Cynthia Strasmann

PROGRAMS - Mitch Mitchell & Diane Daruty
Meeting Setup …….K Dufour/R Shlemon/M Newcomb

PUBLIC RELATIONS
Media Coverage - Dave Schapiro
Spindrift Editors - D Schapiro/D Daruty/M Newcomb

INVESTMENT - Richard Swinney

ACTIVE PAST PRESIDENTS

Mike Gertner | CDM Club 67-68
Mike Gertner | 9/78-8/79
Garry TeWinkle | 9/79-8/80
Mitch Mitchell | 9/83-8/84
W.C.Fox| 9/91-9/92
George Lesley| 9/93-8/94
W.C.Fox | 1/00-6/00

Duncan Forgey | 7/05-6/06
Jerry Nininger | 7/09-6/10
Leo Fracalosy | 7/12-6/13
Wally Ziglar | 7/13-6/14
Leo Fracalosy | 7/15-7/16
Richard Swinney | 7/18 - 6/19

Ken Dufour | 7/19-6/20
George Lesley | 7/20-6/21
Mike Gertner | 7/21-6/22
Ken Dufour | 7/22-6/23
Shirley Lashmett | 7/23-6/24
Roy Shlemon | 7/24-6/25
Ross Stewart| | 7/25-6/26

ANNUAL ACTIVITY CALENDAR

JULY
National Convention
Membership Drive

AUGUST
Membership Drive
Installation 29th

SEPTEMBER
Sports Books
Membership Drive

OCTOBER
Serving with Honor Awards

NOVEMBER
One Nation Under God
Proudly We Hail

DECEMBER
Christmas Party
Families Helping Families

JANUARY
ECNH Birthday

FEBRUARY
Community Service Month

MARCH
National Exchange Birthday
Club Nominations

APRIL
Child Abuse Prevention Month
Club Elections
A.C.E. Awards

MAY
Freedom Shrine Month
GIVEAKIDAFLAGTOWAVE
Citizenship Award
Field of Honor
Patriotic Art Initiative
Youth of the Year Awards

JUNE
Milestones of Freedom
Installation Banquet