

# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 03 Issue 26 Wednesday, March 3, 2010

## Spring Cleaning, a Shared Tradition

*...and one that is rapidly turning "green"*

By Sophie Braccini



*Digging Deep on page 8*



*Elsi Mastick takes her spring cleaning seriously*

*Photo Sophie Braccini*

It's hard to miss the signs -- spring is almost here. Already sprightly bulbs revive our roadsides, scattered showers mix with bright sun and fruit trees are beginning to bear bunches of blossoms. As the birds sing away in the gardens, we want to open our windows to the spring's milder winds; a feeling of lightness fills our homes. The days grow longer and our circadian rhythms adjust; our bodies produce less melatonin, giving us increased energy. Perhaps it's no wonder that many traditions link this time of year with a thorough house cleaning. To many, spring cleaning is a spiritual act, an opportunity to get rid of the old and make room for the new, to bring order, beauty and harmony to the physical environment.

Cleaning traditions have existed for thousands of years. Some ancient societies cleaned before the onset of winter. Others used the longer hours of daylight in the spring and summer to get their abodes thoroughly cleaned and dried. The Chinese have a long tradition of cleaning their homes before the lunar New Year to rid them of bad luck. Spring cleaning is often linked to religious practices, for example, observant Jews have always cleaned their homes before Pesach, or Passover, to ensure that no traces of leavened foods (chametz) remain in the home.

"Some trace the origin of spring cleaning to Norouz, the Persian Zoroastrian New Year tradition that started some 2500 years ago in our region and coincides with the spring equinox," says Katty Amirdelfan of Orinda, "it has a symbolic meaning; it signifies leaving the old behind, both spiritually and physically." Iranians today continue the practice of "khooneh tekouni" which literally means "shaking the house." Everything in the house is thoroughly cleaned, from drapes to floors, and windows to furniture.

*... continued  
on page 6*



## Kurt Piper presents

### 851 Paradise Court, Lafayette



**Prime Downtown Location.** Beautifully remodeled 3 bedroom 2 bath ranch style home ideally located within walking distance to eight years of schools, the popular regional trail, downtown and brand new Lafayette library. You will fall in love with this charming home that includes gourmet kitchen, remodeled baths, hardwood floors and wood beam ceilings. A fabulous location for everyday living.

**Offered at \$985,000**

### 616 Huntleigh Drive, Lafayette



**Exquisite Burton Valley Home.** 3 bedrooms, 2 baths. Gorgeous view lot. Designer touches. Crown moldings & hardwood floors. Tastefully remodeled bathrooms. Closet organizers. Large backyard patio and sprawling lush lawns.

**Offered at \$949,000**



## Kurt Piper

400+ closed transactions  
A leading broker for 17 years  
35 year resident of Lamorinda



www.kurtpiper.com  
kurt@kurtpiper.com

o (925) 253-2527  
c (925) 818-8000

## Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

<b>LAFAYETTE</b>	Last reported: 4
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$487,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,523,000
<b>MORAGA</b>	Last reported: 5
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$180,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$850,000
<b>ORINDA</b>	Last reported: 4
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$731,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,400,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal Resource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California Resource. Neither Cal Resource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

### LAFAYETTE

330 Denise Lane, \$675,000, 4 Bdrms, 2422 SqFt, 2000 YrBlt, 2-10-10  
3116 Diablo View Road, \$487,000, 4 Bdrms, 2155 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 2-4-10  
995 Kelley Court, \$1,523,000, 5 Bdrms, 3599 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 2-3-10  
639 Laird Lane, \$615,000, 3 Bdrms, 2025 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 2-2-10

### MORAGA

2067 Ascot Drive #141, \$180,000, 1 Bdrms, 777 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 2-4-10  
911 Augusta Drive, \$850,000, 4 Bdrms, 1708 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 2-5-10  
111 Merion Terrace, \$815,000, 3 Bdrms, 2680 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 2-4-10  
1727 St. Andrews Drive, \$525,000, 3 Bdrms, 1749 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 2-4-10  
556 Woodminster Drive, \$517,000, 3 Bdrms, 1572 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 2-9-10

### ORINDA

14 Cedar Lane, \$905,000, 3 Bdrms, 2736 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 1-29-10  
254 Glorietta Boulevard, \$731,000, 4 Bdrms, 2459 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 2-8-10  
27 Ichabod Lane, \$1,400,000, 5 Bdrms, 2139 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 2-5-10  
38 Linda Vista, \$875,000, 2 Bdrms, 1770 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 2-2-10

## Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

### ORINDA

100 Lucille Way, Long Beach Mortgage, 01-26-10, \$865,814, 3083 sf, 5 bd



**SLUGI** FINE BEDDING & GIFTS  
Japanese Style & Comfort

**10-50% OFF**  
selected items

- Natural Hand-crafted Futons
- ◆ Solid Hardwood Frames
- ◆ Tatami Platforms & Mats
- ◆ Custom Comforter Covers
- ◆ Shoji Screen & Lanterns








Dana Green



Sarah Edwards

[www.DanaGreenTeam.com](http://www.DanaGreenTeam.com)



**(925) 339-1918**

[danagreen@rockcliff.com](mailto:danagreen@rockcliff.com)

# Dana Green Presents...

## Four Great Reasons to Buy!

Lic. 01482454

### 1920's Historical Estate Property!

**61 Crest Avenue, Alamo**



**1-Of-A-Kind!**

Renovated 4BD+, 3.5BA, 3659 sq. ft. estate. Additional 400 +/- sq. ft. finished basement, hardwoods, French doors, historical windows, high ceilings, wood-beams & built-ins. 1-acre private grounds w/pool!

**\$1,399,000**

### Modern-Day Farmhouse!

**3576 Powell Drive, Lafayette**



**Lafayette Woodlands!**

Modern-day farmhouse built in 2003! Filled w/old fashion warmth & charm, this 5BD/5BA, custom home has 4258 sq.ft. Dream backyard w/built-in spa, brick fireplace, & expansive lawn!

**\$2,295,000**

### Renovated Happy Valley Treasure!

**33 Los Arabis Cir., Lafayette**



**1.48 Acres!**

Spectacular 1.48-acre estate property with stunning valley views, pool, spa, level lawn, play structure and gazebo, set amongst the Oaks. This beautifully updated 3800+/- sq. ft. home has 5+BD and 3.5 BA.

**\$2,195,000**

### Beautiful Burton Valley Remodel!

**3179 Cordova Way, Lafayette**



**Pending in 7 days!**

Beautifully remodeled Burton Valley rancher w/ 4 BD, 2.5 BA & 1958 sq. ft. Granite kitchen, open floor plan, oversized bedrooms & private master suite. .24-acre park-like yard!

**\$935,000**

# Sharp by Hand

By Susie Iventosch

If your kitchen knife is feeling dull, and has lost the competitive edge it once had, a visit to Sharp by Hand for a little tune up may be in order! Professional sharpener David Latham makes a point to put the edge back in your knife's life, by giving it a hand-honed edge.

Sharp by Hand is at the Moraga Farmers' Market most Sundays, and can diagnose and correct your knife's problems while you shop the market. Latham can usually sharpen two or three knives while you wait, but if you have an entire set, it's a good idea to leave them with him and return the following week for pick up. It typically takes 10 to 15 minutes per knife, depending up on the size and condition of the knife. He also suggests arriving early, when the market opens (9 a.m.), so he has plenty of time to fit in as many customers as possible before the market shutters at 1 p.m.

Latham started his business when his own kitchen knives were in need of sharpening.

"I looked everywhere to find a good sharpener, but didn't like what I saw," he said. "Most were using belts and sanders or grinding wheels, which I thought to be too aggressive for knives used by the home chef."

After much research, he discovered a custom-made abrasive water stone system, which he calls the "Cadillac" of hand-operated knife sharpening systems.

"It was very expensive, but I bought it anyway," he noted. "I sharpened all of my knives and it did a great job. Then, I moved onto my friends and family and sharpened all of their knives."

When he ran out of knives to sharpen, he decided to branch out and make a business of it—to share his newly honed skill and to capitalize on his investment.

According to Latham, the home sharpening systems such as Chef's Choice don't necessarily have the appropriate angles for all knives and they use a stone with "middle of the road" coarseness, which again may not be appropriate for every knife. And, they often sheer off too much metal with each use.

Chef Lesley Stiles, who owns a Pleasant Hill catering company of the same name, takes her knives to Sharp by Hand on a regular basis.

"Each knife has its own life and its own story to tell," she said. "Each needs personal attention and David does exactly that. I use my



David Latham at work

Photo Andy Scheck

knives constantly and the edges last a long time after he's sharpened them. The trait of a good sharpener is if you can use your steel to keep the edge sharp in between visits."

Both Latham and Stiles say their favorite knives are Wüsthof chef knives. David likes the 6-7" blade while Stiles likes her 10" chef's knife. It is largely a matter of what feels comfortable in your hand.

"Spending money on one good quality knife such as a Wüsthof, that could last a lifetime, is a smarter investment than buying a whole set of inferior-quality knives," instructed Latham. "For students or young people going out on their own, Dexter-Russell knives are also a very good value, and they sharpen up very well."

Susan Marconi, manager of Across the Way in Moraga, said she and her dad, Sal Zammitti, have taken their knives to Sharp by Hand and are very pleased with the results.

"The knives had beautiful edges when we picked them up," Marconi said. "There were no rough spots at all. The blades were consistent from tip to handle and they have held their edges very well."

Latham says that there are three things that determine how well an edge will hold: the surface of the cutting board, what is being cut, and how the operator uses it. For example, cutting on glass, ceramic or steel surfaces will dull a knife more quickly than on composite, wood or plastic surfaces. Similarly, if the owner mis-treats the knife by tossing it loosely in a drawer, running it through the dishwasher, or using it

as a can opener, box cutter or chisel, the life expectancy of the edge and the knife itself will be compromised.

Serrated knives are a different animal all together and should be taken to a specialist who has dedicated machines for this type of blade. They can be hand-sharpened by thinning the flat side of the knife at a very shallow angle and then running a much finer thin, (rat-tail) file through the scallops, but it is usually best to send them off to a sharpener with a machine designed to re-contour the scallops.

"These knives are real workhorses in the kitchen, but are not well-suited to a lot of sharpening because of the smaller surface area around each contour on the scalloped edge," Latham explained. "And it's expensive, so I suggest sharpening your serrated knives only when absolutely necessary."

Latham and his wife, Annie, enjoy the Sunday morning farmers' market ritual in Moraga.

"It is a really nice community experience," he noted. "I've learned a lot about the area's youth soccer, schools and teachers. It's like an active 'town square' that meets on Sunday mornings!"

In Patti's world, everyone's a winner!

COLDWELL  
BANKER  
RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE

I Lost Valley Ct, Orinda

OPEN Sun  
2-4:30pm



Patti Camras  
925.899.9282

**Great new price** for this fabulous 5 bedroom, 3.5 bath, 3100 sq.ft. home nestled on a cul-de-sac on a private 1.47 ac. lot. The dramatic open floor plan features hardwood floors, new carpeting, indoor-outdoor living, a private in-law suite, great style, Brazilian hardwood decking, an expansive flat lawn, an in-ground trampoline and room for a vineyard. **\$1,395,000**

WWW.PATTICAMRAS.COM

PATTI.CAMRAS@CAMOVES.COM

## Sharp by Hand - David Latham

Phone: (925) 808-9834, Email: sharpby-hand@gmail.com

To learn more about knife sharpening and what to look for, Latham suggests this web site: <http://forums.egullet.org/index.php?//topic/26036-knife-maintenance-and-sharpening/>



**Harvest Sun  
Garden Gate**

designed & fabricated  
by ModoVerde,  
locally in Lafayette

(925) 360-4694  
[www.modoverde.com](http://www.modoverde.com)



*ModoVerde*  
Garden Design & Elements

Serving your needs in  
Garden design  
Garden elements design  
&  
fabrication.



PACIFIC UNION INTERNATIONAL

**PACIFIC  
UNION**  
GMAC Real Estate  
**International**  
*Exclusive Affiliate of*  
**CHRISTIE'S  
GREAT ESTATES®**

The Fine Art Of Fine Property™

[www.PacUnion.com](http://www.PacUnion.com)

8 Camino Encinas, Suite 100 | Orinda | 925.258.0090



**YEARS OF EXPERIENCE & RESULTS**

Orinda • Moraga • Lafayette • Alamo • Piedmont



**LINDA VAN DRENT**, Associate Broker  
**925.253.4604**  
[LindaVanDrent.com](http://LindaVanDrent.com) • DRE#01051129



## Just what the doctor ordered!

### 225 Mayhew Way #15, Walnut Creek:

Stylishly updated 2 bedroom townhouse just minutes away from BART on the Iron Horse Trail.

Priced to sell at **\$339,000**



### 3420 Woodview Drive, Lafayette.

Spectacular views and tastefully updated throughout. Over 2500 sq ft. 4bd, 3bth + media room.

**\$1,185,000**



Frith Wiggins and Lisa Hactor,  
"The Home Sales Doctors"  
We Make House Calls!



**Lisa Hactor** (925) 698-5752  
www.lisahactor.com  
lisa.hactor@prurealty.com Lic. #01300193

**Frith Wiggins** (925) 698-6030  
www.frithwiggins.com  
frith.wiggins@prurealty.com Lic. #01433398

## Judy Schoenrock presents: HARMONY AND RELAXATION!

### 1842 Del Rey Street, Lafayette

Gorgeous 3 bedroom 2 bath remodel with a beautiful park-like yard. Eat-in kitchen with granite and artistic tiles, stainless appliances and walk-in pantry. Sunny living room with gas fireplace. Master has walk-in closet and lavish remodeled bath. Hardwood floors, double paned windows, air-conditioning and tankless water heater. Lafayette School District



Price **\$810,000**

Call Judy for your private showing!

**JUDY SCHOENROCK**

925-998-9900

DRE # (01023112)

email: judy@judyschoenrock.com



## Spring Cleaning, a Shared Tr

... continued from page 1



Mariam Atefi and her two sons, Omeed and Rameen, take away old items Photo Sophie Braccini

"Here in America we do not have the thirteen days of vacation that's the custom in Iran," says Mariam Atefi of Moraga, "there, over a two-week period, people will not only clean their house, but they will dispose of old and used items, then they will reconnect with family and friends. Here it is hard to do, but we still continue to collect all our old clothes and unused appliances and give them to those who have a use for them."

Moraga's Elsi Mastick shares the same tradition, but from a quite different ethnic background. "My origins are half Swiss, half Italian," explains Mastick, "I learned from my mother that closets need to be regularly emptied to make room for the new, and I continue to practice the ritual complete spring cleaning, now with a little outside help."

But some Lamorindans are concerned with the harm chemical cleaning products can bring to our environment and our homes. "Our valiant cleaning efforts can actually make our homes less safe and less healthy," says Steve Richard, co-founder of Sustainable Lafayette. "Most of the conventional cleaning products that we all grew up with are petroleum-based and have toxic ingredients. If we took inventory at the average American home we'd find 63 synthetic chemical products, adding up to about ten gallons of harmful chemicals. Because of that and other toxic sources, the EPA has found that indoor air pollution can be up to 100 times higher than outdoor air pollution."

Susan JunFish of Moraga, the head of Parents For a Safer Environment, agrees, "I did



# tradition

extensive research seven years ago on the toxicity of cleaning products and safer alternatives, which I presented at a conference we convened in May of 2003," says JunFish. "Chlorine bleach (sodium hypochlorite) is very hazardous, breaking down to trihalomethanes upon coming into contact with any organic substance. Trihalomethanes are precursors to chemicals that trigger cancer. I don't have any bleach in the house and highly recommend against using it since there are safer alternatives."

"Green" cleaning products are indeed now available almost everywhere. But there too, buyer beware. "Cleaning products are not required to list their ingredients and so most, even the "environmentally friendly" ones, do not," says Laurie Walter, founder of Chartreuse, a Lafayette-based company that manufactures and sells natural cleaning products, "this becomes especially annoying when you realize that most environmental claims have no legal definition. 'Biodegradable' means that it breaks down eventually. 'Plant-based' or 'plant-derived' means an ingredient started out as a plant but anything could have been done to it. 'Nontoxic' means the company believes it to be so."

Carol Shenon, who teaches asthma prevention for the Contra Costa Coalition, gives out a list of everyday-use cleaning products that can be made at home. "It is much less expensive than buying ready-made products," says the Moraga mom, "I clean my floor with distilled white vinegar and water and for an all-purpose cleaner I use baking soda with vinegar and lemon juice." Shenon adds that she trusts Seventh Generation cleaning products, which



Laurie Walter with her line of natural cleaning products Photo Sophie Braccini  
are readily available in most drugstores, for some of her other cleaning needs.

"In Iran people use vinegar, water and old newspapers to clean windows," says Amirdefan, "they are very big on recycling and green products. When I was growing up there my nanny told me to never use detergent but to use rice water instead." She now uses "green" products that she buys at Costco and plans to continue the ancestral tradition with her family this coming spring. "When you clean everything you feel good about yourself," adds Amirdefan, "then you do it for your soul, you do it in your heart, and you call on friends you had a bit of a disagreement with. And then you are ready to start a new year, rejuvenated from the inside out."



## Resources For a "Green" Spring Cleaning

- Do It Yourself – a list from the Contra Costa Asthma Coalition

### All purpose cleaners:

- For counter stains, squeeze lemon juice on stain and let sit for 45 minutes. Sprinkle baking soda and rub with cloth.
- For general cleaning, add 1 teaspoon of liquid soap to 8 ounces of water in a spray bottle, or mix one part vinegar with 9 parts water.

### Bathrooms:

- Tub and sink: sprinkle baking soda and rub with a wet rag.
- Toilet: sprinkle baking soda inside the toilet, add a couple of drops of vegetable-based liquid soap, scrub with toilet brush.
- Mold: scrub with lemon juice or white vinegar at full strength.

### Floor:

- Mop linoleum and tiled floors with a mixture of ½ cup white vinegar and warm water. The scent will go away after the floor dries.
- For wooden floors, use vegetable-based liquid soap and 2 gallons of hot water. Rinse floor with water afterwards.

### Windows and mirrors:

- Add ¼ cup of vinegar to spray bottle and fill with water; spray on surface, rub with newspaper or lint-free rag.

### Dusting:

- Use magnetic cloth to dust without water, or use a damp, lint-free 100% cotton cloth such as an old cotton t-shirt.

- Buying "green" cleaning products

Many brands of "green" cleaning products are available at local drugstores such as CVS, OSH in Moraga, Moraga Hardware and Lumber and Across the Way (which carry an extensive range of Mrs. Myers products, and some hard to find products such as Vaska laundry detergent, Holy Cow and Caldrea), and Lafayette Ace Hardware.

Chartreuse products are available at Diablo Foods and Lavande in Lafayette, as well as at the company's new headquarters, 3454 Mount Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette.

## Pamela is open for business!



**Pamela Halloran,**  
Broker Associate

**Village Associates**  
**(925) 323-4100**

**Pamela@PamelaHalloran.com**  
**www.PamelaHalloran.com**

"Put Pamela's 20+ years of experience to work for you!"



**Call her with all your  
real estate needs.**

March 2010 - Digging Deep

# Gardening with Cynthia Brian: Care, Share and Be Fair

*"You don't have a garden just for yourself. You have it to share." Auguste Carter*



*Close up of the rose peach petals*

The day I became a gardener was the first sunny day in the month of March. My dog, Bullet (yes, named after Roy Roger's and Dale Evan's Hollywood hound) and I went for a stroll in my mother's prized garden with the intent of picking her a beautiful bouquet. Not a great idea.

It was the intoxicating fragrance of the blooming Daphne that led me down this garden path. The glossy leaves with the abundant purple-throated flowers on the outside with the flush of pink inside and the scent of a Goddess were irresistible to my six year-old paws. After pinching as many blossoms as I could hold, I moved on to the deep pink camellias. How excited I was to arrange such a lovely bouquet! Of course, in my earnest efforts to choose the best blooms, I had

**Photo on page 1:**

*Flowering peach tree blossoms against the clear blue sky Photo Cynthia Brian*

also discarded numerous buds unworthy of my magnificent mom.

That's when we heard the screeching scream and the formidable footsteps. "Cynthia, if I've told you once, I've told you a hundred times not to pick flowers from the garden without asking," my mom yelled as she ran towards me. With teeth barred, Bullet posed his protection, growling like a mountain lion. No one, including my momma was going to intercept his mistress, me. "Mom, but I'm picking you a bouquet to cheer you up. These are for you," I pleaded, as only an innocent can, while my mother's eyes sadly surveyed her beautiful petals littering the bricks. "Come with me, young lady," my mom ordered. "Today you get a gardening lesson."

And with that admonition, Bullet and I became gardeners. Instead of a spanking, mom walked us around her expansive grounds sharing names of the plants, growing habits, and flowering

vest blooms without an invitation. It wasn't long after this incident that my parents bestowed each of their children with a small plot of land that we could call our own. "Plant what you will and pick what you want," was the message. It was a bit like Beatrix Potter's Mrs. Rabbit warning her precious bunnies, "Now, my dears, you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don't go into Mr. McGregor's garden!"

Once Bullet and I had our very own garden, we didn't like anyone picking our flowers or vegetables either. The garden became our sanctuary-our special place where we could just be, dig, play, and enjoy the smells of the earth while watching the insects, worms, and occasional gopher or snake. We worked hard in that space and we most definitely felt it was ours. Bullet guarded it as if he was a three hundred pound beast instead of the thirty-pound mutt he was. No one was allowed to pluck without consent lest they confront his wrath.

Of all the emails and letters I receive, one overwhelming theme arrives from frustrated homeowners asking what they can do to keep intruders from pilfering their flowers, fruits, and vegetables. I empathize with their sentiments. There have been workmen who took every one of my oranges and lemons when they thought I wasn't looking, stuffing big bags in their trucks. **... continued on page 10**

schedules, all the while explaining that it was disrespectful to the gardener to har-



*Lenten Rose - the true harbinger of spring*

*Photo Cynthia Brian*



WWW.HOLCENBERG.COM

*Client satisfaction: a family tradition*

41 Lambeth Square, Moraga

First open Sunday 1-4pm



### Mediterranean Gem

This home oozes character and charm. Private courtyard, custom iron gates & arched front doors. Hardwood floors, vaulted, beamed ceilings and views of hills. Updated kitchen with cherry cabinets, granite, stainless appliances, and breakfast bar opening to family room. Luxurious master suite w/ retreat, two walk-in closets, sitting area, & bath w/jetted tub & shower. Two other bedrooms, office and bonus room. Three yard settings – pool/spa, view sitting areas, and garden /play yard. Private setting on cul-de-sac.

**Listed for \$1,229,500**

Coming Soon



### Campolindo Home on Huge Lot

This private home sits on 1.4 acres of gardens, backing to a trail to the Lafayette Reservoir. Upon entering this single-story home on a cul-de-sac you're greeted by a combined living/formal dining room with views of hills. The kitchen and dinette are open to the family room and have raised beamed ceilings. There are three bedrooms and two baths, new carpet, dual-paned windows and a laundry room. The lot includes a patio and extensive gardens. This home needs some cosmetic updates, but what a fabulous opportunity!

**Listed for \$779,500**



**Wendy Holcenberg**  
wendy@holcenberg.com  
925.253.4630

**Michelle Holcenberg**  
michelle@holcenberg.com  
925.253.4663



**Patricia Battersby**

925-330-6663  
pb@patriciabattersby.com  
DRE# 00854469

**Ashley Battersby**

925-323-9955  
ashley@patriciabattersby.com  
DRE# 01407784

[www.patriciabattersby.com](http://www.patriciabattersby.com)



**1121 Rahara Drive, Lafayette**



Happy Valley New Construction!  
Distinctive Piedmont Style Home  
Real Craftsman's Attention to Detail  
4 Bedrooms + Office 3 1/2 Baths  
4,269 Sq. Ft. .55 Acre  
Gorgeous Setting and Views  
*Offered at \$2,050,000*

**1070 N. Thompson Road, Lafayette**



Absolutely Charming Craftsman!  
Tastefully Updated Throughout  
3 Bedrooms 2 Baths  
Great, Livable Floor Plan  
Walk to Vibrant Downtown, BART  
*Offered at \$895,000*

**1199 Monticello Road, Lafayette**



Gorgeous Custom Home  
In Happy Valley Glen!  
Beautifully Maintained  
Private .51 Acre Setting  
Lots of Glass and Light  
Large Family Room off Kitchen  
*Offered at \$1,195,000*

**4055 Happy Valley Road, Lafayette**

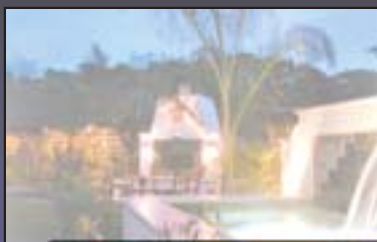


New England Traditional  
Built in 2000 to Perfection!  
Private .9 Level Acre  
Approx. 4,272 Sq. Ft.  
Private Guest Cottage  
Expansive Lawns, Gardens, Pool  
*Offered at \$3,800,000*

# Garden Lights landscape & pool development inc.

Garden Lights is an Award Winning Landscape Design-Build Firm Offering Services in . . .

- Landscape Design & Installation  
*Planting - Masonry - Concrete - Carpentry*
- Low-voltage Landscape Lighting
- Pool / Spa Design, Installation & Remodels
- Water Gardens, Ponds & Waterfalls



Design & Install with just one call.

925-254-4797

Free Consultations

Serving the Lamorinda Area for 18 years. Bonded – Licensed & Insured Lic. #702845

DESIGN  
INSTALLATION  
IRRIGATION  
DRAINAGE  
STONEWORK  
CONCRETE WORK  
DECKS  
FENCES  
PATIOS  
LAWNS  
PONDS  
CLEANUP &  
HAULING

## BLUE RIDGE



925-258-9233

CELL: 510-847-6160

LANDSCAPE CO.

BLUE JAY FELDMAN

OWNER/OPERATOR

WWW.BLUERIDGELC.COM



LICENSED  
INSURED  
Lic# 818633

## Gardening with Cynthia Brian: Care, Share and Be Fair ... continued from page 8



Watering can framed by pixie orange-throated yellow daffodils

Photo Cynthia Brian

“Excuse me, what are you doing?” I’ve asked, “These are my precious citrus!” I’ve endured numerous responses, including “well, they were just hanging on the tree. We didn’t think you wanted them,” to “lemons are so expensive in the stores, and we love fresh fruit.” I’ve had walkers pinch a bountiful bouquet of my tantalizing tulips thinking I was the hired help while commenting to me “why should I buy a spray when there are so many right here!” What are they thinking... or not thinking?

No matter what our intentions, how big a garden is, or how many varieties of flowers, fruits, vegetables, and herbs are growing in the area, we always must respect private property. Even in a poor economy, purloining someone else’s goods is stealing... pure and simple.

Today as I pick my camellias and I inhale the scent of the aromatic Daphne, I am grateful for my March gardening lesson so many moons ago. A garden is to grow and a garden is to share, yet we must always remember that a garden requires a hard working gardener to flourish.

As you enjoy the plethora of yellow daffodils, blossoming plums, ripe Meyer lemons, and flowering quince, make sure to ask before you help yourself to a clipping, a snippet, or a bag. Gardeners are enterprising generous folks and they may be saving those special specimens for a special occasion. By politely requesting, most likely you’ll be given a sampling because gardeners enjoy planting happiness. Gardeners also know that the best things to come out of the garden are gifts for others. Don’t be a thief. Care, share, and be fair.

## McDonnell Nursery

Shop now  
and earn  
McDonnell BUCK\$!

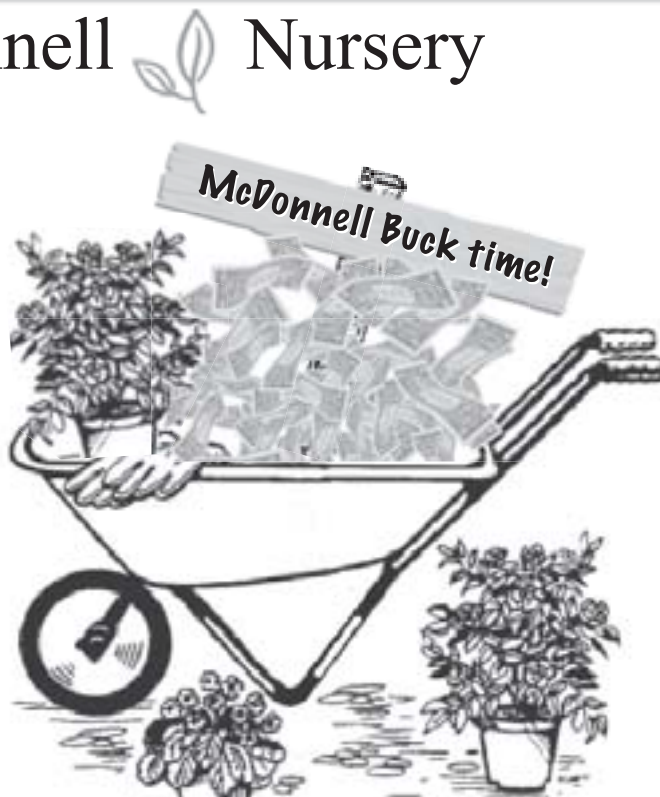
For every \$10 you spend in  
March and April you earn one  
McDonnell Buck (10%).  
Redeem your Bucks in August.

196 Moraga Way  
Orinda

254-3713

- Open Daily -

www.mcdonnellnursery.com



## Cynthia's Digging Deep Gardening Guide for March

*"Keep a green tree in your heart and perhaps the singing bird will come."* Chinese proverb

As the temperature warms, we begin to feel the stirrings of spring. It's time to get out the hoe and start preparing the soil for the plantings to come. Spade and till, add organic amendments and compost. Fruit trees erupt into bloom this month perfuming the wind while daffodils, bergenia, crocus, and tulip trees provide a patchwork quilt of provocative color. Breathe in the fresh air of the birth of the natural cycle.



Bergenia (aka Elephant Ears) Photo Cynthia Brian

- **LAWNS** are ready to be mowed regularly now. Feed with high-nitrogen fertilizer. Once the weather is dry, seed or sod new lawns. Pull any weeds, making sure to get the roots. To control crabgrass and broad-leafed weeds, visit your local garden center for organic sprays. Always pay careful attention to the labels.
- **LOOKOUT** for oak moth larvae on your oak trees. If you notice large masses of green droppings on the ground, call in the professionals.
- **FEED** rose bushes alfalfa pellets mixed with diatomaceous earth to keep roses healthy throughout the season.
- **FERTILIZE** fruit trees, annuals, shrubs, and mature trees with a solution high in nitrogen. Wait to fertilize rhododendrons and camellias with an acid fertilizer until next month and then when they are finished blooming.
- **COMPOST** your grass clippings, leaves, vegetable scraps, newspaper, and other organic matter. Do not put any diseased plants or weeds into your pile.
- **DIVIDE** perennials including day lilies, agapanthus, yarrow, and phlox while they are semi—dormant. Share and replant healthy pieces after division.
- **PLANT** beets, peas, carrots, lettuces, potatoes, onions, and herbs.
- **PICK** slugs, snails, and earwigs off your plants or put out saucers of beer encouraging their drunken suicides.
- **PROTECT** your garden from deer and cottontails by netting plants that you don't want nibbled.
- **FLOAT** camellias in a glass bowl with sprigs of Daphne for indoor beauty and fragrance.
- **BULBS.** Your summer will be more beautiful when you take the time to plant warm weather bulbs now. Choices include begonias, dahlias, gladiolus, watsonia, and callas.
- **PRUNE** your pelargoniums and geraniums for fuller summer blooms.
- **ATTEND** the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show March 24-28 at the San Mateo Event Center for four acres of inspiring full-sized gardens, seventy seminars and workshops plus over 250 vendors all for only \$16. Tickets are available at Bay Area nurseries or online at [www.sfgardenshow.com](http://www.sfgardenshow.com).
- **REFRAIN** from "borrowing" a bloom or a bulb. Ask before you take a sample.
- **SHARE** a bouquet of Dutch iris, daffodils, and tulips. Savor the delight your gift from the garden brings to others.

Happy Gardening to You!

### Happy Gardening to You!

Cynthia Brian  
 PO Box 422  
 Moraga, Ca. 94556  
 925-377-STAR  
[cynthia@star-style.com](mailto:cynthia@star-style.com)  
[www.GardeningwithCynthia.com](http://www.GardeningwithCynthia.com)



Cynthia Brian in her garden

**Support  
 Lamorinda Weekly by  
 shopping with our  
 advertisers and telling  
 them you saw their ad!  
 Your local free Newspaper  
 for Lamorinda. Thank you!**



**MICHAEL VERBRUGGE  
 CONSTRUCTION INC.**  
 General Contractor

**925.631.1055**  
[www.MVCRemodeling.com](http://www.MVCRemodeling.com)

**Specializing in kitchens & bathrooms.  
 All forms residential remodel/repair.**



*"A little bit of myself goes into every job."*  
 Michael Verbrugge,  
 Owner,  
 Moraga Resident




**Clean | Courteous | Conscientious  
 On-time | Trustworthy | Local References**  
 Full design team resources available

**G.B. DUARTE  
 CONSTRUCTION**  
 INTERLOCKING PAVINGSTONES

**(925) 759-4854**

Pavingscapes in the Finest  
 Roman Tradition

**Free Estimates** [gbduarte@aol.com](mailto:gbduarte@aol.com)  
 driveways | walkways | patios | walls

**Peralta Construction**  
 CUSTOM HOMES | ADDITIONS | REMODELING

owned and operated by Moraga resident  
**Pat Geoghegan**



**925.273.7692**  
[www.peraltaconstruction.com](http://www.peraltaconstruction.com)

BUILDING THE BAY AREA FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS

**Lamorinda Weekly** is an independent publication, produced by and for the residents of Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda, CA

Lamorinda Weekly, P.O. Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570-6133 Phone: 925-377-0977 | Fax: 1-800-690-8136 | email: [info@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com)

**It's all Online: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com)**

# Lamorinda's Leading Independent Real Estate Firm.



**ORINDA**   
**212 The Knoll**  
 Orindawoods jewel - impeccably maintained 2100 sf townhome w/soaring ceilings, lovely tranquil views of wooded hillsides, spacious kitchen, private atrium, gorgeous master.  
**Offered at \$689,000**



**ORINDA**   
**25 Risa Court**  
 Fabulous views of sunset from .93 acre with private yard, expansive grass & basjetball court. Attractive remodel w/great open plan - remodeled kitchen & bath. Hdwd floors throughout.  
**Offered at \$1,050,000**



**ORINDA**   
**20 Tarry Lane**  
 Renovated new construction in 2008 w/high quality amenities & unparalleled design. Ideal family living floorplan w/5bd/5+ba. Chef's kitchen/family room.  
**Offered at \$2,195,000**



**MORAGA**   
**1365B Camino Peral**  
 New in Moraga - Comfortable 2bd/2ba 1281 sf with frplc, W/D, deck & 2 dedicated parking spaces. Near shopping, park, library and trails. Best schools!  
**Offered at \$389,000**



**MORAGA**   
**1455 Camino Peral**  
 Neat as a pin. Bright & Sunny 3 bd/2ba 1700 sf townhome in popular Casitas de Moraga. Updated kitchen w/newer cabinets, corian counters. New carpet & fresh paint throughout.  
**Offered at \$489,000**



**MORAGA**   
**1896 Joseph Drive**  
 Special "Bluffs" neighborhood 4bd/2.5ba home that offers a quiet & serene retreat. Remodeled & updated w/wonderful floor plan, .82 ac yard w/privacy & pool, potential for vineyard.  
**Offered at \$1,050,000**




**LAFAYETTE**   
**3575 Springhill Road**  
 Remodeled 3bd/2ba sgl lvl home on lovely .75 acre oak studded lot. New kitchen, hdwd floors & dual panes. Very special pvt setting surrounded by natural beauty. Laf schools!  
**Offered at \$749,000**



**LAFAYETTE**   
**996 Hawthorne Drive**  
 Charming 3bd/2ba main house & separate 1bd/1ba guest house. Tastefully updated, newer kitchen & baths, gorgeous oak studded lot with views of rolling hills & downtown.  
**Offered at \$799,000**



**LAFAYETTE**   
**1842 Del Rey Street**  
 Don't miss this wonderful 3bd hm remod from top to bottom. New granite kitchen, hdwd flrs & dbl paned windows thruout! Sunny LR w/stone frplc, lg flat yd.  
**Offered at \$810,000**




**LAFAYETTE**   
**1070 No. Thompson Raod**  
 Charming Craftsman-style private setting, walk to Bart & downtown. Tastefully updated w/gourmet kitchen, great livable floor plan w/spacious open rooms, hdwd floors.  
**Offered at \$895,000**



**LAFAYETTE**   
**851 Paradise Court**  
 Beautifully updated and remodeled 3bd/2ba rancher just steps to town/trail/schools. Gourmet kitchen, hdwd floors, beam ceilings, new windows, paver driveway & patio.  
**Offered at \$985,000**



**LAFAYETTE**   
**1190 Brown Avenue**  
 Truly unique 3244 sf hm blt in 2000, gorgeous lot w/spectacular views of Mt. Diablo, chef's kitchen, maple floors, huge mstr, wine storage, ofc/au pair w/sep ent.  
**Offered at \$1,280,000**




**LAFAYETTE**   
**3454 Sky Lane**  
 Custom built contemporary on 1.44 acre lot, private & secluded. Open floor plan w/vaulted ceilings throughout! Fabulous master suite! Level lawn, pool & spa.  
**Offered at \$1,289,000**




**LAFAYETTE**   
**4022 Tilden Lane**  
 This traditional, well maintained home has a deluxe chef's kit w/adjacent fam rm that opens to level grassy lawns, lush gardens, & pool. Close to schools & commute.  
**Offered at \$1,895,000**



**LAFAYETTE**   
**3670 Happy Valley Road**  
 Happy Valley - delightful sylvan setting at end of pvt lane yet walk to town & Bart. Fab one-of-a-kind 3bd/3ba custom on 1.16 lvl ac. Open flr plan flows beautifully.  
**Offered at \$1,900,000**



**LAFAYETTE**   
**1121 Rahara Drive**  
 Piedmont style home built in 2009, desirable Happy Valley. Distinctive style, arch. integrity. Craftsman's attention to detail. All high end appointments, 4bd + office.  
**Offered at \$2,050,000**

## THE VILLAGE ASSOCIATES:

- Ashley Battersby
- Patricia Battersby
- Joan Cleveland
- Joan Eggers
- Joan Evans
- Linda S Friedman
- Pamela Halloran
- Dexter Honens II
- Debbie Johnston
- Hal Kaufman
- Margot Kaufman
- Susan Zeh Layng
- Art Lehman
- Charles Levine
- April Matthews
- I. Bruce Maxon
- Loretta Mullins
- Karen Murphy
- Ben Olsen
- Sue Olsen
- Kurt Piper
- Tara Rochlin
- Judy Schoenrock
- Ann Sharf
- Steve Smith
- Jeff Snell
- Lynda Snell
- Clark Thompson
- Ignacio Vega
- Terri Bates Walker
- Ann Ward
- Dan Weil
- Lara Williamson
- Margaret Zucker

See Weekly Online Previews Every Wednesday and Friday by noon.

**Sunday Open House**

Check Sunday Opens at a Glance [www.villageassociates.com](http://www.villageassociates.com)

93 Moraga Way, Suite 103  
 Orinda, CA 94563  
 (925) 254-0505 or 1-866-856-VARE



 Virtual Tour Available on our Web site