

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 05 Issue 18 Wednesday, November 9, 2011



What So Proudly We Hail

By Laurie Snyder



The flagpole in front of Randy Trudeau's home sports yardarms in addition to a properly-displayed American flag.

Photo Doug Kohen

"And yet, though silent, it speaks to us – speaks to us of the past, of the men and women who went before us, and of the records they wrote upon it." - President Woodrow Wilson

Just over the rise of a hill and around the bend of one of Orinda's many winding roads, Old Glory flutters, lifting and resettling with each breeze, drawing the eyes of passers by up and away from the neighborhood's natural brown and green tones.

The flag, which flew previously over the U.S. Capitol and now streams from a nautical-style pole, is part of a quiet tribute to America installed by Randy Trudeau and his family more than twenty years ago at the start of Desert Storm. An anchor that previously graced Lafayette's former Cape Cod Restaurant completes the picture.

Why does Trudeau fly the American flag daily? "It's what I was raised with as a child – and my wife, too. It's just what we do," he says.

Like many Lamorindans, Trudeau has family in the military. His nephew is stationed aboard a Nimitz-class aircraft carrier, the USS Harry S. Truman.

Trudeau has also served the nation himself. A past commodore of his yacht club with 45 years of seamanship under his belt, he was appointed to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Northern California Maritime Security Committee. In the aftermath of 9/11, he helped to draft guidelines still used today by recreational boaters as they approach sensitive targets.

Trudeau first came to understand the intricacies of flag etiquette via seamanship training as a child. "Flags are big on boats," he notes. The "boater's bible," Chapman's *Piloting, Seamanship and Small Boat Handling*, devotes an entire chapter to how and when to fly all manner of banners, including the U.S. Ensign – the sailors' term Trudeau uses for the flag.

American Flag Flying 101

Terry Murphy, liked Trudeau, is a devoted flag flyer. As the commander of the local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) post for Lamorinda and Walnut Creek, Murphy hopes more area residents will hoist the Stars and Stripes high – "certainly on Flag Day, Veterans' Day, and Memorial Day." He offers these three tips:

- Never let the American flag touch the ground.

... continued on page D4