

## Finally! In Lamorinda Home Values and Sales are Rising

	April 2011	April 2012	% Increase
Lamorinda:			
Properties Sold*	55	63	15%
Average Sale Price	\$884,763	\$952,799	8%

\*includes town houses and condos.

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- 2) Lamorinda 1 story, no steps to \$1,000,000

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**Troy Feddersen**  
Broker Associate  
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## Cairns in the Garden

... continued from page D1



Since that afternoon, Woodbury has gained a greater appreciation for cairns on a trail. "In my youth I called them ducks, not cairns," she says. "I thought ducks were for sissies who couldn't find their own way through the wilderness. I always kicked them down. Well, nowadays I find great comfort in seeing a duck ahead of me. It reassures me that I am on the right path."

"Building the cairns was a learning experience," agrees Bob Flasher. "It is a challenge balancing round rocks, which makes you wish you had a chasm to pitch them into. But once you lower your expectations, it becomes less frustrating and more enjoyable. We gave each other creative suggestions and ended up trying lots of different shapes. It was really an enjoyable way to spend an afternoon, and Stu's garden is more unique as a result. We're hoping that the cat doesn't rub against any of the teetery ones, or its purr will turn to a yelp faster than white on rice!"

Visiting with Selland a few weeks after the party, all of the cairns were still up in the garden. "I am still discovering some of them," says Selland, showing a small three-stone cairn that someone had left for him in his studio. The biggest ones were made of about 20 stones, all quite different from one another and blending in the surrounding landscape, so discovering one is always a charming surprise. "They each used a different place in the garden that inspired them, and left their creation behind for us to enjoy," says Selland. "Creativity is inside all of us; it's about learning and paying attention."



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Cairns built by friends in Stu Selland's back yard Photos Sophie Braccini



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# Security Systems for the Home

By Cathy Dausman



Technicians monitor home security systems at Bay Alarm Company.

Photo provided

To alarm or not to alarm; that is the question. Homes in affluent communities, Lamorinda included, can be magnets for thieves. An alarm system may be one way to prevent your house from becoming the next burglary statistic.

"I'm all for 'em," says Moraga Police Chief Robert Priebe, who believes they deter break-ins. He says his home is alarmed, but cautions the systems can cause problems for the police department if they are not properly maintained. Priebe also suggests homeowners become familiar with an alarm company's reporting procedures before making a purchase. How the call is routed, and whether the call center is out of town can

affect response time.

Orinda Detective Dan Jeffries says burglars who've been caught tell police they simply won't bother a home with a security system. He says homeowners should "announce to the world" they have an alarm system. Jeffries, who brought the concept for Orinda's burglary audit with him from a previous police department, adds homeowners should also keep their home exterior well lit at night, and trim vegetation away from entry points.

Lafayette's Police Chief Eric Christensen agrees, but cautions: "As with all security devices, the alarm needs to be activated when you leave the home and

you need to take the maintenance of the system as one of the overall costs."

Answering basic home and lifestyle questions can help homeowners determine what kind of security system works for them. How large is the house? How many points of entry (doors and windows) does it have? Has it been pre-wired for a security system? Should the alarm system be a hard-wired or wireless? Who will install the alarm—the homeowner or an alarm technician?

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A simple security system might have only door and window alarms and motion detectors. Some home alarm systems also monitor smoke alarms. Today's technology allows for video camera monitoring, remote access to a home's lights via smart phones and iPads and GSM radio communication between a homeowner and his or her alarm company. It's even possible to purchase an alarm system run through your cable television or telephone provider (Comcast or AT&T, for example).

Multi-media bells and whistles on home security can be "cool," says Eric Taylor of Bay Alarm Company, but people should not get caught up in what he calls "sexy technology."

"If we're talking security, let's focus on keeping the family safe." The premise of a burglar alarm, he says, is not to catch a thief once they're inside, but to keep thieves out of your home. Taylor says major security alarm manufacturers—Digital Monitoring Products, Honeywell, GE, and DSC, for example – all offer the same technology and basically the same equipment. GoControl and 2Gig are relatively new to the home security system business.

Those who have or want to install an alarm system should take steps to ensure their system does not trigger false alarms. "We respond to a lot of alarms," says Christensen. "Every time we go as if there is someone in the house, because once in a while an alarm means that someone is really there." Orinda Police Chief Jeffrey Jennings says his department answered 1,408 alarm calls in 2011, "the vast majority of which were false." Because of that some law enforcement agencies (although not those in Lamorinda) have even stopped answering burglar alarm calls.

The response to false alarms is an "ongoing problem," says Priebe, whose department responded to 207 false alarms in 2011. "Moraga Police Department will always respond to alarm calls," he says, even though his department "would rather be using police personnel to address other areas of concern."



Typical security system control panel



Door sensor



A sign in the front yard points out the security system

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**Offered at \$899,000**



**50 Donna Maria Way**  
Super remodel of all rms incl dlx new kitchen w/adj fam rm + butler's pantry. Lg master suite. All high end finishes & fixtures. 1-lvl EZ access to flat lot/lawns. Walk to 12 yrs. schools.

**Offered at \$1,295,000**



**2 Oakview Terrace**  
Exquisite 4bd/3.5ba 3530 sf trad on .84 ac lot w/hdwd flrs; guest suite w/bath; lg mstr w/frplc; kitchen/fam rm; stone patios w/blt-in grill; waterfall; sep hobby rm; lvl lawn & play areas.

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**38 Mira Loma**  
Ideal 5bd/4ba 4200 sf lg fam hm w/newly remod baths & kitchen w/adj fam rm. Fun game rm, kids floor & tons of space! EZ access outdoors to new decks & lush gardens, vus & privacy.

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**6 Rich Acres Road**  
NEW, NEW, New construction on almost 1 acre amidst towering oaks, lvl lawn & lg stone patio. 5bd/5ba. Pvt gated road close to town, chefs kitchen w/adj fam rm. In-law w/LR, bd/ba.

**Offered at \$1,999,000**



**136 Manzanita**  
Santa Barbara style 4bd/3.5ba, 4000 sf hm w/incredible design/custom craftsmanship. Ideal fam living comfort. New stucco/tile wall provides privacy.

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**3 Wingfoot**  
Inverness 3bd/2ba model with updates throughout. Sunny eat-in kitchen, dramatic windows, cul-de-sac location. Lg master with vaulted ceiling, great closets, spacious bath & more.

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**26 Ross Drive**  
Turnkey 4bd/2ba cul de sac rancher w/hdwd floors thruout, gourmet kitchen/fam rm combo w/island, updated baths, fenced bckyd w/lawn & deck. Top schools!

**Offered at \$859,000**



**1223 Larch**  
Fully remod & beautifully landscaped executive rancher w/ a light bright kitchen/ fam rm. Sky-light, maple hdwd flrs, Andersen sliders, garden retreat. Top schools!

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**3497 St. Mary's Road**  
Complete remodel from top to bottom. Sgl lvl 4bd/2.5ba on professionally landscaped flat .25 acre lot. Walk to town, trails & schools.

**Offered at \$999,000**



**4 Middle Road**  
Frank Lloyd Wright inspired mid-century classic of 2900+ sf. Total 5/4 w/4bd/3ba, updated kitchen, LR, DR, FR + ofc & den on main lvl AND a 1bd/1ba w/kitchenette upstairs.

**Offered at \$1,049,000**



**3500 Moraga Blvd.**  
Amazing location nr town, trails, schools, Bart & more. 4bd/3ba hm impressively blt w/high quality materials & the finest craftsman finishes. Lg mstr w/spa-like bath, open kitchen.

**Offered at \$1,150,000**



**567 Merriewood Drive**  
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**110 Camelia Lane**  
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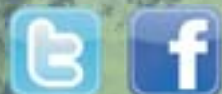
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