

# Moraga Neighbor Spearheads Roadside Makeover

By Cathy Dausman



From left: Rena and Dave Munson, Linda Foley, Kathy Shieman, Meridel Moulton, Linda Miller, Elaine Smit, John Moulton, Margie Mason, Jan Catalano, Kathy Flett, and Marcia Fisherkeller. Photo Al Foley

“I think I opened a Pandora’s box,” laughs Linda Foley of Moraga. If she did, it will soon be filled with daffodils, thanks to a neighborhood group calling itself the Stafford Groomers. Stafford, as in Stafford Road, which is only about 30 feet long, intersects the Lafayette Moraga Regional Trail at roughly the five mile westbound marker, connecting St. Mary’s Road and Fernwood Drive. No one lives on Stafford Road, but traffic flows regularly in and out of the adjacent Rheem Valley Manor neighborhood. Until now, it has been a dull, dry, weed-strewn landscape. Foley’s plan “to create a welcoming entry to our neighborhood” initially involved a two-hour work crew October 13. She sent e-mail requests to neighbors and members of the Moraga

Garden Club, which she is president, and more than a dozen volunteers showed up, shovels and weed whackers in hand. The group filled more than 20 bags of debris. Advanced Tree Service sent Lou Edwards to help with poison oak removal; his company will rototill the soil when conditions are favorable. Foley said Moraga’s Parks and Recreation Department will plant the “hundreds” of daffodil bulbs donated by Moraga Garden Club, giving the area “a much needed face lift.” She called the initial work-party response “inspiring, fun and rewarding.” A second work party was held October 20. Foley invites anyone who wishes to participate in additional work parties to e-mail her at [lindafoley@me.com](mailto:lindafoley@me.com).

# How to Create a Luxury DIY Design Project

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Solid wood can be lacquered, refinished, repaired, repainted, rebuilt – heck, it can even be stripped and chipped.

### Step three: Customize.

Your home should reflect you, not someone else. The intent is to enhance your life. Your home should be a refuge and encourager, a place of safety and order. It’s hard out there! Creating spaces that nurture us is important. It can be as simple as monogramming a favorite sham, adding trim to a pre-fab drapery panel or painting a colorful line in a groove on a piece of furniture you love. Whatever it is, make it you.

### Step four: Concentrate.

What does excellence look like for your DIY project? Proper hand sanding, distressing and curing of custom finishes cannot be rushed. Write down the details and you can roadmap your professional outcome. Remember, we eat the elephant one bite at a time.

### Step five: Complete.

What should your completed DIY project look like? Prepare for that completed look from the start. Honestly address realistic timelines, proper supplies and appropriate work space. I always consult clients undertaking DIY to budget three times the hours they think, purchase

all the proper supplies before starting and create a formal work space as if they were completing the job for a make-believe client. It’s all right to use your garage to refinish a piece of furniture, just treat it as a formal studio during the time it takes. Preparation means you won’t be putting anti-scratch pads on your new dining chairs as friends walk in for a dinner party! Take pride in being the strong finisher and move forward in life.

Isn’t that what life is all about anyway?



Ann McDonald is the Founder/CEO of Couture Chateau in Orinda, a luxury interior design firm. She is an associated member of the International Interior Design Association (IIDA) and the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO), and was recently quoted by Elle Decor on Luxury Now. She teaches design seminars: “How to Run your Project like a Pro” in addition to blogging on design: [www.couturechateau.com](http://www.couturechateau.com).

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