

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 07 Issue 5 Wednesday, May 8, 2013



*Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian
...read on page D10*

Divine Designs Revealed at Upcoming Kitchen Tour

By Catherine Kauder

Six beautiful kitchens will be featured at this year's Lafayette Juniors' Kitchen Tour on Saturday, May 18. The 14th annual event, which runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., features kitchens with influences as diverse as the European countryside to the Barefoot Contessa.

Shelly Barnes envisioned her dream kitchen 20 years ago when she and her husband David purchased their home in Lafayette's Silver Dell neighborhood. Although the couple wasn't crazy about the layout of their 1960s ranch, they loved the lot and knew that the space had potential.

Two years ago, the Barnes embarked on a full-house renovation, and as visitors will see from their spacious, rustic kitchen, the result was worth the wait.

The kitchen features a sweeping, cream-colored stucco hood that evokes a country house in Tuscany. The natural stone and glass backsplash over the six-burner stainless steel stove frames a carved Sonoma tile plaque that Barnes found in a tile shop.

...continued on page D4



Shelly and David Barnes in their newly-renovated kitchen that Shelly designed herself.

Photo Ohlen Alexander



VLATKA BATHGATE



IF I HAD A BUYER FOR YOUR HOME WOULD YOU SELL IT?

Call me at 925 597 1573

Vlatka@BestLamorindaHomes.com

DRE#01390784



ENTERTAINER'S DREAM

3235 Withers Avenue, Lafayette



Beautifully updated 3 bed/2.5baths home with high quality materials and abundance of character and attention to detail. Private, landscaped backyard includes pool with waterfalls and spa.

Offered at \$899,000



SECLUDED RETREAT

216 Encounter Bay, Alameda



Best lagoon view location! Water views from kitchen, family room and upstairs bedrooms. Minutes to San Francisco.

Offered at \$799,000

WHAT DO YOU WANT THAT YOU DON'T HAVE NOW?

I always get the highest possible price for my Sellers and the best possible price for my Buyers. Call Vlatka today: 925.597.1573

VLATKA CAN HELP YOU WITH BUYING OR SELLING YOUR HOME. WWW.BESTLAMORINDAHOMES.COM

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

| City | Last reported: | LOWEST AMOUNT: | HIGHEST AMOUNT: |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| LAFAYETTE | 19 | \$530,000 | \$1,985,000 |
| MORAGA | 8 | \$650,000 | \$1,211,500 |
| ORINDA | 10 | \$260,000 | \$3,220,000 |

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

- 3217 Brookwood Drive, \$845,000, 4 Bdrms, 2151 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 4-2-13; Previous Sale: \$575,000, 03-10-00
- 3244 Camino Diablo, \$975,000, 3 Bdrms, 1712 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 3-27-13; Previous Sale: \$350,000, 05-01-97
- 3640 Crescent Drive, \$925,000, 4 Bdrms, 1616 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 3-29-13; Previous Sale: \$183,000, 03-23-88
- 3369 Dyer Drive, \$862,500, 5 Bdrms, 2748 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 3-28-13; Previous Sale: \$1,050,000, 10-14-05
- 130 Haslemere Court, \$750,000, 3 Bdrms, 2025 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 4-2-13; Previous Sale: \$236,500, 04-12-88
- 3235 Judith Lane, \$918,000, 3 Bdrms, 1440 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 4-9-13; Previous Sale: \$953,000, 08-23-05
- 605 Lancaster Drive, \$880,000, 3 Bdrms, 1651 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 3-29-13
- 620 Lancaster Drive, \$782,000, 3 Bdrms, 1632 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 3-28-13
- 3925 Leroy Way, \$1,350,000, 5 Bdrms, 2363 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 3-28-13; Previous Sale: \$325,000, 03-30-94
- 3199 Lucas Drive, \$1,045,000, 3 Bdrms, 2395 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 4-3-13
- 3641 Madrone Drive, \$530,000, 2 Bdrms, 1099 SqFt, 1936 YrBlt, 4-9-13; Previous Sale: \$520,000, 01-03-12
- 1985 Marion Court, \$1,985,000, 5 Bdrms, 4206 SqFt, 2001 YrBlt, 3-29-13; Previous Sale: \$1,910,000, 06-28-02
- 2094 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 3454 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 3-27-13; Previous Sale: \$425,000, 07-01-94
- 3216 Sharon Court, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 1907 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 3-29-13; Previous Sale: \$1,075,000, 01-06-05
- 1149 Sierra Vista Way, \$770,000, 3 Bdrms, 1577 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 3-29-13
- 521 Silverado Drive, \$1,425,000, 4 Bdrms, 3591 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 3-29-13; Previous Sale: \$127,000, 05-27-77
- 3492 Silver Springs Road, \$1,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 2543 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 4-5-13; Previous Sale: \$1,506,000, 09-27-07
- 816 Solana Drive, \$902,000, 4 Bdrms, 2243 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 3-27-13; Previous Sale: \$40,000, 09-29-72
- 3370 Woodview Drive, \$1,610,000, 4 Bdrms, 3163 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 4-5-13; Previous Sale: \$147,000, 04-11-80

... continued on page D8

Reach 60,000+ in Lamorinda
Advertise in Lamorinda Weekly

Call 925-377-0977 today

We print and deliver 26,000 copies every other week.

KAREN RICHARDSON PRESENTS

3334 Ridge Road, Lafayette Open Sunday 1-4pm



Location! Location! Location! Walk out your front door and land on the popular Lafayette trail ~ just a stone's throw from twelve years of award winning schools, downtown and BART. This traditional 5bedroom 4bathroom craftsman has tons of curb appeal and has been completely remodeled from the ground up. This home has a thoughtful floor plan with four bedrooms and three full baths upstairs as well as a bonus room/ play area and kitchen great room with a den or 5th bedroom and full bath downstairs. Enjoy a large chef's kitchen with a 48inch Five Star Range and all new stainless steel appliances. With a large grassy play area in the front yard, and grassy rear yard that has been beautifully landscaped this home is ready for you to move right in. Approximately +/- 2700 on a little over .3 acres. **List Price \$1,399,000**

Call Karen with questions (925) 639-3904



Karen Richardson
(925) 639-3904

Karen@karenrichardsongroup.com
www.karenrichardsongroup.com
DRE#01407557



*THANK YOU LAMORINDA
MOMS FOR VOTING THE
KAREN RICHARDSON GROUP
~ **BEST REALTOR 2013!***

*We feel honored to work and live in such
an amazing community!*



KAREN RICHARDSON GROUP
KRG


ALAIN PINEL
REAL ESTATE

Kitchen Tour

...continued from page D1



A sonoma tile that owner Shelly Barnes found in a tile shop is used as a backsplash for the kitchen's stove.

Photos Ohlen Alexander

The fronts of the two cabinet doors on either side of the hood are made of wire mesh, which allows the viewer to see what's inside but also gives depth and texture to the cabinetry. The large, honed light mocha-colored Juparana Persa granite island stands in subtle contrast to the creamy hues cabinets, giving the kitchen a warm and inviting feel.

"I like to build around a focal point," explains Barnes, who designed the kitchen herself and has also rebuilt two homes with her husband in their neighborhood.

Perhaps one of the kitchen's most enticing features is its view. Across from the island is a breakfast nook with a banquette against a large wall of windows looking out onto the back yard. The yard, which has a pool, fire pit and awnings hanging with wisteria, will be where lunch is served during the kitchen tour.

Nestled on a quiet street in Lafayette's trails neighborhood, Vickie and Dan Vradenburg's home features a clean, contemporary kitchen with a colorful Venetian glass island countertop made of recycled bottles and jars. Flecks of green, blue and brown glass give the island a pop of color over its dark walnut wood base and contrasts with the gray Cesarstone counters and lighter-stained wood cabinetry in the rest of the kitchen.

"My favorite thing is the island – it's such a functional piece of art," says Vickie, who has a long-time hobby of creating mosaics out of broken glass.

...continued on page D6



The outdoor patio of the Barnes' home, which will be where lunch is served during the Lafayette Juniors' Kitchen Tour this year.



Patricia Battersby

925-330-6663

pb@patriciabattersby.com

DRE# 00854469

Ashley Battersby

925-323-9955

ashley@patriciabattersby.com

DRE# 01407784



www.patriciabattersby.com



Orinda Country Club Spanish Hacienda

**Main Residence - 5 Bedrooms + Library
Luxurious Master Suite 2 Family Rooms Wine Cellar
4 Full Baths 2 Half Baths 5495 Sq Ft****

**Separate Guest House- Living Room, Kitchen, Bedroom,
Bath, Verandas 749 Sq Ft** Over Four-car Garage**

Offered for \$3,950,000

This 1937 Orinda historical Spanish-Mediterranean home, beautifully crafted and exquisitely restored, is located in a prime Country Club estate setting encompassing 1.67* acres.

The home has been thoughtfully expanded and updated to preserve the original character while adding space and amenities to make it a stylish and comfortable home by today's standards.

With grand sized living areas and expansive grounds, this residence has a truly remarkable setting and the perfect venue for large scale entertaining. Magnificent views abound, and beautifully designed landscaped gardens complement the historical architecture.

Infinity salt water pool, spa, patios, verandas, lawn, play areas, work-out room.

Top rated Orinda Schools: Orinda Intermediate & Miramonte High named California Distinguished Schools 2013

*Per Tax Records **Per Measurement



Kitchen Tour

...continued from page D4



Vickie Vradenburg in her kitchen, which features a colorful Vetrazzo island countertop made of broken bottles and jars.

The Vradenburgs had wanted to redo their kitchen, which was once walled off from the rest of the house with a semicircular bar that overlooked the family room. Last year, after the kitchen was flooded and extensively damaged when a hot water dispenser burst, they got their chance. The Vradenburgs decided to remodel their entire home with the help of architect

Leila Douglah of Douglah Designs.

The couple decided to tear down the original wall of the kitchen and open it up to the adjacent living areas. They converted an unused nook off of the kitchen into a spacious work area for Vickie, raising the window so that they could add a desk that overlooks their garden.

Their more formal dining area,

which was originally walled off from the kitchen, is now opened up and overlooks their spacious entry way and fireplace. An elegant Hubbardton Forge chandelier hangs over the dining table, giving soft light to the space.

Colorful accents complement the kitchen, like three modern, amber-colored pendant lights over the island and forged metal hardware on the cabi-

netry. The backsplash behind the Dacor stovetop is a mosaic of thin multi-colored glass tiles that pick up on the gray tones of the countertop. A travertine tile floor and natural woven window shades frame the kitchen and allow the colorful elements to stand out.

Rounding out the eclectic mix of homes on this year's kitchen tour are an energy-efficient Mediterranean style home with spectacular views of Mount Diablo, a kitchen inspired by its horse ranch setting, a classic traditional-style home and one with a kitchen inspired by the easy yet refined style of Ina Garten, the Barefoot Contessa.

All the homes featured on the tour are located in the Happy Valley, Burton Valley, and Reliez Valley neighborhoods of Lafayette.

Proceeds from this year's kitchen tour will go to Lafayette Juniors' non-profit beneficiaries: New Day for Children, CoachArt, Contra Costa Interfaith Housing, the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, and We Care. These organizations were selected by the Lafayette Juniors for the exceptional support they provide to children and families in need throughout Contra Costa and neighboring East Bay counties.

Tickets are available for sale to the general public for \$40 (\$30 tax deductible), with a box lunch available for \$12. Tickets can be purchased online at www.lafayettejuniors.org or from Douglah Designs (3586 Mt. Diablo Blvd.) and Premier Kitchens (3373 Mt. Diablo Blvd.) in Lafayette.



We Are Now the #1 Real Estate Company Representing the Sale of Homes in Lafayette.



This is why we live here.

pacificunion.com



To DIY or hire, that is the question

By Andi Peterson Brown

I don't know about you, but last night when I watched the same commercial from Lowe's four times in 30 minutes that kept telling me to Never Stop Improving, I have to say that it worked. They got me. All of a sudden I had a burning desire to improve something, anything. It was 9:15 at night but I wanted to jump in the car right then and there and drive to Lowe's to buy brushes and cans and sprays and plants and on and on and on...

They made it look so fun, so happy, and so relaxing to repaint the house, landscape the yard, and sandpaper the front porch. The sun was shining, everyone smiled as they worked - I mean how could you *not* want to sandpaper your front porch when it could bring such joy?

Sure there are lots of projects to get excited about and stock up at Lowe's for, but many are better left to the professionals. So how do you know when to hire a professional? Hire a professional when:

- The project is elaborate or extensive. Adding on? Rebuilding kitchen cabinets? Absolutely call an expert.
- You just aren't handy with a hammer and never will be.
- You don't have the time. If you don't have the time, you will end up with 2/3 of a completed project. Trust me.



**andi
PETERSON
brown**
Real Estate Broker
AndiBrownHomes.com
925.818.4588
COLDWELL BANKER

DRE# 01738605

real local • real knowledge • real value

©2013 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage office is owned by a subsidiary of NRT LLC. DRE License # 01908304

MANZONETEAM.COM

MANZONE

REAL ESTATE TEAM

In the business of making dreams a reality.

Let Michele and Leslie's experience, expertise, leadership, passion and dedication to their clients and bettering the industry, guide you to your real estate goals and dreams.

If you are thinking of selling or finding the perfect home contact The Manzone Team today!

925.253.7027
ManzoneTeam@gmail.com

Michele Manzone
Leslie Dopp-Manzone
Realtor®, GRI, CRS, CDPE

J. Rocheliff
REALTORS

CA DRE # 01028002 / 01120753

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

...continued from Page D2

MORAGA

10 Hanson Court, \$650,000, 3 Bdrms, 2095 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 3-29-13; Previous Sale: \$630,000, 04-07-04
14 Josefa Place, \$676,000, 3 Bdrms, 2095 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 4-3-13; Previous Sale: \$740,000, 05-29-08
147 Natalie Drive, \$1,050,000, 4 Bdrms, 1976 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 4-9-13; Previous Sale: \$959,000, 11-30-05
3 Peralta Court, \$1,050,000, 4 Bdrms, 2735 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 3-29-13; Previous Sale: \$542,000, 06-30-93
1151 Rimer Drive, \$1,080,000, 3 Bdrms, 2067 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 4-8-13; Previous Sale: \$1,125,000, 05-01-08
1409 Rimer Drive, \$1,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 3113 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 4-9-13; Previous Sale: \$1,179,000, 04-18-03
5 Southard Court, \$1,211,500, 4 Bdrms, 2470 SqFt, 1995 YrBlt, 4-4-13; Previous Sale: \$530,000, 08-20-96
91 Warfield Drive, \$949,000, 4 Bdrms, 2181 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 4-5-13

ORINDA

95 Diablo View Drive, \$2,375,000, 4 Bdrms, 3961 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 4-9-13; Previous Sale: \$1,800,000, 07-07-06
43 Dos Osos, \$1,075,000, 4 Bdrms, 2337 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 4-8-13
87 El Toyonal, \$401,000, 2 Bdrms, 1103 SqFt, 1934 YrBlt, 3-27-13
167 Las Vegas Road, \$829,000, 3 Bdrms, 1759 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 4-1-13; Previous Sale: \$729,000, 01-14-03
154 Ravenhill Road, \$930,000, 2 Bdrms, 2546 SqFt, 1982 YrBlt, 4-4-13; Previous Sale: \$692,000, 10-06-10
52 Underhill Road, \$260,000, 2 Bdrms, 1114 SqFt, 1930 YrBlt, 4-5-13; Previous Sale: \$238,000, 09-30-93
100 Underhill Road, \$675,000, 3 Bdrms, 1887 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 3-27-13; Previous Sale: \$562,000, 03-30-12
19 Valley View Road, \$3,220,000, 5 Bdrms, 4375 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 4-1-13; Previous Sale: \$559,000, 03-31-88
28 Via Farallon, \$1,800,000, 5 Bdrms, 4160 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 4-9-13; Previous Sale: \$445,500, 07-20-87
31 Via Hermosa, \$690,000, 2 Bdrms, 1642 SqFt, 1936 YrBlt, 4-5-13



The GRUBB Co.
REALTORS

Open Sunday 2-4:30



151 La Espiral, Orinda

Come home to a tranquil retreat, recently refreshed inside and out. The sun-filled, well-designed, almost level floor plan offers spacious rooms and logical flow. Built to encourage classic, California indoor/outdoor easy living, there are decks, gardens, a level play area and an incredible hillside vineyard, studded with oak and olive trees. This property is in a serene location, not far from great commute options.

Offered at \$1,250,000

LUXURY PORTFOLIO

Katherine Cooper

510.339.0400/211

cooper@grubbco.com

KatherineCooperHomes.com



Charming Old Town Lafayette



Premium location, this charming property features walking access to downtown with a serene creek side setting. Built in 1952 the delightful home offers three bedrooms, two-and-a-half-baths, plus separate office. The single story floor plan features an abundance of

3665 West Road, Lafayette



natural light and hardwood floors throughout. The open living room has vaulted ceilings and large windows looking out onto the back yard and patio providing seamless indoor and outdoor living.

This approximate 1,532 square foot private home is centrally located, some amenities include: updated kitchen with granite counters, tons of natural light, separate office or bonus room, large private level yard, automatic gated driveway, walk to town, BART and Lafayette schools.

Offered at \$950,000



Presented by

SUE LAYNG

Cell: 925-963-7189

Sue@SueLayng.com

www.SueLayng.com

DRE # 000970956



DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT...

"We had difficulties selling our home with another real estate agent in the recent market. After a great deal of consideration, we contacted Team Rothenberg. It was the best decision we could have made. Ron and Susan are incredible professionals who handled the marketing and sale of our house with an uncanny understanding of the market. They navigated through sales complications flawlessly and handled even the most difficult issues perfectly. The house was sold within a month. Not only did they work with the best staging companies in the area to present our home in the most favorable manner, but they have a good understanding of what needs to be done to close a deal successfully. We wish we knew about them earlier. It would have saved us almost a year of frustration. They are both utterly honest, knowledgeable, and hard working – the best real estate team in the Bay Area."

F. Schlatter, MD, Lafayette, CA - 2012
Emergency Room Physician



Ron and Susan Rothenberg

Lisa Quiros

925.286.5530

info@teamrothenberg.com

www.TeamRothenberg.com

DRE# 01309986 | 00857547 | 01420876



Real estate with a difference.



A Member Of Real Living



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Mother, May I?

By Cynthia Brian

“In search of my mother’s garden, I found my own.” - Alice Walker

The robin darted from her nest the moment I walked outside. She’s been laying four blue eggs either on the wreath on the door or in the vertical hanging basket for the past several years. Today her babies hatched arching their little beaks to receive their first meal.

A few feet away, a doe and her new born fawn leapt over the hedge headed for the hills. The momma has been resting daily under the Meyer lemon tree and may have given birth right here at our house.

All this momma and baby interaction encourages me to drive to our Napa ranch to visit my own nurturing mother. Every time I call she is working in the garden, pulling hoses, planting, weeding, pruning, or feeding her multitude of birds. And every time we speak she fills me in on the baubles blooming beautifully. We compare notes. “You really need to see my garden!” she exclaims. She’s right. I do.

Since my computer is in for a hard drive wipe



Nonie, Cynthia's gardening Mom, sitting in the patio with her containers of cymbidiums and cyclamen.



Pink striped azalea looks like a spring candy cane.

Photos Cynthia Brian

(yikes, worst scenario for a writer/media personality), I jump in the car and head to the ranch. The long winding road to our country abode is filled with potholes, yet I relax instantly as I view our meandering creek, the one we used to swim in, catch pollywogs, and sail homemade rafts when we were kids. The masses of lupines and poppies dotting the hillsides and the mooing cattle whisk me back to my youth. I’m home and home is comforting.

Before I even reach the garden, I smell it. Fragrant purple wisteria and ruby red roses wind through the fences. The vineyards are leafing out, and everything looks so green. Mom’s vegetable garden is already planted with a multitude of tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squash, eggplant, and the perennial leeks. A new drip system, installed by my brother, will make it easier for her to keep up with the watering.

“What do you think?” Mom asks as I grab my camera. “Glorious, gorgeous, OMG!” is all I can say as I scan her carefully curated masterpiece of colorful hydrangeas, azaleas, camellias, rhododendrons, clematis, roses, African daisies, tulips, and a multitude of coveted specimens. “Here’s a box, a trowel, and a clipper! Let’s walk,” she says. Mom knows me so well. I can’t keep my hands off her plants as I snip, pinch, dig, and admire. What’s wonderful about “shopping” in Mom’s garden is that, with the exception of the magnificent bougainvillea that dominates one entire side of the 1890s farmhouse, everything will flourish in my Moraga landscape. A garden is to share and my mom is the poster woman of generosity.

...continued on page D12



The jasmine wafting from Nonie's bird tree is intoxicating.



Ceanothus, known as California lilac, French lilac, and wine-hued weigela flank the boxwoods and the brick-lined pool.

| | |
|--|--|
|  Janet McCardle DRE No. 00244605 (925) 915-3336 jmccardle@rossmoorrealty.com |  Valerie Petersen DRE No. 00974130 (925) 623-3076 valpete@rossmoorrealty.com |
|--|--|



Secure, Gated Resort Style Living Exquisite Single Family Home

Enjoy all that Rossmoor has to offer in this beautiful one story, level-in, 2-bedroom, 2-bath 2053 sq.ft. single family home in the prestigious Heritage Oaks neighborhood. Tranquil oak studded hillside views from the large wood deck, gorgeous dark granite counters, natural wood cabinets, marble baths. Attached double car garage. It's truly exquisite and ready for grand living.

Offered at \$1,250,000

*Your No. 1 Choice for Rossmoor
Real Estate.*



Rossmoor Realty

1641 Tice Valley Boulevard, Walnut Creek CA 94595

Tel: (925) 932-1162 Fax: (925) 932-1428

www.rossmoorealty.com

Digging Deep

...continued from page D10



Ice blue clematis is a vertical climber.

Photos Cynthia Brian

“What’s that elephant-eared plant with the pink florets called again?” she asks me as we promenade around the property. “Bergenia,” I respond, delighted that I can add something to her amazing horticultural repertoire. The bergenia in my garden came from her plantings as did my bearded iris, loquats, magnolias, plums, peaches, grapes, narcissus, pelargonium, Jacobinia, acanthus, and numerous other contributions. She presents me with a few pots of my favorite spring perennial – the “Felix Crousse” peony boasting fragrant large carmine-red double flowers gracing glossy green leaves. They will look magnificent flanking my front door. I am grateful.

We sit on the patio with a glass of wine admiring her cymbidiums with their multiple spires as the finches and hummingbirds flock the feeders. The intoxicating perfume of her jasmine vines and lilac trees permeate the evening air. After plowing the fields, my brother stops by, soon joined by my sister, nieces, and nephews. It’s family time in step with nature. We are all green thumbs.

Last year on Mother’s Day I presented my mom (whom the grandkids call “Nonie”) with “her best gift ever.” It was a book of photographs that I had taken of her garden over several years in every season embellished with favorite quotes. She still carries it everywhere with her to show friends and strangers her piece of paradise.

Arriving back in my own Lamorinda heaven, the doe and her fawn greet me without moving from their comfy bedding. The baby robins are asleep in their cozy nest as their momma proudly chirps a lullaby perched on the magnolia branch.

Robert Fulghum may have learned everything in kindergarten, but since I didn’t attend kindergarten, I learned everything I needed to know about life in a real garden ... my mom’s garden. And all I had to do was utter, “Mother, may I?” Thank you, Mom!



Fragrant purple wisteria winds around the gurgling fountain.

McDonnell Nursery



family owned since 1933

Trees • Shrubs • Vines • Annuals • Perennials
Vegetables • Containers • Statuary & Fountains
Indoor Plants • Decorative Items

www.mcdonnellnursery.com

196 Moraga Way • Orinda • (925) 254-3713 • Open Daily

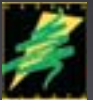


Bearded iris amidst forget-me-nots and woodland hyacinths.

Get Out & Stay Out!

In Your New Outdoor Room

Let Garden Lights Landscape Development give you good reason to "Get Out and Stay Out" this summer.



Enlarge your living area with an outdoor kitchen or entertainment space complete with a built in barbecue and the warm glow of a stone or masonry fireplace.

Garden Lights Landscape Development, Inc. is a full service landscape & pool design build firm. We design & install with just one call 925-254-4797 • www.gardenlightslandscape.com

Celebrating over 20 years of service in Lamorinda. Bonded – Licensed & Insured License# 702845 C27 & C53

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

BLUE RIDGE



925-258-9233
CELL: 510-847-6160

LANDSCAPE COMPANY INC.

BLUE JAY FELDMAN
OWNER/OPERATOR

WWW.BLUERIDGE.LC.COM



LICENSED
INSURED
Lic# 818633



Ask Cynthia Brian-Vetch Reader's Request

Hi Cynthia:

I found vetch in my garden (don't know how it got there) but would like to know how I can spread it to more places? Do I wait for seeds or should I dig some up and move? Thanks.

Andy, Moraga

Hi Andy:

Grown for green manure and part of the pea family, vetch is a perennial or annual herb with spreading, creeping stems that can reach two to twelve feet in length. It is used mainly on farms to add nitrogen to the soil. Vetch is toxic to humans and non-ruminants if consumed but goats love it.

Most likely birds brought seeds into your garden last summer allowing for vigorous spring eruptions. There are over 150 species of vetch with 25 native to the United States. The most common in our area are crown (not a true vetch) and hairy vetch, both native to Europe or western Asia. You can easily transplant vetch from one area to another by first preparing the area where you want the vetch to grow by tilling the soil four to six inches deep. Dig out the vetch (roots are shallow) and transplant where you want it, spacing plants at least two feet apart if you are seeking full coverage. Even if you sever a few roots, the plant will recover within two weeks with regular watering as vetch is hardy and acclimates easily to new locations. Vetch prefers well-drained soils with PH of 6 or 7, however, it seems to do fine in our clay. Basically, vetch is not picky. If you want to buy vetch seeds, your best bet is through agricultural or pasture catalogues such as <http://www.johnnyseeds.com>. Prices vary but expect to pay around \$5 per ¼ pound.

You can also wait for the seeds to pod in July or August. Don't harvest as they don't mature uniformly, but allow them to shatter and scatter on their own. This cover crop will grow slowly in the fall, but develop strong roots that continue through winter until spring sprouting and blooming. Vetch suppresses other weeds, but beware. Although it contributes maximum amounts of nitrogen as a first class soil conditioner, you need to dig it into the earth to reap the benefits. As a weed itself, if left to grow without tilling, it will twine like a vine around your other plants, strangling and smothering them.

For this reason, if you want your flowers and vegetables to be the showcase of your garden, consider vetch as a cover crop only for your fertilizer needs, not as an individual specimen. And don't eat it unless you are a goat!

Happy Gardening!

©2012

Cynthia Brian

The Goddess Gardener

Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com

www.GoddessGardener.com

I am available as a speaker, designer, and consultant.

Cynthia will answer one or more questions every other issue as space allows. Email your comments or questions to Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com



Vetch

Photo Cynthia Brian

Drainage Systems

- Standing Water Problems Eliminated
- Sump Pump Service, Repairs & Replacement
- Drainage Inspections & Reports
- Retaining Walls
- Grading

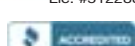


The first and only
Company in the Bay
Area Offering a **5 Year**
No Standing Water Under
the House Guarantee*



925-944-5263

drainagepros.com



*Our 5 year guarantee is offered to qualified clients who follow our repair recommendations completely

Thank you for
recycling this
paper. It is printed
on at least 50%
recycled material
and vegetable
based ink and
should be
recycled again.



Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for May

**Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand. Mother Teresa*

The early April showers did indeed bring May flowers. Gardens are rich in birdsong, new growth, and blooms that are bigger, brighter, and more boisterous than years past. With the record highs of warm weather this May, we need to be diligent in watering, fertilizing, and protecting our homes. Fire season has arrived early. Make sure to walk your perimeters to determine what debris must be discarded. On Mother's Day, give a gift from the garden to the magnificent mom in your life. The sunshine is invigorating so get up, get out, and get going. Put a spring in your step and a song on your lips. It's merry May and time to play. Get thee into the garden to enjoy the new birth of the season.

- **HARDEN** off the seedlings that you have started indoors by putting them outdoors in a sheltered location for a few hours each day after your Frost-Free Date, before bringing them in at night. Do this for a week to 10 days, gradually lengthening the time outdoors. This will help your seedlings avoid transplant shock.
- **FOLLOW** up ground fertilizing of flowers, perennials, vegetables, and fruits with foliar and micro-nutrients at appropriate times during the growing season.
- **DOWNLOAD** a free Beginner's Guide to Gardening from Google. It's basic yet filled with helpful data. Works on Android devices. For iPhones try the \$2, Garden Tracker.
- **EAT** the flowers from nasturtiums, roses, arugula, cilantro, thyme, roses, basil, and sage. They add flavor and beauty to many dishes.
- **CELEBRATE** National Public Gardens Day on May 10 by visiting a public garden, arboretum, or botanical garden. Many are offering free passes for admission.
- **ELEVATE** any small outdoor space to an attractive natural art form with vertical plantings. Make your own or buy a pre-designed wall planter.
- **IMPROVE** the biodiversity of your soil ecosystem through mulching and composting. Spring and fall are the ideal times to increase organic matter and the humus content. Adding compost to your garden reduces the need for chemical fertilizers, allows the soil to hold water well which means less watering.
- **PICK** up the last of the spent camellia blossoms from your garden to protect your plant for next season.
- **PULL** out the leaves of your spring bulbs only when they have completely dried and are crackly. When you tug on them, the leaves will come off easily without disturbing the bulb. Remember, if you pull or cut them while they are still green, necessary nutrients are not sent to the bulb for the next season's bloom.
- **QUARANTINE** any new plant for a few days before planting to make sure it is pest free.
- **CONTROL** ant colonies by creating a perimeter of boric acid powder around the garden.
- **HAND PICK** and destroy all caterpillars. The larvae of moths are voracious eaters and will defoliate a plant in a few days.
- **WAIT** until soil has been dry for at least a week before watering succulents.
- **HARVEST** multi-branched stalks of bearded iris in the cool of the morning for longer lasting blooms. Cut stems on an angle and plunge into cool water.
- **RAISE** herbs such as basil, cilantro, parsley, and sage in pots close to the kitchen for quick snips of flavor.
- **TEACH** patience and responsibility to children by providing them with their own private plot or pot to plant something they want to eat or enjoy.
- **EXCHANGE** seeds of your favorite flowers with a friend or neighbor.
- **SWEEP** debris from driveways, walkways, steps, and porches to freshen up for spring.
- **BRIGHTEN** your curb appeal with colorful annuals and perennials including petunias, zinnias, cleome, salvia, dahlias, snapdragons, impatiens, bachelor buttons, and gaura.
- **PERFUME** the air by planting jasmine, sweet pea, lilac, and citrus trees.
- **STOP** by the Be the Star You Are!® booth at the Moraga Faire to say hello to me on May 11, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and take home a FREE bag of aromatic homegrown potpourri!
- **INCREASE** your green intake by planting antioxidant and vitamin rich dinosaur kale, arugula, and purslane. Delicious cooked or in salads.
- **SHOWER** your Mother, Mother-in-Law, or any cherished woman in your life with extra love on Mother's Day, May 12. She deserves flowers.

Wishing all you marvelous moms a memorable Mother's Day. You are the gardener's of life.

Happy gardening and happy growing to you!

©2013

Cynthia Brian
The Goddess Gardener
Cynthia@goddessgardener.com
www.goddessgardener.com



**ADVANCE
TREE SERVICE**
Lic.: #611120
& Landscaping

Family owned in Moraga since 1987



Your friendly neighborhood arborists Darren and Lew Edwards

Does your yard look tired?

Do you have weeds and your lawn has dead or dry spots?

Advance Tree Service can re-place lawns and upgrade irrigation systems, replace bender boards and add plants and flowers in only a few days. Don't waste water on an old lawn - a new and healthy lawn will not only look better but will save you water as well. Landscaping can add value and curb appeal. Good landscaping doesn't have to be time consuming or expensive. With the right plan and some creativity, you can easily be the envy of all your neighbors.

Advance Tree Service

Your Authority on Trees and Landscape.



925-376-6528

advancetree@sbcglobal.net www.advancetree.com

Follow us on Twitter (advancetree) and like us on Face Book
(ADVANCETREESERVICEANDLANDSCAPINGINC.)

Lamorinda's Leading Independent Real Estate Firm.

ORINDA



New Listing

31 Oak Drive

Charming 1600 square foot home on beautiful setting offering a good value for 4 bedrooms and 2 baths. Vaulted wood beamed ceiling, living-dining room French doors open to brick patio. Tons of tranquility and privacy.

Offered at \$725,000

ORINDA



52 Oak Drive

Enchanting 1939 Vintage Home on a beautiful oak studded 1.4 ac lot. 5bd/4ba, hardwood floors, dual pane windows, large master suite with sitting/office. Beautiful pool area, fabulous views. Close to 12 yrs of award winning schools.

Offered at \$1,595,000

ORINDA



65 La Espiral

Updated 4bd/4ba with beautiful custom features & amenities. Very well maintained. Majestic setting, lovely gardens, new pool + views/privacy, fully fenced. Tuscany ambiance, European flair.

Offered at \$2,195,000

LAFAYETTE



Pending

3665 West Road

Premium location, nicely updated - chefs kitchen with granite, stainless appliances, hardwood floors, vaulted ceilings, seamless indoor outdoor living. Charming 3bd 2bth + separate office. A great value.

Offered at \$950,000

ORINDA



New Listing

4 Loma Vista

Remodeled 3 bedroom, 3 bath, high end finishes. Anderson windows, maple floors, lots of natural stone. Light, bright home on .45 acre lot. Close to town.

Offered at \$879,000

ORINDA



New Listing

21 Don Gabriel Way

Picture perfect Nantucket shingle style traditional with park-like backyard. Exquisitely remodeled from top to bottom on level 1/3 ac lot w/huge lawn & sport court in the coveted Del Rey neighborhood, this 4bd/2.5ba home is a showpiece.

Offered at \$1,599,000

ORINDA



68 Singingwood Lane

Orinda Downs! Exquisite 6bd/5.5ba Architect's Home, cul-de-sac, over 5,000 sq. ft., 1.7 acres, soaring ceilings, views, level lawn/ patio, lush landscape. First time on market in 21 years.

Offered at \$2,495,000

LAFAYETTE



Pending

3148 Somerset Place

End of Burton Valley's most popular cul-de-sac ideal for family. Spacious 6bd/3ba, 2900sf functional living w/light-bright rms, gorgeous living rm & din rm w/vaulted beamed ceilings. All with easy access outdoors. Private & tranquil.

Offered at \$1,165,000

ORINDA



New Listing

41 Charles Hill Circle

Stunning single story updated 4+ bedroom and 2 bath traditional on a level knoll with privacy, grassy yards, pool/spa and incredible views.

Offered at \$1,399,000

ORINDA



New Listing

11 Cedar Lane

One level with spacious light-filled rooms, views, patios, level lawns and a pool. Many rooms open to the back yard for true indoor/ outdoor living. Five bedroom, three and a half bath home on a cul-de-sac!

Offered at \$1,700,000

LAFAYETTE



Pending

3394 Angelo Street

Charming 1700 sq ft, 3 bedroom 1.5 baths on .4 level acre, small court setting. Original owners, 1950's cutie that would love to be updated.

Offered at \$784,000

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

19 White Oak

Private, nature-filled setting on .8 ac yet easy access to commute. 5bd/3ba w/walls of glass open to level play & entertaining. Updated kitchen, mstr bath. Great guest area. Small neighborhood HOA w/pool, tennis, BBQ, \$300/quarter.

Offered at \$1,290,000

ORINDA



9 Las Piedras

Picturesque private estate in a park like setting. Views, level lawn and recreational pool. Classic custom home with vaulted ceilings, walls of windows, and hardwood floors.

Offered at \$1,595,000

ORINDA



201 Glorietta Blvd.

Stunning 4400 sq ft 5bd/4.5ba Spanish hacienda beautifully updated with handmade tile roof, hardwood floors, central courtyard. Fabulous granite and stainless kitchen. Gorgeous one acre with sweeping lawns, terrace, pool.

Offered at \$2,195,000

LAFAYETTE



3216 Judith Lane

Lovely classic 3bd/2ba ranch home. Beautiful family room with hardwood floors, vaulted ceiling, French sliders to large level lawn. Expansive side yard. Gorgeous sunset views! Jog to trail.

Offered at \$799,000

WALNUT CREEK



2050 Shell Ridge Trail

Northgate Vineyard Estate with Gated 1.08 Acres, Grand main house, gorgeous grounds, guest/ party house with movie theatre, diner style game room + newer salt-water pool, 5-car garage.

Offered at \$2,400,000

THE VILLAGE ASSOCIATES:

Ashley Battersby

Patricia Battersby

Joan Cleveland

Shannon Conner

Joan Eggers

Linda Ehrich

Joan Evans

Linda S Friedman

Marianne Greene

Dexter Honens II

Anne Knight

Susan Zeh Layng

Art Lehman

Charles Levine

April Matthews

Karen Murphy

Ben Olsen

Sue Olsen

Tara Rochlin

Jaime Roder

Altie Schmitt

Judy Schoenrock

Ann Sharf

Amy Rose Smith

Molly Smith

Jeff Snell

Lynda Snell

Clark Thompson

Angie Evans Traxinger

Ignacio Vega

Terri Bates Walker

Ann Ward

Dan Weil

Margaret Zucker

Visit www.villageassociates.com

to see our weekly online previews.

Click on **Sunday Open House**

Friday after 5 PM for Open House listings



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

