

Hunsaker Canyon

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Four-legged residents of Hunsaker Canyon

Photo Cathy Dausman

Schneider says Hunsaker Canyon was developed along Grizzly Creek from part of the Rancho Laguna de Los Palos Colorados land grant. The Hunsaker family lived there 20 or 30 years, said Lafayette Historical Society's Laura Torkelson, adding the family produced two county sheriffs. The Hunsakers moved out when Horace Carpentier took over the Moraga land grant in the 1870s and eventually moved to Oregon, Torkelson said.

Author Joyce Maynard and her husband, Jim, "fell in love with Hunsaker Canyon and the little community here just a year ago." Maynard spent her "young years" in New Hampshire. "I'd seen pictures online of a house for sale in the canyon, and the place was so unlike anything I'd seen anywhere else that I knew I wanted to see it that same day. We jumped on his motorcycle, and off we flew, and when we pulled around the last bend in the road and saw the place, I knew I was home," she said.

For Maynard, Hunsaker is "quiet, utterly peaceful, and surrounded by nature. When I step outside at night, I can see the stars, and all night long we hear owls calling to each other."

Kim and Fred Curiel felt they got the best of both worlds when they moved from Hayward in 1998 and built their dream house of straw in Hunsaker Canyon. "He wanted to live in the country and I wanted to live within 15 minutes of a hospital and school. Hunsaker met all of our requirements. It's amazing to wake up surrounded by the absolute beauty of the oak woodlands, walk to work at Burton Valley Elementary School (she is the gardening teacher), and in the evening we can be in downtown Berkeley in less than half an hour," Curiel said.

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