

# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 10 Issue 7 Wednesday, June 1, 2016



*Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian  
...read on page D16*

## Local Lumber Transforms into Great Furniture

By Sophie Braccini



*Julie Mitchell, owner of Lafayette Rancho Cantina, sits at a eucalyptus bar.*

*Photo Sophie Braccini*

Many Lamorinda residents have trees on their properties that hold sentimental value: the kids have been climbing them or a treehouse was nestled there at one time. It may be a great redwood, a majestic cedar or a bicentennial walnut.

But time passes for trees, too, and some-

times they have to go. Bill Ridings of Lafayette, owner of California Urban Lumber, makes sure that these old companions are not completely gone, and in the form of a table, a bench, a center kitchen island, he magnifies their beauty and makes sure they continue to draw admiration and warmth into the home.

Ridings is a sawyer, meaning that his gift is to be able to take a piece of lumber and see how to best saw it to extract the most beautiful boards. "Then I have people on my team that will be creative and turn it into furniture," he says. A banker for many years, Ridings comes from at least three generations of talented woodworkers. Then one day in 2007, on a whim, he asked his friend John Connolly if he'd be interested in having him operate his machinery and develop the business. Connolly said yes, and when he retired, Ridings purchased California Urban Lumber.

*... continued on page D4*



*This redwood table top that belongs to Michael and Teresa Gerringer of Lafayette is three inches thick, four feet wide and 16 feet long.  
Photo provided*



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# Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	16	\$525,000	\$3,000,000
MORAGA	16	\$609,000	\$1,605,000
ORINDA	11	\$615,000	\$1,745,000

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

- 3216 Bavarian Lane, \$1,600,000, 3 Bdrms, 2789 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 5-6-16; Previous Sale: \$1,195,000, 04-27-07
- 1517 El Sombro, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 2509 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 4-26-16
- 4080 Legion Court, \$1,384,500, 4 Bdrms, 1986 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 4-29-16
- 1169 Nogales Street, \$825,000, 4 Bdrms, 2055 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 4-29-16
- 3316 North Lucille Lane, \$840,000, 4 Bdrms, 1655 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 5-4-16
- 3921 North Peardale Drive, \$1,310,500, 3 Bdrms, 1989 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 4-26-16; Previous Sale: \$365,000, 08-12-92
- 914 Old Hawthorne Road, \$1,850,000, 4 Bdrms, 2266 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 5-5-16; Previous Sale: \$600,000, 11-24-99
- 3710 Rose Court, \$1,920,000, 3 Bdrms, 2445 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 5-3-16
- 1049 Silverhill Drive, \$1,225,000, 4 Bdrms, 3053 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 4-29-16; Previous Sale: \$965,000, 09-27-12
- 3397 Silver Springs Court, \$2,750,000, 5 Bdrms, 4530 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 5-5-16; Previous Sale: \$2,595,000, 06-03-05
- 955 Stow Lane, \$3,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 4054 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 5-10-16; Previous Sale: \$1,095,000, 04-12-99
- 15 Via Magnalena, \$1,910,000, 4 Bdrms, 2735 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 4-26-16
- 3701 West Road, \$525,000, 1 Bdrms, 832 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 4-26-16; Previous Sale: \$375,000, 08-22-13
- 1030 Windsor Drive, \$1,110,000, 3 Bdrms, 2159 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 4-26-16; Previous Sale: \$569,000, 06-28-99
- 2 West Creek Court, \$741,000, 3 Bdrms, 1488 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 5-6-16; Previous Sale: \$741,000, 06-15-06
- 3395 Woodview Drive, \$1,155,000, 4 Bdrms, 2503 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 5-6-16; Previous Sale: \$220,000, 05-12-86

## MORAGA

- 1021 Alta Mesa Drive, \$609,000, 2 Bdrms, 1700 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 5-5-16; Previous Sale: \$525,000, 04-02-04
- 617 Augusta Drive, \$900,000, 2 Bdrms, 2187 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 4-25-16; Previous Sale: \$860,000, 07-31-07
- 321 Birchwood Drive, \$1,335,000, 5 Bdrms, 2352 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 5-10-16; Previous Sale: \$850,000, 07-28-09
- 49 Buckingham Drive, \$1,205,000, 4 Bdrms, 1764 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 4-27-16
- 1094 Country Club Drive, \$1,293,500, 3 Bdrms, 1875 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 4-28-16; Previous Sale: \$869,000, 08-03-12
- 173 Cypress Point Way, \$1,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 1644 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 4-28-16; Previous Sale: \$480,000, 06-27-00

... continued on page D14



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**5 Owl Hill Ct, Orinda**

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**SALE PENDING**

**24 Jennifer Highlands Ct, Lafayette**

**Entertainer's Dream home with yard  
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**SALE PENDING**

**35 Oak Rd, Orinda**

**Fairy Tale Setting  
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**SALE PENDING**

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## Local Lumber Transforms into Great Furniture

... continued from page D1

From building wood cell towers, the business' direction has been redirected over the last 10 years toward furniture making because of demand from people who had to cut trees in their yard — as well as word of mouth. Ridings often partners with Hamilton Tree Service in Lafayette, a company that has a crane powerful enough to lift the thousand-pound logs that are cut. Then Urban Lumber fetches the tree and starts the milling process.

Once Urban Lumber has cut the boards they have to dry. Ridings says that the rule of thumb is that it takes a year per inch of thickness. It also depends on the species of timber, redwood drying a lot faster than walnut. "In fact everything dries faster than walnut," he adds with a smile. People store their own lumber. Ridings says that outside is fine, that rain is fine, but that sun is the enemy, and that you want air to get to it and dry it.

The variety of creations that can come from the lumber is limitless.

... continued on page D6



*Bill Ridings shows a client a walnut piece with live edges for the table the client wants to give his son.*

*Photo Sophie Braccini*



*This single piece oak board that will eventually become a bar gets set to go through the sander.*

*Photo Sophie Braccini*



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**PENDING!** 21 Old Rogers Ranch, Pleasant Hill  
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**PENDING!** 2551 Olympic Blvd, Walnut Creek  
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**SOLD!** 3546 Silver Springs Road, Lafayette  
Offered at \$1,598,000 Multiple Offers/Sold Over



# Local Lumber Transforms into Great Furniture

... continued from page D4



*Bill Ridings checks the natural finish of a center island piece that's ready to go.*

*Photo Sophie Braccini*

Ridings explains that depending on how the wood is cut, the boards will be more or less knotty. He sometimes would re-saw a board through its thickness creating a book-match: once the cut is complete and you've opened the two pieces, like a book, the grain on each of the two cut faces will almost perfectly mirror one another. He occasionally leaves live edge on the sides of the board, or turns it around, putting the live edge in the middle. "It's quite popular for office or conference tables because you can slide the cables through the holes in the middle of the table."

At Rancho Cantina in Lafayette, owners Julie Mitchell and Erik Peterson have worked with Ridings to create a look of authenticity for all

their restaurant tables. Mitchell says that Ridings is a friend and they had seen other tables he had done for a restaurant in Walnut Creek. The tables are red bark eucalyptus, oil finished, and both rustic and sophisticated. "We get a lot of compliments about our tables," says Mitchell.

Teresa and Mike Geringer of Lafayette have also been hiring Ridings to construct furniture for their vacation cabin. There it is redwood that was milled and sanded to create a one-of-a-kind table. Mike Geringer says that what he loves about Ridings' pieces is that each is unique. "Every time you go to the warehouse to see the wood it is different," he says. "There is something magical there."

Don't lament if you don't have one of these precious trees in your yard. Ridings has trees that have been donated by people who did not need the wood but did not want to see their trees go to wood chips. The company mills 100,000 board-feet a year. (One board-foot is 12-inches by 12-inches by one-inch thick.) Ridings adds that a typical log has about 150 to 200 board-feet.

In the air of the huge warehouse in Martinez, light fragrance of trees softly drift through. The place is a compelling mix of rugged powerful machinery and the moving beauty of trees. No wonder Ridings says he just loves getting up early every morning to go to work.



## Coming Soon

### 108 Overhill Road, Orinda

East Coast meets West Coast in this exquisite Orinda estate. This custom 5 bedroom, 4.5 bathroom 3724 sq. ft. home is beautifully positioned on a rare pancake flat .45 acre lot. Impressive living spaces include a dream kitchen, formal dining room, salon living room, second family room and an alluring master retreat. Exterior features include an expansive level lawn, pool and spa, outdoor fireplace and kitchen, multiple entertaining and dining venues, and a sport court. Incredible finishes and notable millwork combine to create this completely rebuilt oasis. Located walking distance to Glorietta Elementary School and just minutes to downtown Orinda.

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## Moraga Bluffs Beauty

124 Santa Catalina Court, Moraga



At the end of a lovely cul-de-sac in The Bluffs sits this light-filled 4BD/2.5BA home with views of the Moraga hills. Nearly every inch of this 2,653+/- sq. ft. home has been remodeled with high-end finishes including the wonderful kitchen with top-of-the-line appliances & custom cabinetry that opens to the family room. A beautiful master suite enjoys soaring ceilings, a wall of windows, heated bathroom floors and a state-of-the-art tub. Enjoy natural outdoor beauty from the private back patio and grass area. Situated on 1.6+/- acres, this home is perfection!

124SantaCatalina.com

Offered at \$1,589,000

~ Coming Soon ~

## Tucked Away Treasure in Orinda

70 Lost Valley, Orinda

Tucked back in the Orinda hills, sits this lovely remodeled 4BD/3BA home with 2,342+/-sq. ft. The wonderful open floorplan includes hardwood floors, gorgeous kitchen with large island overlooking the family room and separate bedroom wing. Located on .47+/- acre, 70 Lost Valley enjoys terrific privacy and views.

70LostValleyDrive.com

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## Lafayette Valley Estates

483 Peacock Boulevard, Lafayette

3 Bedrooms | 2 Bathrooms | 1890± sq. ft.

Perfectly situated on a cul-de-sac on Lafayette Valley Estates' most desirable street, this contemporary single story has been expanded with a remarkable great room, featuring a true cook's kitchen and a large master bedroom suite, complete with a well-outfitted walk-in closet. Newly painted inside and out, newer carpet and gleaming hardwood floors, this home is ready to move right in and enjoy the summer in the serene, level backyard.



Offered at \$1,189,000

Coming Soon

Miramonte Gardens	1514± sq. ft.   3BR/2BA	\$695,000
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## It's Not Easy Being Green

By Andi Peterson Brown

Along with family road trips and outings for ice cream, summer is synonymous with home improvement time. If you want to do some value-add projects to your home this summer but tearing up your dated bathrooms sounds way too intense, you might want to consider doing a little bit of "greening" instead. Compared to other house-related projects, greening your home can be much easier, can immediately lead to utility savings, and can still create some long term value. Below are a few ways to easily go green.

- Switch to low flow showerheads and dual-flush toilets.
- Replace lights with CFLs or LEDs.
- Seal gaps and cracks around windows and doors and install weather stripping where necessary.
- Install solar landscaping lights and motion sensor porch lights.
- If possible, replace some grass square footage with native landscaping/low water plants.
- Install a programmable thermostat.
- Plant your own vegetable and herb garden.
- Lower the temperature setting on your water heater to 120 degrees.
- Replace an outdated HVAC system with a newer, more energy efficient model.



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## Stylish Solutions

# Four Steps To Creating Your Future Dream Home Now

By Ann McDonald



*Simple clean lines for an outdoor kitchen make room for life and people. Many Lamorinda homes were built in the 50s and have brick outdoors. This showcases an easy way to work around that for an updated look.*

What an incredible time of year. We are so blessed to live in Northern California. I absolutely love the seasons, and am particularly enjoying the summer blooms following our recent rains.

This month, Stylish Suburbanite, I wanted to share helpful tips from "Behind the Drapery" as many in Lamorinda undertake remodels, refreshes and other updates to properties and homes this time of year. Even as the world swirls around us, there is something sacred about home. It does not matter if our abodes are big or small, the spaces and places we call home set the stage for so much of our lives.

As we look toward the summer months and consider what to undertake, may these tips help us create beauty and

invite peace into our living spaces.

First, an encouragement for any who are feeling overwhelmed at the prospect. As a veteran of the Design Industry, I am often asked to speak encouragement to my peers. I don't know if it's just because I'm old or what, but as I say to them, "Stay the course!" The beauty you create and steward in your home will pay off in more ways than you can count.

One of my most requested presentations is what I call "Present Future Design." This has to do with truthful evaluations of what space is currently emphasizing in ones' life and how to systematically go about changing those spaces without trashing the entire set-up.

... continued on page D12

//JUST LISTED

## VACATION WHILE STILL AT HOME

149 Westchester Street, Moraga



This lovely, updated townhome is located in Moraga Country Club on a coveted quiet and inviting Cul de Sac. You are just minutes from golf, tennis, swim, fabulous dining and entertaining facilities at the stunning MCC club house.

The spacious 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath townhome is approximately 1,892 square feet. The front patio graciously welcomes guests. It has seamless access from the family room, for outside dining and is a wonderful play area for young children or a combination of all the above.

The kitchen offers granite counters, great breakfast bar for

casual meals, stainless steel sink, and views of the patio. It is adjacent to the spacious dining room with seamless access to the private deck, once again expanding the interior area to the outside.

The living room also accesses the deck providing a wonderful area for family fun and entertaining friends.

Upstairs are three spacious bedrooms and two recently remodeled baths. All with tons of natural light, and plenty of closet space. This is a lovely family home with all the amenities of Moraga Country Club.

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## Stylish Solutions

# Four Steps To Planning Your Dream Home Now

... continued from page D10



*In this small space we see practical application of four chairs and a coffee table with a fireplace. Note the teak is not in perfect condition, and accent pillows provide color. Stick with neutrals for the main cushions so you can switch the look each year. The addition of an outdoor rug would be nice as well.*

Seasoned, and sometimes hardened, architects, designers and decorators are reminded of their heart that brought them into an industry where creating spaces and places blesses and encourages new growth, both in the built environment and for people who will inhabit those built environments.

So for the Lamorinda reader, here is my reminder: Your home is meant to catapult you into the next season, not hold you captive to a yesterday, laden with faded memories. Make room for the next. The next season with your spouse or significant other, the next season with your children and/or friends and/or pets, and most importantly, the next season of you.

### How do we do that? Here are my foundational tips:

- 1) Take an unplanned photo of each and every space, room, and if possible, the outside of your home. Nothing speaks truth like a good, unplanned picture. I recommend you don't tidy up. Why? Because it gives us a strong understanding of how we really live. Today.
- 2) Evaluate those photos in a neutral location. Don't sit and look at the spaces and places you live in from your messy dining room. Go to a peaceful place for you, which could be an outdoor hike, a coffee shop, library or the neighborhood pool. Just get out. Bring a notebook

and tag photos with what an ideal life would look like in those rooms one, three and even five years out.

Plan for your present to future life in those spaces.

Do you yearn to pick up painting again? Create space for that today. Do you yearn to have more peace in your life? Eliminate the television and donate all those old video games. Do you yearn for less time cleaning up? Eliminate all the clutter.

- 3) No playing catch-up. Forward march only! Many times, families especially, are designing for the past season of their lives trying to catch up. It's often unconscious. We find the resources grow as the kids leave home, and that pool that never materialized looks mighty inviting. However, by honestly evaluating where we'd like to be five years out, we are able to make educated wise decisions about design and remodels.

One trend we are seeing strong is the aging in place concept. As such, many clients are preparing for in-law suites or revamping so there is a first floor master bedroom. Take time to take stock. Don't rush — plan well. It will save time once the project starts, I promise. Your soul will thank you for planning.

- 4) And finally, only undertake by yourself, what you can finish by yourself. We joke in the studio that DIY is actually an evil spirit. Here's wisdom: there are some projects you can do alone. You can plant the front porch pots alone, but probably not re-build the steps. As the summer hits its stride, remember that help is often booked out, so plan for your sanity now. It's okay to ask for help. Not one of my friends with television shows on DIY does it themselves. If you knew the teams, sponsors and crews making it all possible, you'd never feel guilty about hiring again.

What's the old saying? Many hands make for light work. It is especially true in design-related projects.

For today, may your home be blessed and may your spaces be places of refuge and restoration, beauty and good cheer.

... continued on page D15



### 91 Orchard Road, Orinda

Beautifully remodeled home in Glorietta with park-like grounds including lawns, flowering plants, ponds, waterfalls, patios, greenhouse, outdoor fireplace and peaceful views. Complete au-pair/in-law suite with separate entrance.



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## JUST LISTED

2863 Brian Ranch Ct, Walnut Creek | \$1,795,000

4 bdrm | 4.5 bath | 3,654 sq ft | Built in 2015

<http://pro.walkintour.com/17528>

Beautiful single story home with a bright, open floor plan. Ideal for entertaining with impressive 10 ft ceilings and 8 ft doors throughout. High quality finish work, gourmet kitchen, slab granite, custom tile work, crown molding and custom cabinetry make this house extraordinary. Each bedroom features a walk-in closet and own bathroom. The expansive flat backyard has plenty of space for a pool. Move-in ready!



## Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

### MORAGA ... continued

308 Corte Gabriel, \$840,000, 3 Bdrms, 2018 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 5-10-16; Previous Sale: \$300,000, 12-27-93  
 43 Miramonte Drive, \$619,000, 2 Bdrms, 1344 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 5-2-16; Previous Sale: \$415,000, 11-12-03  
 238 Paseo Bernal, \$835,000, 3 Bdrms, 2044 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 4-29-16; Previous Sale: \$748,000, 12-30-14  
 632 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,225,000, 4 Bdrms, 1965 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 5-3-16  
 266 Scofield Drive, \$1,270,000, 3 Bdrms, 1573 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 5-6-16; Previous Sale: \$884,500, 04-29-04  
 1724 St. Andrews Drive, \$775,000, 2 Bdrms, 1464 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 4-29-16; Previous Sale: \$73,000, 12-19-75  
 1742 St. Andrews Drive, \$950,000, 2 Bdrms, 2191 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 5-5-16; Previous Sale: \$865,000, 09-29-06  
 3832 Via Granada, \$1,438,000, 3 Bdrms, 2078 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 5-6-16  
 133 Warfield Drive, \$1,605,000, 4 Bdrms, 2149 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 5-10-16  
 93 Warfield Drive, \$1,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 2100 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 5-5-16; Previous Sale: \$730,000, 11-29-00

### ORINDA

39 Camino Encinas, \$1,270,000, 4 Bdrms, 1561 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 5-4-16; Previous Sale: \$815,000, 10-06-09  
 64 Donna Maria Way, \$1,160,000, 3 Bdrms, 1857 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 4-29-16; Previous Sale: \$446,000, 09-04-97  
 4 Edgewood Court, \$1,275,000, 4 Bdrms, 2280 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 5-3-16; Previous Sale: \$1,082,000, 10-15-08  
 108 Hillcrest Drive, \$1,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 1771 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 4-27-16; Previous Sale: \$300,000, 11-28-95  
 215 Ivy Drive, \$650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1281 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 5-10-16  
 12 Knickerbocker Lane, \$1,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 1930 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 5-4-16  
 233 La Espiral, \$999,000, 3 Bdrms, 1254 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 4-29-16; Previous Sale: \$790,000, 10-05-09  
 626 Moraga Way, \$795,000, 4 Bdrms, 1897 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 5-6-16; Previous Sale: \$615,000, 04-27-16  
 15 Valley View Drive, \$1,745,000, 4 Bdrms, 2967 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 4-29-16; Previous Sale: \$800,000, 06-30-98  
 112 Via Floreado, \$1,370,000, 4 Bdrms, 2978 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 5-6-16



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## Stylish Solutions

... continued from page D12



Here we see clean lines for an outdoor kitchen. The view is the star, something many Lamorinda homes can take advantage of. If your outdoor kitchen is far away from the main house, perhaps up a hill, make sure to allocate enough storage so you aren't constantly going back and forth. A disposal is also a good idea.



Here we see armless chairs in a very neutral setting. Low profile is timeless, especially in outdoor furniture. These are investment quality pieces. I like how they work with the old pavers, something many Lamorinda homes have. Don't rush to rip them out. If uneven, lay an outdoor rug atop instead.



Ann McDonald, IIDA, NAPO, is the Founder/CEO of Couture Chateau, a luxury interior design firm in Orinda. For a complete blog post including other design ideas, visit [www.couturechateau.com/blog](http://www.couturechateau.com/blog).



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## Digging Deap

# Your Garden is Your Canvas This June

By Cynthia Brian

*"The world is but a canvas to the imagination." Henry David Thoreau*



*Cymbidiums are blooming in abundance outdoors.*

With summer approaching quickly, June is possibly one of the busiest months. Graduations, Father's Day, weddings, birthdays, vacations, swim meets, pool parties... it seems that these 30 days offer the most opportunities for celebrations.

It is time to fire up the barbeque, sweep the patio, freshen the flowerbeds and get ready for some serious fun. By growing your own food, you and your family will be healthier, happier, and enjoy more exercise. Get your children involved in the seed sowing, planting, and caring process to help them understand how food travels from the ground to the table. Allow your garden to become your artistic canvas to showcase your imagination and creativity throughout the summer.

### SEED SOWING

This is a fun project to do with children, providing pride in growing. Start with radishes, lettuces, kale, zinnias, marigolds, or beans as they germinate quickly. An edible garden is especially popular with young kids.



*Sweet peas reseed and climb wire or fences. Excellent for cut bouquets.*

- **RECYCLE** plastic six-packs, flats, and pots to use to grow your own seedlings. Wash well before beginning the process and make sure the drainage holes are not plugged.
- **HANG** a shoe organizer on a sunny wall with the pockets filled to three-fourths full with soil for a fun vertical garden that is especially excellent for herbs, lettuces, and other compact plants.
- **BUY** sterile seed-starting mix, which doesn't have any soil in it when you want to plant seeds in a container.
- **READ** seed packets carefully. It's critical to know how to plant each variety of seed, what amount of water, sunshine and care it will need. You also want to know how big the plant will become.
- **PLANT** extra seeds as many will not germinate.
- **KEEP** seedlings moist or they will shrivel and die as summer approaches.





Roses are prolific bloomers this year.

Don't over water or seeds will drown.

- **THIN** as necessary. Discards the remnants to the compost bin.
- **FERTILIZE** with organic micronutrients once a plant has several leaves.
- **TRANSPLANT** when each plant is big enough to outgrow its planter.
- **REWARD** yourself and your children with the harvest of vegetables or flowers.

#### SUN SAFE TIPS:

National Sun Safety Week is June 5-11.

- **APPLY** sunscreen daily and especially before going out into the garden. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer.
- **WEAR** a hat to protect your head and sunglasses to protect your eyes.
- **CHECK** your skin for any abnormalities and see a physician if you suspect problems.



Rhododendrons need moisture to keep healthy.

Photos Cynthia Brian

#### FIREPROOF YOUR GARDEN

It's probably not possible to completely fireproof any area, but follow guidelines issued by the fire protection districts to create defensible spaces no later than June 15.

- **PREVENT** embers from igniting your home in the event of a fire by clearing leaves, needles and debris from gutters, eaves, porches and decks.
- **REMOVE** dead vegetation from under your deck and within ten feet of your home.
- **TRIM** weeds and grasses to three inches.
- **PRUNE** tree branches so that the lowest branches are between six-ten feet from the ground.
- **REDUCE** "fire fuel laddering" by pruning to separate trees from bushes.
- **MAINTAIN** your property and weed-whack or pull any re-growth.

# Digging Deep

## Cynthia Brian's Fresh Tips for Your June Garden

- **AVOID** using pesticides and insecticides as they kill the beneficial insects along with the invasive. Bees, bats and bugs that help our crops reproduce and flowers flourish can be destroyed.
- **DINE** on nasturtium. For a stunning and delicious appetizer, roll curried egg salad into the peppery leaves of nasturtium. Add edible flowers to the platter. It's delicious.
- **PACK** your salads with nutritional vitamins A, C, K, iron, calcium, potassium and folate by growing leafy greens such as frisee, mache, romaine, bok choy, arugula and kale. Don't forget to toss in radish and turnip tops, too, for an added crunch.
- **BUILD** a raised bed for a low maintenance edible feast. Make sure to put mesh wire on the bottom to keep out the gophers, moles and rats. Fill with clean soil for best results.
- **ADD** a gently meandering dry creek with gravel and rocks to help with drainage, runoff, and provide a natural look to your landscaping. For a shaded area, plant with hosta, ferns and lamium.
- **INVITE** butterflies into your garden by providing a sunny spot for them to land, shrubs for shelter, masses of flowers for nectar, and a saucer of water for a sweet drink. Make sure to change the water daily so as not to attract mosquito larvae.
- **DEADHEAD** roses as soon as flowers are spent to encourage continual re-blooming. This is one of the best years ever for the prolific showcase of these prize winners.
- **RECYCLE** brown and green waste, fruit, vegetable scraps, coffee and tea into a natural fertilizer. Make your own compost all year round to feed your plants.

... continued from page D17



*Easy to grow lettuce and kale will be welcome for summer salads.*

- **PICK** bouquets of vibrant sweet peas and clematis for long lasting fragrant arrangements to brighten your interiors as well as your outdoor dining areas.
- **GROW** cymbidium orchids in containers located in a north or northwest location to enjoy annual blooms. Cymbidiums bloom for months, and can be brought indoors for further pleasure. When the spires fade, return the pots to the coolness of outdoors.
- **FERTILIZE** rhododendrons, azaleas, roses and camellias.
- **ENJOY** your special celebrations in your charmingly refreshed garden.
- **REFLECT** your unique personality with your plantings and artistry. Be creative in the outdoors. It's more fun.



*Jacob's Coat is a stunning rose packed with multiple sunny colors.*



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For a soothing shade garden, columbine mixed with hosta in a gravel riverbed is attractive.

Congratulations to everyone who is graduating and commemorating a special occasion. Happy Father's Day to all the dedicated dads, especially those who share the respect for Mother Nature with their children.

Happy gardening. Happy growing!



©2016 Cynthia Brian cautions gardeners to wear hats in the garden.  
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**97 Meadow View Road**  
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**\$1,325,000**

## ORINDA



**9 Fleetwood Court** Wonderful Harold Smith traditional home located at end of court & backs up to open space. Hardwd flrs, kitchen w/island & dining area. Formal living, dining + family rm opens out to yard.

**\$1,395,000**

## ORINDA



New Listing

**10 Van Tassel Lane** Exceptional custom remodel of highest quality, lovely craftsmanship. Prime Sleepy Hollow street. One level living w/vaulted ceilings, Chef's kitchen. Pool, lawns, gardens. Classic appeal.

**\$1,395,000**

## ORINDA



New Listing

**33 La Cresta** Expansive mid-century home w/hwd flrs, updated kitchen, 2 Masters & guest suite/ in-law unit with 2nd kitchen, media/ family rm & private entrance. Level backyd w/barbecue, pool, spa.

**\$1,795,000**

## ORINDA



**16 La Cintilla** This exquisite OCC 6bd/6ba two story residence is located on a private oak-studded .30 acre lot. Vaulted ceilings, open flr pln, gourmet kitchen, spacious game rm & priv. au-pair guest suite.

**\$2,150,000**

## ORINDA



**68 Southwood Drive** Beautiful fully renovated w/high-end features in/outside. Perfect for family & ideal entertaining all on 1 level. Exceptional grounds, views & privacy + close-in location. Sep. studio suite.

**\$2,500,000**

## ORINDA



**160 Camino Don Miguel** Magnificent Spanish Med. estate on two adj. lots, located on 4th hole of OCC. Main house completely rebuilt in 1996 is over 5800sf with 5bd/5.5ba & separate 627sf 1bd/1ba guest house.

**\$5,498,000**

## MORAGA



New Price

**2121 Donald Drive #6** Desirable Moraga Manor 2 story, 2bd/1.5ba remodeled 1,224 sf condo with granite kitchen, fireplace & patio. Steps from pool & designated parking. Close to shopping, trails. Top schools!

**\$435,000**

## LAFAYETTE



**1820 Reliez Valley Road** Modern Farmhouse in pastoral Reliez Valley. Remodeled single story 4bd/2.5ba on a usable acre. Incredible Privacy w/ endless room for a pool, vineyard, horses, sports court, guest house.

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**3 Dead Horse Canyon** Spectacular 2003 custom 4220sf home & apx. 1200sf carriage building on 2.47ac in Burton Valley. High ceilings, gourmet kit./fam rm, 1st flr mstr retreat. Wlk to elem. schl & swim club.

**\$2,495,000**

## LAFAYETTE



**1155 Camino Vallecito** Esheric Architectural Mid Century. Spectacular 2ac Happy Vly Estate. Beaut. updated, walls of glass, Fr. doors, high ceilings, pano views. Kit./fam rm, stunning liv/din rms, cabana/ba. Top schools.

**\$3,595,000**

## ALAMO



New Listing

**2465 Lunada Lane** Beautiful Westside Alamo home w/almost half acre gated park-like yard w/pool, patio, grass play area. Updates throughout w/hwd flrs, crown molding, double hung windows. Amazing location!

**\$1,395,000**

## OAKLAND



New Listing

**2700 8th Avenue #2** Ivy Hill 1920's Charmer! 1000 sq.ft. 1 bed/1 bath condo. Open kitchen, walls of windows, newly renovated kitchen & bathroom, garage parking, backyard & lots of storage.

**\$475,000**

## WALNUT CREEK



New Listing

**141 Norlyn Drive** Beautifully remodeled 2 story home with 2000 sq.ft. addition completed in 2011. Ideal floor plan & amenities, hardwood floors, energy efficient, drought tolerant landscaping & more.

**\$1,699,000**

## WALNUT CREEK



New Listing

**156 Brodia Way** New construction by KT Builders, a local, high-end home builder. Captivating views of Mt. Diablo & La Casa Via Valley. High ceilings, open flr pln & large .92 acre lot at end of cul de sac.

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