

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 10 Issue 19 Wednesday, November 16, 2016



...read on page D4

Digging Deep

Growing Gratitude in the Garden

By Cynthia Brian

"Gratitude is the fairest blossom which springs from the soul." — Henry Ward Beecher



Tom turkey struts his stuff on the driveway.



Photos Cynthia Brian Hachiya persimmons hanging on the tree. Eat them when they seem over-ripe.

Are you grateful for the simple things in life? This is the perfect time of the year to reflect upon our blessings and gifts. I am so thankful for all of you who read my column. Your interest and questions are always appreciated. Thank you, also, for so many of you who have hired me to help you with your planting needs or garden desires. It's magnificent to grow with you.

Every day I am very grateful to be a gardener to witness the beauty, bounty, and endless diversity of Mother Nature. Our landscapes are ever changing. What's here today may not be here tomorrow, nor, the next year. Seeing the cows grazing in the hills, breathing our clean air, enjoying peace, safety and serenity that only comes from living in this semi-rural environment makes my heart sing with

gratitude.

Wild turkeys have moved into Lamorinda territory, immune to the possibility of becoming a holiday main dish! A big Tom waddled across my driveway as two dozen of his hens toppled and gobbled the berries from the top of my Chinese pistache.

... continued on page D11





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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	7	\$829,000	\$2,500,000
MORAGA	6	\$850,000	\$1,625,000
ORINDA	11	\$950,000	\$2,310,000

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

- 3654 Happy Valley Road, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 3139 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 10-14-16
- 3913 Happy Valley Road, \$2,500,000, 5 Bdrms, 2914 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 10-20-16
- 1118 Hilltop Drive, \$1,715,000, 4 Bdrms, 2133 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 10-13-16
- 473 Peacock Boulevard, \$829,000, 3 Bdrms, 1154 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 10-17-16
- 2596 Pebble Beach Loop, \$858,000, 3 Bdrms, 2052 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 10-19-16; Previous Sale: \$505,000, 09-27-11
- 1870 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 1903 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 10-14-16
- 3340 Victoria Avenue, \$960,000, 1 Bdrms, 1016 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 10-17-16

MORAGA

- 137 Cypress Point Way, \$900,000, 3 Bdrms, 1749 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 10-13-16; Previous Sale: \$900,000, 11-19-15
- 143 Donald Drive, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 1822 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 10-20-16
- 325 Rheem Boulevard, \$850,000, 2 Bdrms, 1836 SqFt, 1990 YrBlt, 10-18-16; Previous Sale: \$717,000, 11-15-05
- 25 Sanders Ranch Road, \$1,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 2514 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 10-25-16; Previous Sale: \$975,000, 09-26-03
- 103 Sanders Ranch Road, \$1,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2735 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 10-14-16; Previous Sale: \$487,500, 05-02-89
- 227 Scofield Drive, \$950,000, 3 Bdrms, 1819 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 10-13-16

ORINDA

- 15 Acacia Drive, \$950,000, 3 Bdrms, 1581 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 10-14-16
- 73 Bates Boulevard, \$1,323,000, 5 Bdrms, 2606 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 10-19-16; Previous Sale: \$64,900, 04-20-73
- 19 Bel Air Drive, \$2,310,000, 5 Bdrms, 3178 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 10-14-16; Previous Sale: \$465,000, 06-25-96
- 5 Darnby Court, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 1942 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-24-16; Previous Sale: \$87,000, 07-15-76
- 99 Donna Maria Way, \$1,330,000, 4 Bdrms, 2146 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 10-25-16
- 42 Ivy Drive, \$1,020,000, 3 Bdrms, 1441 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 10-14-16; Previous Sale: \$812,500, 09-24-04
- 10 Lost Valley Drive, \$1,030,000, 4 Bdrms, 1689 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 10-13-16
- 516 Miner Road, \$1,675,000, 3 Bdrms, 3529 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 10-17-16; Previous Sale: \$63,000, 01-10-77
- 245 Orchard Road, \$1,218,000, 3 Bdrms, 2383 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 10-25-16; Previous Sale: \$1,050,000, 07-12-05
- 4 Overhill Road, \$1,175,000, 3 Bdrms, 2152 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 10-14-16; Previous Sale: \$1,100,000, 02-27-07
- 67 Tara Road, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 4125 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 10-18-16; Previous Sale: \$775,000, 05-20-94

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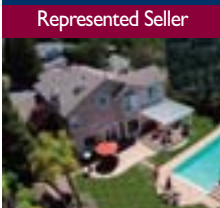
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Highly desirable neighborhood

1571 1st Ave, Walnut Creek



Represented Buyer
Convenient location with huge yard

24 Jennifer Highlands Ct, Lafayette



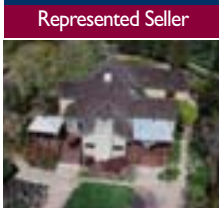
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Stylish Solutions

Embrace the Designs of the Season

By Ann McDonald



Unique Thanksgiving decorations can be made from everyday finds. Don't stress and enjoy the process.

Photo provided

It's that time of year when sanctuary, family, celebration, and yes, a bit of stress starts to settle in. The magazines show us what an idealized November looks like, with perfect pictures, perfect table settings, and not a messy child, unruly relative or stressed-out host in sight.

We look at the photos flooding our social media and grocery store checkout lines, then we go home and see piles of unopened mail, boxes of mismatched china we barely put away from last year's celebrations, our sagging sofas, dog hair filled corners, or worse, our perfectly staged but empty-of-process and empty-of-people homes....and wonder.

What now? How do I navigate this so-called season of joy, when I'm not seeing it in my actual spaces and places? This month, Stylish Suburbanite, I'd like to offer some practical help in the form of a single word:

embrace.

We must stay away from perfectly staged homes void of process and movement. As a luxury designer, one of the most valuable things I do is imbue permission for life to flow, books to be read, and to break the spirit of perfectionism which often lingers in new design commissions where pictures form the idealized look.

Don't get me wrong, I can spot a one-eighth of an inch off in a stack of books a room away; however there is a massive difference between poor design masquerading as process (read: messy and disordered) versus so-called great design masquerading as dead, immovable interiors, where even the presence of humanity ruins a look.

I happen to believe beauty through design process can shift things, from our soul's perspective, and bring

hope into situations and birth new life from celebrations, even when those celebrations don't look like the magazine photos and staged events pushed on us every season. Beauty in process is quite practical!

Here are some tips to "embrace" November:

1) Embrace: your current season of life. If you have young children or pets at home, organic snacks dropped on the floor are an entirely appropriate seasonal décor item. The pets will think they are pennies from heaven, and your real beauty is in not needing the perfectionism mentioned above. Process is lovely. Anyone who renders a design judgment because you have young kids and or pets, with the requisite toys or dog hair, isn't actually a designer. Why? Because they don't understand the beauty of process. Design in its purest form is about process.

2) Embrace: decorating anyway. If you are like we are, with an empty house, where most things actually stay in the place we put them, and that "void-of-life perfectionism thing" can start to creep in...decorate anyway! I can't tell you how often clients let us know "we won't be decorating this season because it's just us."

I happen to think "just us" is a holy and wonderful thing! Did you decorate when you were first married? Then decorate now! Didn't decorate when you were first together because you were broke? Then decorate now! Embrace the beauty together. Find something you both love. Beauty has a place in every space, and the natural shift of season should mirror what goes on inside our sanctuary homes as well. As the earth decorates with color changes, weather change and even the animals move habitations, we need to take our cues and do the same. At the very least change the center hall table arrangement, or the family room shelves.

3) Embrace change with anticipation of good. Change carries a resonance. What you bring in, whether it's live and natural or you prefer the kitsch of seasonal styles (there is a beloved place for both), the resonance of hope you find and the bits of discovery from the "joy of the shop" will fill your home with the same.

... continued on page D6

LAMORINDA'S FAVORITE NEW KITCHEN



Residences at Harvest Court were thoughtfully designed understanding the kitchen is often the heart of the home. Each open concept design offers luxurious features such as Precision Cabinetry with large kitchen islands for gathering, Thermador® Appliances, Kohler® Plumbing Fixtures and other details providing the perfect space for entertaining and family gatherings.

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The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

By Andi Peterson Brown

It's beginning to look a lot like the most wonderful time of the year. And if your home is still on the market, you might be contemplating pulling it for the winter. Hold that thought. Even though real estate activity tends to decline during November and December, the season can in fact be a great opportunity to showcase your home in its holiday best.

Buyers who are out looking during the holidays are usually more serious about their search. To capture their hearts and secure a sale, here are some quick and easy tips for holiday staging.

Keep it natural, keep it simple. While it might be tempting to display your cardboard cut-out Buddy the Elf or put your Clark Griswold skills to the test, it's best to keep things simple and natural at your front door. Beautiful wreaths, poinsettias, and tasteful, classic twinkle lights will put buyers in the spirit and make a lasting first impression.

Keep it natural, keep it neutral. It's important for buyers to see themselves living in your home, and universals such as winter greenery, decorative candles, pine cones, and glass jars of candy canes and marshmallows all invoke the warmth of the holidays and spread good cheer to the widest pool of buyers.

These tips, coupled with the fact that Lamorinda has a very low housing supply, might just make the difference for that one buyer. And remember: it only takes one.



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Embrace the Designs of the Season

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I often marvel at the process of designing seasonal décor for our clients. What starts out as a chore to them, or at the very least a "social obligation" becomes this window into childlike hope where at one moment in time, all things are actually possible.

What you design and bring matters and shifts things! The beauty you create in process with design in the private spaces of your homes, and the public front porches for friends and neighbors in Lamorinda to drive by and be encouraged with, changes the atmosphere in our cities and towns as a whole.

Embrace the beauty, embrace the process and embrace the resonance.

If you would like to join us for a free webinar on Design for the Holidays, this completely free event is hosted online. I will be sharing tips and encouragement for you and yours this season so our beloved Lamorinda can arise and shine brightly as a place of refuge, restoration and hope! You may register for free here: <https://annmcdonald.easywebinar.live/holiday-design-free-event-registration>.



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.



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Happy Thanksgiving



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Digging Deep

Growing Gratitude in the Garden

... continued from page D1

As annoying as they can be, I'm happy to co-exist with the wild things. You may want to collect a few of the beautiful turkey feathers as I do to add to your holiday bouquets.

Persimmon trees are bursting with orange tangy fruit, ready for our holiday puddings. Fall is still showing off its brilliant robes of reds, yellows and gold, yet there is a nip in the air reminding us that winter is a little over a month away. Pumpkins and gourds are still a seasonal favorite. Native to North America,

pumpkins are a vegetable, not a fruit, genus Cucurbita, species pepo or maxima. They are a type of winter squash and the really weird, ugly ones are the most delicious. The blue-green pumpkins you are growing or have purchased are derived from New Zealand. Cook them as their golden-yellow flesh boasts a sweet, mild aromatic flavor. Were you repelled by the warty pumpkins you saw in markets this year? Don't be. Those ugly growths are actually sugar secretions. The more warty

the pumpkin, the smoother, creamier, and sweeter the flesh inside. Make a pumpkin puree for dinner, or a scrumptious pumpkin pie for Thanksgiving and you'll be hooked.

As we soon bid farewell to fall, let us all keep gratitude in our hearts as we look for the fertile joys that sprout with simplicity. Believe something wonderful is about to transpire.

Grow and glow in gratefulness.



Although a bit marbled, hydrangeas maintain their fall interest.



Were you wondering what happened to the turkey eggs? They hatched!





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Cynthia Brian's Mid-month Garden Reminders

- **PLANT** Woodland Herbaceous Peonies, a separate species of herbaceous peony that thrive in the shade. Naturalizing in a deciduous woodland area with the early spring sun and summer shade, they will grow to one-and-a-half-feet tall and self-seed as a ground cover. Woodland peonies provide three-season appeal with delicate white flowers in early spring, lush green foliage throughout the growing seasons, and dramatic indigo and scarlet seed pods in the fall. <http://peony-senvy.com>.
- **LOOKING** for a preplanned garden selection? High Country Gardens offers deer and drought resistant plants that have color, texture, and curb appeal. www.highcountrygardens.com,
- **PRUNE** those thorny creepers, bougainvillea, now to remove old flowers. Cover with burlap if exposed in an area that gets frost.
- **COLLECT** turkey feathers to add to bouquets to wreaths for Thanksgiving.
- **PICK** persimmons. Fuyu persimmons can be eaten like apples but the hachiyas must be mushy ripe before eating.
- **PUREE** warty pumpkins for the sweetest, smoothest, most delicious pumpkin dish you'll ever taste. Obviously, don't puree the skins!
- **CUT** branches from liquid amber or Japanese maple trees to use indoors for a punch of end of fall color.
- **PLANT** your spring bulbs now through January to enjoy a meadow of continuous flowers next year.
- **PICK** up pansies to plant for winter. 2017 has been named The Year of the Pansy.
- **ADD** a cover crop to your garden to fix the nitrogen and make green manure for spring. Austrian winter pea has delicious edible pee shoots. Other great mulching cover crops include clover, mustard and vetch.
- **DISCOVER** a tree to climb with your kids. It's that time of year!
- **CULTIVATE** ornamental grasses for low-maintenance and drought tolerate plantings. Maiden hair grass, blonde ambition grass, feather reed grass, and silky thread grass are a few of the lesser known but easily propagated species.
- **TRAIN** rambling and vining plants on a trellis or tall support for a spectacular vertical garden wherever space is lacking.



Pick a few branches from a liquid amber tree to enhance your interiors.

- **SOW** wildflower seeds that will attract pollinators, hummingbirds and beneficial bugs.
- **PRUNE** all perennials when finished blooming. Add the stems and spent flowers to the compost pile.
- **FERTILIZE** lawns.
- **GIVE** thanks every day for something. Keeping a gratitude journal alongside your garden guide is a great tool for remembering to be grateful.



Warty pumpkins have the sweetest and most delicious flesh.

Thank you, thank you for being my special gardening gang. I am humbled to be your guide on the side. There is no such thing as a brown thumb, just one that hasn't turned green yet!

Happy gardening and happy growing! Happy Thanksgiving and Turkey Day!



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WINTER TIPS

Cleaning and thinning your trees may reduce the potential storm hazards without compromising the shade. In some situations the risk of failure cannot be reduced without removal of branches. Remember that healthy structurally sound trees are generally wind fast even when mature.

Storm damage is usually, but not always, related to structural problems that could have been addressed with proper structural training when the tree was young. Co dominant (two trunks with a narrow angle of attachment) trunks account for many trees failures. The hazard of wind damage is higher on the regrowth of trees that have been "topped".

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Hibiscus in pink, orange, and yellow is still blooming brightly.



A spectacular hibiscus from J. Berry Nursery in a gorgeous fall color.



Cynthia Brian with her Thanksgiving and fall bouquet with a turkey feather.

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ORINDA



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ORINDA



4 Quail Ridge Lane This 2.87 acre lot enjoys spectacular valley views, filled with mature trees. Complete with approved plans to built 3276 sq. ft. home. Great loc. not far from downtown, BART & award winning schools. **\$650,000**

ORINDA



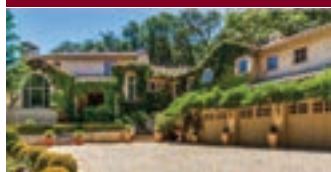
220 Camino Sobrante Special location on the lake. Classic, wood crafted 4bd/4ba home has great use of space on two levels, ideal for comfortable living & entertaining. Bonus sports court. Alluring setting of beauty & privacy. **\$1,695,000**

ORINDA



147 Camino Don Miguel Set on private, lush .32ac overlooking 4th fairway of OCC. 3bd/2.5ba w/apx. 3223sf, hdwd flrs, main flr master ste, ofc/den, sun porch. Near top-rated schools, Orinda Village & commute. Views! **\$1,850,000**

ORINDA



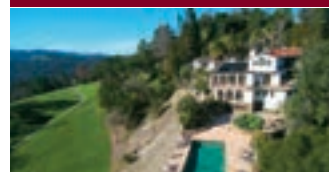
5 Oak Arbor Road Prime Oak Arbor living at its best! Traditional European spectacular home w/quality features in/outside w/grand-scale rooms of exceptional space, light + access outdoors. Gorgeous setting! **\$2,695,000**

ORINDA



105 Crane Terrace Exceptional 4.87 acre gated estate traditional of incredible appeal on alluring knoll, private setting of pano views. Custom craftsmanship. Lovely grounds w/lawns, gardens, mature trees. **\$2,950,000**

ORINDA



160 Camino Don Miguel Spectacular Spanish Mediterranean 5bd/5.5ba 5851sf home overlooks the 4th hole of OCC. Rebuilt from ground up in 1996. Resort quality pool & spa, gardens & views. **\$4,795,000**

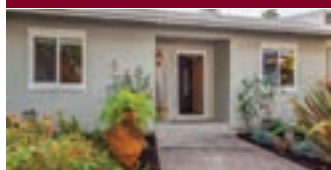
MORAGA



For Lease

1 Harrington Road Turnkey exclusive rental with new carpet, new paint & refinished hardwood floors. Open eat-in kitchen/ family room combo. Cathedral ceilings, pool & spa. Desirable Sanders Ranch gated community. **\$6,800**

MORAGA



820 Country Club Drive Sought after single level, end unit on cul-de-sac. Nicely updated throughout. Walk to town, trails, etc. Enjoy MCC amenities: golf, swim, tennis, club house. Top schools! **\$725,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

818 Augusta Drive Bright & spacious! Great location backs to water feature. 3 beds + versatile bonus rm. Updated kitchen, updated 2.5 baths. Hdwd flrs & wall to wall carpeting. Enjoy all MCC amenities. Top-rated schools! **\$875,000**

MORAGA



New Price

670 Augusta Drive Updated & ready to move in! Kitchen w/cherry cabinets, granite & Brazilian cherry flrs thruout main flr. Gardens, private patio. Rare 3 BR+ bonus rm. Close to clubhouse, facilities. Walk to town! **\$879,000**

MORAGA



9 Shannon Court Sanders Ranch estate property over 1.5 acres, 4966 sq. ft., Chef's kitchen, hardwood, new carpet, fresh paint, pool, ideal indoor/ outdoor living spaces. **\$3,125,000**

LAFAYETTE



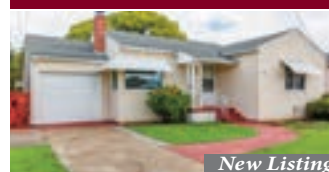
3 Dollis Park Road Large 4bd/3.5ba, 4090 sq. ft. home w/ideal functional floor plan. Lovely kitchen/ family rm + bonus rec. rm. Luxurious master suite. Great guest bedroom w/bath is ideal for separation of space. **\$1,489,000**

PLEASANT HILL



20 Whitfield Court Great parcel at top of knoll with views of Mount Diablo and ideal privacy. Truly special setting sites for development zoned R-10 & R-15. Wonderful opportunity for investment. **\$1,495,000**

SAN LEANDRO



New Listing

1452 Lark Street Desirable single family home with large yard, refinished hardwood floors, dual pane windows, garage with storage & more. Mature trees, shed with covered workshop area. **\$449,000**



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