"A little bit of myself goes into every job." Michael VerBrugge, Moraga Resident 925.631.1055 www.MVCRemodeling.com Specializing in kitchens & bathrooms. All forms residential remodel/repair. CONSTRUCTION INC. General Contractor Clean | Courteous | Conscientious time | Trustworthy | Local References Full design team resources available

925-376-1118 CALL TOM Since 1993! Tom Gieryng, owner and operator

~ He's All About Lamorinda ~

:LARK**thompson**=

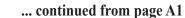
Office: 925-254-8585 925-998-7898 Cell: www.clarkthompson.com

ct@clarkthompson.com



Giving Dreams an Address

Falling trees





This tree fell onto St. Andrews Drive near Moraga Way in Moraga

Photos Gint Federas



massive trunk of the fallen eucalyptus tree



so, owner of Traverso Tree Service and a certified arborist, estimated that the oak tree that fell was an estimated 250 years old and suffered from the street being moved 10 feet closer. In addition, he added, all water going down a crack in the had been damaged beneath the upper layer and rotted out.

ferent matter." said Moran. "It was the trunk. clearly overgrown and prime for a fall."

Kwan of Moraga says that the town has been pretty lucky so far, but actually contribute to further failthere was a big tree that fell on Augusta Drive near the Country Club.

"Homeowners should be aware that they are responsible for the trees around their property," warned Kwan. "Public Works will remove a tree that is blocking a roadway, but the property owner will have to pay for that service." He added that the homeowner's insurance usually covers the cost.

Precautions for Homeowners

Moran also cautions that property owners are responsible for the maintenance of trees adjacent to their property (ie. sidewalk trees).

"Many of the older and big-

Saranap resident John Traver- ger eucalyptus and pine trees have the weaker and smaller trees, while problems and are already on the way out," said Moran. "The eucalyptus have shallow foundations and should be pruned regularly, while many pine trees have been decimated by bark beetles."

One large problem with existgutter went beneath the tree. Roots ing trees is too much landscape irrigation. Direct water on tree trunks, growing lawn around trees and "From the surface, no one over mulching can all compromise gest that if homeowners have any could have seen the damage to the a tree. Traverso recommends keepoak, but the eucalyptus was a dif- ing water at least 10 feet away from

up to three to five years for prob-Public Works Director Edric lems to decrease from the past drought. "One good winter may ures. Early storms brought down ety of Arboriculture.

The remains of a Jeep Wrangler car crushed by the eucatiptus tree was parked in front of La Finestra Restaurant worse storms are bringing down bigger ones."

Traverso also mentioned a large problem for tree owners: summer (or sudden) limb drop in warmer weather. "Throw in 100-degree heat and a drop in the weather at night and it can cause a defect in the branch to break and fall."

Traverso and Moran both sugdoubt about the condition of their trees they should consult a qualified arborist for an evaluation. Most Traverso estimates it may take companies would evaluate and submit a bid for free. People can also check the www.treesaregood.com website for a qualified tree risk assessor from the International Soci-





Many power lines are in danger to be damaged by falling trees like this one on Reliez Valley Road.

Danger of Falling Trees —What to Look For:

- Uncorrected Leans: The upright growth of the tree has been compromised. This could happen for a variety of reasons (shade constraints, trauma, etc.). To check if a tree is leaning more, drive two screws into different levels of tree and check with a digitalized level. Measure again periodically to see if there is increased angle.
- Fungi: Various fungi can cause damage to the tree's trunk. Most commonly, Armillaria, sometimes called the oak root fungus, can infect the roots. Because of this, detection is difficult unless characteristic mushrooms are produced around the base of the tree or symptoms become obvious in the crown or on the lower stem.

Generally, the foliage thins and discolors, turns yellow, then brown; branches die back; and shoot and foliar growth are reduced.

On large, lightly infected or vigorous trees, crown symptoms develop over a number of years until the trees die. Conifers, particularly Douglas fir and western larch, frequently produce a larger-than-normal crop of cones, known as stress cones, shortly before they die.

On most conifers, the infected portions of the lower stems are somewhat enlarged and exude large amounts of resin. Infected portions of the roots frequently become heavily encrusted with resin, soil and fungal tissue. Other fungi can include brown rot and shelf conks, which resemble seashells protruding from the trunk.

- Drought stress: Symptoms are often the same as fungal damage, but without the presence of fungi.
- Buried trunk: The trunk resembles a buried telephone pole. This can be the result of overmulching or excessive watering. Digging around the base may reveal root damage.
- Root restriction: Factors such as nearby concrete, foundations, retaining walls, pathways, etc., may limit root extension. Girdling roots may be found wrapping around the base of the tree.
- Excessive pruning. Improper or excessive pruning can compromise a tree and lead to failure. Over-thinning the interior of the tree (called lions-tailing), unbalances the crown causing future growth toward the ends of remaining branches. This shifts the center of gravity higher where wind speed is greater. Branches may break more easily in storms or under their own weight.
- Multiple trunks: Trees with more than one dominate trunk can have a tendency to split, causing major portions of the tree to fall.
- Vine growth: Vines can cause structural problems. Added weight can break branches or cause tree to topple. Debris and moisture can be trapped against the trunk leading to fungal and bacterial diseases and structural decay at the base of the tree.

Sources: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service; Urban Tree Foundaion; The Britton Fund; Midwestern Trees; John Traverso, Arborist