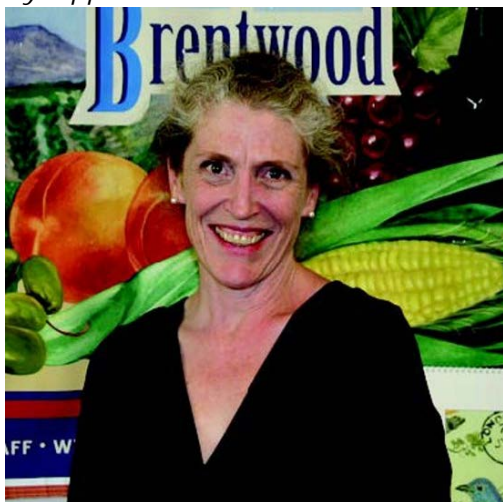


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Longtime Lafayette resident gets Lifetime Award

By Pippa Fisher



Kathryn Lyddan, winner of this year's Sustainable Contra Costa Lifetime Award Photo provided

The seeds for 15 years dedicated to conservation were sown in the Moraga Community Garden, at least for this year's Sustainable Contra Costa's Lifetime Award recipient, longtime Lamorinda resident, Kathryn Lyddan.

"Kathryn has been a strong advocate for farm land preservation and sustainable agriculture for many years," explains Sustainable Contra Costa Senior Advisor Mark Westwind.

Indeed Lyddan, who was born in Canada but raised in Davis where her father taught at the university, has an impressive list of conservation achievements to her credit.

Lyddan currently works as Director of the Land Resource Protection Division at the California Department of Conservation, a job she took last year. Working with state and local governments, land trusts, landowners, farmers, researchers, nonprofits and local governments they aim to conserve farmland, natural resources and open spaces, promote local agriculture, and build a sustainable California food system.

From 2003 through 2016 Lyddan served as the executive director of the Brentwood Agricultural Land Trust, a nonprofit established to permanently protect Contra Costa productive farmland and build a vibrant local agricultural economy on the urban edge of the Bay Area.

Lyddan has overseen a wide range of projects promoting food and farming through agricultural enterprise zoning and regional marketing, such as the Contra Costa Buy Fresh Buy Local marketing campaign and the Brentwood-Richmond Farm-2-Table Community Supported Agriculture.

She coauthored "Sustaining Our Bounty" (2011) and "Triple Harvest: Farmland conservation for climate protection, smart growth and food security in California" (2013).

Following her undergraduate degree at Davis, Lyddan graduated from Hastings Law School and spent 10 years working as an attorney bringing a background of legal land use and public finance experience to her future direction in conservation.

Lyddan, who served on the Lafayette Planning Commission, lived for 10 years in Moraga and another seven in Lafayette. She raised two daughters here, both of whom attended Campolindo High School. She recently moved to Sacramento when she started her job at the California Department of Conservation in 2016.

Lyddan says emphatically that her longstanding involvement with the Moraga Gardens was hugely impactful on both her and her two daughters and certainly steered her towards farmland conservation. In particular she says that the garden's founder Dava Rajan was very influential.

She credits Rajan and also John Chapman, a previous chairman of the Greenbelt Alliance who passed away in 2016, as mentors. "This award is particularly sweet because I have devoted myself to protecting Contra Costa farmland for the past 15 years," Lyddan says as she notes that Chapman himself was a previous recipient of the award, making it all the more meaningful.

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