

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 12 Issue 14 Wednesday, September 5, 2018

Poolside living

By Cathy Dausman



Dive in! This finished 15-foot by 35-foot backyard in-ground pool is ready for use.

Photo Cathy Dausman

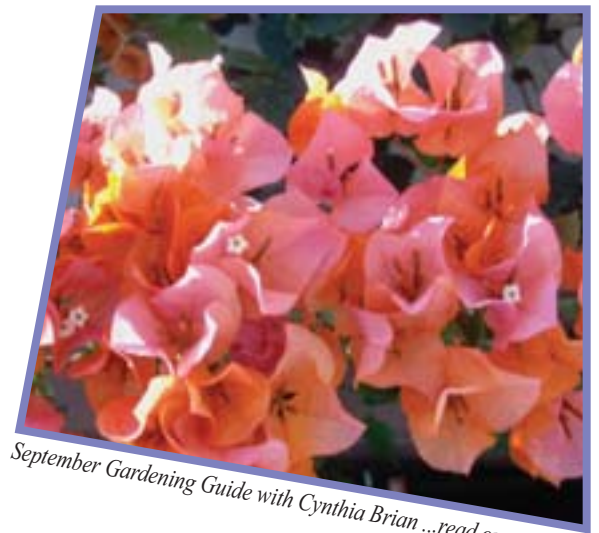
Warm weather often makes Lamorindans consider a dip in a pool; especially if that pool is just steps outside your own back door. And while the long summer daylight hours may be fading, the hot dry weather the Weather Network recently said was “anchored across the western half of the U.S.” lingers into autumn.

Lamorinda pools got a good workout in 2018. But residential pool installations involve more than answering “yes” or “no” or “do we want one?” The project is multi-layered, time-consuming and possibly lifestyle-changing.

Above ground or in-ground? If in-ground, will it be vinyl, fiberglass or concrete? How will

the pool area be kept safe? How will it be heated? Who will use it, and when? Who’ll do the cleaning and chemical maintenance? What are the liability issues? Additionally, pool construction often forces homeowners to consider taking on related projects, such as upgrading electrical service, installing solar heating, paving or repaving surrounding areas and adding or changing out vegetation. All of this extends the project timeline and adds to the cost.

While realtors caution that having a pool won’t change a residence’s appraisal value, there is an undeniable appeal to after-hours water fun in your own backyard. Ask Aaron and Anjali Cargain, who recently completed their pool and now enjoy using it with their daughters.



September Gardening Guide with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D14

Anjali Cargain was ready to install a pool when the couple first purchased their home, but Aaron admits he needed “a little convincing.” After coming to agreement on building a pool and deciding on its shape and materials (theirs would be an in-ground, concrete pool, with solar heating and a built-in spa) they began work with an electrical service upgrade to the house.

Pool pumps, lighting, an in-pool spa and heating systems all require at least 30 amps and 240 volts of dedicated service, says Rob Omo of Omo’s Electric Company. He says it costs as much as \$5,000 to upgrade a main panel, and the older the home, the more likely that will happen. And while today’s pumps cost as much as four times more than older models, they run five to 10 times more efficiently, which translates into a smaller hit on your electric bill.

The construction process hit a snag early on due to the electrical permitting process; when that was resolved, construction began in earnest.

The finished pool is a 15-foot by 35-foot rectangle incorporating a 7 by 7 spa cutout and sun shelf (wading) entry. The Cargains chose Pennsylvania blue stone to ring their pool deck. A matching low wall along the back length serves as an additional poolside seating area. A minor fence line revision shifted extra driveway space to the backyard. Related projects included the installment of driveway pavers to match those on the pool patio and a s’mores-friendly fire pit in a secluded corner.

Work on the finishing touches continues (paver sealing and landscaping) but the pool opened for play in July. “We love our new pool,” Aaron Cargain says, “and have been playing in it a bunch” during summer.

... continued on Page D4



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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	6	\$980,000	\$3,650,000
MORAGA	5	\$770,000	\$1,617,000
ORINDA	12	\$1,278,000	\$5,300,000

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

- 3669 Boyer Circle, \$980,000, 3 Bdrms, 2309 SqFt, 1926 YrBlt, 8-10-18;
Previous Sale: \$450,000, 02-06-18
- 1185 Glen Road, \$1,431,000, 3 Bdrms, 1916 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 8-10-18;
Previous Sale: \$960,000, 06-27-08
- 3905 Happy Valley Road, \$3,650,000, 6 Bdrms, 4578 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 7-31-18;
Previous Sale: \$3,050,000, 05-20-16
- 777 Reliez Station Road, \$1,275,000, 3 Bdrms, 2333 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 8-8-18;
Previous Sale: \$469,000, 03-24-98
- 3414 Shangri La Road, \$1,209,000, 3 Bdrms, 1849 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 8-9-18
- 3369 Sweet Drive, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 2371 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 8-13-18;
Previous Sale: \$288,000, 11-25-92

MORAGA

- 127 Calle La Mesa, \$1,387,500, 4 Bdrms, 2525 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 8-6-18
- 47 Corte Del Campo, \$1,323,000, 5 Bdrms, 3329 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 7-31-18;
Previous Sale: \$505,000, 06-29-94
- 752 Country Club Drive, \$770,000, 2 Bdrms, 1262 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 8-13-18;
Previous Sale: \$700,000, 04-29-14
- 14 Crockett Drive, \$1,617,000, 5 Bdrms, 3793 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 7-31-18;
Previous Sale: \$130,000, 09-11-87
- 253 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,225,000, 3 Bdrms, 1866 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 8-1-18

ORINDA

- 85 Acacia Drive, \$1,450,000, 4 Bdrms, 2575 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 8-7-18;
Previous Sale: \$386,000, 11-19-91
- 165 Canon Drive, \$1,653,500, 3 Bdrms, 2277 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 8-7-18;
Previous Sale: \$1,190,000, 08-21-08

... continued on Page D13



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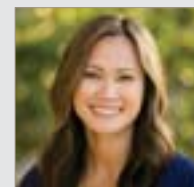
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Poolside living

... continued from Page D1



Pool dug to 6.5-foot depth; circulation pipes installed.

Photos Cathy Dausman



Gunite is sprayed over steel rebar forming the pool shape. Oversized first step is called a sun shelf.

Both girls have taken swim lessons; their parents say the older daughter is now water safe and her younger sister is getting there. They've already hosted one pool party and already plan another. Cargain expects to be able to use the spa year 'round and hopes that because the pool itself is solar-heated, its off-season will be limited.

The couple was so impressed with their contractor they recommended him to Anjuli's parents for a landscape project. Aaron Cargain advises patience when considering a residential pool installation.

"It's a process," he says. "Expect the unexpected and (expect) delays. Make sure you're ready to have a construction zone in your backyard for the next several months." The couple kept neighbors apprised of upcoming construction work, apologizing in advance for short-term inconveniences. And as for their new pool setting? "It creates an environment to spend a lot of fun time with the kids," Cargain said.

Project timeline: September 2017 to July 2018

- Electrical panel upgrade
 - Solar installation
 - Earth excavation
 - Concrete pour
 - Construct pump area
 - Add decorative tile work
 - Install pool deck pavers
 - Build low-wall seating
 - Complete backyard fencing
 - Install driveway pavers
- Contractors:**
- Pacheco Landscape and Pool Construction
 - Hardscape: Atlas Pavers
 - Solar: Sunworks
 - Fencing: Rudy Tejada



Decorative tile installed; Pennsylvania blue stone used as coping stone is mortared to the top of pool.



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Living & Selling Lamorinda



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Feng Shui

Home office review

By Michele Duffy



The "Commanding Position" for the home office desk is always the best bet, and blue and green colors create growth and creativity. *Photo provided*

The Bay Area has a plethora of creative entrepreneurs, many of whom work from their home offices. With the advent of autumn and many children returning to school, the following helpful home office tips will not only help those of us in the throws of working from home, but those of us still studying to possibly become an entrepreneur.

First, we have to carve out a separate space for our creative hard work at home, ideally not the dining room table (unless lack of space dictates otherwise). By finding a space of your own in your home, your business won't get the "situational" chi from the dining table dumping ground. Home offices are also not ideally situated in your master bedroom, which is meant to guide you into restful sleep, not remind you of all the work you still have to do, especially as an entrepreneur.

If you are in the process of searching for a home, try to include the spaciousness needed to create an actual home office in a room by itself. It's important to include the concept of healthy boundaries when you are running a business out of your home, and the room should ideally include a door that closes so that you are able to remain focused on your business. Also, limit the number of reminders of family to two framed photos; too many pictures can distract us and potentially interfere with execution of tactical and strategic events for our business.

Second, the "Commanding Position" is a central Feng Shui concept, and as it relates to a home office, the desk placement is vital. When you enter the room, from the door wall the desk ideally should be placed to face the door across the room at a diagonal, never in line with the door, and preferably with a solid wall behind the person sitting at the desk.

This concept of mountain behind us, water in front is a key aspect of Feng Shui placement and is designed to energetically put you firmly in charge of your business and all decisions, creative focus, organization, and strategic planning. If you place your desk with your back to the door it may energetically place you and your business in a weaker position, creating distracting back-biting gossip behind your back, or being blindsided by unhelpful events. Set yourself up in the most advantageous position from the start and see how you feel. ... continued on Page D12

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Feng Shui

Home office review

... continued from Page D10

Don't be shocked if it feels like a more secure, cozy and comfortable vantage point from which to run the ship.

As for the desk shape and size and materials usage, avoid glass desks if possible because seeing through the desk doesn't provide a solid foundation and wood or metal desks are a better choice to ground the work you do there. Also, rectangular desks or round tables used as desks are the best choices, but if you have space for an L-shaped desk, this can work well, too, in creating plenty of room to work on a computer and also spread out visual projects or proposals.

Third, take a quick audit of the overall home office space. Does the color of the room promote growth (greens and light blues) and is the hue strong enough to keep you awake? If you want an accent wall it might be inspiring if it was the wall you face while at your newly placed commanding position desk. What does the art and images on your walls say about your business? Placing your logo in a frame or on a stretched canvas reinforces what you are there to do, but equally at home in an home office might include framed photos of the Golden Gate Bridge or Mount

Diablo or other natural wonders based in your business' geographical area. What inspires you? Do the images work their magic? If not, consider an upgrade. Next, do you have proper lighting? If you do not have overhead or recessed lighting, are their ample 100-watt desk or floor lamps well positioned in your home office? There are so many lighting options in whatever style you want to create for your home office including modern, vintage, farmhouse chic, contemporary, traditional or avant garde.

The key function of lighting is to illuminate so you don't strain your eyes and can see what you are trying to work on, so don't skimp on this important functional step.

These timely tips can also inform your student's workspace and create a more stable environment to start the new school year. Putting an extra pair of eyes on your own home office or your children's school work space, will provide the mid-year rejuvenation you need to carry you through the fall season in grounded command of what's to come.

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Michele Duffy, BTB M.F.S. is an Orinda resident who, since 1999, enjoys creating "Space as Medicine" Feng Shui one space at a time, as well as hiking in nature, cooking, and spending time with her family; Canyon Ranch Feng Shui Master, International Feng Shui Guild (IFSG) Red Ribbon Professional. To schedule a professional 2018 Feng Shui Consultation, contact Michele at (520) 647-4887 or send an email to spaceharmony@gmail.com.



Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from Page D2

ORINDA ... continued

- 49 Diablo View Drive, \$1,890,000, 5 Bdrms, 3989 SqFt, 2002 YrBlt, 8-10-18;
Previous Sale: \$210,000, 09-06-00
- 6 Dover Court, \$1,515,000, 4 Bdrms, 2735 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 7-31-18;
Previous Sale: \$342,000, 08-26-88
- 113 Estates Drive, \$1,800,000, 3 Bdrms, 2262 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 8-1-18;
Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 04-28-03
- 54 La Campana Road, \$2,800,000, 5 Bdrms, 3122 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 8-8-18;
Previous Sale: \$985,000, 12-31-14
- 50 Linda Vista, \$1,278,000, 4 Bdrms, 2468 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 8-7-18;
Previous Sale: \$955,000, 05-27-14
- 44 Oak Drive, \$1,825,000, 4 Bdrms, 3094 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 8-7-18;
Previous Sale: \$750,000, 08-05-16
- 7 Sycamore Road, \$5,300,000, 5 Bdrms, 5151 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 8-1-18;
Previous Sale: \$1,095,000, 10-06-99
- 16 Valley View Road, \$2,092,500, 3 Bdrms, 2344 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 8-10-18;
Previous Sale: \$1,620,000, 06-30-15
- 36 Via Floreado, \$1,300,000, 5 Bdrms, 4888 SqFt, 1926 YrBlt, 8-8-18
- 10 Westwood Court, \$1,550,000, 5 Bdrms, 2543 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 8-10-18



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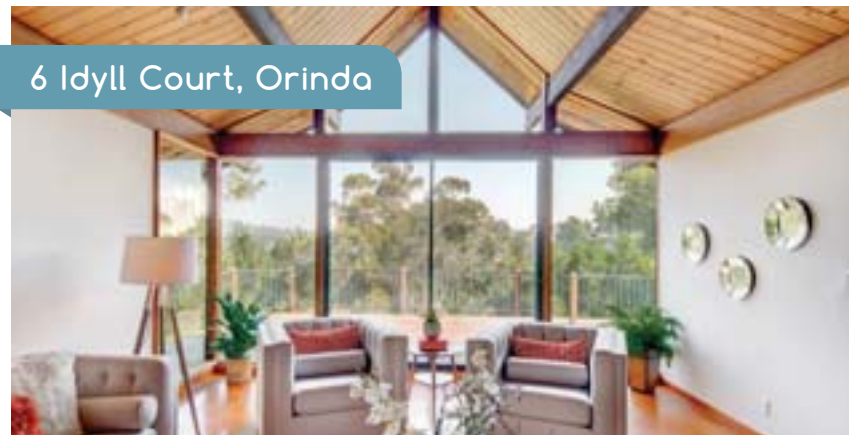


Modern Style in Orinda

Splash of contemporary style on a quiet private lane. Horizon views of the Orinda Hills, the natural surroundings offers a relaxing reprieve from today's hustle and bustle. Convenient location and 12 years of top rated schools.

4 BR | 2.5 BA
2,614 SF | 33,541 SF Lot
Offered at \$1,610,000
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6 Idyll Court, Orinda



Idle Times on Idyll Court

Spacious & airy floor plan with lots of natural light, Douglas fir ceilings and open kitchen. In addition to the main house there is a separate two-story 3 room, 1 bath, +/-700 sf guest house/office. Close to all that Orinda has to offer.

3 BR | 2 BA
1,936 SF | 37,500 SF Lot
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3 BR | 2.5 BA | 1,716 SF
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Cynthia Brian's Gardener's Guide for September

Gardening at any age

By Cynthia Brian

"Old Gardeners never die, they just spade away!"



Echinacea is a favorite summer blooming perennial.

Photos Cynthia Brian

When my dad turned 60 he confided that he didn't have the physical strength that he'd had at 30. Although he was always Superman to me, Dad had to make accommodations to continue working uncompromisingly in the fields on our ranch as he aged.

Gardening and farming are bedfellows. Having worked in the dirt since I toddled, I have always felt confident in my gardening vigor whether it was lifting heavy rocks, pulling barbed wire, cutting limbs, digging holes, or carrying sacks of fertilizer. Over the decades, I have learned to curb my enthusiasm and ask for assistance when a task is beyond my physical prowess.

Gardening offers exercise for the body, mind and spirit. It is an outdoor activity that anybody can enjoy

from birth until death. By working in the garden, our bodies and bones become stronger and more flexible allowing for greater mobility. Gardening reduces stress, clears our minds, births creativity, and staves off depression. The bonus is we get to enjoy beautiful landscapes, gorgeous flowers, and fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs.

Here are a few tips I've gleaned that have been helpful to increase my gardening enjoyment while taking precautions for health and safety.

Health and safety tips for all ages

1. Always apply sunscreen before going outdoors.
2. Wear gloves, a hat and boots with good treads.
3. Although my preferred summer gardening wardrobe (and that of my family members) is wearing a bathing suit or shorts with my boots, it's best to

pull on trousers and a long shirt when pruning roses, blackberries, or doing any type of spraying.

4. Use insect repellent or wear a scarf and socks by Insect Shield® to keep the ticks, mosquitoes, and other pests from biting.
5. Get a tetanus shot every 10 years.
6. Seek medical attention immediately if allergic to bee or yellow jacket stings.
7. Respect physical limits. I push myself forward, but more gently.

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A luscious black Mission fig on the tree.

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Cynthia Brian's Gardener's Guide for September

Gardening at any age

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8. Minimize the BLT activities: bending, lifting, and twisting. I now do my weeding scooting along the ground. I lift only an amount that doesn't hurt my back and I avoid twisting as much as possible. (Sorry Chubby Checker!)
9. Install raised beds for vegetables to decrease the "B"... bending.
10. Use caution when climbing on high ladders.
11. Drink lots of water. It's so easy to get dehydrated while gardening especially when it is warm. My mother taught me that lesson.
12. Keep tools sharpened, cleaned and organized. Always use the proper tool for the job at hand.
13. Repair or replace immediately anything that could be hazardous to the gardening experience. I walk my perimeter daily adjusting rocks, stepping stones, picking up fallen branches, or debris that could lead to a fall or worse.
14. Hire experts when needed.
15. Bathe and wash clothes after every garden work out.
16. Spend at least 20 minutes daily enjoying the beauty and the bounty. My morning ritual is to express gratitude and awe for my garden every morning as I meander through the landscape before going to work. In the evening I appreciate being able to harvest fresh vegetables, fruits, and herbs for our supper.
17. Use all of your senses. Listen, really listen to the sounds of nature. Pay attention to the birds, bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and insects. Embrace the sounds of the breeze whistling through the trees, breathe in the sweet fragrance of the flowers, and taste the peppery flavor of the nasturtium. Feel the velvety texture of lamb's ear and avoid the prickles of the cactus. Look around you and truly see the unique kaleidoscope of flora and fauna.
18. Make gardening a family affair. Encourage your spouse, partner, children and grandchildren to dig in the dirt with you.

Practicing the art of gardening is an activity that reaps benefits for our physical fitness and spiritual wellbeing. It is a hobby with measureable perks. Be alert and consider safety first. With joy and abandonment, we will be able to frolic in our garden playgrounds for a lifetime until we just spade away!



A tree of green persimmons.



Peace lily or Sail plant offers immune boosting chemicals called phytoncides to keep indoor air fresh.



A fresh picked box of Sweetwater grapes, Mission figs, and pomegranates.



Cynthia Brian's Monthly Tips for September

TREAT balconies, rooftops, and porches like outdoor rooms. Define the space, add robust colors, comfortable furnishings, and an element of shade.

ELIMINATE sugar and artificial sweeteners from your diet. Plant stevia, a natural sweet herb that is a healthy sugar substitute.

MAINTAIN optimum health by adding superstar foods to your vegetable garden including sweet potatoes, broccoli, watermelon, butternut squash, and numerous leafy greens including mustard, kale, collards, spinach and Swiss chard.

DIVIDE overgrown perennials beds after the flowers have finished blooming. Plant the divisions in other areas of your yard or share with friends or a garden club.

FERTILIZE roses, azaleas, rhododendrons, fuchsias and camelias.

CUT bouquets of Naked Ladies and bougainvillea to use in flower arrangements. Flowers last about a week to 10 days.

SOAK the heads of hydrangeas in a bucket of water after cutting. Hydrangeas drink from the top. Spray bouquets with water once a day to keep the hydrangea flowers fresh looking.

HARVEST apples, grapes, figs, and Asian Pears as they ripen.

BUY bulbs for spring planting. Tulips, crocus and hyacinth will need to be refrigerated for six weeks before planting.

DETER squirrels and birds from devouring your green persimmons by netting the tree.

VISIT me and other contributors to my eighth book, "Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers Celebrating the Gifts of Positive Voices in a Changing Digital World" at the Pear and Wine Festival on Saturday, Sept. 22 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Get your books autographed with sales benefitting literacy outreach projects. Information at <http://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. Thank you to Lamorinda Weekly for sponsoring.

BRING plants into your office. Exposure to living greenery has a calming effect and helps us be more productive. Many plants, such as the Peace Lily, also called the Sail Plant, emit antiviral, immune-boosting chemicals that clean the air and promote health.

GROW echinacea as a beautiful hardy perennial as an ornamental or for its medicinal qualities that are found in its root. Test the quality of the root by chewing a small piece. If your tongue tingles, the root can be used for making teas, tinctures, and toners.

ENLIST the assistance of a pest control professional if you find bats getting into your attic, garage or other space. Although they don't usually attack humans, they can carry rabies. On the positive side, bats are garden guardians and consume copious amounts of damaging insects.

RELISH the spectacular show of colorful crape myrtles this month as they grace driveways, gardens and town centers.

Savor the final days of summer. Autumn clean up is coming soon. Sharpen your spade and spade away!

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.
Cynthia Brian



A bloom on the watermelon crape myrtle tree.



Bat on a screen door.



Raised beds with a chicken coop.



Covered raised beds are great for winter gardening.



Bees drinking from a fountain. There must be a hive nearby.



Cynthia Brian with the Naked Ladies.

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, raised in the vineyards of Napa County, is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's Radio show and order her books at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Buy a copy of the new book, Growing with the Goddess Gardener, at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Available for hire for projects and lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com

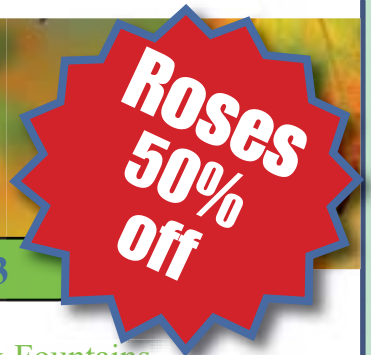
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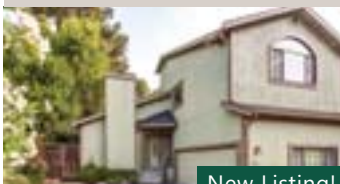


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