



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

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Welcome spring with the delightful Feng Shui wood element

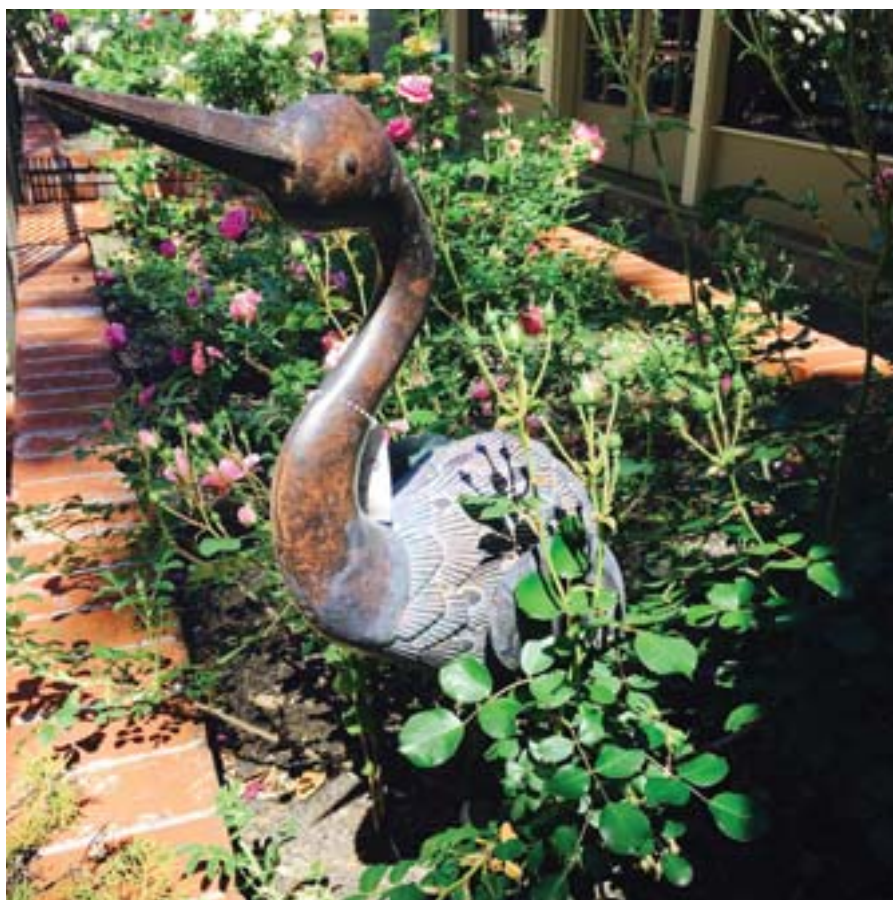


Photo provided

Creating an outdoor oasis of greenery landscape attracts abundance and new beginnings to your home.

By Michele Duffy

Although the chilly morning temps register at a brisk 37 degrees, spring is awakening slowly and this much-anticipated season is long overdue. The backdrop of spring's bloom provides a gentle shift away from the dormancy of winter with changeable weather, increased activity and new growth. Spring's promise introduces us to longer-lasting days, new seeds planted, young daffodils bobbing in sunshine-drenched afternoons, the genius activity of birds and species of all types engaging in fresh courting rituals. Spring's activity mirrors the

upward explosive growth of the wood element which manifests as the signal that the cycle is beginning all over again for another year.

Spring translates in the home as a shift to green and a refreshing transition to a lighter look and feel. Remember, Feng Shui begs us to notice the change in seasons not only as permission to finally put away the outside holiday lights or wreaths, but also to make a few important changes in our homes, as well as in our diet, sleep and exercise regimes. Last month I offered help with creating a sensual and relaxing master bedroom, since winter is really the season for lots of sleep. As the clock and light change, so must our own personal rhythms in spring. If we try to align our homes and ourselves with the spirited upward growth of the wood element of spring, we might also notice that it's easier to get up earlier, exercise before breakfast, and skip a meal once a week. As the flowers wake up, so do we.

Spring's wood element is represented by fresh healthy plants and flowers, the colors green and lavender, and also, the rectangular shape. It's time to throw open the draperies, let the fresh air and sunshine stream in and take note of all the new bustling activity.

Beyond the mundane "spring cleaning" in Feng Shui, we are asked about the purpose or the reason for cleaning. We are also asked to adjust our intention; instead of "cleaning" we "space clear" to welcome and create greater abundance, health and harmony. Part of the reason is our environments mirror our state of mind and, put simply, when we allow our spaces to be reborn we also experience new growth, opportunities and wellness. We "spring clean" to embrace the rebirth of the season, to create space for new growth, opportunities and new beginnings in our homes and lives. As the saying goes: out with the old and in with the new.

Start with the master bedroom and bath and create a spotless oasis; notice how it improves your sleeping. Do you feel lighter and more in control of your life? Clean the refrigerator and freezer, especially after all the holidays, and this might inspire a new approach to diet. Since the kitchen is tied chiefly to our health and well-being, attention here helps us adjust to increased activity. Notice if you feel more able to achieve your diet and fitness goals with a clean slate in the fridge. Clean out storage bins, drawers, closets, and simply repurpose, donate or toss. Wash the windows, declutter the attic and basement and step back and review your progress. What's opening up for you as you open up your home to the freshness of spring? You might also be called to create a zenlike online experience with new headshots, photos and color, and also be more open to new ideas.

... continued on Page D4

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City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	2	\$630,000	\$2,550,000
MORAGA	5	\$619,000	\$1,775,000
ORINDA	5	\$840,000	\$2,050,000

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

3279 Mt Diablo Court #16, \$630,000, 2 Bdrms, 1386 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 02-05-19,
Previous Sale: \$435,000, 05-02-02

3545 Oconner Drive, \$2,550,000, 5 Bdrms, 3163 SqFt, 2017 YrBlt, 02-08-19,
Previous Sale: \$976,500, 10-29-13

MORAGA

887 Augusta Drive, \$958,000, 2 Bdrms, 1552 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 02-05-19,
Previous Sale: \$619,000, 08-03-04

486 Butterfield Place, \$1,050,000, 4 Bdrms, 1768 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 02-07-19
795 Crossbrook Drive, \$1,493,000, 4 Bdrms, 2276 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 01-31-19,
Previous Sale: \$1,020,000, 05-24-11

170 Miramonte Drive, \$693,000, 3 Bdrms, 1742 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 01-29-19

70 Sanders Ranch Road, \$1,775,000, 4 Bdrms, 3033 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 01-31-19

ORINDA

22 Cedar Lane, \$1,400,000, 4 Bdrms, 2244 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 02-01-19

4 Edgewood Court, \$1,420,000, 4 Bdrms, 2280 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 01-28-19,
Previous Sale: \$1,275,000, 04-28-16

5 North Lane, \$875,000, 4 Bdrms, 1831 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 01-30-19

34 Oak Ridge Lane, \$1,825,000, 4 Bdrms, 4012 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 02-08-19,
Previous Sale: \$2,050,000, 09-06-15

6 Snowberry Lane, \$1,450,000, 3 Bdrms, 2491 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 02-07-19,
Previous Sale: \$840,000, 10-10-01

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Welcome spring with the delightful wood element



... continued from Page D1

Marie Kondo has certainly raised the consciousness of our culture regarding clutter, and I thank her for that, but for thousands of years Feng Shui has asked us to honor the tao and the interrelationship of our environments and the quality of our lives. Feng Shui has always asked us to connect to the purpose of home, simplify, purge the unnecessary, love everything in our surroundings, keep the chi moving in alignment with the energetics of each season, and also remember that it's an ongoing process, as opposed to a one-and-done approach.

Beyond the decluttering and cleaning to welcome spring, here are some other ways we

can align and bring spring's wood element in to create that shift in our homes:

- 1) What are your seasonal intentions for spring? Make them personal and achievable and fun;
- 2) Plant an herb garden in easy-to-care-for pots and place near the kitchen;
- 3) Add plants to home areas that promote healthy growth, like bamboo and jade, which are favorites for attracting wealth;
- 4) Bring bouquets of fresh flowers into your home on a weekly basis and rotate in the foyer, kitchen and master bedroom.
- 5) Make sure your home is supported with a well-landscaped garden and yard, create a butterfly and hummingbird haven and add water features;
- 6) Welcome spring with a new front entrance wreath and more greenery in your dining table centerpiece;
- 7) Refresh all bed, bath and home linens with lighter, colorful picks;
- 8) Infuse your space with more green, also wear more green and eat more green;
- 9) Open all the windows and doors, let the sunshine in and with positive intentions, and space clear with sandalwood or sage.

However you plan to welcome spring, be sure you reflect on the wonderful opportunity spring provides to allow each one of us and our homes to be better aligned with the very best springtime has to offer.

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 2019 Feng Shui Consultation, contact Michele at (520) 647-4887 or send an email to spaceharmony@gmail.com.



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3 bd. | 2.5 ba. | 1512 sq ft. | .28 acre



This comfortable Lafayette home, with approx. 1512 sq. ft., in the heart of Lafayette, sits graciously on a .28 acre parcel. The home boasts 3 large bedrooms, 2.5 updated bathrooms. The formal living/dining room spaces offer a wood burning fireplace with brick hearth, skylights, and a bay window with views of Mt. Diablo. The eat-in kitchen, fit for a chef, features granite counter tops, stainless steel appliances, a built-in desk area, and an adjacent viewing deck. Set privately, the master suite boasts a walk-in closet with built-ins, and access to a private deck and gardens. The additional bedrooms feature spacious closets and share a bathroom with separate shower. This home has been tastefully updated with all new interior paint and hardwood floors throughout. Entertain or retreat to the peaceful gardens. Enjoy the convenient decks and the upper area ideal for planting beds, lawn or children's play. This home is located about 1/2 mile to BART, downtown Lafayette and Lafayette's top-rated schools!

\$1,275,000



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153 El Toyonal, Orinda



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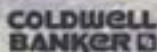
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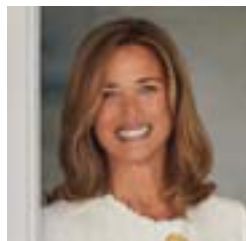
Gorgeous Sleepy Hollow Residence



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What Matt's Clients are Saying...

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On top of that, you guided us through the complicated purchase of our new home in Rossmoor! If you are looking for a trusted advisor that has strong local knowledge and can handle the complexity of both a sale and a purchase...**we highly recommend Matt McLeod.**

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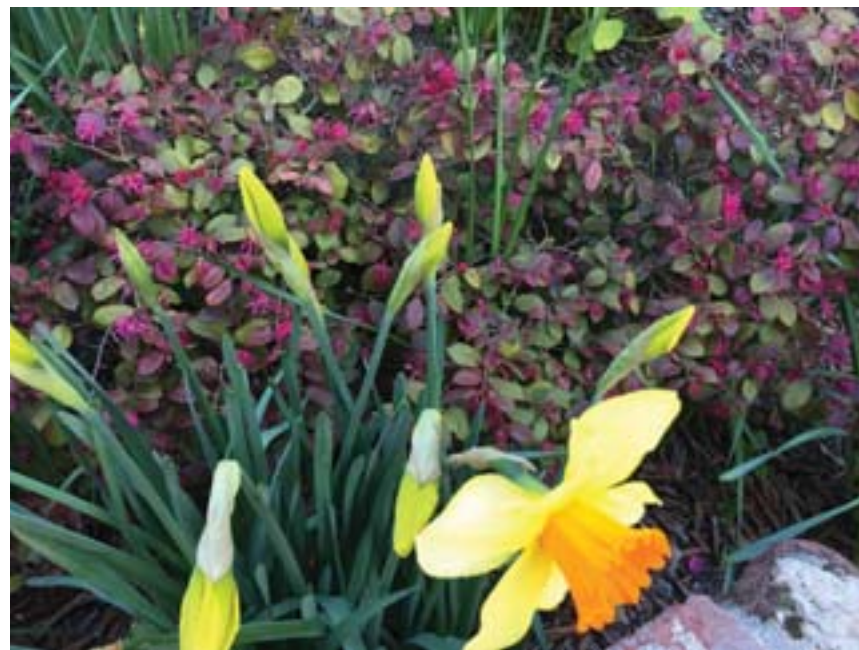


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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Awaken spring

"The ghostly winter silences have given way to the great spring murmur of awakening life."— Jack London



Spring daffodils and Chinese fringe.

Photos Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian

It all began when I witnessed the new growth unfurling on one of my loquat trees. The leaves were a mesmerizing bright green, like the color of lime with a hint of sunshine. Ah, sunshine, I thought! How I longed for warm, sun-drenched days. The darkness, cold and wet of winter had begun to unravel my soul.

The rains throughout the winter, although welcome and necessary, have been torrential. The creeks are full and raging. If only we could save this H₂O to quench summer thirsty landscapes. Our hillsides are carpets of emerald grasses. The only hint that salvation was near was the happy stalks of the ubiquitous daffodils singing to the sky an end to the melancholia.

I wanted to bottle a bit of this luminosity from those loquat leaves so I did the next best thing ... I painted my fingernails the exact color! An odd choice, I've been told, but I was hell-bent on awakening spring.

The next day, the weather reports suggested that we would bask in sunlight for at least a week. My earthy polish must have summoned the gods of rebirth.

As if on cue, terra firma has erupted in a procession of power plants. Besides the narcissi and bergenia that have been blooming successively since January, we now witness muscari, tulip, hyacinth, ranunculus, anemone, oxalis, calla lily, azalea, freesia, Chinese fringe, blue star grass, and one of my favorite overlooked specimens, hellebore joining the parade.

Hellebores are deer-resistant, low-maintenance perennials that stir with blooms (actually sepals protecting the flower) before other plants. Known as the Lenten rose, they prefer partial shade, are evergreen and boast flowers January through May.

... continued on Page D15



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Partner - The Beaubelle Group
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112 Camino Sobrante, Orinda

3 bedroom 2.5 bathroom 2300 SF offered at 1,495,000

This charming custom cottage located just steps from Orinda Country Club and Lake Cascade is a gardener's delight. The light filled home boasts a formal living/ dining space, eat in kitchen, and family room, as well as, three bedroom and two and half baths. There are doors in every room accessing the numerous patios and decks where you can enjoy the views of the hills and lake, entertain, or relax in the hot tub. This home is ideally located close to town but feels like a private oasis.



Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Reminders

CREATE a cutting garden for summer by planting delphiniums, snapdragons and sunflowers.

VISIT www.RecycleSmart.org for dates of the 5th Annual Compost Giveaway. Register to collect up to three yards of free compost or "black gold" which has been recycled from the green organic bins.

FERTILIZE lawns. Spring is also the second-best time after fall to install a new lawn or refresh an old one. If you are seeding, March and April are excellent times to scatter seed, especially before a rain. My preference is <http://www.PearlsPremium.com> for an almost weed-free, lush green ground cover.

ADD to your planting list aeoniums and other succulents as they require minimal maintenance and water, even in the hot months.

CONTINUE to pick up the fallen branches of camellias. I know I'm sounding like a broken record but camellias have a long blooming season and the ones that drop will cause a rot for next year's bloom. Don't stop picking them up and don't add them to your compost or recycle bins.

STOP mowing your lawns when the grass is wet or it is raining. Hearing the growl of lawnmowers when it is pouring outside boils the soul of my inner gardener. Cutting the grass when it is raining damages the grass blades and causes ruts and compaction. Inform your "mow, blow, and go" service providers to perform other tasks in inclement weather. A healthy green lawn will thank you for your restraint.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Hello Spring!



Fluorescent fuchsia flowering peach blossoms with daffodils.



A dinner plate aeonium succulent is beautiful in all seasons.



The elegant tulip soubletiana magnolia adds beauty and structure to any landscape.



Hellebores, also known as Lenten roses, bloom before other plants.



A close up of pretty pink freesias.

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Awaken spring

... continued from Page D12

If you plant them on a slope, you'll be able to see the flowers more easily as their stems face downwards. Hybrids include shades of ivory, jade, maroon, pink, yellow, speckled and fringed combinations.

As the soil warms and the daylight hours grow longer, it is time to prepare your garden for seeding by weeding, hoeing and adding rich soil. This year I have chosen packets from Renee's Garden (<http://www.reneesgarden.com>) and have already jotted down when the seeds will be planted. At the end of March or beginning of April, I will be planting beets, leeks and clarkia. In April I will add cleome, columbine and dwarf dahlias. Brussels sprouts will wait for a summer sowing. Pumpkin seeds that I've saved will be planted in late May in anticipation of Halloween and Thanksgiving. If you want to carve them, choose a fun variety such as Warty Goblin or Super Moon. For that delicious holiday pie, the go-to favorite is Pik-a-Pie. Pumpkins need a large area



Cynthia boasts spring green nails squatting by the hellebores

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.

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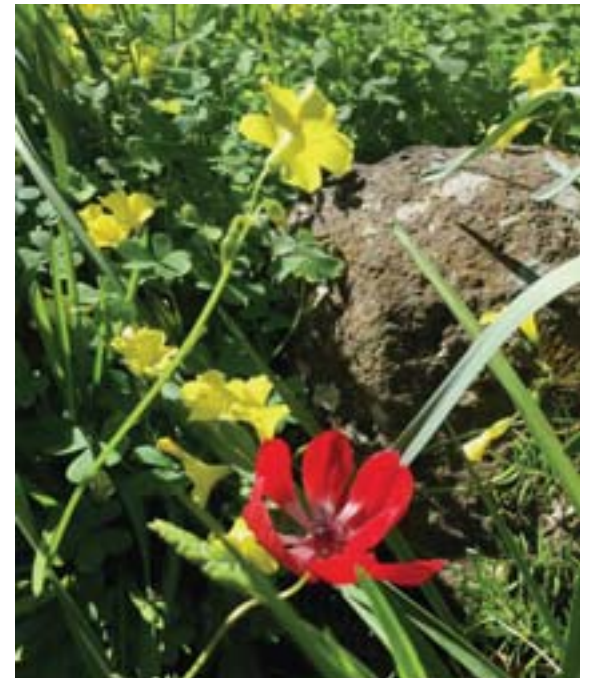
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to grow making it essential to plan now to give your Curcubita pepo the room to thrive. Small pumpkins need a 12-foot area, medium pumpkins require 24 feet, and giants want a 36-48 feet space per plant.

Are you thinking of including perennials that will attract butterflies, bees, bats and birds? The National Pollinator Garden Network has announced it has surpassed its goal of registering 1 million pollinator gardens. In just three years, 1.04 million gardens were registered with the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge. From tiny yards to public gardens, the million-plus gardens add up to a network of approximately 5 million acres of enhanced or new pollinator habitat. Offer a buffet with a diverse array of flowers, herbs, colors, fragrances, sizes, and shapes that will encourage these garden guards to visit and stay.

The elegant tulip soulangeana magnolia adds beauty and structure to any landscape and now is the time to choose a specimen in full bloom at your local nursery. Blooming time varies with varieties and micro-climates. Santa Rosa plum and peach trees are radiantly blossoming and will soon form fruit. Crab apple will follow shortly. Hopefully, the rains won't knock off too many buds. The frogs are chirping, birds are tweeting,



Red ranunculus pops up beside the yellow oxalis.

and cows are mooing. The orchestra of nature waking up from its winter slumber is music to my ears. It's time to polish our dancing shoes (and maybe your nails) as the vernal equinox has arrived with an equal balance of light and dark. The season of spring has sprung.

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ORINDA



3 Lost Valley Court

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\$2,295,000

ORINDA



119 Via Floreado

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LAFAYETTE



1321 Sunset Loop

Move-in ready 2 Bed/1 Bath home includes a wood burning fireplace, separate cottage and expansive lawn.

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LAFAYETTE



3393 Angelo Street

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LAFAYETTE



3913 Happy Valley Road

Mid-Century modern Happy Valley Estate on 3.54 acres, soaring ceilings, walls of glass, large living/dining.

\$2,695,000

MORAGA



30 Miramonte Drive

Beautifully remodeled Miramonte Gardens 2 Bed/1.5 Bath townhome with top of the line finishes.

\$649,000

MORAGA



110 Quintas Lane

Desirable neighborhood, great style and design, super entertainer on picturesque private setting.

Call for Price

MORAGA



422 Fernwood Drive

Spacious "heart of Moraga" 4 Bed/3 Bath home with outdoor kitchen, pool, spa and putting green.

\$1,785,000

WALNUT CREEK



150 Sharene Ln #204

Ideal location! 2 Bed/ 1 Bath with spacious family room, large closet space and functional floor plan.

\$395,000

PLEASANT HILL



1413 Stonehedge Drive

Lovely single story on a flat 1/4 acre lot. Spacious living, eat-in kitchen, expansive private yard.

\$849,000

CLAYTON



5679 Pine Hollow Road

Only 4 Left! Beautiful New Construction Single Story Homes w/ 4 Beds + office on .35-.41 acre lots.

\$1,175,000

OAKLAND



670 Vernon Street #102

Rose Park Terrace 2 Bed/1 Bath. Gorgeous updated home with parking. Easy to everything!

\$638,000

The Village Associates:

Ashley Battersby
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Linda Ehrich
Emily Estrada

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Jenny Lyons Wilhite
Margaret Zucker

Village
ASSOCIATES

It's Village. Of Course.

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