



*Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian*

*... read on Page D12*

## Hometown Halloween skit hits milestone year



Last year's cast

For the past 25 years, neighbors, friends and family have delivered a Halloween performance between 7 and 9 p.m. from the Wilson family garage at 12 Lynwood Place in Moraga on Halloween night.

The “fun and zany skit” originated on the front porch of the Wilson’s home and grew to 15 cast members, according to event promoter Judy Michel Shumate. “As the cast grew, with family and friends joining in, the skit moved to the garage.”

In 2018, the Wilson family counted about 1,000 people who stopped by to watch the skit throughout the evening. “Moraga police always stop by to show their support,” Shumate said. “We usually go through about 25 bags of treats for the kids.

... continued on Page D4



Photos provided

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## Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	8	\$757,500	\$4,500,000
MORAGA	5	\$860,000	\$1,670,000
ORINDA	14	\$800,000	\$3,200,000

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

- 1084 Brown Avenue, \$1,495,000, 3 Bdrms, 2102 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 09-11-19
- 1000 Dewing Avenue #404, \$757,500, 1 Bdrms, 881 SqFt, 2017 YrBlt, 09-19-19
- 3767 Happy Valley Road, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2973 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 09-18-19, Previous Sale: \$1,750,000, 12-12-18
- 3828 Happy Valley Road, \$4,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 7478 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 09-19-19
- 3340 Helen Lane, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 1683 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 09-17-19, Previous Sale: \$1,250,000, 02-26-16
- 655 Los Palos Drive, \$2,440,000, 4 Bdrms, 2904 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 09-20-19
- 10 Sessions Road, \$2,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 2743 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 09-13-19, Previous Sale: \$1,295,000, 06-27-13
- 1025 Willow Drive, \$940,000, 4 Bdrms, 1476 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 09-09-19

### MORAGA

- 875 Augusta Drive, \$860,000, 2 Bdrms, 1985 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 09-18-19, Previous Sale: \$124,000, 03-01-79
- 302 Claudia Court, \$1,535,000, 5 Bdrms, 2908 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 09-09-19
- 139 Donald Drive, \$1,255,000, 3 Bdrms, 1822 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 09-17-19, Previous Sale: \$800,000, 09-20-18
- 35 Hansen Court, \$1,640,000, 2665 SqFt, 2003 YrBlt, 09-18-19, Previous Sale: \$1,360,500, 07-25-17
- 63 Sanders Ranch Road, \$1,670,000, 4 Bdrms, 3114 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 09-13-19, Previous Sale: \$770,000, 05-26-98

### ORINDA

- 64 Brookwood Road, \$800,000, 3 Bdrms, 1351 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 09-20-19, Previous Sale: \$652,000, 03-06-07
- 19 Camino Del Diablo, \$1,702,500, 4 Bdrms, 2676 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 09-20-19, Previous Sale: \$985,000, 06-23-09
- 147 Camino Don Miguel, \$1,570,000, 3 Bdrms, 2861 SqFt, 1932 YrBlt, 09-16-19, Previous Sale: \$1,766,000, 10-12-07
- 7 El Campanero, \$3,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 3983 SqFt, 2018 YrBlt, 09-09-19, Previous Sale: \$765,000, 07-14-04
- 3 El Nido Court, \$1,120,000, 3 Bdrms, 1576 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 09-16-19, Previous Sale: \$759,000, 06-04-09
- 11 Gardiner Court, \$2,035,000, 4 Bdrms, 4552 SqFt, 1992 YrBlt, 09-20-19, Previous Sale: \$340,000, 05-01-89
- 8 Hidden Lane, \$1,680,000, 5 Bdrms, 3695 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 09-11-19, Previous Sale: \$850,000, 09-28-00
- 18 Loma Linda Court, \$1,331,500, 4 Bdrms, 2622 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 09-16-19, Previous Sale: \$539,000, 03-24-98
- 325 Miller Court, \$2,500,000, 5 Bdrms, 3939 SqFt, 2014 YrBlt, 09-10-19, Previous Sale: \$2,286,000, 12-16-14
- 540 Miner Road, \$1,448,000, 3 Bdrms, 2301 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 09-09-19
- 4 Oak Flat Road, \$1,545,000, 4 Bdrms, 3007 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 09-10-19
- 123 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 1444 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 09-09-19, Previous Sale: \$800,000, 03-23-04
- 16 Valley View Lane, \$2,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 4453 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 09-11-19, Previous Sale: \$2,600,000, 05-12-16
- 324 Village View Court, \$1,975,000, 3 Bdrms, 2700 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 09-13-19, Previous Sale: \$1,245,000, 12-06-06

Just Listed



## 7 Lloyd Lane, Orinda

4 bed | 3 bath | 3,222 Sq Ft | \$1,830,000  
7LloydLane.com

Impeccably maintained 4 bed 3 bath close to downtown Orinda. High ceilings and crown molding throughout set the tone for this elegant home featuring hardwood floors in the main living areas, 2 fireplaces and a formal dining room with butler's pantry. Tranquil backyard with waterfall, flagstone patio, covered porch and flat lawn. Granite countertops, island with a wine refrigerator, large pantry and skylight in kitchen. Heated Italian marble floors in master bathroom. Conveniently located close to downtown Orinda, freeway and BART.



Just Listed



## 2 Roxanne Lane, Lafayette

5 Bed | 3.5 Bath | 3,615 Sq Ft | \$1,875,000  
2RoxanneLane.com

Stunning custom home with spectacular views of Mt Diablo and the surrounding valley. This 5 bedroom 3.5 bath home includes an in-law unit on the lower level, 3-car garage and elevator. Large master suite with fireplace, 2 walk-in closets, and hot tub on a private deck. High ceilings and sliding glass doors in the family and dining rooms lead onto a large deck perfect for entertaining. Conveniently located close to trail and downtown Lafayette.



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# Hometown Halloween skit hits milestone year

... continued from Page D1

We have volunteers that help manage the crowds, and hand out candy after the show.”

Audio track creator James Shumate, who joined the fun at 4 years old and is now a graduate in sound and video from San Francisco State, adds his expertise.

Both of Michelle Wilson’s daughters have added to the fun as well. Daughter Amanda is a vocal coach in the community, and her voice can be heard in the audio. The Wilson family has roots in the entertainment business, Wilson was on the Stage in Las Vegas and had a part in “The Trial of Billy Jack” in 1974.

Now she enjoys creating smiles on the faces of the little goblins. “Laughter keeps us all young,” Shumate said. “We hope to deliver cauldrons of giggles!”

-- J. Wake



The garage is converted into a mini theater.

## 11 Critical Home Inspection Traps to be Aware of Weeks Before Listing Your LAMORINDA Home for Sale

LAMORINDA - According to industry experts, there are over 33 physical problems that will come under scrutiny during a home inspection when your home is for sale. A new report has been prepared which identifies the eleven most common of these problems, and what you should know about them before you list your home for sale.

Whether you own an old home or a brand new one, there are a number of things that can fall short of requirements during a home inspection. If not identified and dealt with, any of these 11 items could cost you dearly in terms of repair. That’s why it’s critical that you read this report before you list your home. If you wait until the building inspector flags these issues for you, you will almost certainly experience costly delays in the close of your home sale or, worse, turn

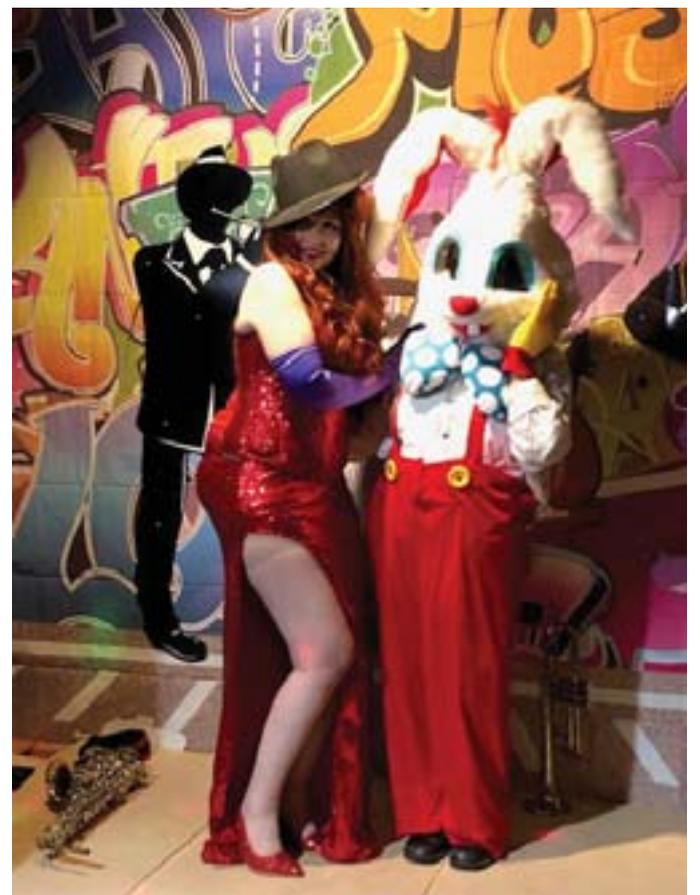
prospective buyers away altogether. In most cases, you can make a reasonable pre-inspection yourself if you know what you’re looking for, and knowing what you’re looking for can help you prevent little problems from growing into costly and unmanageable ones.

To help homesellers deal with this issue before their homes are listed, a free report entitled “11 Things You Need to Know to Pass Your Home Inspection” has been compiled which explains the issues involved.

To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report call toll-free 1- 844-941-0941 and enter 2503. You can call any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Get your free special report NOW to learn how to ensure a home inspection doesn’t cost you the sale of your home.

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## Feng Shui

# Choosing the right colors for your home



Photo provided

**By Michele Duffy**

Fall and the readiness for the upcoming holidays can often include an interior or exterior color refresh, but picking the right colors for your home can be a daunting task. A professional color consultation is a great way to connect your vision with color palettes that work effort-

lessly with your unique taste, style of home, and the rest of your neighborhood.

First, FengShui “colors” are designed to “activate” the Five Elements that are included in the primary FengShui tool, the Bagua map.

We can apply color to “activate” any of the Bagua areas and, in fact, changing the wall colors in a room to harmonize with the corresponding Five Elements color is the fastest way to change the energy to a more positive and nourishing space. To get the most out of your color picks always begin with:

- 1) Function of room;
- 2) Color palettes you love;
- 3) Bagua location of room to be painted;
- 4) Bagua Area element and corresponding “activating” colors; and
- 5) Color Journal no more than 2-3 options to pick a final winner.

It’s important to note first how you and your family use a room and how it functions in the household before picking a color. Obviously, the function of the master bedroom is very different from that of a dining room, with the master cultivating ease of sleep, resting and intimacy, while a dining room is more about activity, entertaining and lively Qi-filled food. So master bedroom color picks should not be too “active” or yang. Painting the master or any bedroom walls red, for example, is a Feng Shui no-no. Be thoughtful about the actual function of the room you want to paint.

Consider the color palettes you absolutely love and ideas that you would be comfortable with in your own master. Even if you don’t know the exact colors you want, the more you can research ideas and begin to narrow down your options by first acknowledging what colors would make you happiest. Maybe you don’t really know what colors you like. Sometimes, it’s “anything but what we have currently” so that’s okay, too, since this process will allow you to decide later.

Next we map the Bagua over your home to learn the Bagua location of the master bedroom. For our purposes, we will say it’s located in the “Relationship” area (far right from front door) which is indeed an ideal placement. The “Relationship” area is linked to the specific earth-element colors that include pink, earthy skin-tones, and white.

Once you have decided on two or three workable colors for your master, it’s important to understand how a small color swatch will look very different on walls.

### Getting started:

- 1) If you have a partner, be sure to include them in this process. Simply purchase sample sizes of your top 2-3 picks and create 1-foot by 1-foot “brush-outs” on small-medium poster boards that you can move around. You can create two sets of poster boards, if you like.
- 2) Label the paint color brush-outs. Three of my favorites for Master Bedrooms in the Relationship Bagua area are: BM Proposal AF-260; BM Hush AF-95; and BM White Dove OC-17.
- 3) Keep track of your impressions of your colors picks in a “color journal” – any notebook will do fine. Again, write down and label brush-outs Color No. 1, 2 and 3.

... continued on Page D10

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DRE# 01301392



## Feng Shui

# Choosing the right colors for your home



... continued from Page D8

4) Look at your color picks in the morning, at noon and at night since different times of the day provide varying natural light, and make sure you do this in the actual room you are painting!

5) Simultaneously, place the brush outs on the wall with the most light (opposite windows) and also on the walls that are the darkest (walls with windows). Move the brush outs around, too (that second set of brush outs is very handy now).

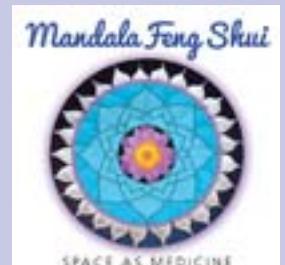
6) Record your impressions, for example, it's less brown than I thought or it has more green or is too light or too dark, etc.

7) Review your color journal after three days. Be mindful and notice if there is one color that you and your partner have

begun to gravitate toward. Is there one color that emerges as the “one” you prefer during more times of the day, and that also works well on your well-lit and dark walls?

At the end of this process the final color you choose will have the added assurance that you did a bit more of the thoughtful work upfront. This will help you to “know” it's the color that works best for you and this color selection process will help you avoid second-guessing your choice later, when it's on all four walls! This is an ideal outcome since you will sleep better in the color you picked over time, and which is also perfect timing, for sleeping longer and lingering in these late Autumn days.

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](mailto:spaceharmony@gmail.com).



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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

# Scary, scary night



The Merrill Fire burnt to the back fences of houses in Moraga,

Photo Cynthia Brian

**By Cynthia Brian**

*“Starry, starry night  
Flaming flowers that brightly blaze  
Swirling clouds in violet haze.” – Don McLean*

In 1889, post-impressionist Vincent Van Gogh painted one of his most memorable paintings, “The Starry Night,” as he looked out of his asylum east window. On Oct. 10, when I looked out our east window, the starry night was aglow with flames and they were not the brightly blaze of flaming flowers. Normally, I look forward to October because of the frivolity of Halloween – costumes, candy, scarecrows, black cats, ghosts, ghouls, jack o’lanterns, and trick or treating offer children a scary evening of amusement. It was a scary, scary night, but it was not Halloween.

The power was off and a fire erupted racing down the hill to a neighborhood fast asleep. Firefighters were swift and efficient evacuating the community and containing the inferno. Police officers assisted in maintaining peace and safety. Fortunately,

all structures were saved and no injuries were incurred, thanks to the professional first responders. Gardens and landscapes survived the blaze with only a few fences being torched.

What homeowners need to know to be more fire-safe:

Lamorinda is rural, wooded, with minimal escape routes. Many of the plants and trees growing throughout our area are highly flammable including pines, cypress, cedar, fir, bamboo, acacia, juniper, Pampas grass, rosemary, ivy, arborvitae, miscanthus, and eucalyptus. Coyote brush, although moderately fire-resistant when it is young and green, is highly combustible as it grows. It depends on fires to regenerate and grows everywhere in our hills. All of these plants need to be removed or carefully supervised. Since heat moves up, fire speed and severity is stronger on slopes where vegetation management is crucial.

Autumn is a prime time to prepare your landscaping for the next season and create a defensible space around your property. A defensible space is an area around a structure that has been cleared of ignitable

debris and botanicals that may cause a public safety hazard. No plant is fireproof. Under the right conditions, every plant will burn, especially those that are drought-stressed or not maintained. A “fire-safe” plant means that it tends not to be a significant fuel source in itself with a chemical composition that resists heat and combustion. It is critical to keep plants around our homes well tended and pruned as a fire protection tool. The closer plants are to the house, the more care is needed. Every homeowner is responsible for managing their vegetation to meet fire district requirements.

Neighborhoods are encouraged to form a committee to receive advice from local fire professionals on how to be Firewise. Being Firewise is dependent on the diligence of everyone in a neighborhood to keep property fire safe. Fires do not honor property lines. All properties become indefensible when one neighbor has overgrown bushes, brush, or low hanging trees.

... continued on Page D14

Lafayette



**1140 Camino Vallecito** **\$3,250,000**  
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Lafayette



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Lafayette



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**What makes flora highly flammable?**

- Dry and dead leaves, twigs, branches
- Abundant, dense foliage
- Needles
- Low moisture foliage
- Peeling, loose bark
- Gummy sap
- Leathery or aromatic leaves
- Content of terpene, oils, or resin
- Dry uncut grasses

**What makes flora reasonably fire-resistant?**

- Hardy, slow-growing plants that don't produce litter or thatch.
- Drought tolerant natives with internal high water content. Generally, but not always, California natives are more tolerant of fire and deer.
- Trees with thick bark that restrict the growth of invasive shrub species and hardwood trees such as walnut, cherry, maple and poplar are less flammable. Deciduous trees and shrubs are more fire resistant because they have higher moisture content when in leaf, lower fuel volume when dormant, and usually do not contain flammable oils.
- Supple, moist leaves with little to no sap or resin residue.
- Low growing ground covers.
- Bulbs with dried leaves cut to the ground.

**What can you do now to create a more fire-resistant landscape?**

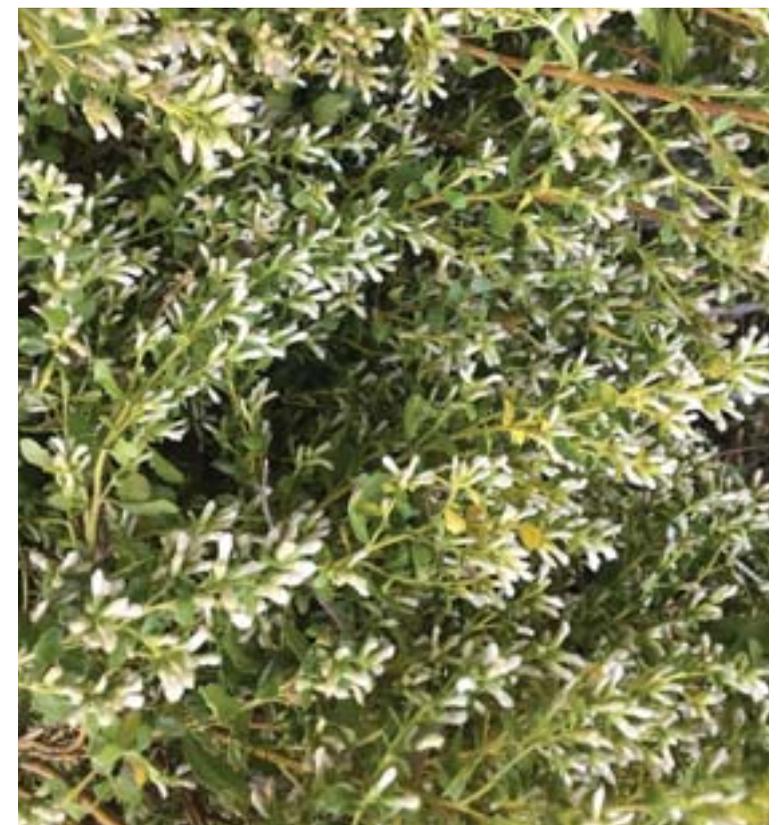
- Include pavers, bricks, pavement, gravel, rocks, dry creek beds, fountains, ponds, pools and lawns.
- Select high moisture plants that grow close to the ground with a low sap and resin content.
- Plant the right plant in the correct location. Leave space between plants.
- Minimize the inclusion of evergreen trees within 30 feet of structures. Clear the understory. Keep trees 20 feet away from chimneys.
- Remove invasive species or swaths of flammable plants including ivy, rosemary, broom, coyote brush, chamise, and juniper.
- Keep mulch moist. Create zones of rock, brick or gravel. Bark and leaves are not mulches recommended near structures.
- Prune trees 6-10 feet above the ground to hinder fire laddering.
- Keep appropriate clearance to reduce the threat of burning embers from decorative features such as gazebos, fences, sheds, porches and junk areas.
- Irrigate and maintain all flora, lawns, and hillsides. Clover, ground covers, and grasses that are kept low and green are excellent alternatives.
- Due to soil erosion, bare ground is not recommended.

**Helpful Websites**

- National Fire Protection Association: <https://www.nfpa.org>
- Moraga-Orinda Fire District: <http://www.mofd.org>
- University of California Cooperative Extension: [https://ucanr.edu/sites/fire/Prepare/Landscaping/Plant\\_choice/](https://ucanr.edu/sites/fire/Prepare/Landscaping/Plant_choice/)
- Fire Safe Marin: <https://www.firesafemarin.org>
- Pacific Northwest Fire Resistant Plants: <http://www.firefree.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Fire-Resistant-Plants.pdf>
- Las Pilitas Nursery (Located in Santa Margarita, this website lists deer and fire-resistant flora plus burn times.) <https://www.laspilitas.com/easy/deerfire.htm>



Beautiful and fire-safe New Guinea impatiens.



The flower of coyote brush is fragrant with seeds that scatter to grow multiple plants.

Photos Cynthia Brian



The happy scarecrow points the way to the pumpkin patch.



Cynthia Brian in a flammable eucalyptus grove.

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 StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com). Buy a copy of her books, *Growing with the Goddess Gardener* and *Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers* at [www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store](http://www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store). Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) [www.GoddessGardener.com](http://www.GoddessGardener.com)

### Sign Up for Alerts

- Location-specific alert is Contra Costa County Community Warning System: <https://cwsalerts.com>
- General alert: <http://www.nixle.com>

Having had warning of the looming PG&E blackout, I had deeply irrigated my entire garden and hillside. An alert from EBMUD instructed that in a power outage, water must be used judiciously, so as a preemptive measure, I watered my landscape thoroughly, soaking the grass, shrubs, mulch, trees and fences. Throughout the summer, thrice, I had weed-whacked the tall grass surrounding my property and that of neighbors, pruned low hanging tree branches, and a week before the fire I had, thankfully, cut the dry perennials to the ground. These are steps I encourage all homeowners to undertake. Maintaining our landscaping is a never-ending task mandatory for both our pleasure and protection.

Let's participate in keeping the fire-breathing dragon away. Enjoy a safe and scary evening of Trick or Treating under the starry skies!

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Halloween!

# McDonnell Nursery

## October Sale!

family owned since 1933

**25% off Perennials, Trees and Shrubs**  
Also find special pricing on  
select garden decor.



[www.mcdonnellnursery.com](http://www.mcdonnellnursery.com)

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# LAMORINDA'S LEADING INDEPENDENT REAL ESTATE FIRM

## ORINDA



New Listing

### 9 Kittiwake Road

Classic one-level 3 bed/ 2 bath Orinda home with remodeled chef's kitchen & workshop/hobby area. \$1,135,000

## ORINDA



New Listing

### 24 Valley Drive

Classic mid-century influenced 3 bed/ 2 bath home 2033 sqft with mature gardens & patios. \$1,198,000

## ORINDA



New Listing

### 8 Charles Hill Circle

Large 4320 sqft 6 bed/ 3.5 bath Orinda family home with separate in-law accommodations. \$1,550,000

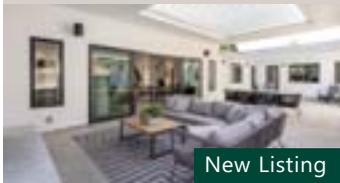
## ORINDA



### 271 Orchard Road

Updated & expanded rancher in the heart of Orinda. Large lawn, patio, sports court & rooftop deck. \$1,645,000

## ORINDA



New Listing

### 257 Overhill Road

Beautifully updated modern 3 bed/ 2 bath home with hardwood floors & an abundance of natural sunlight. \$1,795,000

## ORINDA



### 19 Donald Drive

Serene 3460 sqft garden oasis with panoramic views, luxurious interiors & numerous meditative retreats. \$1,795,000

## ORINDA



New Listing

### 65 Lombardy Lane

4 bed/ 3.5 bath ranch home with oversized chef's kitchen in coveted Sleepy Hollow neighborhood. \$2,495,000

## ORINDA



### 383 Miner Road

East Coast meets West Coast! Orinda Country Club Cape Cod home on 1.32 acres, updated. \$2,550,000

## ORINDA



### 19 La Cintilla

Elegant 5 bed/ 3.5 bath with chef's kitchen, hardwood floors & patio. Minutes to commute & top schools. \$3,198,000

## ORINDA



### 13 Gardiner Court

Custom craftsman home. 6 bed/ 4.5 bath with spectacular views, flat play areas, & stunning infinity pool. \$3,595,000

## ORINDA



### 57 Charles Hill Circle

A new SpringHill Homes masterpiece! 5 bed/ 5 baths + 2 half baths with an open floor plan on a .75 acre lot. \$4,395,000

## LAFAYETTE



New Listing

### 871 Las Trampas

Sea Ranch inspired custom contemporary home with newly remodeled kitchen, master bedroom, & hardwood floors \$1,295,000

## MORAGA



New Listing

### 806 Augusta Drive

Updated single level 3 bed/ 2 bath home on Moraga Country Club golf course. Close to schools & trails. \$1,250,000

## ROSSMOOR



### 1341 Leisure Lane #4

Beautifully updated, sought after level-in Yosemite model, 2 bed/ 1.5 bath. Perfect for privacy. Views! \$545,000

## ROSSMOOR



### 2642 Saklan Indian Drive #3

Updated 1546 sqft 2 bed/ 2 bath upper unit condo. Includes office, washer & dryer, & 1 car garage. \$829,000

## WALNUT CREEK



New Price

### 1670 San Miguel

Spacious 2 bed/ 2.5 condo w/ remodeled kitchen, hardwood floors, & oversized master w/ large closet. \$699,000

## The Village Associates:

Ashley Battersby  
Patricia Battersby  
Shannon Conner  
Meara Dunsmore

Linda Ehrich  
Emily Estrada

Joan Evans  
Linda Friedman  
Dexter Honens II

Anne Knight  
Susan Layng

April Matthews  
Hillary Murphy  
Karen Murphy

John Nash  
Altie Schmitt

Judy Schoenrock  
Ann Sharf  
Amy Rose Smith

Molly Smith  
Jeff Snell

Lynda Snell  
Steve Stahle

Clark Thompson  
Angie Evans Traxinger

Ignacio Vega  
Ann Ward

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It's Village. Of Course.

DRE#01301392