

# Lamorinda

# OUR HOMES

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Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page D2

## *Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian*

### **Sirius is serious**



Photo Cynthia Brian

**Spring blooming tulips planted in fall are interplanted with delphiniums and pansies.**

**By Cynthia Brian**

*“When the ancients first observed Sirius emerging as it were from the sun ... they believed its power of heat to have been so excessive that ... the Sea boiled, the Wine turned sour, Dogs grew mad, and all other creatures became languid.”*  
~ John Brady, 1813, *a Compendious Analysis of the Calendar.*

Forever the optimist, when I penned my last column, “The Dog Days of Summer,” I intentionally left out the part of the Old Farmer’s Almanac, 1817 that indicates, “Make both hay and haste while the sun shines, for when old Sirius takes command of the weather, he is such an unsteady, crazy dog, there is no dependence upon him.”

In the last few weeks we have witnessed

the ravages of Sirius with thousands of lightning strikes causing more than 600 wildfires, millions of acres burned, gusty erratic winds, radically unhealthy air quality, and ash blanketing the state. More land has burned in the last few weeks than burned in all of 2019. Death and destruction are the horrific aftermath.

Our Napa county farm was amongst the blazing landscapes. Everyone living in the valley where our vineyards and ranch reside was evacuated, yet, with firefighters engaged elsewhere battling numerous other infernos, my brother stayed behind on his tractor to cut roads, create safety zones, and clear debris. The hills and pastures burned. He saved the vineyards, barns, and our family home.

Between the brutal pandemic, perverse politics, sizzling heat and suffocating smoke, we all have a reason to despair. To thwart a fire on my hillside, I have cut my dried perennials and annuals to ground level. The only beauty is offered by my faithful blushing naked ladies and lavender society garlic plants and the passionflower vine that is twining up my peach tree. The ground is parched.

As I was repairing a broken water pipe so that I could irrigate this arid field, my optimism suddenly resurged. Swallowtails flitted through the smoke-filled air searching for a colorful landing place. A hummingbird settled on my string of patio lights before nuzzling my pink jacobinia growing in a cement urn. A five-lined skink, also known as a blue-tailed lizard, perched on a nearby boulder completely uninterested in my cutting and gluing efforts. I completed my project, picked a ripe tangerine from the tree, headed for the hammock, and savored the juice as it dripped down my chin. ... continued on Page D12