



Home repair advise

read on Page D4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

May flowers ... without the showers



Photo Cynthia Brian

Bearded iris, daffodils, and Bergenia frame a fountain that invites birds to bathe.

By Cynthia Brian

"My garden is my most beautiful work of art" – Claude Monet

We've all heard the adage, "April showers bring May flowers!" We have the flowers this year, but April precipitation did not materialize. This year is lining up to be the third driest year in the history of California. And that means that we must be more diligent than ever to prepare our properties for a season of increased wildfires.

I have been weeding my property with every spare minute since February. It is essential to pull out weeds by the roots, else they return promptly. This is round three and the resulting garden is looking beautiful. I've been experimenting with mixing flowers of iridescent pinks with buttery yellows and pumpkin orange accented by sky blue and bold purple. The palette has taken on an Impressionistic essence of which Monet would be proud.

April and May have always been my favorite months because of the plethora of blooms, birds, and fragrances. The perfume of the jasmine permeates the morning air, the lilac scents the afternoon sunshine, while the wisteria and mock orange infuse the evening with glorious aromas. My two thornless Lady Banksia rose bushes with their profusion of creamy double-petaled flowers have commandeered 30 linear feet of a fence as well as twined to the tops of a plum and chestnut tree. The flowering cherry tree showcases puffy blossoms resembling pink snowballs. The mock orange tree's white blooms are candy for the bees. The cerise flowers of the Western redbud tree offer a gorgeous contrast to the unfurling green leaves of the honey locust trees. Under a canopy of pines and surrounded by white calla lilies and lacy hemlock, a New Zealand hawthorn brightens the verdant scene with clouds of blush blooms. Bearded irises in a variety of colors are delicate and fragrant. Azaleas and camellias thrive in the shadow of the redwoods. Freesias, tulips, daffodils, calendulas and anemones continue their carnival of blooms. Despite the lack of rain, the spring display is splendor in the grass.

In many parts of the country, people wait until after Mother's Day to start planting their vegetables but because of the warmth of this season, I advise that you get started soon. Getting children involved with planting vegetables and herbs will encourage them to eat what they plant.

... continued on Page D10

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	6	\$1,150,000	\$2,525,000
MORAGA	3	\$628,000	\$1,235,000
ORINDA	4	\$1,300,000	\$1,850,000

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

3217 Acalanes Avenue, \$1,898,000, 4 Bdrms, 2848 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 03-12-21

920 Hawthorne Drive, \$1,905,000, 4 Bdrms, 2497 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 03-08-21,
Previous Sale: \$1,012,000, 04-12-04

3150 Mars Court, \$1,150,000, 5 Bdrms, 2465 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 03-09-21

2424 Olympic Boulevard, \$2,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 1524 SqFt, 1945 YrBlt, 03-10-21,
Previous Sale: \$840,000, 08-07-15

3393 St Marys Road, \$1,500,000, 3 Bdrms, 1674 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 03-09-21

3177 Stanwood Lane, \$2,525,000, 4 Bdrms, 3591 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 03-10-21,
Previous Sale: \$985,000, 03-16-07**MORAGA**1423 Camino Peral, \$628,000, 2 Bdrms, 1116 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 03-12-21,
Previous Sale: \$219,500, 08-01-901380 Camino Peral, \$755,000, 2 Bdrms, 1126 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 03-10-21,
Previous Sale: \$555,000, 06-05-141844 Saint Andrews Drive, \$1,235,000, 3 Bdrms, 1819 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 03-12-21,
Previous Sale: \$715,000, 06-02-11**ORINDA**56 Camino Del Diablo, \$1,850,000, 4 Bdrms, 2291 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 03-08-21,
Previous Sale: \$826,500, 11-20-0223 Donald Drive, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 2034 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 03-12-21,
Previous Sale: \$1,261,000, 07-24-1743 Parklane Drive, \$1,350,000, 3 Bdrms, 1428 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 03-09-21,
Previous Sale: \$1,060,000, 08-31-1811 Southwood Court, \$1,825,000, 3 Bdrms, 2432 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 03-12-21,
Previous Sale: \$1,550,000, 08-22-16

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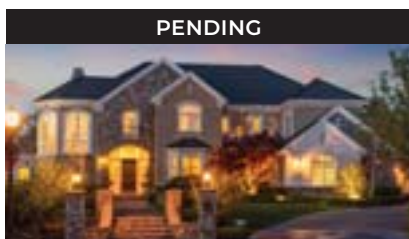
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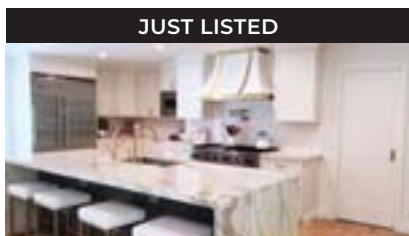


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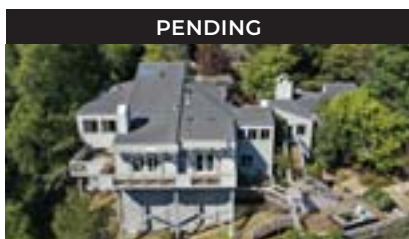
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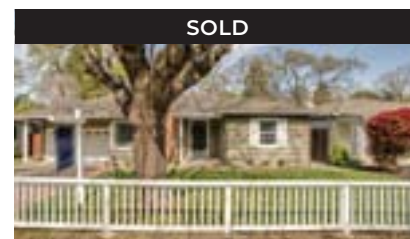
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Slipping and sliding

By Jim Hurley

When the key stopped working on the driver side door of my old Ford Ranger, after 10 years and 175,000 miles, I called the dealer's parts counter to ask about replacing the lock.

"Don't do that yet," the Parts-Guy said, "Get a can of Tri-Flow and spray the heck out of the lock." (I think we all understand that he did not literally say "heck.") Tri-Flow, what an epiphany! I had already sprayed the lock several times with the ever-popular WD-40. The first time it worked OK for a bit, the second time not so much, the third time had me calling the Parts-Guy. Tri-Flow worked beautifully and the lock worked for another two years.

Tri-Flow versus WD-40; aren't they the same? Not really.

Thanks to great marketing, WD-40 has become a household name. By the way, WD-40 stands for Water Displacement - 40. It was the

40th version in a series of the manufacturer's experimental formulas. It is basically a silicone and oil lubricant combined with a spray propellant intended to repel water, and leave a rust reducing film. It works very well at that. The downside to WD-40 is that it tends to collect dust forming a sticky sort of grime that eventually contributes to the friction, rather than reducing it. Initially bicyclists loved to spray their bike chain and gears with WD-40 to help them go faster. What they found was that the accumulated grime actually wore out the chains and gears faster.

Tri-Flow is a Teflon-based lubricant which repels dust as well as water. It sprays on much the same as the other stuff but works better at loosening sticky parts and keeps things cleaner. Unlike the silicone in WD-40, the Teflon in Tri-Flow tends to settle in the solution, so you need to shake the can before you spray. If you can't find Tri-Flow at your local hardware store, check the bike shop. Bi-

cyclists love this stuff. I don't carry WD-40 in my tool kit anymore; Tri-Flow is much more versatile.

Now that we've fixed your squeaky hinges and sticky locks, let's talk about sticky doors. One of the most common calls I get in the Lamorinda area is about doors that don't open or shut easily. There are several reasons why this happens. (I may have another article about that later.) But one common problem is that the jamb has slightly shifted just enough that the door is tight against it. The best lubricant I've found for that bind is paraffin wax. Some people use candles, but I buy blocks of paraffin wax that are sold with canning supplies in the house-



Photos J. Wake

Tri-Flow can be used to fix a sticking sliding glass door.

wares department of hardware stores and better grocery stores. Rub the paraffin along the edges of the door (or window) and the jamb: you won't see it, but it works wonderfully to reduce friction. I rub paraffin on the bottom edges of old dresser drawers to help them slide (new furniture has metal rollers). It will also quiet a noisy fan belt on your car. Do Teslas have fan belts or am I dating myself?

Tri-Flow and paraffin wax can help relieve much of the unwanted friction in your life. I recommend practical mindfulness and meditation for the rest.

Jim Hurley is an independent handyman with over 25 years of experience in residential repairs. Hopefully this free advice is helpful to someone attempting Do-It-Yourself home repairs. The information presented is intended for informational purposes and for use by persons having appropriate technical skill, at their own discretion and risk.



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This neighborhood cul-de-sac is located near top-rated Moraga schools, swim club, farmers market and hiking trails. Southwest facing yards provides afternoon light and picturesque sunset views over the undisturbed hills above the Upper San Leandro Reservoir. The bright and dynamic architecture features gourmet island kitchens, hardwood floors and luxurious primary bedroom suites.

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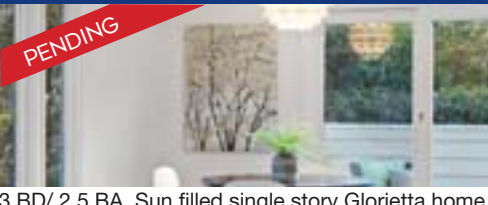


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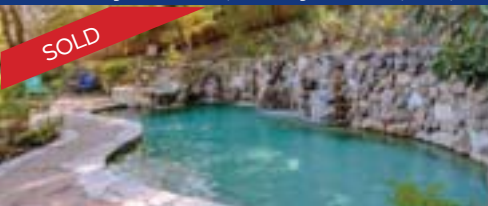
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Lafayette



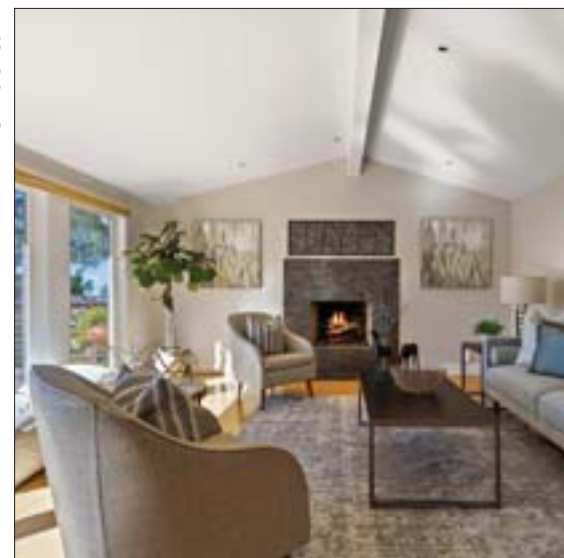
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Montclair



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1236 Lindell Drive, Walnut Creek

3 BD | 1 BA | ± 1118 Sq Ft | \$1,285,000

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4008 Canyon Road, Lafayette

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PENDING

826 Skywood Rd, Lafayette

Offered at \$2,495,000



PENDING

3801 Ardley Ave, Oakland

Offered at \$925,000

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PENDING

1099 Larch Ave, Moraga

Represented Buyers



SOLD

1535 D Ashwood Dr, Martinez

Represented Buyer



**SOLD
12 OFFERS!**

327 Maryal Rd, Pleasant Hill

Represented Buyer



Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

May flowers ... without the showers



A Western redbud is in full bloom.

Photos Cynthia Brian

... continued from Page D1

After researchers spent time with children in Central Texas who had gardens and gardening classes at their schools, they discovered that the nutrition of both parents and children improved.

Also, those who participated began enjoying more vegetables.

If you are planning a vegetable patch, buy pint or quart size containers of your favorite vegetables. Don't attempt to plant everything you see at the nursery. Only plant what you and your family love. For example, for my spring veggie garden, I've planted nine varieties of tomatoes as I'm a tomato snob. I only eat tomatoes in season and prefer only tomatoes that I, a friend, or a family member grows. Also planted are eggplant, zucchini, cucumbers and peppers. Already growing are a plethora of herbs including basil, oregano, fennel, sage, thyme, dill, cilantro as well as leafy greens of arugula, sorrel, lettuce, and sugar snap peas, artichokes, onions, chives, strawberries and broccoli.

Make sure that you rotate your crops from year to year so as not to deplete the soil. Most summer vegetables require a minimum of six hours of sunlight. Read and follow the instructions that come with your plant.

Another beautiful, long-flowering, and excellent fresh-cut for arrangements is the dahlia. Although they are supposed to be deer-resistant, the deer that graze around my property seem to find them delicious. I don't advise dahlias to be planted in areas where you have marauders. Dahlias produce large, colorful blooms and are a welcome addition to any garden. Here's how to get them started in

your landscape:

1. Choose a well-drained area with plenty of sunlight.
2. Plant the tubers after the danger of frost have passed.
3. Dig a hole about a foot deep and amend with compost or potting soil.
4. Place the tuber flat and cover with the amended soil.
5. Make a patch of dahlias spaced 12-36 inches apart for maximum impact.
6. Water immediately.
7. After sprouting, pinch off the side buds to allow the central blowers to be larger.
8. Deadhead as flowers fade to maintain blooming.

Because of the arid times in which we are living, make sure to cut all tall wild grasses, trim limbs up from the ground six to 10 feet to prevent fire laddering, and clear a safety zone around your home. Clean out gutters, remove debris, be cautious when barbecuing and careful around the fire pit. Keep gardens irrigated, watering early in the morning or early in the evening. Be diligent and responsible to help prevent a fire from igniting. Pray for rain yet be prepared for drought.

Mother's Day is approaching and a welcome gift for mom can always be found in the garden. Consider a bubbling fountain, birdhouse, or colorful annuals to plant. Make a simple arrangement using flowers from the garden accompanied by a garden book that will be treasured always. Whatever you do, let your mom know how much she means to you whether it is through a virtual visit or an in-person brunch, picnic or walk. Moms love the little remembrances and deserve accolades, at least once a year!

Spring is the time to savor the beauty surrounding you. If you've ever been to Giverny in France, you will know that Monet was not exaggerating about his garden being his most beautiful work of art. He was inspired by nature and you can be too. Be an artist and create your masterpiece in your garden.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Mother's Day!



A pretty Mother's Day arrangement of white roses, purple mums, berries, and eucalyptus leaves.



A thornless Lady Banksia rose climbs trees and cascades over fences.



Under a canopy of pines, a New Zealand hawthorn shines amidst the calla lilies and hemlock.



Cynthia Brian in the spring garden with yellow freesias and blue woodland hyacinths.

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, is available for hire to help you prepare for your spring garden. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia 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.

Buy copies of her best-selling books, including, Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul, Growing with the Goddess Gardener, and Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Receive a FREE inspirational music DVD.

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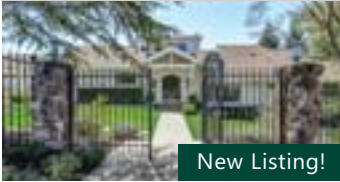
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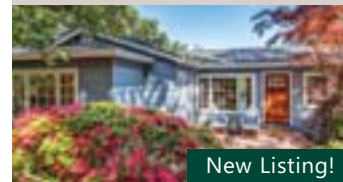
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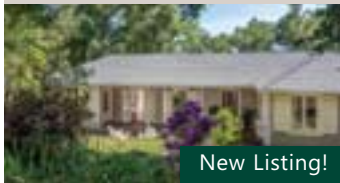
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171 Las Vegas Road

Traditional 3 bed/ 2.5 bath including bonus recreation/ hobby room & half bath downstairs in the popular country club area.

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136 Fiesta Circle

Single level 3 bed/ 2 bath Ranch style home located in highly sought-after Ivy Drive neighborhood w/ level backyard.

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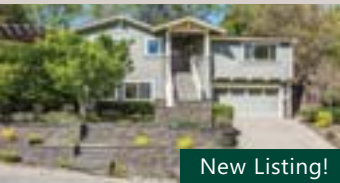


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10 Storybook Lane

Perfect opportunity to build in amazing setting near Mt. Diablo on 8 acre gated parcel w/ room for horses & stable.

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