

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 17 Issue 21 Wednesday, December 6, 2023



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page D2

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Rolling in the leaves

By Cynthia Brian



Golden leaves of a male Chinese pistache.

Photos Cynthia Brian

“Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away; Lengthen night and shorten day! Every leaf speaks bliss to me, Fluttering from the autumn tree...” ~Emily Brontë

There is something so comforting and beautiful about watching the falling leaves of autumn. Winter is just three weeks away and the nights are colder, yet I'm not willing to abandon rolling in the leaves just yet. The sensory, aesthetic, and cultural factors of fall are reasons that I appreciate this season.

The vibrant colors on my deciduous trees range from golden yellow to rustic sienna to persimmon orange to deep crimson, creating a visually stunning and warm landscape. The changing foliage transforms the environment from natural to decorated as we enter the holidays. Within the next few days, the trees will have shed their autumn cloaks and I'll begin hanging boisterous balls of Christmas cheer on their naked branches.

But for now, the rustling sound of leaves underfoot, the scent of decaying foliage, and the crispness of the air evoke a pleasure that only this time of year can provide. Watching the leaves flutter to the ground re-

minds me of butterflies in search of nectar. Like many young people everywhere, raking leaves into a big pile and jumping into it, rolling around with carefree joy, is a fond memory of childhood. As an adult, I am filled with nostalgia for those simple traditions. Never too old to be silly, I make angel wings on a bed of fallen leaves. The power of nature unearths the awe, amazement, and wonder in such an enjoyable endeavor.

Our gardens are winding down for their long winter nap. Landscapes look lonely and lacking color, except for a few favorites. If you've been deadheading your roses, your bushes will continue to bloom and delight through January when it will be time for the heavy pruning. Persimmon and pomegranate fruit are delicious ornaments hanging on trees as they quickly ripen to embellish the forthcoming holiday table. Ripe Hachiya persimmon pulp can be used to make a delectable barbecue sauce that can be frozen for summer gatherings. Pomegranate seeds are high in vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants. Add the seeds to salads. They are worth the effort involved.

In preparation for Christmas décor, I am drawn to adding pots of poinsettias to a variety of plantings. Poinsettias look festive anywhere and are readily available in stores. Try tucking samples into your succulent garden or combine them with cyclamen and impatiens.

Before winter arrives, savor the fluttering fall finale, allowing the leaves to speak bliss.



Cyclamen and impatiens planted with pots of poinsettia.



Red-vein Chinese lantern flowers look like holiday ornaments.

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Happy Holidays



THANK YOU TO MY
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RECENT SALES IN 2023



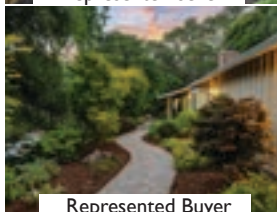
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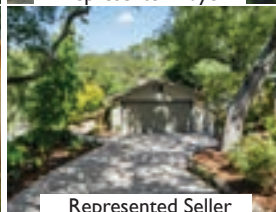
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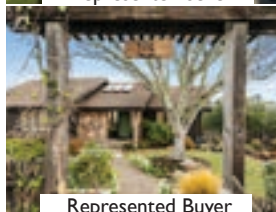
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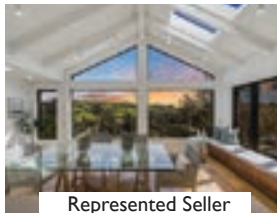
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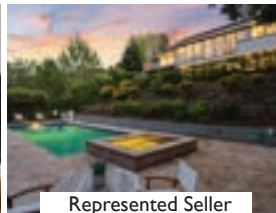
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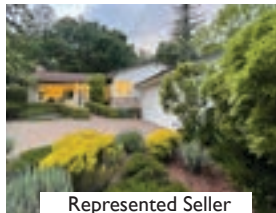
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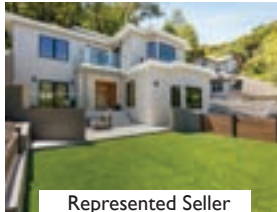
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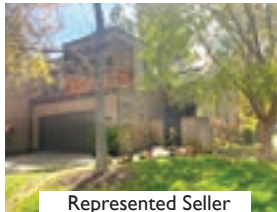
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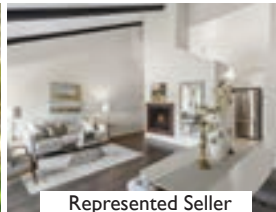
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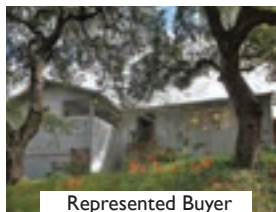
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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	16	\$1,180,000	\$3,500,000
MORAGA	5	\$944,000	\$2,700,000
ORINDA	8	\$1,128,000	\$3,100,000

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

- 1 West Arbor Way, \$1,625,000, 3 Bdrms, 1513 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 10-30-23, Previous Sale: \$950,000, 09-15-14
- 900 Brown Avenue, \$1,630,000, 2 Bdrms, 1765 SqFt, 2022 YrBlt, 10-23-23
- 3227 Burton Court, \$3,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 2708 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 10-25-23, Previous Sale: \$1,085,000, 04-12-04
- 630 Francis Drive, \$1,180,000, 3 Bdrms, 2180 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 11-02-23, Previous Sale: \$510,000, 03-02-11
- 2265 Hidden Pond Lane, \$1,850,000, 4 Bdrms, 3188 SqFt, 1993 YrBlt, 11-01-23, Previous Sale: \$1,400,000, 07-19-23
- 7 Hidden Valley Road, \$2,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 1803 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 10-24-23
- 22 Hidden Valley Road, \$2,898,000, 3 Bdrms, 3336 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 10-26-23, Previous Sale: \$600,000, 11-11-98
- 10 Julie Highlands Court, \$2,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 3813 SqFt, 1997 YrBlt, 10-25-23, Previous Sale: \$1,675,000, 08-26-20
- 1849 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 2173 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 10-27-23, Previous Sale: \$1,205,000, 07-20-17
- 21 Ruth Court, \$1,825,000, 3 Bdrms, 2060 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$1,175,000, 07-28-15
- 79 Silverwood Drive, \$2,415,000, 3 Bdrms, 2344 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 10-27-23, Previous Sale: \$1,290,000, 12-18-13
- 3079 Sweetbrier Circle, \$1,650,000, 4 Bdrms, 1874 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-31-23
- 3134 Sweetbrier Circle, \$1,460,000, 4 Bdrms, 2273 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 11-01-23
- 3381 West Terrace, \$1,675,000, 3 Bdrms, 1485 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$579,000, 07-07-03
- 1203 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$3,500,000, 6 Bdrms, 5250 SqFt, 1996 YrBlt, 11-03-23
- 1008 Woodbury Road #202, \$2,675,000, 3 Bdrms, 2468 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 10-31-23, Previous Sale: \$2,260,000, 03-01-21

MORAGA

- 6 Benedita Place, \$1,110,000, 2 Bdrms, 1845 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 10-30-23, Previous Sale: \$1,180,000, 03-30-22
- 20 Buckingham Drive, \$1,375,000, 3 Bdrms, 1654 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$1,083,000, 07-19-18
- 1501 Camino Peral, \$944,000, 3 Bdrms, 1440 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 11-03-23, Previous Sale: \$800,000, 12-04-20
- 378 Redfield Place, \$1,750,000, 5 Bdrms, 2452 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 11-02-23
- 200 Willowbrook Lane, \$2,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 3174 SqFt, 2017 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$2,312,500, 05-15-18

Orinda

- 24 Altamount Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1877 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 10-30-23, Previous Sale: \$1,050,000, 07-11-14
- 56 Davis Road, \$2,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 2262 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 10-24-23, Previous Sale: \$1,471,500, 08-05-16
- 10 Fleetwood Court, \$2,450,000, 4 Bdrms, 2509 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-24-23, Previous Sale: \$277,500, 08-01-85
- 192 Hall Drive, \$2,175,000, 3 Bdrms, 2256 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 11-03-23
- 62 Martha Road, \$3,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 3022 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$239,500, 02-01-79
- 27 Oakwood Road, \$2,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 3078 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 10-30-23, Previous Sale: \$2,100,000, 07-23-21
- 249 Overhill Road, \$1,758,000, 4 Bdrms, 2048 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$937,500, 07-10-08
- 9 Wildwood Road, \$1,128,000, 4 Bdrms, 2246 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 11-02-23, Previous Sale: \$825,000, 11-09-05

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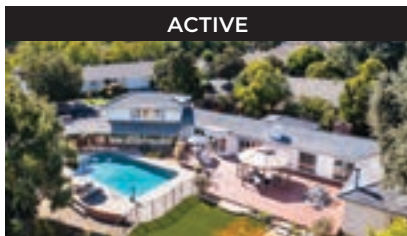
JUST LISTED

601 WATCHWOOD ROAD, ORINDA
OFFERED AT \$2,298,000
CAROLYN WAY | 925.890.4115



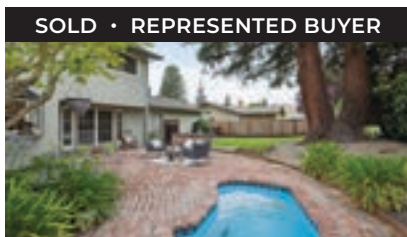
ACTIVE

89 DAIRY CREEK LANE, ORINDA
OFFERED AT \$4,999,000
RUTH EDDY | 925.788.5449



ACTIVE

250 NORMANDY LANE, WALNUT CREEK
OFFERED AT \$1,550,000
S.HUTCHENS/A.HAMALIAN | 925.212.7617



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378 REDFIELD PLACE, MORAGA
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RACHEL DREYER

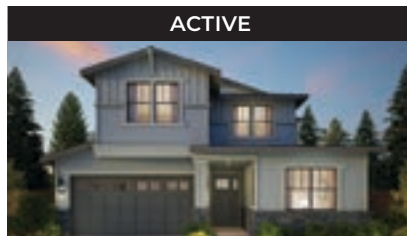


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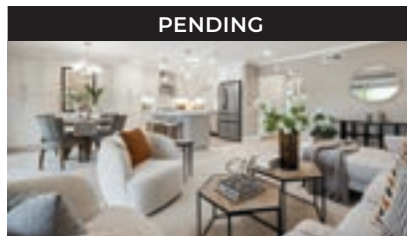
JUST LISTED

3351 BETTY LANE, LAFAYETTE
OFFERED AT \$1,350,000
SMITH HOMES TEAM | 925.998.1914



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1036 UPPER HAPPY VALLEY RD, LAFAYETTE
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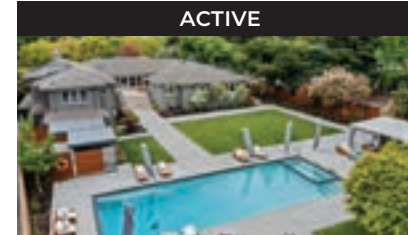


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DRE# 01979180

RUTH EDDY

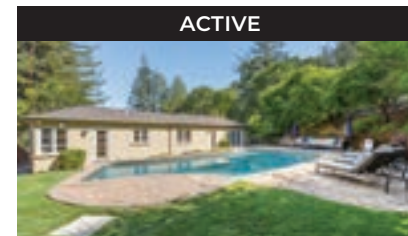


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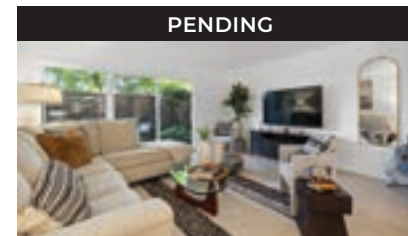
ACTIVE

3666 HAPPY VALLEY ROAD, LAFAYETTE
OFFERED AT \$6,495,000
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ACTIVE

32 CREST ROAD, LAFAYETTE
OFFERED AT \$3,495,000
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PENDING

651 MORAGA ROAD, #29, MORAGA
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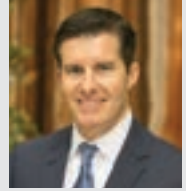
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BRYAN HURLBUT



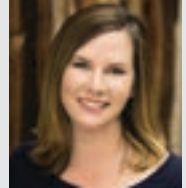
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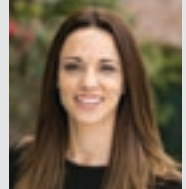
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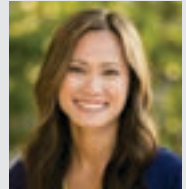
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Patching holes made easy

By Jim Hurley



Photo Jim Hurley

Do you have a hole from a nail or screw in the wall? You can spackle it or just leave it alone. Did the doorknob bang the wall and make a dent? You could fill the dent or ignore it. Did the doorknob punch through the wall leaving a hole the size of your fist or larger? That requires a patch. The question is: Who will patch it and how?

Patching holes in walls is a very easy DIY if you don't care what that wall looks like after it is patched. Out in your garage, behind the refrigerator or bookcase, inside a closet, the finished surface or texture on the surface really does not matter because no one will ever see it. However, finishing a patch to match the texture of the wall where you will see it, well, that takes time and technique.

The hardware store does have wall patching kits. I don't recommend them. The kit includes a sticky fiberglass mesh that adheres over the hole and is then covered with joint compound, AKA "mud." What the easy-to-follow instructions don't tell you is that you will see that raised 1/16-inch bump on the wall. To get rid of that bump, professionals do what is called "feathering," spreading more texture over a wider radius from the lump until it looks flat. Being generous with the mud is a good thing.

Instead of a patching kit, I square off the hole by cutting out the surrounding sheetrock and nail in a replacement piece. Then I tape the seams, (with paper joint tape, not masking tape) and texture the area to make it match the rest of the wall. This involves a little more time than the fiberglass patch but gives better-looking results. The key to doing this yourself will be understanding how to match that texture.

What is the texture you are going to match? First off, let me say that "Smooth" is a texture. I recently did a shed-to-home-office con-

version with new sheetrock on the walls. I asked the client what texture they wanted, and they said, "no texture." I had to explain that smooth is a texture. Smooth walls are one of the more time-consuming finishes to achieve. Why is that? It takes several passes over the area alternating light sanding with applying mud, (joint compound) and allowing time in between for the mud to dry.

Other textures consist of thinned mud sprayed from a hopper by an air compressor and lightly troweled for a decorative, lumpy surface. The lumpy styles of textures, commonly called "Knock Down" and "Orange Peel," are very good for hiding slight bumps and irregularities in the surface of the wall. The third most common texture, after Orange Peel and Knock Down, is Skip Drag. Skip drag texturing is easy to learn, and is common in homes from the '60s and '70s. With skip drag, you thin the mud with water, put the mixture in your mud-pan, coat your blade with a thin line of mud on the long edge and gently drag it across the wall allowing the blade to randomly skip and leave blotches of mud and gaps.

If you are attempting to match a Knock Down or Orange Peel style, you can buy cans of spray-on texture in the paint department at the big box store. My experience with this stuff has not been positive. The cans cost plenty and frequently clog before they are empty. I called customer service for the manufacturer about the clogged cans. They recommend warming the can in hot water before use to loosen the contents for mixing. Humph, I recommend not spending money on products that don't work. You can match that texture with a sponge. Mix your mud with water to thin it and dab it on the wall with a big sponge or a sponge roller. Let it dry about 15 to 20 minutes and knock it down gently with your trowel. Extend the new texturing over the patched area and beyond, to blend the patch in with the rest of the surface.

The good news about using mud is that it cleans up with water. Let splotches that hit the floor dry and then pop them off with a putty knife. It's all washable. Just remember that once the wall is finished, the bare mud must be primed and painted to seal the mud to the wall. See my article about touch-up paint for this next step.

Patching larger holes in your wall or ceiling is very involved, requiring tools and techniques to accomplish. Watching several YouTube How-To videos might help you get the result you want. Or, you might save time and frustration by hiring a painter or a handyman to take care of the problem for you.

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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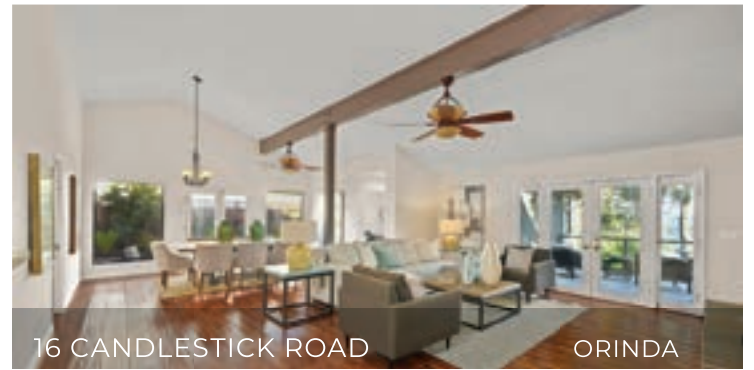
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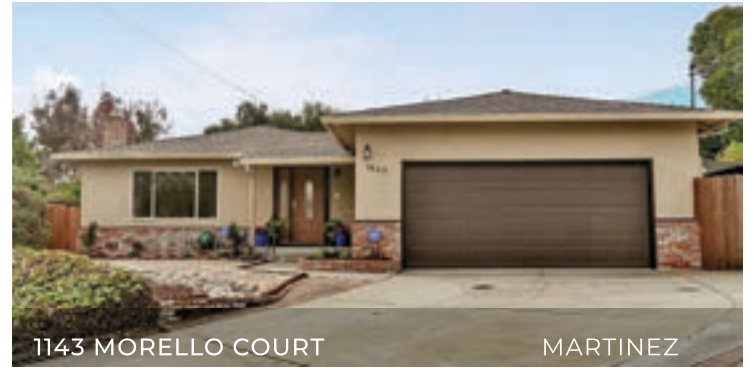


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**Happy Holidays
to You and Yours...**

**Make the Right
Move in 2024!**

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COMPASS



'The Real Estate Team Playbook' co-authored by Dana Green

Submitted by Jennifer Ries

Lafayette real estate expert, Dana Green, has joined forces with acclaimed co-authors Steve Shull and Jonathan Lack to introduce "The Real Estate Team Playbook." This collaborative effort represents years of dedication and fulfills Dana's longstanding dream to give back to the industry she holds dear.

Dana Green's impact on the real estate landscape has been profound, marked by her commitment to excellence and a passion for sharing knowledge. "The Real Estate Team Playbook" is a testament to this commitment. Unlike any other resource available, this book is tailor-made for real

estate teams, providing a step-by-step guide to building and leading high-performance teams.

"The Real Estate Team Playbook" fills a crucial gap by offering practical insights and strategies specifically designed for building and leading high-performance real estate teams. The collaboration with Steve Shull, a renowned real estate coach, and Jonathan Lack, a seasoned strategy and operations guru, brings a unique blend of expertise to the playbook.



Photo provided

Third from left: Real Estate Team Leader, Dana Green with her co-authors, Steve Shull and Jonathan Lack, and Compass' CEO Robert Refkin

A naturalist's reflections on November and December

By Toris Jaeger



The invasive French Broom

bigstock images

Traditionally, November is the month of being thankful for all of life's gifts. We are thankful

for life, freedom, health, family and friends. We are thankful for a career that sustains financially and makes us happy. We are also thankful for the gifts of Mother Nature!

Clean air, water, land and the contributions of the flora and fauna in the ecosystems of chaparral, grasslands, Oak woodland, wetlands, riparian, mountains and desert and ocean.

Each ecosystem has an animal and plant that needs it.

Let's hope that in the near future we can be thankful for a world with no war and guns killing people and wildlife.

December is the month of giving: We give gifts to our families and friends, and kindness and patience are our great gifts. We can also give back to Mother Nature by planting trees and plants that attract the pollinators, bees,

birds and butterflies. We can pick up litter that will eventually find its way into our creeks to flow into the ocean.

We can also help by removing non-native invasive plants.

At the top of the list, French Broom, Vinca, Star Thistle, Spurge, Orem, Horse weed, Hemlock, and Chinese Parsley. These invasive plants should be pulled up by the roots before they put on seed, and should be placed in your green waste bin.

Some great Natives you may want to plant are: Ceanothus, the Salvias, Manzanita, Toyon, Twin Berry, the Honey suckles Yarrow, and the other Ribes. The Native Milkweeds, Narrowleaf and Showy.

Let's do what we can to work with Mother Nature to heal the Earth.

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Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for December

CHANGE out your current houseplants with colorful seasonal plants including cyclamen, paperwhites, and poinsettia.

ADD color spots of primroses to your front yard.

BUY deciduous trees that boast autumn hues now before they are barren. This is the best time of year to determine what showcase trees you want in your yard.

RAKE the fallen leaves on your lawn to add to your compost pile.

PRUNE roses for the final burst of December blooms before the January pruning begins.

BE eco-friendly and wrap gifts in used newspaper with twine. You'll save money while saving the earth.

COVER frost-tender plants with burlap or cloth to protect them from freeze and wind damage.

REPURPOSE Christmas cards into gift tags.

PLANT cover crops to enrich the soil over winter. Good choices include fava beans, alfalfa, clover, and mustard.

PURCHASE a living tree for your Hannukah Bush or Christmas tree.

DECORATE an indoor plant for the holidays.

ALLOW winter's coat of bright berries, rosehips, moss, and boughs to be the inspiration for your decorating.

CARE for the birds by keeping feeders clean and filled. Make sure to provide a water source and shelter.

ROLL in the leaves. Tap into your inner child. Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.



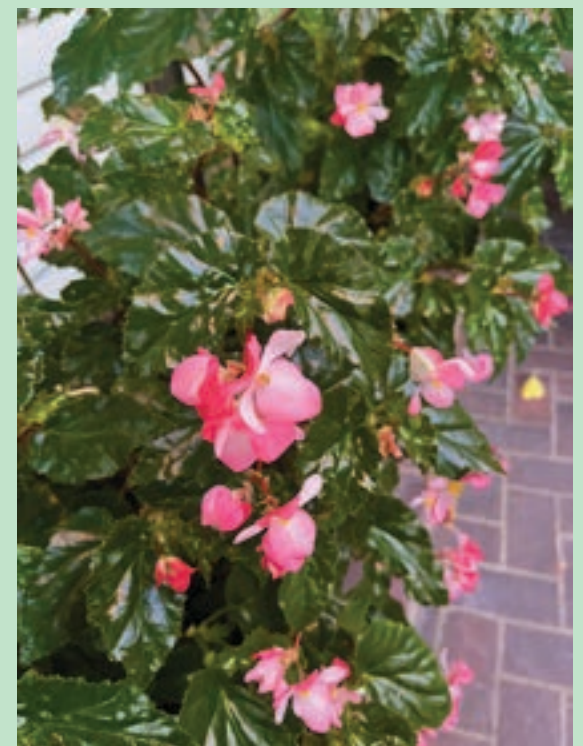
Crimson cestrum shines for December.



Primroses add needed color to the garden after the drizzle.



Aeonium succulent flanked by poinsettia.



Begonias blooming in a bed.

Photos Cynthia Brian



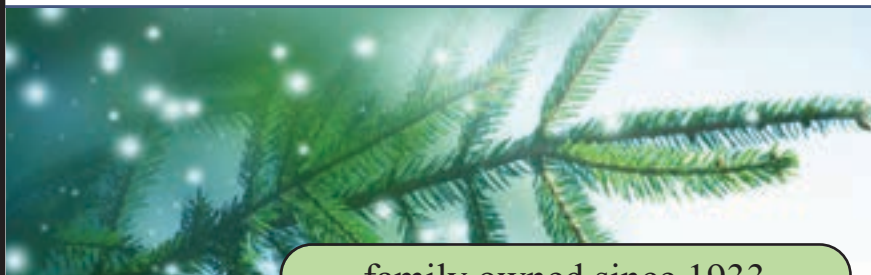
A beautiful mixture of succulents with poinsettias. Photo Cynthia Brian



Cynthia Brian channels her inner child by rolling in the leaves.

For more gardening advice for all seasons, check out Growing with the Goddess Gardener at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian 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. Her newest children's picture book, Family Forever, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available now at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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ORINDA



51 Las Palomas

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ORINDA



228 El Toyonal

Mid-century 3 bd/ 2 ba gem offers privacy & views of the Briones reservoir. Enjoy being close to downtown Orinda but feel like you are worlds away!

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ORINDA



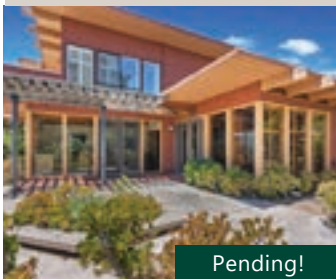
New Listing!

8 Hidden Lane

Beautiful 5 bd/3 ba, 4562 sq ft home with wrap-around Sleepy Hollow views and is move-in ready!

\$1,980,000

LAFAYETTE



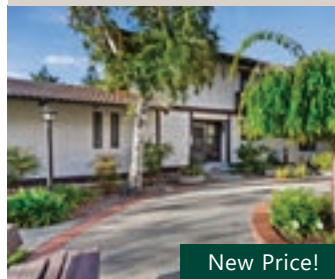
Pending!

3445 Shangri-La Road

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\$1,750,000

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New Price!

1379 Camino Peral, Unit B

Spacious 3 bd/ 2.5 ba townhouse features updated kitchen, private patio & convenient access to shopping, restaurants & more!

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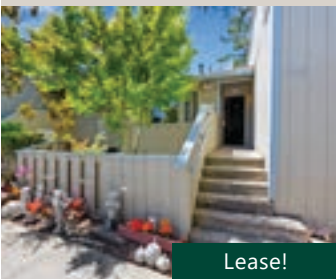
New Listing!

211 Corliss Drive

Fabulous family home nestled on prime private .42 acre in sought after Rheem Valley Orchards neighborhood!

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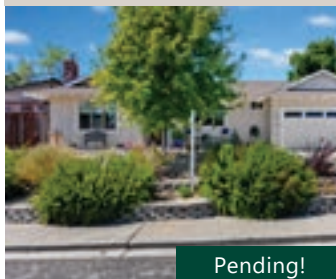
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1944 Ascot Drive

Amazing 2 bd/ 1.5 bd 1234 sqft Moraga townhome w/ views of the hills from the upper & lower decks!

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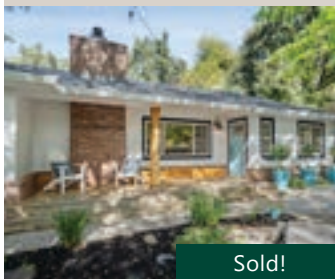
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550 Odin Drive

Single level 4 bd/ 2 ba rancher has a great floor plan w/ wonderful indoor/outdoor flow!

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Sold!

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