

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 17 Issue 26 Wednesday, February 14, 2024



Composting tips from a naturalist ... read on Page OH9

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Sandbags, moss, lichen, butterflies, and garden gossip

By Cynthia Brian

Photos Cynthia Brian



The storm caused branches and palm fronds to fall.



Look how delicate the moss growing on these bricks is!

"Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished." ~ Lao Tse

What a storm last week! It certainly seemed like nature was hurrying to topple trees, flood streets, and dare us to pay attention! Various reports noted the winds were hurricane equivalent. Shorn branches, palm fronds, and other debris littered streets. The local creeks were rushing as houses relied on sandbags as an extra layer of protection.

We need precipitation, yet it is better to have a break between these very volatile atmospheric rivers. The hills are greening, and the weeds are sprouting. If you live on a hillside, it is best not to begin weeding until the rains halt as roots help stabilize the soil.

With the wet weather, you may have noticed a multitude of mosses covering bricks, stones,

and wood. This ancient non-vascular species has existed for millions of years around the globe requiring damp, moist conditions to thrive. Mosses are rootless and reproduce via spores. There are over 10,000 known types of mosses, and yes, there are male and female mosses. If you have hiked in a fern forest or camped in the redwoods, you have probably enjoyed sitting on a cushy, moss-covered log. Moss is important in the ecosystem because they stabilize soil and reduce erosion. They fight against air pollution and are effective indicators of CO2 emissions. Mosses filter water and provide food to insects and other invertebrates. As an elegant top cover for my potted plants, moss maintains moisture.

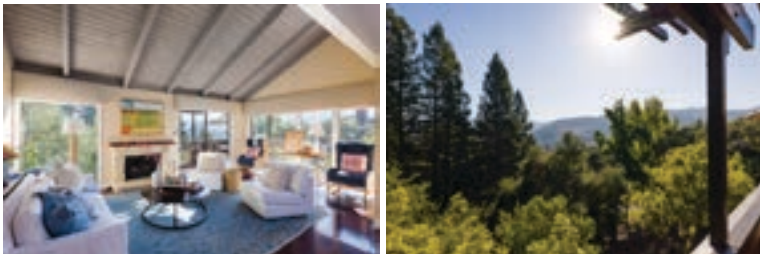
Often, people mistake lichens for moss, yet they are very distinct organisms. Mosses are singular organisms while lichens are composites

formed when fungi and algae enter a symbiotic relationship. Lichens are ubiquitous, with about 15,000 species in every size, shape, and color. They grow on trees, rocks, and walls, and can even make a home out of decaying fabric. Lichens are a primary colonizing species with around 3,600 species reported in North America. Through decomposition, they influence soil formation, which helps create the correct conditions for other organisms to flourish. Lichens are key-stone reflections of the health of an environment. Where lichens prosper, the area is healthy with good air quality. Lichens fight air pollution as they absorb carbon dioxide through their photosynthesis process.

... continued on Page OH8



JUST SOLD | 315 MILLER COURT | ORINDA | 5BD | 4BA | OFFICE | 3,822SF
ORINDA OAKS | \$3,550,000



PENDING | 114 RAVENHILL ROAD | ORINDA WOODS | 3BD | 3BA | 2,320SF

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	9	\$981,000	\$2,000,000
MORAGA	2	\$1,200,500	\$1,655,000
ORINDA	1	\$3,142,500	\$3,142,500

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

- 1829 Del Rey Street, \$1,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 1720 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 01-11-24
- 1408 Eagle Point Court, \$1,880,000, 4 Bdrms, 2949 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 01-04-24
- 3346 Freeman Road, \$1,950,000, 3 Bdrms, 2649 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 01-11-24,
Previous Sale: \$234,000, 01-10-24
- 1003 Hawthorne Drive, \$1,199,000, 4 Bdrms, 1680 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 01-04-24,
Previous Sale: \$840,000, 08-09-21
- 3341 North Lucille Lane, \$1,101,000, 3 Bdrms, 1277 SqFt,
1951 YrBlt, 01-12-24
- 3339 Oak Court, \$981,000, 3 Bdrms, 1296 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 01-04-24
- 1391 Sunset Loop, \$1,751,000, 4 Bdrms, 2048 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 01-10-24
- 4057 Valente Court, \$2,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 2024 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 01-05-24
- 3975 Woodside Court, \$1,350,000, 3 Bdrms, 1681 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 01-04-24

MORAGA

- 8 Buckingham Drive, \$1,200,500, 3 Bdrms, 1522 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 01-05-24
- 7 Juniper Way, \$1,655,000, 3 Bdrms, 2112 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 01-11-24

ORINDA

- 134 Diablo View Drive, \$3,142,500, 5 Bdrms, 4008 SqFt, 1994 YrBlt, 01-11-24,
Previous Sale: \$390,000, 08-01-92



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243 Sandringham Drive, Moraga

You're not going to want to miss this one! Tucked away in a close-in Moraga neighborhood, this delightful single-level home offers ample living space on a generous, flat lot.

Step inside to discover a beautifully updated interior where modern convenience meets timeless charm. The heart of the home is the open kitchen seamlessly connecting to the family room, creating the perfect gathering spot. The sliding doors to the backyard provide a smooth transition to the outside making indoor/outdoor entertaining a breeze.



\$1,950,000

4 Bed

2 full 1 half baths

2,353 sqft

.25 acre lot

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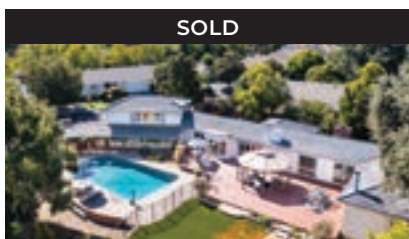
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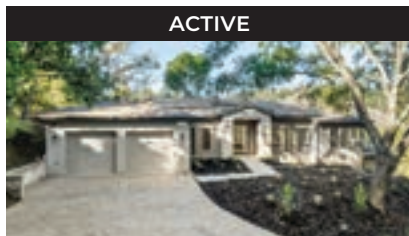
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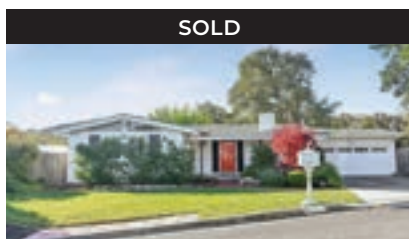
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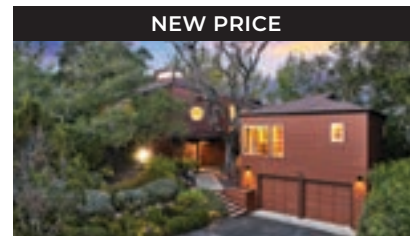
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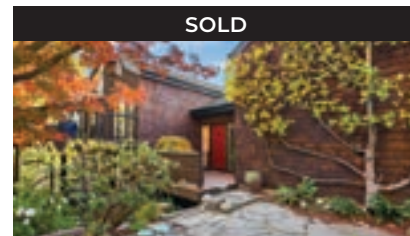
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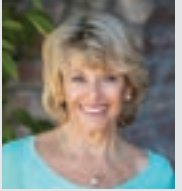
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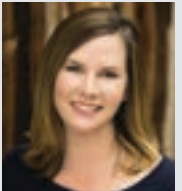
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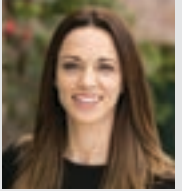
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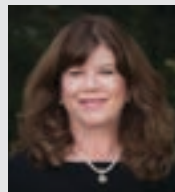
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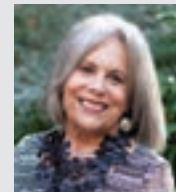
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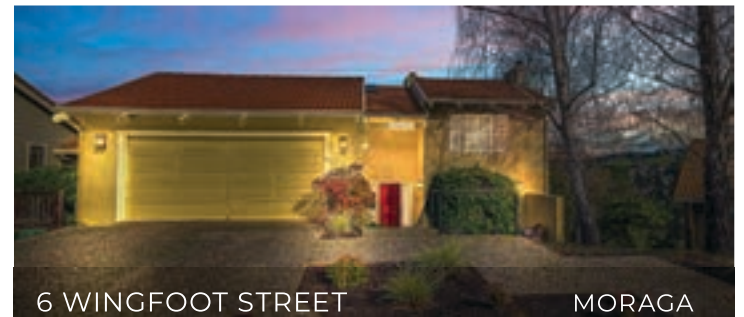
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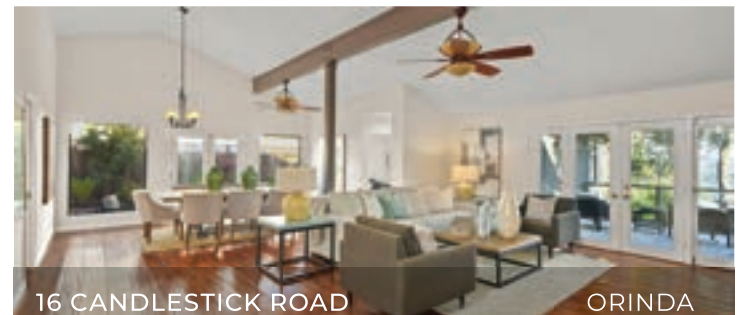
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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Sandbags, moss, lichen, butterflies, and garden gossip



A different species of moss thrives on the pavement.



Photos Cynthia Brian

You have a healthy yard when you have lichen growing on your trees.

... continued from Page OH1

Lichens benefit humans by absorbing pollutants, including heavy metals, sulfur, and carbon. Scientists can extract these toxins to determine pollution levels.

Hummingbirds and other birds make nests from lichens, using them as camouflage and insulation. Many grazing animals include lichens as a nutritious food source. Some insects have adapted their appearance to be dis-

guised as lichen. If you have lichens growing on your rocks, trees, and soil on your property, you are fortunate. This means that the air you are breathing is clean and healthy. Be careful to not disturb lichen-encrusted soil as it can take years to regenerate. When I was visiting Iceland, we were specifically told not to walk or sit on the lichen-covered earth as it could take hundreds of years to re-grow. Nature is not hurrying with lichen. I am eternally grateful for the bounty of lichens that call my landscape home.

Make composting and recycling your resolution for 2024

By Toris Jaeger, Naturalist



Food Scraps with worms

Photo A. Scheck

As we embark on the new year with much hope for a peaceful world, our most frequent resolutions seem to revolve around losing weight, exercising more and eating a more healthy diet. But one resolution that would make the world a more peaceful place is if all of us were more kind to our family, friends and other people we meet.

We could also be kinder to the Earth, which includes all of the flora and fauna. One simple resolution could be to use the bins provided by Republic Services more correctly.

The blue bin is for all items that can be recycled, the green bin is for plant debris and food scraps. One could also start composting at home. Republic Services will provide you with a compost bucket for the kitchen that can be used to collect the food scraps to put in your outside compost bin. They can also provide a compost bin for a reduced price. My favorite are bio-stack bins that have doors at the bottom. The finished compost can be removed from the bottom of the bin while you can continue to put food scraps on the top of the bin.

The black bin is for trash – not items that can be recycled, green waste or food scraps – and goes to the landfill where the trash is emptied on top of the earth and plowed over.

My dream is that all trash will someday become extinct. May your new year be filled with happiness and good health.

For more information about compost bins, and workshops about composting, visit www.recyclesmart.org/compostbins/

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BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR
Hollie Lucas-Alcalay
HOLLIE'S HOMEGROWN

Ecstatic to pass the title on to such a worthy recipient. Proud of what Hollie brings to our Community. Stop by to congratulate her in person -- Hollie's Homegrown is in the old Squirell Cafe!

Additional February Garden Gossip

The ferocious winds and river of rain pummeled my narcissi, yet I'm thrilled the stronger stems of daffodils have been unaffected. Burgundy calla lilies as well as the traditional white "crystal-clear" calla lilies have emerged, indicating that spring is within reach. They are a beautiful ornamental plant, although not a true lily, with gorgeous trumpet-shaped flowers that bloom in several colors. If you don't already grow them, buy a few of these African natives at your favorite nursery as they'll provide you with years of beauty and bliss starting in late winter.

Be on the lookout for monarch butterflies through the end of February. I visited the Pismo Beach Butterfly Grove, which has one of the largest protected overwintering sites for western monarch butterflies. The tall eucalyptus and Monterey cypress trees provide a sheltered area with thermal stability. These butterflies can fly over 200 miles in a day. Some travel 2,000 miles to reach their overwintering grounds in California. When summer summons, they fly as far north as Canada.

On the monarch migration coastal course, Moraga boasts a Monarch Butterfly Garden at Rancho Laguna Park created by the Moraga Garden Club.

<https://www.moragagardenclub.org/moraga-for-monarchs>

The monarchs and their migration are threatened. What can you do to entice monarchs?

Be organic. Do not use pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides.

Plant milkweed.

Plant native nectar flowers.

Support conservation efforts.

Educate yourself. <https://xerces.org/monarchs>

Naval oranges are ripe and sweet. There is nothing more delicious than a freshly picked orange.

Bare-root roses need to be planted now with a wide range of glorious selections in the garden centers. Make sure to follow soaking and planting directions carefully.

Last chance to prune your growing roses for an April burst of blooms. Cut canes back by at least one-third.

Treat your true love to a beautiful bouquet or an inspired live plant for Valentine's Day.

May everything get accomplished in nature's time. Sandbag before the storm, marvel at your moss, like your lichen, and look for butterflies. Stay dry. Stay safe.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Love Day!



Monarch butterflies overwintering in the eucalyptus grove.



Relish the sunny daffodils as they pop up!



Purple is the color for February for Cynthia Brian.

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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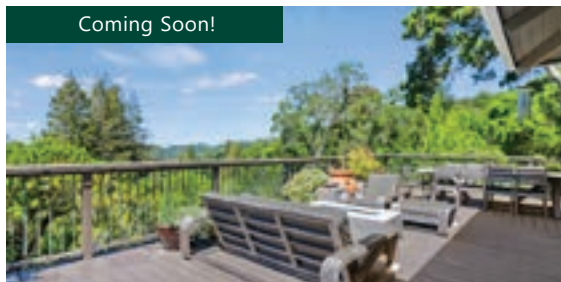
LAMORINDA'S LEADING INDEPENDENT REAL ESTATE FIRM



8 Hidden Lane, Orinda

5 Bd | 3 Ba | 4495 Sqft | \$2,250,000

Beautiful 5bd/3ba, 4495 sqft home w/ wrap-around Sleepy Hollow views and is move-in ready!



Coming Soon!

710 Miner Road, Orinda

5 Bd | 3 Ba | 3088 Sqft | \$1,995,000

Fantastic off-market opportunity available for showing now! Peaceful 1.15 acre knoll setting with beautiful valley views!



17 Fallen Leaf Court, Lafayette

5 Bd + Study | 5.5 Ba | 4789 Sqft | \$4,495,000

Rare, single-level! 5bd/5.5ba family home nestled on a cul-de-sac in one of Reliez Valley's most coveted neighborhoods!



312 Maverick Court, Lafayette

4+ Bd | 3.5 Ba | 3243 Sqft | \$2,999,000

Tastefully updated 4bd/ 3.5ba, 3500+ sq. ft. home features an ideal floorplan that captures views of the large, private yard.



New Listing!

637 Sky Hy Circle, Lafayette

5 Bd | 3 Ba | 3064 Sqft | \$2,995,000

Set in quiet Sky Hy Ranch, this 5bd/ 3ba retreat has stunning views of Mt. Diablo and the Lafayette hills!



New Listing!

243 Sandringham Drive, Moraga

4 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2353 Sqft | \$1,950,000

Tucked away in a close-in Moraga neighborhood, this 4bd/ 2.5ba, single-level home offers ample living space on a generous, flat lot!



211 Corliss Drive, Moraga

5 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2538 Sqft | \$1,699,000

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



1409A Spruce Street, Berkeley

1 Bd | 1 Ba | 645 Sqft | \$575,000

Cute rancher on a huge lot on a cul-de-sac in the Strandwood neighborhood. Wood floors and updated kitchen w/ newer appliances.



New Listing!

3605 May Road, Richmond

3 Bd | 2 Ba | 1515 Sqft | \$795,000

Adorable sanctuary w/ views of the hills featuring 3bd/ 2ba, living & family rooms + an office in approx. 1515 sq.ft. on a .23-acre lot.

The Village

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