

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 11 Issue 6 Wednesday, May 17, 2017



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

...read on page D16

Creating a kids' zone is child's play

By Paula King



Stephanie Catron finishes up decorating this kids' bedroom.

Photos Andy Scheck

After building an addition onto her Orinda home, Meredith Friedman had several new living spaces to decorate and the most challenging was a front great room space designated as the hangout area for her two sons and their friends.

One of Friedman's goals for the project was to give the house more of an "adult" ambiance. However, she was unsure of how to balance the kids' entertainment needs and achieving her desired interior style.

"I wanted this area to be the place my kids would want their friends to hang out in, but it's also the first room you walk into in my house, so it couldn't look like a playroom," Friedman said.

Friedman's experience was a common struggle in interior decorating for most parents while trying to create a home that is whimsical and comfortable enough for children yet stylish and striking enough for entertaining.

So, Friedman hired Orinda real estate agent and home designer Stephanie Catron of SBC Style, who believes that you don't have to wait for your children to grow up to have the home of your dreams and you don't have to spend a fortune.

"When you have small kids so much of your time is spent at home either having other families over, hosting play dates or just spending the weekend reconnecting as a family. It's important that you love the space you are in," Catron said. "Invest some time in pulling together the main living spaces with art work and accessories that

make you happy."

According to Catron, the key is occasional updates to create a space that is fresh and inviting to family and guests. She is known among Lamorinda clients for her inexpensive Home Goods, Living Spaces and Target finds of art, pillows and throws that are paired with investment pieces of furniture, professional painting and quality flooring to create a signature look.

"One day you will set an object on a low table and find that the kids are not interested in touching, moving it or putting it in their mouths. That's when you can move your style forward," Catron said.

Catron guided Friedman through a process of searching Pinterest and magazines for images of eye-catching rooms. As a family, the Friedmans tested out new accessories and the overall layout of each room until it was the right fit.

Catron often tells homeowners to utilize store return policies as they place things in various spots throughout the home and find what works for them.

"Don't be afraid to move things around after the kids are in bed. Pour a glass of wine and have fun creating your new space," Catron advised.

In the Friedman kid's zone, Catron placed the TV over a fireplace, suggested an L-shaped sectional and found the perfect placement for a seven-foot pool table. Catron finished the room with lamps, rugs and coffee tables and even Friedman's sons, ages 9 and 11, were impressed.

... continued on page D4



17 Via Las Cruces, Orinda



KNOCK YOUR SOCKS OFF fabulous custom home featuring 5 bedrooms, 3 baths and approximately 3000+ square feet on a gorgeous .95 acre lot with exquisite gardens and landscaping. Pride of ownership abounds, and the home has been tastefully updated with the finest of materials. The gracious floor plan is highlighted by a quintessentially California indoor/outdoor atmosphere with stunning views. Stand out features include a striking chef's kitchen, a lavish Master Retreat with a charming viewing deck, a private guest suite with its own separate entrance, a wine cellar and an easy commute location.

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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYE E	12	\$850,000	\$2,765,000
MO GA	3	\$618,000	\$1,098,000
ORINDA	7	\$1,215,000	\$2,250,000

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 Camelia Lane, \$2,765,000, 4938 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 4-12-17;

Previous Sale: \$1,525,000, 12-06-05

3939 Canyon Road, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 2696 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 4-11-17;

Previous Sale: \$1,800,000, 05-06-15

16 Diablo Circle, \$1,605,000, 3 Bdrms, 1730 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 4-11-17;

Previous Sale: \$990,000, 02-23-15

754 Glenside Drive, \$1,070,000, 3 Bdrms, 2371 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 4-7-17;

Previous Sale: \$160,000, 09-15-82

125 Haslemere Court, \$850,000, 3 Bdrms, 1638 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 4-7-17;

Previous Sale: \$209,500, 06-30-88

... continued on page D17

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Correction

In a Lamorinda Weekly Our Homes article published in the April 5 issue, "Changing your garden, changing your life," the name of the landscape architect who worked with Kay Countryman and Ron Briggs to create their garden was incorrect. It was Roxy Wolosenko.

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Creating a kids' zone is child's play

... continued from page D1



"Some of the items she shopped for me, but I also found options and asked her advice and she steered me in the right direction. I am so happy with how it came together," Friedman said.

Some of Catron's advice for parents of little ones is to keep the accessories to a minimum and opt for a clean and uncluttered look. To keep youngsters safe, use a big ottoman or a few average sized ones as a coffee table with a decorative tray.

Since children can be messy, Catron said to pick white furniture that can be bleached or utilize slipcovers on couches, chairs and ottomans. She noted that dual purpose pieces are ideal for saving valuable space such as a tall bookcase that can house more valuable pieces on top shelves and toy storage in baskets on the bottom shelves.

"Think about your priorities and how you want the space to be used. That's the most important thing. And

don't be afraid to repurpose what you have," said Friedman, who admits that her home's redesign was an education in interior decorating for her.

For families with infants and toddlers, Orinda's Trish McDermott suggested that portability and compactness of baby gear helps to cut down on clutter in the home. McDermott manages a baby equipment rental business called Babierge East Bay.

"Some high chairs and strollers fold more compactly than others and can be easily stored between uses in a nearby closet, which helps your home look less cluttered," she said. "You can also match your gear's color scheme with the same manufacturer like your pack n' play, infant swing and high chair."

A huge part of the process of redecorating a family home is to ensure that the kids feel comfortable and cozy there too. Catron said that plush rugs, beanbags and blankets

are ideal for that.

"Get down on the floor and imagine how it feels to be there," she said. "Any home that is pulled together, looks great and has spaces that feel organized will add to a child's sense of well-being."

Before the home makeover, Friedman said her family knew what they liked but struggled with committing to real pieces over temporary solutions. Catron didn't come in and decorate the home but guided them with vendor and color choices and design options and empowered the Friedmans to create their new, family-friendly home.

"It has absolutely made us enjoy our home more," Friedman said. "She gave me confidence to make some of these decisions myself that I never would have before. She taught me what to look for and how to see design elements that would complement each other."



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Offered at \$1,150,000



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Tip No. 3: Small Table or Console

Adding a small table, chest or console can help create a “drop zone” for things like keys and mail. It also creates a space for decorative items to be displayed giving your guest a small taste of what’s to come in the rest of your home. If space is tight I forgo the table and use a small bench, you can add a pillow or two for a pop of color.

In this client’s home their entry immediately opened up to the living and dining room, so we opted to place a rug at the entrance and created a “drop zone” down the hall by the staircase. We used upholstered storage o

installed high enough that guests don’t bump their heads or the door bangs it when opening. I use flush mount or semi-flush mount lights for entries with low ceilings.

Tip No. 5: Tray, bowl or basket

Decorative trays or bowls are a bright ceramic bowl versus t And who wants to see that pile

As the Owner and Principal Designer of Lamorinda-based Amanda Carol Interiors, Amanda Eck believes your home’s interior should be both approachable and well-appointed. She often asserts, “Beauty is a necessity.”

With a distinct sense of style that mixes contemporary and classic design she fashions spaces that are both elegant and

it into a pretty basket to be sorted th

Tip No. 6: Fresh Flowers

And finally, never underestimate the of an indulgence to have fresh ower or other flowering plant? You will b I love buying the inexpensive orchid decorative pot or bowl and adding s to eight weeks of blooms before hav

And there you have it, my top trance. I hope this inspired you to cr

Until next time!

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All information herein deemed reliable but not guaranteed.



Digging Deep

The Magic of May

By Cynthia Brian

"Harmony makes small things grow. Lack of it makes big things decay." — Sallust



Sweet jasmine climbs a palm tree filling the air with perfume.

Photos Cynthia Brian

By mid-May Mother Nature has waved her magical wand sprinkling glitter and glory among her growing children. No matter where you look, shrubs, trees and landscapes showcase a beauty and harmony that set this month apart from the remaining 11.

Herbaceous peonies are budding and will bloom for weeks offering outstanding companionship to mixed perennial gardens. Glorious bouquets of roses decorate pathways and arbors. Fields of bearded iris brighten the most mundane areas with their multitude of colors, gentle fragrance and graceful arches. Horse chestnut, buckeye and locust trees are over-owing with grapelike bunches of blooms. Get up close to examine the intricacies of their flowers.

The warmer weather has sped up the blooming season while only a month earlier the cooler weather slowed it down. My waves of bright blue forget-me-nots have seeded into a sea of seeds that attach to any clothing that ventures near, easily spreading the flowers to places unplanned. Along the creek beds, even the poisonous hemlock weeds sprouted several feet taller than in previous years with attractive clusters of flowers resembling Queen

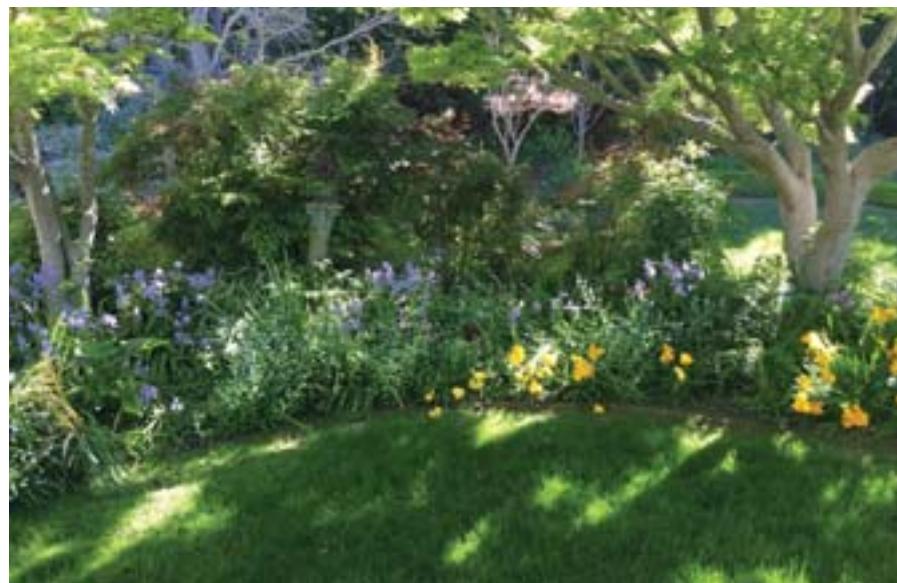
Anne's lace. Tiny Alpine strawberries are red, ripe, and delicious as snacks or in salads. Better to eat these than any store-bought strawberry thanks to the unparalleled Pearl's Premium grass seeds, my lawn has never looked so lush and lovely. If you want turf that is tough, drought resistant, low maintenance and beautiful, start thinking now about preparing your ground for an autumn seeding of Pearl's Premium (www.PearlsPremium.com).

The Old Farmer's Almanac recently contacted a colleague garden writer asking about what tools, products, and plants gardeners sought most this year. She posted a request for suggestions on our member community site and I reveled in the answers that I believe resonate with you, my garden guide readers. Here's my abbreviated version of what we gardeners want.

1. We crave information that we can use on a daily basis.
2. We want to grow our own food for better nutrition and first-rate freshness.
3. We want to save money.
4. We want to bring pollinators into our gardens for an organically friendly habitat. We are putting out the welcome mat for birds, bees, butterflies and bats.
5. We want to reduce waste by composting more.
6. We want tools that are sturdy, long lasting, yet not exorbitantly expensive.
7. We want to explore simpler to use, more environmentally friendly power tools that are battery powered and strong.
8. We want space saving ideas including container and vertical gardening techniques.
9. We want to learn to prune properly.
10. We want low-maintenance, native alternatives, and drought resistant plants.
11. We want to ENJOY our garden rooms!

The wants of the national garden community echo locally as well. My promise to you is to continue to bring you the latest tools, tips, and tricks that will make your garden experience extraordinary.

... continued on page D18



Green, lush Pearl's Premium grass and colorful landscaping is a tribute to May magic.





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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded ... continued from page D2

LAFAYETTE ... continued

550 Merriewood Drive, \$1,424,000, 4 Bdrms, 2142 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 4-5-17;

Previous Sale: \$901,000, 05-02-03

1191 Pleasant Hill Circle, \$1,600,000, 3 Bdrms, 1408 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 4-13-17;

Previous Sale: \$1,000,000, 07-30-15

841 Santa Maria Way, \$1,425,000, 3 Bdrms, 1844 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 4-7-17

3337 Sweet Drive, \$1,220,000, 3 Bdrms, 1209 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 4-11-17;

Previous Sale: \$860,000, 10-07-13

1005 Timothy Lane, \$2,100,000, 5 Bdrms, 4868 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 4-12-17;

Previous Sale: \$1,735,000, 01-31-13

1083 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$1,905,000, 3 Bdrms, 2073 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt,

4-7-17; Previous Sale: \$1,175,000, 05-03-13

3330 Vaughn Road, \$1,630,000, 3 Bdrms, 2736 SqFt, 2003 YrBlt, 4-10-17;

Previous Sale: \$1,485,000, 07-05-05

MORAGA

119 Ascot Court #3, \$618,000, 3 Bdrms, 1320 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 4-10-17;

Previous Sale: \$430,000, 12-27-13

1260 Bollinger Canyon, \$875,000, 4 Bdrms, 2303 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 4-7-17;

Previous Sale: \$575,000, 12-22-00

217 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,098,000, 3 Bdrms, 1610 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 4-6-17;

Previous Sale: \$695,000, 11-30-11

ORINDA

19 Charles Hill Road, \$1,405,000, 4 Bdrms, 2850 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 4-7-17;

Previous Sale: \$103,500, 06-11-76

95 Diablo View Drive, \$2,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 3961 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 4-11-17;

Previous Sale: \$2,375,000, 04-09-13

36 El Patio, \$1,900,000, 4 Bdrms, 3144 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 4-7-17;

Previous Sale: \$60,000, 06-23-72

80 La Encinal, \$1,875,000, 5 Bdrms, 3421 SqFt, 1990 YrBlt, 4-7-17;

Previous Sale: \$1,778,000, 04-27-15

220 Longview Terrace, \$1,215,000, 3 Bdrms, 2021 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 4-11-17;

Previous Sale: \$895,000, 11-12-10

27 Martha Road, \$1,295,000, 4 Bdrms, 1772 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 4-12-17

37 Southwood Drive, \$1,565,000, 4 Bdrms, 1900 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 4-6-17;

Previous Sale: \$375,000, 01-06-98

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Gardening Guide

The Magic of May

... continued from page D16



A close-up of the horse chestnut blossoms.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Alpine strawberries are a tangy snack.



Hemlock is growing to twelve feet with beautiful white blooms that are toxic.

CLEAN and DIRTY PRODUCE

In my opinion, one of the main reasons to grow your own fruits, vegetables, and herbs is to know what is in your soil and on your plants. The USDA discovered 178 different pesticides on sample produce this year with the residue persisting even after the produce was thoroughly washed. Strawberries topped the list with over 20 different pesticides, one of the main reasons I grow my own strawberries and Alpine berries.

The cleanest and therefore the healthiest produce included:

1. Corn
2. Avocadoes
3. Pineapples
4. Cabbage
5. Onions
6. Peas
7. Papaya
8. Asparagus
9. Mangoes
10. Eggplant
11. Honeydew Melons
12. Kiwis
13. Cantaloupe
14. Cauliflower
15. Grapefruit

Pesticide residues are extremely rare on "The Clean 15" so these are items that we can buy and serve without worry.

Known as "the Dirty Dozen" here's a list of the worst produce culprits you can purchase:

1. Strawberries
2. Spinach
3. Nectarines
4. Apples
5. Peaches
6. Celery
7. Grapes
8. Pears
9. Cherries
10. Tomatoes
11. Bell Peppers
12. Potatoes

Sadly, all of these fruits and vegetables are family favorites and generally considered to be healthy. Luckily we can easily grow all of these and if you don't want to grow your own, make sure to buy organic.



The fluorescent pink corn lilies (gladiolus communis) are a favorite deer dinner.

Cynthia Brian's Mid-month Gardening Tips

- **TUNE UP** your irrigation system. Check for sprinklers that aren't working, bushes or fences that are blocking sprinkler heads, broken pipes, clogged nozzles, leaky hoses and valves, and sprinklers that are spraying driveways and walkways.
- **MULCH** for water retention and weed prevention. Three inches is recommended. Your soil will improve over time as well.
- **TAKE** breaks while gardening to protect your back and knees.
- **PLANT** summer blooming bulbs and seeds. There are over 100 different choices of bulbs and 200 perennials.
- **IMPROVE** memory, lower cancer risk, and promote your heart health by planting a container of blueberries. Easy to grow as a patio plant, one serving provides 25 percent of your daily Vitamin C requirement.
- **WIN** \$50,000 for your Garden: As a judge in America's Best Gardener Contest. I encourage you to enter your best garden photo. The top prize is \$50,000. www.americasbestgardener.com.
Avoid decay and continue the harmony every day. Enjoy the magic of May. Have a magnificent Memorial Day weekend, too!

Happy Gardening and Happy Growing!



Cynthia Brian loves gardening in May.

Cynthia Brian, the Goddess Gardener, 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 1® 501 c3.
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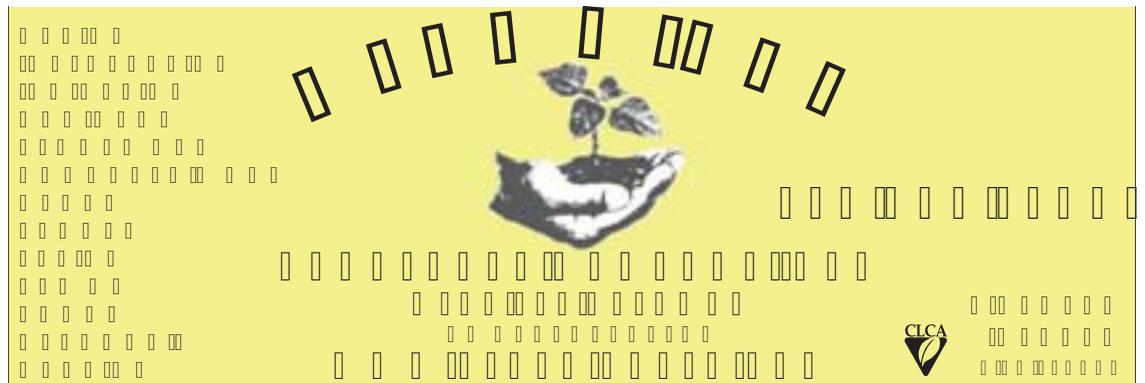
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ORINDA

29 Via Callados

Romantic Sleepy Hollow "tree house" Retreat. 3 bedrooms + office, 2.5 baths, approx. 2318 sq ft., on .62 acres. Updated and light filled home with soaring ceilings and skylights. Come see!

ORINDA



1 Kittiwake Road

Exceptional allure Mid-century 3 bedroom, 3 bath home of great charm & appeal. Lovely features of quality redwood, floor to ceiling windows, vaulted beam ceilings, views & nature at your doorstep.

ORINDA

662 Moraga Way

Meticulously maintained 4 bed, 2.5 bath with open kitchen with custom cabinets, granite counters, high end appliances & center island. Pool, hot tub, sport court, synthetic lawn & expansive patios.

ORINDA



11 Las Palomas

Modern light filled home set on knoll providing exceptional privacy & tranquility. Each bdrm is en-suite. Bonus office/ 4th bdrm. Fabulous kitchen. Special in/outdoor ambiance, valley views, level lawn.

ORINDA



411 Camino Sobrante

One of Orinda's most charming & distinctive homes set on Premier parcel at El Sueno corner lot. Incredible "Old World" charm in every rm. Easy access to patios, yards for entertaining, family fun.

ORINDA

2 Scenic Drive

Fabulous 3281 sq ft, 5bd/4ba two story French country home in wonderful close-in neighborhood. Exquisitely renovated throughout. Private level 1/3 acre lot with expansive lawn, pathways, & gardens.

ORINDA



176 Camino Don Miguel

Magnificent custom built classic traditional 3 bedroom, 3.5 bath home viewing the 5th fairway of Orinda Country Club. Beautiful lawns, gardens, terraces.

ORINDA

3 Gardiner Court

Fabulous apx. 5156sf executive retreat nestled on gorgeous 1.2 acre w/sparkling pool, sport court, lawns, & views. Kitchen adjoining family room w/French doors open to veranda. 5 bdms + office.

ORINDA



22 Van Tassel Lane

Quality crafted Mediterranean style with ideal inside/ outside living spaces of exceptional beauty. Over-sized rooms, atrium, guest cottage, sauna, wine cellar, pool & spa. Views!

MORAGA



365 Birchwood Drive

Spacious Single-Level home with 4 Bedrooms, 3 Baths, Eat-in Kitchen, Sparkling Pool and Views. Close to trail, park and shopping.

MORAGA



1031 Bollinger Canyon Road

Horse lover's dream home! Rancho Dos Rios is a 10.51 acre ranch with 3,432 sq.ft., 4bd, 2.5ba home, detached 4 car gar. w/1,018 sq.ft. in-law apt., pool, 2 stall barn w/paddocks, 5,400 sq.ft. arena, mare-motel.

LAFAYETTE



844 Santa Maria Way

Exceptional home in sought after "Trails Neighborhood". Apx. 4000 sq.ft., 5 bdms, 4 baths, "Chef's" kitchen adjoining family rm plus play/theater rm. Seamless indoor/ outdoor living. Come & enjoy!

CONCORD



1901 Meredith Court Beautiful Rancher on quiet cul-de-sac. Pride of ownership abounds. Fully remodeled 3 bedroom/ 3 bath with Bonus Detached Office/ Studio. Fruit trees and garden beds. Backs to Open Space.

KENSINGTON



71 Rincon Road

Adorable 1950 Cottage, apx. 1224 Sq. Ft., 3 Bedrooms,

WALNUT CREEK



225 Mayhew Way #11

Spectacular townhome w/remodeled kitchen, hardwood style flrs, beautiful master bdrm & more. Short walk to Trail & nearby BART. Assigned covered parking space w/add'l guest parking, community pool.

WALNUT CREEK



361 Shady Glen Road Walnut Heights Treasure. Beaut. renovated in 2017. Single level, high ceilings, walls of glass, detached bonus rm, fabulous .74 acre private setting. Views, top W.C. schools, Las Lomas High. Close to downtown.



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