Samorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 05 Issue 26 Wednesday, February 29, 2012



...read on page Da

Leap Up and March On! Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

"We cannot command nature except by obeying her." Francis Bacon By Cynthia Brian

The pollinators are busy savoring the sweetness of the flowering peach tree in full bloom. I love the sight, smell, and sound, however, these botanical gifts have arrived thirty-three days earlier than the normal March 17th blossom burst. It wasn't even Valentine's Day when spring sprung chez moi. Driving through Lamorinda over President's Day weekend, I stopped at three lemonade stands erected by entrepreneurial elementary school children. As much as I am a sun lover, without winter wetness our summer gardens may not yield.

I am amazed at how early my daffodils sprouted and bloomed. My jonquils flowered in early January and my first narcissus bloomed on February 6th. (Narcissus and daffodils are the same. Daffodil is the common name for the genus narcissus while a jonquil is a specific species with several strong-scented yellow florets with rounded leaves.) Usually in March I am romping through the mustard fields, not tromping around the daffodils. Besides the ubiquitous yellow daffodil that decorates roadsides, my hillside bloomers delight me with their varied throat colorations, frills, ruffles, and petal markings. Depending on the expert, there are 40-200 different species, subspecies, and varieties of daffodils with thousands of hybrids. Unlike tulips, the deer, squirrels, and rodents won't eat the bulbs or the blooms as they are poisonous to them. Easy to grow and tolerant of numerous weather conditions, daffodils can be planted in the sun, shade, and drifts for naturalization. Daffodils are the true trumpets of the vernal equinox. ...continued on pageD8



Daffodil-Innocence of pure white

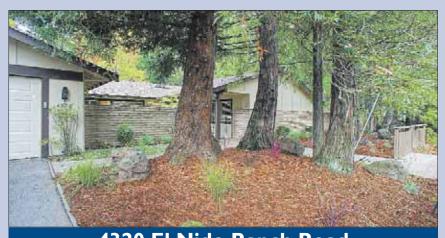
Photos Cynthia Brian



Daffodil-Peaches and Cream

THE BEAUBELLE GROUP Finola Fellner presents...

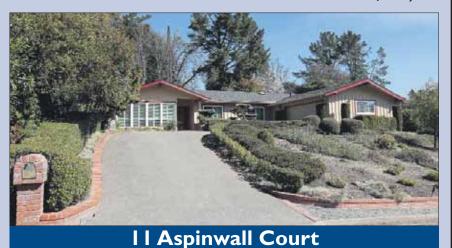
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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNTS
LAFAYETTE	2	\$415,000	\$645,500
MORAGA	4	\$168,000	\$825,000
ORINDA	4	\$415,000	\$950,000

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

911 Dewing Avenue #A2, \$415,000, 2 Bdrms, 1296 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 1-31-12; Previous Sale: \$535,000, 09-23-04

3340 Helen Lane, \$645,500, 3 Bdrms, 1683 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 1-25-12

MORAGA

48 Corte De Rosas, \$825,000, 4 Bdrms, 2659 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 1-25-12; Previous Sale: \$700,000, 07-01-08

2121 Donald Drive #18, \$168,000, 2 Bdrms, 896 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 1-30-12; Previous Sale: \$387,000, 06-03-05

2145 Donald Drive #3, \$210,000, 2 Bdrms, 1162 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 1-31-12

1509 Moraga Way, \$455,000, 2 Bdrms, 1522 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 1-23-12; Previous Sale: \$407,000, 05-29-09

ORINDA

134 Ardith Drive, \$415,000, 3 Bdrms, 1560 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 1-27-12; Previous Sale: \$555,000, 03-14-07

21 Crestview Terrace, \$930,000, 3 Bdrms, 2638 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 1-30-12; Previous Sale: \$390,000, 11-01-91

246 La Espiral, \$950,000, 3 Bdrms, 2983 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 1-23-12;

Previous Sale: \$430,000, 06-24-88

21 North Lane, \$695,000, 4 Bdrms, 2120 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 1-26-12; Previous Sale: \$87,000, 09-30-77

Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

none recorded

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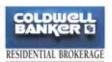
Patti Camras 925.899.9282 patticamras.com DRE# 01156248

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Located on one of the most prized streets in all of Lafayette, this single level Traditional boasts the enduring architectural legacy of a classic Marchant home. Superbly and tastefully renovated throughout, it features approximately 3000 square feet (per owner), 4 bedrooms, 2 full baths and 1 half-bath. Nestled on a flat .52 acre parcel, this home's impactful curb appeal makes an inviting impression that promises to delight visitors with its easy-going elegance. On MLS March 9th with first Open House Sunday, March 11th. Please call for details.









Patricia Battersby

925-330-6663 pb@patriciabattersby.com DRE# 00854469

Ashley Battersby

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Beautifully Updated, Single Level Home Great Happy Valley Neighborhood with Cul-de-Sacs Lovely Private Yard with Pool, Views of the Surrounding Hills Kitchen/Family Room + Large Living Suite perfect as a Second Family Room/Office/4th Bd or In-Law Quarters

Walls of Glass and Eleven Skylights

Wonderful Indoor/Outdoor Access, Great Entertainer Walking Path up street to Happy Valley School

Offered at \$1,499,000

*per Public Records

Virtual Tour:



Page: D4 LAMORINDA WEEKLY OUR HOMES www.lamorindaweekly.com \$\tilde{P}\$ 925-377-0977 Wednesday, February 29, 2012

MCC Builds a New Clubhouse

By Sophie Braccini



The new dining room can seat 210 people

ven from a distance the new Moraga Country Club's clubhouse, which opened its doors to its members at the beginning of the month, presents itself as a completely different animal than the old one. The magnitude of the improvements can be better appreciated from close up, as one approaches the new construction and enters the majestic lobby.

What used to be a utilitarian and somewhat run down construction is now an elegant resort, both functional and impressive. While Frank Melon, the Club's General Manager, took this reporter on a tour, he answered questions about the economics of his new home away from home.

"Our old clubhouse was clearly out-dated and it made more sense to build a new structure that would be emblematic of what we have become, than to try to fix the old one," said Melon.

The two story building was not ADA compliant, the seismic retrofit was not up to par, the lockers were too small, especially the ladies', the restaurant was in dire need of updates. It had some family-friendly characteristics, but the circa 1973, 9,000 square foot building was not reflect-

Photos Ohlen Alexander



Teal and alder wood throughout the building

ing of a club that now boasts 1100 family members. According to Board of Directors' President Don Maddison, it would have cost five million dollars to bring the old building up to code and only twice as much to build a brand new one.

The new 22,000 square foot building was design by Karl Danielson, of the Dahlin Group, with the goal of being functional while maximizing the use of ambient light and creating an energy efficient structure.

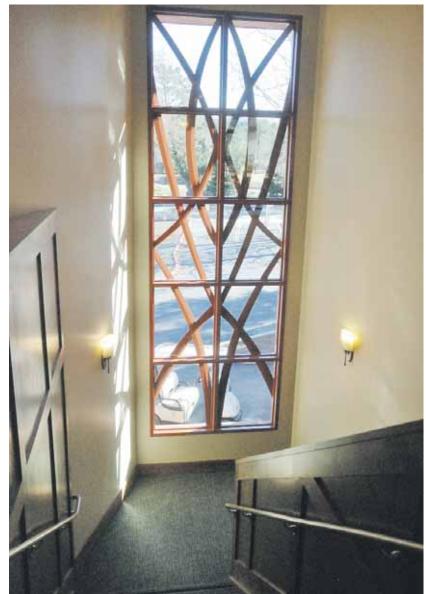
According to Melon, the bid from Overaa Construction came in at a great price and the Club was able to secure a loan at an incredible rate. "We got a lot of bang for our buck," said Maddison.

The project was a long time in the making, involving membership approval and saving over many years. "The homeowners and golf associates voted on the project six years ago and we got more positive votes than the two-thirds required," recalled Maddison. Members were assessed \$2,500 in 2009 and an additional \$200 last year. "We also slightly increased our monthly dues," added Maddison, who will step down in March with a feeling of a mission accomplished. "When I was elected President six years ago it was with the goal of getting a new clubhouse done," he said with pride. ... continued on page D7



Upstairs hallway with window gallery for natural light





A stairway is lit by a large window.



Members gather at the bar.

Kurt Piper's Update

Kurt Piper's Lamorinda Listings

Address	Beds	Baths	SqFt	Acres	List Price	Status
960 Hawthome Dr. 3376 Ridge Rd. 663 Glenside Dr. 15 Candlelight Ln. Burton Valley	3 4 4 5 4	2 2 2 3.5 3	1400 1728 2150 3417 3000	.25 .18 .48 .72 .25		Available Pending Coming Soon Coming Soon In The Works

Kurt Piper's Active Buyers

Moving From	Beds	Baths	Neighborhoods	Price Range
Southern California	2+	2	Moraga	\$300-\$450
Pleasant Hill	3	2	Orinda/Lafayette	\$650-\$750
Lafayette	3	2	Lafayette	\$700-\$850
Lafayette	3	2	Lafayette	\$650-\$750
San Francisco	4	2+	Orinda/Lafayette	\$900-\$1.1M
Moraga	4+	3	Orinda/Lafayette	\$1M-\$1.7M
Marin	4+	3+	Orinda/Lafayette	\$2M-\$2.5M

The 2012 Lamorinda real estate market has started off with a bang! This could be a very active year in home sales as there have been multiple offers on some listings.

I'm working with qualified buyers who are looking for homes in the above Lamorinda communities. If you are thinking of selling or have a friend or neighbor who may sell please call or email me. This could be a great year for Lamorinda home sales!

Kurt Piper

kurt@kurtpiper.com (925) 818-8000

KURT PIPER

BROKER ASSOCIATE

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CO Detectors: Noisy Help for a Silent Killer

By Cathy Dausman

moke detectors have been required in California homes since 1987. But highly visible smoke and fire comprise only part of the deadly threat when something burns. It's time to install a second detector—this one for carbon monoxide. A new state law, Senate Bill 183, now requires single family homes with a fossil fuel burning appliance (think gas stove or water heater) or an attached garage or fireplace to install a working carbon monoxide detector. The bill took effect July 1, 2011. Apartments and hotels have until Jan 1, 2013 to comply.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is the result of incomplete combustion. Carbon monoxide is produced when something burns without sufficient oxygen to make carbon dioxide (CO2). Unlike carbon dioxide, which occurs in nature and is tolerated by humans and animals at low levels, carbon monoxide binds to the body's red blood cells, prevents them from carrying oxygen, and eventually causes suffocation. Carbon monoxide, smoke and fire's evil twin, is invisible, odorless and tasteless. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists carbon monoxide symptoms as headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. High levels of CO inhalation can cause loss of consciousness and death.

CO detectors are similar in cost and operation to the now-familiar smoke detectors, and are readily available at hardware and home improvement stores as well as online. Combination smoke/CO detector units are also available.

Moraga Orinda Fire District's (MOFD) Fire Marshall Michael Mentink says carbon monoxide detectors are "a good thing." Unit installation varies widely depending on the type of detector you buy, so Mentink advises homeowners to carefully read and follow the directions. Mentink says the National Fire Protection Association (NPFA) and most fire departments recommend replacing detector batteries every six months.

Once a law is passed, the challenge becomes its enforcement. "Inspection of single family dwelling is somewhat restricted by law," says Mentink. Although fire departments support the installation of carbon monoxide detectors, regulation falls under building codes. For example, the presence of smoke detectors can only be verified by one of two "triggers": sale of a home, or issuance of a building permit of \$1,000 or more. If an inspection shows a home to be without a working carbon monoxide detector the homeowner has 30 days to correct the violation before a fine (\$200) can be levied. But Mentink says fire departments, including MOFD, are now including carbon monoxide detectors into their existing smoke detector public education campaigns.

The California Air Resources Board says 30 to 40 people die each year from CO poisoning.

These resources will familiarize you with the state law, CO symptoms and CO detectors:

- Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act of 2010 http://sb183.com/
- Carbon Monoxide: What You Need to Know is available as a brochure from MOFD
- From the California State Fire Marshall website: http://tinyurl.com/6hnupl7
- Carbon Monoxide poisoning info is online at the CDC: http://www.cdc.gov/co/faqs.htm
- The U.S. Consumer Product Safety
 Commission has a Q&A page available online
 at http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/466.html



Wide selection of detectors at a local hardware store

Photo Cathy Dausman

MCC Builds a New Clubhouse

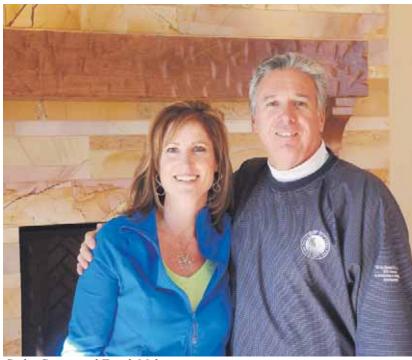
... continued from page D4

Adequate financial planning also allowed the Country Club to address one of its members' major concerns: the kitchen. "We've built a large professional kitchen where new Executive Chef Kevin Ables is now preparing the contemporary-farm fresh cooking our members deserve," said Melon. The new dining room on the second floor (elevator accessible) can seat 210 guests or be partitioned into three separate spaces. All around the dining area, large terraces overlook the new pool, the club's grounds and the Moraga hills. But don't bother to call to make a reservation for dinner if you're not a member, this is a private venue.

Some of the other beautiful assets of the new building include a new, all-wood pro-shop, large locker rooms with personal lockers, a magnificent granite bar in the lounge, teak and alder wood accents all around the Clubhouse, an abundance of natural lighting, light fixtures designed by a Club member, and natural stones.

"We are very much a part of this community and will host some Town events on our grounds," said Melon, "for example, we'll have Saint Mary's College Alumni functions here, and we will host a golf tournament with the Chamber of Commerce. But as a rule, the receptions, such as weddings, are member-sponsored events only."

Non-members can have the pleasure of seeing the building from afar. There are five golf associate memberships available at this time. "With the Clubhouse now finished, the prices are going up," warned Maddison.



Cathy Carter and Frank Melon

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Campolindo Single-Story on Cul-de-Sac

34 Campolindo Court, Moraga

This 4 bedroom, 2 bath, single-story home in the Camplindo neighborhood is located on a cul-de-sac with a level yard. Through the foyer are formal living and dining rooms. Beyond is the kitchen that looks onto the yard and opens to the dinette and family room with vaulted ceiling. The private yard features a pool, patio, and grassy area. The home has 2 fireplaces, indoor laundry room, plentiful storage, and new paint and carpet. It's located close to top-rated Campolindo High School and the Cabana Club, and in a great commute location. Come take a look at this wonderful home.

Offered at \$799,950



Wendy Holcenberg wendy@holcenberg.com

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Michelle Holcenberg

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Page: D8 LAMORINDA WEEKLY OUR HOMES www.lamorindaweekly.com \$\int_{\text{925-377-0977}}\$ Wednesday, February 29, 2011

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

...continued from page D1

Spring is about looking forward and this year, we are leaping. We have bypassed the dark days of dormancy and are marching straight into the season of spring. We don't have to wait for the emergence of our favorite flowering fruit trees or Easter hellebore as they are already parading their newest wardrobes. Our weather is changing and our garden zones are also evolving. Updating the 1990 Plant Hardiness Zone Map, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has just released the newest version of this handy garden tool. The new map was jointly developed by the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (the chief intramural scientific research agency of the USDA) and Oregon State University's PRISM Climate Group. This new 2012 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map is the standard in gardening to determine which plants will

thrive in which locations. It's based on the average annual minimum winter temperature, divided into ten degree Fahrenheit zones. Interestingly, most areas across the country are now rated at least a half a degree warmer. Lamorinda is rated in the 9B zone. The map is not yet available in printed form, but you can download it at the web site of

http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov.

With a possible drought in the works, as we contemplate our plantings, we must work with water-wise sensibilities. If you are considering installing a lawn or sod in March, you may want to plant a clover field or dicondra grass instead. The following drought-tolerant perennials are beautiful even in the hottest seasons and many have the added appeal of attracting butterflies, hummingbirds, and honeybees.

Several varieties of early blooming daffodils along the picket fence.

Photos Cynthia Brian

Drought Tolerant Suggestions In addition to cacti and succulents, these beauties provide a bounty of blooms throughout the growing season.

Agastache

Allium

Blanket Flower

Columbine

Coneflower

Daylilies

Echinacea

Globe Thistle

Lamb's Ears

Lavender

Penstemon

Sage

Salvias

Sedum

Sundrops

Yarrow

Of course, put daffodil bulbs on your fall want list as they are drought resistant and flourish in Lamorinda without disappointment. With so many colors available, there will be something for every gardener's penchant. I am including a variety of photos of my different daffodils for your enjoyment. This St. Patrick's Day, the flowering peach will have already finished its spectacular show, but the daffodils and shamrocks will continue to enchant. Savor the sunshine, leap up, and march on. Aram Go Braugh!



Daffodil-Yellow with deep orange throats





925-377-0977

Daffodil-Lemon and Lace





Daffodil-Triple Threat



Daffodil-Ruffled yellow and orange



Daffodil-White Ruffles



Daffodil-White petals, Deep Orange frilly trumpet

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SITE FACTORS

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Page: D10 LAMORINDA WEEKLY OUR HOMES www.lamorindaweekly.com / 925-377-0977 Wednesday, February 29, 2011

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for March

"Wheat and corn are important crops, no question about that. Butdaffodils provide nourishment too—for the soul." Charles Kuralt

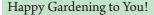
When I think of daffodils, I visualize trumpets of singing sunshine and it makes me happy. Although this winter hasn't been too dreary, the sight of daffodils stretching their necks skyward is always a welcoming messenger of the bright days ahead. Inspiration strikes this month as our gardens wake up. Every day we find some new specimen to admire. Get up, get out, and celebrate the Ides of March with a hoe, spade, and shovel.

- REPEL insects by planting nasturtium, marigold, calendula, wormwood, and pennyroyal.
- ATTRACT hummingbirds and butterflies with the red and pink wildflowers of penstemon, columbine, scarlet gilia, and Shirley poppy.
- GIVE an Easter or Passover gift that inspires health and happiness by filling baskets with a collection of herb seeds for an indoor or outdoor garden.
- **PLANT** a never-fail kid loving veggie garden with peas, lettuce, radishes, spinach, dill, and carrots.
- **GO** to the Bouquets to Art at the de Young Museum March 13-17 for the glorious annual floral eexhibitions matched to the art collection. Visit www.bouquetstoart.org.
- BUY azaleas, camellias, and rhododendrons now so you can choose colors that compliment your landscape.
- **PREVENT** compaction by not tramping on wet soil. Before planting seeds or seedlings, allow the dirt to dry to a cake mixture consistency.
- **COLLECT** fallen camellia florets. Rotting flowers left on the ground encourage petal blight.
- CUT a few branches from budding trees such as cherry or peach to enjoy the slow release of the sweet smelling, beautiful blooms.
- MARCH around your garden and finish the winter clean-up in preparation for our fast approaching spring.
- BUILD fruitful fences by trellising grapes or kiwis. You'll get privacy, autumn color, and nutritious food.
- **TEACH** kids patience and healthy eating by helping them plant an edible patch of strawberries, carrots, radishes, and peas. They'll get exercise, sunshine, and feel proud of their culinary ac-complishments.
- **GET** a tetanus shot if you haven't had one recently. Digging in the dirt has its hazards.
- MIX nutrient based organic fertilizer into your beds. Till and dig well for eight inches to improve the soil and feed the roots.
- **NEED** a gardening based fundraiser? Renee's Garden Seeds offers a fundraiser program. Check out http://www.reneesgarden.com/fundraiser.html. Seed donations are also available for non profit organizations planting community gardens.
- FERTILIZE lawns now with an organic high nitrogen mixture specifically for spring growth.
- **NET** your seeded area to protect from hungry birds and rabbits.
- **DIG** in your summer bulbs this month. Discover the colors and types you want at your local garden center. Gladioli come in a kaleidoscope of colors but are a favorite food for deer.
- PLANT sweet peas as soon as the soil is warm enough and once they start blooming, cut huge bouquets for indoor beauty.
- **ADD** life and movement to your garden with a water feature for the benefit of all.
- CHECK out the 2012 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map at http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov
- FIND out the worth of your special tree with a new free APP by Davey Trees. Go to value.m.davey.com from your mobile device.
- OOPS! My apologies for omitting the beautiful gardens at Heather Farms from my list of public and botanical gardens to visit locally. March is a great time to visit.

The Gardens at Heather Farm 1540 Marchbanks Drive Walnut Creek, Ca 94596 www.gardenshf.org (925) 947-1678 Open Year Round. Free

Thank you to everyone for your emails with compliments, questions, and suggestions. Digging Deep is for you and I am honored to be your garden guide.

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a container of oxalis on your table. Another name for oxalis is shamrock! Wishing you the luck of the Irish.





Cynthia Brian





Oxalis, also known as the Shamrock plant, is perfect for St. Patrick's Day on March 17.

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8 Lost Valley Drive

1st time on market! Beaut updated sgl lvl 4bd/3b + 2 half-baths in 3265 sf on serene 1.1 ac. Vaulted ceilings, gourmet kit, hdwd flrs. Custom pool/spa, wonderful gardens.

Offered at \$1,375,000



1251 Rimer Drive

Very special turnkey 5bd/3.5ba "Moraga Home Tour" beauty. Lvl lot w/pool, patio, lawn & raised beds. High end designer finish work. Amazing touches throughout. Easy biking to K-8.

Offered at \$1,249,000



104 Richard Lane

Lovely 3bd/2ba trad hm in great neighborhood perfect cul-de-sac location. Close to school, transp, walking/biking trails. Fam rm, hdwd flrs, beam ceiling. Fr doors to pyt yard.

Offered at \$670,000



106 Scenic Drive

Special ranch w/charming appeal for comfortable living. Hdwd flrs, beamed LR ceiling, big windows & sliders to outdoors, 3bd/2ba main house w/bonus inlaw w/kit, bath & privacy

Offered at \$859,000



136 Greenbriar

Spacious 3bd/2ba home w/hardwood floors, nice light & vaulted ceilings. Private cul-de-sac location. backs to open space. Come see why people love living in Moraga Country Club!

Offered at \$659,000



3245 Judith Lane

Delightful 3bd/2ba 1204 sf hm at end of lane in beautiful oak tree setting. Updated kitchen & baths, spacious deck & patio, skylights, tranquil setting, nr

Offered at \$549,000



1520 Whitecliff Way

Rudgear Estates 5bd/2.5ba, 2604 sf jewel in tranquil country setting yet downtown close! Updated kichen {& baths, ofc, plantation shutters, commun pool, lvl lawn, patio/play area.

Offered at \$799,000



3 Orchard Road

Stunning 3000 sf Old Orinda charmer exquisitely maintained & renovated by longtime owners. Gorgeous mstr suite, dream kitchen, 3+bd/2.5ba on

Offered at \$1,195,000



1753 Spyglass Lane

Big views from this 4bd/2.5ba home in MCC. Updates thruout incl new kitchen applis, master bath, new carpet/paint/lighting. Open floorplan, plenty of storage, cul de sac.

Offered at \$869,000



3286 Sweet Drive

Lovely 3150 sf home, flex flr plan, updated thruout, granite kitchen. Sweeping views, 2 mstr bdrms plus 2 more bedrooms & 4 baths in Burton Valley. Guest

Offered at \$875,000



Fabulous 2-story trad 5+ bdrm hm beaut maintained & updated. Gorgeous pvt parklike bckyd w/expansive lawn & lovely gardens. Prime loc on quiet cul de sac. Top Alamo schools

Offered at \$829,000



5 La Noria

Wonderful 4bd/3.5ba mid-century modern on .70 ac in OCC. Floor to ceiling windows, hdwd in LR & DR. Sep 200+ sf ofc. Fab setting, privacy, views of

Offered at \$1,295,000



10 Dickenson Drive

4bd/2.5ba completely renovated 1-lvl 2711 sf home, designer touches, many special custom amenities. Fr doors, granite, slate, hardwood,

Andersen windows. Walk to top-rated schls

Offered at \$1.139.000



3819 Palo Alto Drive

Beautifully updated Happy Valley sgl lvl 3bd/4ba hm w/lg living suite w/frplc & bath (2nd fam rm/ofc/in-law/4th bd) on .75 ac. Lovely pvt yd

Offered at \$1,499,000



687 La Vista Road

Estate home of 4bd/3+ baths in heart of Lakewood area, dramatic interior, .48 acre pvt park-like grounds backing to open space, vinevard too! Walk to swim & tennis club

Offered at \$1,185,000

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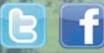
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Margaret Zucker

