

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 06 Issue 12 Wednesday, August 29, 2012



Digging deep with Cynthia

...read on page D5

The Many Flavors of Feng Shui

By Sophie Braccini



Marsha Golangco likes a round light fixture above the dining room table to channel positive energy

Photo Ohlen Alexander

Everybody seems to know something about Feng Shui – it's about numbers, colors, energy or direction; it's Chinese; all of Hong Kong's buildings are built following its rules; red is good; the number eight is good. Some people spend their entire lives studying this ancient art of placement.

"Feng Shui literally means wind and water, which are two of nature's dynamic forces influencing the flow of Chi, the energy of life," says Lafayette interior designer Lynda Catlin. "This an-

cient art and science balances, enhances and directs energy flow in a harmonious way within our environments, thus improving our life situations."

In Lamorinda, many residents incorporate some aspects of Feng Shui, either by studying it themselves or asking for help from professionals. All of those we met get a sense of balance and harmony from the practice, even when adding only a few elements of the complex system into their lives.

Interpretations of Feng Shui vary among the different disciplines or schools, says Catlin, who

studied Bon Tibetan Buddhist Feng Shui. "To analyze a space, a core tool is the concept of the Bagua, the eight-sided symbol with the trigrams of the I-Ching arranged in an octagon with each side of the diagram representing a different aspect of life. It is superimposed upon a space and becomes a compass and tool for analysis of the life situations: career, knowledge, family, wealth, fame, relationships, creativity, benefactors, health."

Some forms of Feng Shui align the Bagua on the entry door of a space, while the more traditional Chinese form aligns it with the north, east, west and south.

Teri Tanner taught herself Feng Shui and she always has a compass with her. Her bible is *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Feng Shui*. "When I bought my condo in Moraga I used to run my business from the garage, and it didn't work for me," she remembers. Tanner researched the favorable direction for herself, according to her birth year, and learned it is southwest. "I placed my office upstairs, my back to the southwest for support and I placed my fax machine so incoming faxes would come from that same direction," she explains.

Tanner says that her business thrived. Now that she is looking to purchase a house in Lafayette, the first thing she looks at is her compass and the orientation of the front door.

Jan Gruen met Marsha Golangco at a meeting of the California Professional Women in Building Council, and was very interested in the Chinese woman's practice of Feng Shui for builders. Gruen asked Golangco to come and take a look at her house.

... continued on page D4