

Don't Let the Water Run Off! It's the New Law

By Sophie Braccini



The bio-retention basin in front of 331 Rheem Blvd in Moraga

Photo Sophie Braccini

s of December 1 of this year, homeowners adding more than 2,500 square feet of impervious surface to their property will have to mitigate runoff. In plain English, if you add square feet to your existing home, redo your driveway, add an impervious deck and the total surface is more than 2,500 square feet, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board requires all water from your gutters and driveways to be somehow caught or redirected from common drains.

According to the Contra Costa Clean Water Program the benefits of having water go in the ground rather than running directly into storm drains is two-fold: First it avoids dramatic swells of creeks in case of a storm; second, the earth filters some of the chemicals that can be contained in the runoff. Large developments have dealt with similar requirements for years and give examples of what can be done.

... continued on page D4

### Village Associates Real Estate welcomes

# Molly Smith

as a sales associate

Village Associates is pleased to announce that Molly Smith has joined our firm. Growing up in the business Molly learned from the best, her mother Melinda Menefee Sesnon. Molly, a successful Realtor in the Lamorinda area, shares her intimate knowledge and insight of the community, schools, swim clubs, neighborhoods and local recreation making her clients feel right at home from the start. She successfully and effectively represents her clients, as evidenced by the large numbers of referrals and repeat clients.

Molly maintains an active role in the community where she has lived for more than 26 years. She and her husband have two children and reside in her hometown of Orinda. Molly is truly "Your Key to Lamorinda".



## Molly Smith

Village Associates Real Estate

925.253.2144 molly@mollyslist.com www.mollyslist.com dre#01498053



## **CLAREMONT HOME LOANS**

346 Rheem Blvd, Ste 205D, Moraga, CA

## **HISTORIC LOW RATES**



claremonthomeloans.net

### Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	11	\$427,500	\$2,000,000
MORAGA	6	\$460,000	\$915,000
ORINDA	11	\$728,000	\$1,350,000

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

3340 Betty Lane, \$585,000, 3 Bdrms, 1651 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 9-6-12 1207 Camino Vallecito, \$900,000, 4 Bdrms, 3982 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 9-11-12; Previous Sale: \$700,000, 01-29-99 30 Carolyn Court, \$752,000, 3 Bdrms, 1563 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 8-30-12; Previous Sale: \$346,500,06-30-98 3108 Del Oceano Drive, \$690,000, 4 Bdrms, 2067 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 9-12-12; Previous Sale: \$336,000, 09-25-98 3785 Highland Road, \$550,000, 3 Bdrms, 1510 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 9-11-12; Previous Sale: \$160,000, 05-12-83 5 Juniper Drive, \$1,400,000, 7 Bdrms, 5176 SqFt, 1926 YrBlt, 8-31-12 4150 Los Arabis Drive, \$1,350,000, 3 Bdrms, 2299 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 9-5-12; Previous Sale: \$1,325,000, 06-18-10 3484 Moraga Boulevard, \$590,000, 3 Bdrms, 1290 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 9-7-12 3279 Mt. Diablo Court #2, \$427,500, 2 Bdrms, 1697 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 8-31-12; Previous Sale: \$440,000, 01-06-04 7 Sessions Road, \$2,000,000, 4110 SqFt, 1999 YrBlt, 9-5-12; Previous Sale: \$1,350,000, 08-30-99 3432 St. Marys Road, \$655,000, 3 Bdrms, 1756 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 9-4-12 MORAGA 1890 Camino Pablo, \$616,000, 3 Bdrms, 1762 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 9-6-12; Previous Sale: \$605,500, 03-23-12 770 Country Club Drive, \$460,000, 3 Bdrms, 1749 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 9-5-12; Previous Sale: \$450,000, 08-25-00 121 Cypress Point Way, \$640,000, 2 Bdrms, 1464 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 8-31-12; Previous Sale: \$755,000, 08-15-07 1063 Del Rio Way, \$915,000, 5 Bdrms, 2820 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 9-12-12 430 Fernwood Drive, \$820,000, 4 Bdrms, 2479 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 9-7-12; Previous Sale: \$450,000, 06-29-92 1750 Spyglass Lane, \$700,000, 3 Bdrms, 1962 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 8-31-12 ... continued on page D7

### Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

### MORAGA

Ascot Drive, 94556, Green Leaf Properties, 09-07-12, \$242,343, 1682 sf, 3 bd **ORINDA** 

El Toyonal, 94563, Genworth Financial, 09-13-12, \$425,000, 1103 sf, 2 bd La Espiral, 94563, HSBC Bank, 09-17-12, \$733,509, 1300 sf, 2 bd

million

## The RE/MAX Collection

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Walnut Creek ~ ONE OF A KIND custom hm w/VIEWS forever yet close to dwntwn W/C, Bart, & freeway. 5200 sf w/5bdrms, 5baths + 6th bdrm/office. Wonderful chef's kit w/lg center island open to family rm. Private setting, a must see! \$2,350,000



Alamo ~ Fabulous one level creek-side estate in oak studded park-like setting. Almost 1 acre w/1000 sf guest house, pool & Koi pond. Home is approx 3973 sf & exquisitely remodeled throughout! \$1,675,000



Alamo ~ European-inspired 6bdrm, 5.5bath Alamo Estate nestled at the end of a knoll. This .85 acre property boasts cheerful views, 5400 sf, amazing ambiance & elegance. Price reduced to sell! OPEN SUN 10/14 1:00 ~ 4:00 \$2,373,000

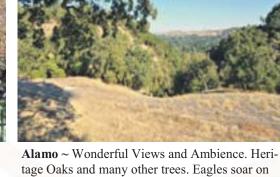
**Gretchen Bryce** 

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Alamo ~ Gorgeous, private-gated, Westside Alamo. 4bdrms, 3.5baths, 4000 sf home on 1.27 acres. Featuringan Itailian-style gourmet kit, wine celler, cul-de-sac & fantastic Alamo Schools. Potential Short Sale. \$1,399,000

Stephanie Stadtler Todd Carter 800-977-8985 Michael S. Hatfield 925-914-5844 925-984-1339



Alamo ~ Wonderful Views and Ambience. Heritage Oaks and many other trees. Eagles soar on this one of a kind setting at the end of cul-de-sac. Backs to open space and overlooks the valley and Las Tranpas Ridge. Utilities to Street! **\$899,000** 



Lafayette ~ This is a special house with charm and character. 4bdrms, 4baths sitting on 1.2 acre's of nearly level land. Large patio and pool! Self contained guest cottage w/kitchen and bath. Wonderful Opportunity! \$1,490,000

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**Michael S. Hatfield** 

925-984-1339 Jay Weymouth

925-915-1100

Paddy Kehoe

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## Don't Let the Water Run Off! It's the New Law

... continued from page D1



Permeable pavers in front of the Lafayette Library Photos provided



Water collecting planter at the Walnut Creek Library

"Homeowners, according to the new State requirement, will have different options to divert the flows and we are working on the detailed specifications," says Cathleen Terentieff, Orinda Associate Engineer/Stormwater Program Manager. The different options are to direct roof runoff into cisterns or rain barrels for reuse and onto vegetated areas; to direct runoff from sidewalks, walkways, and/or patios onto vegetated areas; and to construct sidewalks, walkways, and/or patios with permeable surfaces. In short, homeowners can collect water, divert it to planters or gardens, and/or construct their driveways with permeable material.

The collection option is pretty straightforward. "Homeowners can collect the water in a barrel and use that water for their own garden later," says Terentieff.

The more complex approach is diversion to a filtering, vegetated area. In Moraga, a bio-retention basin was donated and built by Bay Area Drainage in front of the Town's building at 331 Rheem Boulevard, as a demonstration site. Bioretention basins, also called bioswales or rain gardens, are commonly used to filtrate runoffs and not increase the peak flow from pre-development. The new development proposed in Moraga by SummerHill includes three bioswales.

"Bioretention basins are built with a mix of soil and planted with specific plants," says Civil Engineer Greg Miller who works with Summer-Hill. "The water percolates through the mixture, the soil and root systems cleanse the water, there is no stagnant water on the surface and it can be very attractive." In our area where the sub-terrain is not permeable, a sub-drain is installed that will divert the clean water to the conventional drainage system.

In Orinda, the Wilder neighborhood was also designed with runoff mitigation in mind. "All water runoff from the Wilder neighborhood, including from streets, homes and hillsides, flows through a carefully-designed combination of landscaped bioswales and a series of six water quality ponds," says Jason Keadjian for Wilder. "The bioswales and ponds naturally filtrate and treat runoff water before it leaves the site."

The cost of a bioswale for homeowners varies, since they can build it themselves or ask a contractor/landscape architect to do it. A simpler version of a bioswale for a home can be a filtering planter.

Permeable pavers for driveways, patios or parking areas are also an option to limit runoff, but it is not a method of treatment. "A good example of permeable pavers in a parking lot can be seen at the Lafayette Library," says Karen Mc-Cardle of the landscaping firm Hansen McCardle in Lafayette. "The pavers themselves are not necessarily porous, but there is space filled with gravel between them so the water goes into the ground rather than running off into the creeks."

There are other types of pervious treatment: pervious concrete or asphalt. "We considered pervious asphalt for the new parking lot the Town is building by the Skate Park along Moraga Road, but the cost was too high," explains Moraga Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram. "Instead we are building a bioretention basin that will be located between the road and the parking lot and fully landscaped." Other less expensive permeable treatments include granular material such as crushed shells, gravel, aggregate base, cobbles, or wood mulch.

The ultimate step after collection and filtration is, of course, re-use. There is no current State mandate regarding that aspect.

For more information, visit cccleanwater.org.

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### **ASK CYNTHIA:** Reader Requests

### Hi Cynthia:

I live in an apartment with a small backyard. Since I don't have a lawn mower, I planted clover instead of grass seed as I want some semblance of a lawn. My problem is that the clover has infiltrated my flowerbeds and is taking over. It's everywhere. I pull it, but it spreads again. Help!

### Jonathan, Lamorinda



### Hi Jonathan:

We should be so lucky as to have clover infiltrating our gardens. In the September 26, 2012 issue of Digging Deep, I actually wrote an entire column called "Under Cover" (https://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0615/Digging-Deep-Under-Cover.html) which describes the best specimens to plant to nourish the soil as cover crops. Clover is one of the best soil amendments you can find, enriching your dirt with tons of nitrogen to help your garden grow strong. When clover spreads to the beds, pull it out or dig it up by hand, but don't throw it in the compost pile. Instead turn it into the soil as deeply as possible. Use a hoe, rototiller, or spade. Within 10 days to two weeks, the clover breaks down providing nutrients to your soil and surrounding plants. Repeat as necessary and be grateful for your green carpet that is also an environmentally correct feeding machine.

Happy Gardening!

Cynthia

### ©2012 Cynthia Brian The Goddess Gardener Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com

www.GoddessGardener.com

I am available as a speaker, designer, and consultant.

Cynthia will answer one or more questions as space allows. Email your comments or questions to Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com







## **California Trees**

Your friendly neighborhood arborists Darren and Lew Edwards

Darren lives his life with passion, and trees have been his passion since he was a kid, working with his father in the tree care company, he is a firm believer in the power of planning, and in the importance of giving back to those aspects of life that sustain you.

California has a rich horticultural history and many extraordinary specimens of trees can be seen in nearly every community here. Each of the many tree species provides unique form, texture, color and often aroma. These are the trees that provide shade, help to conserve energy, improves property value, reduces storm-water runoff, sequester CO2, mitigate air pollution, and make urban living healthier and more peaceful. "We all have a role to play in planning for the future of our trees". So invest in the future and plant the correct type of tree in the proper location.

So don't wait until it's too late, have a complete inspection by a Certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping



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## The Real Estate Quarter in Review

### By Conrad Bassett, CRP, GMS

he third quarter of 2012 again showed significant activity on the residential side of Lamorinda real estate.

Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported from July 1 through September 30, 2012, 80 singlefamily homes closed in Lafayette which was higher than the 76 that closed in the third quarter of 2011. Sales prices ranged from \$433,000 to \$2.7 million. There were two additional homes listed above \$2 million that closed during the quarter but the prices were not provided to the Multiple Listing Service. The average number of days on market was 37 versus 46 days for the same period in 2011 and 67 days in the third quarter of 2010. The average sales price was \$1,001,291 which was lower than the year ago period where the average was \$1,071,776. The average sales price was \$1,053,173 in the second quarter of this year.

In Moraga, the number of singlefamily closings was 34, identical to the same 90 day period a year ago. Prices ranged from \$615,900 to \$3.5 million. The average sale price was \$1,049,408, up significantly from a year ago's \$874,909. As Moraga had 2 sales above \$2 million, which is not typical, the numbers were affected accordingly. The average marketing time was similar at 34 days on market where a year ago it was 35 days. In the second quarter of this year, the average sale price was \$983,875.

In Orinda, the number of singlefamily closings was up to 81 which far exceeded the third quarter of 2011 when there were 47. Sales prices ranged from \$483,000 to \$2.35 million with an average price of \$1,109,094, an increase over 3Q11 when the average was \$1,055,629. There were 2 sales where the sale price was not reported to the MLS. In the second quarter of this year, the average price was \$1,132,702. It took an average of only 38 days to expose a home to the market prior to contract and it was 55 days a year ago.

In the third quarter of this year, on an average price per square foot basis, Lafayette detached single-family homes sold at \$419.49 per square foot. A year ago it was \$416.05 per square foot. Moraga homes sold for \$396.29 up from \$381.18 per square foot a year ago and Orinda was at \$417.70 per square foot this last quarter.

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had four closings between \$514,000 and \$600,000; Moraga had 19 ranging from \$141,000 to \$640,000. The 2 highest sales were in Moraga Country Club. Orinda had three—\$220,000 to \$790,000. The first was on Brookwood and the other 2 in Orinda Woods.

As of October 3, 2012, there were 107 pending sales per the MLS in the 3 communities combined. A year ago it was 71 which points to a significantly increased number of closings in the fourth quarter of the year. The asking prices were from \$199,000 for a Moraga condominium to \$2,495,000 for a single family home in Lafayette. It should be pointed out that there are 20 "Potential Short Sales" that are currently pending and were subject to lender approval. Four of the pending sales are REOs (bank owned properties.) The number of REOs in Lamorinda continues to be very low on a percentage and actual basis when compared to other communities.

It is interesting to point out that of

the 107 pending sales in the area, 66 have received acceptable offers since September 1. That is an average of just over 2 per day. Usually many of the sales are completed prior to the start of school. Depending upon how many of the homes are being purchased by families with children who are new to Lamorinda, it may impact certain grades at the elementary level.

Inventory, however, continues to plummet when looking at the available homes. In Lafayette there are 42 on the market versus 84 on the market a year ago in early October. At this same point in 2010 there were 114 on the market.

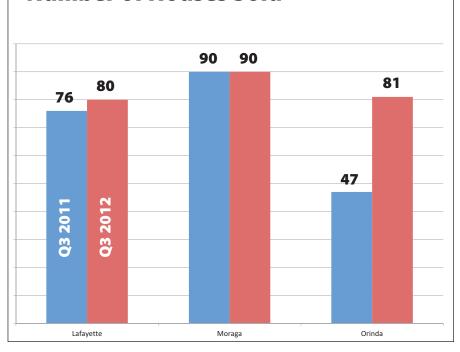
In Moraga buyers have their choice of only 15 properties, down from 41 homes 12 months ago, and 64 on the market on this date in 2010.

Orinda inventory has fallen from

80 available properties in October, 2010 to 64 homes in October, 2011 and to only 39 at the beginning of this month.

In total, as of October 7, 2011 there were 189 residences available in the 3 communities including 2 in Canyon. As of last week there were only 96. Asking prices range from \$202,950 for a condominium in Orinda to \$7.75 million for a Lafayette property.

As is the case nearly every quarter, the most active price range is in the more "affordable" price ranges. At the high end, 10 homes sold above \$2 million in the 3 communities combined versus six the same period in 2011. There are 22 currently available above this amount—8 in Lafayette, 11 in Orinda, and 3 in Moraga.



## Number of Houses Sold

•••

## Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

### ... continued from page D2 ORINDA

112 Canon Drive, \$1,725,000, 4 Bdrms, 3693 SqFt, 1999 YrBlt, 8-29-12; Previous Sale: \$289,000, 05-01-98
8 El Caminito, \$755,000, 5 Bdrms, 2067 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 8-30-12
2 El Camino Moraga, \$785,000, 3 Bdrms, 2381 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 8-31-12
4320 El Nido Ranch Road, \$900,000, 4 Bdrms, 2586 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 8-31-12
5 Estabueno Drive, \$940,000, 3 Bdrms, 2325 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 9-7-12; Previous Sale: \$1,100,000, 07-25-08
51 La Espiral, \$1,350,000, 5 Bdrms, 3152 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 9-12-12; Previous Sale: \$1,100,000, 03-08-04
122 La Espiral, \$1,429,000, 4 Bdrms, 2761 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 8-31-12; Previous Sale: \$1,440,000, 07-23-10
64 Lost Valley Drive, \$1,485,000, 4 Bdrms, 3571 SqFt, 2000 YrBlt, 8-30-12; Previous Sale: \$1,465,000, 09-24-04
157 Ravenhill Road, \$728,000, 3 Bdrms, 2245 SqFt, 1982 YrBlt, 9-12-12
14 Risa Court, \$925,000, 4 Bdrms, 1758 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 9-4-12

### Lamorinda Home Values are Rising

	September	September	%
Lamorinda:	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
Properties Sold	64	59	-(8%)
Average Sale Price	\$924,000	\$1,100,000	19%

Your home may be worth more than you think! Contact me for a free pinpoint price analysis.

Inventory is low and it is the best time to sell in years. Go to <u>www.Lamorinda.net</u>, or call 925-550-2353

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To see what homes have sold recently in <u>your neighborhood,</u> go to: <u>www.Lamorinda.net</u>

J. Rockeliff



**Frov Feddersen** 

Broker Associate

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### Lovely Rancher with Large, Private Yard 373 Donald Drive, Moraga

Located in desirable Rheem Valley Manor close to Moraga Commons Park and walking trail, this beautiful home features 4 bedrooms and a large bonus room on one level. The updated kitchen is open to the family room & dinette and opens to the beautiful, private yard with level lawn areas, pool and spa, arbor, apple, pear and citrus trees, and room to roam. Formal living and dining room. New paint, carpet, lighting. Top schools. More information at: **www.373DonaldDrive.com**.



### Single-Story Campolindo Charmer 3980 Paseo Grande, Moraga

Beautiful single-story home in sought-after Campolindo. With 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, and a private level yard, this updated home has much to offer. Formal dining and living rooms, kitchen with granite countertops, gas range and breakfast nook open to family room with fireplace and entertainment unit. Master bedroom with bonus space and redone bath. Granite, hardwood flooring, dualpaned windows, tile roof, new paint and carpet. Close to top-rated schools and Campolindo Cabana Club, with an excellent commute location. More information at: www.3980PaseoGrande.com. Offered at \$949,000



Wendy Holcenberg wendy@holcenberg.com

925.253.4630 DRE#00637795

Michelle Holcenberg michelle@holcenberg.com

> 925.253.4663 DRE#01373412



Offered at \$975,000

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### ORINDA



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#### 40 Dos Osos

Incredible Orinda, San Pablo Dam, Mt. Diablo views + abundance of nature surrounds this supersized parcel bordering EBMUD land. Exceptional beauty. Once in a lifetime oppty raw land sale.

### Offered at \$647,000



251 Monte Vista Ridge Road Stunning gated custom estate hm w/pano views of Briones. Outdoor living at its best w/expansive terrace featuring fabulous kitchen. Romantic mstr retreat w/spa bath.

### Offered at \$1,995,000 LAFAYETTE ☑



#### **1690 Reliez Valley Road** Fab 1+ ac ridgeline ppty w/spectacular views of Mt. Diablo etc. Paved driveway to building site w/utilities & sewer at ppty. Incl preliminary plans for 4900+ sq ft home.



**3767 Happy Valley Road** Fabulous updated H.V. Trad. Dream kit., spacious mstr ste. Hdwd flrs, custom detail Fr. doors open to priv. deck. Lush setting w/lvl lawn. Top neighborhood, walk to town.

Offered at \$1,349,000



### 3 Owl Hill Court

Charming modern 3bd/2ba classic on gorg. priv. 2/3 ac w/fab. oak trees & lovely views. High ceilings, lots of glass. Nestled at end of cul de sac w/in walking distance of downtown Orinda.

### Offered at \$799,000 ORINDA



#### 65 La Espiral

Updated w/beautiful custom features & amenities. Very well maintained. Majestic setting, lovely gardens, new pool + views/ privacy, fully fenced. Tuscany ambiance, European flair.

Offered at \$2,350,000



#### **3773 Happy Valley Road** Charming 4bd on .32 ac lot. Walk to H.V. school & town. Trad. open flr plan, hdwd flrs, tons of nat. light & easy in/outdr living. Remod. kit., bkfst bar & formal din. area w/creekside setting.

Offered at \$899,000

**34 Winding Glen** Classic ranch style 4bd/3ba home combines sophisticated elegance w/ charming ease. Huge park like yard features, 42 acre yard with grass play areas, covered patio, pool & spa.

Offered at \$1,425,000



#### **73 La Espiral** Well maint. 4bd/3ba hm for easy living. Vaulted ceilings & abundance of windows. Updated baths & mod. kit. This 2825 sf hm offers "Great Room" concept, stylish decor, & quality features.

Offered at \$1,060,000



**60 Coachwood Terrace** An Estate in prime location. 5bd/4.5ba, pool/spa, apx. 6000 sq ft on apx. 6.54 acres. Fabulous stone walled gardens, many fruit trees. Reflects Orinda living at its best.

#### Offered at \$2,495,000



**3898 Happy Valley Road** Fab orig owner property in Happy Valley's "Golden Mile". Prime 1.5 ac w/lvl lawn, secluded patio, towering redwoods. Gorgeous vus. Restore 1948 farmhouse or build new dream hm.



**324 Grapevine Place** Desirable Sun Valley Vineyards in P.H.! Updated 2 bd/2ba twnhm feat. open kit/fam. rm combo, covered porch & priv. patio, 2 car gar. w/lots of stor. & vaulted ceilingsã& updates thruout!

**Offered at \$249,000** 



**43 Canyon View Drive** One of a kind, secluded, Tahoe-like 4bd/3.5+ba hm on 1.25 ac w/views of hills & Mt. Diablo. Sep 1bd cottage, & artist studio/ofc. Fruit trees abound. Stone fireplace. Updated kit/baths.

### Offered at \$1,439,000



15 Silvia Court Wonderful 6 bd hm on small cul-de-sac. Dual panes, hdwd flrs, expanded thru'out. Fab. Ivl .4 ac w/ lawns/ gardens/ fruit trees. Originally 3-car gar, one stall converted to large laundry rm.

### Offered at \$948,000



**3645 Boyer Circle** Uniquely pvt 4bd/3.5ba 3600 sf custom hm on .76 ac natural setting close to town. Lovely views, lvl play area, fab decks, 3-car garage. Vaulted ceilings, hdwd flrs, French & sliding doors.



**1720 Orchard Lane** Original Orchard Lane Estate. 4bd/ 4.5ba + office. 4792 sq. ft. home on 1.32 acres. Updated and remodeled in 2004. Simply Fabulous! By appointment only.

Offered at \$2,350,000

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