

# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 08 Issue 11 Wednesday, July 30, 2014

## Virtually Neighbors

By Cathy Dausman

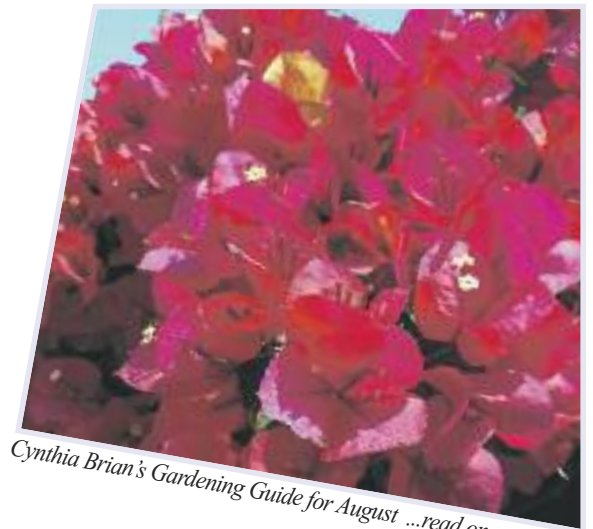


The online application, Nextdoor, could help Moraga resident Chuck Murray (on right) share his bumper crop of “pluots” – a hybrid plant grown from a plum and an apricot – with more people than just his own next door neighbor David Fuhrman.

Photo Andy Scheck

More than 3,000 Lamorinda neighbors are learning who has extra fruits or vegetables to share or who has lost a pet without ever leaving their home in

everyday conversations with neighbors – only in this 21st century version, it’s carried out online. Conversations across the street or back fence have grown to include online social media conversa-



Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for August ...read on page D10

tions. Neighbors, meet one virtual neighborhood organizer – Nextdoor (<https://nextdoor.com>).

Local residents are using the social media application to inquire about who felt a recent earthquake or who saw a coyote wandering the streets, to learn about street closures or paving and community gardening projects, or to alert neighbors about unwanted door to door solicitors or burglars. They get recommendations for travel agents, painters, cleaning services, general contractors, sitters or tutors at the click of a button. They know who wants recycled moving boxes or grocery coupons, or where to buy furniture or sell pianos, books, games or bikes – all virtual everyday conversations neighbors have with neighbors.

“I have loved Nextdoor,” said Moraga organizer Jan Russell. “Two-thirds of our homeowners are members, and it is really useful in terms of communicating. It has been great.”

Matt McLeod is active on Nextdoor in Moraga’s Corliss neighborhood. “I took the lead in an effort to help keep neighbors in the area stay informed about a new development off Camino Ricardo. I think it has been useful and a great tool to keep neighbors informed about crime and safety issues as well,” he said.

Cara Heilmann of Orinda said the primary reason she joined Nextdoor back in July 2012 was for her Neighborhood Watch Program. Her neighborhood has 64 members. “We have active block captains for almost every street in our neighborhood and we get together annually for a block party each summer,” she said. “We continue to send invitations to neighbors to join as we consider this to be our main way to stay connected for all activities.”

... continued on page D4



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### RECENT SOLDS



740 Glenside Circle, Lafayette, represented Seller



4060 Fiora Place, Lafayette, represented Seller



953 Bridgecrossing Way, Concord, represented Seller



1234 Morning Glory, Concord, represented Seller



1354 Meadow Glen Way, Concord, represented Seller



127 Jervis Bay, Alameda, represented Seller and Buyer



42 Knox Dr, Lafayette, represented Buyer



52 Miner Road, Orinda, represented Buyer



10 Laird Drive, Moraga, represented Buyer



1702 Toyon Rd, Lafayette, represented

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## Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	6	\$760,000	\$4,500,000
MORAGA	-	-	-
ORINDA	4	\$385,000	\$1,367,000

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

17 Benthill Court, \$1,485,000, 4 Bdrms, 6580 SqFt, 1982 YrBlt, 6-26-14;

Previous Sale: \$1,250,000, 06-06-05

1711 Chapparral Lane, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 3130 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 6-27-14;

Previous Sale: \$623,500, 09-08-94

3191 Diablo View Road, \$760,000, 3 Bdrms, 1943 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 6-27-14;

Previous Sale: \$292,500, 11-04-92

1018 Hoedel Court, \$4,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 3147 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 6-19-14;

Previous Sale: \$2,400,000, 04-27-05

1206 Vacation Drive, \$925,000, 3 Bdrms, 1565 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 6-27-14

1009 Windsor Drive, \$1,176,000, 4 Bdrms, 2417 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 6-20-14

### MORAGA

No sales information available

### ORINDA

47 Citron Knoll, \$385,000, 6-20-14

58 Citron Knoll, \$1,367,000, 6-30-14

68 Citron Knoll, \$1,354,500, 6-30-14

58 Morello Place, \$1,346,500, 6-26-14

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**771 Los Palos Drive, Lafayette**

*4BR/3BA, 3275± sq. ft. custom on level .37± acre lot*  
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Lot!

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*Pancake-flat 1.04± acre parcel in Burton Valley*  
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**10 Rita Way, Orinda**

*3BR/2.5BA, 2215± sq. ft. on a level .33± acre lot*  
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**3216 Judith Lane, Lafayette**

*Charming 3BR/2BA, 1969± sq. ft. on .36± acre lot*  
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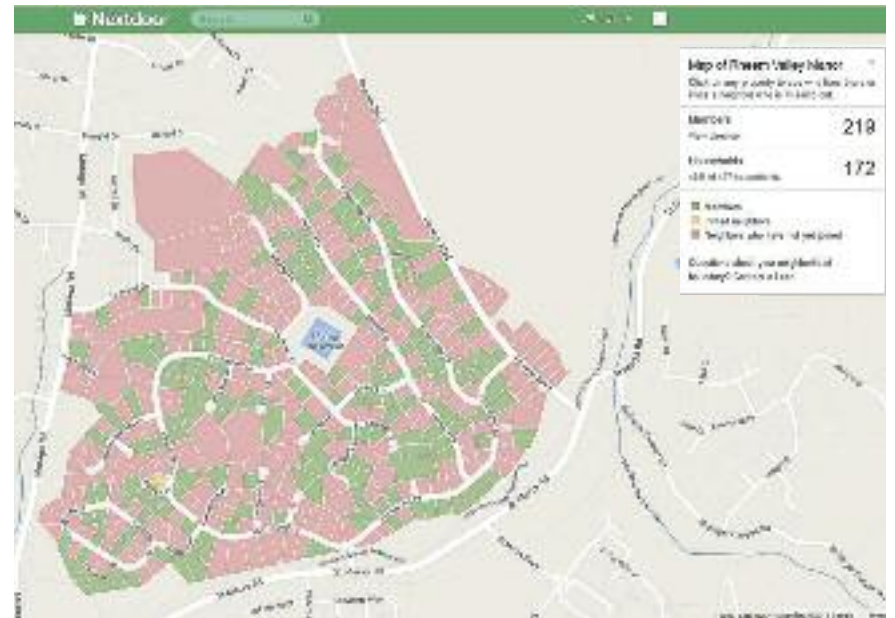
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# Virtually Neighbors

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According to this Nextdoor map, 40 percent of the Rheem Valley Manor households in Moraga have registered on the site.

Gene Gottfried was their area captain for many years and has recently retired from the role, she said. Since then Heilmann, along with Jennifer Matthews and Jake Acevedo have shared the leadership role.

Orinda's Patti Young joined Nextdoor in August of 2012. She calls the site "an excellent way to communicate quickly with my neighbors in case of an emergency or simply to gain or give out information."

Young said she is "heavily involved" with the Community Emergency Response Team, the Orinda Citizen Corps Council, K6ORI radio group and Moraga-Orinda Fire District's Communication Support 245 team. "I know that these four organizations highly recommend that Lamorinda citizens use Nextdoor as one of their means to organize their neighborhoods for better communication prior to an emergency," Young said.

In contrast, Duncan Seibert, program manager for Lamorinda's Community Emergency Response Team, may be the lone naysayer in the crowd. "I may well be wrong but I have not had good luck with it except for baby sitters and garage sales," he said. But Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda governments think otherwise; each has incorporated Nextdoor as a city-wide communications tool.

A Moraga police department press release explained via email that "town departments plan to share important news and updates, available services, programs, public events, and emergency notifications that are relevant to specific neighborhoods," and respond directly to Nextdoor member questions and comments. (See related story on page A9.)

"Of course there are privacy guidelines, and one can put out as much or as little information as he or she would like and a person can choose to only see listings from his or her own neighborhood or multiple areas," Young explained. "The developers of Nextdoor are genuine in wanting us to be happy with their application and frequently ask how they can make it better to fit our needs," she said. "Go check it out and encourage your neighbors to do so as well."

# He's All About the Neighborhoods.



## **The Bluffs**

50 San Pablo Court, Moraga  
5 bedrooms, 3 baths, 3085 sqft.  
\$1599,000



## **The Downs**

112 Amber Valley Drive, Orinda  
5 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2810 sqft  
Call for Price



## **The Club**

19 Mira Loma Road, Orinda  
3 bedrooms, 2baths, 1535 sqft.  
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## **Sleepy Hollow**

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## Stylish Solutions

# Creating Sanctuaries in the Home

By Ann McDonald



Here we created transitions in a small spa bath designed as a European Wet Room Space. Material changes force you to adjust your purpose. You step up to remove shoes on the teak floor; place slippers in the box and step down again into the overhead shower. The vessel contains your soap; you must slow down to find it.

Photos courtesy Couture Chateau llc, photography by Couture Chateau llc

How do we keep our peace on as the world seems to fall apart around us? Have you ever asked yourself that question? As designers, we are constantly challenged to create functional spaces for everyday living. The truth is, those spaces must bring us back to proverbial center to be successful projects.

Here I share some of my stylish solutions so you can create a sanctuary at home no matter how little space, time or even money you have. If you don't know where to start, try this: What sends you over the edge in your home? Is it the constant tripping over soccer cleats, ballet shoes or lacrosse sticks in the front hall or the retired spouses' collection of putters or tennis visors that drains your emotional reserves? What about the work-at-home spouse who comes out of their office for coffee while you are in the middle of something?

We all have things that shouldn't send us over the cliff but for some reason do. It's life. What's a stylish suburbanite to do?

**1) Create Intentional Transitions.** One of the biggest pitfalls I see, especially in suburban homes with lots of square footage is that we forget about intentional transition between spaces. Because we have so much space to work with we end up designing "must haves" – the library, gym, master suite, guest room, so much so that we forget about transition.

Consider this: Why is it we can head to the spa in a downtown location with less than half the space of our typical master bath and somehow relax, but in our own oversized master bath suite we feel chaotic?

They have been intentional about creating a transition. As ancient as the cultures, we find that archways, doorways, mats, material changes, even bells or shelves have been used to indicate you were moving from one type of space to another. You came in, changed your breathing pattern, slowed a bit, put on a robe in a calm room, slippers, drank water from a pretty glass. The transition component forced you to switch gears.

In our own large homes we fail to cultivate that transition process. Especially with the beloved open concept, we forget how critical this is.

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Campolindo High School/Acalanes District** (check availability)

\*Per Tax Records

*Offered at \$2,395,000*



## Stylish Solutions

# Creating Sanctuaries in the Home

... continued from page D6



*This corner space is intentionally pink and is used as a mid-day escape hatch. From the artwork to the petit built in desk, candles and favorite design books, it's where this designer goes to re-charge her design brain and find inspiration.*

*Photo Peter Medilek*

Consider how and where you can manifest transition even if it's moving from the kitchen into a chair in the living room. Do you always remove your shoes? Get a cup of tea? Bring a book? A notepad? Light a candle? What is it that you can use as a singular transition to remind you it's "sanctuary time."

**2) Edit for Purpose.** What is the purpose of your sanctuary space? Is it reading? Having a cup of coffee? Working from home? Prayer? Exercise? It could be anything and, in fact, what is right for your sanctuary is not right for another. Be OK with that. Break their sanctuary rules and fiercely protect your own.

Remember that oxygen mask! I have several spaces in my own home and studio that function as sanctuaries right in the middle of the chaos. They are spaces edited for specific purposes and the tools, acces-

sories and look all tie into their purpose for calm. A space in the middle of my kitchen is intentionally pink. I live in a house with two sons, three dogs and a husband. Not much of the house is pink, but this corner is.

This is my mid-day escape hatch. From the artwork to the petit built in desk, candles and favorite design books, it's where I go to re-charge my design brain and find inspiration. The funny part? As soon as my son came home from college, he absconded with this space as his own. Why? Because it's "so nice to sit here mom!"

Thank goodness I have more than one corner, and for now, I have retreated to another one of my spaces: we jokingly call it "the altar." It sits in the middle of the living room window and functions as a hands-off space for mom. No dogs, pets or food allowed. It has been the feature in several photo shoots and always brings me back to center.

**3) Call it holy for you.** I love the thought that the mundane is somehow set apart. Great design reminds us that the every day is precious. Think about why we care so much for grandmother's silly chair when she passes. It's never going to fetch millions at Sotheby's but it does capture our hearts. It was set apart unto her. Be intentional about finding those pieces and spaces that can be set apart unto you.

Creating sanctuaries within larger projects is one of the most important things we do as designers. It often comes out in the presentation phase of a design job when we are describing the transition from pantry to kitchen or kitchen to dining room, but it's there. It's funny, when people start a design project they don't often articulate the desire for peace, calm and order, but those are the exact things needed for an exceptional design project, no matter the scale or budget.

Even the old fashioned butler's pantry was a transition space of peace between the hustle and bustle of the kitchen prep to the noise and clatter of a full dining room. Why do you think friends congregate in those spaces? By nature, they are set apart. We seek them (transition spaces, purposeful and set apart) without even being conscious of it. Even in a simple kitchen remodel, we deal with the sanctuary. Sometimes it's as small as a proper place for a favored coffee cup – the one you drink from that makes you feel special in the morning before the stress of the day hits head on.

Where will you cultivate transition, purpose and a set apart space in your home? Let me know! For now, light a candle, find some peace and live a custom life!



*Ann McDonald, IIDA, NAPO, is the Founder/CEO of Couture Chateau, a luxury interior design firm in Orinda. If you are interested in chatting about your next decorating project, give us a call at (925) 386-0720 – we're here all summer. For a complete blog post including photos of different sanctuaries, visit [www.couturechateau.com/blog](http://www.couturechateau.com/blog).*



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Open Sunday 1-4



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# Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for August

By Cynthia Brian

*"I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but, it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble." ~ Helen Keller*

There are many ways to tackle a task.

With a drought in full swing, those of us with lawns are investigating every avenue to keep our playgrounds verdant. In Los Angeles, lawn painting has become a new lucrative business using non-toxic permanent dye applied to stressed grass. The green application lasts about 12 weeks without color fade or run-off. When the rains come, most lawns grow back on their own.

On a different path to encourage continued love of gardening, a client of mine decided to take things into her own hands. Her 3-year-old granddaughter was distressed that the pebbles the tyke planted in "Granny's garden" hadn't sprouted. Using twigs, broken jewelry pieces, shiny rocks from her floral arrangements and a glue gun, Grandma fashioned flowers to "grow" and planted them in the plot. The next day, the toddler's excitement when she witnessed the stone blooms was beyond priceless.

The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in California, yet another sign that no matter what the climatic changes, gardeners will find a way to survive the elements

to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble.

- **DIG** technology with the Easy Gardening Tips app from Suntory®. It's a digital magazine with tips on designing decks, summer canning, palette picking, and more. Download free at the App Store.
- **STAKE** tall gladiolus before they topple in the wind and protect from the deer who love to nibble the blooms.
- **TASTE** summer by mashing mint for garden fresh mojitos. Grow all mints in containers as mint is invasive. Can you and your friends drink that many juleps or mojitos?
- **LEARN** the difference between bees and yellow jackets. Bees feed all year long on the lavender and rosemary which require only rainwater, while the yellow jackets feed on your picnic or barbecue. Save the bees, call Vector Control for the yellow jackets: (925) 685-9301.
- **PERUSE** spring bulb catalogues to get your order in this month for fall delivery.
- **DEADHEAD** roses weekly to elongate the blooming season.
- **FILL** hummingbird feeders with a homemade concoction of boiled water with sugar. No need to add food coloring.
- **PRUNE** clematis sparingly after blooms are finished. Save the dark stems, cut away the light stems. Depending on your variety, clematis bloom on new, old, or a combination of the two woods.
- **ENROLL** in a free composting class through Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority at [http://www.wastediversion.org/app\\_pages/view/1723](http://www.wastediversion.org/app_pages/view/1723).
- **ENHANCE** your interior space with an easy to care for plant that blooms for months. The "moth orchid," phalaenopsis likes bright indirect light and temperatures in the 65-80 degree range – perfect for summer indoors.



*Elderberries are ripe and ready for jams, jellies, and wine making.*



*The climbing pink bower vine has made a full recovery after the winter freeze.*

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## CALL AN ARBORIST

The most common reason a tree owner calls an arborist is concern that something is wrong with a tree. It may be that some of the leaves are discolored, a branch has died, or perhaps the entire tree has been dropping leaves. Sometimes the cause of the concern is a minor problem that is easily explained and corrected. Other times the problem is more complex-with several underlining causes and a remedy that requires treatments extending over several years. Unfortunately, there are instances in which the problem has gone undetected for so long that the tree cannot be helped, and the only option is removal. If an arborist had been called earlier, perhaps the tree could have been saved.

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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- **FERTILIZE** your vegetable garden as edible plants are hungry for nutrients. Without the help of fertilizer their appetites will exhaust the soil, producing a poor harvest. Read labels carefully as too much fertilizer can be worse than too little!
- **REMOVE** the silks from corn before cooking. Steam or grill with or without husks. Store corn in its husk in the refrigerator in open bags after picking to maintain freshness. Shuck immediately before using.
- **CULTIVATE** a continuous crop of colorful beans, one of the most economical sources of protein rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.
- **ASK** a trusted neighbor or friend to water your container plantings and hanging baskets when you go on vacation. August is traditionally a very warm month and unless you have a drip system installed, pots need daily monitoring.
- **GROOM** your annuals and perennials by taking the time to deadhead the spent blooms or dead leaves, helping them to flower into fall.
- **PRUNE** summer flowering hedges and shrubs after they have finished blooming, removing any dead or damaged branches.
- **CLEAR** brush and vegetation to create a 100-foot defensible space around your home if you have not already done so. Fire season is with us until the rain pours. For any questions on abatement, call (925) 258-4525 ext. 533.
- **CONTINUE** weeding. With warm weather, weed seeds germinate faster, zapping the moisture necessary to nurture other plants.
- **WATER** deeply, thoroughly, and infrequently in the early morning or early evening to prevent rapid evaporation and water wasting.
- **CUT** a bouquet of dahlias to enjoy inside. Spiky, long blooming dahlias come in all sizes, colors, and shapes guaranteed to dazzle. If you don't grow dahlias, buy tubers for fall planting.
- **CONSERVE** water by pouring gray water from kitchens and showers in your outdoor yard. Every drop helps.
- **SAVE** seeds of fennel, arugula, onions, leeks, tomatoes, beans, marigolds, calendula, zinnia, sunflower, and cosmos to share with friends for next spring.
- **HARVEST** pears, blackberries, blueberries, apples, and elderberries. August is the perfect month to can jams, jellies, pickles, whole fruits, and vegetables.
- **LIGHT** the night with inexpensive solar lights available at garden centers to save on electricity.
- **ENJOY** the crayon colors of summer with the effervescent bougainvillea, the perky naked ladies, the sun-burst firecracker plants, and the calming agapanthus.
- **REFRAIN** from worrying about a brown lawn. Grasses go dormant in hot weather when not watered regularly, but they are not dead. Raise the blades of the mower higher to protect the roots and wait for winter greening. (Unless of course you prefer painted grass!)

Feed your eyes, ears, nose, and soul with a stroll in nature. The garden is a warehouse of nourishment beyond food. Love summer!

Happy gardening and happy growing!

Cynthia Brian



Cynthia Brian

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# Lamorinda's Leading Independent Real Estate Firm

## ORINDA



New Listing

**19 Mira Loma Road** A truly delightful 2bd/2ba of apx. 1600sf built in 1940's represents traditional properties built on the knolls overlooking the Club. Naturally light & bright. Walk to town, Lake Cascade or the Club. **\$875,000**

## ORINDA



New Listing

**345 Camino Sobrante** Updated 4bd/3ba, 3301sf contemp. on .55ac in primo country club loc. Spacious great rm, updated kitchen; hdwd flrs; lower lvl guest apt w/priv. entr; level lawn; close to BART & Top Schools. **\$1,250,000**

## ORINDA



**62 Van Tassel Lane** Charm abounds in this 4bd/3.5ba, 3422sf traditional on .68 acre in Sleepy Hollow. Formal LR & DR; eat-in kitchen/ family combo; master retreat with large separate office; and den/study room. **\$1,295,000**

## ORINDA



**155 Amber Valley** Orinda Downs 3bd/2.5ba, 2506sf custom trad. on 1.55ac cul-de-sac; formal LR & DR; updated eat-in kitchen opens to FR; lrg paver patio w/outdr kit., pool & fire pit; downstairs bonus room. **\$1,395,000**

## ORINDA



New Listing

**28 Moraga Via** Glorietta 4bd/3.5ba lovingly maint. & lux. upgraded. Gourmet kit. w/cherry cabs, granite & SS. Newly added mstr w/walk-in clst, granite & jetted tub. Solar htd pool, sprts crt, tree hse, patio, views. **\$1,399,000**

## ORINDA



New Price

**36 Linda Vista** Country Club neighborhood beauty & convenience combine in this 5bd/5.5ba of over 3098 sf incl. "Nanny" unit & sep. 1bd/1ba cottage. Beyond belief sunset views + incredible design style. **\$1,439,000**

## ORINDA



New Listing

**7 La Encinal** Move in ready 4bd/3ba home w/large rms +great light, abundance of wndws. Vaulted ceilings, hdwd flrs + updated kitchen & baths. Family rm off kit. opens to level area. Deluxe master suite. **\$1,455,000**

## ORINDA



New Price

**2 Los Altos Road** Experience living on private .27ac lush setting in sought-after Country Club area. Remodeled 4bd/2.5ba of apx. 3035sf. Vaulted ceilings, kitchen/ fam rm, deluxe master ste. Beautifully landscaped. **\$1,549,000**

## ORINDA



New Listing

**176 Lombardy Lane** Exceptional family 5bd/3.5ba w/fabulous floor plan for comfortable living + entertaining. Large chef's kitchen w/adj. fam rm. Main floor rooms open to spectacular yard from French doors. **\$2,100,000**

## ORINDA



**81 Mossbridge Lane** Beautifully updated approx. 4700 sf, 6bd/5.5ba Traditional Orinda Downs gem! Form meets function in this exquisite home perched on a private lane. This is the home you have been waiting for! **\$2,650,000**

## MORAGA



**4 Wandel Drive** New landscaping, two new bathrooms, three bedrooms, hardwood floors. Great location! **\$975,000**

## MORAGA



New Listing

**50 San Pablo Court** Rare opportunity to live in The Bluffs. 5bd/3ba, 3085sf fully updated trad. w/ideal spaces for family living at its best. Large private level bckyd along w/cul de sac loc. makes for perfect home. **\$1,599,000**

## LAFAYETTE



New Listing

**1023 Windsor Drive** Beautiful renovated 4+bd/3ba with incredible attention to detail! Remodeled chef's kitchen & fabulous master suite, office/ gym, gleaming hardwood floors & great outdoor living with pool. **\$1,396,000**

## LAFAYETTE



New Listing

**3 Oliveira Lane** Two story charming Eastern Colonial on Laf. trail, beautifully detailed, updated, fabulous kitchen/family room, office. Large level .95 acre w/gorgeous private yard, pool, garden, lawns. **\$2,395,000**

## DANVILLE



New Listing

**544 El Capitan Drive** Great curb appeal! Spacious traditional Danville Station home w/large master suite, formal dining rm, living rm w/vaulted ceilings, family rm w/fireplace and wonderful patio & lawn. **\$899,000**

## WALNUT CREEK



New Listing

**20 Iron Horse Lane** Sophisticated 1bd/2ba townhome in great location, walk to BART, shopping & trail. Dramatic high ceilings, gourmet Kitchen, large Master Suite with office space. Great value! **\$479,000**



## THE VILLAGE ASSOCIATES:

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