

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 09 Issue 2 Wednesday, March 25, 2015



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D13

Holding Back the Moving Earth

Retaining walls work to hold things in place

By Chris Lavin



Rick Barnette of Dig This inspects his work for the day at a home in Orinda.

Photos Chris Lavin

There are not many absolutes in life, but suffice it to say that on one topic – retaining walls – no one, but no one ever opens a conversation with a good story. The words: “Wow! I just put a new retaining wall on my property, and it was a great experience! I absolutely loved it! It was so fun,” could be something out of a science fiction novel. A story, perhaps, where gravity is not a factor.

That is because no one has fun, or loves to replace or build retaining walls at their homes and properties. Often, however, it must be done. “Oh, I could

tell you some stories,” said Pat Ward, the proprietor of Dig This Inc., a company that does its share of retaining walls and deals with homeowners whose soil is shifting. “Some of them aren’t so good. But lots of them are good. Most are good.”

Even the name, Dig This, Ward chose for his company reflects an attempt at humor in often troubling situations. “The name came to me in the shower,” Ward said.

Ward lost one of his legs in a motorcycle accident years ago, for instance, and he does not let it slow him down one single bit. “That was a long time ago,” he

said, deftly picking up something that had fallen off a Bobcat earthmover. “I don’t even think about it anymore.” He’s also a professional arm wrestler, which is worthy of a story unto itself. For the meantime, he’s using his prowess to build walls.

And he gets a lot of work done. The Lamorinda area is full of shifting soil and rock types – clays, mud, loam, chert, and the list of geology terms goes on – and gravity tends to make those elements flow downward, toward houses, driveways, buildings. Sometimes even the houses themselves risk misplacement.

“People can find themselves in some rough situations,” Ward said. “It’s not that they want to do the work, but they have to.”

Exacerbating the problem with houses in Lamorinda are the natural features that surround us all – many of us live on hills, or slopes downhill or uphill, created by the oceans and volcanic activity that preceded us thousands of years ago. Sometimes we think that the earth is static, and when we move in, that’s the way things are going to stay.

“People really don’t know what their dirt is going to do,” Ward noted. Enough said.

Paula of Orinda, who did not want her last name in the paper, had no idea what she was getting into when she contracted Dig This to fix her back yard and driveway. She lives at the bottom of a slight valley with houses on all sides, and the valley drains into a small creek. As rains came and gravity worked its magic, she found that her neighbors’ properties were gradually flowing onto hers, and unless she did something, her house would eventually be underground. So she hired a company to put in retaining walls. Her adventure then began.

... continued on page D4

THE *Beaubelle* GROUP



JUST LISTED ~ WALK TO SCHOOLS AND PARK

Nestled in one of Moraga's more popular neighborhoods, this four-bedroom, three-bath home with approx. 2740 sq ft sits on a third of an acre with a sprawling backyard and welcoming curb appeal. Moraga offers top performing schools, lovely parks and so much more.

Offered at \$1,249,000

GLENN AND KELLIE BEAUBELLE
925.254.1212
TheBeaubelleGroup.com

CABRE# 00678426, 01165322



Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	8	\$750,000	\$2,550,000
MORAGA	3	\$900,000	\$1,160,000
ORINDA	4	\$507,000	\$1,307,000

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

- 3337 Carlyle Terrace, \$1,340,000, 4 Bdrms, 1753 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 2-10-15;
Previous Sale: \$650,000, 05-31-00
- 26 Camino Court, \$1,356,500, 4 Bdrms, 3913 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 2-9-15;
Previous Sale: \$1,125,000, 10-29-03
- 529 Florence Drive, \$750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1116 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 2-12-15;
Previous Sale: \$410,000, 06-01-01
- 9 My Road, \$880,000, 2 Bdrms, 2019 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 2-10-15
- 3540 Oconner Drive, \$1,485,000, 3 Bdrms, 2367 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 2-10-15
- 1700 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,500,000, 2 Bdrms, 1677 SqFt, 1943 YrBlt, 2-6-15;
Previous Sale: \$975,000, 04-10-13
- 7 Sessions Road, \$2,550,000, 4110 SqFt, 1999 YrBlt, 2-13-15;
Previous Sale: \$2,000,000, 09-05-12
- 4018 Tilden Lane, \$1,900,000, 4 Bdrms, 2668 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 2-10-15

MORAGA

- 127 Hardie Drive, \$1,160,000, 4 Bdrms, 2176 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 2-9-15
- 118 Oxford Drive, \$900,000, 5 Bdrms, 1967 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 2-5-15;
Previous Sale: \$426,000, 02-27-90
- 1 Ross Drive, \$975,000, 4 Bdrms, 1716 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 2-11-15;
Previous Sale: \$40,000, 02-25-71

ORINDA

- 22 Alder Walk, \$1,307,000, 2-12-15
- 241 Camino Pablo, \$700,000, 3 Bdrms, 1130 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 2-13-15;
Previous Sale: \$490,000, 08-22-01
- 18 Ichabod Lane, \$935,000, 3 Bdrms, 1527 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 2-11-15;
Previous Sale: \$750,000, 10-23-02
- 52 Underhill Road, \$507,000, 2 Bdrms, 1114 SqFt, 1930 YrBlt, 2-2-15;
Previous Sale: \$260,000, 04-05-13



Quinn Berg

Broker Associate

Direct: 925.765.2996

quinn.berg@camoves.com

www.quinnberg.com

CalBRE #01872891



©2015 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage office is owned by a subsidiary of NRT LLC. CalBRE License # 01908304

JUST LISTED & COMING SOON

Beautiful Lafayette Remodel



- 4BR/3.5BA
- 2900± sq. ft.

843 Las Trampas Road, Lafayette



- Spanish Hacienda
- Offered at \$1,695,000

761 Tofflemire Drive, Lafayette



- 1.55± Acre Lot
- Offered at \$1,599,000

Prime Court Location

**BURTON VALLEY
COMING SOON**

- 4BR/2BA
- 2700± sq. ft. on .5± acres

1106 Upper Happy Valley Road, Lafayette



- Gorgeous Remodel
- Offered at \$1,680,000

6 Arbolado Court, Orinda



- Mediterranean Remodel
- Offered at \$1,050,000

238 The Knoll, Orinda



- 2BR/2BA
- 1534± sq. ft. view

839 Ava Court, Lafayette



- Quiet Court in Trail
- Offered at \$1,325,000

3166 Lucas Drive, Lafayette



- Country Quiet
- Offered at \$1,195,000

Upper Happy Valley



- 3BR/3BA + Cottage
- Total Remodel

Burton Valley Contemporary



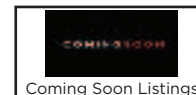
- Douglah Designs Kitchen
- Offered at \$1,375,000

The Best of Lafayette



- Built in 1990, 3171± sq. ft.
- Offered at \$1,695,000

To see these and other coming soon listings
go to KurtPiperGroup.com and click coming soon.



Kurt Piper



Christine Gallegos

Leslie Piper



415.606.2047



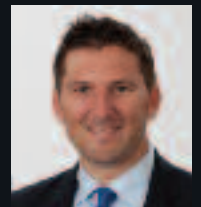
415.990.4929

Amy Price

Scott Sans



925.997.6808



925.216.7583

**RANKED IN THE
TOP 1% OF REALTORS IN
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**



KURT PIPER GROUP

REALTORS RECOMMENDED FOR A REASON

**PACIFIC
UNION**

**CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE**

**Kurt Piper
925.818.8000**

Kurt@KurtPiperGroup.com

www.KurtPiperGroup.com

License #: 01130308



Kyle Davis

Mortgage Consultant/Owner/Partner

Lamorinda Resident Since 1995

CalBRE License #01111347/NMLS #274107

Direct: 925-314-5299 Kyle@Stonecastle-LHF.com

319 Diablo Rd., Ste 103 • Danville • CalBRE Lic. # 01327738, NMLS#280803

RATES ARE NEAR ALL TIME LOWS!
30 YEAR FIXED RATE TO \$4,000,000!
3.875% / 3.990% APR
GREAT CONFORMING RATES!

	Fixed Rates to \$417,000		Fixed Rates to \$625,500	
	RATE	APR	RATE	APR
30 Year Fixed	3.750%	3.750%	3.875%	3.875%
15 Year Fixed	3.000%	3.000%	3.250%	3.250%

"PROVIDING PREMIER LOAN PRODUCTS AND SERVICE FROM THE MOST EXPERIENCED AND SOLUTION-ORIENTED PROFESSIONALS IN YOUR COMMUNITY."

Call 925-314-5299 for Today's Quote!

This is not a loan commitment, nor is it a guarantee of any kind. This comparison is based solely on estimated figures and information available at the time of production. Interest rate is subject to borrower and property qualifying.
 Stonecastle Land and Home Financial, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Lender.



WWW.HOLCENBERG.COM

Client satisfaction: a family tradition

We know
 Lamorinda like the
 back of our hand.

And we know
 how to get you top
 dollar with the
 least stress.



Wendy Holcenberg
 wendy@holcenberg.com

925.253.4630
 CalBRE#00637795

Michelle Holcenberg
 michelle@holcenberg.com

925.253.4663
 CalBRE#01373412



Holding Back the Moving Earth

... continued from page D1

"I got a call at work and they said, 'We had to move some stuff around, so you don't have a driveway right at the moment,'" Paula said. She came home to find mounds and mounds of detritus filling up her front yard. It has since been removed, or put back – and her property is now protected for a hundred years or so – but the whole project was a mind-bending experience of working with neighbors about their swimming pools, their soil drift, their lack of vegetation to hold soil in place so that it doesn't flow right into the creek or into her yard.

"I had no idea that we would have such a problem when we moved in," she said.

Once homeowners find out they need to replace or put in a retaining wall, dealing with city officials to obtain permits can be as frustrating as watching the slopes slip. In Lafayette, for instance, four separate agencies or offices have to sign off on the plans before construction (or reconstruction) even starts. Until all the offices sign off, construction cannot even begin without the possibility of a neighbor phoning in to complain about work being done without permits.

"We make sure all the paperwork is in place before we start," said Ward. "There are setbacks and variances that have to be met to get permits. It's a process that takes a while, sometimes, but we get it done."



The homeowner of this house in Orinda got a call from her retaining wall contractor who said, "Um, you won't have a driveway for a while."

Photos Chris Lavin

50 Corte María, Moraga



Offered at \$1,549,000

Open Saturday & Sunday, 1-4

Rare newer construction on a coveted Moraga cul de sac, this fantastic 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath single story home circa 2001 offers an easy lifestyle with a wonderful floorplan and outstanding indoor-outdoor access.



Terri Bates Walker

Broker

925.253.6441

www.terribateswalker.com

terri@terribateswalker.com

CalBRE #01330081



Giving Dreams an Address





BRYDON&IVES
 TWICE THE SELLING POWER

*Privacy and Spectacular Views in
 Orinda Downs*



Orinda Downs Contemporary nestled in to the hills. Privacy abounds in this 3500+/- sf. 4 bedroom, 3.5 bath home surrounded by majestic oaks. **Listed at: \$1,688,000**

Coming Soon

Beautiful Burton Valley Home

Tucked back into the serene hills of Lafayette at the end of a private cul-de-sac, this beautiful remodeled home welcomes you with a tranquil & inviting setting. Enjoy the 3BD/2.5BA main house as well as the wonderful au-pair/guest unit/apartment over the garage with a separate entrance, full bath & mini kitchen. This stunning 2,784+/- sf. home offers a plethora of amenities including a wonderful open floor plan, beautiful chef's Kitchen, cherry hardwood floors, vaulted ceilings in the elegant living room, sophisticated master suite, oversize deck area for entertaining and a private backyard with custom built chicken coop, vegetable/herb gardens, flat play area & beautiful landscaping. **Call for more information.**

Lisa Brydon 925.285.8336 | Kristi Ives 925.788.8345

CalBRE#: 01408025
 CalBRE#: 01367466

www.BrydonIvesTeam.com
 BrydonIvesTeam@apr.com



Two Great Orinda Properties!



64 Bates Boulevard
 Offered at \$1,299,000

Located in the heart of Orinda, this approx. 2,741 sq. ft. home sits on .60 of an acre. This contemporary home, with 5 bedrooms, 3 baths & office, boasts vaulted ceilings, lovely hardwood floors, and beautiful outdoor spaces with views of the hills.



649 Ironbark Circle
 Offered at \$1,325,000

Located in Orindawoods, this lovely approx. 2,494 sq. ft. home features open beamed ceilings, glass walls in the living room, custom tiled floors, spacious kitchen, private master suite, a large atrium deck and a gorgeous pool.



Nancy Stryker
 925.890.6911
 www.TheBeaubelleGroup.com
 BRE #01290002



©2014 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned by a Subsidiary of NRT LLC. Real estate agents affiliated with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage are independent contractor sales associates and are not employees of Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage or NRT LLC. CalBRE License #01308304.

Build Your Lafayette Dream Home



3355 Hillside Terrace, Lafayette

Enjoy tranquil views of the Reliez Valley and the colorful western sky to the west from this expansive, gently sloping .87± acre lot, set amongst beautiful estate caliber homes. Close to town, Springhill Elementary, Acalanes High School, freeways and BART, yet worlds away within a serene country setting.

Offered at \$649,000 | Please Call for More Information



Ron Rothenberg, MBA Marketing & Finance
Susan Rothenberg
925.286.5530

License #: 01309986 | 00857547

TeamRothenberg.com | info@TeamRothenberg.com



Palatial Hillside Retreat

Open House
March 28-29
1:00-4:00 PM



This home features stunning architecture, 3,90 Sqft, 4 Beds, 3.5 Baths and 2.2 acres of pristine views.

28 Camino Court, Lafayette www.28CaminoCt.com



Ken Marson & Cristina Candelori
J. Rockcliff Realtors
925-366-8269
BRE#01258364/01922446



Patti Camras

I believe in the art of living well.

3171 Surmont Drive, Lafayette



DOWN-SIZING or UP-SIZING... This home is the right size for you! Nestled on a private .69 acre parcel, this one-level jewel has a Southern Exposure and boasts 3 bedrooms, 3 baths & approximately 2173 square feet. This 1960's rancher proves the power of "Love at First Sight." It features an expanded Master Retreat with its own side yard + hot tub, hardwood floors, a gracious floor plan that inspires entertaining and a completely flat backyard. Virtual Tour at www.3171Surmont.com

Offered at \$1,149,000



PATTI CAMRAS
REALTOR®

CalBRE# 01156248

925-899-9282

patti.camras@camoves.com
5 Moraga Way, Orinda

www.patticamras.com

THE
ART
REAL ESTATE



©2015 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company, Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned by a Subsidiary of NRT LLC. Real estate agents affiliated with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage are independent contractor sales associates and are not employees of Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage or NRT LLC. CalBRE License #01908304.

Should you remodel before selling your home?

2015 Cost vs. Value Remodeling

		Project Cost	Resale Value	Cost Recouped
Bathroom Addition	MidRange	\$52,643	\$53,265	101%
	UpScale	91,164	89,057	98%
Kitchen Remodel	Midrange	69,359	75,493	109%
	Upscale	134,874	120,563	89%
Window Replacement	Midrange	12867	13640	106%
	Upscale	16406	18624	113%
Roofing Replacement	Midrange	25967	29710	114%
	Upscale	51123	49,290	96%
Garage Door Replacement		1942	3067	158%
		3298	5150	156%

To obtain a full report of Cost vs. Value for a wide range of projects, please contact us. We can advise you on which projects will get you the greatest return on your investment.

Frank Woodward

Tina Jones

925-330-2620

WoodwardJonesTeam.com

*Two Masters Providing
World Class Service*



CalBRE#01335916/0885925 ©2015 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned by a Subsidiary of NRT LLC. Real estate agents affiliated with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage are independent contractor sales associates and are not employees of Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage or NRT LLC. CalBRE License #01908304.



774 Crossbrook Drive, Moraga

This beautifully updated 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom home is ideally located on a secluded 1.12± acre knoll-top setting with breathtaking valley views. The large level fenced yard has lush lawns, decks, aggregate walkways, a huge side yard and plenty of room for expansion. Just minutes from Moraga Commons Park, the regional hiking/biking trail, shopping, restaurants, the BART bus & top-rated Moraga schools (check availability).

Offered at \$1,249,000 • Call for more information



Paul & Virginia Ratto

925.998.9501

vvarni@pacunion.com

www.RattoandRatto.com

License #: 00900621 | 01361537



SK
Sheryl
Kortright

**Bringing SMILES to
Lamorinda Since 1986**

*As a former Orinda Family Dentist...
I've helped Lamorinda residents
(and their smiles) for over two decades...*

*And now, as an Orinda Realtor,
I'm still helping people smile!*

*When you're ready to 'sink
your teeth' into Lamorinda's
profitable Real Estate Market...
Let's talk!*



Sheryl Kortright
REALTOR®

CalBRE #1956426

Cell: 925.528.9798

Email: Sheryl@SherylKortright.com

Website: www.SherylKortright.com



©2015 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned by a Subsidiary of NRT LLC. Real estate agents affiliated with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage are independent contractor sales associates and are not employees of Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage or NRT LLC. CalBRE License #01908304.



SUE DIMAGGIO ADAMS

suerca@aol.com

925-207-9219

CalBRE# 00820932

KATHIE DIMAGGIO STEIN

kathie@kathiestein.com

925-699-6258

CalBRE# 01942595

*Turning Your Dreams
into an Address.*



Rossmoor Realty
1641 Tice Valley Blvd.
Walnut Creek, CA 94595

ROSSMOOR
DO YOU
KNOW PARADISE
EXISTS
RIGHT HERE
IN THE
EAST BAY??



Visit and Talk to
Your Rossmoor Specialists.

ROSSMOOR

Jim Colhoun Presents
Iconic Orinda Home

Residents of Orinda's desirable Glorietta neighborhood are readily familiar with one of the most distinctive properties in the area. Now for the first time ever, 102 Meadow View Road comes to the market March 27, 2015. Built in 1990 on a level .40 acre lot, this East Coast traditional style home has been recently refreshed and re-energized. This is a home where lifetime memories are created and where outdoor weddings and memorable parties will be treasured. Rarely is a home with this magical combination of space and structure available. Open Saturday and Sunday March 28 and 29 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Property is listed at \$1,995,000. Contact Jim Colhoun at 925.200.2795 for more information or to arrange a private showing.

Open Saturday and Sunday
March 28 and 29 from 10 am to 4 pm



Jim Colhoun

Relocation & Home
Marketing Specialist
CalBRE# 01029160

www.JimColhoun.com

925.200.2795



Virtual Tour at www.102MeadowView.com

Neighborhood Preview With Wine and Cheese
Thursday, March 26 4:00-7:00pm

**Better
Homes
and Gardens**
REAL ESTATE

MASON-McDUFFIE

89 Davis Rd, Suite 100, Orinda

Mid-Century Contemporary in Burton Valley



Updated throughout, freshly painted, gorgeous pool, chef's kitchen. Oversized lot with privacy. Entertainer's Dream with easy indoor-outdoor flow.

Call for pricing



Tom Stack

Mobile: (925) 878-9964
tom.stack@camoves.com
www.TomStack.com

BRE#01501769



As VP of the Town Hall Theatre's Board of Directors I am happy to support the Theatre and the Community by announcing the lineup for the

5th Annual Lafayette Community Music Festival.

This promises to be yet another musical extravaganza featuring local musicians who donate their time and talents in a benefit for Town Hall Theatre.

There will be a silent auction featuring rock and roll and sports memorabilia as well as donations from local businesses.

Tickets \$30.00 advance, \$35.00 at the door
Saturday, May 2nd. Doors 6:30/Show 7:30

Get your tickets today at www.TownHallTheatre.com

**5th ANNUAL
LAFAYETTE COMMUNITY
MUSIC FESTIVAL**
OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY - UNPLUGGED
MARK STANLEY ~ PAT NEVINS
KIKI STACK ~ CLIVE WORSLEY
MIKE MILLER ~ AND SPECIAL GUESTS
TOWN HALL THEATRE.COM 925.283.1557
SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2015
DOORS AT 6:30 ~ MUSIC AT 7:30
\$30 ADVANCE ~ \$35 AT-DOOR



To DIY or hire, that is the question

By Andi Peterson Brown

I don't know about you, but last night when I watched the same commercial from Lowe's four times in 30 minutes that kept telling me to Never Stop Improving, I have to say that it worked. They got me. All of a sudden I had a burning desire to improve something, anything. It was 9:15 at night but I wanted to jump in the car right then and there and drive to Lowe's to buy brushes and cans and sprays and plants and on and on and on...

They made it look so fun, so happy, and so relaxing to repaint the house, landscape the yard, and sandpaper the front porch. The sun was shining, everyone smiled as they worked – I mean how could you not want to sandpaper your front porch when it could bring such joy?

Sure there are lots of projects that are a-ok to stock up at Lowe's for and do-it-yourself, but many are better left to the professionals. So how do you know when to hire a professional? Hire a professional when:

- The project is elaborate or extensive. Adding on? Rebuilding kitchen cabinets? Call an expert.
- You just aren't handy with a hammer and never will be.
- You don't have the time. If you don't have the time, you will end up with 2/3 of a completed project. Trust me.



CalBRE# 01738605

andi
PETERSON
BROWN

A CB Top Producer
AndiBrownHomes.com
925.818.4588



real local • real knowledge • real value

©2015 Coldwell Banker Real Estate, LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate, LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned by a Subsidiary of NRT LLC. Real estate agents affiliated with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage are independent contractor sales associates and are not employees of Coldwell Banker Real Estate, LLC, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage or NRT LLC. CalBRE License #01908304.

Spring and Feng Shui

By Michele Duffy



The fresh green of spring is nicely expressed in this living room.

The Wood element and the fresh green color resembling jade governs spring in feng shui, and spring has sprung! Spring symbolizes colorful new growth, new projects, new friendships, new bonds, new beginnings and abundant health – especially when associated with the idea of family. You can think of your family as the roots of your being, your DNA, your very own new beginnings. Families are defined by the group that loves you unconditionally and may include your immediate family but also close friends or colleagues.

The Family, New Beginnings and Spring area on the Feng Shui Bagua is, from the front entrance door, the middle left area of your home or office. This is also the area that governs “little money,” or the paying of everyday bills. Oh, you say, how do I get that area moving? Easy. The number three is associated with this area, so since plants represent the wood element, place three small lucky jade plants, purple African or common purple violets on a desk or side table. Do so with the motivation and intention to

welcome upward growth in this area, to leave any difficulties of paying your daily bills in the past, and planting new possibilities for abundance moving forward. One can deepen the “activation” of the wood element that rules this area even further by choosing green pots for the plants.

Since moving water creates wood, the Family/New Beginnings area is excellent for a water feature. As long as that area is not a bedroom, a nice sounding upward directional indoor water fountain will get things moving nicely. Paint that area a soft but happy color of green to activate the wood element of spring, or place three images of a sunrise, a forest or bamboo in wooden frames on the wall. In the same area of your garden, place an outdoor water feature and a bamboo wind chime. Remember to minimize the metal in this location almost entirely, since metal is not a friend of wood and you do not want the vibrant upward growth and new beginnings of the spring season to be cut short.

... continued on page D12

JUST LISTED!

28 KELLIE ANN COURT, ORINDA



Opportunity in Glorietta! Private 4 bed/3 bath home with incredible views, large lot and open floor plan. Offered at \$1,199,000

COMING SOON!

15 SOUTHWOOD COURT, ORINDA



Orinda 1939 classic on approx .78 of an acre with gorgeous outdoor space. Walk to town!



Finola Fellner
925.890.7807
BRE #01428834



Suzi O'Brien
925.286.8520
BRE #01482496

©2014 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned by a Subsidiary of NRT LLC. Real estate agents affiliated with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage are independent contractor sales associates and are not employees of Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage or NRT LLC. CalBRE License #01908304.

Orinda & Lafayette's Finest!



Pending!
6 Abbott Court, Orinda



Coming Soon!
Fabulous Happy Valley Home!

This pristine one level home on cul-de-sac boasts fabulous traditional charm with ideal floor plan, gorgeous chef's kitchen/family great room, private master suite, and large formal spaces perfect for the entertainer! The guest house with vaulted ceilings, spacious kitchenette, lovely full bath and beautiful built-ins offers a perfect place for guests, au-pair, office. The gardens are magnificent: large level lawns, private pool with hot tub, spacious patio and beautiful mature trees.

Call for more information!



Finola
FELLNER
925.890.7807
www.FinolaFellner.com
BRE #01428834



©2014 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned by a Subsidiary of NRT LLC. Real estate agents affiliated with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage are independent contractor sales associates and are not employees of Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage or NRT LLC. CalBRE License #01908304.

Spring and Feng Shui

... continued from page D10



Green, the color of spring

Photos provided

Some of the other energetics of this Family and New Beginnings area include feeling more secure in all areas of your life. Activating this area can help you build a stronger foundation to help you meet life's challenges with more confidence and less stress, improve family relationships and bring more harmony into family matters, enhance your business and increase income, get a promotion, or create a situation where you always have the money to cover the bills. You can find emotional balance and stability, improve your physical and mental health, and make better choices in life.

The energy in our homes and gardens influences us in many meaningful ways, so with your own harmonious intentions, plant your gardens this spring with a mindful eye to all that you will be shifting anew, and welcome the wonder of the season with each new day of possibilities.



Michele Duffy, BTB M.F.S. is an Orinda resident who, since 1999, enjoys creating "Space as Medicine" Feng Shui one space at a time, as well as hiking in nature, cooking, and spending time with her family; Canyon Ranch Feng Shui Master, International Feng Shui Guild (IFSG) Red Ribbon Professional. To schedule a professional 2015 Feng Shui Consultation, contact Michele at (520) 647-4887 or send an email to spaceharmony@gmail.com.

WEALTH & PROSPERITY "Gratitude" REAR LEFT <u>Wood</u> Blues, purple & reds	FAME & REPUTATION "Integrity" REAR MIDDLE <u>Fire</u> Reds	LOVE & MARRIAGE "Receptivity" REAR RIGHT <u>Earth</u> Reds, pinks, & whites
HEALTH & FAMILY "Strength" MIDDLE LEFT <u>Wood</u> Blues & Greens	CENTER <u>"Earth"</u> Yellow & earth tones	CREATIVITY & CHILDREN "Joy" MIDDLE RIGHT <u>Metal</u> White & Pastels
KNOWLEDGE & SELF CULTIVATION "Stillness" FRONT LEFT <u>Earth</u> Black, blues & greens	CAREER "Depth" FRONT MIDDLE <u>Water</u> Black & dark tones	HELPFUL PEOPLE & TRAVEL "Synchronicity" FRONT RIGHT <u>Metal</u> White, grey & black

"Front Door"

Feng Shui Basics

Feng shui (or Wind and Water) is the practice of arranging your environment so that energy or "Qi" flows gently and smoothly through your home or business. The principles of feng shui are founded on traditional Chinese medicine, which is based on the dynamic opposites of yin and yang, together with the five elements (water, wood, fire, earth and metal) as well as form, landscape, space orientation and time. Feng shui is about creating a natural equilibrium, while promoting health, harmony, stability and prosperity. Feng shui is not a meditation practice, a religion or a New Age cult. In fact, its origins are thousands of years old. Feng shui is based on the concept that everything in your environment has a life force or energy called "Qi." Just as Qi flows through your body, Qi also flows your through living environment. When the energy flow is stagnant, stuck, obstructed or moves too quickly, unbalanced Qi may lead to ill health, domestic strife or financial concerns. Professional feng shui advice, adjustments and blessings help create nurturing energy in the spaces and places we spend the most time in, our homes and offices. The goal is sustainable good luck, good health, harmonious relationships and prosperity.

Digging Deep - Gardening with Cynthia Brian

Paradise Found

"God has given us a world that nothing but our own folly keeps from being a paradise." – George Bernard Shaw



Plant a few bird of paradise to enjoy the feeling of the tropics.

Photos Cynthia Brian

For many people, including myself, sometime between February and March, I have an insatiable urge to experience the exotic romance of a tropical island. I want to feel the sand between my toes, listen to the waves pounding against the shore, smell the seaweed-tainted salt air and soak up the sun. I yearn to snorkel with turtles, swim with sharks and perfume my

hair with plumeria. As winter wanes and spring sprouts, hammocks beckon. In paradise, the landscape is lush with flowers, trees, and vines that we normally only experience in botanical gardens. But what if we can't take a trip to a fantasy island? How can we plant a piece of paradise in our personal places to release that fabulous feeling of leisure?

Here is a smattering of simple ways that you can plant the aloha spirit into your spring swing.

Palms

Nothing says "tropical" more than palm trees! When I built my home in Lamorinda, the first two trees I planted in containers were palms. Now planted at the top of my driveway, the two lovers are well over 30 feet, their fronds swaying in the wind to welcome me home. There are numerous varieties of palms to choose from including lady, queen, date, coconut, bamboo, sago and many more, depending on what you desire in height, hardiness, leaf structure and upkeep.

Bird of Paradise

When my daughter and I went on "the college tour," what enamored her most about San Diego were sunshine, surf, palm trees and birds of paradise – four ingredients of kick back island living. Hardy in zones 9-12, bird of paradise are remarkably easy to grow in our area as long as the plants get four or more hours of direct sunlight with good drainage. They prefer temperatures of 50 degrees and above, but I've had no problem growing them even when the thermometer dips below freezing. If planted from seed, they will take seven or more years to bloom, otherwise, expect to wait three or four years. They afford exquisite, long lasting cut flowers.

Hibiscus



Tuck a pink hibiscus in your hair.

When you are looking for high impact tropical flair with low maintenance, you can't beat the show-stopping hibiscus. Easy to grow and available in a kaleidoscope of colors, hibiscus enjoys temperatures up to the 90s but doesn't do so well under 30 degrees. Hibiscus can be trimmed into gorgeous hedges or used as a moveable container plant.

Ferns

When we think of ferns, we often are reminded of redwood forests or Victorian parlors. In the rain forests, many varieties of ferns grow wild in filtered light where they thrive on humidity and moisture. Propagated by spores, I grow maidenhair, walking, sword and other hardy ferns in my outdoor landscape, using them often in my floral arrangements. ... continued on page D14

DESIGN
INSTALLATION
IRRIGATION
DRAINAGE
STONWORK
CONCRETE WORK
DECKS
FENCES
PATIOS
LAWNS
PONDS
CLEANUP &
HAULING

BLUE RIDGE



LANDSCAPE COMPANY INC.

BLUE JAY FELDMAN
OWNER/OPERATOR

WWW.BLUERIDGELC.COM

925-258-9233

CELL: 510-847-6160



LICENSED
INSURED
Lic# 818633

Digging Deep - Gardening with Cynthia Brian

Paradise Found

... continued from page D13



A traveler's tree looks like a banana tree but is really a bird of paradise

Traveler's Tree

I bet this specimen stumps you! *Ravenala madagascariensis* was named because its long leaf sheaths accumulate a quart of water, often used for drinking in emergencies by travelers. This Madagascar native has a trunk that resembles a palm and fronds that look like banana leaves, yet it is a member of the bird of paradise family boasting white flowers. In the tropics, the traveler's tree will grow to 30 feet, but in my three large ceramic deck pots, it reaches a perfect height of about eight feet, dying back in a winter freeze.

Bromeliads

What is not to love about these perennial monocotyledons? In tropical settings, we see them attached to trees, structures, or growing like pineapples. In California, they are usually used as houseplants requiring minimal maintenance. They thrive outdoors in the heat as long as the weather remains above freezing. Their brilliant bracts maintain color for six months or more and each rosette blooms only once. As the mother is dying, pups are born, repeating the cycle. Fill the cup



Pineapples are bromeliads. Bromeliads are easy and beautiful.

on the top of your bromeliad with water when necessary without watering the soil.

Anthuriums

Originally from Central and South American tropical rain forests, now a mainstay in the Hawaiian Islands, anthuriums flourish with heat, humidity, filtered light and good drainage. Colors include red, pink, white, orange and green. Combine them with other tropicals for a rich tapestry of vacation envy.

Jungle Fowl

In the islands, jungle fowl roam freely. The magnificently feathered roosters are protective of their girls and offspring. Chickens are the domesticated version of these jungle birds. Although the boys may not be welcome in your neighborhood, the hens will deliver fresh eggs while fertilizing and tilling your landscape. Peacocks are another beautiful bird in paradise. I grew up raising chickens and peacocks. While my egg business paved the way to my college education, the peacocks provided endless entertainment with their constant preening around anyone or anything they perceived to be female, including our ornamental cement ducks.

Koi Pond

Experience the luxury of getting up close and personal with friendly, curious, colorful fish by installing a koi pond, probably the most popular of all garden installations. With proper filtering, aerating and feeding, you will enjoy years of exotic water entertainment.



For water enjoyment, entertain a koi pond.

These are just a few ways to bring a slice of foreign fun to your home. There are hundreds of dramatic plants to introduce into your tropical design including begonias, orchids, amaryllis, bamboo, lilies, bougainvillea, mandevillas and vines of every sort. Keep in mind that many of the indoor plants we purchase at our favorite nursery or garden center are actually grown in the wild in tropical climates. Even if you don't decide to create a tropical paradise outside, you can always transport the tropics indoors to enjoy a bit of paradise. Finally, don't forget the importance of a water feature and attracting the birds.

Spring has sprung so why not bring the romance, adventure and luxury of a vacation hideaway to your piece of heaven. Kick off your mud boots, grab your flip flops and sun tan lotion, tuck a bright pink hibiscus blossom in your hair and find paradise in your continental backyard.

Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Reminders



Anthuriums are available in multiple colors.

CHECK out the new science based app, Tomato MD, which helps gardeners identify more than 35 diseases, insects or disorders of tomatoes. The demo version is free; the full version is \$2.99 from Apple App store or Google Play.

ALLOW spent daffodils and narcissus to dry as they are. Do not cut or you won't have any flowers next season.

PICK bouquets of freesia, bearded iris, and jasmine for a fragrant centerpiece.

ADD nitrogen to boost the growth of all your plants.

COME to the Be the Star You Are!® Book Bash Blow Out on April 25 at 5A Rent A Space to pick up your free seeds and complimentary potpourri. For information, visit <http://ow.ly/K3zXG>.



©2015

Cynthia Brian
The Goddess Gardener
Starstyle® Productions, llc
Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com
www.GoddessGardener.com
925-377-STAR

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

**ADVANCE
TREE SERVICE
& Landscaping**

Lic.: #611120

Family owned in Moraga since 1987



Your friendly neighborhood arborists Darren and Lew Edwards

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.

Advance Tree Service

Your Authority on Trees and Landscape.



925-376-6528

advancetree@sbcglobal.net www.advancetree.com

*Follow us on Twitter (advancetree) and like us on Face Book
(ADVANCETREESERVICEANDLANDSCAPINGINC.)*

McDonnell Nursery

shop now to receive McDonnell bucks

family owned since 1933

Trees • Shrubs • Vines • Annuals • Perennials
Vegetables • Containers • Statuary & Fountains
Indoor Plants • Decorative Items

www.mcdonnellnursery.com

196 Moraga Way • Orinda • (925) 254-3713 • Open Daily

Lamorinda's Leading Independent Real Estate Firm

ORINDA



New Listing

45 Donald Drive
Opportunity knocks, contractor special - 2 story 6bd/2.5ba 2898 sq. ft. house on .69 acres. Wonderful views, central location, walk to ridge hiking trails and open space. **\$849,000**

ORINDA



Coming Soon

85 Oak Road Light & bright 3bd/2.5ba 2,131sf 2 story craftsman features wonderful views, fully remodeled gourmet kitchen w/soapstone counters, new roof, HW flrs, trex decking & lots of play space. **\$1,100,000**

ORINDA



New Listing

169 Overhill Road Super mid-century appeal stylish & well designed. One level living w/ floor to ceiling windows, vaulted ceilings. Gorgeous courtyard w/lawn, oversized deck. Bonus office/studio. **\$1,189,000**

ORINDA



New Listing

62 Van Tassel Lane Great Sleepy Hollow opportunity w/exceptional value price per sq.ft. 4bd/3.5ba, abundance of space, easy access outside. Kitchen/family room combo, close to Swim/Tennis Club. **\$1,279,000**

ORINDA



73 Scenic Drive Fabulous Glorietta 6486 sf spacious home tucked on a private .82 acre lot with a view. Complete with 5 bedrooms, 6 baths, 2 family rooms, level lawns, private decks, 3 car garage. **\$2,395,000**

ORINDA



New Listing

134 Crestview Drive Private Orinda Hills renovated 1948 Spanish retreat w/apx. 4000sf, 4+bd/3.5ba on sun-splashed apx. two acre setting. Outdoor kitchen, large level yard & near top-rated Orinda schools. **\$2,995,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

176 Miramonte Drive Light, bright, updated & lovely special Miramonte Gardens townhome w/3bd +bonus room. Indoor laundry, wood floors, new double paned windows, kitchen opens to fenced patio. **\$645,000**

MORAGA



740 Country Club Drive Serene lagoon setting, sought after Moraga Country Club single level, 2bd/2ba plus den. Steps from pool, golf and tennis. **\$739,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

49 York Place
Corliss area home, hardwood floors, large family room, private backyard, cul-de-sac, minutes from school and shopping. Move-in ready. **\$1,195,000**

MORAGA



New Listing

50 Corte Maria Rare newer construction on coveted Moraga cul de sac, this fantastic 4bd/2.5ba single story home circa 2001 offers easy lifestyle w/wonderful flrpln & outstanding in-outdoor access. **\$1,549,000**

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

3393 Goyak Drive Wonderful traditional 4+bd/2.5ba on premium level .5ac at end of small court! Hdwd flrs, formal dining rm, family rm adj. spacious kitchen, pool & entertaining areas! Walk to schools. **\$1,288,000**

LAFAYETTE



3336 Springhill Road Expanded in 2004 including kitchen & baths. 3000+ square foot home, .6 acres - private creekside location. Large lawn and great outdoor living, minutes from schools. **\$1,639,000**

LAFAYETTE



23 Sessions Road Gated English Manor 12.18 acre 5bd/6ba Estate. Grand foyer, living, family rms + "Club" rm, deluxe kitchen, dramatic solarium + executive office. Gorgeous grounds w/lap pool/lawns, views. **\$3,895,000**

OAKLAND



New Listing

566 Athol Avenue Located in desirable Haddon Hill, this single story home has beautiful architectural details & charm. Close prox. to Lake Merritt, Grand Lake Theater, farmer's mkt, freeway access & more. **\$699,000**

WALNUT CREEK



Back on Market

0 Brodia Way Lot D Fabulous .92 acre lot in prestigious Walnut Creek neighborhood of La Casa Via. Expansive views of valley, hills & Mt. Diablo. All utilities underground in street. Build your dream home! **\$575,000**

WALNUT CREEK



New Listing

1519 Encanto Place Builder's own terrific home. Remodeled and expanded with great style! Custom built cabinets throughout. Gorgeous kitchen and baths with European style. **\$1,200,000**



THE VILLAGE ASSOCIATES:

Ashley Battersby
Patricia Battersby
Joan Cleveland
Shannon Conner
Joan Eggers
Linda Ehrlich
Joan Evans
Linda S. Friedman
Marianne Greene
Dexter Honens II
Anne Knight
Susan Zeh Layng
Art Lehman
Charles Levine
Erin Martin
April Matthews
Karen Murphy
Ben Olsen
Sue Olsen
Tara Rochlin
Jaime Roder
Altie Schmitt
Judy Schoenrock
Ann Sharf
Amy Rose Smith
Molly Smith
Jeff Snell
Lynda Snell
Clark Thompson
Angie Evans Traxinger
Ignacio Vega
Terri Bates Walker
Ann Ward
Dan Weil
Margaret Zucker



facebook.com/VillageAssociates

twitter.com/villageassoc

93 Moraga Way, Suite 103 • Orinda, CA 94563 • Phone: (925) 254-0505

Visit www.villageassociates.com Click on

Sunday Open Homes