

Into the Wilder-ness

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Brooks Street's Perry says that about 20 percent of Wilder's current residents are empty nesters.

Bresnik and Mallory fit this profile. Essentially empty nesters – Mallory's 27-year-old daughter has boomeranged home while she gets her career established – they claim to be Wilder's oldest residents. As the sixth to move there, next door to the very first occupants, they are certainly among the earliest. The younger residents tend to work for large tech companies like Sales Force, Paypal, and Survey Monkey, or in biotech. Many of the children attend nearby private schools, but some attend Orinda public schools and high schools in the Acalanes Union High School District. Buses are available for students of both public and private schools.

Both families extol Wilder's proximity to open space, and they make full use of it. Mallory says she and her daughter particularly enjoy hiking the winding trail between the development and neighboring Sibley Regional Park to get away from it all. The Vicencios make regular use of Wilder's local system of trails and paths to walk their two golden retrievers. The valley is home to a great many songbirds and raptors that are generally in view, and Mallory especially likes to watch the local flock of redwinged blackbirds doing aerobatics "at that magic time" before dusk.

To most of us who zip past Wilder on Highway 24, the most salient feature of the project is the growing group of five sports fields that cascade down from the



Photo Andy Scheck

top of the saddle separating the valley from the rest of the world. The fields, included in Wilder as a condition for building the development, are already busy, especially after school and on weekends. Michelle Lacy, Orinda's Director of Parks and Recreation, reports that they are used for youth and adult soccer, lacrosse, youth

and adult rugby, adult softball, youth baseball, and field hockey. She cites 2015 use by no less than 19 different sports organizations from both sides of the tunnel, including some from Berkeley and Martinez-Pleasant Hill.

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