Lamorinda

OURHOMES

Lamorinda Weekly

Volume 17

Issue 2 Wednesday, March 15, 2023



Tips on how to get organized

read on Page D4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

March into spring



Tulip magnolias and palms are an uncommon, yet gorgeous combination.

Photos Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian

"Rain, rain go away. Come again another day!" ~ Nursery Rhyme

Do you remember being a child tired of the winter mud puddles and anxious to go outside to play? As much as California has needed the downpours, I find myself reminiscing about the dreariest, grayest, coldest winter of my childhood when my sisters and I decided to run away from the farm to find the sunshine.

We were all under the age of 5 and on the

first rainless day in March we loaded our big red wagon with the most essential items ... our dolls, dinosaurs, pogo sticks, jump ropes, picture books, puzzles, miniature tool kit, hula hoops, Monopoly money (we thought it was real), rock collections, roller skates, and a shovel. Items like food, water, clothing, and blankets never crossed our minds. Our mom handed us a bag of sandwiches, and Dad suggested we take our dog for protection. We kissed our parents goodbye and told them we were off to wonderland.

My garden is my wonderland, and I am

antsy to start sowing. But, alas, the soil is still too damp and cold, so I have retreated to reading about resources for spring planning and planting. This is my way of marching into spring with increased knowledge while providing you with helpful information.

A book I highly recommend is by Susan Mulvihill, "The Vegetable Garden Problem Solver Handbook," which is chock full of easy-tounderstand data on how to identify and manage diseases and other common problems on edible plants with natural solutions. I interviewed her on my radio broadcast, StarStyle®-Be the Star You Are!® where you can listen to her advice (https://www.voiceamerica.com/ episode/142669/the-vegetable-garden-problemsolver-and-garden-guidance). Filled with hundreds of full-color photographs, many from her garden, and an extensive reference chart of problems with solutions, this book is an essential guide to pinpointing challenges and finding the answers quickly.

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Hang a basket of violas for instant color and a pop of excitement.





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Page: D2 OUR HOMES 925-377-0977 Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Lamorinda home sales recorded

| City | Last reported | Lowest amount | Highest amount |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| LAFAYETTE | 7 | \$900,000 | \$2,405,000 |
| MORAGA | 4 | \$574,500 | \$1,650,000 |
| ORINDA | 2 | \$1,065,000 | \$1,689,000 |

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

3106 Del Oceano Drive, \$1,335,000, 4 Bdrms, 1758 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 02-02-23 607 Laird Lane, \$999,000, 4 Bdrms, 2263 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 01-23-23 839 Las Trampas Road, \$900,000, 4 Bdrms, 1711 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 01-23-23 1141 North Thompson Road, \$1,007,000, 2 Bdrms, 1276 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 02-01-23

1064 Via Alta, \$1,280,000, 5 Bdrms, 3170 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 01-23-23

1001 Woodbury Road #201, \$2,405,000, 3 Bdrms, 2468 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 02-03-23, Previous Sale: \$2,200,000, 09-28-22 964 Yorkshire Court, \$1,860,000, 5 Bdrms, 2653 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 02-03-23 MORAGA

1966 Ascot Drive, \$710,000, 2 Bdrms, 1234 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 01-30-23,

Previous Sale: \$480,000, 04-14-22

2079 Ascot Drive #239, \$605,000, 2 Bdrms, 1193 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 02-01-23, Previous Sale: \$517,500, 07-13-18

17 Miramonte Drive, \$574,500, 4 Bdrms, 1762 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 01-30-23, Previous Sale: \$220,000, 04-01-90

308 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,650,000, 5 Bdrms, 2954 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 01-30-23, Previous Sale: \$1,475,000, 06-17-16

ORINDA

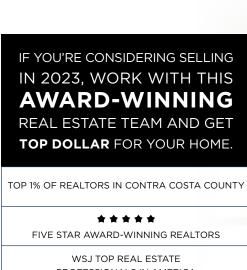
136 Spring Road, \$1,065,000, 2 Bdrms, 1667 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 01-31-23, Previous Sale: \$1,120,000, 02-17-22

32 Valencia Road, \$1,689,000, 5 Bdrms, 3202 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 01-24-23

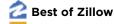
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Help! Why can't I stay organized?

OUR HOMES



Images Shutterstock

Installing pullouts in cabinets can help you use your space efficiently.

By Jennifer Raftis, CPO

Just in time for spring cleaning, I wanted to share some solutions that will help you stay organized and in control of your belongings.

In my experience, there are three key reasons that we have trouble keeping our homes organized – buying too much for your space, not using your space efficiently, and not maintaining your space regularly.

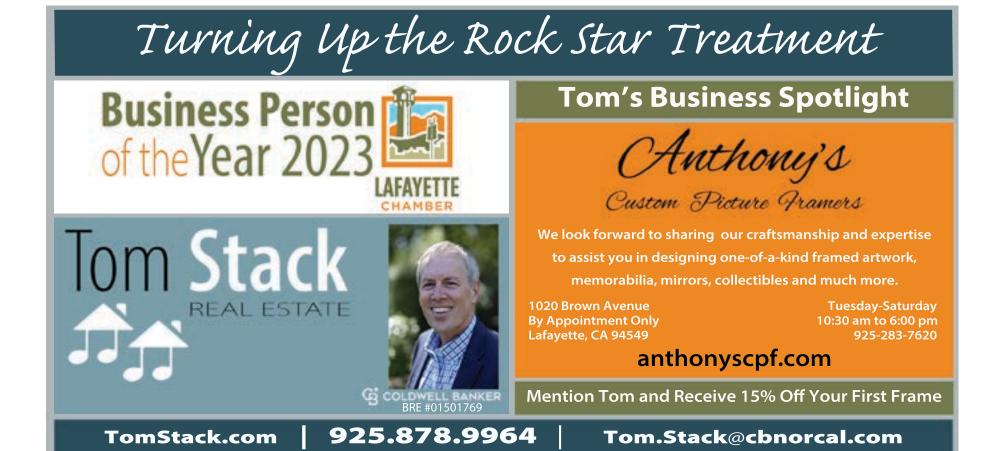
Are you over buying for your space?

One of the key reasons that most people can't stay organized starts outside the home (or on the computer ... hello, Amazon) when you make a purchase. We live in a culture of shopping and we are constantly tempted to buy things. Words like "get it now before it's gone" and "only on sale for 1 more day" create an urgency that we need to buy. It's a great marketing strategy for businesses and it definitely works. Hopefully, you will recognize it for what it is: a way to make you spend money.

I have read that 80% of us are in debt, carry at least three credit cards and a recent survey of teenagers rated their favorite pastime as shopping. More than ever, the things we own end up owning us.

Think before you buy or better yet, buy with intention. Asking yourself a few questions before you make a purchase might help you save money, the landfill, and the harmony in your home: Do I really need this? Do you have another item that will work instead or is this replacing something you already have? Where will I store it? Are my cabinets and drawers already full? Do I have room to put this away? Am I using my home as a warehouse for storage? Am I buying this because it's on sale? (This is the No. 1 reason people purchase items that they do not need or sometimes don't even want. Note: You save 100% on what you do not buy!) Can I afford this? Am I putting this purchase on a credit card? Do I really need to buy in bulk to save a few dollars? I have written about this before, but it's worth repeating. If you do not have the room to store large quantities of items - and the chaos in your home is making you crazy – is it really worth the savings?

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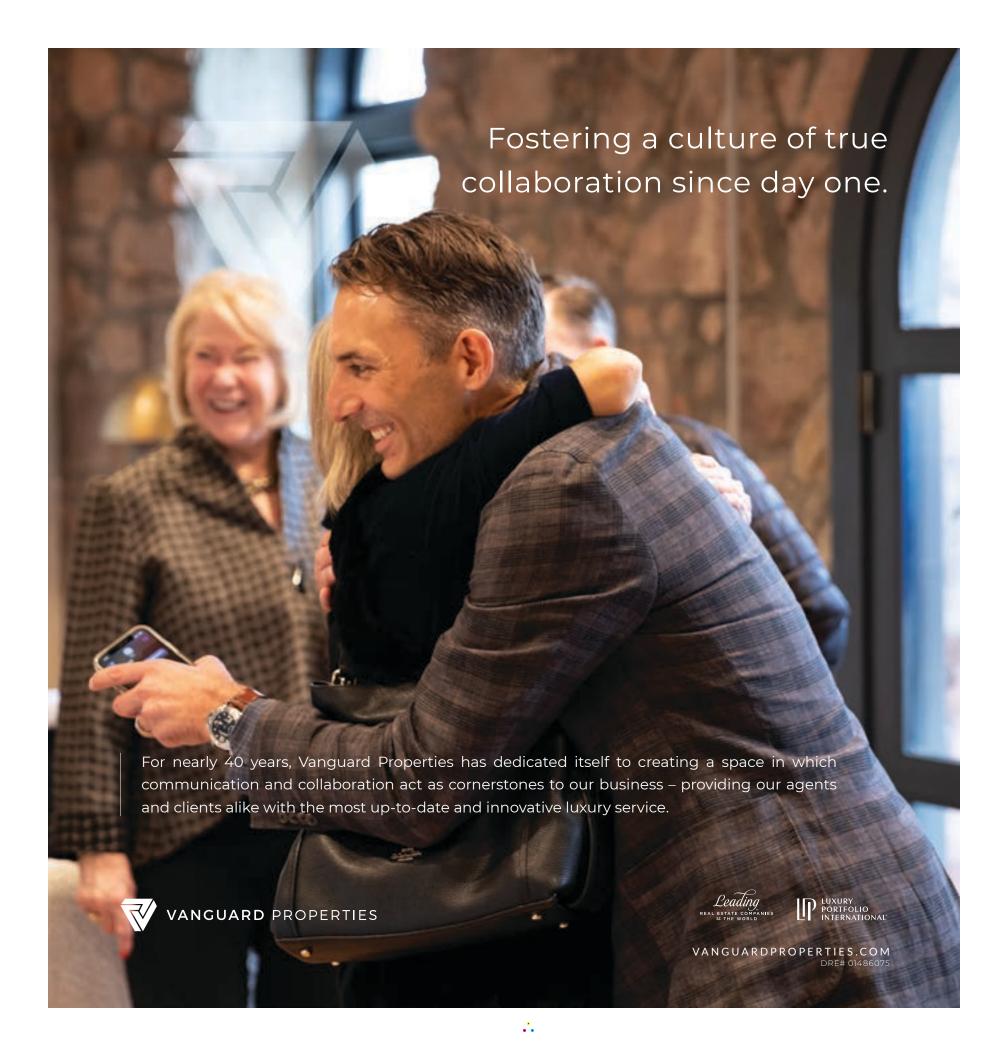
Serenity Found in This Mid Century Gem in the Country Club 4 beds | 2.5 baths | 2421 sqft | .69 acre parcel | \$1,950,000



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COMPASS



Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

OUR HOMES

March into spring

A section on critters in the garden offers controls and strategies to outsmart the birds and mammals most often encountered.

As a garden communicator, I subscribe to a plethora of different catalogs, newsletters, and digital diaries, each one delivering a different perspective on how to design, create, and implement a cheerful landscape in any season. Reading garden catalogs brings me great pleasure. Most include a parade of pictures of plants in their prime. When perusing these collections, I feel like a kid in a candy store. My mouth is agape, and I can't get enough.

You'll find information on water-wise gardening, pollinators, ground covers, perennials, trees, patio plants, indoor décor, hanging baskets, arrangements, bouquets, seeds, bulbs, roses, azaleas, hydrangeas, shade gardens, herbs, vegetables, fruits, bird houses, ponds, garden accents, pottery, recipes, and more, depending on the publication. Make lists of your favorite specimens and products. Purchase locally at your favorite nursery or garden center, or order directly from the grower. Free shipping is often offered with purchases that total a certain amount of dollars.

... continued on Page D10



The sun shines on a winter view of a Japanese maple with daffodils at the base.

Photos Cynthia Brian

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Help! Why can't I stay organized?

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It's important to edit (decide what to keep and what to let go of) at least once a year.

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Are you using your space efficiently?

Look around your home, are you using your space efficiently? Here are a few simple ideas:

- When possible, install pullouts in all lower cabinets. Many items that are in the back of cabinets often die there. If you can't see it or reach it ... enough said.
- Adjust the height of your shelves. If you see empty space above the items on a shelf, can you adjust the shelf height to accommodate the items to use all of the space?
- Use the inside of doors. There are many products that can be mounted to the inside of doors to store products such as shoes, toiletries, cleaning supplies, hats, gloves, and even tools.
- Store like items together and closest to where you use them (so you can find them).

Professional Organizer, Jennifer Raftis, CPO® founded Efficiency Matters, LLC to help you with all of your organizing needs for your home and business. She is a Certified Professional Organizer and an active board member with NAPO, National Association of Productivity and Organizing **Professionals**.

She is also an independent representative for The Container Store and has expertise in designing closets, garages, pantries, playrooms and more. In addition, she is a Corporate Organizing and Productivity Consultant and has worked with Fortune 500 companies across the U.S. Another large part of her business is move management especially working with seniors who are downsizing. She and her husband have lived in Moraga for 30 years, raising 3 kids and working countless volunteer hours with many local non-profit organizations and schools. Jennifer@efficiencymattersllc.com, 925-698-3756 www.efficiencymattersllc.com



Purchase multi-functional furniture that has storage. For example: A coffee table or ottoman that has space to store games and blankets, or a shelving unit that has storage boxes for toys.

Are you maintaining your space by editing consistently?

I don't think our parents knew that editing (deciding what to keep and what to let go of) was something we needed to do. I recommend editing at least once a year. This is even more important if you have growing children. It helps to have a donation box or bag in every closet to keep up with the outgrown clothing, shoes and toys. Here are some items that you can probably edit right now:

- Tupperware (food saver containers) especially when you don't have the lid, it's not coming back
- Bags, cloth, paper, plastic you know you oversave these
- Linens you probably don't need 5 sets of sheets for each bed or mismatched items
- Water bottles
- Expired medication, sunscreen, spices, food
- Toys
- Craft supplies
- Coffee cups

Are you wondering where to start? Remember, the answer to your space problem is probably subtraction.

Happy Spring Cleaning!



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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

March into spring



Purple bearded iris glisten in the garden.

A gorgeous combination of flowering pear and camellia trees.



Azaleas are in full bloom. Photos Cynthia Brian

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Here are a few of my favorite catalogs and newsletters to whet your appetite: American Meadows: www.AmericanMeadows.com Baker Creek Heirloom seeds: www.RareSeeds.com Bluestone Perennials: www.BlueStonePerennials.com Botanical Interests: www.Botanicalinterests.com Burpee Seeds and Plants: www.Burpee.com Brent and Becky's Bulb Growers: www.BrentandBeckysBulbs.com Green Mantel Heirloom Plant Nursery: www.GreenMantelNursery.com Gurneys Seed and Nursery: www.Gurneys.com High Country Gardens: www.HighCountryGardens.com Jackson and Perkins: www.jacksonandperkins.com John Scheepers Kitchen Garden Seeds: www.kitchengardenseeds.com Lilipons Water Garden: https://lilypons.com Monrovia Nursery Company: www.Monrovia.com Nature Hills Online Plant Nursery: www.NatureHills.com Nichols Garden Nursery: https://nicholsgardennursery.com Plant Delights Nursery, Inc.: www.PlantsDelights.com Proven Winners: www.ProvenWinners.com Raintree Nursery: https://raintreenursery.com Renee's Garden: www.ReneesGarden.com Seed Savers Exchange: www.seedsavers.org Territorial Seed company: https://territorialseed.com

Urban Farmer Seeds: https://www.ufseeds.com

Wayside Gardens: www.WaysideGardens.com White Flower Farm: www.WhiteFlowerFarm.com

This directory is by no means exhaustive. Choose a few that speak to you and increase your horticultural education. To elevate your garden savvy even more, dive into the world of gardening for a free live stream of the Great Grow Along Festival happening March 15-19. Whether you're a seasoned green thumb or a new plant parent, you'll have the chance to connect with top influencers, participate in interactive demonstrations and in-garden footage, and even chat live with the speakers. Take advantage of this opportunity to take your gardening skills to the next level. There are several sessions to choose from, covering everything from sustainability to DIY landscaping, first-time and experienced gardeners will get practical advice and creative inspiration from top 'plantfluencers,' garden experts, and industry leaders – all for free. https://greatgrowalong.com

Being a gardener means being on a constant learning curve. No matter how much we know, we'll never know enough. We may not be able to work in our gardens in the unpredictable inclement weather, but with the inventory of reading materials and online displays, we won't need to run away to find the sunshine. Sit by the fire with a cup of herbal tea infused with lemon and mint to savor the sweetness of marching into spring. Or, since St. Patrick's Day is nigh, hoist a Guinness and relish the green terrain that evokes the Emerald Isles, land of leprechauns, shamrocks, and banshees, with gratitude to the rain. There will be plenty of time for digging deeply in the next few months.

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You are probably wondering how my youthful runaway quest ended. My sisters and I did find paradise. We spent the day in a field of mustard plants that were taller than us. We created rooms, pretended we were pioneers, picked flowers, and as night descended, were spooked by coyotes as we huddled together stargazing with our dog keeping guard. We were sleeping soundly when our Dad came to get his girls. In the morning we awoke in our beds, the smell of Mom's cooking wafting from the

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kitchen. At breakfast, we all agreed we had indeed found the Promised Land far, far away. Our parents listened with rapt attention as we shared stories of our exhilarating adventure to the land of sunshine and flowers. We didn't realize that our enchanted faraway world was only a mile down the road, on our own property. We had never left our farm.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy St. Patrick's Day!



Photo Cynthia Brian

Bright pink Bergenia provides a colorful understory to manicured privet along a fence.



Cynthia Brian enjoys playing in the mustard fields!

Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at

www.StarStyleRadio.com. Her newest children's picture book, No Barnyard Bullies, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available now at

www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store For an invitation to hang out with Cynthia for fun virtual events, activities, conversations, and exclusive experiences, buy StarStyle® NFTs at https://StarStyleCommunity.com Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures.

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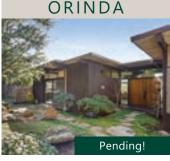
\$2,295,000



49 Las Cascadas A 4 bd/ 2.5 ba, 2421 sqft serene

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LAFAYETTE

3300 Betty Lane

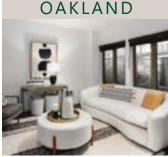
Updated single level, 4 bd/2 ba Storybook Charm in the Lafayette Estates/Burton Valley neighborhood!

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