

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 18 Issue 6 Wednesday, May 8



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page OH2

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

The Need to Weed

By Cynthia Brian

Photos Cynthia Brian



A plethora of flowers beneath the tangled weeds means hand-weeding is essential

"Digging the garden tending the weeds, Who could ask for more?" John Lennon & Paul McCartney

Before the weather gets too warm and the soil hardens, we must eradicate weeds from our gardens. I know, I know. A weed is just a plant growing somewhere it is not wanted; where we live and how we cultivate determines the perspective we may have about what is a weed and what is wanted a specimen.

The weeds in my garden are invasive, prickly, adaptable, and undesirable. The grass weeds that have blown in from the hills make excellent hay; yet the thistles, euphorbia spurge, hemlock, bindweed, black medic, pelargonium robertianum, and geranium purpureum are a constant source of pain, strain, and drain.

Everyone knows about wild thistles. They have prickly leaves and stems with colorful flower heads. They are in the same Asteraceae family as daisies and sunflowers. What you may not know is that they are ecologically important, providing food and nectar for pollinators, including bees, butterflies, birds, and mammals. In some parts of the



Pink azalea, yellow freesia, and bluebells appear after weeding

world, they are cultivated for their ornamental value. As I was about to pull out two large thistles, butterflies landed on the leaves and purple buds. Watching them savor their meal, I let these weeds live another day.

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	16	\$750,000	\$3,850,000
MORAGA	6	\$710,000	\$2,125,000
ORINDA	13	\$1,091,000	\$2,625,000

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**
- 968 4th Street, \$750,000, 1 Bdrms, 642 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 03-27-24
 - 3231 Burton Court, \$1,470,000, 4 Bdrms, 1924 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 04-02-24
 - 910 Carl Road, \$3,850,000, 4 Bdrms, 3654 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 03-26-24, Previous Sale: \$1,680,000, 09-16-03
 - 1018 Dyer Drive, \$2,350,500, 3 Bdrms, 1997 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 04-01-24, Previous Sale: \$820,000, 05-17-17
 - 1874 Hannibal Drive, \$2,050,000, 4 Bdrms, 2007 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 03-27-24, Previous Sale: \$530,000, 06-22-00
 - 1087 Leland Drive, \$2,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 3779 SqFt, 2016 YrBlt, 03-28-24, Previous Sale: \$1,930,000, 10-25-17
 - 3334 North Lucille Lane, \$1,884,000, 5 Bdrms, 2541 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 03-25-24, Previous Sale: \$83,000, 08-01-78
 - 3434 Moraga Boulevard, \$1,601,000, 2 Bdrms, 1383 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 03-28-24
 - 19 Old Millstone Lane, \$2,675,000, 5 Bdrms, 2301 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 04-01-24
 - 36 Olympic Oaks Drive, \$2,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 2329 SqFt, 1997 YrBlt, 04-05-24, Previous Sale: \$1,169,500, 08-20-13
 - 1128 Orchard Road, \$2,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 2665 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 03-27-24
 - 3392 Orchard Valley Lane, \$1,430,000, 3 Bdrms, 1384 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 03-26-24, Previous Sale: \$73,500, 11-01-78
 - 76 Revere Court, \$1,755,000, 3 Bdrms, 1918 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 04-02-24, Previous Sale: \$755,000, 11-12-02
 - 3208 Ronino Way, \$2,089,000, 4 Bdrms, 2838 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 03-25-24, Previous Sale: \$1,754,500, 04-02-20
 - 1594 Silver Dell Road, \$2,325,000, 5 Bdrms, 3711 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 03-26-24
 - 1071 Sunrise Ridge Drive, \$1,880,000, 5 Bdrms, 3572 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 03-28-24, Previous Sale: \$1,045,000, 10-17-14
- MORAGA**
- 1988 Ascot Drive #C, \$710,000, 3 Bdrms, 1472 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 03-28-24, Previous Sale: \$480,000, 11-01-06
 - 8 Harold Drive, \$1,650,000, 4 Bdrms, 1653 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 04-02-24, Previous Sale: \$1,470,000, 08-25-21
 - 4004 Paseo Grande, \$2,125,000, 4 Bdrms, 2341 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 03-28-24, Previous Sale: \$185,000, 06-01-79
 - 375 Redfield Place, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2340 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 04-04-24, Previous Sale: \$1,228,500, 04-08-08
 - 243 Sandringham Drive, \$1,880,000, 4 Bdrms, 2353 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 03-29-24, Previous Sale: \$925,000, 10-11-12
 - 5 Tracy Court, \$1,775,000, 3 Bdrms, 2717 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 04-05-24, Previous Sale: \$985,000, 01-08-04

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ORINDA VIEW DEVELOPMENT
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OFFICE | 5,691 SF | 1.17 AC



MORAGA | AMPLE ABODE
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ORINDA | Playful Paradise
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EL TOYONAL LOCATION
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LAFAYETTE | 2 SEPARATE LOTS
HAPPY VALLEY GLEN
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\$2,985,000
0 MONTICELLO RD | 7.64 AC
\$2,398,000



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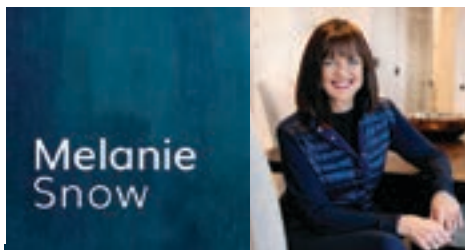


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Organizing is Not Always About Just Getting Rid of Stuff

By Jennifer Raftis, CPO(r), Efficiency Matters, LLC

If your previous attempts at getting organized have failed, it might not be all about getting rid of your “stuff”. It could be about a need to develop a few simple habits to help you manage your home and life.

People often claim, “if you get organized, you will save time and money so you can concentrate on what really matters”. That, of course, is partially true, but what you really gain is peace and calm instead of frustration and STRESS!



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I know that feeling frustrated is my number one reason to stay organized...frustration about lost passwords, being late, losing an important paper, etc. Being frustrated makes me crazy and I will go to

great lengths to make sure I don't have to experience that feeling.

I always encourage my clients to let go of the things they no longer use or need, but that's not going to totally eliminate your frustrations. So, how do you eliminate, or at least minimize, feelings of frustration? It's not necessarily because you have too much stuff (not necessarily is the key word here), but it might also be because you need to create habits to keep you organized. A few simple changes can make all the difference!

When people call me to get help with organizing, I will ask them what isn't working in their home. After listening to the answer, I instinctively know if it's because of their habits. For example, regularly putting things back in the correct place takes less time than searching for something you didn't feel like putting away at the time. Habits!

Here are 3 of my organizing client's top frustrations and suggestions on how to create new habits to fix them.

1. Not Being Able to Find Your Things: Do you know where to find items in your home when you need them?

Solution/Habit: All of your belongings need a home; every single item you own should have a place where it lives in your home and everyone in the home should know where that is (and return the item to where it lives after they use it). It's not as hard as you might think - remember that everyone always knows where the forks are located and that the forks get returned there after they are washed.

... continued on Page OH9

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

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ORINDA

- 1 Ardilla Road, \$2,451,000, 4 Bdrms, 3391 SqFt, 2008 YrBlt, 04-05-24,
Previous Sale: \$159,000, 01-01-90
- 139 Ardith Drive, \$1,714,000, 3 Bdrms, 1633 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 04-04-24,
Previous Sale: \$951,500, 07-28-10
- 69 California Avenue, \$1,091,000, 3 Bdrms, 2105 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 03-25-24
- 1 Corte Del Rey, \$1,575,000, 3 Bdrms, 1605 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 04-01-24,
Previous Sale: \$363,000, 12-14-98
- 328 Glorietta Boulevard, \$1,750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1679 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 03-26-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,300,000, 07-01-20
- 32 Hacienda Circle, \$2,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 3768 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 04-03-24,
Previous Sale: \$216,000, 03-01-78
- 192 Ivy Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1318 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 04-04-24
- 6 Jack Tree Knolls, \$1,876,000, 5 Bdrms, 2666 SqFt, 2014 YrBlt, 04-03-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,475,000, 12-15-16
- 23 Kellie Ann Court, \$1,844,000, 4 Bdrms, 2236 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 03-28-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,550,000, 04-23-19
- 51 La Cuesta Road, \$3,300,000, 5 Bdrms, 3712 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 03-27-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,875,000, 09-19-23
- 23 Marston Road, \$3,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 3695 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 03-27-24
- 84 Muth Drive, \$1,749,000, 5 Bdrms, 2372 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 03-29-24,
Previous Sale: \$600,000, 05-07-99
- 12 Ramona Drive, \$1,400,000, 5 Bdrms, 2299 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 03-29-24

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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

The Need to Weed



Pink Poseidon clematis outshines the weeds.



Santa Barbara daisies, Dutch iris, and roses.



After weeding, California poppies fill the field.

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The artichokes we enjoy on our dinner plates are also a thistle in the Asteraceae family. They have been specifically bred to be edible and tender without the spiky prickles.

In the past, I have written extensively about euphorbia, hemlock, bindweed, and black media. But most people are not familiar with pelargonium robertianum and geranium purpureum, although you may have seen it. Interestingly, geranium robertianum, a native of Europe, with its delicious musky fragrance when stepped upon, is coveted by many gardeners and foragers. Its flowers and leaves add a spicy flavor to food, and the crushed leaves are an insect repellent. It also boasts medicinal uses to lower blood sugar levels, reduce inflammation, and arrest diarrhea.

In a patch growing alone, it is a pretty groundcover; however, when it grows in mixed beds, it tends to twine and strangle plants. It is in the geranium family and is known by several names, including Herb Robert, Red Robin, and Stinky Geranium. The reason I don't cook with it derives from its common name...death come quickly. It arrived in my landscape about three years ago, probably in a potted plant or perhaps from a bird, and has spread everywhere.

A subspecies of geranium robertianum, pelargonium purpureum, known as Little Robin, is on the California Invasive Plant Council list. It doesn't possess a strong fragrance, only a very slight aroma. It is pervasive throughout California, spreading by seeds and dispersed by animal

and human activities. They both have tiny pink flowers and lobed leaves. Because I grow anemones, weeding is challenging if the plant is not blooming because their lobed leaves are very similar. It is for this reason that I weed slowly and by hand.

Can you tell the difference between a weed and a domesticated plant? Why is it necessary to weed? To maintain a healthy garden, weeding is obligatory. If you have an area that is growing only weeds, weed whacking is easiest. If you have a large landscape as I do that is filled with flowers and shrubs competing with the weeds, you'll need to weed by hand.

Here are the reasons that weeding is crucial.

Resource Competition: All plants require water, nutrients, and sunlight. Weeds compete with garden plants for these resources. By removing the weeds, the plants you love are allowed to thrive.

Aesthetic Appeal: In my opinion, weeds make a garden look unkempt. Look at the photos in this article of my garden. Although there are hundreds of blooming flowers, the weeds have overpowered the plants, making the garden look messy.

Disease and Pest Prevention: Weeds harbor diseases and pests that could spread to cultivate plants. My weeds are so dense and so tall, that again, this week I received another tick bite, despite wearing protection. Reduce the risk of ticks and other infestations by removing the weeds.

Air Circulation: When the weeds are dense, air circulation is impeded. Mildew can occur. Free up the airflow by getting rid of the weeds.

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The ubiquitous weed, geranium robertianum...death come quickly.

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Photos Cynthia Brian
Tournament of Roses rosebush blooms amongst the weeds.

Seed Spread: Weeds develop seed heads and once they burst, they disperse thousands of seeds that float through the air to increase the weed population in other areas. Many of my weeds have already started shooting their seeds before I could pull them.

Soil Health: Many weeds have deep root systems that disrupt the soil structure, making it difficult for other plants to grow. Weeds like euphorbia spurge emit a toxin in their roots that kills other plants, making way for only the spurge to flourish.

Stress Reduction: There is a peacefulness and tranquility to weeding. When I'm kneeling or sitting in the weeds, I am up close and personal with the plants. I hear the birds singing, and the wind rustling. I witness the butterflies, bees, and bugs that hover around the plants. I smell the leaves and scents emanating from the soil. My senses are alive and I feel connected to nature and all things. My prescription to stress less, is to get your hands in the dirt. Give it a whirl!

As fire season approaches, it is essential to cut weeds. The hills are lush and green now, but soon the heat of summer will be upon us, and the grass will be dry and brown. Heed the checklist from our fire departments to create defensible spaces around our homes. Many of us, including my family, have had our homeowner's insurance canceled or non-renewed because we live in a designated fire zone. As frustrating as this is, it is imperative to harden off our homes. Follow year-round directions at

www.mofd.org/our-district/fuels-mitigation-fire-prevention
To summarize fire district recommendations:

Prevent embers from igniting your home by clearing leaves, needles, and debris from gutters, eaves, porches, and decks.
Mow grasses and weeds.

Keep your garden watered.

Prune tree limbs to keep the lowest branches 6-10 feet from the ground.

Reduce "fire fuel laddering" by not allowing bushes or trees to touch one another.

Keep combustible materials 15-30 feet away from structures.
Maintain your property and be alert for any fire danger.

Organizing is Not Always About Just Getting Rid of Stuff



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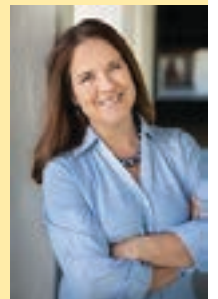
2. Arriving Late: Arriving late to an event or appointment is stressful!
Solution/Habit: Plan ahead, look at your week and know where you have to be. Map out how long it will take to get there and add 20 minutes to the time. Better early than late! You might want to gather the items that you'll want to take with you the night before. I personally always have a podcast or some type of work (knitting, crossword puzzles, phone game apps, etc.) with me if I arrive too early.

3. Managing Passwords: This is probably my biggest frustration. This can be especially frustrating if you do not live alone and someone else has the ability to change your passwords (and adorably does not tell you).
Solution/Habit: Set up a password manager on all of your devices and make sure everyone who uses your devices knows how to save passwords to the password manager. Many of my clients also keep a written copy of their passwords in a notebook or address book, and some of my clients keep them in their phone.

The next time you are feeling frustrated about managing your home or life, remember to focus on cultivating a new organizing habit - this might just be the solution you need.

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



Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Gardening Guide

To easily kill weeds in cracks, bricks, driveways, or paths, use a solution of 30% vinegar available at hardware stores mixed with table salt. Spray on a windless, hot, sunny day. This spray will kill whatever is growing, so be cautious around desirable plants.

Mosquitoes are breeding. Empty any containers of water or add Dunks or a few drops of bleach to birdbaths or other non-circulating water features.

Don't cut back your daffodils or other yellowing bulbs. To provide the nutrients for next year's bloom, the leaves need to dry and be crackling like potato chips before pulling.

Make sure to rotate the location of your vegetables when planting this season. Don't plant tomatoes near potatoes as they are members of the same family and susceptible to the same diseases. Plant neither of them in the soil where peppers or eggplants grew previously.

Check your irrigation system for leaks and breakage. As the weather warms, watering in the morning or evening at least once a week will be necessary for garden wellbeing.

It's Mother's Day. Make sure to treat your special Mom with a glorious bouquet or potted plant. Flowers are always appreciated.

Digging in the garden. Tending the weeds. Who could ask for more?

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Mother's Day



A bee savors nectar from a mock orange tree.



Edible wild leeks, also called ramps, can be as invasive as weeds.



Like every mom, Cynthia Brian enjoys her beautiful bouquet of blooms.

For more gardening advice for all seasons, check out Growing with the Goddess Gardener at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. 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 which was just honored as the 2024 Nonprofit of the Year by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Her newest children's picture book, Books in the Barnyard: Oh Deer!, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available for discounted pre-sales at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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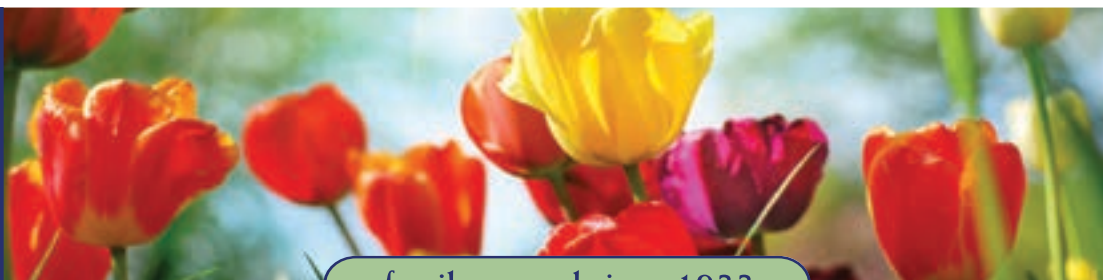
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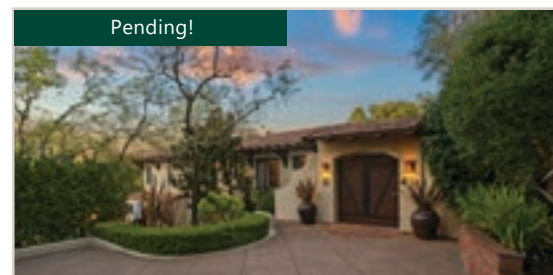
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10 Ranch Road, Orinda | Appointment Only
5 Bd + Study/Office | 6 Full Ba + 3 Half Ba | 6573 Sqft | \$6,495,000
Incredible home completely rebuilt by Diamond Construction. Custom finishes throughout, 5 bds (all en-suite!) plus office, study & pool on a gated 1.08 acre lot!



523 Miner Road, Orinda | Open Sun 2-4
5 Bd | 4 Ba | 3945 Sqft | \$4,150,000
Experience luxury living in this captivating 1971 modern architecture masterpiece, designed by Carmel Architect Bud Evenson and stylishly remodeled in 2015!



41 La Noria, Orinda | Pending!
5 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 4405 Sqft | \$3,795,000
Top quality 5 bd/ 4 ba home around the corner from OCC w/ an incredible layout & magical spaces indoor & out!



417 Moraga Way, Orinda | Open Sun 1-4pm
4 Bd | 2 Ba | 2007 Sqft | \$1,995,000
Custom home by Dan Bartlett of DB Design Build features, soaring ceilings, wall of multi-sliders & scenic views!



3235 Mt. Diablo Blvd #104, Lafayette | Appointment Only
2 Bd + Office | 2 Ba | 2148 Sqft | \$1,995,000
Luxury 2 bd + office/ 2 ba single-level condo on a cul-de-sac features hardwood flooring, beamed ceilings, Anderson windows & so much more!



1603 Reliez Valley Road, Lafayette | Open Sun 1-4pm
4 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2406 Sqft | \$1,685,000
In the heart of Reliez Valley, this charming 4+bd/2.5ba home has breathtaking views & picturesque garden!



160 Greenwood Circle, Walnut Creek | Open Sun 2-4pm
3 Bd | 2 Ba | 1472 Sqft | \$1,245,000
Charming single-level rancher features 3 bd/ 2 ba, two separate living rooms & spacious backyard w/ level lawn!



300 N Civic Drive #411, Walnut Creek | Appointment Only
1 Bd | 1 Ba | 825 Sqft | \$345,000
Convenient location close to vibrant downtown with restaurants and shopping, and easy access to freeway and Bart for commute.



5505 Taft Avenue, Oakland | Open Sun 2-4pm
2 Bd | 1 Ba | 1363 Sqft | \$1,950,000
Single level bungalow, fully upgraded systems & design, most sought after block in Rockridge!

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