OUR HOMES





## Let's Eat!

## ... continued from page D4

"I move plants around like they were furniture," she said, pointing to a 5-year-old apple tree she moved last year. "I'm a big believer that you can move anything in October, when it stops growing for the season."

Susan Andersen-Berger of Orinda has at least three microclimates in her yard, she said, standing on a large circle of pristine lawn grass bedecked with chairs overlooking Mount Diablo. "This used to be the garden, for instance," she said – but the wind whipped the plants mercilessly in the fall and it got too cold. Now her ornamentals are on one side, and her edibles are protected by a hill down-slope from the lawn. She strolled through from one side to the other, naming each of dozens of plants.

"As I got more and more into it, I had to make more spaces," Andersen-Berger said.



Ellen Bier will decorate her house with her own pumpkinsthis Halloween.Photos Chris Lavin

"This is my sanity," she said, touching the plants as she went. "Honestly, I love it out here. I spent as much time in the garden as I can."

TIP: While a pumpkin in your patch is growing, carve a child's name into the flesh. By Halloween, the name will have grown scarred and scary. (Preston)

Andersen-Berger's thoughts are a common theme among gardeners, who balance the stress of life with the turning of the soil to plant new things. And the harvest is only part of the cycle. It is difficult to find a gardener who doesn't like to cook. They seem to talk about cooking just as much as varieties of tomato.