



Lamorinda Weekly Volume 07 Issue 20 Wednesday, December 4, 2013

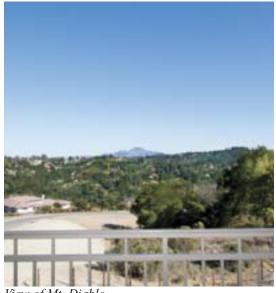
# Orinda Oaks Grows Amid the Acorns

#### By Cathy Dausman

new Orinda development is taking place above Moraga Way, where the traffic noise quiets and Orinda hills fall away to frame Mount Diablo in the east. It is Orinda Oaks, a cul-de-sac of residential homes on a new street – Miller Court – constructed by Signature Development Group.

Ironically, the development's grand opening took place on a day where the fog obscured the views, said Beaubelle Group realtor Kellie Beaubelle. When *Lamorinda Weekly* visited the site, however, there wasn't a cloud in the sky, and construction crews busily roamed the hillside in trucks and tractors.

The development is just a ridgeline east of the Wilder development and can be accessed most directly from the south end of Stein Way. Orinda



View of Mt. Diablo



Master bedroom

Oaks homes are listed "at a price point near Wilder," Beaubelle said. Three have been sold; one is currently occupied. Available home sizes range from 3,700 to 3,968 square feet; the last phase will offer homes over 4,000 square feet. Scott Zengel of Signature Development Group said lot sizes range from 1 to 8 acres. And because the entire development is just 12 homes "you won't have construction for years and years," Beaubelle added.

Photos provided

The two-story home development (the lone single story home is already sold) contains a mix of modern, Spanish and traditional styles; each has a large, open floor plan. Master bedrooms are located on the main living level and houses have at least three full baths and two or three bay oversized garages.

...continued on page D4







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Exclusively represented by Glenn W. Beaubelle, The Beaubelle Group of Coldwell Banker



Brokers must accompany their client(s) and register them on their first visit to the Sales Center in order to be eligible for a broker commission. © 2013 Orinda Oaks Signature Development Group

Page: D2 OUR HOMES

# Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

AMOUNT:
2,100,000
1,598,000
1,290,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax in-formation 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

3291 Beechwood Drive, \$735,000, 2 Bdrms, 1589 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 11-5-13 3539 Boyer Circle, \$875,000, 4 Bdrms, 2464 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 10-29-13 32 Brookdale Court, \$1,058,000, 4 Bdrms, 2278 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 10-30-13 974 Janet Lane, \$1,040,000, 3 Bdrms, 1473 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 10-30-13; Previous Sale: \$845,000, 12-07-06 129 Jordan Place, \$1,645,000, 4 Bdrms, 3288 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 11-1-13; Previous Sale: \$1,910,000, 02-14-07 1946 Marion Court, \$1,625,000, 3 Bdrms, 3477 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 11-1-13; Previous Sale: \$1,850,000, 09-27-05 3370 Mildred Lane, \$725,000, 3 Bdrms, 1154 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 11-1-13 3545 Oconner Drive, \$976,500, 2 Bdrms, 1154 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 11-4-13 1141 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$2,100,000, 5 Bdrms, 4558 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 10-31-13; Previous Sale: \$1,550,000, 10-24-12 3300 Walnut Lane, \$795,000, 3 Bdrms, 1163 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 10-29-13; Previous Sale: \$600,000, 10-20-09 MORAGA 1478 Camino Peral #A, \$347,000, 2 Bdrms, 1272 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 10-31-13 755 Camino Ricardo, \$1,117,000, 4 Bdrms, 2082 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 11-4-13; Previous Sale: \$765,000, 08-08-01 3868 Campolindo Drive, \$1,225,000, 4 Bdrms, 2539 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 10-29-13; Previous Sale: \$12,500, 06-08-71 171 Corliss Drive, \$1,598,000, 5 Bdrms, 3176 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 11-5-13; Previous Sale: \$900,000, 04-10-02 89 David Drive, \$1,375,000, 4 Bdrms, 2544 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 10-31-13; Previous Sale: \$1,040,000, 05-11-07 92 Devin Drive, \$1,099,000, 4 Bdrms, 2122 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 10-25-13 69 Miramonte Drive, \$565,000, 2 Bdrms, 1762 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 11-1-13 1731 St. Andrews Drive, \$660,000, 2 Bdrms, 1464 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 10-29-13; Previous Sale: \$315,000, 01-23-96 21 Tamarisk, \$729,000, 3 Bdrms, 1819 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 10-23-13; Previous Sale: \$759,000, 07-29-04 161 Westchester Street, \$838,500, 3 Bdrms, 2148 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 10-23-13; Previous Sale: \$869,000, 08-21-07 **ORINDA** 372 Dalewood Drive, \$1,230,000, 3 Bdrms, 3553 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 11-6-13; Previous Sale: \$1,139,500, 11-13-02 63 Davis Road, \$1,082,000, 2 Bdrms, 2085 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 10-25-13 16 Estabueno Drive, \$1,125,000, 3 Bdrms, 2134 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 10-29-13 316 Glorietta Boulevard, \$1,290,000, 3 Bdrms, 2732 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 10-28-13 120 Goodfellow Drive, \$912,000, 3 Bdrms, 1953 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 10-25-13;

Previous Sale: \$384,000, 04-06-98

7 Los Conejos, \$1,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 1973 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 11-1-13; Previous Sale: \$303,000, 06-25-97

392 Moraga Way, \$712,000, 4 Bdrms, 1695 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 10-25-13

11 Wanflete Court, \$995,000, 4 Bdrms, 1580 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 10-25-13; Previous Sale: \$925,500,09-13-05

仓

# The RE/MAX Collection

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way. Listed at \$2,099,000.



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Orinda ~ "One of a Kind" This exceptional Fench Tudor is located on 3/4 of an acre beautifully landscaped w/pool & spa. 4 bdrms 3.5 baths in the main house plus 1 bdrm 1 bath guest house....Large Chef's kitchen w/huge center island & separate eating area. Easy access to freeway & Orinda CC....Listed at \$3,995,000

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# Orinda Oaks Grows Amid the Acorns

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Visitors enter the model home through a generous hard surface patio surrounded by half walls, with high ceilings and wide-plank wooden flooring in its interior. The kitchen featured high-end stainless steel appliances; its center island and counter surfaces were quartz. The patio off the kitchen in the model home felt especially airy as the lot sloped away from the house on that side.

Upgrades to the model, noted in print room by room, included custom pendant lighting in the kitchen, a large suspended light in the family room, crown molding and cabinet color changes. The model home has already been sold, but it won't be occupied until the development is complete. If you have walked the model and still can't envision material options or upgrades, a design center in Livermore has the building materials on hand.

Beaubelle stressed the local involvement that went into developing Orinda Oaks. According to its website, Signature Development Group is a 20year-old privately owned, locally managed Oakland-based firm. The Beaubelle Group of Coldwell Banker is an Orinda business, something SDG felt Photos provided

made "a perfect match." After the tour, Beaubelle was asked if she was tempted to move in to one of the Orinda Oaks homes. "Oh no," she laughed. "I built my dream home 12 years ago!"

Orinda Oaks is exclusively represented by the Beaubelle Group of Coldwell Banker. For details, visit www.orindaoaks.com or call (925) 253-6337.



Game Room

## Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian Winter Wonders

#### **By Cynthia Brian**

"The best Christmas trees come very close to exceeding nature." – Andy Rooney couple of days after Halloween, my niece who is a paramedic posted photos of her Christmas decorations on Facebook. Every inch of her home and garden were already festooned in holiday finery. Her tree was hung with sparkling ornaments, the mantel dressed with swags and candles, the bushes and flowerbeds glittering with lights and accents. She definitely inherited the celebratory spirit from our farm family. Every year since I was born, my parents made sure that at least two acres of our ranch were illuminated like a runway to enable Santa Claus to find his way to our remote locale. Not one inch of the gardens surrounding the house was left without adornment and twinkle lights. This was an outward display of pure inner love and I can't even imagine what this oasis looked like from the night sky. Even now, with seven great grandchildren to amuse, my gardener mother maintains this enchanted tradition. Magic happens to those who believe.

Every day those who tend gardens work hand in hand with Mother Nature. As the Grand Dame, she is always in charge. Gardeners are her faithful stewards, nurturing the land that feed our bodies while clothing our spirits with beauty, fragrance, and spiritual wellness. As the earth settles down for its winter nap, we also slow our pace in our outdoor spaces to begin preparations for the holiday celebrations and a new year. ...continued on page D6



Chestnuts on a horse chestnut tree are not edible! They are poisonous.



#### A Family Tradition of Excellence

STATUS	ADDRESS	CITY	PRICE
STATUS	ADDRESS	CITY	PRICE
Sold	919 Dewing Ave.	Lafayette	\$588,000
Sold	2420 Cherry Hills Dr.	Lafayette	\$650,000
Sold	1841 Del Rio Dr.	Lafayette	\$721,000
Sold	1028 Carol Ln.	Lafayette	\$725,000
Sold	1062 Sierra Vista Way	Lafayette	\$728,000
Sold	3784 Mosswood Dr.	Lafayette	\$749,000
Sold	1042 Sunnybrook Dr.	Lafayette	\$750,000
Sold	432 Donegal Way	Lafayette	\$765,000
Sold	4133 Hidden Valley Rd.	Lafayette	\$809,000

TATUS	ADDRESS
Sold	3530 Deer Hill Rd.
Sold	3432 Saint Marys Rd.
Sold	3444 Solana Ct.
Sold	1712 Chapparal Ln.
Sold	567 Silverado Dr.
Sold	3178 Teigland Rd.
Sold	3138 Diablo View Rd.
Sold	1111 Sierra Vista Way
Sold	3674 Happy Valley Rd.
Sold	2 Benedita Pl

CITY	PRICE
Lafayette	\$840,000
Lafayette	\$846,500
Lafayette	\$900,000
afayette	\$1,125,000
Lafayette	\$1,185,000
Lafayette	\$1,200,000
Lafayette	\$1,300,000
afayette	\$1,410,000
Lafayette	\$3,190,000

\$521,000

Moraga

2013 Lamorinda Closed Sales

STATUS	ADDRESS	CITY	PRICE
Sold	343 Calle La Mesa	Moraga	\$933,000
Sold	1100 Country Club	Moraga	\$1,130,000
Sold	31 Via Hermosa	Orinda	\$690,000
Sold	49 Dolores Way	Orinda	\$809,000
Sold	149 Ardith Dr.	Orinda	\$928,000
Sold	149 Ardith Dr.	Orinda	\$968,000
Sold	18 Meadow Park Ct.	Orinda	\$980,000
Sold	25 Los Amigos	Orinda	\$1,050,000
Sold	81 Van Ripper Ln.	Orinda	\$1,150,000



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# Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

#### ... continued from page D5

In order to sleep peacefully and dream of our gardens, we have to think about safety first. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission over 10,000 people visit emergency rooms during the holidays due to decorating injuries from falls, burns, cuts, and shocks. More than 200 fires are started each year because of dried out trees.

Every tree is the perfect tree at Christmas, especially if you have children who choose. To put the magic in your winter wonderland while keeping your family secure and protected, here are a few suggestions.

- Find the freshest tree to light up your yuletide. Whether you cut it yourself, or buy it from your favorite lot, look for a tree with green needles that are difficult to pull from the branch. The tree's bottom needs to be sticky with resin and needles should not fall off when the tree is shaken.
- Keep all trees, branches, and flammable decorations away from fireplaces, radiators, and high traffic areas.
- Hang stockings on chimneys only when there is no fire burning.
- Buy new lights that have been tested by the Underwriters Laboratory (UL). Make sure that lights for your garden are labeled as outdoor capable. All lights need good wiring, devoid of any broken or cracked sockets, frayed wires, or loose connections. Only use extension cords that are designed for the outdoors and beware of the number of light sets that may be attached.
- Never add electric lights to metallic ornamentations as you could be exposing yourself to electrocution.
- When climbing ladders, use the buddy system. Besides the conifers that beckon Santa's visit, fruit bear-

ing trees provide wondrous gifts of nature during December. Persimmons, quince, chestnuts, and pomegranates offer exotic flavors for holiday gastronomy. The delicious and juicy Hachiya persimmon is the perfect fruit to flavor many holiday dishes, including Christmas puddings and fruitcakes. These beautiful pointed persimmons resemble bright orange ornaments hanging on the bare branches. If they are firm when picked, allow them to sit on a plate on the counter until soft. They can then be enjoyed raw or cooked, but only when they are mushy. On the other hand, the Fuyu persimmon is flat, hard, and delicious eaten like an apple or sliced into salads. Once it gets soft, it can also be used in dishes that suggest Hachiya. When planting persimmons, keep in mind that it may take up to 10 years for a bountiful yield.



*Like glittering ornaments, Hachiya persimmons hang on a winter tree.* 

Another tree that is offering holiday bounty is the quince. This hard fruit resembling an ugly apple was a sign of love and commitment in ancient Rome. In Greek mythology, quince was the gift from Aphrodite, the goddess of love. It has been speculated that the forbidden fruit that tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden was actually the quince, although quince is inedible raw. When cooked, the aroma smells like rose petals, and the color of the flesh turns amber. The taste is a combination of pear and apple. Mixed with cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg, quince is heavenly. The fruit is popular in Middle Eastern meat stews as well as British tarts and preserves.

"Chestnuts roasting on an open fire, Jack Frost nipping at your nose" are the popular lyrics from the Christmas song that conjures up images and happy memories of bygone holiday seasons. On the branch, the chestnut is encompassed inside a prickly shell that looks like a small yellow tennis ball with spikes. When the shell opens, out falls a shiny brown nut. For those who grow chestnuts, now is the time to gather the fallen fruit. Slit the skin with a serrated knife (use caution as the shell is tough), blanche, roast, wrap in a cloth for five minutes before eating. BEWARE: the nuts from horse chestnuts and buckeyes are poisonous. They look like chestnuts but are not edible to humans or animals.

Pomegranates have symbolized hope, prosperity, fertility, and eternal life for over 4,000 years. Today they are heralded as a 'superfood,' low in calories, high in antioxidants, vitamin C, potassium, and fiber. When planted in a sunny location, the small 6- to 12-foot tree is easy to grow with green glossy foliage and pretty orange flowers in summer and fall. When the fruit is red it is ripe and ready to be eaten raw. Cut the crown to remove the yellow pith while scoring the skin in quarters. Immerse the scored fruit in a large bowl of cold water. Holding the fruit under the water, break it into sections. The seeds will fall to the bottom of the bowl. Drain, dry, and enjoy.

Be prepared for sticker shock when you purchase any of these Christmas treats. Persimmons and pomegranates cost \$2-4 each in the produce aisle. Perhaps it's time to write a letter to Ole' St. Nick to put in a request for these special trees or other garden gadgets. What do you want or need for your garden? A gazing ball, purple rhododendron, pair of shears, birdbath, a money tree? He's making a list and checking it twice. December is the month for dreams to come true. Tie your Christmas to the outdoors. Let there be light!

Peace on earth. Good will to all. Be a child again on Christmas morning. May your stockings be filled with the seeds of winter wonders, hope, and love.



A live cypress tree in a container is a great replacement for cutting a tree.

## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for December

"Christmas is not in tinsel, lights, and outward show. The secret lies in an inner glow." – Wilfred Peterson, "The Art of Living"

What would the holidays be without the high voltage displays of thousands of twinkling lights illuminating our landscapes? We drive around neighborhoods oohing and aahing at the inflatable snowmen waving to us, Santa's sleigh on the rooftops tethered to his blinking reindeer, and flickering candy canes hanging from tree branches. The festival of lights is upon us as we hark the heralded angels and remember the reason for the season. Light a fire in your heart and shine brightly with love. Tidy your garden, then, enjoy the merriment.

- CONSIDER purchasing a living Christmas tree instead of a cut one. Garden centers have a selection of cypress, pine, fir, and even rosemary clipped to resemble a Christmas tree. Place your • tree in a beautiful copper container, or wrap with festive fabric. Live trees will survive year after year and prices are reasonable.
- FERTILIZE shrubs and trees after all the leaves have fallen to provide food to last for the season.
- **RAKE** the over abundance of leaves in your gardens to add to the compost pile.
- SURROUND yourself with colorful orchids or amaryllis to chase away the winter blues.
- PLANT pansies, violas, and cyclamen to brighten your beds.
- ADD texture and drama to your indoor décor with spiky long lasting bromeliads.
- **INCORPORATE** plenty of organic matter into new beds that you are preparing for spring. Double dig to ensure the best results.
- CLEAN garden equipment, patio furniture, and remove leaves from water features. Sharpen shears and oil your tools to protect them from rusting.
- **SERVICE** mowers and tillers to avoid the spring rush.
- PRUNE dormant fruit trees including peach, apricot, prune, plum, apple, and pear. Save the wood for barbecues next summer.
- CUT any dead or damaged branches from all trees and shrubs.
- CHECK any stakes or ties on smaller trees to make sure they are sturdy enough to withstand strong winter winds.
- WINTERIZE your wonderland by pruning and shaping wisteria, honeysuckle, berry bushes, and perennials.
- **SORT** containers. Move any frost tender pots to a sheltered area.
- CLEAR vegetable beds that have finished cropping.
- SOW cover crops such as alfalfa, lima beans, and peas to increase the nitrogen in your soil.
- PICK persimmons, pomegranates, quince, and lemons to use in displays and holiday cooking.
- CREATE wreaths and garlands from branches of grapevines, redwoods, pines, and other conifers.
- GATHER pinecones, berries, twigs, and grasses to add to your arrangements.
- ATTRACT birds to your backyard throughout the cold months by keeping feeders filled and baths ready.
- DECORATE a sapling with dollar bills to give as the perfect house-warming gift!
- **DEADHEAD** roses for a final flush of blooms for the New Year.
- ADD sparkle and pizzazz to your porch by spraying your left over pumpkins and gourds gold, silver, or bronze. They'll look like jewels.
- DRINK a glass of tart cherry juice before bedtime to boost your melatonin and help you sleep better. Making a hot valerian tea works wonders too, but don't combine with alcohol or other sedative drugs.
- PUREE mint leaves with garlic and olive oil for a winter fresh pesto to put over pasta, bread, and fish.
- LIGHT up your decorations with battery powered twinkle lights, or other outdoor lights set to timers. Trees trimmed with lights inspire delight.
- PICK carrots for Rudolph and the reindeer, and don't forget to leave yummy persimmon cookies for Jolly St. Nick on Christmas Eve.

Get up, get out, and get growing while you celebrate the holly jolly. Give the greatest gift of all - the light of love. Believe in the magic and get glowing!

Happy Gardening to You!

©2013 Cynthia Brian The Goddess Gardener Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com 925-377-7827 I am available as a speaker, designer, and consultant.







Your friendly neighborhood arborists Darren and Lew Edwards

# WINTER TIPS

Cleaning and thinning your trees may reduce the potential storm hazards without compromising the shade. In some situations the risk of failure cannot be reduced without removal of branches. Remember that healthy structurally sound trees are generally wind fast even when mature.

Storm damage is usually, but not always, related to structural problems that could have been addressed with proper structural training when the tree was young. Co dominant (two trunks with a narrow angle of attachment) trunks account for many trees failures. The hazard of wind damage is higher on the regrowth of trees that have been "topped".

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better than filling your rooms with orchids.

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**ORINDA** 

**11 Fairway Drive** 

property.

Rare find. Mid-century modern

ceilings, office, boudoir, great

guest setup, updated kitchen.

Grand, comfortable, very special

\$1,599,000

4bd/3ba + 2 half bath home on 4th

fairway. Private, large rooms, high

\$219.000

ORINDA

#### 40 Dos Osos

Incredible Orinda, San Pablo Dam, Mt. Diablo views + abundance of nature surrounds this supersized parcel bordering EBMUD land. Once in a lifetime opportunity raw land sale.

#### **ORINDA**



54 La Campana Brilliant 1938 south facing lathe & plaster construction in heart of Country Club. 4bd/3ba with approximately 2608 sf. One of largest pools in Orinda, Trader Vics built BBQ poolside, gardens. A bit of TLC needed. \$1.000.000



#### 9 Las Piedras

Picturesque private 6bd/3ba home in park like setting w/ panoramic views, level lawn & recreational pool. 3745 sf classic custom w/ vaulted ceilings, walls of windows, hardwood floors, den, workout room, FR & wellappointed kitchen. \$1,349,000



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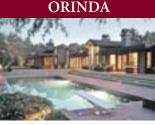
\$545,000 **ORINDA** 

**17 Tappan Lane** Vistas across Orinda come alive from all rooms of this spacious 4,155 sf with 6 bd/4 ba & 2 half ba. High ceilings & light & bright. Perfect for fun in the sun with

yards, decks, pool, & vineyard on 1.15 acres. \$2.389.000



**11 Scenic Drive** Elegant updated 4bd/3.5ba, 4695 sf single-story estate property on .64 ac. Custom millwork, hand carved biblical stone fplcs, lrg bdrms, ofc, Chef's eat-in kit/fam.rm; guest house, pool, lrg patio, gorgeous landscaping. \$3.350.000



Absolutely One-of-a-Kind Bay Area Home with captivating, sweeping views from every rm. Perched on foremost knoll of the coveted Sandhill enclave. Ideal for active family as well as large scale entertaining. \$5.200.000

92 Sandhill Road



137 Via Joaquin Updated Moraga Townhome with Oversized loft, chef's kitchen, open floor plan, lots of windows, private setting. Inviting patio backs to open space. 75 Walk Score. \$645.000



1743 Spyglass Lane Moraga Country Club Forest Hills model, updates throughout include new kitchen appliances, granite counters, updated bath, hardwood floors, new carpet, paint & lighting. \$950,000





**30 San Pablo Court** Remodeled 4 bedroom & 2 bath home with high end finishes located on a huge flat yard. Desirable "The Bluffs" neighborhood with top rated Moraga & Campolindo schools. \$1,275,000

#### LAFAYETTE



9 Mountain View Place Fabulous updated 4bd/2.5ba, 3481 sf custom contemporary on .78 ac in tranquil setting. Spacious LR & DR, new hardwd flrs throughout, new eat-in kitchen/DR open to FR, voltaic solar panels, new redwood deck & more. \$1,299,000

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