

# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

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*Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for July ... read on page D13*

## Hunsaker Canyon

*Lamorinda neighborhood boasts an unpretentious, quiet countryside*

By Cathy Dausman



*Wild horses (although this one is actually a statue) couldn't drag most residents away from their beloved Hunsaker Canyon.*

*Photos Cathy Dausman*

Hunsaker Canyon may be one of Lamorinda's best-kept real estate secrets, but its residents eagerly share its attributes. Nestled in acreage adjacent to Burton Valley and land owned by East Bay Regional Parks and PG&E, Hunsaker is imminently accessible yet retains a distinctly remote, definitively country feel. It is a warm, dry oak woodland habitat populated by 70 or so residents sprinkled among 20 or so homes.

Unlike the other Canyon abutting the East Bay hills, this is not a stand-alone community but a Lafayette neighborhood. Some homes are new and generously sized at 3,000 to 4,000 feet while other originally tiny homes were enlarged over time.

Residents claim the original houses were built in the 1920s as a collection of summer residences. An adobe home and one built entirely of straw clad with stucco sit among more standard wood-sided

homes. A home built at a 1,000-foot elevation commands a 180-degree view, to the east of Mt. Diablo, the west beyond Moraga to the Berkeley Hills, and as far north as Martinez. On a clear day, residents and guests of another home can see the Sierras.

People from as near as Walnut Creek and as far as New England populate Hunsaker. "We sort of have a hillbilly reputation, but we have doctors, lawyers, writers, business owners and some local green community advocates," Karen Schneider told Lamorinda Weekly. "To live here you need an independent and free outlook," she explained. Schneider and her husband, Doug, are no strangers to the area; they grew up in the East Bay. "We built our [Hunsaker] home 25 years ago, but were owners of the property for 43 years," Schneider said.

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*This metal sculpture adds movement and whimsy to this outdoor space.*