

# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 09 Issue 16 Wednesday, October 7, 2015



*Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D16*

## Plugging In

*Electric car trend leading to upgrades at home*

By Chris Lavin



*At Norseman it's a family affair with sons Darryl and Travis Johnson working alongside their father, Randy. Their Lafayette client sports their favorite license plate.*

*Photo Chris Lavin*

Far gone are the days when Fred Flintstone powered a car with his feet. Also gone are the days of the giant gasoline guzzlers of "American Graffiti." Welcome, now, to the days of volts and amps.

The large national and also very

much local trend toward going electric turns out not to be as simple as running an extension cord out to the driveway. While there used to be a time when an electric car could be plugged in to just about any outlet, times have changed.

Today's cars need big power for fast

charging. Most require the installation of electric vehicle supply equipment, or EVSE in the parlance of the day. And unless care is taken, the supply chain can get hot, quite literally.

"When Chevy Volts came in they were catching fire in the garage," said

Gint Federas of Lafayette, a photographer for Lamorinda Weekly who has owned a variety of electric cars. "Sometimes the most simple way to charge is not the most efficient."

While the Moraga-Orinda Fire District hasn't seen any house fires start directly because of electric car issues, special trainings about car fires have started to incorporate concerns about how people are "heating up" their garages.

"We haven't seen any fires directly because of that," said MOFD firefighter-paramedic Brittany McMahon. "But people can't plug their cars into a regular outlet. It's definitely a new thing."

When you find yourself among electricians and savvy electric car owners, it is easy to check out of the conversation. There is talk of amps and wattage. There is talk of overload. Talk of circuit breaks. Talk of bypasses and breakers. One finds oneself thinking "What's for dinner?" while talk of applications of electricity and circuitry abound. Electrician Randy Johnson breaks into this line of culinary thinking by saying, "Yeah, that can start a fire."

"What?" Turns out that, yeah, bad circuitry can start a fire.

... continued on page D4

# THE *Beaubelle*

## GROUP



**ORINDA** - Ideally located in the prestigious Charles Hill/St. Stephens neighborhood in East Orinda, the home offers



picturesque views of the East Bay hills and a welcoming ambience. The hillside property sits on .46 acres and features 5 bedrooms, 2 1/2 bathrooms and approx. 3,460 sf of living space. Enjoy hardwood floors, high ceilings, new lighting, custom paint colors and more. Close proximity to town and highway. Offered at **\$1,295,000**



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## Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

| City      | Last reported: | LOWEST AMOUNT: | HIGHEST AMOUNT: |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| LAFAYETTE | 13             | \$250,000      | \$3,190,000     |
| MORAGA    | 10             | \$420,000      | \$1,800,000     |
| ORINDA    | 7              | \$1,032,000    | \$2,000,000     |

Home sales are compiled by CalREsource, 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

- 3638 Bickerstaff Road, \$910,000, 2 Bdrms, 1127 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 8-14-15;  
Previous Sale: \$749,000, 06-14-05
- 3676 Happy Valley Road, \$2,295,000, 3 Bdrms, 2158 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 8-14-15
- 1812 Hunsaker Canyon Road, \$1,200,000, 2387 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 8-7-15;  
Previous Sale: \$660,000, 06-17-09
- 312 Maverick Court, \$1,775,000, 4 Bdrms, 3513 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 8-14-15;  
Previous Sale: \$1,200,000, 05-31-02
- 2 Middle Road, \$1,575,000, 3 Bdrms, 2340 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 8-17-15;  
Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 05-15-07
- 1601 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,250,000, 3 Bdrms, 2263 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 8-7-15
- 1231 Rose Lane, \$3,190,000, 4 Bdrms, 4710 SqFt, 1982 YrBlt, 8-11-15;  
Previous Sale: \$1,100,000, 07-16-93
- 65 Silverwood Drive, \$250,000, 4 Bdrms, 3055 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 8-18-15
- 3376 Springhill Road, \$1,170,000, 3 Bdrms, 2334 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 8-17-15
- 3161 Teigland Road, \$1,100,000, 5 Bdrms, 2923 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 8-7-15;  
Previous Sale: \$158,000, 04-01-77
- 21 Tiana Terrace, \$2,995,000, 5 Bdrms, 4157 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 8-18-15;  
Previous Sale: \$3,100,000, 07-07-05
- 3320 Woodview Court, \$1,430,000, 3 Bdrms, 2784 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 8-7-15;  
Previous Sale: \$550,000, 02-12-98
- 1075 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$1,310,000, 3 Bdrms, 1855 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 8-14-15; Previous Sale: \$855,000, 10-09-09

### MORAGA

- 633 Augusta Drive, \$840,000, 2 Bdrms, 2270 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 8-18-15;  
Previous Sale: \$725,000, 09-03-14
- 8 Berkshire Street, \$950,000, 2 Bdrms, 1696 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 8-17-15;  
Previous Sale: \$800,000, 12-20-12
- 1349 Camino Pablo, \$1,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 2443 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 8-11-15;  
Previous Sale: \$1,050,000, 07-21-14
- 461 Chalda Way, \$588,000, 3 Bdrms, 1322 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 8-19-15;  
Previous Sale: \$197,000, 07-16-98
- 2048 Donald Drive #2050, \$980,000, 4 Bdrms, 1620 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 8-18-15;  
Previous Sale: \$849,000, 09-01-05
- 2121 Donald Drive #15, \$420,000, 2 Bdrms, 1224 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 8-10-15;  
Previous Sale: \$230,000, 09-27-10
- 17 Francisca Drive, \$685,000, 2 Bdrms, 1211 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 8-14-15;  
Previous Sale: \$600,000, 05-30-14
- 1513 Moraga Way, \$584,000, 2 Bdrms, 1522 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 8-14-15;  
Previous Sale: \$99,500, 08-01-79
- 5 Teodora Court, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 3668 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 8-14-15
- 6 Wingfoot Street, \$1,290,000, 3 Bdrms, 3424 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 8-7-15;  
Previous Sale: \$484,000, 12-31-87

... continued on page D14

# KPG SELLER REPRESENTATION

## FOR SALE, PENDING & SOLD

1139 Garden Lane,  
Lafayette



- 4BR/4BA, 3500± sq. ft., .24± acre
- Offered at \$1,495,000

28 Dos Encinas,  
Orinda



- 4BR/2 Full+2 Half BA, 3046± sq. ft.
- Offered at \$1,695,000

874 Mountain View Drive,  
Lafayette



- 3+BR/2BA, 2000± sq. ft., .67± acre
- Offered at \$1,150,000

64 Muth Drive,  
Orinda



- 4BR/3BA, 2000± sq. ft., .77± acre
- Offered at \$995,000

1138 Garden Lane,  
Lafayette



- 3BR/2BA, .35± acre
- Offered at \$939,000

3483 Hamlin Road,  
Lafayette



- Represented the Buyer
- Offered at \$1,495,000

623 Lucas Drive,  
Lafayette



- 5BR/3BA, 3400± sq. ft.
- Offered at \$2,150,000

3160 Somerset Place,  
Lafayette



- 2700± sq. ft., .5± acre
- Offered at \$1,495,000

616 Lancaster Drive,  
Lafayette



- 4BR/2BA, 2300± sq. ft.
- Offered at \$1,350,000

3538 Silver Springs Road,  
Lafayette



- 5BR/4BA, 3536± sq. ft., .5± acre
- Sold at \$2,250,000 | 2 Offers

1036 Sunnybrook Drive,  
Lafayette



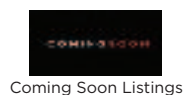
- 2401± sq. ft., .28± acre lot
- Offered at \$1,275,000 | 4 Offers

1186 Pleasant Hill Circle,  
Lafayette



- 4BR/3.5BA, 2700± sq. ft.
- Offered at \$1,695,000 | 5 Offers

To see these and other coming soon listings  
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# Plugging In



Randy Johnson of Norseman Electric checks the timer for a client's electric car.

Photos Chris Lavin



An EVSE plug to a newer electric car. Electric vehicle supply equipment provides a safer way to charge up – two prongs are for power, one for a ground, one for safety so that the power will shut off if things get gnarly, and one to communicate with the car's computer.

... continued from page D1

"It's a learning curve," said his son, Travis Johnson, who works for the family business. An electric car driver must traverse that curve. Some cars might have the battery capacity to drive for a day, but the supply on the home end will require two days to charge. Early electric cars with the smallest batteries would limit their range to a 50-mile radius.

"You really had to plan the trips," Federas said.

Now there are bigger batteries, and more complicated computer systems. Whether one chooses a Tesla, a Nissan LEAF, a Volt or other brand, new electric cars come with a charging package that may well require rewiring a garage, an outside charging port, or both.

A new electric car owner today has to know how big and how strong his or her battery is and how long it will last. Onboard computers help owners know how much and how long they have left, and the computers let them know when they need to dock in. But again, it is not just a plug in the wall.

"It's a lot like plugging your phone into its docking station," said Federas. If the phone runs out of power, no calls come in. If the car runs out of power, no turning the ignition; you are dead in the road.

By using EVSE, the whole system will monitor how much charge the car battery can take, as well as how much power there is to be had. In many cases plugging in at Whole Foods or the hardware store, at BART or stores that offer free charging while shopping will be different than plugging in at home.

"It depends on where you are," Randy Johnson said. "Different docks come with different specifications." Some Tesla owners, he said, carry a plethora of adapters to be able to plug into whatever outlet is available.

Another thing to consider is when to charge the car. Pacific Gas and Electric Co. has peak hours. Even though driving by electricity is cheaper than buying gasoline, charging the car during peak hours can cost twice as much as charging on the off hours – so most electric car owners charge the car while they are asleep. Some owners use timers on the systems themselves; the more modern cars utilize on-board systems to know when to "turn on" to charge.

Other drivers have applications on their personal devices that will allow them to monitor the use of their electricity by the minute. "Yay!" they will say while watching Netflix, when a window appears in the corner of the screen. "The car just came on."

Ready to go in the morning.

# //PENDING

## HIDDEN GEM IN ORINDA COUNTRY CLUB



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Situated on an inviting wooded .30 acre lot this approximately 2392 square foot home offers three bedrooms, two and a half baths, an expansive living room with vaulted ceilings, gas fireplace and wonderful inside-outside living. The formal dining room opens to a beautiful deck for outdoor entertaining as does the eat-in kitchen providing a seamless flow to enjoy the views.

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**FOR SALE! 10 Las Palomas, Orinda**



Beautiful 5BR, 3.5 BA, 3983 sq. ft. home. Located in Orinda Country Club on .5 acre. Free flowing floor plan, saltwater pool, spa, full outdoor kitchen, level lawns & mature plantings. Lower level has own entrance, ideal for guest or in-law. \$2,350,000

**JUST LISTED! 651 Evelyn Ct, Lafayette**



Great home on quiet cul-de-sac. 3 BR, 2 BA, 1665 sq. ft. on .38 acre mostly level lot. 3 car garage. Open floor plan and bonus room. Call for details.

**FOR SALE! 2477 Cherry Hills Dr, Lafayette**



Great opportunity to own 2 homes on 1 lot! Main home is remodeled with open floor plan. 3 BR, 2 BA with 2 car garage. Second home is 2 BR, 1 BA with 1 car garage & own laundry. \$895,000

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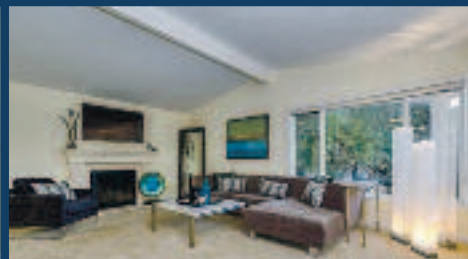
## A Darling Home with Character & Charm

This 2 bed/2 bath home has been meticulously cared for and has all the charm you could ever want. Set back from the road, including a circle driveway surrounding a fruitful citrus tree, the home sits on over 1/3 of an acre with views from the front and back of the property. The moment you walk in you are enchanted by high ceilings, an open floor plan, and a newly added loft running the full length of the living area. Situated close Downtown Lafayette, great schools, and recreation, if you are looking for character and charm, this is it!

## 953 Oak View Circle, Lafayette



Offered at \$899,000



## 3720 Highland Court, Lafayette

### Home Buyer's Dream in the Heart of Lafayette

(Now with a master suite addition plans!)

Location, location, location! Nestled into a 1/4 acre of nature, this 3 bedroom, 2 bath home is a peaceful retreat in the heart of all the action in Lafayette—only minutes to Downtown and Bart. It boasts approx. 1,988sqft and is light, bright, and airy, featuring an updated kitchen, and views from almost every window in the house! There are plenty of closets for storage, a bonus space downstairs, open for entertaining. The large 2 car garage comes with a work bench area and more room for storage. All of this and your own private entry surrounded by beautiful landscaping. It's everything you'd want in a home!

Offered at \$1,050,000



## Amazing Estate with Spectacular Views

This magnificent new home sits atop a lush Happy Valley hill with views from all sides. With over 4,200sqft, 5beds/3.5bath, and 5 acres, this home beckons to all! Covered patios, courtyard, outdoor kitchen—this home has room for family, friends, and indoor/outdoor entertaining. A stand alone guest house is perfect for in-laws, an au-pair., or guests. Ask to see plans now, and have it built to suit your needs!

## 931 Sunnyhill Road, Lafayette



Call for Price



# Fall Feng Shui and the Metal Element

By Michele Duffy



*This table setting incorporates elements of wood, earth and fire for the perfect Thanksgiving feast.*

*Photos provided*

It's raining and so lovely today as I write this from my porch in Lamorinda and the wish to reach for a cozy sweater reminds me it is fall.

Typically, the dining room needs a feng shui makeover this time of year as we tend to gather in to warmer spaces with family and friends, lingering over meals on shorter days.

Design with an appreciation of the five elements (water creates wood, wood creates fire, fire creates earth, earth creates metal and metal creates water) integral to Chinese culture, Chinese medicine and feng shui requires a basic understanding of the feng shui Bagua (see diagram on page D12). Overlay the BAGUA map over the floorplan of your residence, and use the actual elements, representative shapes and colors to make the five elements come alive and ignite a nourishing energetic

in your home. One of the best places to focus your attention during fall is the dining room and the bounty of the harvest found at the dining room table.

Dining rooms can often become a dumping ground for the entire household's daily accumulations, or worse, a makeshift office. How can we gather with friends and family at the dining room table if it is piled high with household clutter?

Part of getting a handle on clutter anywhere in our homes is by simply observing where stuff tends to accumulate and pile up. These are potentially areas of stagnation, so note what Bagua areas on the diagram are affected.

Fall is ruled by the metal element, and includes metallic colors as well as gray and white. You can balance the metal element with bits of red (fire) and green

(wood), both of which present many delightful opportunities for someone with a creative eye.

Highlight and incorporate edgy metal baskets to collect some of the dining room clutter, or add metal yard sculptures or other metallic items in your dining room décor. Sophisticated scented soy Anthropologie candles in silver finish, gleaming silver serving dishes and mixing silver and gold metals with evergreens, red cyclamen and rosemary centerpieces will bring a sparkle to your table.

Be playful, artfully display what you like, and create an abundance of fall reminders with actual harvested items like pinecones for table place card holders, abundant candlelight for glowing conversations, strewn gourds for a casually elegant table, and warmer tones for table linens. Create intimacy since generally only our closest friends and family are invited over to our homes for dinner.

... continued on page D12



*Use gourds in your décor to highlight the harvest season.*

# Listing Lamorinda...

5 Burton Vista Ct. ~ \$6,595,000



23 Sessions Rd. ~ \$3,550,000



1154 Camino Vallecito ~ \$1,700,000



40 Dos Osos ~ \$489,000



## ALSO COMING SOON!

- Classic 1930's Spanish Hacienda in OCC
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# Fall Feng Shui and the Metal Element

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Deep reds of fall can balance with the metal element in home décor.

Remember to warm up the area, too, and be seasonal in terms of what you are serving and sharing around your dining room table to balance the cooler weather.

Fall offers us a chance to reflect and gain clarity on the lessons of this harvest, and to ask ourselves what worked and what did not. The vision of that thought may be enough inspiration to start creating a fresh dining room approach that you are inspired to entertain in and that also includes the subtle and ancient art of feng shui.

If the holidays (and clutter) are stressing you beyond imagination, and who isn't stressed in anticipation of multiple fall holidays, use organizing professionals (ask me who) to help clear out, sort and organize. It's win-win way to get your home in tip-top shape for the holidays, clear out the superfluous so you can imagine how you can create fresh holiday glimmer for a truly fresh take on your personal fall holiday design and décor.

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>WEALTH &amp; PROSPERITY</b><br>"Gratitude"<br>REAR LEFT<br><u>Wood</u><br>Blues, purple & reds             | <b>FAME &amp; REPUTATION</b><br>"Integrity"<br>REAR MIDDLE<br><u>Fire</u><br>Reds | <b>LOVE &amp; MARRIAGE</b><br>"Receptivity"<br>REAR RIGHT<br><u>Earth</u><br>Reds, pinks, & whites          |
| <b>HEALTH &amp; FAMILY</b><br>"Strength"<br>MIDDLE LEFT<br><u>Wood</u><br>Blues & Greens                      | <b>CENTER</b><br>"Earth"<br>Yellow & earth tones                                  | <b>CREATIVITY &amp; CHILDREN</b><br>"Joy"<br>MIDDLE RIGHT<br><u>Metal</u><br>White & Pastels                |
| <b>KNOWLEDGE &amp; SELF CULTIVATION</b><br>"Stillness"<br>FRONT LEFT<br><u>Earth</u><br>Black, blues & greens | <b>CAREER</b><br>"Depth"<br>FRONT MIDDLE<br><u>Water</u><br>Black & dark tones    | <b>HELPFUL PEOPLE &amp; TRAVEL</b><br>"Synchronicity"<br>FRONT RIGHT<br><u>Metal</u><br>White, grey & black |



Michele Duffy, BTB M.F.S. is an Orinda resident who, since 1999, enjoys creating "Space as Medicine" Feng Shui one space at a time, as well as hiking in nature, cooking, and spending time with her family; Canyon Ranch Feng Shui Master, International Feng Shui Guild (IFSG) Red Ribbon Professional. To schedule a professional 2015 Feng Shui Consultation, contact Michele at (520) 647-4887 or send an email to [spaceharmony@gmail.com](mailto:spaceharmony@gmail.com).

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## 34 St. Stephens Drive, Drinda



Tucked behind a private gate and nestled amongst mature oak trees and redwoods in the heart of Orinda Country Club, this approx. 2804 sq ft mid-century classic home offers an open floor plan, light filled kitchen, soaring ceilings, spacious family room & peaceful views. Enjoy Orinda's top rated schools and close to town location. This one you do not want to miss.

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## Suzi O'Brien

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www.suziobrien.com



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## Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

### ORINDA

8 Aspinwall Court, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 1951 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 8-19-15

67 Barbara Road, \$1,120,000, 4 Bdrms, 2373 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 8-19-15;

Previous Sale: \$250,000, 07-07-93

59 Cedar Lane, \$2,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 3931 SqFt, 1992 YrBlt, 8-7-15;

Previous Sale: \$1,420,000, 04-13-04

134 El Toyonal, \$1,032,000, 3 Bdrms, 1547 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 8-11-15;

Previous Sale: \$570,000, 02-04-02

11 Estates Drive, \$1,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 3252 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 8-11-15;

Previous Sale: \$1,125,000, 08-06-10

674 Moraga Way, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 2497 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 8-19-15;

Previous Sale: \$940,000, 05-21-04

97 Oak Road, \$1,515,000, 4 Bdrms, 2846 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 8-7-15;

Previous Sale: \$1,059,000, 06-05-08

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### 15 Hilldale Court, Orinda

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Lynn Molloy

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## Orinda Country Club Classic

88 La Espiral, Orinda



This 1935 classic Orinda home features approximately 2498 sq. ft. 4 bedrooms / 2.5 bathrooms and sits on a private .82 acre lot with a solar heated pool and stunning views. There are updates throughout that maintain the original appeal. When you enter the home you are immediately drawn to the spacious formal living room with hardwood floors, a wood burning fireplace and French doors to a deck with views of the Orinda hills. The home includes an updated kitchen with stainless appliances and granite counters, a formal dining room with beautiful wainscoting, a private master suite with two closets and updated bathroom, a family room with wet bar, and bonus play room.



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## Digging Deep - Gardening with Cynthia Brian

# Water Wise Dreams

By Cynthia Brian

*"If something you are doing is not working, doing more of it won't work any better."* – Unknown



*Agave and succulents thrive in dry conditions.*

*Photos Cynthia Brian*

Spring, summer and fall have always been my most favorite seasons because I thrive in the sunshine, relish the warmth and indulge my senses in the lavish, lush beauty of the landscapes of California. This year has been an exception to my predilection as my garden is straining to survive in this thirsty environment. As I was writing this column, the skies sprinkled droplets of rain and I was so excited I stood outside with my face to the darkened heavens blissfully grateful for this tiny bit of moisture. Water, our most valuable resource, is becoming increasingly precious as our climate changes. The way we have been functioning in our gardens isn't working any longer.

I was privileged to be a speaker at the recent National Gardening Symposium held in the horticultural wonderland of Pasadena where the temperatures ex-

ceeded 100 degrees on a daily basis. It was hot, hotter, and hottest as the thermometer hit 107. Although considered a Mediterranean climate, it felt more Saharan. Attendees hailed from all around the United States, Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, as well as a few other countries with the most discussed topic being H<sub>2</sub>O. Trees were at the top of the list of plantings that must be saved. The world is watching California as we struggle to find a path to water conservation.

On a behind-the-scenes tour of the Los Angeles County Arboretum, I learned about an age-old technique used in Eastern Europe called "hugelkultur." Translated from German, it means "mound culture," because the practice involves salvaging limbs, branches, and debris to make raised beds that will improve drain-

ing and grow gardens without irrigation or fertilization. The Arboretum team removed a large lawn from an area where they are now experimenting with various ways to save and harvest water by slowing it down, spreading it out, and filtering it. Hugelkultur is something that many of us could embrace, especially with our compacted clay soil. For large properties with slopes or trees that have fallen or need to be cut down, hugelkultur could be a godsend. The process to design a hugel is simple.

1. Choose an area where you want a mound.
2. Gather logs, branches, twigs, other wood debris and leaves to line the area. Don't use wood from Black locust, walnut or cedar because of toxicity. Rotted wood is great.
3. First lay the big logs, add a layer of branches, then twigs, then leaves and grass clippings. Make the mound a minimum of three feet; seven feet or more is best. The mound will compact and shrink.
4. Water the layers.
5. Add kitchen scraps, compost, and mulch. Wood is high in carbon and could leach nitrogen from the soil. Compost is a necessary ingredient.
6. Add two inches of topsoil and more mulch.
7. Prepare your beds now in the fall so they will cure for a spring planting.

... continued on next page



*Growbags are the latest development in moisture retention for container plantings.*



My hugelkultur trial will start soon as it is definitely more environmentally friendly to utilize the wood debris that I encounter in my gardening maintenance than putting it in the green bins. Plus, I love the look of rounded hills in landscapes.

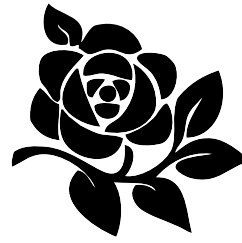
Another exciting discovery was a lawn seed that claims to “seldom or never need water or fertilizer once established.” This seed is an all-natural product with 100 percent native and adaptive grasses, no genetically modified seed, and 99.9 percent weed free – a result of 10 years of product research and testing. I have ordered it for my lawns and as soon as I know the results, I’ll be reporting it to you. Stay tuned.

As we drive around our neighborhoods we notice that most lawns are brown and the surrounding landscapes look dull and dry. Maintaining a beautiful, productive, verdant garden is becoming more complicated as our water bills continue to escalate even though we are consuming less than in previous years.

... continued on page D18



A hugel is born with logs, branches, and twigs.



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# Water Wise Dreams

We can be water wise by implementing these steps:

1. Add organic material to your soil. Compost and mulch improve the water-holding capacity. Mulch cuts down on weeds, holds in moisture and maintains the temperature.
2. Use soaker hoses when possible as they are the most efficient irrigating system delivering water directly to the roots.
3. Prepare to collect rainwater. In Bermuda, all buildings have an underground cistern that collects rain from the limestone roofs. It may be time for Californians to start thinking about cisterns, or like the Aussies, install storage tanks in our crawl spaces. A 1,000-square-foot roof will harvest 625 gallons of water from one inch of rain.
4. Before planting, study your garden. Know where the sun and shade are at all times of the day.
5. Group plants with similar needs together and choose drought tolerant species that are known to thrive in our environs.
6. Maintain, monitor and weed. Be alert for pests.

Instead of drowning in denial, it is time to save our selves with water-wise investments. I'll be your guide on the side to dream with you.



*A sensible suggestion for heat and drought tolerance.*

... continued from page D17



*A recirculating fountain adds coolness to hot environs.*



*A pile of mulch is ready to be added to the hugel.*

Happy Gardening and Happy Growing.



A century-old olive tree is drought tolerant. Save the trees.



Cynthia Brian at The Huntington Gardens in the contemplative Chinese garden.

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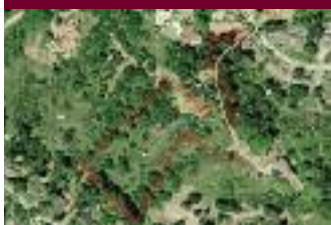
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## ORINDA



**50 Don Gabriel Way** South Orinda home features open floor plan w/custom cabinetry, hardwood flrs, updated kitchen. Patio & outdoor dining area, large terraced upslope backyard perfect for relaxation. **\$1,150,000**

## ORINDA



**20 La Vuelta** Custom contemporary, apx. 2390sf, 3bd/2.5ba w/spacious living rm, formal dining rm, eat-in kitchen & family rm all accessing inviting decks, view & private setting. Award winning schools. **\$1,195,000**

## ORINDA



**42 Valley Drive** Fabulous contemporary home in sought after Glorietta area. High ceilings, formal dining & living rm, large bonus rm, gourmet kit. open to fam rm. Walk to Swim/Tennis Club & Glorietta Elem. **\$1,450,000**

## ORINDA



**8 Camino Del Diablo** Stunning Contemporary rebuilt in 2002 by MGHG Designs. Impeccable design & architectural finishes. Chef's kitchen w/top of the line appliances, Carrera marble counters, radiant flrs. **\$2,100,000**

## MORAGA



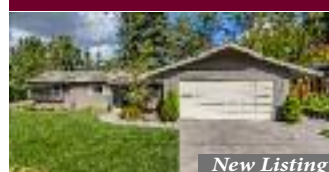
**5 Paseo Linares** Stunning new construction. Priv. cul-de-sac setting, views & lvl yd. Apx. 4142sf, 5bd/4.5ba Med. Villa w/spacious rms, formal din. & great rm. Walk to shops, Moraga Commons & bike trail. **\$2,525,000**

## LAFAYETTE



**3 Shreve Lane** Fabulous sun flooded 2 year old townhome! Open flr pln w/granite & stainless kitchen, 4 well appointed bdrms incl. gorgeous master ste, 3.5 baths. Walk to shops, library, restaurants & Trail. **\$949,000**

## LAFAYETTE



**348 Shire Oaks Court** Burton Valley cul-de-sac charmer. 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, 1545 square feet., meticulously maintained & top schools!

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## LAFAYETTE



**1154 Camino Vallecito** Opportunity abounds to renovate a special home on beautiful 1.86ac site. Top of the knoll setting w/views & privacy. Needs full enhancing in most rooms yet offers incredible upside appeal. **\$1,700,000**

## LAFAYETTE



**23 Sessions Road** Gated English Manor 12.18 acre 5bd/6ba Estate. Grand foyer, living, family rms + "Club" rm, deluxe kitchen, dramatic solarium + executive office. Gorgeous grounds w/lap pool/lawns, views. **\$3,550,000**

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**1141 Vallecito Court** Treasured Happy Valley estate custom built in 2006 w/finest craftsmanship. Chef's kitchen, gorgeous master, ofc, fam rm, home gym. Pool, spa, firplc & level lawn w/views. Detached guest house. **\$3,900,000**

## LAFAYETTE



**5 Burton Vista Court** Spectacular 7bd/9+ba, 8986sf Estate w/luxury amenities in grand oversized spaces. Premium 2.25ac parcel w/sport court, sun-drenched pool, pavilion w/kitchen, dressing rms & showers. **\$6,595,000**

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**791 Contra Costa Avenue** Coveted upper Thousand Oaks neighborhood 1925 built home. Bay views, remodeled bath, private yard, master/sitting room, eat-in kitchen, charming in-law studio w/separate entrance. **\$899,000**

## CONCORD



**1440 Dumaine Street** Newer two story 2032sf, 3+bd/2.5ba home w/vaulted ceilings, spacious family rm & dining open to kitchen, large master suite. Fenced level yard & patio. Near shops & schools. **\$625,000**

## OAKLAND



**4902 Broadway #201** Fantastic penthouse loft w/direct access from unit to deeded rooftop deck, fabulous views of SF Bay. Hwd flrs, granite counters. Near BART, fwys, bus commute. Deeded parking space. **\$627,000**

## WALNUT CREEK



**3311 Rossmoor Pkwy #4** A rarity! Fantastic, level in (no steps) Cascade model on golf course w/views of hills & course from most living spaces. Granite kitchen w/breakfast nook, plantation shutters, view deck. **\$659,000**



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