

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 10 Issue 14 Wednesday, September 7, 2016



Picturing the Paw-fect Pet Photo By Diane Claytor



Barbara Brady-Smith photographs dogs in her home studio.

om, you need a passion in your life." This sentence, spoken by Barbara Brady-Smith's daughter several years ago, was the beginning of a life-changing adventure. "At the time she said it," Brady-Smith laughingly acknowledges," I felt like poking her little eyes out. But then I realized she was right."

A native of Southern California, Brady-

Smith came to Berkeley to attend college. She fell in love with the area (as well as with her husband, Scott) and never left, moving to Lafayette in 1984. At the time, Brady-Smith, a self-described "math-nerd," was working for Wells Fargo Bank, eventually becoming an executive vice president. At 40 years old, Brady-Smith left the world of banking, "because, fortunately, I could afford to," she said gratefully. Her mother had

moved in with them, her daughter, Chrissy, was entering middle school, and, "I figured it was the perfect time for me to stay home and dedicate myself to my family," she happily recalls.

Looking for a fulfilling hobby, Brady-Smith decided to explore digital photography, which, at the time, was in its infancy. She attended classes and read books. She learned everything she could. With both her daughter and high school coach-husband heavily involved in Campolindo sports, Brady-Smith started photographing their teams.

"I started with a digital camera that was lousy at low light and lousy at action sports," she says. But cameras got better and so did Brady-Smith.

"I loved that instant gratification of immediately seeing the pictures," she says. Becoming intrigued with lighting and the digital post-production process, Brady-Smith again took classes and read more books, learning about Photoshop and Lightroom. And then she volunteered, taking pictures of sporting events, choir performances and class activities. "It was such fun," Brady-Smith said.

"So, several years later, when Chrissy noticed that I seemed bored and in need of something more, I realized that what had started out as a hobby - digital photography, studio work, lighting and post-processing - had become something I really loved doing."

... continued on page D4

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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:	
LAFAYETTE	10	\$940,000	\$2,960,000	-
MORAGA	8	\$305,000	\$1,525,000	1
ORINDA	12	\$750,000	\$2,695,000	I

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 Califorian REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE

3405 Goyak Drive, \$1,565,000, 4 Bdrms, 2061 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 8-11-16; Previous Sale: \$1,225,000, 03-29-07 3682 Hastings Court, \$1,585,000, 4 Bdrms, 2174 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 8-4-16 521 McBride Drive, \$1,225,000, 4 Bdrms, 2017 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 8-12-16 3201 Ortega Avenue, \$1,065,000, 3 Bdrms, 1809 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 8-11-16 3807 Palo Alto Drive, \$2,960,000, 4 Bdrms, 4292 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 8-5-16 1400 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,562,000, 4 Bdrms, 2657 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 8-8-16 1262 Sunset Loop, \$940,000, 2 Bdrms, 1459 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 8-9-16 3263 Withers Avenue, \$1,155,000, 3 Bdrms, 1650 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 8-9-16; Previous Sale: \$899,000, 10-20-05 1003 Woodbury Road #103, \$1,220,000, 2 Bdrms, 1638 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 8-4-16 10 Shreve Lane, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 2035 SqFt, 2013 YrBlt, 8-11-16

MORAGA

2129 Ascot Drive #2, \$415,000, 2 Bdrms, 1314 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 8-12-16; Previous Sale: \$156,000, 08-07-90 51 Ascot Place, \$765,000, 2 Bdrms, 1379 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 8-5-16; Previous Sale: \$628,000, 06-26-07 780 Augusta Drive, \$1,525,000, 3 Bdrms, 2430 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 8-10-16 326 Calle La Montana, \$1,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 2424 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 8-11-16; Previous Sale: \$355,000, 04-25-88 1396 Camino Peral, \$685,000, 3 Bdrms, 1440 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 8-5-16; Previous Sale: \$575,000, 11-08-06 2133 Donald Drive #14, \$305,000, 1 Bdrms, 560 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 8-10-16; Previous Sale: \$122,000, 03-01-11 172 Miramonte Drive, \$610,000, 3 Bdrms, 1913 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 8-4-16; Previous Sale: \$449,000, 09-20-12 3878 Paseo Grande, \$1,087,000, 4 Bdrms, 2008 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 8-5-16; Previous Sale: \$739,000, 09-04-02



...continued on page D12

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Picturing the Paw-fect Pet Photo



A picture taken at the Lafayette Community Park, one of Barbara Brady-Smith's favorite locations. Photos provided

While taking pictures of people was good, she stated, "It was photographing animals that I really loved." Share the Joy Photography, a boutique business dedicated "to photographing pets" was created and Brady-Smith was off and running.

"Boutique' is a good word for it," Brady-Smith says, "because it's so specific to pets and their families." She takes pictures in her Lafayette home studio, in clients' homes and outdoors – "from Half Moon Bay to Bodega Bay," she says. "Most of what I do is local and the Lafayette Community Park is one of my favorite spots." She knows the park inside and out and knows "the best place to be at every time of day and every time of year" to capture the very best picture.

While Brady-Smith mostly photographs dogs and cats, she has taken pictures of just about every type of pet – birds, horses, bunnies and turtles.



One of Barbara Brady-Smith's favorite photos, showing off the personality of this family of pups.

... continued from page D1

Her most unusual pet photo was of a snake, she reported, "one that actually disappeared in my yard, only to be found several months later, just lounging in the sun." She's never been bitten or scratched, she states proudly. As one very satisfied client said, Brady-Smith's "compassion, kindness, patience and humor... make her a pleasure to work with. From the moment she met my dogs, they had a bond."

Brady-Smith also offers memory sessions for animals diagnosed with a fatal illness. "Often the animal isn't expected to live much longer and its owner wants a great picture to hold onto," Brady-Smith said. "We do whatever the animal is capable of – some dogs have had to be carried but they're still having fun, getting treats. And I'm creating an image that the owner will love forever.

"My process is very customer-oriented," Brady-Smith says. "I start with a consultation, meeting both the pet and its human, learning about the animal's personality and what types of pictures are wanted. After the photography session, I edit, again meet with the client and do the post-processing work." The final products are all top of the line, "museum quality," she said. "These photos are an investment; they are pictures that will last a lifetime."

In addition to photographing pets, Brady-Smith, a certified professional and master photographer, teaches others how to do the same. She typically teaches five sold-out classes a year, many of which are sponsored by various professional photographer organizations. She is also in the process of producing a book, "Hug Tails – Portraits of Therapy Pets," "documenting the amazing peace and joy these animals bring..." Additionally, Brady-Smith volunteers her photographic talents to non-profit animal groups to help them find forever homes for their residents.

Brady-Smith, who has won numerous international and national photography awards, acknowledges that she's absolutely reinvented herself, stating "I wake up every morning, so excited. I never would have imagined myself doing this – and loving it so much."

Tips and Tricks for a Great Pet Photo

A quick look at social media tells the story: everyone takes – and posts – pictures of their pets. Professional pet photographer Barbara Brady-Smith of Share the Joy Photography offers some tips and tricks for making these pictures truly share-worthy:

Prep your pet — a good brushing and wiping around eyes is a great way to start.
 Watch your lighting. If outside on a bright day, head into the shade. The best light is in the morning or early evening, not in the middle of the day.

3. Calling your pet's name is not the best way to get its attention; it will likely cause it to run toward you. Instead, shake a treat bag, squeak a toy or say a favorite word ("treat," "ride" "walk") to get it to look at you.

4. Most people tend to take pictures looking down on their pet. Rethink your angles. Try getting on the ground and photographing up at your pet.

5. Owners often forget that pets can be emotional sponges. If you stress about picture taking, your pet will, too. Instead, laugh a lot, reward with treats and show your pet lots of love between pictures. This will make it fun for both of you!

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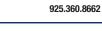


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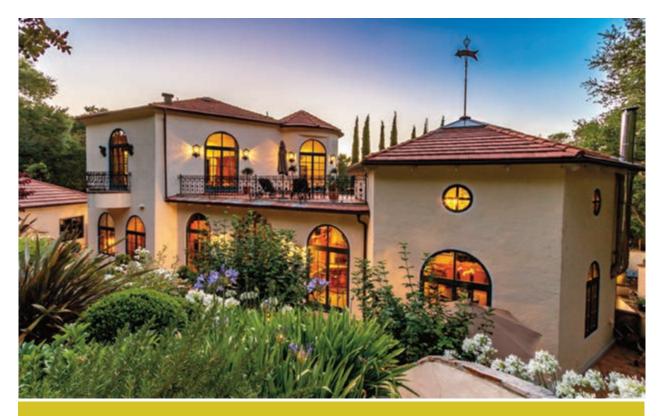
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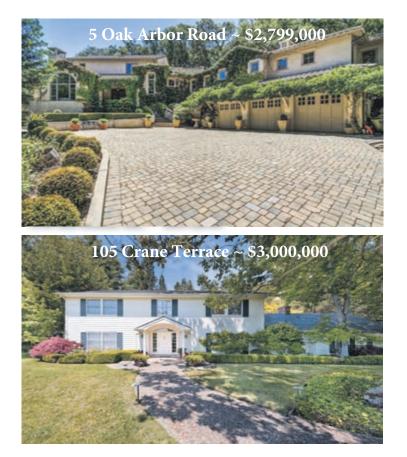


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OUR HOMES

Feng Shui

Create an Inviting Front Entrance

By Michele Duffy



Red front doors like this Moraga home are considered the best Feng Shui since red is protective and also attracts Qi , or life, towards the home.

Photo Michele Duffy

Fall is almost in full swing and here come all the fabulous fall gatherings. With that anticipation of home entertaining, what better time to review the Feng Shui of the powerful front entrance?

In Feng Shui we call the front entrance the "Mouth of Qi/Chi" or the main entryway where the Qi enters the structure. It is akin to the way each of us takes nourishment into our mouths so that our whole body is supported, nourished and fed. Sometimes the front entrance is called the "Doorway to Good Fortune" or the "Doorway of Opportunities" since this is again the main portal of energy into the home.

We also always overlay the Feng Shui Bagua map over the home from the front entrance, even if residents enter most days through a garage or secondary door.

The front entrance of a residence creates a first impression for you, for others, and for unlimited opportunities to come your way. It sets the intention for the rest of your home and every time you drive up to home your house either emanates an aura of success, abundance and pride, or a feeling of disarray, laziness and misfortune.

Think about when you are on holiday and drive up to the entrance of a hotel entrance — what goes through your mind immediately? You look at the maintenance of the building, landscaping, parking lot, the number of staff around, and all of surrounding influences of your first impression. You make many evaluations instantaneously and either you are elated or incredibly annoyed. When the hotel driveway welcomes you with beautiful trees, colorful flowers, a grand water fountain and a friendly doorman, you are happy before you have even stepped foot in your room. It is not a coincidence that most of the building budget goes into creating as lavish a first impression as possible.

In the same way, your home must welcome you, your family, your guests and all of your opportunities with loving, open arms. Before these "opportunities" ring the doorbell, your goal is to flood them with beauty, happiness and harmony. While they wait for you to answer the door, give them multiple reasons to generate positive thoughts about you. Create a home that glimmers and stands out from the rest.

Step outside your door. What do you see? What do you hear? Does the outside of your home emanate beauty? Notice the upkeep of the paint, roof and landscaping and keep in mind that a home that is clean and well cared for leaves a lasting impression. The trees, shrubs, and flowers should be thriving and well-trimmed. A cluttered yard or overhanging, tangled weed growth creates the same sort of stuck Qi (energy) outside in your yard as it does inside (ying) your home. The inside should always reflect the outside (yang) so if it's neat inside your home, it should be tidy outside in your yard, so balance is achieved and you have an uplifting view of outside from inside your home.

The path leading up to your home must be easily accessible. Clear away bicycles, trash, garbage bins, dead plants, newspapers, water bottles, and repair broken or leaky sprinklers. ... continued on page D14



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925-377-0977 Wednesday, September 7, 2016

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

ORINDA

78 Claremont Avenue, \$1,030,000, 3 Bdrms, 1478 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 8-12-16; Previous Sale: \$339,000, 04-14-94 15 Estates Drive, \$1,520,000, 4 Bdrms, 2240 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 8-4-16

36 Hacienda Circle, \$1,475,000, 5 Bdrms, 3073 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 8-4-16 117 Ivy Drive, \$1,705,000, 5 Bdrms, 2572 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 8-10-16; Previous Sale: \$1,370,000, 10-02-07

21 Lost Valley Drive, \$1,900,000, 4 Bdrms, 3824 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 8-4-16 57 Meadow View Road, \$920,000, 3 Bdrms, 1774 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 8-12-16

44 Oak Drive, \$750,000, 3 Bdrms, 2584 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 8-5-16

18 Ramona Drive, \$1,275,000, 4 Bdrms, 1992 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 8-5-16; Previous Sale: \$829,000, 02-13-07

407 Ridge Gate Road, \$1,310,500, 2 Bdrms, 2153 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 8-10-16

14 Sycamore Road, \$1,850,000, 3 Bdrms, 3582 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 8-8-16; Previous Sale: \$1,650,000, 08-08-14

40 Valley View Road, \$2,695,000, 4 Bdrms, 3480 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 8-12-16; Previous Sale: \$2,298,000, 07-31-07

23 Wilder Road, \$1,925,000, 4 Bdrms, 3380 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 8-12-16



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PACIFIC UNION CHRISTIES

Feng Shui **Create an Inviting Front Entrance**

... continued from page D10



Water features like at this Orinda home, attract money flow and life towards the home.

Here are some basic Feng Shui tips for powerful entrances:

• Clear clutter from the yard, pathway and front porch to allow energy to flow into the home. No old gardening wellingtons, newspapers or children's toys. Also clear away all spider webs with a broom and keep your front stoop spotless.

• Repaint the front door a bright, cheerful color. Red is the Feng Shui color for prosperity and abundance. Green is the color of nature and money.

• Place a tall, healthy plant on either side of your front door. It should not block the entrance.

• Hang white lights around the front porch to attract attention to golden opportunities.

• Install a water fountain on the right side of the main door to bring fortunate energy in every time you open the door.

• Place a statue to bring stability, blessings and protection to the home. This can be a ceramic angel, a friendly animal such as rabbit (love), deer (longevity) or turtle (health). Cultural artifacts such as a stone Buddha are also great to ground the front entrance but Buddhas are sacred art and must be shown great respect, so place a small table or flat rock or piece of driftwood under the Buddha so there is elevation off the ground.

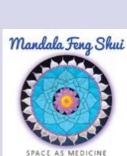
• Buy a colorful welcome mat with red to attract the qi into the home. Red is a color that stands out and gets noticed and this is desirable at the front entranceway. Then imagine that the moment visitors step the lovely welcome mat that their love for you is heightened.

• If you energize, clean and prepare your front entrance now it will create much greater clarity to layer the many upcoming fall and winter seasonal decorations. Just remember to remove each set of decorations after the holiday has passed to reflect living in the moment. ... continued on next page

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

The Bagua Map: Front Door

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.





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THE NOBLE CHRYSANTHEMUM



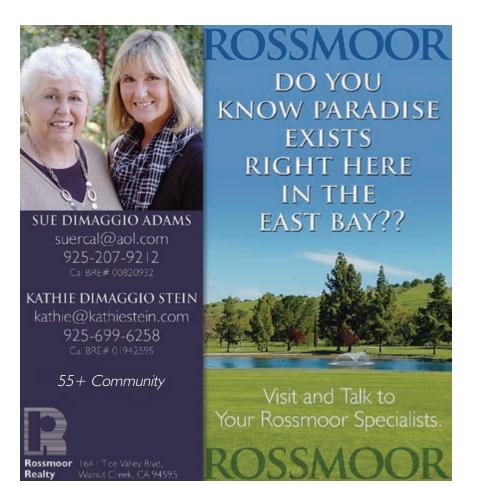
Using seasonal foliage, color and plants is excellent Feng Shui and the Feng Shui symbol for fall are chrysanthemums.

Chrysanthemums have more of an oriental origin where people in the nobility have been planting them for years, but they also have become very popular in the west. Because this flower is still favored by the rich and noble in China, other people, common people, were prohibited from growing this plant. As time passed, however, views about the chrysanthemums changed and it became part of Feng Shui. Having chrysanthemums at your front entrance attracts abundance and happiness.

Chrysanthemums are highly regarded because they are associated with a long life of ease, constancy, faithfulness and goodwill. Chrysanthemums seen so abundantly in floral shops and in fall gardens represent bumper harvests, abundant joy and a long, fruitful life. Placed at your front entrance symbolizes health and long life for your home. Chrysanthemums are thought to bring laughter and happiness into the home.

Chrysanthemums are excellent indoors as air filters, are easy to care for and last much longer than cut flowers.

Place Chrysanthemums to also attract wealth Qi, particularly when moving into a new home, beginning a new undertaking or at the beginning of the New Year.





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Digging Deep

A Short Romp in the Ruth Bancroft Gardens

By Cynthia Brian

"Who cares if I'm not around? If I don't plant it, then nobody will get to see it!" — Ruth Bancroft



This optunia prickly pear cactus in the Ruth Bancroft Garden bears purple tuna fruit ready to be tasted.

ince as long as I can remember I have always said that I wanted to live to be 108 years old. Why I chose that number I have no idea as I had never met anyone who lived to be 108...until this week when I met Ruth Bancroft, creator of the Ruth Bancroft Gardens in Walnut Creek. Ruth turned 108 years young on Sept. 2 and I was privileged enough to celebrate her birthday with bubbly and her favorite chocolate cake in her masterpiece dry gardens that she began planting in the 1970s.

Bancroft's gardening passion began as a child in Berkeley. When she moved through the tunnel to Walnut Creek she became a "collector." Her efforts, trials, tribulations and experiences along the way are chronicled in the new Timber Press book, "The Bold Dry Garden," penned by Johanna Silver, the garden editor of Sunset magazine, and photographed by Marion Brenner. With the entire West Coast on drought alert, the Ruth Bancroft Gardens are a model for low-water plantscaping. If you have ever been curious about succulents, cacti, yuccas, and other desert plants that will flourish in the East Bay, this beautiful book will become an essential reference guide.

Our local water company states that water use was 24 percent less in 2015 than it was in 2014, saving enough water to fill the Oakland Coliseum 71 times! As homeowners rip out lawns in favor of xeriscaping, we'll focus on the benefits of adding low maintenance, low water use plants and planting them NOW in your garden.

Although I have a lifetime of gardening experience, I'm not sure that I will ever become an expert

in any one area of horticulture, as gardens are living, breathing, evolving, growing entities that are constantly changing. What I adore about Bancroft's garden is this consistent evolution. Each time I visit, a new vista or display greets me, even from the same specimens as the first visit. The colors, textures and sizes are in perpetual motion, from California natives to the canopy of trees, the rosettes of terrestrial bromeliads to the swords of the yuccas.

Here are a few of Bancroft's prized collection that you can grow in your garden for your benefit and that of your great-grandchildren's children.

Aeoniums: One of the most popular plants of all of the succulents, aeoniums have lovely fleshy rosettes that will reach towards the heavens, mound in purgatory or cascade towards hell. They prefer a bit of shade and are easy to cultivate and grow in the ground and in containers.

... continued on page D18



Encephalartos horridus was Ruth Bancroft's first cycad-very prickly and scary plant.



These full-grown yuccas frame the desert-like environment in this area of Ruth Bancroft's garden.



This aqua blue aeonium is stunning in a vintage Mexican bowl.



The pond is restorative and soothing.



A world renowned succulent expert, Brian Kemble breeds South African aloes seeking the bumpiest and bluest in the Ruth Bancroft propagation greenhouse.

A Short Romp in the Ruth Bancroft Gardens ... continued from page D16

Yuccas: These sword-shaped plants are native to the Americas and the Caribbean and like hot, dry regions. In their natural habitat they are pollinated by the yucca moth. Although yuccas are grown mostly for ornamental use, many species use the seeds, flowers, stems and sometimes the roots for food and medicine.

Echeveria: Many of the most beautiful small succulents are echeveria, often confused with aeoniums because of their rosettes. Their leaf colors are brilliantly hued and they boast flowers in red, orange, white, yellow, purple, and pink. They grow well between rocks and are a terrific ground cover or garden filler. Most echeveria species hail from Mexico.

Sedums: A hardy perennial with thick, fleshy leaves and stems and clusters of pretty flowers, sedums are most popular for groundcovers, borders and rock gardens. They require minimal to no care at all, are easy to propagate from cuttings, and are drought resistant.

Aloe: The best-friend plant for anyone with a sunburn, cut or bite, aloe is known as nature's soothing succulent. Aloes relieve itching and irritation on the skin, and reduces redness and swelling by inhibiting the body's release of histamine. In a garden, aloes bloom in bright colors of red, orange and yellow with over 500 species ranging from tiny to tree height. These unfussy favorites are a "must have" in any garden or container.

Agave: With over 200 species native to the Americas, agaves are diverse in colors, shapes, sizes, and spines. Agaves are sculptural. They can be a focal point in a landscape



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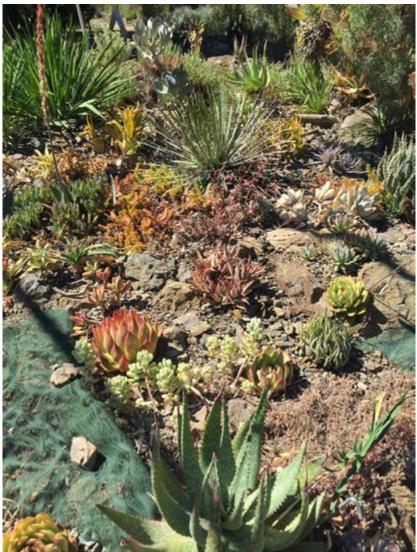
The ideal time to plant trees and shrubs is during the dormant season-in the fall after their leaves drop or early spring before bud breaks. Weather conditions are cool and allow plants to establish roots in the new location. The proper handling during planting is essential to ensure a healthy future for new trees and shrubs.

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A variety of succulents including aloes boast the colors of autumn.

Photo Cynthia Brian

or can mix well with other plantings. Before planting an agave, make sure to read the label to determine the final size of the plant. Some agaves have a fullgrown diameter of 13 to 14 feet while others remain small and compact.

Barrel Cactus: Always armed with heavy spines and prominent ribs, barrel cacti are known as the "fierce or wild cactus." Flowers always grow at the top without spines. Native Americans boiled the flowers to eat like cabbage. The fruits are considered inedible. Barrel cacti add a fascinating form to any landscape when planted in circles or artistic ways.

Prickly Pear Cactus: Optunias, commonly called prickly pear cactus, have yellow, red, purple or orange fruit that is delicious and sold in stores as tuna. The paddles are called Nopales and used in many ethnic recipes. The soluble fibers of both the fruit and the paddles are considered to stabilize blood sugar. These cacti make a great fence to keep out human and animal invaders as the spines are tiny and very sharp. My sister surrounded her property with optunias that bore enough fruit for a weekly farmer's market booth.

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Although I've concentrated on the desert plants, the Ruth Bancroft Garden reveals a softer side with riffs of bulbs, wildflowers, grasses and California natives. A visit to the Ruth Bancroft Garden is a must-do for anyone interested in learning more about dry and drought tolerant gardening. We are fortunate to have one of the nation's most renowned public gardens literally in our backyard with a collection of rare specimens available for sale that will enhance your landscape while saving precious water. Visit www.RuthBancroftGarden.org for more information.

Embrace your sense of curiosity. Employ a few of Ruth Bancroft's dry gardening specimens. Gardens are a legacy to our future and the time to plant is today. In 108 years, who will be enjoying your garden?

Happy Gardening and Happy Growing!



Ruth Bancroft, 108 years old, and Cynthia Brian at her birthday celebration.

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