

Lamorinda

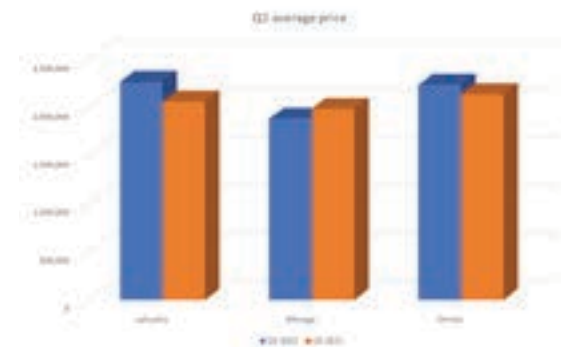
OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly

Volume 16

Issue 17

Wednesday, October 12, 2022



The Real Estate Quarter in Review

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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

It's all happening at the zoo



Pumpkins and gourds are piled high for fall.



Squirreling away acorns for winter!

Photos Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian

*"It's a light and tumble journey
From the East Side to the park;
Just a fine and fancy ramble to the zoo!"
~ Simon & Garfunkel*

When the squirrels start collecting piles of acorns, and pumpkins, gourds, and squash adorn front porches, we know that autumn has arrived. With the cooler weather, we welcome fresh air and respite from the heat waves.

Besides gardening, I have always adored animals (thus, my new children's book series "Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures" with the first book, "No Barnyard Bullies"). When I have an opportunity to meld those two passions together, my heart is grateful and invigorated.

With my children and their families, I've been fortunate to spend time at both the Oakland and San Diego zoos.

Monkeys, giraffes, elephants, lions, alligators, wolves, bears, zebras, birds, and

more exotic creatures from around the globe mingle in the lush landscapes. Ponds, streams, waterfalls, and lily pads add to the natural ambiance. Interestingly, and most likely on purpose, many of the species planted throughout both zoos borrow names from the animal kingdom: birds of paradise, lion's ear, foxtails, leopard's bane, zebra plant, snake plant, bear's breeches, turtle-head, elephant ears, wolfsbane, goose grass, staghorn ferns, and many more. Walking through the tropical rainforest surrounded by tall, thick bamboo, delicate ferns, bromeliads, and orchids while listening to the calls of the wild transports me to my travel memories of tangled jungles and saturated rainforests in Africa and South America.

Walking the many paths of both zoos is a great way to engage in healthy exercise while fully immersing yourself in the sounds and sights of global nature. Children are mesmerized by the beautiful beasts and enjoy many hands-on exploratory endeavors that contribute to their knowledge of the inhabitants of this earth. The atmosphere is happy and familial. It is all happening at the zoo.

After a day of celebrating children, animals, and landscapes, it is time to regroup to consider what chores are looming in my paradise. I'm waiting for inclement wet weather to transplant the variegated shell ginger sent to me by the online plant nursery, NatureHills. Spring Meadow Nursery and Proven Winners want me to trial Bouvardia Estrellita and Tecoma Chicklet. Friends gave me a struggling rose in a container which I've resuscitated to glory with measured coffee grounds as well as avocado and banana trees.

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