

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 16 Issue 21 Wednesday, December 21, 2022



Handyman touch-up paint tips

... read on Page D4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Night lights



Cynthia's Fire Chief nephew's illuminated house.

Photo Cynthia Brian Cynthia's farmer brother lit up his ranch home.



By Cynthia Brian

"The best Christmas trees come very close to exceeding nature." ~Andy Rooney

Everyone who knows me understands that I am a nature girl. I spend as much time outdoors as possible in all weather conditions. As I meander around my property, I am always investigating the trees, pondering the possibilities for Christmas décor. When December rolls around, there is nothing that gives me more joy than admiring the twinkling lights that illuminate landscapes, glow on houses, and glimmer on Christmas trees.

My family tradition has always been to decorate every inch of the inside and outside with holiday fervor. Growing up, my dad used to joke that for extra excitement, we could watch the electric meter spinning wildly. Our ranch house and surrounding gardens were adorned with thousands of lights, Nativity scenes, sleighs, Santa, elves, reindeer, snowmen, candles, and whatever else was over-the-top festive. Because we lived on a farm in the boondocks, as kids we believed we had to light the night so that Santa would be able to find our house in the deep darkness.

Because my children have flown the coop and have their own homes, I'm not as crazy as earlier in my life with my holiday embellishments, although my extended family still goes all out. My brother's

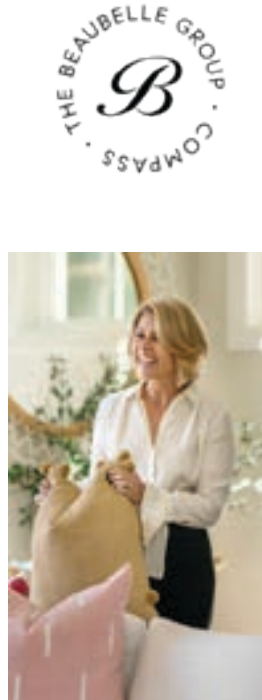
and nephew's houses could win awards for creativity and innovative illumination.

Trimming a Christmas tree is an active sport. Whether we cut a tree, buy a living tree, erect a fake tree, or bedeck a houseplant, festooning our holiday bushes is as varied as our personalities. It doesn't matter if a tree is perfect or off-kilter. What matters is the meaning of the moment and the joy it delivers during the season. Every year I adorn my aging fiddleleaf fig tree at the base of my stairwell with lights and ornaments as it has grown too large to move. In another room, the Christmas cheer is enhanced with a glistening, garlanded tree as well as freshly cut greenery with flowers from my yard. What makes all trees sparkle and shine are the twinkling lights, clear or colored.

Fresh greenery indoors creates the feeling of Christmas, especially with aromatic boughs of fir, pine, redwood, spruce and cedar. If you have any conifers in your yard, this is a great time to trim the limbs to use to decorate your porch and patio. Holly is a traditional plant to use in garlands, wreaths, and centerpieces, however, any berry-bearing bush adds color and whimsy to arrangements. All evergreens are welcome to create long-lived wreaths and centerpieces including clippings from boxwood, bay, magnolia, and pepper trees.

... continued on Page D10

May your home be filled with joy and happiness this Holiday Season.



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COMPASS

Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	13	\$1,120,000	\$2,800,000
MORAGA	2	\$1,650,000	\$1,665,000
ORINDA	6	\$1,150,000	\$2,250,000

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

LAFAYETTE

- 935 Carol Lane, \$2,800,000, 5 Bdrms, 2166 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 11-04-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,268,500, 05-15-20
- 526 Florence Drive, \$1,250,000, 3 Bdrms, 1481 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 11-07-22
- 3423 Goyak Drive, \$1,120,000, 3 Bdrms, 2590 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 11-09-22
- 210 Lafayette Circle #301, \$2,213,500, 2 Bdrms, 1823 SqFt,
2021 YrBlt, 11-10-22
- 210 Lafayette Circle #304, \$2,402,000, 3 Bdrms, 1872 SqFt,
2021 YrBlt, 11-10-22
- 918 Moon Court, \$1,400,000, 3 Bdrms, 1386 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 11-10-22
- 3410 Mt Diablo Boulevard, \$1,450,000, 19912 SqFt, 2021 YrBlt, 10-31-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,250,000, 09-03-19
- 1845 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,696,000, 4 Bdrms, 1887 SqFt,
1926 YrBlt, 11-04-22
- 749 Silver Crest Court, \$2,176,500, 3 Bdrms, 2734 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 11-03-22
- 15 Southampton Place, \$1,974,000, 4 Bdrms, 2465 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 11-10-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,585,000, 04-13-20
- 1221 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$2,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 2321 SqFt,
1961 YrBlt, 10-31-22, Previous Sale: \$750,000, 04-28-00
- 3600 Walnut Street, \$1,150,000, 2 Bdrms, 854 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 11-10-22,
Previous Sale: \$598,000, 06-21-10
- 3963 Woodside Court, \$1,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 2181 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 11-09-22

MORAGA

- 12 Carnoustie, \$1,665,000, 3 Bdrms, 2828 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 11-10-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,050,000, 05-25-16
- 10 Woodside Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1679 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 11-04-22

ORINDA

- 151 Canon Drive, \$2,250,000, 5 Bdrms, 3552 SqFt, 1936 YrBlt, 11-07-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,805,000, 10-31-17
- 205 Crestview Drive, \$1,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 2027 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 11-02-22
- 35 Eastwood Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 2307 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 11-01-22
- 208 La Espiral, \$1,535,000, 4 Bdrms, 2456 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 10-31-22
- 18 Lavenida Drive, \$1,985,000, 4 Bdrms, 1924 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 11-01-22,
Previous Sale: \$726,000, 04-28-11
- 233 Village Gate Road, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2313 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 11-07-22,
Previous Sale: \$745,000, 09-30-11

TIS THE SEASON TO THINK ABOUT 2023

Let me add your house to "my list"

*It's a merry time to start thinking about buying
and selling in 2023. Contact me today!*

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Touch-up painting tips and travails



Photo J. Wake

Paint cans often hide in garage back corners for years before a need arises.

By Jim Hurley

“I have some touch-up paint for that.” That sentence lives in infamy recalling the day my client handed me an old paint can. First, the lid was stuck to the can with gobs of hardened paint all over it. I set the can on the ceiling in the garage and pried the top off, bending it into a misshapen mess in the process.

The can felt pretty light, certainly not full, and as I mangled the lid, I figured I could save what paint was left after the touch-up task in a smaller jar or can. Lid finally off, I bravely grabbed a stir stick and began to mix the paint as a large chunk of

rust broke off the bottom of the can and all the remaining liquid streamed out onto the garage floor. With no top or bottom on the container, all I could do was clean up the mess and tell the client that we would need to paint the entire wall, because the touch-up paint was gone.

Actually, that is now my standard recommendation to clients, “We should plan to paint the whole wall,” (ceiling, room, surface). So let me tell you why.

Touch-up paint seldom matches the original color unless the room has recently been painted. There will be a slight color difference where you touch up. Several factors can influence this: Oxidation takes place. The new paint has a fresh clean surface and over time it fades and becomes porous. If the room was painted 10 years ago, the surface of old paint is not the same as it was when it was new. Sunlight will cause the color to fade over time. The fresh paint from the can will be the original color, but that no longer matches the wall.

If the reason for touch-up painting is to cover patching to the wall, the patching compound will absorb more of the new paint than the old paint unless it is sealed with a primer first. (Some cans of spackle claim they are “paint ready” and don’t need primer; I’m not sure about that.)

Anyway, unless the area being touched up is in a closet or going to be behind furniture or covered by artwork, touch-up painting may not hide the patches. At the very least, be prepared to repaint if the touch-up doesn’t meet your expectations.

By the way, new paint cans have a plastic bottom. If the can of touch-up-paint you’re holding has a metal bottom, you know it’s old. Check for small rust spots too. You may want to put the paint can in an old dishpan or pie pan before you stir it. It might be better to just dispose of that old paint by taking it to a paint disposal recycling place. Empty cans and dried paint can safely go in the trash. There is a product you can buy at the

paint sales counter which absorbs paint in the can and dries it up, so you can simply chuck it.

One additional tip: paint color matching technology is excellent these days. If you want to match the color on the wall and don’t have the original can, a sample of the color can be matched by a photo-spectrometer at the paint store. You may be able to collect a color sample from debris while doing demolition. If a large enough sample (at least one inch square) is not available, you might carve a sample of the paint with a razor knife from an inconspicuous corner (or behind a door) and then patch that spot along with the wall.

The paint store will want to know what type of paint you are matching. Be prepared to answer questions about the sheen: Flat/Matte, Eggshell, Semi-Gloss/Satin, or Gloss. Hopefully you get a kindly salesclerk who will help you decide. Occasionally you see a clerk with the attitude, “If you don’t know; you don’t belong here and I can’t help you.”

There is no harm in trying to touch up some small spots, however, you may end up repainting a larger area. It may be more work, but just think how pleased you will feel in a clean and freshly painted room.

Bottom line: beware of old and rusty paint cans.

Jim Hurley is an independent handyman with over 25 years of experience in residential repairs. Hopefully this free advice is helpful to someone attempting Do-It-Yourself home repairs. The information presented is intended for informational purposes and for use by persons having appropriate technical skill, at their own discretion and risk.





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Thankful now more than ever for our incredible community. Wishing everyone safe and healthy holidays and a wonderful 2023.

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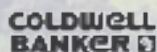
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Housing Inventory in Central Contra Costa is Shrinking

This article covers both October and November's sales in central Contra Costa of detached homes. November sales (258) were down slightly from October (290). Days on market were virtually the same at 27 days. Pending sales dropped from October (232) to November (161). The interesting number when comparing the 2 months was Active Listings; 490 in October and 391 in November. This makes 5 consecutive months that the active inventory continues to shrink. This is higher than Oct/Nov 2021 when active inventory shrunk from 305 in October to 168 in November. That was a flaming hot seller's market.

Shrinking inventory is an encouraging factor for homeowners who need to sell. In my opinion, there are only 5 reasons why a homeowner needs to sell; 1. Life (babies), 2. Death, 3. Marriage, 4. Divorce and 5. Job change. There are, of course, subcategories that fall into each of these reasons. Suffice it to say, there are homeowners who will need to sell in the upcoming months. And there are still homes selling in a short number of days and with multiple offers. However, your house really needs to shine as compared with 2021. Sellers should listen to their agents regarding recommended inspections, making necessary repairs, putting a fresh coat of paint inside (and possibly outside) using colors your agent recommends, replacing tired appliances and professionally cleaning and staging your home. Many agents will pay for the staging (just ask me).

Many economists and Fanny Mae forecast Interest rates to drop in 3rd or 4th quarter, 2023, possibly below 5%. If you can wait until then, start getting your home ready now. It may take 2 to 3 months (or more) to make your home shine. Then, be prepared to offer incentives to buyers. Ask me about 2/1 buydowns. See more of my blogs at www.YourContraCostaRealtor.com.



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Happy holidays to all you movers (and shakers)

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1 Ross Drive, Moraga
61 Hardie Dr, Moraga

869 43rd St Oakland, CA
5 Evans Place, Orinda
309 Sunset Rd, Pleasant Hill
439 Verbena Ct, Pleasant Hill
862 Bonde Ct, Pleasanton
1878 Magnolia Way, Walnut Creek



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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Night lights



Santa Day at 5A boasted a pretty artificial tree.



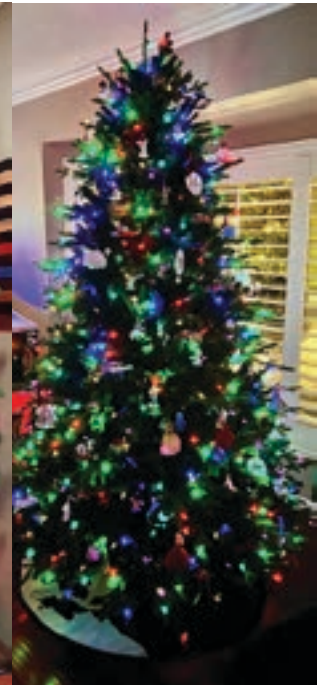
Elegant tree.



Angels and stars glow on this tiny tree.



A freshly cut fir tree adorns the corner.



Glorious green is the color of Christmas.

... continued from Page D1

In "The Art of Living," Wilfred Peterson wrote that "Christmas is not in tinsel, lights, and outward show. The secret lies in an inner glow." My feeling about the tinsel, lights, ornaments, and outward show is that these accoutrements provide the inner glow of joy to my world.

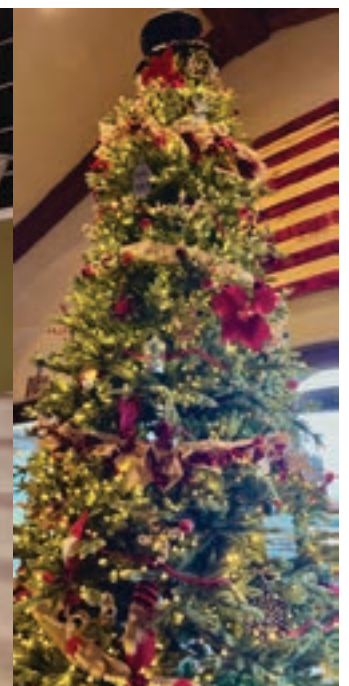
Delight in my photos of these beloved, bejeweled Christmas trees and bright night lights. Whatever you celebrate, I wish you seasonal sparkle, and happy health. Glow forth to savor being home for the holidays.



Nutcrackers stand guard.



The aging and tall fiddleleaf fig is lit and trimmed for the holidays.



A 12-foot garlanded tree is the focal point of the great room.

Photos Cynthia Brian

Cynthia Brian's December Garden Guide

DECK the halls with boughs of holly, pyracantha, cotoneaster, magnolia cones, rose hips, or any other merry berry!

FEED the soil, not the plants. Continue adding organic materials including hay, leaves, and compost to enrich your soil over winter.

SAVE birds by going organic. Provide seeds, berries, and safe nesting areas. Add a few native plants to your landscape that native birds already enjoy or stop pruning roses to allow the rosehips to form and feed our flying friends.

TRIM low-hanging branches of redwoods, pines, firs, and other evergreens to use in wreaths, garlands, and holiday ornamentation.

CREATE a stunning DIY holiday table arrangement using a combination of evergreen branches, narcissi, pinecones, or other greenery from your garden.

PICK carrots to leave for Rudolph and bake a different kind of fruitcake with organic fruits from your garden. Apples and persimmons are fresh now, and you may have frozen or canned peaches, apricots, cherries, figs, or pears.

REST in winter. The holidays are a time to celebrate with family and friends. No more hoe, hoe, hoe. Take a break from garden chores. You deserve it.

IGNITE the night with your glimmering lights.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Hannukah. Merry Christmas!



Christmas for Cynthia Brian with her daughter, daughter-in-law, and mom.

Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Her newest children's picture book, No Barnyard Bullies, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available now at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store For an invitation to hang out with Cynthia for fun virtual events, activities, conversations, and exclusive experiences, buy StarStyle® NFTs at <https://StarStyleCommunity.com> Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <https://www.GoddessGardener.com>

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ORINDA



160/162 Camino Don Miguel
6 bd/6.5 ba Spanish Revival estate w/ views of OCC golf course and hills beyond. Exceptional location!

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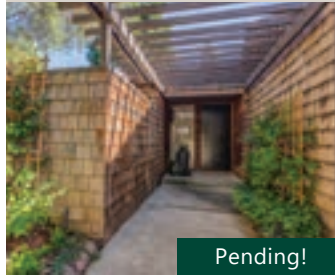
ORINDA



5 De Soto Court
Mid Century Contemporary 4 bd/ 2.5 ba offers peaceful private setting on quaint court just minutes from downtown!

\$2,395,000

ORINDA



Pending!

120 Ravenhill Road
Completely renovated 3 bd/ 3 ba Orindawoods home offers an ideal setting w/ natural light, privacy & views!

\$1,749,000

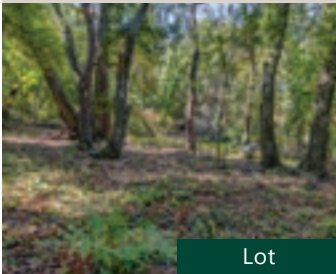
ORINDA



2 Orchard Court
Home sweet home! 3 bd/ 2 ba home needs lots of TLC now & is awaiting the next generation!

\$1,025,000

ORINDA

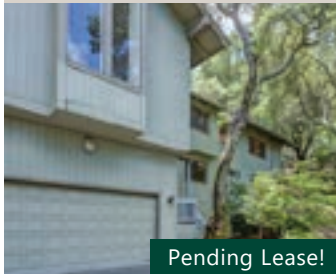


Lot

0 Camino Del Monte
Come see this desirable lot located minutes from Hwy 24/BART, top rated schools, downtown, regional parks & views!

\$225,000

ORINDA



Pending Lease!

19 Woodcrest Road
Fabulous Glorietta location! Spacious, light & bright 4 bd/ 2.5 ba home with high ceilings and beautiful views!

\$5,800/mo.

LAFAYETTE



Pending!

1336 San Reliez Court
Rare opportunity on .75 acre lot with 5 bd/ 3.5 ba 4098 sq.ft. in the heart of Springhill!

\$2,195,000

LAFAYETTE

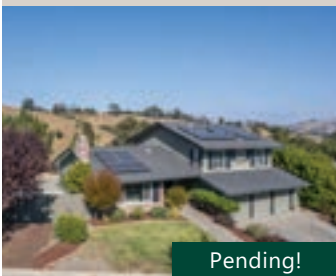


Leased!

4010 Woodside Court
Spacious 4 bd/ 3 ba home w/ sparkling pool, formal living room & hardwood floors. Private location w/ big views!

\$5,900/mo.

MORAGA



Pending!

92 Warfield Drive
Classic two story 5 bd/ 3 ba home sits on a private .39 acre parcel w/ 2527 sq.ft of a fully functional floor plan!

\$1,945,000

BERKELEY



7164 Buckingham Blvd
Sophisticated contemporary 3 bd/ 3 ba set in the Claremont Hills featuring lovely canyon views!

\$1,945,000

ALAMEDA

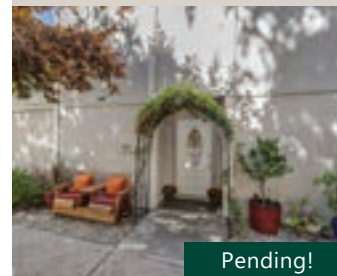


New!

2114 Buena Vista
Permitted duplex on 4,500 sq. ft. lot in Central Alameda! Unit A - 2bd/ 1 ba, w/ formal dining room. Unit B - 1 bd/ 1 ba, w/ lg living space!

\$895,000

DANVILLE



Pending!

501 Garden Creek Place
Updated 3 bd/ 2.5 ba end-unit townhome less than .5 miles from top-rated schools, downtown & more!

\$849,900

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