

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 17 Issue 15 Wednesday, September 13, 2023



Handyman's toolbox tips

... read on Page D4

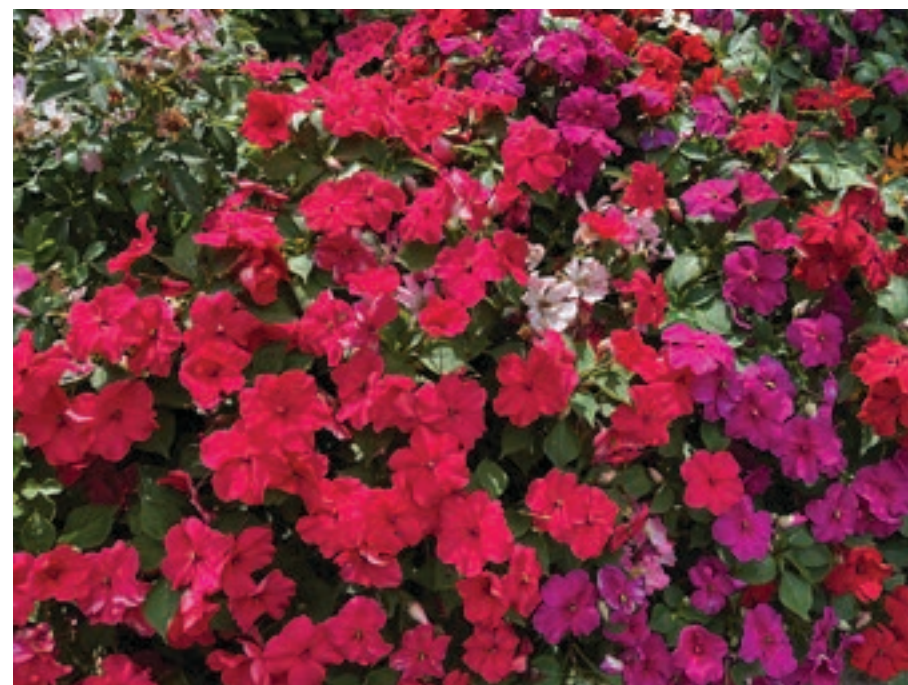
Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Roots



Clipped topiary with blue hydrangeas

Photos Cynthia Brian



Bright impatiens are perfect in fall borders.

By Cynthia Brian

"The Land! That is where our roots are. There is the basis of our physical life." ~ Henry Ford

As a gardener, I spend copious amounts of time thinking about roots. Healthy roots are critical indicators of the overall health and survival of plants and trees.

Why are roots essential?

Anchorage: One of the primary functions of roots is to anchor the plant firmly in the soil so that it is not uprooted by wind, water, or other forces of nature.

Absorption: Roots absorb water and nutrients essential for growth

and development. The extensive network of roots maximizes the plant's ability to access these resources.

Storage: The root system also stores energy in the form of starches and sugars which can be utilized during periods of drought or new growth.

Transport: The vascular system extends from the roots to the leaves to the stems facilitating movement of water and nutrients.

Stabilization: Roots reduce erosion by binding the soil particles together making the plant strong and stable.

Microbial Support: Roots con-

tribute to improving soil structure by promoting microbial activity and organic matter decomposition. Mycorrhizal fungi and nitrogen-fixing bacteria enhance nutrient uptake and protect plants from pathogens.

Aeration: Roots create tiny channels in the soil as they grow. These channels allow oxygen to penetrate deeper into the soil, which promotes a healthier ecosystem. Roots also prevent soil compaction which aids in better water infiltration and growth.

Drought Resistance: Periods of drought are survivable because of deep root systems and taproots.

Without healthy roots, all plants would struggle to survive.

Human roots are also important.

Recently friends invited my husband and me to a picnic and a private wine tasting at Beringer Brothers in St. Helena. "How fun," I responded. "It will be great to be back in my stomping grounds."

Although we had been friends for years and they knew that I'd grown up in the vineyards, they didn't know the story of my roots. I'll share a snippet of my heritage with you.

... continued on Page D12

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	14	\$1,410,000	\$4,201,000
MORAGA	6	\$955,000	\$2,260,000
ORINDA	7	\$1,575,000	\$4,152,000

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

- 3176 Bradena Lane, \$2,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 2517 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 07-31-23, Previous Sale: \$1,700,000, 12-23-22
- 406 Castello Road, \$1,410,000, 3 Bdrms, 1388 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 08-11-23, Previous Sale: \$578,000, 07-05-12
- 3600 Deer Hill Road, \$1,450,000, 3 Bdrms, 3179 SqFt, 1937 YrBlt, 08-02-23, Previous Sale: \$795,000, 11-21-16
- 726 Las Trampas Road, \$1,775,000, 4 Bdrms, 2452 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 07-31-23, Previous Sale: \$170,000, 05-01-79
- 3372 North Lucille Lane, \$1,495,000, 4 Bdrms, 1496 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 08-10-23, Previous Sale: \$747,500, 09-27-05
- 4033 Marianne Drive, \$1,820,000, 3 Bdrms, 2371 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 08-04-23, Previous Sale: \$525,000, 07-05-01
- 4061 Marianne Drive, \$2,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 2897 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 08-07-23
- 3921 Quail Ridge Road, \$2,900,000, 5 Bdrms, 3350 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 08-10-23, Previous Sale: \$1,699,000, 09-24-07
- 216 Seclusion Valley Way, \$2,900,000, 5 Bdrms, 3562 SqFt, 2018 YrBlt, 08-04-23, Previous Sale: \$2,343,000, 06-17-19
- 6 Tofflemire Drive, \$4,201,000, 5 Bdrms, 6664 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 08-09-23
- 1064 Via Alta, \$3,350,000, 5 Bdrms, 3170 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 08-03-23, Previous Sale: \$1,280,000, 01-11-23
- 11 Vista Viax, \$2,050,000, 4 Bdrms, 1572 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 07-31-23, Previous Sale: \$1,510,000, 03-29-22
- 35 Woodbury Highlands Place #21, \$1,580,000, 3 Bdrms, 1892 SqFt, 2022 YrBlt, 08-08-23
- 3320 Woodview Court, \$2,250,000, 3 Bdrms, 2827 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 08-04-23, Previous Sale: \$1,430,000, 07-28-15

MORAGA

- 1382 Camino Peral, \$955,000, 3 Bdrms, 1360 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 08-07-23, Previous Sale: \$702,500, 10-28-16
- 694 Camino Ricardo, \$2,260,000, 4 Bdrms, 2464 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 08-09-23, Previous Sale: \$1,500,000, 03-19-18
- 1183 Cedarwood Drive, \$1,637,000, 3 Bdrms, 2115 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 07-31-23
- 1254 Larch Avenue, \$2,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 2446 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 08-07-23
- 17 Miramonte Drive, \$1,126,000, 4 Bdrms, 1762 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 08-11-23, Previous Sale: \$574,500, 01-09-23
- 35 San Pablo Court, \$2,100,000, 5 Bdrms, 3406 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 08-10-23, Previous Sale: \$235,000, 06-01-78

ORINDA

- 46 Crestview Drive, \$4,152,000, 5 Bdrms, 4626 SqFt, 2022 YrBlt, 08-03-23
- 8 La Fond Lane, \$2,300,000, 6 Bdrms, 2922 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 08-11-23
- 5 Rita Way, \$1,660,000, 3 Bdrms, 1935 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 08-01-23
- 18 Sycamore Road, \$2,548,000, 4 Bdrms, 3067 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 08-11-23
- 308 Village View Court, \$2,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 2541 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 07-31-23, Previous Sale: \$1,200,000, 06-17-13
- 311 Village View Court, \$2,620,000, 3 Bdrms, 2165 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 08-07-23, Previous Sale: \$1,550,000, 09-07-10
- 615 Watchwood Road, \$1,575,000, 2 Bdrms, 2203 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 08-11-23

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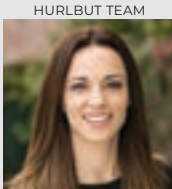
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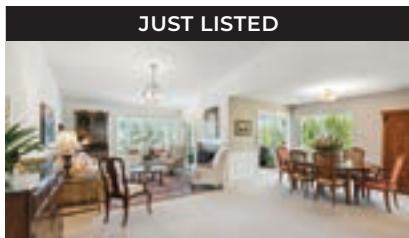


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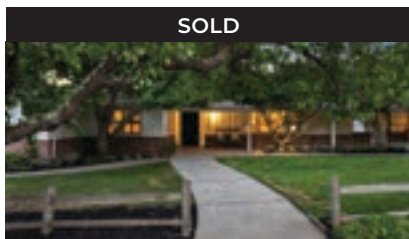
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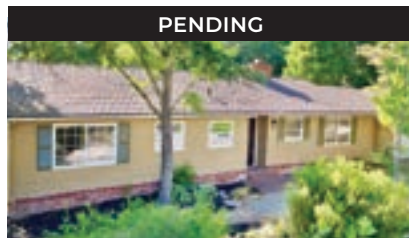
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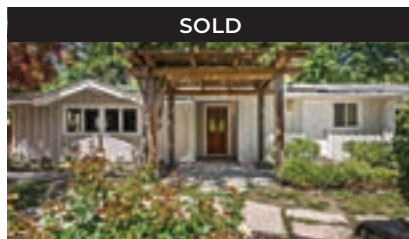
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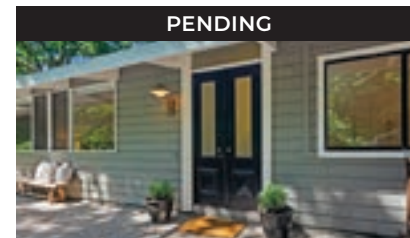
SOLD

1 MONROE COURT, ORINDA
SOLD FOR \$1,675,000
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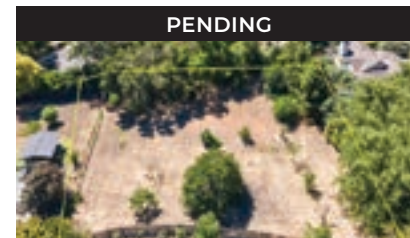
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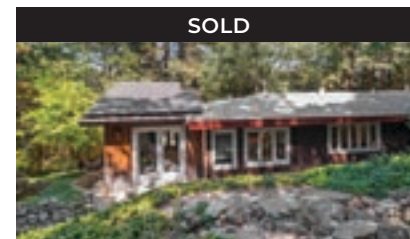
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14 WHITE OAK DRIVE, LAFAYETTE
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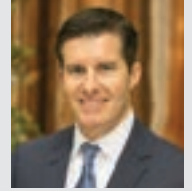
0 MARTINO ROAD, LAFAYETTE
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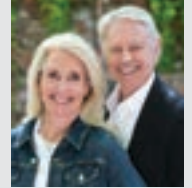
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DRE# 01347508

CHERYL HATA



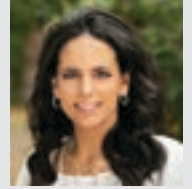
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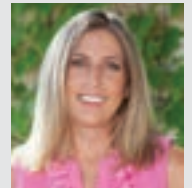
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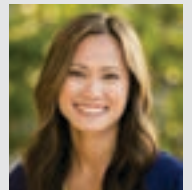
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Best tools to include in your basic toolbox



Toolbox

By **Jim Hurley**

It is essential to have the right tools for the job. Sure, there are times I have made it work, but it is not good to use a table knife from the kitchen drawer to tighten a loose screw.

My high school graduation gift to my son was a basic toolbox. I never expected him to follow my line of work since it was always clear he had zero interest in the work I did around our house. Yet I



Screwdrivers and pliers

felt that everyone can benefit from having good basic tools on hand should an urgent repair job arise. When summer was over and I was helping to move him into his college dorm, I suggested that he take his modest toolbox too. He seemed confused about why until two young ladies from down the hall asked if anyone had a Phillips screwdriver. I looked at him and said, "You do." He grabbed his toolbox and happily went off to help.



Allen Wrenches

Photos Jim Hurley

What basic tools should you have in a beginning toolbox? I love tools and have a whole pickup truck filled with them. Of course, you don't need all the tools I have but you should own enough basic hand tools for simple repairs around your house. I will limit this article to hand tools and discuss power tools in the future. A basic toolbox must contain a hammer, pliers, screwdrivers, and Allen wrenches. Each of these items needs a little explanation. ... continued on Page D6

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Best tools to include in your basic toolbox

... continued from Page D4

Hammers. Choosing a hammer is not as simple as you might think. On your visit to the hardware store, you will find more than a dozen different hammers on display. Little tack hammers, finish hammers, framing hammers, roofing hammers, ballpeen hammers, and sledgehammers. But what do you really need? Your first hammer should be a 16-ounce finish hammer with a straight claw (not curved). It will handle most common tasks. Start with a wooden handle hammer. Don't waste your money on any hammer with a tubular metal handle because these inevitably end up with a nasty bend in the shaft.

Pliers. There are a huge variety of pliers. To start, definitely get a pair of needle nose pliers, get an adjustable wrench, and a pair of lineman pliers. If you want to be better prepared, add a pair of diagonal pliers for cutting wire. The adjustable wrenches (formerly known as Water Pump Pliers), come in different lengths; get a 12-inch pair, and if you sense bigger trouble ahead, get a bigger size for backup. Most needle nose pliers come with a wire cutter built-in, but that is not always convenient for nipping wires. It's useful to have wire cutters and you may also want a pair of wire strippers as well. These, combined with a good set of screwdrivers, will get you through most household issues.

Screwdrivers. Screwdrivers come in multiple sizes and tips. You will save money buying a set with a selection of types. Flathead and Phillips screws are most common, but now many screws require Torx bits (different size star-shaped slots). You may want a Torx set (one driver handle with multiple, interchangeable tips). Be sure to buy quality screwdrivers, as cheap ones tend to bend or break on screws that are unwilling to come out. I don't usually recommend a brand name, but I will say that Sears Craftsman is the only screwdriver that I have in my tool bag. Sears usually has packaged sets for Christmas sales (which somehow start in October now). Once you have your quality screwdrivers, never use them as a chisel unless you want to buy new ones.

Allen Wrenches. Allen Wrenches (or Alvin Wrenches for those of you who saw "A Man Called Otto") have hexagonal tips of various sizes which are typically required for set screws. They come in Metric and American Standard sizes. You should buy a set of each to avoid being frustrated when the wrench you have almost-but-doesn't-quite fit the slot and slips instead of loosening the screw.

There you have your starter set. As you progress in your DIY adventures, I hope you won't hesitate to buy the additional tools you may need for a specific job. A pipe wrench for plumbing, a crescent wrench for nuts, a level for hanging art, a good 25-foot tape measure, and a pry-bar or nail puller may be handy. As I mentioned earlier, buying quality is important if you plan to reuse your tools frequently.

Most important be sure to get a toolbox to keep them all in one place. This way you can leave the table knives in the kitchen drawer until mealttime.

**JUST
SOLD**



2724 Eccleston Ave., Walnut Creek
Sold for \$1,299,000

Charming 4 bedroom, 2 bath home with detached office in sought-after neighborhood. Updated throughout.

With the help of a program called **Realvitalize** I was able to help my clients prepare their home for the market without upfront expenses, allowing them to maximize their sale price. Please contact me if this is a program that could be helpful to you!

Michelle Holcenberg
www.holcenberg.com



michelle@holcenberg.com
925-324-0405
CalDRE #01373412



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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Location! Location! Celebration!



15 Overhill Road, Orinda

This stunning modern home, completely renovated to perfection, offers the ideal blend of style, comfort, and convenience. Located within walking distance to downtown Orinda, this 5-bedroom, 3.5 bathroom gem is a dream come true for anyone seeking luxury and accessibility.



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\$2,980,000

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3 full 1 half baths

3,610sqft

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Listed By:

Shannon Conner, Molly Smith & Amy Rose Smith

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Shannon (DRE 01885058) | Amy (DRE 01855959) | Molly (DRE 01498053)

All information herein deemed reliable but not guaranteed.



Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian Roots



Winemaker, Fred Abruzzini with Clark Gable in front of the famous carved Beringer cask.



The map from 1939 with a delightful one-day trip from the Bay Area.



Zinfandel grapes are ripe.

Photos Cynthia Brian

... continued from Page D1

My paternal grandfather, Fred Abruzzini, was the son of Italian immigrants who emigrated to America via Canada at the turn of the century. As a boy, he began working with my great uncle at Cribari Winery in Madrone where he became the winemaker.

Between Prohibition and the Great Depression, many California wineries closed. Beringer Brothers was faltering. Federal agents suggested to Bertha Beringer that she hire someone with integrity and knowledge, someone like Fred Abruzzini. He motored up to St. Helena and when he saw the caves, he believed that he could make some excellent wine. In 1932 at the age of 28, in exchange for free rein, he was hired to be Beringer's manager, winemaker, and chief promoter. He gambled that Franklin Delano Roosevelt would be elected President and end prohibition, so he began crushing more grapes, making wine and port.

Prohibition ended in 1933 and in 1934 Grandpa had the innovative idea to open the cellars to the public for tours, and on special occasions, free tastings. For the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition, a World's Fair held at Treasure Island, he created the first colorful map of "one of California's most delightful one-day trips" where all roads led to Beringer.

He, my grandmother, father, and uncles would drive the 60 miles every evening to hand out maps. The tourists came. He sent boxes of wine to Hollywood celebrities inviting them to stop over and made certain that local and national newspapers reported these events with photos in front of the carved cask. Clark Gable, Carol Lombard, Charles Laughton, Tom Mix, Ginger Rogers, Roy Rogers, Abbott and Costello, Max Baer, Rudy Vallee, and a bevy of other luminaries visited often and became friends. Fred became a legend in Napa Valley with his publicity for the wine industry and put it on the map.

As children, we rode horses, barbecued, roamed the caves, and played at the winery. For many years, the grapes from our vineyards were crushed into Beringer wines. Grandpa was killed in 1988 when a gigantic elm tree toppled on him while he mowed his lawn. He would be proud to know that the roots he planted as the first person to offer tours and tastings to the public have grown into Napa Valley being the beautiful and renowned wine destination it is today.

Cuttings from those first grape canes planted by my grandfather are rooted and thriving in my garden. His children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren have continued his legacy.

Roots. Yes, they are the basis of our physical life.

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Sunday, Sept 24, 2023

11:00am - 1:00pm Steve Snyder Big Band

1:30pm - 3:30pm ZEBOP!

4:00pm - 6:00pm The Sun Kings



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The Goddess Gardener's September Gardening Guide

- **DEEP SOAK** roots of trees in need with a soaker hose during dry spells.
- **REMOVE** aphids on plants by mixing into a spray bottle two tablespoons of dishwashing liquid. Spray affected plants daily to smother the aphids.
- **HARVEST** apples, Asian pears, Bartlett pears, grapes, blackberries, tomatoes, prickly pear, and quince.
- **CUT** and dry big heads of hydrangeas for indoor bouquets.
- **PLAN** to plant cover crops to add maximum benefits to your soil over the winter. Fall mixes can include seeds of legumes, grass, grains, brassica, vetch, rye, clover, and radish. These will suppress weeds, add aeration, and increase soil aggregation.
- **SEND** a plant off to college with your student to keep the indoor air clean while offering memory and concentration improvement. Prayer plants, peace lilies, pothos, and snake plants are easy-to-grow specimens that will acclimate well to dorm rooms.
- **SAVE** seeds from your favorite perennials.
- **DEADHEAD** roses for several more flurries of blooms before January.
- **PRUNE** a shrub into a creative topiary!
- **ENJOY** the bright colors of impatiens in borders and beds.
- **RELISH** your roots!

Happy Gardening! Happy Growing!



Chinese fringe flowers with a spiral topiary.



Continue to deadhead roses for continual blooms.



Prickly pear fruits are delicious. Wear gloves when peeling.

Photos Cynthia Brian

Mark Your Calendar:

On Saturday, Sept. 30, Be the Star You Are!® will host a booth sponsored by the Lamorinda Weekly Newspaper and MBjessee Painting at the Pear and Wine Festival in Moraga. Stop by to plant seeds and pick up bags of free potpourri. More info at <https://www.bethestaryouare.org/events-1/2023-pear-and-wine-festival>

**Cynthia Brian**

For more gardening advice for all seasons, check out Growing with the Goddess Gardener at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. 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, Family Forever, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available now at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <http://www.GoddessGardener.com>

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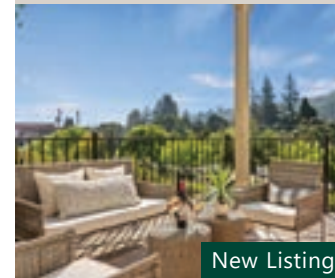


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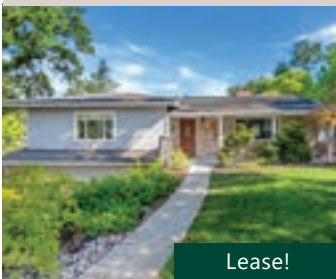
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