

# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 18 Issue 14 Wednesday, Aug. 28, 2024



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page OH2

## *Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian* **Naturally Naked**

By Cynthia Brian



Lighter pink Naked ladies shine at night.

Photos Cynthia Brian

*"Nature loves to hide." Heraclitus*

In the winter, these ladies are wrapped in lush green mantea that glisten in the rain. When warmer weather commences in late spring, their coats turn brown and eventually dry out. This is when we pull off their straps, leaving them lumpy and bumpy, hiding in plain sight. Sitting silently, they endure all measure of inconspicuousness. Then a sudden surprise transpires as they push their long slender necks skyward, shimmering in the summer sun.

Amaryllis belladonna—magic lily, resurrection lily, surprise lily—the stunning Naked ladies have arrived! Just as most perennials in the garden have taken their final bow, these breathtaking bulbs fill my orchard and garden with their picture-perfect pink flowers. What began with the gift of a single bulb many years ago, has metamorphosed into a fabulous field of dreams because every season I dig up a few bulbs to plant in other areas.

Amaryllis belladonna is the botanical name of the flower, "Naked



With blue agapanthus and red-veined Chinese lantern as a background, Naked ladies are magical.

lady". Belladonna means "beautiful lady" in Italian. These plants are called Naked Ladies because of their unique bloom pattern. In the winter, the bulbs produce a bounty of beautiful, shiny green leaves like the leaves of agapanthus. Those leaves wither and die in spring around the same time that the strappy leaves of daffodils are browning. With so many bulbs, it takes me awhile to remove and compost the dead leaves. With the leaves gone, dirt-colored bulbs resemble rough turtle shells as their rounded heads form clusters. In August, single stems sprout from the ground. Finally, flowers emerge at the top of the stems giving them a striking appearance as if they're "naked" because they are standing alone without leaves.

Here are some key things to know about Naked ladies:

**Appearance:** Naked ladies produce tall, elegant stems that can reach up to two feet in height, bearing masses of trumpet-shaped flowers that are usually pink, but can also be white or red. My Naked ladies showcase either a deep pink or blush color.

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## Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	11	\$950,000	\$3,100,000
MORAGA	5	\$620,000	\$2,700,000
ORINDA	5	\$1,495,000	\$3,400,000

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

- 3347 Beechwood Drive, \$1,850,000, 3 Bdrms, 1422 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 07-23-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,057,500, 11-15-16
- 3354 Betty Lane, \$1,500,000, 3 Bdrms, 1154 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 07-15-24
- 1145 Garden Lane, \$1,399,000, 3 Bdrms, 1774 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 07-23-24
- 3252 Hillview Lane, \$1,483,500, 5 Bdrms, 2324 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 07-16-24
- 116 Haslemere Court, \$1,338,000, 3 Bdrms, 2025 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 07-24-24,  
Previous Sale: \$868,000, 10-31-05
- 3098 Hedaro Court, \$950,000, 3 Bdrms, 1403 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 07-23-24
- 17 Silverhill Way, \$2,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 2981 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 07-23-24
- 624 Sky Hy Circle, \$3,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 2979 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 07-17-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,590,000, 04-23-14
- 3172 Stanley Boulevard, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 1930 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 07-24-24,  
Previous Sale: \$2,200,000, 02-18-22
- 1343 Summit Road, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2592 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 07-15-24,  
Previous Sale: \$155,000, 10-01-77
- 3143 Sweetbrier Circle, \$1,675,000, 3 Bdrms, 1511 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 07-23-24

### MORAGA

- 2016 Ascot Drive #2a, \$620,000, 2 Bdrms, 1169 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 07-25-24,  
Previous Sale: \$505,000, 08-31-17
- 25 Brandt Drive, \$1,795,000, 3 Bdrms, 2678 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 07-23-24,  
Previous Sale: \$120,000, 05-01-87
- 12 Corte Annette, \$2,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 2341 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 07-23-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,565,000, 04-17-23
- 824 Country Club Drive, \$1,335,000, 3 Bdrms, 1749 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 07-19-24,  
Previous Sale: \$775,000, 12-21-05
- 192 Draeger Drive, \$2,400,000, 4 Bdrms, 2458 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 07-23-24,  
Previous Sale: \$2,501,000, 05-12-23
- 1155 Sanders Drive, \$1,639,000, 3 Bdrms, 1604 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 07-23-24,  
Previous Sale: \$242,500, 12-01-86

### ORINDA

- 342 El Toyonal, \$1,495,000, 5 Bdrms, 2211 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 07-26-24
- 10 La Cresta Road, \$2,500,000, 3 Bdrms, 2753 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 07-24-24,  
Previous Sale: \$895,000, 11-13-01
- 15 Lost Valley Drive, \$2,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 3022 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 07-15-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,231,000, 08-05-11
- 56 Rheem Boulevard, \$3,328,000, 5 Bdrms, 3883 SqFt, 2002 YrBlt, 07-23-24
- 125 Silver Oak Terrace, \$3,400,000, 5 Bdrms, 4571 SqFt, 1993 YrBlt, 07-16-24



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*Turning Up the Rock Star Treatment*

# From Grocery Cart to Chaos: Overbuying Food

Jennifer Raftis, CPO, Efficiency Matters, LLC



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Food management might not be your favorite topic, but saving \$1,000 a year might be! Many of my clients struggle with overbuying food products and then end up throwing them away. Here are some key reasons this happens and ways to prevent it.

## Why we overbuy

I've noticed that many of us are reeled into food purchases because of impulse buying, shopping without a list, and shopping when we are hungry (GUILTY).

There is a reason grocery stores have products next to the checkout stand – impulse shoppers, especially HUNGRY impulse shoppers.

Vendors pay prime rates for those spaces because their market research shows that shoppers purchase those items at an alarming rate. Shopping without a list probably means you have not planned your food needs for the week, and of course shopping while hungry is down right self sabotage.

## Consequences of overbuying

Food waste, overspending, and unhealthy habits are a few of the top consequences of overbuying. Food waste and overspending are self explanatory, but the unhealthy habits might not be.

In many cases, overbuying food leads to overeating. You and your family will eat what is available and if you are concerned about a healthy lifestyle, you need to manage what everyone has access to in your home. It can be so much easier to limit the purchase of the sweets and snacks than to monitor them once they are in the house.

It can be a constant battle; I know, I raised 3 kids of my own and being the food police is not fun.

## How to prevent overbuying

- Shop your pantry, refrigerator and freezer first. Take inventory of what needs to be eaten and what you are running low on.
- Keep like items together in your pantry, refrigerator, and freezer. I know that sounds like overkill, but if you try it, you will be amazed at

how much money you will save when you are not throwing out expired food or buying more than you need because you didn't realize you already had it.

- Create a meal plan for the week ahead based on your family's current calendar. This needs to be done each week as your schedule will constantly change with different activities. If you look at your current schedule and see if you have work events, kids activities, dinner dates, etc. you will need to pack dinners or plan on eating out for some of the nights.

- Consider if your family likes to eat leftovers; if they don't, maybe pair down the amount of food you are making for one dinner. Use recipes that are smaller and feed a family of 4 rather than a larger recipe that results in a lot of leftovers. For example, you could divide the 6 pack of chicken breasts and freeze half for another meal.

- Be very cautious of bulk purchases, especially if you do not have the space to store the items. Also, remember that fresh food-bulk purchases are a commitment: bread, fruit, veggies and dairy can be tricky as they expire quickly. Ask yourself if your family will really eat 25 apples a week! Trying to keep food in the house for a large family is very time consuming, and purchasing in bulk can be very helpful. I have even recommended that clients share the bulk purchases with other families so they can both benefit with the cost savings. The caution with bulk purchases is they have to be managed. I find this to be most problematic with frozen bulk purchases. Freezers are often hard to keep organized and therefore many items get lost and die in the back or the bottom. I know this might sound ridiculous but it's advisable to keep a current inventory after your shopping trip of what is in the freezer. Keep in mind that the effort you put into this can save you hundreds of dollars a year.

- Keep an ongoing grocery list, either on your phone or a paper copy. Having a list can be very helpful and curb impulse purchases (this takes a little discipline). There are many apps that can be instrumental in planning meals, creating shopping lists, and even help with the inventory. Cozy Family Organizer and Yummly are a few apps you can check out.

- Limit your quantities by using a container as a limiter. In other words, if the container is full of the product, don't purchase any more. It's also an easy inventory visual to glance at in the pantry and see that the container is full or needs refilling.

## Food Organization Tips Refrigerator/Freezer

In the refrigerator, keep categories of products together in one section (for example, dairy products such as milk, cheese, yogurt, etc.).

- Meat should be kept on the lower shelves to prevent any drips from contaminating other foods.

- Fruits and veggies should be in a drawer in the refrigerator to maintain freshness. You could even use produce-specific storage containers to extend the life of the item.

- Condiments and sauces usually fit nicely in the door of the refrigerator for easy access, and then they don't get lost in the back.

- Try using a shelf riser inside the refrigerator -- trust me, this is a game changer.

## Pantry

- You can arrange your pantry several ways.

Some of my clients like to keep categories such as dinner, breakfast, snacks and sweets together; others like to keep it by type such as pasta/rice, canned goods, baking mixes, and snacks together. One of my clients kept the food organized by the household member!

- If you are tight on space, try using the vertical space on the inside of the door. Container Store sells an over the door basket system by Elfa that holds a ton of products on the door.

Once you get the hang of this, you won't be throwing out food and you'll start saving money. The only catch to this is YOU HAVE TO MAINTAIN IT!! Good luck and happy organizing!

Professional Organizer, Jennifer Raftis, CPO® founded Efficiency Matters, LLC to help you with all of your organizing needs for your home and business. She is a Certified Professional Organizer and an active board member with NAPO, National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals.

She is also an independent representative for The Container Store and has expertise in designing closets, garages, pantries, playrooms and more.

In addition, she is a Corporate Organizing and Productivity Consultant and has worked with Fortune 500 companies across the U.S. Another large part of her business is move management especially working with seniors who are downsizing. She and her husband have lived in Moraga for 30 years, raising 3 kids and working countless volunteer hours with many local non-profit organizations and schools. Jennifer@efficiencymattersllc.com, 925-698-3756 www.efficiencymattersllc.com





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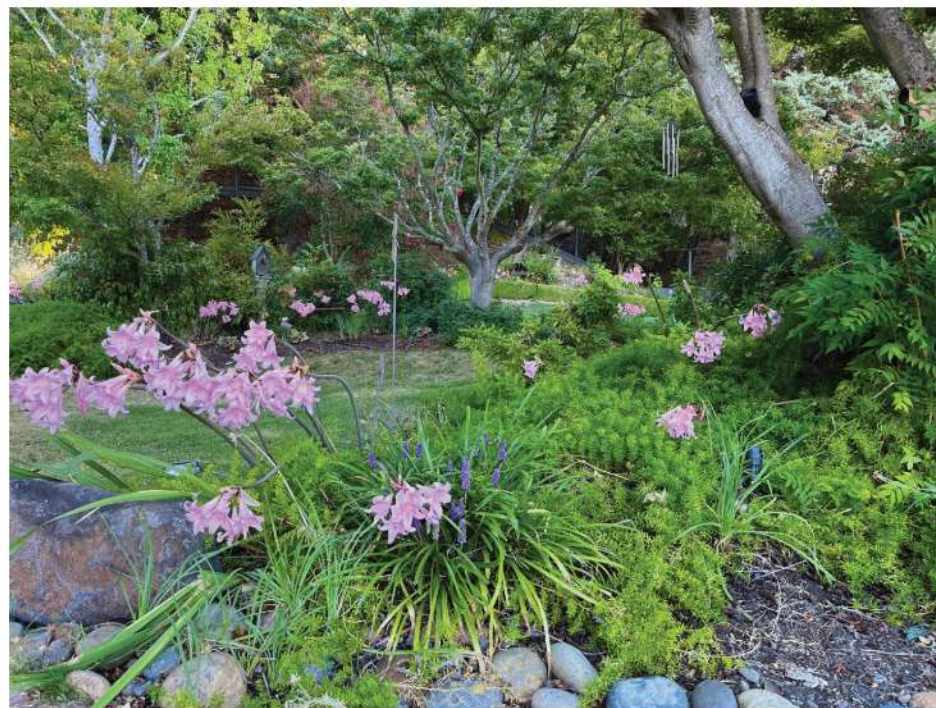


## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

# Naturally Naked



The hillside and orchard are filled with stunning *Amaryllis belladonna*, Naked ladies.



Naked ladies are the stars of this shade garden. Photos Cynthia Brian

... continued from Page OH1

Their long throats stretch to face the sun, wherever it may be during the day.

**Bloom Time:** They generally bloom in late summer to early fall, making them a beautiful and unexpected addition to the garden at a time when many other plants are winding down. I have found that planting bulbs throughout the year allows various blooming times from August through October.

**Growing Conditions:** Naked ladies prefer well-drained soil and full sun to partial shade. They are hardy and tolerate various soil conditions, though they do best in dry soil, which works well in our drought-ridden area. Naked ladies do not like having their feet overly wet.

**Planting:** Naked ladies are grown from bulbs, which can be planted or transplanted at any time during the year with the optimal time being in late fall after all the flowers have faded. The bulbs can be placed about four to six inches deep with the top of their heads above ground. I suggest spacing them at least 18 inches apart to allow the bulb clusters to form. Wherever bulbs are planted, nothing else will grow on their “turtle tops”, which can easily reach two feet in diameter.

**Care:** Once established, Naked ladies require minimal care. They are drought-tolerant and don't require regular fertilization. In colder climates, mulch is suggested to be scattered around the base to protect the bulbs from freezing temperatures. The “minimal care” may be a bit of a misnomer when multitudes of Naked ladies are in the garden. The dried winter leaves must be pruned in spring and the dead stalks must be cut to the

ground after blossoms fade. These tasks are easy to do, yet very time-consuming.

**Toxicity:** The plant is mildly toxic if ingested. Keep pets away from nibbling on plants. Instruct children never to taste or eat any plant without approval for its edible content. The toxicity is due to compounds called alkaloids present in the plant.

I adore my Naked ladies for filling my landscape with their distinctive, eye-catching blooms, and their ability to thrive and naturalize with minimal maintenance. Nature hides their beauty when only the bulb is visible. They then sprout as my naturally naked summer stunners.

My favorite showy summer tree is the crape myrtle. *Lagerstroemia*, native to Asia, provides year-round interest and is a popular choice in gregarious garden design. Here's why I recommend crape myrtles.

**Long Blooming Period:** Crape myrtles are renowned for their extended flowering season with a dense canopy of bright blooms. Depending on the variety and climate, they can bloom from late spring through fall. Their vibrant flowers come in a range of colors. I grow watermelon pink, purple, and lavender, with my preferred tree being watermelon pink. Other available colors are red and white.

**Attractive Foliage:** The leaves of crape myrtle trees are also visually appealing. They can display a range of colors throughout the seasons, including lush green in spring and summer, turning to brilliant red, burgundy, and orange in autumn.

... continued on Page 10



*Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener,  
Cynthia Brian*  
**Naturally Naked**



Photo Cynthia Brian

**Bright pink surprise lilies balance the gray licorice plant and burgundy cordyline.**



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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

### Naturally Naked

... continued from Page OH8

**Variety of Sizes and Forms:** Crape myrtles come in various sizes and forms, from small shrubs to large trees. On one hillside, I grow purple shrubs which I shape to size. I also have multi-trunk specimens. The versatility of crape myrtle plants allows them to fit into various garden styles and spaces, from small urban gardens to expansive landscapes like mine.

**Attractive Bark:** One of the distinctive features of crape myrtles is their exfoliating bark. The peeling bark reveals shades of brown, gray, and cream, adding a textural and visual element to the tree's appearance in winter.

**Low Maintenance:** Once established, crape myrtles are relatively low maintenance. They are drought-tolerant and can thrive in a variety of soil types. They also resist many common pests and diseases, making them a

practical choice for many gardeners. They can be pruned after blooming to reduce size, or allowed to flourish naturally for a fuller, taller tree.

**Versatility:** They can be used in various landscape applications, including as standalone specimens, in hedgerows, or as part of mixed borders. Their adaptability to different growing conditions and their ability to be pruned into various shapes make them versatile garden plants.

Because of the combination of a long flowering period, beautiful foliage, gorgeous naked bark, and adaptable nature, the crape myrtle is my beloved tree.

Nature may like to hide but with the naturally naked *Amaryllis belladonnas* and *Lagerstroemias* in full bloom in my garden, the curtain has been pulled wide open and the spectacle is a showstopper.

Happy gardening. Happy growing.



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Photo Cynthia Brian

The naked legs grow above the "turtle tops" of the resurrection lilies.

**Correction:** The Fire Safety Story we ran on Aug. 14 regarding the opening of wire mesh vent covers stated an incorrect dimension for the optimal wire grid and should be changed to: "If the opening in the wire mesh is more than 1/8 inch square, it is recommended to cover the vent with a finer mesh."

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**Cynthia Brian amongst white agapanthus with Naked ladies starting to shoot.**

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 which was just honored as the 2024 Nonprofit of the Year by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com). Her newest children's picture book, Books in the Barnyard: Oh Deer!, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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**33 La Noria, Orinda**  
5 Bd + Office | 4.5 Ba | 5267 Sqft | \$5,500,000

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**New Listing!**  
**27 Orinda View Road, Orinda**  
5 Bd | 5.5 Ba | 5335 Sqft | \$5,150,000

This private 5 bd/ 5.5 ba retreat is above it all offering unobstructed sweeping views out nearly every window!



**291 Monte Vista Ridge Road, Orinda**  
5 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 5576 Sqft | \$4,250,000

This exquisite home combines luxury, comfort, quality, privacy, & convenience to SF & top tier Orinda schools.



**188 Lombardy Lane, Orinda**  
5 Bd | 4 Ba | 3948 Sqft | \$3,495,000

Fabulous home in coveted Sleepy Hollow w/ wonderful floor plan & spectacular private backyard!



**20 El Patio, Orinda**  
6 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 4552 Sqft | \$2,995,000

Totally renovated & updated in 2013, this light filled 6 bd/ 4.5 ba w/ bonus room & possible au-pair suite is a fabulous place to call home.



**108 Oak Road, Orinda**  
4 Bd | 3 Ba | 3377 Sqft | \$2,995,000

Built in 2000 & nestled in one of Orinda's close to town neighborhoods, this bright spacious home has everything you are looking for!



**43 Bear Rodge Road, Orinda**  
5 Bd | 3.5 Ba | 3571 Sqft | \$2,250,000

Nestled in the Sleepy Hollow neighborhood, this spectacular property includes a 4 bd/ 2.5 Ba main home + a 1 bd/ 1 ba cottage.



**417 Moraga Way, Orinda**  
4 Bd | 2 Ba | 2007 Sqft | \$1,695,000

Thoughtfully designed custom home offers gorgeous views & abundant natural light from a wall of multi-sliders!



**152 Ravenhill Road, Orinda**  
3 Bd | 3 Ba | 2546 Sqft | \$1,595,000

Located in the prestigious Orindawoods, this 3 bd/ 3 ba, modern light-filled townhome is stunningly updated & has it all!



**New Price!**  
**53 Via Floreado, Orinda**  
5 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2851 Sqft | \$1,575,000

Bright 5 bd/2.5 ba home in Orinda w/ amazing views!



**76 La Cuesta Road, Orinda**  
3 Bd | 2 Ba | 1762 Sqft | \$1,495,000

Va-Va-Views! This stylishly updated Orinda home is immersed in nature & a peaceful escape, yet right in town.



**New Listing!**  
**3930 Quail Ridge Road, Lafayette**  
4 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 3771 Sqft | \$3,085,000

Stylish retreat in Happy Valley hills w/ views from every room! 3771 sq ft, 4 bd + office, pool, wine room & greenhouse on 1+ acre!



**1087 Rahara Drive, Lafayette**  
3 Bd | 3 Ba | 2685 Sqft | \$2,595,000

This expansive 3 bd/ 3 ba home spans 2,685 sf on a generous 0.56-acre lot in the coveted Happy Valley neighborhood.



**3580 Boyer Circle, Lafayette**  
3 Bd | 2 Ba | 2158 Sqft | \$1,795,000

Fall in love with this beautifully updated, 4 bd/ 3 ba, single-level home with an ideal layout!



**1031 Bollinger Canyon, Moraga**  
5 Bd | 3.5 Ba | 4571 Sqft | \$2,795,000

This secluded country horse ranch fts 10.51 acres w/ a 3,472 sf main house, 1,018 sf guest house, a 2-stall barn, a 5,400 sf arena + more!



**New Price!**  
**2714 Jones Road, Walnut Creek**  
4 Units | 3986 Total Sqft | \$1,895,000

Built in 1970 this 4 unit complex is conveniently located off the I-680 freeway, is fully rented & ready to produce a profit!



**488 El Alamo, Danville**  
4+ Bd | 4 Ba | 4110 Sqft | \$3,850,000

Nestled in Danville's desirable El Pintado neighborhood, this 4 bd/ 4 ba Farm House Estate has been completely remodeled!



**6915 Ridgewood Drive, Oakland**  
3 Bd | 2 Ba | 1464 Sqft | \$1,495,000

On a private lot, set within a verdant garden oasis, this Montclair gem offers modern luxury & tranquility!



**1167 Kaski Lane, Concord**  
4 Bd | 3 Ba | 2237 Sqft | \$1,199,000

Fall in love with this beautifully updated, 4 bd/ 3 ba, single-level home with an ideal layout!

## The Village Associates:

Ashley Battersby • Shannon Conner • Meara Dunsmore • Linda Ehrich • Emily Estrada • Joan Evans • Linda Friedman • Liz Gallagher  
Claudia Gohler • Ari Hatton • Gillian Judge Hogan • Dexter Honens II • Christina Linezo • April Matthews • Hillary Murphy • Karen Murphy  
John Nash • Altie Schmitt • Ann Sharf • Amy Rose Smith • Molly Smith • Jeff Snell • Lynda Snell • Alexis Thompson • Clark Thompson  
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