

LETTER FROM THE SELLER

821 Polk Street, Albany

Dear Prospective Buyer,

Thank you so much for stopping by! Since 2007 my family has loved and adored our home...

We have always enjoyed the spaciousness. (Early on an exploring visitor commented "It's like the Winchester House – it goes on and on!"). Also, we have loved the view of the hills and the campanile (even though we are not UCB grads). Which reminds me – we always meant to put a deck outside the kitchen. We envisioned sitting with coffee in the morning sun, the Berkeley hills to the east and Oakland to the south. We went so far as to get the period-appropriate French doors (You will find them in the basement). Perhaps your family will create that deck!

We will miss not only the very special neighbors, but the amazing shops and restaurants we could walk to in the evenings. I'll now have to drive to get my Cajun veggie dish at "Hot Shop!" (if you go, get it without the wrap - the very kind owner Kabir makes it hot with his amazing sauce and will put it on top of rice and greens like a salad for you). I also doubt I will last long without Bua Luang's pumpkin curry. Mr. Dewey's cashew-based deep chocolate "ice cream" is too good to be true. Tay Tah café. I could go on. (It's making me sad to write this, gosh it's tempting to stay...).

Other shops that held a special place for us were "Toy Go-Round" where one can buy pre-loved toys, then later (if you've been careful) bring them back to "go round" to the next child. A recent favorite of mine is the plastic-free shop ("FillGood") close by in the atrium, where one can also get a massage – all in walking distance!

We might alternatively walk in the other direction up Catherine's walk onto the hill among the Eucalyptus trees. We took my favorite family photo up there near the tree swing. I've heard rumors the tree swing is back up. We never took enough advantage of the Albany bulb, but dogs do love to jump into the water there. Found-object sculptures reward you if your walk ventures all the way to the end. My father, lover of horse races, was surprised Golden Gate Fields is walking distance here!

You will have well-educated interesting neighbors. Colby on the North side is especially kind and always there to help when needed. Just the other night, after we'd moved, he so kindly and cheerfully checked when I wasn't sure I had locked up properly. Beside him big hearted Julie nursed one of the local wild turkeys back to health in her back. Susan, an artist, will stop to give you the neighborhood news as she walks her dog. Sharon, down Washington, teaches English but also speaks Mandarin. Her witty husband Mark is an international photographer.

I expect you will have your own ideas about how to use our sweet back yard. There were dogs out there at times, (which is why we put up the fence), but most recently we had three sweet

chickens, one or the other “crowing” proudly occasionally to let us know she’d laid her egg. One of them, Mascot, insisted on coming indoors so we had to get her a chicken diaper. Who knew such a thing existed?

Our favorite memories (and here it gets tempting again not to leave!) were our Holiday gatherings. Perhaps the most fun, even above pumpkin carving and tall Christmas trees, has been Easter celebrations– They became elaborate over time. We would share food and talk while expressing our creativity coloring real eggs, then fill hundreds of plastic eggs with surprises, coins and dollars, hiding them all over the back yard. We’d then hold the bigger kids back until the younger ones got a chance, then the mad dash and search, adults laughing and directing children to not-yet-found eggs, chickens clucking under foot, followed by counting and prizes.

The loft above the garage is special. Our teenage daughter had her room up there for a while. It was painted a lovely purplish-pink, and there were white Christmas lights along the walls, and stars and planets that shone only after the lights were out. It was small but the others were jealous of her hide-a-way.

She and her older brothers are adults now. I love having people around and “roomers” added to our household. We had a visiting professor from China with his son, a French teacher, a musician... We had kind people whom we will miss.

I see you as so lucky to come to this place out of all the places in the universe.

It has become time for us to downsize. I wish you many, many happy memories.

Sincerely,

Deb