



Lavender Notes

*Improving the lives of LGBTQ older adults
through community building, education, and advocacy.*

*Celebrating 23+ years of service and positive change
April 2018 Volume 25 Issue 4*

STORIES OF OUR LIVES - A BI-COASTAL PILGRIMAGE

AKILAH MONIFA

Neither Manhattan, Kansas ("The Little Apple") nor Huntsville, Alabama ("Space and Rocket Capital of the World") might seem a likely place to nourish and inspire an African-American lesbian to identify, accept or celebrate her sexuality. But Elizabeth Ann Thompson, born in Kansas and "raised" in Alabama didn't let the stereotypical homophobia of the Midwest or the South hamper her from coming to grips with who she is or who she was meant to be.

Little Elizabeth was born 3rd April 1957, the second child of a young Kansas woman, who later had a career with Avco Electronics, and her husband, a graduate student at Kansas State University. Her father's career led the family to Huntsville via a job with IBM Corporation. Elizabeth's only sibling, brother Dennis, is three years older than her.

"I had a happy enough childhood, growing up in a privileged, upper-middle-class family in the town with Werner von Braun Space Center," she recalls. "But I knew early on that I didn't really identify with my name, which I learned by age 11 was a 'slave' name and one that didn't mean anything to me. When I read Maya Angelou's 'I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings,' I decided two things: that I was probably a lesbian and that I would one day change my name from Elizabeth Ann Thompson to something that was more meaningful to me!"



Blurry shot, Age 6



Sixth Grade, Age 12

In spite of the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v Board of Education* decision mandating racial integration of schools, Huntsville schools remained segregated until 1968, also the year that her parents divorced and her father moved to New York. In sixth grade, Elizabeth's classroom had only one other person of color, a Filipina girl. She graduated in 1974 from Butler High School, which was recently closed.

"Books were my salvation as I navigated those teenage and early adulthood years," she recalls. "As for a social life in high school, the closest thing to a date I ever had was going to a junior class prom-like gathering with a boy I had something of a crush on. Unfortunately, that 'date' was arranged between my mother and his mother. It was not a successful evening, to say the least. When I started college at Emory University in Atlanta, however, my world suddenly opened up, as I read every book in the library's Lesbian and Gay Collection, some of which were in the reference section and some you could take out and read at home."



Age 16 - What am I going to be when I grow up?!

While at Emory, she focused mainly on academics and devouring the library's LGBT collection. She didn't date, join any groups or become politically active. After spending two years in Atlanta, she took a year off to travel in Europe, becoming an au pair in Paris for a few months.

"Soon after I returned, I moved to upstate New York - near my father, whom I've always felt close to - and enrolled at SUNY-Binghamton, where I also read everything in the LGBT collection there - I think we've added the 'Q' to that acronym mostly in the 21st century," she explains. "I still hadn't had any relationships with women when I left New York in my mid-20s!"

Elizabeth opted to head west to California in 1982, where she attended and graduated from Santa Clara University's School of Law. During those law-school years, she embarked on her first lesbian relationship - with an older woman who identified as bisexual and was unwilling to be out in any way. It was during those years that she began reaching out to her community.

"I finally found 'my people' in San Francisco, Marin County and the East Bay," she recalls. "I connected with the NIA Collective - 'Honoring Lesbians of African Descent' - which just celebrated its 30th anniversary last year. I attended the annual gatherings in Marin County and a few events at the Pacific Center. I continued being an avid reader of all things LGBT, including newspapers like the Bay Times and the Advocate, and magazines like Ms."

After graduating from law school, she received a community law fellowship which involved working for two years with Legal Services of Alameda County. She stayed on for another two years with Legal Aid Society of Alameda County, worked at the Contra Costa County Public Defender's Office and with an asbestos law firm. She began teaching preparatory classes for incoming law students from all over the country at Hastings School of Law, spending a second summer doing a similar job at the University of Idaho in Moscow, ID.



Akilah developing her political "chops" - here as professor with Anita Hill, being honored by New College

After working part-time at Golden Gate University School of Law - primarily research and writing classes - she pursued tenure-track positions with various law schools around the country.

"I got hired full-time at New College School of Law in San Francisco," she recalls, "where I taught the usual law-school curricula, including research and writing, criminal law and torts. But I also put together a seminar called 'Sexual Orientation and the Law,' which was an inspiration not only to me, but also, I believe, to many of the students there."

During those New College years, she became involved in a serious long-term relationship with the woman who eventually became her wife and co-mother of their children. At age 40, she realized that she still wasn't sure what she wanted to be "when I grow up." She took some time away by herself - with journals dating from when she was 19 - and realized that she wanted to make some major changes in her life.

"Looking at those old journals, I realized that I had always really wanted to be a writer from an early age," she explains. "I made a deal with my partner that I could take a year off to pursue free-lance writing, during which time I did indeed tick off some of the items on my bucket list - getting published in 'Ms.' magazine, working for the New York Times Syndicate and writing editorials and op-ed pieces through the Progressive Media Project at Progressive magazine. Fortunately, that agreed-upon year off expanded into TWO before we re-negotiated my 'time-off' arrangement."

Since the couple wanted to have a family, settle down into a home and a routine, the new agreement was that Elizabeth (by then morphing into Akilah Monifa) would guarantee to bring in at least \$50,000 per year in some way to contribute to the household. She scoured the San Francisco Chronicle and Oakland Tribune classified sections and concluded that most of the jobs she circled had something to do with communications and public relations.

"My first PR job was being press secretary for Medea Benjamin, the Green candidate against Dianne Feinstein for U.S. Senate," Akilah recalls. "Then I worked with the SPIN Project, training non-profit organizations all over the country on how best to do their own PR and media relations. Though that was based in San Francisco, I traveled extensively for those two years."

While attending the 2002 National Association of Black Journalists conference in Milwaukee, she fortuitously met Barbara Rogers of KPIX (CBS-San Francisco), who told her there would soon be a job opening there. She applied for the job and got it!

"My title, Director of Communications, eventually became Director of Communications and Public Affairs during my 14 years with CBS," Akilah explains. "I was responsible for TV stations in San Francisco, Sacramento and Seattle, plus four radio stations. I produced public affairs shows for both TV and radio stations. In 2016, that position was eliminated."

Akilah has continued to write - primarily through Huffington Post, the Progressive Media Project and on-line blogs like "Moms Rising", none of which really contributed to the family income.

"I had been working with MacArthur Fluornoy and his ex-partner on a venture called Arise, catering to LGBTQ of African-American descent," she recalls. "After three years, it had foundered and I had, coincidentally, also left CBS. I decided to try to revive that project as an on-line venture, Arise 2.0, again with my good friend, MacArthur, as co-founder. I spent much of 2017 developing the content for BlackHistoryEveryDay.com, but also tried to expand to contribute to other celebrations of People of Color, such as Asian History Month and Hispanic Heritage Month. I believe I became a bit overly-ambitious and had over-extended myself, something I couldn't really sustain."

In addition to these on-line sites, she also maintains the Arise 2.0 website, a Facebook page and Alexa Skill.

Meanwhile, over the years, many changes took place in her personal life, as well. She had met and fallen in love with another woman, her first major long-term relationship, and they had adopted a daughter (at six weeks old) and a son (at birth), who are now 17 and 14 years old, respectively. The couple was together for nearly 20 years when they got married in 2008 (along with 18,000 other California couples prior to Proposition 8 being passed). They were separated four years later and formally divorced in 2016. They continue to co-parent the children and remain good friends.

One of her major lifetime challenges has been dealing with her weight. When her 5'11" frame had reached 400 pounds and she could no longer bear looking at herself in the mirror, she decided she needed to take control for her own health and well-being. She decided to have gastric-bypass surgery done by a renowned Alabama-born surgeon at Stanford. She gave up snack-foods like chips and soda and has become a "foodie" who focuses on fresh fruits and vegetables, smaller portions and always taking at least half of the serving home for leftovers on those rare occasions when she goes out to eat.



Photo from 6/13/2014 CNN Story on her weight loss Doing a sleep study to deal with sleep apnea

"As the CNN piece reported in June of 2014, I lost 222 pounds, which I have pretty much maintained since," Akilah says. "I no longer use a C-PAP for sleep apnea, no longer need blood pressure meds and my back and joint pain is gone. Last but not least, I look in the mirror regularly now and see somebody I really admire! What an accomplishment!"

As for her personal life as a lesbian, coming out to friends was fairly easy. Coming out to family, however, was much more difficult.

"I came out to friends in law school in 1982," Akilah explains. "They didn't have any problem with my being a lesbian. Their main concern was the difference in age between me and my first lover - plus her reticence at being 'out' when we were together, for various reasons that don't need to be explained here.

"Coming out to my mother, however, was very painful over a protracted period of time. After I told her on the telephone, she said I shouldn't have told her - and basically refused to speak to me for 20 years. When my mother's mother and sister died within a few days of each other, my father notified me and I decided to go with my wife to the memorial services in Kansas. My mother acted like nothing had happened in the intervening two decades. She was very gracious and receptive during the services, but it was clear the mother-daughter relationship was permanently damaged and - as it turns out - beyond repair.



Akilah in her last visit with her Mom in Huntsville, July 2013

"At one point, after she'd seen an episode of 'Oprah' on unfinished business in your life, my mother called me and I started visiting her periodically and talking with her on the phone. It was soon obvious, however, that she didn't want to know anything about my personal life. Even after we adopted our kids, she refused to take on a grandmother role, since she said she thought of them as my wife's kids rather than equally mine. Though she did come out here once - for Grandparents Day, oddly enough - my daughter was six and my son was in pre-school - she refused to come to our wedding in 2008. She was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, from which she deteriorated very quickly. I saw her one last time in July 2013, when she was in assisted care. She didn't really recognize me as an adult and she died three months later."

Though her brother, Dennis, did attend her 2008 wedding and there has been occasional sibling contact over the years, he has mostly remained estranged, as well. He has made it clear that he wants no further contact with either Akilah or their father, though neither of them understands the exact reason. Her relationship with her father has remained solid all of her life. In fact, he was one of the most supportive people in her life when she and her wife divorced in 2016.

"When I came out to my Dad, he told me he wasn't surprised at all - he had known I was a lesbian when I was NINE years old!" Akilah says. "I had to ask him why he never told ME that, when I could've really used the information earlier! But we remain fast friends, occasionally joking - perhaps from the pain of it - about both of us being cut out of my brother's life."

So how did Elizabeth Ann Thompson become Akilah Monifa, by the way?

"Once, probably in about 1990, when I was hanging out with one of my three LGBT cousins on my father's side, we were talking about the fact that so many African-Americans continue to carry their 'slave' or 'sharecropper' names, inherited from the 'masters' of some plantation or another," she recalls. "While we were together, I bought a book of African names, read it cover-to-cover on the plane back home and had circled two names that very much appealed to me. Akilah means 'intelligent' and Monifa means 'I have my luck'. Both resonated with me and I've been called Akilah - or 'Kiki' - by family and friends for nearly three decades."



Akilah in one of her current head-shots for Arise 2.0

Akilah is currently engaged to be married (and her ex-wife is in a new relationship). She is a devoted full-time mother, writer-blogger-vlogger, activist and a Vice President of the Board of Directors at Lavender Seniors of the East Bay. She continues being involved in any and all issues pertaining to women, People of Color and LGBTQ.

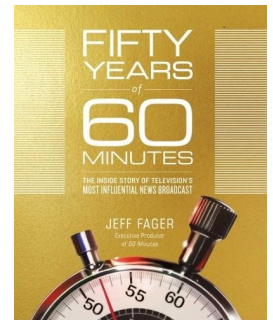
Her current work can be seen at <https://arise2ptoh.com/> and <https://blackhistoryeveryday.com/>. Her weight-loss story can be read at <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/06/09/health/weight-loss-akilah-monifa/index.html>.

Book Review

Fifty Years of 60 Minutes

By Jeff Fager

Readers are probably wondering why I bother to look at "60 Minutes". It was chiefly because of Andy Rooney, long time editor. His comments on gays were wildly homophobic (pages 31-34). He rejected the idea of same sex marriage and saw homosexuality as immoral. He also attacked Black Americans. He lectured us as follows, "Blacks have watered down their genes because the less intelligent ones have the most children. They drop out of school early, do drugs, and get pregnant". He paid what some people considered a stiff price. He was suspended for three months with no pay.



Readers will enjoy all of this "60 Minutes" retrospective. It is enjoyable any time.

- Frank Howell



© Can Stock Photo

CONNECTIONS

Have you moved out of the area, do you want to get in contact with other Lavender Seniors near you or someone you have lost contact with? [Email us](#) and we will try to help out. No information will be shared without your specific permission.

LAVENDER SENIORS FRIENDLY VISITOR PROGRAM HAS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE.

Volunteers with the Lavender Seniors Friendly Visitor program are background checked, interviewed and trained, after which they are matched with a senior to visit regularly, usually for a couple hours each week. Visitors can share stories, chat about mutual interests and current events, and if both are willing and able, volunteers can take their seniors out for a walk in the park, a bite to eat, a cup of coffee, shopping or maybe a movie or a trip to the museum.

We ask volunteers to make a commitment of at least six months.

If you are in need of a Friendly Visitor, we can help with that too!

Please contact info@lavenderseniors.org and we will be in touch with you soon. Thank You!

Second Saturday Pot Luck Lunch, April 14th 12-2pm

All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling, San Leandro



Program is a presentation by Justice in Aging.

A buffet luncheon will begin at noon, followed by announcements and the program at approximately 1:00pm. Feel free to bring a dish to share if you wish.

Justice in Aging email re: Part A application-March 31st deadline

Justice In Aging

Fighting Senior Poverty Through Law

Many low-income Californians do not qualify for premium-free Medicare Part A (hospital) coverage because they do not have 40 quarters of qualifying work experience. They can get this coverage through the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) benefit.

To qualify in 2018, individuals must act NOW, before March 31.

Who is affected:

Individuals who do not qualify for premium-free Medicare Part A with incomes below 100% of the 2018 Federal Poverty Level and with low assets.

The exact QMB eligibility numbers are:

- Countable incomes below \$1,032/mo. for an individual and \$1,392/mo. for a couple (100% of the 2018 Federal Poverty Level and a \$20 income disregard);
- Countable assets below \$7,560 for an individual and \$11,340 for a couple (primary residence, car, burial funds, and some other assets do not count).

What does the QMB benefit provide?

The QMB benefit is extensive. It pays Medicare Part A and Part B premiums and protects beneficiaries from paying any deductibles, co-insurance, or co-pays for Medicare services. QMBs also automatically receive the Part D Low-Income Subsidy.

Since dual eligibles already have health coverage, why should they apply for QMB?

Having Medicare Part A allows an individual to use Medicare Part A providers, like hospitals that do not participate in Medi-Cal. It also gives the option of joining a D-SNP, a Medicare Advantage plan or, in participating counties, a Cal MediConnect plan. Medicare beneficiaries without Part A coverage are barred from participating in Medicare managed care.

How does someone apply? There are two steps:

1. First, go to the local Social Security Office and apply for "conditional Medicare Part A." Be sure to get a piece of paper saying that

the application for "conditional Part A" has been received. The application can only be filed during the General Enrollment Period which extends from January 1 to **March 31** each year.

2. Then go to the local Medi-Cal office and apply for QMB. Bring proof of having filed for "conditional Medicare Part A" at the Social Security Office.

When will the QMB benefit start?

QMB eligibility will begin on July 1, 2018.

If an individual misses the March 31 cut-off, the earliest the benefit can start is July 1, 2019!

Elders' Guild Meetings - Sunday, April 15th (Third Sundays)

Changing Aging w/joy & love

North Berkeley Senior Center
1900 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. at Hearst · Berkeley, CA
Wheelchair accessible.

Hosted by Barry B. From Elders' Guild

Details

Conscious Aging for the Greater Good

Our vision is a world in which powerful and conscious elders join together in common purpose to bring healing, joy and connection to our lives, our families, our communities and the world.

Our mission is to create the communities where we re-imagine our old age, look after one another and embody the wisdom that will enable us to help heal the future.

Each Elders' Guild Meeting is a Celebration of Life that Enlivens the Spirit.

Please bring (relatively) healthy treats to share

We shmooze from 1:45 to 2:00 and begin at two

Donations requested to cover the cost of space rental

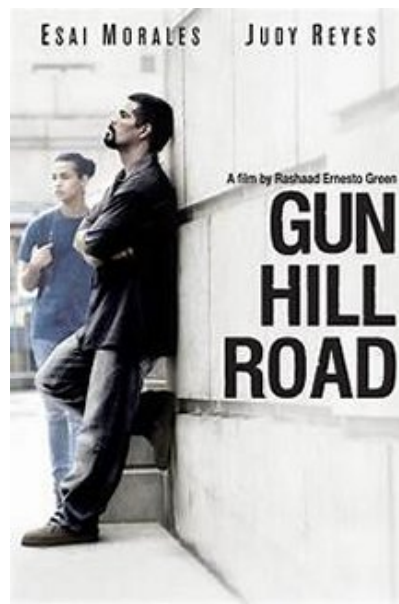
THIRD WEDNESDAY LAVENDER SENIORS FILM SERIES, 18TH APRIL, 1-3PM

GUN HILL ROAD

A macho Bronx Latino, Enrique (played by Esai Morales) comes home from a prison stint to discover that his son, Michael (played brilliantly by Harmony Santana), has decided to become his daughter instead! Wife and mother, Angela (played by Judy Reyes) - who is trying to hide an affair that began while her husband was in prison - also tries to mediate the stormy times between the son/daughter and the father.



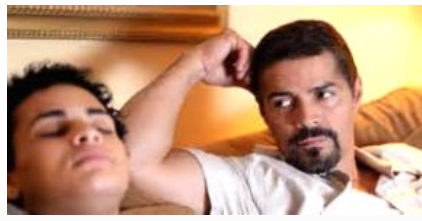
Enrique peering through the bars, anticipating going home.



Enrique and his son, Michael, in one of their many stand-offs

Unable to accept his child, Enrique clings to his masculine ideals while Angela attempts to hold the family together by protecting Michael. Still under the watchful eye of his parole officer (Isiah Whitlock, Jr.), Enrique must become the father he needs to be or, once again, risk losing his family and his freedom.

Can a father's fierce love for his family overcome his street-hardened ideas about manhood and end the vicious cycle controlling his life? Writer/director Rashaad Ernesto Green's first feature film is an intricate portrait of a family divided - told with sensitivity, gentle humor, and a deep understanding of the environment that shapes its people.



Enrique trying to re-connect with his wife, his son and the daughter his son plans to become

Though Lavender Seniors has provided popcorn, bottled water and apple juice for refreshments during these showings for over three years, a new library staff person has suddenly decreed that we can no longer have food or drinks in the room. That will be negotiated over the next couple months - perhaps requiring a deaning deposit or some such - but for now no refreshments.

The showing begins promptly at 1pm on Wednesday, 18th April, in the Carnegie Lecture Hall at the San Leandro Public Library, 300 Estudillo. The small theater is wheelchair- and walker accessible, though the room can sometimes be a bit cool, so bringing a sweater or light jacket is often suggested.

Following the showing, there will be a brief discussion and evaluation of the film as to its applicability to LGBTQ seniors and their allies.

The library is easily accessible via BART or AC-Transit. For those driving, it is between Bancroft Avenue and East 14th in the north-south direction and Estudillo and Callan in the east-west.

The library has ample two- and three-hour parking available.

Advocating for the Disabled

Research has consistently shown that - whether from a pediatric, young adult, adult or geriatric point-of-view - people who have stability, living in a loving environment, being educated, feeling supported - and, if they are able to work, doing work that they enjoy and are adequately compensated for - have the greatest chance for living long, happy and productive lives. Whether a person is born with a disability or becomes disabled through trauma, disease or aging, s/he will likely thrive best "in place" and with dignity.

A team of advocates - Mark Polit and Bonnie Black - from East Bay Innovations (EBI) in San Leandro will be on hand at Third Friday Lunch Bunch this month to discuss the many issues involved with supporting the disabled members in our community - of all ages - to achieve the best outcomes possible. They will discuss the history of the disability rights movement in California beginning in the 1950s, including the Lanterman Act and how it helped change society for the better, to be more inclusive.

As a parent of a young man with developmental disabilities, Mark Polit has fought for three decades to break down societal and policy barriers to the empowerment, independence, inclusion, and employment of people with disabilities. He helped lead the movement in California for deinstitutionalization, self-determination and employment of people with developmental disabilities, leading to key legislative victories. Mark served as Executive Director of the California Alliance for Inclusive Communities, Director of California Developmental Disabilities Policy for the Service Employees International Union, and was appointed by Governor Brown as Deputy Director of Policy and Planning to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.



Bonnie Black has been in Workforce development for 20 years. She currently works with EBI as a Recruiter and a Job Developer - a cultivator of relationships. She will introduce Mark Polit and be available to answer any questions about EBI.

Third Friday Lunch Bunch - held this month on 20th April at the North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Jr Way (corner 58th Street) begins at 12 noon, when a nutritious buffet-style lunch is served (including vegetarian options). After lunch, there will be brief community announcements before the program is turned over to our visitors from EBI. There will be plenty of time for questions afterward.

The parking lot and entrance are at the rear of the building off 58th Street.

COMING UP

OAKLAND'S FIRST LGBTQ HOLISTIC HEALTH & WELLNESS DAY APRIL 29TH 11AM-8PM

Oakland LGBTQ Center, 3207 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland
<https://www.oaklandlgbtqcenter.org/health-wellness>

EAST BAY ASIAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORP SENIOR HOUSING WAIT LIST OPENING

EBALDC will be opening their waitlist for Lion Creek Senior (Phase V), March 30 - April 6, 2018.

EBALDC is also accepting applications for their 2018 Annual Marketing List (AML), April 2 - April 8, 2018. The AML allows you to apply online to be considered for EBALDC's Below Market Rate (BMR) Affordable Housing units that become vacant throughout the year. Apply to multiple properties using one pre-app.

<http://ebaldc.org/how-to-apply/>

1825 San Pablo Avenue, Suite 200
Oakland, CA 94612
Phone: 510.287.5353

OPENHOUSE Presents
Spring Fling 2018 - Sunday, April 8, 11am - 5pm

Openhouse is a residence for LGBTQ seniors in San Francisco. The following four paragraphs describe events that will take place during this Spring Fling celebration and fund-raiser:

Openhouse is excited to invite you to our annual Spring Fling celebration!

Come out for a fabulous brunch and program honoring LGBTQ older people and those fighting to keep them central in our lives and our community. Stay out to enjoy our Tea Dance out on the gorgeous Ritz Terrace Courtyard.

As Openhouse's biggest fundraising event of the year, monies raised through Spring Fling are critical to providing and expanding quality programs and services for LGBTQ seniors. We thank you for all of your support!

Adelman/Gurevitch Founders Award 2018

The Founders Award is presented each year to a person who has significantly impacted or influenced Openhouse.

Join us in honoring **Kate Kendell** as this year's Founders Award recipient! Kate Kendell leads the National Center for Lesbian Rights, a national legal organization committed to advancing the civil and human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and their families through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education. NCLR's legal, policy, and legislative victories set important precedents that improve the lives of all LGBTQ people and their families across the country.

Trailblazer Award 2018

The Trailblazer Award recognizes visionary pathfinders who are committed to empowering the LGBTQ community.

We are excited to announce **Cecilia Chung** as this year's Trailblazer Award recipient! Cecilia is the Senior Director of Strategic Projects for the Transgender Law Center and is a nationally recognized advocate for human rights, social justice, health equity, and LGBTQ equality. She was the former Chair of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission and currently serves on the Health Commission.

DATE AND TIME

Sun, April 8, 2018
11:00 AM - 5:00 PM PDT

TICKET PRICES

Ticket prices range as follows:

- \$75 for Tea Dance Only
- \$275 for Brunch and Tea Dance
- \$350 for VIP Brunch and Tea Dance
- \$1,500 to Become Partner Sponsor
- \$2,750 for Table of Ten
- \$3,000 to Become a Benefactor Sponsor
- \$3,500 VIP Table with Exclusive Perks

LOCATION

The Ritz-Carlton, San Francisco
600 Stockton St
San Francisco, CA 94108

REFUND POLICY

No Refunds

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/openhouse-spring-fling-2018-tickets-42028866471#tickets>

**ROYAL GRAND DUCAL COUNCIL TO
PERFORM DRAG SHOW FUNDRAISER FOR LAVENDER SENIORS
AND OTHER NON-PROFITS**

On April 15, 2018, Sunday from 4 to 7 pm at the Port Bar in Oakland,
This year's Queen Of Hearts, Elsa Touche/Charles Purdy, mustered the Royal Ground Ducal Council of Alameda and Contra Costa County to do a drag-show fundraiser.

Come join in the merriment and help a good cause.

COMMUNITY LEGAL ASSISTANCE SATURDAY PROGRAM

Free drop-in legal clinic: open to all on the first Saturday of every month at the Alameda County Law Library, 125
12th Street, Oakland

Doors open from 10:30 am - noon

Do you have a question that a volunteer lawyer may be able to help you with?

Free legal assistance clinic, open to anyone, brief consultation with a lawyer

Receive referrals to legal services organizations, understand your legal rights.

Spanish, Mandarin, and Cantonese interpreters may be available.

Family, criminal, housing, consumer, immigration, employment and more.

For more information contact: vlsc@ 510-302-2222

PAWSITIVELY SAN LEANDRO

Join the City of San Leandro Police for the first annual Pawsitively San Leandro Pet Fair!
Dress your pet in their favorite costume and enter them in the best dressed Pet Contest!

Saturday April 21, 2018 from 10 am - 2 pm

Low cost vaccinations by "Cheap Shots", Microchipping, Specialty Vendors, City of San Leandro Dog Licensing and more!

Held at San Leandro Police Department, 901 E. 14th Street.

On-going Safety program from City of San Leandro.

For more information contact: Kris Herrera at 510-577-3210

Discount Tickets May Be Available for Lavender Seniors

ANGELS IN AMERICA - BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATER April 17th - July 22nd

Beginning a three-month run on April 17th, Berkeley Repertory Theatre will present Tony Kushner's Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning masterpiece *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes* in its entirety. The production will be directed by Michael Leibert Artistic Director Tony Taccone, who co-commissioned and directed the original production at the Eureka Theatre in San Francisco. Tony Kushner wrote the play during the height of the AIDS epidemic, and this epic piece interweaves the topics of gay identity, politics, and human relationships. Even 27 years later, *Angels* is an apt commentary on the hate and fear in today's political landscape, and provides hope for a brighter future.

We know the Bay Area is one of the strongest service communities in the country working directly with the people and the themes this play embraces. The work that Lavender Seniors does every day is part of what makes this community more powerful and inclusive. With this in mind, we welcome you and your association to join us for *Angels in America*. We'd like to share this seminal work with a new generation of theatregoers, so we are happy to extend a deeply discounted price of \$20-50 tickets for select performance dates.

If you are interested in attending *Angels in America* with your organization, please contact Arielle Rubin at groups@berkeleyrep.org with an estimate for how many people you intend to bring. Together we can schedule a date that will best accommodate your group and arrange your tickets accordingly.

We are looking forward to creating a space in the theatre for the community to share their thoughts and experiences. Please let us know if you would like to connect and discuss any opportunities for engagement. Thank you for your time and consideration and for the important work you are doing. We look forward to seeing you at the theatre.
Warm regards,

Arielle Rubin
Marketing & Digital Communications Fellow
Berkeley Repertory Theatre
(510) 647-2912 | arubin@berkeleyrep.org

[Editor's Note: In response to this recent communication from Berkeley Repertory Theater, Lavender Seniors is awaiting word on exactly which of the performances are eligible for the \$20-\$25 ticket price affordable to many seniors.

Keeping in mind that this is a two-part show - including several "Marathon" performances where a 1pm matinee of Part 1 (approximately 3 hours with one intermission) is followed by a 7pm performance of Part 2 (also about 3 hours with one intermission) that same evening, we have to decide whether to try to organize such an outing for Lavender Seniors - probably in July, if at all..

Meanwhile, we know that, if there are 15 or more seniors interested in attending as a group, we would get the best ticket price. Anyone, who is interested should contact JohnDavid@LavenderSeniors.org and indicate whether they would prefer attending the performances on two separate days or one Marathon performance. Calendar information is available at <https://www.berkeleyrep.org/season/1718/12033.asp>.

More information on whether Lavender Seniors will be organizing such a group-discounted outing will be available in the May newsletter. Obviously, people should go ahead and make independent plans to attend performances if they aren't interested in joining a Lavender Seniors group outing.]



The Criminalization of Queer People

Monday, April 16th

Strut, 470 Castro Street

FREE - [Registration now open](#)

Queer people have had a detailed history of being criminalized by society. It wasn't long ago when you could end up in jail because you happened to visit a gay bar or because the buttons on your sweater weren't oriented to the traditional "feminine side". Although we have seen many advancements, LGBTQ people still face discrimination in the legal and penal system. What can we do to reform the system and ensure equal treatment for all? Join us as we take a look at who is being criminalized today and at how we can rebuild queer lives affected by the criminal justice system.

Moderator: Matthew Coles, Professor of Practice at UC Hastings, Former Deputy Legal Director., ACLU

Janetta Johnson of TGI Justice,

Jessica Nowlan, of Young Women's Freedom Center



LGBT Online Support Group for Caregivers

If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender and caring for someone with ongoing health problems...*you are not alone!*

Family Caregiver Alliance's online LGBT Caring Community Support Group connects you with others facing the day-to-day challenges of caregiving. If you're assisting someone with Alzheimer's, stroke, Parkinson's, traumatic brain injury, or other chronic health problems, you can get support from the convenience of your home.

Share experiences, resources, and ideas in a supportive, caring environment. Available 24 hours a day, all you need is e-mail, and it's free! Visit [LGBT Caring Community Online Support Group](#).



You're getting a new Medicare card!

Cards will be mailed between April 2018 - April 2019

You asked, and we listened. You're getting a new Medicare card! Between April 2018 and April 2019, we'll be removing Social Security numbers from Medicare cards and mailing each person a new card. This will help keep your information more secure and help protect your identity.

You'll get a new Medicare Number that's unique to you, and it will only be used for your Medicare coverage. The new card won't change your coverage or benefits. You'll get more information from Medicare when your new card is mailed.

Here's how you can get ready:

■ Make sure your mailing address is up to date. If your address needs to be corrected, contact Social Security at [ssa.gov/myaccount](https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount) or 1-800-772-1213. TTY users can call 1-800-325-0778.

■ **WATCH OUT FOR SCAMS!**

Beware of anyone who contacts you about your new Medicare card. We'll never ask you to give us personal or private information to get your new Medicare Number and card.

■ Understand that mailing everyone a new card will take some time. Your card might arrive at a different time than your friend's or neighbor's.

HICAP: New Fraud Alert on New Medicare Card Scams

Sent on the behalf of Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)...

We have a new fraud alert for you regarding new Medicare card scams. The Senior Medicare Patrol program with California Health Advocates has received several reports of beneficiaries getting calls from scammers, telling them that they must first buy a temporary card for \$5-50 before their new Medicare card arrives. This is not true. In California, the new Medicare cards will arrive between April and June 2018. They are free, and Medicare will not call them about their new card. Cards will be mailed to people's mailing addresses on file with Social Security. If beneficiaries need to update their mailing address, they can go to <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/>.

The Center for Elders Independence opened its new center in San Leandro that helps at-risk seniors live at home, rather than in a nursing home.

The new facility at 1850 Fairway Drive (just across the street from the San Leandro Kaiser Hospital), will have their state-of-the-art PACE Center and will provide geriatric medical clinic and day center services with a capacity to serve 500 seniors in San Leandro and neighboring communities.

"As the population ages, demand is growing for our holistic model of care that provides solutions for seniors who have multiple health challenges," said Linda Trowbridge, CEO of the Center for Elders Independence. The center coordinates transportation, home care, healthy food, a place to exercise, new friends and social activities services in the PACE health plan.

Every senior enrolled in Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) meets the requirements for nursing home care, 96 percent continue to live in their communities. Seniors who are eligible would enroll in CEI's PACE health plan.

For more information: contact (510) 746-0480, or Toll Free (844) 319-1150; E-mail: Info@cei.elders.org.

SPECIAL EVENT



PRIDE NIGHT

FRIDAY, JUNE 8 | 7:05 p.m.

KC vs.



Special Event ticket required to receive A's Pride Night item



CALL 510-638-4627 OR VISIT athletics.com/pride

Event price includes a 6pm gathering in party room, with some food and Pride item, and reserved seat. Drive or BART to Coliseum.

Tickets are \$26-45 plus \$5 fee per individual ticket. Group Discount for 15 or more. Want to join our Pride Group for Plaza Upper seats? Lowest price. Seats will be within a large gay block. It's lots of fun!

Contact: lesliebonett@sbcglobal.net



SENIOR CENTER

Without Walls

Community Phone Calls

Just a few of the things offered:

LGBTQ Chat 2nd and 4th Mondays, 1:00pm - 2:00pm

This group is open to all LGBTQ seniors and is an opportunity to connect with others socially in a supportive environment where participants can share individual and collective experiences. We will create an inclusive place to share our stories with each other and build a sense of community. Facilitated by Sylvia Vargas, Openhouse Friendly Visitor Manager

Music's Memory Lane Tuesdays, 1/9 - 4/3 6:00pm - 6:30pm

Each week we'll discuss a hit song, vintage television variety shows, or a memorable musician in music history. From Big Band music to the Beatles, we'll dive into our recollections of concerts, lyricists, and pop culture. Facilitated by Steve Maraccini

Advocacy Now Mondays, 1/8 - 3/12 3:15pm - 4:15pm

Meet with your peers to discuss strategies that can be used to effectively communicate your opinion to elected officials about issues that directly affect the financial, emotional, and physical health of adults over 60 and/or adults with disabilities. Facilitated by Patt Schroeder, ESC's SCWW Program Specialist

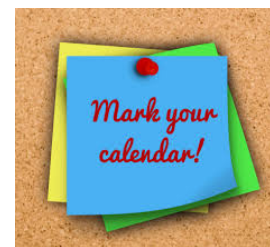
Growing an Elder Community Mondays, 1/8 - 3/12 10:00am - 12:00pm

By speaking with others, older people discover what is beautiful about the latter stages of life, and how getting older, especially as a disabled or homebound person, can contribute positively to our culture-at-large. This is an opportunity to experience what is noble about being human in this world. Facilitated by David "Lucky" Goff, Ph.D., Radio Host, and author

Authors Read Aloud Fridays, 1/12 - 4/6 10:15am - 11:00am

Join independently published authors as they read selections from their works and then answer your questions. Each week will feature a new author representing one of a variety of genres, including romance, drama, biographies, mysteries, and more. Facilitated by Bay Area Independent Publishers Association

View the [Winter catalog](#) of community phone calls [here](#). Check the [website](#) after April 8th for the Spring catalog and for more information. To participate in these or other Senior Center Without Walls (SCWW) telephone activities, or to learn more about SCWW programs, call 877-797-7299 or email info@seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org.



THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

Out Standing Seniors run by Pacific Center peer facilitators

April 3 & 17, 12:30* - 2:00 p.m. (1st and 3rd Tuesdays)

Hayward Senior Center, 22325 N. Third Street, Hayward

***time change, some of us eat lunch together at noon.**

A safe and confidential space for LGBTQ seniors 50+ to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information, and support. FREE, though donations are welcome.

Older & Out Therapy Group - Livermore - Sponsored by Pacific Center

April 3, 10, 17, 24, 1:00 p.m. (Tuesdays)

Livermore Senior Services, Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave., Livermore

Free drop-in therapy group for LGBTQ community members age 60+

Queerly Aging Lesbians

April 5 & 19, 1:30 p.m. (1st and 3rd Thursdays)

The Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue (at Derby), Berkeley

Find support and like-minded wonderful people!

Older & Out Therapy Group - Berkeley - Sponsored by Pacific Center

April 6, 13, 20, 27, 3:15 p.m. (Fridays)

North Berkeley Senior Center, 901 Hearst Ave, Berkeley
Free drop-in therapy group for LGBTQ community members age 60+

Older & Out Therapy Group - Oakland - Sponsored by Pacific Center
April 6, 13, 20, 27 2:15 p.m. (Fridays)
Oakland LGBTQ Community Center, 3207 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland
Free drop-in therapy group for LGBTQ community members age 60+

Older & Out Therapy Group - Hayward - Sponsored by Pacific Center
April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 1:15 p.m. (Mondays)
Hayward Senior Center, 22325 N. Third Street, Hayward
Free drop-in therapy group for LGBTQ community members age 60+

Rainbow Seniors run by Pacific Center peer facilitators
April 10 & 24, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. (2nd & 4th Tuesdays)
San Leandro Senior Center, 13909 E 14th St, San Leandro
A safe and confidential space for LGBTQ seniors 50+ to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information, and support. FREE, though donations are welcome.

Lavender Seniors Advisory Board Meeting
April 11, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. (2nd Wednesday)
675 Hegenberger Rd., Oakland
A portion of this meeting is open to the public.

Senior Gay Men's Group
April 12 & 26, 1:30 p.m. (2nd and 4th Thursdays)
The Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley
Co-sponsor: The Pacific Center, 510-548-8283
Feel alone? Need to find space to be yourself and chat with others? Join us!

Lavender Seniors Pot Luck
April 14, noon - 2:00 p.m. (second Saturday)
All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling Blvd., San Leandro
This month's program: "Justice in Aging" (see info above)

Lavender Seniors Film Series
April 18, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. (3rd Wednesday)
San Leandro Library, 300 Estudillo, San Leandro
This month's movie: "Gun Hill Road" (see info above)

Island Pride Peer Support Group run by Pacific Center peer facilitators
April 19, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. (3rd Thursday)
Mastick Senior Center, 1155 Santa Clara Ave, Alameda
A Peer Support Group is a safe & confidential space for LGBT Seniors 50+ to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information & to support one another.

Oakland Lunch Bunch
Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging & Adult Services
April 20, 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. (3rd Friday)
North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Oakland
This month's program: "Advocating for the Disabled" (see info above)

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Board of Directors

President: Victor Aguilar Jr.

Vice President of Operations:

Vice President: Akilah Monifa


Gwendlyn M. Boozé
Founding Member: Barbara Jue

Secretary: John David Dupree

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Lavender Seniors

 Like us on Facebook

Email: info@lavenderseniors.org

Website: <http://lavenderseniors.org>

Message: 510-736-LGBT

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