



Lavender Notes

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

May 2018

Celebrating 23+ years of service and positive change

Volume 25 Issue 5

STORIES OF OUR LIVES

GARY DOUGLAS TURNER

The newest board member at Lavender Seniors of the East Bay is a big-hearted bi-coastal "bear" - an information technology (IT) wizard who landed in California with John Molnar, the love of his life for ten years, starting a new chapter of his already very busy and productive life.

Born 6th February 1959, in Norwood, MA, to Doug Turner, a machinist - a former navigator in the Air Force - and his wife, Shirley - a waitress "to make ends meet" - Gary was the first of two children. His sister, Catherine, was born the following year.



Dad & Gary, 1959



Gary & sister, Cathy, 1962



Cathy and Gary School Photos, 1966



Mom and Dad, 1972

"My father and his brother, Norman, basically grew up in a boarding school," Gary recalls. "He only came to live with his mother when he was 16 and finished high school in Wrentham. Though my Dad had a very positive and profound impact on me in many ways, I think that ten years of boarding-school experience may have affected his ability to be demonstrative with Cathy and me. My mother was the one who regularly gave us the hugs and kisses that helped make me the warm and cuddly teddy bear of a guy that I have been all my life."

The two siblings accompanied their parents camping, to the beach, visiting family and on other typical excursions. But they also attended regular events with the American Legion - where Dad was a chaplain and Mom was in the Auxiliary. Gary and Cathy learned at an early age to accept some responsibility for the welfare of others, and be compassionate with others.

"Our family was a fairly typical middle-class family," Gary recalls. "But I believe my motivation to share with the LGBTQ community over the years grew largely out of those experiences of putting ourselves out there - whether working a rummage sale, helping Dad grill at a 4th of July picnic or just fund-raising in general. We were a socially-conscious family, trying to make life a little bit better for everybody, including the many who were less fortunate than we were."

Unfortunately, when Gary was in junior high school, his father had a heart attack, followed by a stroke a few years later; then a fatal heart attack when Gary was a senior in high school.

"I had no idea how much my life would be so dramatically turned upside-down by Dad's death," Gary recalls. "The happy family I had known was suddenly in pain and in crisis. It was a challenge for years. I had not planned on even going to college, but a few opportunities arose. Fortunately, Social Security provided monthly stipends for us until we were 22 back then, as long as we stayed in school. So I was able to continue my education - and boy, did I learn a lot during those first years, though I was a 'commuter student' and still lived at home!"

While he was thriving at Dean College in nearby Franklin, MA, he 'caught up' with twins from back home, Matt and Steve, who had gone to a private school, rather than the public school that Gary and his sister attended. He had known Matt since they were in the first grade.

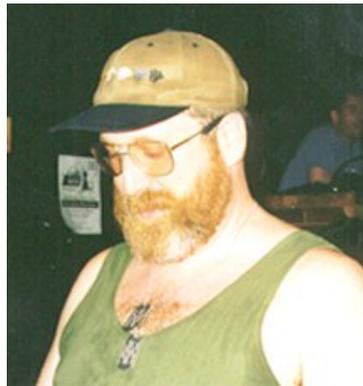
"After we all graduated from Dean," Gary recalls, "I was up at the Fife and Drum in Providence, RI, one evening in 1979, and who did I see out on the stage? Steve and Matt. They were both in the band, and they were both in the band. I was in the band, and they were both in the band."

the dance floor? Matty! Turns out we were both 'queer as a three-dollar bill', becoming friends for life from that moment on. We would refer to each other as our 'evil' twin sister. Matt and I have shared decades of holidays in 'P-Town', as well as many other places like Ogunquit, ME, plus have had many laughs with each other and our several boyfriends over the years!"

Over the next couple of decades, Gary became very involved in LGBTQ activities, including as co-chair of the Worcester, MA, Pride Committee for seven years. Having discovered the "bear" community, he was voted Mr. Grizzly Bear New England in 1998, then Mr. Bay State Bear in 2000. He founded and organized "Out In The Park at Six Flags New England" in 1997, a local annual Gay Day. Gary continued this Gay Day event for eleven years. He was involved with subsequent "bear" appearances in parades at Boston Pride and Providence Pride events.



Quabbin Reservoir, 1994



Emcee, Bear Auction, 1998



Mr. Grizzly Bear, Boston Pride 1998



Mr. Bay State Bear, 2000

He helped pioneer, develop logos, posters and organize other LGBTQ day events similar to "Out in the Park" at various other amusement parks and renaissance faires in the northeast, including Lake George, NY; Stowe, VT; Salem, NH; Saco, ME; Springfield, MA; Bristol and Woodstock, CT, even venturing to "Out en le Parc" in Montreal!

He was also a radio announcer for over 15 years (he loves electronic music!), working with WCJUW, a Clark University station that became affiliated with Berkeley's own Pacifica station (KPFA) and "Democracy Now". He's also been an active participant in various plant societies in the Boston area and the Bay Area, including being instrumental in organizations like the San Francisco Begonia Society, and Orchid Society, both of which he is a past president.

Gary considers five special men to have been his serious long-term partners over the years, being able to track the exact dates for some, ranging from an eight-month relationship to one that lasted nearly 15 years ("My first lover, Jon, and I were together 14 years, 4 months and 4 days - but who's counting?"). It was only in 2006, however, that he met the man (John with an "h"), who he considers "the love of my life."

"Sometimes, love simply happens when we least expect it, just having fun," Gary recalls. "From the moment we met, John and I just fit together - as many of our friends say - like two peas in a pod, like soul-mates intended to be together forever. We shared our lives - going places and doing things, many of which I'd never experienced before. The world was our oyster and we saw plenty of it, living together in 'delightful sin' in Connecticut for the first four-plus years. Then, beginning when the economy crashed in 2008, we were both thrown onto hard times."

John lost his long-term contract with a firm in Connecticut in 2010, and the contract Gary had - providing computer support for companies like DHL, the U.S. Tennis Association and CBS - also was phased out in January 2010.

"John asked me to move to California to live with him," Gary reminisces, "and I couldn't imagine saying no to him. Unfortunately, I had to deal with the grief of my only sister's death that year, dean out my apartment, pack my stuff up, give away as many of my beloved flowering plants as possible to my dear high school friend, Gretchen, and finally head west. The planets had finally aligned so John and I could live together 3,000 miles away from where we'd met and spent so many wonderful years together. We had the time of our lives!"

For the first three California years together, most things were magical. John was commuting three days a week from their home in Hayward to his job at Dole in Monterey. But the other four days a week, the couple traveled extensively, visited family and friends, playing together as much as possible! They were always having fun together, whether they were attending Pride Days in Boston or San Francisco; going sightseeing; celebrating the Supreme Court's marriage equality decisions; or just staying at home and cuddling.

During those happy years, his Mom - also in pain over the loss of her only daughter the previous year - came to visit Gary and John, with Cathy's former boyfriend, Billy, in 2011, when they all trekked through Muir Woods and saw a lot of other Bay area sights. Unfortunately, Mom died in 2012, leaving Gary feeling like 'the Lone Ranger' of his nuclear family. While he was recovering from that loss, however, Gary and John

experienced another devastating blow.



"One day in 2015, when John showed up at work, he was told he was being let go, unlike anything that had ever happened to him before," Gary recalls. "Never mind that 75 per cent of the company had disappeared within two years by that point, John took it personally. He was crushed and never quite recovered from being fired for the first time. An IT person for over 30 years - usually in upper management as, for instance, the head of the IT department at Gallo - he continued to feel like a fish out of water and started getting exceedingly depressed."

Unfortunately, that profound depression was taking a more serious toll on John than Gary realized at the time. Meanwhile, John continued to deteriorate and, unfortunately, died on 22 August 2015, having secretly stopped taking care of his medical and psychological situation.

"Though I am still grieving from the loss of my best friend ever, I am so very fortunate to have a lifetime of wonderful memories from those ten years that I shared with him!" Gary says. "I thought we would have at least 15 or 20 more years together, would sell the Hayward house and retire to Hawaii. That was John's plan after we were unofficially 'married' back in 2011. We had traveled to Hawaii for two weeks to celebrate John's 50th birthday, and we took part in a tour there featuring the 'Hawaiian Wedding Song'. I always joked that John tricked me into getting married in Hawaii! He didn't have to trick me into it, though, since - as I've said so many times - he was the love of my life."



EPCOT Center, 2007



Busch Gardens, 2009



Self-Portrait, 2008



Hawaiian 'Wedding' 2011

One of the family holidays that has always meant a lot to Gary, his family and friends, is Christmas. On many of those occasions over the years, he has been decked out as Santa Claus, to the delight of all those around him.

"I have had more laughs being mistaken for Santa than I can remember," he says. "I'm told I have my Dad's laugh, and you cannot miss it when you hear it, even in a large store!"



Purgatory Chasm, 2000



Santa and Mom, 2006



Santa and John, Christmas 2013

The most recent unforeseen development was that - while recovering from the loss of John and trying to keep his emotional and financial head above water - he unknowingly suffered a series of small strokes that led up to a massive stroke in September 2017. He was hospitalized for two months - being moved from Castro Valley's Eden Medical Center to Summit Medical Center Acute Rehabilitation Wing in Oakland. During that time, the house he shared with John was sold, so friends and neighbors scrambled to put everything into storage for him. He is currently living with a friend in Emeryville until he can get back to work full-time and pull his life back together.

"I'm totally starting my life over at age 59," he remarks. "My many memories with John help sustain me as I put one foot in front of the other to figure out who I am now. This is a totally strange journey! Of course, having so many friends - not only here, but in New England and Florida - has been vital for me to keep plugging along. Now that I've joined the board of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay, I have lots of new directions that will help keep me focused on my journey. We all bring something to the organization, and share our gifts."



Rich, Matt (old friend) & Gary, 2015



Gary, Christmas 2016



Gary & Ed, Christmas 2016



Shoreline Park, 2017

"I thought I couldn't possibly make it through my first Christmas without John," he says, "but with old friends like Gretchen, Matt and Rich, plus

newer friends like Ed, Kevin and Beverly, I've made it through even my second and third Christmases relatively intact! I know that I'll make it. I just wish the love of my life could still be playing that most important loving role he was meant to continue playing in my life! We loved each other so much it hurts some days. But then I do what I need to turn that pain around, to continue my recovery and move on with my life. John wouldn't want it any other way."

BOOK REVIEW

"You're In the Wrong Bathroom!" And 20 Other Myths and Misconceptions About Transgender And Gender-Nonconforming People

By Laura Erickson-Schroth, MD and Laura A. Jacobs, LCSW-R

Erickson-Schroth works with folks in New York City; Jacobs is a psychotherapist who works with trans people.

Authors tell us there are one million transgender people in this country.

For generations society denied that transgenders even existed but in 1952 Christine Jorgenson, who was born male announced that she had life affirming surgery in Denmark.

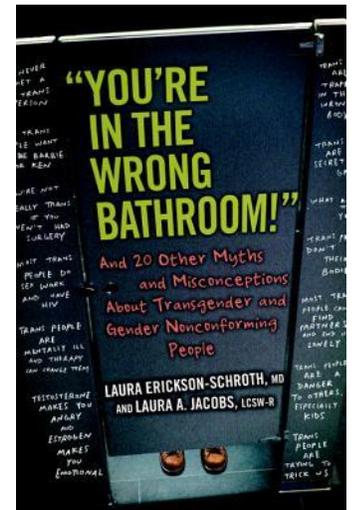
Trans folks led closeted lives and few could afford surgery.

The book surveys 21 myths about trans people. All aspects are probed.

The LGBT community is rapidly committing itself to this newly emerging group.

This book, documenting transgender myths and misconceptions, is well done and highly recommended.

- Frank Howell



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!



The 11th Annual QACON 20108 Queer & Asian Conference

"LIMITLESS" APRIL 27 - 29 at UC BERKELEY

<http://qacon.org> - and for schedule and registration information:

<http://qacon.org/schedule/>

JEWISH FILMS

Saturday, May 5th, 11:15 am & 2:00 pm

Doors Open At 11:00 am

At The San Leandro Museum

320 W. Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro

510 577-3990

Free Admission

--JOE'S VIOLIN--

A donated musical instrument forges an improbable friendship between 91-year-old Holocaust survivor Joe Feingold and 12-year-old Bronx school girl Brianna Perez, showing how the power of music can bring light in the darkest of times and how a small act can have a great impact. (2016, documentary, 24 min.)

--NORA'S WILL--

Nora commits suicide in a timely way consistent with her plan to bring her ex-husband, Jose, and the rest of their family together for a Passover event. As Jose is forced to stay with her body, a photograph from the past, hidden under the bed, leads Jose to reexamine their relationship. Spanish with English subtitles. (2008, NR, 1:32 min)

UNITED SENIORS OF OAKLAND & ALAMEDA COUNTY (USOAC)

Platform Listening Session

Ashland Community Center 1530 167th Avenue, San Leandro, CA

Friday April 27, 2018 at 9:30 - 11:00 AM

East Oakland Senior Center 9255 Edes Avenue, Oakland, CA

Friday, May 4, 2018 1:00 - 2:30 pm

For More information contact the staff at 510 729-0852

**A TRIBUTE TO MOTOWN MUSIC
WITH THE
RETRO JUKE BOX BAND!**

Saturday, May 5 - 2:00 pm
SAN LEANDRO MAIN LIBRARY
300 Estudillo Avenue

FREE ADMISSION

Retro Juke Box Band is a top jazz dance band with an immense repertoire covering multiple genres including timeless 1920's-1960s Jazz, Blues, Motown & Retro versions of today's hits.

For More Information contact San Leandro Main Library: 510 577-3971

A BALINESE DANCE PERFORMANCE

**In celebration of Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month featuring
the**

GADUNG KASTURI DANCERS

FREE ADMISSION

Thursday, May 24, 2018 7 - 8 pm
San Leandro Main Library
300 Estudillo Avenue

In celebration of Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, the San Leandro Public Library invites everyone to enjoy a beautifully exquisite performance of Balinese music and dance by the Gadung Kasturi performers.

Established 2007 in California as a non-profit organization, the Gadung Kasturi Balinese Dance and Music Company is committed to preserve, promote and develop the traditional dance and music of the Bali, Indonesia, through live performance, workshops, classes, lectures and publications.

Balinese dance is a very ancient dance tradition that is part of the religious and artistic expression among the Balinese people of Bali Island, Indonesia. Balinese dance is dynamic, angular and intensely expressive. Balinese dancers express the stories of dance drama through the gestures of fingers, hands, head and eyes.

For more information call the San Leandro Public Library 510 577-3971

www.sanleandrolibrary.org

Queer Women of Color Film Festival

June 8 - 10, 2018
BRAVA THEATER
2780 24th Street

2789 24th Street
San Francisco
Festival@QWOCCMAP.ORG
WWW.QWOCCMAP.ORG
415 752-0868

Friday June 8 Opening Nite
7:30 pm Fierce & Feral
Saturday June 9 Centerpiece
7:00 pm Breaths Intertwined
Sunday June 10 Closing Night
5:00 pm Indigenous Futures

PRIDE CELEBRATIONS

SF's premiere Trans Pride, June 22, 2018: <http://www.transmarch.org/about/>

SF's Dyke March, June 23, 2018: <http://www.thedykemarch.org>

SF's Pride Celebration, June 23-24, 2018: <http://www.sfpride.org>

Silicon Valley Pride Events: <https://www.svpride.com/>

Sacramento Pride, June 10, 2018: <https://sacramentopride.org/>

Castro Valley Pride, July 18, 2018: www.castrovalleypride.com/#!

GROWING HOME - NQAPIA CONFERENCE 2018

JULY 26 TO 29, 2018

Hilton Financial District in Chinatown
750 Kearny Street
San Francisco, CA 94108

Join the National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance and 400 LGBT APIs to network, organize, train, educate, and build capacity of the nation's LGBT API community.

A National Conference of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, transgender and Queer Asian Americans, South Asians, Southeast Asians, and Pacific Islanders

REGISTRATION FEES

\$350 Corporate/Government Rate

\$300 Regular Rate

\$250 NQAPIA Member Group

\$150 Limited income/student rate

For More Information contact:

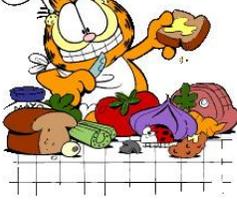
NQAPIA Conference Coordinator: TRACY NGUYEN

Coordinator@nqapia.org

Second Saturday Pot Luck Lunch, May 12th 12-2pm

All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling, San Leandro





Join us for a great Laughing Yoga session!

Bring a favorite dish you'd like to share! A catered buffet luncheon will begin at noon, followed by announcements and the program at approximately 1:00pm. Feel free to bring a potluck dish to share if you wish.



Third Wednesday LGBTQ-Themed Film Series, 16th May, 1-3pm

GOD'S OWN COUNTRY

One of the breakout hits of last year's Frameline International LGBTQ Film Festival, "God's Own Country" is an unlikely love story that takes place in the harsh sheep-farming area of rural Yorkshire, England. The film garnered Frameline's Audience Award for Best Feature in 2017 and for Best Directing for World Dramatic Feature at Sundance Film Festival, in addition to dozens of other awards around the world. The Times of London dubbed it "Britain's Brokeback Mountain".



Young sheep farmer, Johnny Saxby (played brilliantly by Josh O'Connor of PBS's acclaimed series, "The Durrells in Corfu") is numbing his bleak existence by binge drinking and casual sex with little hope for a brighter future. His highly-disapproving father has had a stroke - making it difficult to understand what he's saying much of the time. This means that running the farm - feeling to him like a dead-end proposition - has fallen largely to Johnny. His grandmother (played by Gemma Jones of Harry Potter fame) has a simple life, taking care of her son and grandson in the harsh and barren, yet beautiful environment around Silsden-Keighley in West Yorkshire.

Then along comes gorgeous Romanian migrant worker (played by 33-year-old relative newcomer, Alec Secareanu), hired to work during lambing season, igniting an intense relationship that sets Johnny on a new path, in spite of himself. Though their initial interactions bode poorly for any working relationship, much less romantic relationship, the character development in Johnny is very well-done.

There are some disturbing scenes of the earthy sheep-farm existence - e.g., birthing calves and skinning lambs - all carried out by the actors themselves after attending a rugged two-week "farm school" (no stunt doubles employed on any of these sometimes hard-to-watch scenes). Plus, there are a couple of fairly-explicit gay sex scenes in the film, which is why the film has been banned in Arab countries and most of Eastern European "bloc" countries, having only shown in Romania in that part of the world to date.





The film will be shown at 1pm on Wednesday, 16th May, in the wheelchair-accessible Carnegie Lecture Hall at the San Leandro Public Library, 300 Estudillo in San Leandro. Following the film, there will be a brief discussion and evaluation of the film on its relevance to the lives of today's LGBTQ seniors and their allies.

The library is easily accessed via public transportation (5 blocks above the San Leandro BART station and one block above the aC-Transit stop at E. 14th and Estudillo. For those who are driving, it is also easily accessible from Bancroft Avenue, E. 14th Street, I-580 or I-880. There is ample two-hour and three-hour parking in the library lots and even on the street near the library.

[Editor's Note: For those who have inquired: In keeping with the film series' rotation between L-G-B-T-Q, black-white-Latino-Asian-NativeAmerican, etc. - e.g., last month's showing of "Gun Hill Road" focused on a Latino family dealing with a transgendered teenager - Academy-Award-Winning "Call Me By Your Name" will be shown in July.]

Third Friday Lunch Bunch, 18th May, 12-2pm

HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT: SURVIVING THE HOLOCAUST, 70+ YEARS LATER

Those of us who consider ourselves LGBTQ "seniors" at this point in history were born in the 1920s through the early 1960s. Some of us may have personal memories of the Holocaust. Many of us may have heard horror stories of the Holocaust from our parents and grandparents, may have visited the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, or the Simon Wiesenthal Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. Some of us may have seen "Shoah," the nearly-ten-hour documentary with in-depth interviews of survivors from both inside and outside the extermination camps in Poland.

As history has shown, Hitler and Nazis of the Third Reich had targeted several populations for extermination: Jews, homosexuals, blacks, Roma ("gypsies"), the disabled, Jehovah's Witnesses and a vast array of people labeled simply "asocials" (frequently including lesbians, but anybody who didn't agree with what the Third Reich was doing vis-à-vis "perfecting" the "Aryan race" or carrying out the "Final Solution"). There are several ways that people from those targeted populations would intersect (e.g., a Jewish homosexual wore both the Star of David and the inverted pink triangle).

Those attending the Third Friday Lunch Bunch this month will be hearing first-hand the stories of two East Bay residents who survived the Holocaust.



Identifying symbols on the streets and in the camps: Star of David for Jews; inverted pink triangle for homosexuals; both for Jewish LGBT

Renéé was born in Paris, France, in December 1932. She survived the Nazi Occupation by "hiding in plain sight" in Aix-en-Provence. Her father, a civil engineer, worked in the office of a Nazi Colonel and reported relevant information to the French Underground. She attended public school every day and acted as her father's courier at the age of 11. She came to the USA with her first husband, who also survived as a hidden child. She has four children and eight grandchildren. She has taught languages (French-English-Spanish) throughout her life. She has a Master's Degree in Creative Writing and has published short stories, poetry, and articles in local, regional and national magazines. She moved to Berkeley following the death of her second husband, a concentration camp survivor, in order to be closer to her children. She enjoys the intellectual and political climate and the diversity here.

Bill (born Bela) Vidor was also a "hidden" Holocaust survivor. He was born in 1940 in Nagy Varad (translated as "Big Castle" in Hungarian, Romanian and German), which was then part of Romania, but is now part of Hungary. He was an only child, whose mother got word that they were "rounding up" Jewish children and putting them into camps. She was not about to let this happen to her only child! She herself had been forced into a labor camp, where her job was to sew uniforms for soldiers. Meanwhile, Bill's father was in a Hungarian battalion - also dealing from within a labor camp. His mother took him to his grandmother's place in a now-famous seven-story building in Budapest. Only after the Russian forces "liberated" Budapest in February of 1945 were Bill and the many other hidden Jews - many of them children - able to be reunited with extended family and friends.

As usual, lunch will be served buffet style (vegetarian options available) beginning at 12 noon. After people have had an opportunity to socialize and finish their lunch, there will be a five-minute period for community announcements before the program is turned over to Reneé and Bill. There will be plenty of time for questions after their presentations.

The Third Friday Lunch Bunch is held at the North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Way (corner of 58th Street). Parking and entrance are at the back of the building off 58th Street.

For those interested in another view (where LGBTQ issues of homophobia intersect with Jewish issues of anti-Semitism), Susan Faludi's best-selling 2016 book, *In the Darkroom*, traces the personal history of her Hungarian-Jewish father, Estvan, who went to Post-War Thailand and transitioned to Stephanie, largely as a result of being targeted by anti-Semitism in his early life.

For those wanting more information on either the Holocaust Museum or the Museum of Tolerance (each site with extensive bibliographies of countless other resources):

<https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005261>

<http://www.museumoftolerance.com/site/c.tmL6KfNVLtH/b.9052747/k.BEE4/Home.htm>

Elders' Guild Meetings - Sunday, May 20th (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



FAMILY CAREGIVER ALLIANCE®
National Center on Caregiving

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 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/>.

ADVOCATING FOR RAINBOW CROSSWALK



Rainbow Crosswalk on Davie Street in Vancouver, British Columbia

In a recent San Leandro City Council meeting, Victor Aguilar, Jr., President of the Board of Directors of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay spoke in support of a Rainbow Crosswalk being considered in the budget of the city. A portion of his remarks follows:

"The rainbow flag is a symbol of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) pride and LGBT social movements. In 1977, Gilbert Baker created a flag consisting of the spectrum of rainbow colors that symbolize pride for the gay community. As a young adult this flag was refuge for my friends and me. Any establishment that had a rainbow flag was a sign of hope and pride that people understood and supported such an amazing community. I fly the rainbow flag on my front porch to let others know that it's okay to be who they are and that this household and my neighbors support them. It would mean the world to Lavender Seniors of the East Bay, as well as to my husband and I to have a rainbow crosswalk in San Leandro. We would join major cities like, San Francisco, Seattle, Vancouver, Toronto, Philadelphia, Key West, Florida, West Hollywood, Long Beach and Miami Beach. Please consider this project approval. To me, this is not just a crosswalk, it would help to convey a meaning of community support, acceptance and pride."



Castro Street Rainbow Crosswalk

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

CARING FOR OUR SENIOR LGBTQ PARTNERS/FRIENDS AND OURSELVES Presented by Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

A seven-session process therapy group for full spectrum senior LGBTQ community members caring for partners/friends and ourselves as we age facing critical medical and/or mental conditions.

Our focus is:

- communications,
- personal exploration
- growth

This is a no-fee workshop. The group is limited to 12 individuals and we request a commitment to attend the entire series so that maximum benefit can be had for all.

Sessions held at San Leandro Senior Center, 13909 East 14th Street, San Leandro
Mondays, June 11 - July 23, 2018. Time 3:30 pm - 5:00 PM.

For sign-up, call the San Leandro Senior Center at 510 577-3462

For program information: Barbara Jue, 510 755-5691 or e-mail bjue@LavenderSeniors.org.

Group facilitator is Dr. Melinda Ginne. She is a clinical psychologist with a 35-year career specializing in geriatrics and the treatment of the psychological aspects of acute, chronic, and life-threatening medical illness. She is one of the founding instructors in the Professional Program in Aging and Mental Health at UC Berkeley Extension. In the past two decades she has taught a number of classes and workshops on aging as well as on the psychological aspects of medical illness. She has been active in the LGBTQ community since 1975.

Sponsored by:



A letter to all...

Dear Friend,

We're reaching out to you today to ask for your support in preserving Bay Area lesbian history.

As you might already know, BALA was founded in 2014 by Lenn Keller. Lenn is an African American photographer and filmmaker who has been documenting and collecting the ephemera of the lesbian community, with an emphasis on lesbians of color, for over four decades. While curating an exhibit at the San Francisco Public Library in 2010, she began to wonder where she would place her large collection of material.

While contemplating this question, Lenn was contacted and interviewed by several researchers who traveled to the Bay Area. They had expected to find a treasure trove of materials documenting the Bay

Area lesbian community of the 1970's and 80's, when it was one of the most vibrant, engaged and diverse lesbian communities in the world. The researchers told Lenn they were surprised and disappointed to find so little lesbian material in the local archives. Lenn concluded after conducting her own research and much deliberation, that the best place for her materials would be in a lesbian archives, where they would be valued, accurately interpreted and easily accessible to the public. The dilemma was that the two existing lesbian archives were both distant and not focused on Bay Area lesbian history.

Lenn began to meet with other women in the community who also felt there was an urgent need for preserving Bay Area lesbian history, particularly of the 1970's and 80's. What lesbians did during those two decades was unprecedented, as in mass they came out and defied everything they were taught they were supposed to do and be as women. They created a culture founded on women's liberation and self-empowerment. They built from scratch the culture they wanted and needed. They created a richly vibrant alternative culture that included music, visual and performing arts. They owned and operated bars, collective businesses, newspapers, presses, bookstores, cafes and much more. Those trailblazers and visionaries and ordinary women who gave so much are now dying, aging and downsizing and moving out of the Bay Area. Their stories, memorabilia and vision are in danger of being irretrievably lost to us and to future generations.

The 1990's saw the blossoming of lesbian of color communities in the Bay Area. By the 2000's due to

many forces, there was an almost total disappearance of lesbian feminist culture and there is very little documentation about it for those who could benefit now from learning about that history.

In keeping with the D.I.Y. spirit of the 1970's and 80's, Lenn decided to create a local lesbian archives, seeding it with her own collection. This would be a living archives that would preserve all Bay Area lesbian history -- the past as well as the on-going history of the Bay Area lesbian community.

Since becoming a nonprofit in 2015, BALA has been holding regular community meetings, offering personal archiving workshops and producing well attended cultural events including an on-going author series. This past March, we co-hosted *Dyke Night at the Movies 3* and the book launch of *Sister Love: The Letters of Audre Lorde and Pat Parker*. We preserve lesbian life stories through our Oral History Project and have plans to do much more.

Though our mission is to collect all Bay Area lesbian history, we are focused right now on collecting the endangered history of the 1970's and 80's. Our materials are currently stored in a climate controlled storage space and we're ready for our collections to find a permanent and larger home. We need an office, areas for processing and research, and a small gallery for exhibits. We're working to create an intergenerational community and we envision a warm and inviting space that the public will enjoy visiting.

We are asking for your brilliance, creativity, energy, time and expertise, and of course, your financial support. We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit. [Please make a secure tax deductible donation](#), and please consider becoming a monthly sustainer. Also, remember that you can put us in your will. If you would like to discuss other ways you could support us, please contact us. We are deeply grateful for all your support!

With much love & gratitude,

Bay Area Lesbian Archives
Lenn Keller, Founder
Rebecca Silverstein, Oral History Project Director
Sharon Davenport, Supervising Archivist

Bay Area Lesbian Archives
preserving lesbian legacies for the future
<https://bayarealesbianarchives.org/>
415-789-8537



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

Where Were You When? Saturdays, 12:00pm - 12:45pm

Where were you when you were 50 years old? Or 10? Do you remember where were you on Christmas Eve in 1960 or the summer just before you started high school? Join us to discuss these memories of our lives back when. Facilitated by Janice Rooker

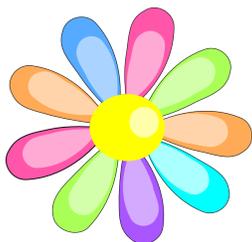
Writing Workshop Sundays, 3:00pm - 4:00pm

Join this peer group for supportive discussions, suggestions, and feedback about what you are writing. Get those creative juices flowing! Participants are invited to offer ideas for writing exercises. Facilitated by Jerry Sexton

Grief Support Wednesdays 6:00pm - 7:00pm & Saturdays 10:00am - 11:00am

Discover the power of a caring environment where you can share and support each other during a time of loss. Learn about helpful tools, tips, and resources for working through grief. Facilitated by Eric King, ASW

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

May 1 & 15, 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

May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 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

May 3 & 17, 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

May 4, 11, 18, 25, 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

May 4, 11, 18, 25 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

May 7, 14, 21 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

May 8 & 22, 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 Board Meeting

May 16, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. (meeting changed this month only)

675 Hegenberger Rd., Oakland

A portion of this meeting is open to the public.

Senior Gay Men's Group

May 10 & 24, 1:30 p.m. (2nd and 4th Thursdays)

The Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley

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

May 12, noon - 2:00 p.m. (second Saturday)

All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling Blvd., San Leandro

This month's program: "Laughing Yoga" (see info above)

Lavender Seniors Film Series

May 16, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. (3rd Wednesday)

San Leandro Library, 300 Estudillo, San Leandro

This month's movie: "God's Own Country" (see info above)

Island Pride Peer Support Group run by Pacific Center peer facilitators

May 17, 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

May 18, 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. (3rd Friday)

North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Oakland

This month's program: "Hiding in Plain Sight" (see info above)

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Board of Directors

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Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

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