



Lavender Notes

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

Volunteer

Donate with
PayPal

Don't Forget to VOTE!



Celebrating 26 years of service and positive change

November 2020 - Volume 26 Issue 11

Tribute to Peter Dempsey

by Mel Terry – taken from two OGMC.org Newsletters

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of our beloved tenor 2 and board member, Peter Dempsey. He passed away on Monday, April 20th, at the age of 63.

As one of the original members from 1999, Peter and his husband, Phillip, have been extremely generous giving time, energy, and financial support to the chorus since its humble beginnings as The Oakland-East Bay Gay Men's Chorus. They have also been dedicated regular donors to Lavender Seniors of the East Bay.



Peter brought light into the world both literally and figuratively. Whenever he entered a room he would light it up with his vivacious personality. It was wonderful how he would circulate among chorus members to get to know us better and share our stories. He was also a professional Lighting Designer with Dempsey Newport Group for 27 years, designing residential and landscape lighting for new home construction and household remodeling. Whenever we entered a new performance venue you could see him carefully scrutinizing the

lighting design and later making excellent suggestions about how to improve it.

The chorus has spent enjoyable evenings at his and Phillip's beautiful home where they hosted many a wrap party. Their holiday decorations were always spectacular.



Peter was an avid singer. It's possible that he never missed a concert performance. He worked very hard to memorize his music and the joy he expressed at rehearsals and performances was palpable. Peter was very involved in the chorus leadership, serving on the board as President and Vice President and a member at large. He so often had great ideas and suggestions. He chaired and

served on many committees, using his boundless energy to raise funds, develop strategies, and help implement our plans.

To quote Peter from tenor 1 June Kamerling's recent interview of him, "The chorus is a place where singers come to sing, where identity is not questioned. Though OGMC is originally and primarily a gay men's chorus, every gender and identity is included. Everyone is seen for who they are and not what they are. We take labels off. Each is an individual. We have come together to sing. We are a family."

His leadership, friendship and guidance will be deeply missed and we wish Phillip strength during this difficult time.

STORIES
OF OUR LIVES



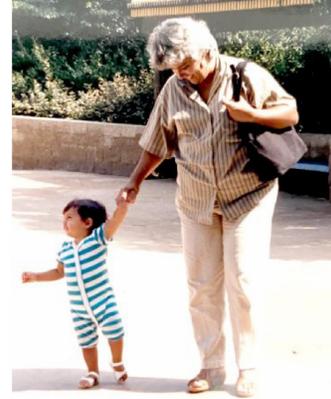
Kayla Brown

Less than four months into her tenure as Director of the North Oakland Senior Center – where the Third Friday Lunch Bunch has, gratefully, held court for nearly a decade – Kayla Brown joined the rest of the Bay Area impacted by COVID-19 shelter-in-place restrictions. She had to re-design a City-run center – closed to seniors for face-to-face congregant activities – for the subsequent seven months. This wasn't the first time her problem-solving skills were put to use.

Kayla was the youngest of five children – two older brothers and two older sisters – born in San José during those millennial years between 1981-1995. Her Puerto Rican mother had been married and divorced previously, having two children from her first marriage.

"By the time I became aware, Mom's two oldest kids were late teenagers who had grown up and moved on," Kayla recalls, "so I felt much like the youngest of three most of my childhood. Unfortunately, when I

was three years old, my Mom passed away suddenly. So I basically grew up with a single father and two older siblings. Imagine facing the reality of being a widower with three young kids — and a three-year-old toddler to raise on your own! I'm sure it was an overwhelming challenge to him, at least at first!"



Kayla, age 2+, and Mom, San Jose



Kayla, age 5, and Dad

"Dad was a very predictable Irishman," Kayla says. "He went to work diligently every day and pulled in the driveway at exactly 5pm every night. We'd all have dinner together at the table, then he would spend much of the evening in front of the TV. He was definitely a product of his generation, certainly not very demonstrative with us kids. But he provided us with a stable home, giving us everything we needed, materially. I learned to push for his affection by sitting on his lap and seeking out women in my life to fill the absence of my Mom. "

The Catholic Church played a prominent role in the family's life.

"Dad was very religious and still is," Kayla recalls. "At home, we had crosses above the door, holy water at the entrances, statues and pictures of Mary, Joseph and Jesus in nearly every room. We went to church every Sunday and holy day of obligation. In fact, the church closest to our home in San Jose wasn't 'Catholic' enough for Dad, so we attended a church in Santa Clara, where we had to kneel to take communion, go into a closet to kneel for confession. The Mass was also offered in Latin and the services seemed quite long, at least to a kid. This involvement with the church provided a type of closeness for our family – a foundation that kept us doing things together for much of the time after we lost our mother."

Kayla – who has always considered herself biracial – has often wondered how life might have been different if she'd grown up with her Puerto Rican mother, as well as her Irish father.

"Our Mom apparently had a reputation for being a very open person," Kayla says. "She had gay friends, was interested in people from all walks of life, and wasn't nearly as religious and traditional as our father was. Mom was not as involved initially with the church as our father was, though she reportedly became more religious after meeting my Dad. She left her first husband, who was abusing one of their children, and was looking for a conservative ultra-provider like my Dad. She got what she wanted, plus three more of us kids!"

Kayla attended a private Catholic school in San Jose until her seventh grade year, when their widowed father moved the family to a rural area



President Kayla - age 8

called Bootjack, in Mariposa County, 150 miles east of San Jose, 35 miles outside of Yosemite.

"It was quite jarring for a big-city girl to suddenly be living on five acres down a two-mile-long dirt road ten miles from a small town of 2,000 people," Kayla recalls. "Dad saw this move as a way of getting my older siblings away from the big-city threats of addiction and gang violence, as well as a way of retiring from a job he was no longer happy with. This was a very conservative little town where the big event of the year was the County fair, deer-hunting season, then eating venison jerky!"

After being home-schooled for the remainder of that seventh-grade year, Kayla began attending Mariposa County Schools in this conservative town.

"I stood out in that community," Kayla says, "because virtually all of the other students in school were white. Though when I was in San Jose, I stood out a bit, when we moved to Mariposa, I became even more aware of my darker skin, as well as other family and financial differences. I never really felt like I fit in there."

She only dated two boys in high school – and each for a very brief time.

"One relationship lasted for a week and the 'long-term relationship' lasted for about a month and focused almost exclusively on the prom," Kayla recalls. "The plan was that my friend, Rosalyn, and I would double-date, with her date actually being my boyfriend. When my friend's parents wouldn't let her go to the prom, I wound up with my boyfriend, which just put off for a couple days my breaking up with him."

Being gay – or suspected of being gay – in Mariposa was extremely dangerous.

"One particularly flamboyant kid was easy to pick out of a crowd," Kayla recalls. "I saw another guy come up in the lunch line and punch him in the face repeatedly, calling him an f'ing faggot. He was suspended for two or three days, then was back in school to continue being a bully. It was impossible to think about – much less discuss – the possibility of being gay or attracted to somebody of the same sex. Though I believe my oldest brother and sister both consider themselves to be bisexual, the only conversation I remember being involved in while I was in high school – concerning gay marriage – ended with one student saying 'If we allow them to get married, it's a slippery slope; next they'll want to marry animals instead of just each other!'"

When Kayla graduated from Mariposa County High School, she tried to put as much distance as she could between her and that town.

"I qualified for a generous financial aid package and my good grades earned me a scholarship at Marymount College in Southern California's Rancho Palos Verdes," Kayla recalls. "It was a two-year college at the time, primarily serving wealthy families whose kids might not get in anywhere else because of their grades. I knew, however, that there was more to life than chicken coops and four-wheelers and I really had to leave. During my first semester, a friend from

Mariposa, who identifies as bisexual, introduced me to a girl, who was my first crush. Though I knew each of us was attracted to the other, I just couldn't buy into it yet, so I was dating other people, as well. My excitement about her firmly planted the question, however, maybe this is who I am!?"

With that realization, Kayla began creeping warily out of the closet.



Kayla receiving her two-year degree from Marymount College

"My Dad had dropped me off at college with no car and no cell-phone," Kayla recounts. "The formerly military housing that served as our residence hall had one wall-phone with a long cord. So I went out on the quad – stretching that long cord outside and closing the door – to privately call my sister. I started crying, confessing that 'I like this girl and that probably means I'll never be able to get married, have kids, dog and white picket fence I'd always dreamed about!' My sister cried, too, though trying to assure me that everything would be okay."

That first lesbian relationship was very complicated for both young women involved.

"Everything was very secretive," Kayla says. "We ended up being girlfriends for a while – I was her first and she was mine. When she was kicked out of school, she went back to North Carolina, which meant we tried a long-distance relationship for three months or so and then it ended."



Kayla, Bro, Sis & Dad - Loyola Graduation

After graduating from Marymount, Kayla was the first in her Dad's family to graduate – with honors – and a four-year degree in Psychology from Loyola Marymount in the Westchester District of Los Angeles.

During her senior year in college, her father remarried.

"I didn't really have the financial backing of my Dad through college, though he did pay my car insurance and send the odd check. I worked throughout my four years in school" Kayla says.

"When he got married, it substantially changed our relationship. After I graduated it was at that point – now that I was no longer financially dependent – I felt I should broach the subject of my sexuality. When I was home for the weekend, we went for a walk around the property. I started by suggesting he'd probably noticed I'd never brought any guys home. Then I explained there was a reason for that: I'm into women! Though he said he'll always love me, he seems to think being gay is a choice. I explained to him that nobody would make a choice that sets them up for being called names in an unsafe world. Either way, since that conversation, there's been a big shift. He does not accept that I am queer. His wife supports his stance, and has said things in the past like gay couples shouldn't be having kids. Our once-close relationship has multiple wedges: homophobia, religion and his re-marriage."

Kayla refers to the years beginning with Marymount, through Loyola Marymount, working in Boston and returning to California as her "serial monogamy" period.

"I had a six-month relationship; then a two-and-a-half-year relationship, then a three-year relationship," Kayla recalls. "When my girlfriend and I moved to Boston – she was in graduate school – I began working 55+ hours a week, first as a pre-school teaching assistant at Perkins School for the Blind and supplementing my income working at Pier 1. I didn't exactly jibe with the Boston culture, so we moved back west. We lived together in the Bay area for about a year-and-a-half and it became clear it was time to end the relationship. When our lease was up, she moved to LA and I stayed in the Bay Area."

Kayla realized much earlier why it took her so long to have these talks with her family.

"I have a cousin I was very close with when I was growing up," Kayla recalls. "I spent some of my summers with my grandmother and he lived close to her. When he came out as gay in high school, I wanted to see how the family would respond, especially my Dad. Nobody – including my Dad – was very supportive or accepting, which is part of the reason why it was so many years later that I finally told him. In fact, my Dad's response to my cousin's coming out was to suggest that he should join the priesthood."

Leveling with her full brother was much easier.

"It was really no big deal to talk with him about it," Kayla says. "In fact, he seemed a bit detached about the whole thing, making the point that there was less need to protect me now as his little sister, since, in his mind, it would be less likely that a woman would be abusive, like a man might. It seemed obvious to me that our experiences of childhood had been quite different."

Kayla wanted to start living a healthier life, so she began weekly therapy for a few years. She is a strong advocate of therapy. She changed jobs based on where she was living. She was formerly a Life Enrichment Director at an Assisted Living and Memory Care facility, as well as working in other various positions with kids with different needs.

"After a couple years of therapy and increased self-awareness, I decided that it was time to try new things, including the adventure of on-line dating," Kayla recalls. "In fact, I could probably write a book on that! After I'd dated a couple women, I met Cristina on OK Cupid. After a few weeks of messaging online, we had a face-to-face meeting."

Kayla was a bit nervous about this meeting because she'd had a few not-so-positive situations in the past from her on-line dating quest.

"Cristina was in a pool league, so I suggested we meet at the White Horse, where there was a pool table – a gay bar from the good old days. When she

texted that she was going to be late, my first thought was, 'well, here we go again.' But she did finally arrive. We had a fairly awkward conversation for 20 minutes or so, then headed for the pool table. With her league experience, I think she figured she would trounce me. I did let her win the first time, but then – because I'd been playing pool since I was a kid – I beat her pretty well for the next few matches. We've been together ever since. She wined and dined me. We eloped – getting married on the Mendocino shoreline in 2018, just the two of us."



Kayla & Cristina Wedding Ceremony, Mendocino Coast, 2018

Things continue to be somewhat strained with her father and his wife, as well as Cristina's Mom, though Cristina's Dad has been supportive of their life together. A favorite aunt and uncle – almost surrogate parents in a way – have also been very supportive.

"My Dad hasn't acknowledged our marriage," Kayla says somewhat sadly. "If we were ever to go to visit together, we are not allowed to stay in the same bedroom at either my Dad's or her Mom's. So when I go to see my Dad, I just drive up and back the same day – not the best arrangement – but I'm so happy with Cristina that I consider it his loss that he hasn't bothered to get to know her and doesn't attempt to build a relationship. After a stint at Hastings Law School, Cristina decided on a career in the tech industry, where she is now Director of Operations."



Cristina, Kayla (center) and Bento return to Mendocino annually

together.

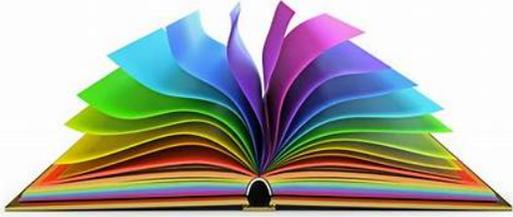
The couple went to Japan for a two-week honeymoon. They love to travel together, including an annual pilgrimage to their "magical" wedding site in Mendocino. They've hit Cuba, several places in Mexico (e.g., Isla Mujeres, Puerto Vallarta and Mexico City) and have traveled to various other domestic and international places during their five years

Kayla is board secretary of the Oakland LGBTQ+ Community Center and is a volunteer of 6+ years at the Pacific Center, where she is also a support group co-facilitator. In her post as Director of the North Oakland Senior Center, she has organized a program for seniors to order and pick up meals at the Center during this COVID-19 pandemic. She also facilitates a virtual book club for seniors and continues to develop more virtual activities for NOSC members. She is dedicated to making sure seniors who had come to rely on the Center can continue having access to the resources they need.

"I think it's particularly hard to be an LGBTQ+ senior (or person of any age) at this point in time," Kayla says. "It takes a lot of courage to be out and visible,

always evaluating your safety, being careful where you live and who knows what about you. It can be very taxing to be out and queer. I am thankful to all those before me that made this journey as a queer person easier. Though much of my life I have 'passed' as straight, I'm much more comfortable now letting people know that I am a biracial queerwoman!"

Thanks for all you do for the community, Kayla. We hope one day soon, you'll be hosting our Third Friday Lunch Bunch meetings there at the North Oakland Senior Center once again!



BOOK REVIEW

A Wild and Precious Life: A Memoir

By Edith Windsor and Joshua Lyon

Edie realized she was a lesbian at an early age. Her social life was centered in Greenwich Village. She led a wild social life in the gay scene during the 1950's.

Her partner, Thea Spyer was a victim of the Nazis in World War II. She worked as a clinical psychologist.

Edie sued the federal government and fought for her marriage to Thea. They were a couple for 44 years. Thea died in 2009. Edie then married Judith Kasen-Windsor in 2016.

Edie died in 2017. Her co-writer finished the book.

I tried to relate Edie's experience to mine. I vividly recall walking into Harvey Milk's camera shop where my pictures were developed. Gays were afraid of each other because of the police. I then stumbled into the gay church in the Castro, Metropolitan Community Church. I had found heaven for several years.

Each of us found a pro-LGBT solution and readers will also. Read and rejoice.

- Frank J. Howell



BONUS BOOK REVIEW

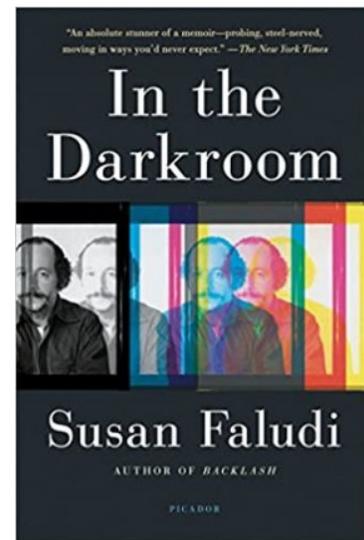
In the Darkroom

By Susan Faludi



This 2016 work of non-fiction by Pulitzer-Prize-winning feminist journalist, Susan Faludi, is one likely to be of interest to any student of the Holocaust, purveyor of genealogy, psychologist or sexologist. What starts as a young woman's search for the mystery of a father who disappeared from her world at an early age winds up something of a memoir from a passionate investigative reporter who begins her 432-page exploration on the meaning of gender with the following disclaimer:

"In the summer of 2004, I set out to investigate someone I scarcely knew, my father. The project began with a grievance, the grievance of a daughter whose parent had absconded from her life. I was in pursuit of a scofflaw, an artful dodger who had skipped out on so many things—obligation, affection, culpability, contrition. I was preparing an indictment, amassing discovery for a trial. But somewhere along the line, the prosecutor became a witness." [This reviewer is tempted to add "for the defense," but each reader will have to decide for him/herself whether Faludi is ultimately a witness for the defense or the prosecution in this hypothetical trial.]



Through an amazingly-intricate web of trans-Atlantic trips, witness interviews and painful encounters with her long-absent parent (originally named István Friedman), Faludi uncovers the many details of her missing father's soul-searching and globe-trotting – from his pre-World War II beginnings in Hungary, through a tortured childhood as a Jewish child hiding from the Nazis during the Holocaust, his subsequent survival and re-invention in Denmark, Brazil and America. In addition, she documents his return to his native Hungary, his life-altering trip to Thailand for gender-confirmation surgery at age 76 and final years somewhat cloistered – now as Stefánie in her beloved/hated hometown of Budapest.

Soon after Faludi's first encounter – 40+ years after their separation and his disappearance – with her somewhat-violent-father-now-turned-mild-mannered-mother – she said the following:

"As I confronted, nearly four decades and nine time zones away, my father's new self, it was hard for me to purge that image of the violent man from her new persona."



Steven & Susan Faludi, 1960s



Stefánie Faludi 2010



Susan and Stefánie Faludi, Budapest 2012

This book, which won the Kirkus Prize in 2016 and was a finalist for the 2017 Pulitzer Prize in Biography, has contributed to the various controversies surrounding roles, motivations and acceptance of trans women into the feminist world of the 21st century.

A most thought-provoking book, written from the point-of-view of an award-winning journalist, but also of a daughter who ultimately forgives a parent for having dealt with abandonment issues much of her life.

- John David Dupree, Tinamastes, Costa Rica

Join Us for #GivingTuesday on December 1st
Lavender Seniors of the East Bay is excited to be participating in #GivingTuesday, will you join us?!



#GivingTuesday is a day dedicated to generosity and giving. It occurs the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, Black Friday, and Cyber Monday. It's a day to acknowledge the power of giving, volunteerism, and simple acts of kindness.

Please join Lavender Seniors on this day when our communities and businesses come together to support the greater good. You can share the good news of our campaign, sign up to be an ambassador, help your loved ones and neighbors and even give if you can. Every donation and act of kindness counts.

Our fight to build the LGBTQ community, educate the general public on issues of LGBTQ seniors, and advocate for changes in social institutions to acknowledge, respect, and celebrate our diversity is more vital now than ever before. This campaign is one of the many ways we can make a difference.

Please visit the [Lavender Seniors Fundraising Page](#) for more information and how you, too, can get involved.

We look forward to "seeing" you on #GivingTuesday. Together, we can make the world a better place for LGBT seniors and everyone.

Don't Forget to VOTE!

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 us at karen@lavenderseniors.org or (510) 424-7240 and we will be in touch with you soon. Thank You!



Second Saturday (Zoom) Rainbow Lunch in November

Favorite LGBTQ-Themed Films?

At last month's Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch meeting, after our check-in, we shared with each other some of our favorite LGBTQ+ literature/authors, with each participant discussing a bit about one of their favorite books, novels, essays, short stories or other sources of information – something that has moved one or more of us in some way as members of the LGBTQ+ community. This month we're going to be discussing some of the most influential LGBTQ-themed films or TV presentations that have impressed any of us in our evolution to how we self-define currently.



For many of us, our childhood/youth/young adult experience of media representations of ourselves – on TV and/or in the movie theaters – was non-existent to negative. “People like that kill themselves, don’t they?” was the rule in Hollywood (and eventually Bollywood, as well) – other pejorative attitudes of the time included “bury your gays” and “dead lesbian syndrome”. There were many negative stereotypes prevalent in those days, including:

- Negative racial stereotypes, like Stepin Fetchit in the Shirley Temple films or Scarlet O’Hara’s house servant, “Mammy”, in “Gone with the Wind” (Hattie McDaniel was the first black actor to ever be nominated for an Academy Award – she won for Best Supporting Actress in 1940!)
- Negative gender stereotypes, like Jane Wyatt as the faithful and submissive wife/mother in “Father Knows Best” (1954-60) or John Wayne as the ultra-macho hero of many Westerns (1930-76).
- Negative religion-based stereotypes include portrayal of Jewish characters throughout much of the 20th century in anti-Semitic films; victims in Holocaust films or as heroes, especially in Hollywood films on the establishment of Israel; then as anti-heroes, mainly in films that might make the “Jew” Nazi-like and the Arabs as Jew-like victims.
- Negative LGBTQ+ stereotypes have ranged from “Sissy Man” in Stan Laurel’s 1923 film, “The Soilers”; to Alfred Hitchcock’s many films (1939-80), featuring villains with implied homosexuality to heighten evilness and alienation. The first TV production credited with portraying a gay man in a totally neutral context was the 1972 ABC film, “That Certain Summer,” about a gay man raising his family, and, though it did not show explicit relations between men, it contained no negative stereotypes.
- Also consider the six-season hit BBC production, “Downton Abbey,” (2010-16) where the sole gay character (poor Thomas) was a conniving, sinister downstairs character whose rarely-depicted sex life implied he was a promiscuous predator devoid of any ability (or desire) for an in-depth intimate relationship, while the many deep, dark, sordid sexual exploits of all the heterosexual characters were explored at great length.



However each of us may have experienced LGBTQ life on the silver or TV screen, such media representations likely contributed in one way or another to how we perceived ourselves and our community. Comparing then and now might be a useful way to assess what role such media offerings might have played in our becoming who we are today. Either way, we have all somehow evolved, thankfully, to a point where we are involved with an inclusive and non-judgmental organization like Lavender Seniors.

Let's share a little of that process with each other at the Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch this month! We have a lot to learn from each other!

Below are the details for joining the Second Saturday Zoom gathering (same hyperlink for December, as well), on Saturday, 14th November, at 12 noon:

Gwendolyn Boozé and John David Dupree invite you to a scheduled
Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch meeting on Zoom.

Topic: **Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch**

Time: Saturday, November 14, 2020 – 12:00 noon Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89671026595?pwd=TGRTbkxaTzZGbWFFTTB1WWpQNFpWZz09>

Meeting ID: 896 7102 6595 – Password: 153953

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 896 7102 6595 – Password: 153953

We hope to see you there, poised to share some of your own process with kindred spirits!

As a post-script, we are hoping to resume the LGBTQ-themed film series on Zoom in 2021, perhaps reviving the tradition many of us had as kids, hiking to the local theater – perhaps with siblings and friends – for weekly Saturday “matinees”. Stay tuned on that!



Mothertongue on Zoom

They say that as we old folks get to “a certain age,” we become less flexible and open to new ideas. Well, our virtual Zoom gathering of the Third Friday Lunch Bunch this month aims to challenge that stereotype once and for all!

It has become an honored November tradition for members of the Mothertongue Feminist Readers Theater – a 44-year-old feminist



women's collective – to present from their works of many moods and colors, covering the full range of issues relevant to the LGBTQ+ community. Last November, their presentation at Lavender Seniors' 25th Anniversary was celebratory;

the previous year was a tribute to their recently-fallen comrade, Ruth Michaels, whose donation and granddaughter, Claire, subsequently helped update the group's website (<https://mothertonguefeministtheater.org/>).

This year, Lavender Seniors and Mothertongue are both trying out providing a "virtual" group performance on Zoom.* The performers will focus on "Turning the Lemon of Isolation into Lemonade", most particularly during intense down-times like the current COVID-19 pandemic.

"Seniors of every stripe might feel isolated or lonely," said Ruth Hurvitz, a long-time member of Mothertongue. "That can be particularly acute with LGBTQ seniors, who might be less likely to be surrounded by their families of origin. Add shelter-in-place to that mix and it's imperative that we make every attempt to help members of our community keep from succumbing to any sense of alone-ness. Being in the Mothertongue community has been balm for me. We hope those who attend this Zoom event on 20th November – just days before Thanksgiving, which might be a quite different kind of holiday this year – will be inspired by our performance."



Four of the eight performers

Mothertongue Feminist Readers Theater Collective began in 1976. Since then over 100 women have come together to tell their truths by talking about and writing the sweet and sour stories of their lives. They have performed in colleges, coffee houses, senior centers, music festivals and at conferences and community events in the Bay Area and beyond. Forty-four years later, Mothertongue members still find joy in telling their truths to each other and performing them for their audiences. At the end of every performance, they engage their audience in a discussion, inviting them to add their own stories and responses to the topic.

Some of the group's familiar and loved themes include Women and Food, Lesbian Erotica, Mothers and Daughters, Disability and Aging. Mothertongue is open to all feminists who have ideas and experiences to share. Their structure reflects their feminist principles of inclusion and being non-hierarchical. They accept all levels of writers and performers. They make decisions through consensus.

For those who might be interested, many of the collective's scripts, historical photos and other artifacts over the years are in a collection at the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Historical Society via the California Digital Library. (See <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt9p3029dn/>)

Details for the Zoom gathering are as follows:

Gwendolyn Boozé and John David Dupree invite you to a scheduled **Third Friday Lunch Bunch** Zoom meeting.

Topic: **Third Friday Lunch Bunch**

Time: Friday, Nov 20th, 2020 – 12-2 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85235825964?pwd=WmptRG5SU2RDVUNyQ1hFWGM2NlZOQT09>

Meeting ID: 852 3582 5964 – Passcode: 569546

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 852 3582 5964 – Passcode: 569546

*[*Editor's Note: We want to thank Heather Morrow for her technical assistance to us on our first-but-hopefully-not-last venture into deep-21st-century technology!]*



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHEERSF

SPECIAL

New Photo Book on Gay Men: “Loving”

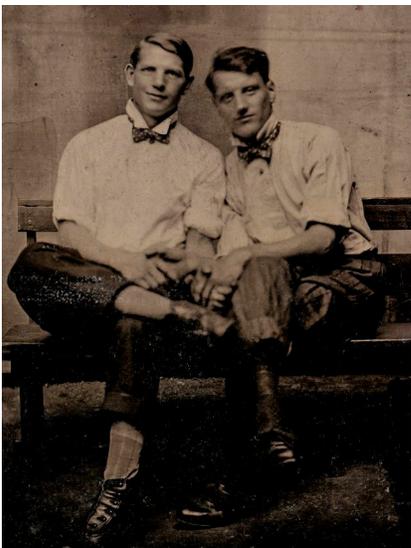
A long-overdue photo compilation of gay men together – *Loving: A Photographic History of Men in Love, 1850s-1950s* – has been published recently. The editors, Neal Treadwell, who works in the cosmetics

industry, and Hugh Nini, a teacher at the Joffrey Ballet, have spent 20+ years snapping up nearly 3,000 vintage photos of men at flea markets, garage sales, off websites like e-bay, etc.

During the 100 years covered in this book – including the birth years of many of us LGBTQ+ seniors right now – it was very difficult for gay men, lesbian and transgender individuals to be out about their sexuality. There were regular police raids on LGBTQ establishments – frequently hidden behind closed doors, followed by public humiliation, loss of jobs, family and social status.



A quote from the Esquire review of this book:



"A hundred years ago, getting your picture taken was a special occasion, one worth cleaning up for. What you see in Loving is men who look like they took the carriage to the photo studio after a day on Wall Street, as well as those who seem to have come straight from the fields, pausing, perhaps, to brush a bit of dirt from their overalls. Sometimes they even dressed alike, perhaps to emphasize their close connection—as in this picture from the late 1800s, where the men wore bow ties, popped their collars, and rolled up not only their sleeves but their pant cuffs."

"You normally wouldn't see someone go to that extent to match perfectly," says Treadwell. "They went the extra mile."

Many of the photos in the Treadwell-Nini collection show couples who met in the military, a place which has had a checkered background dealing with racism, sexism and homophobia – any differences from the "norm". For instance, the U.S. military was only racially integrated under President Harry Truman in July 1948 via his Executive Order on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, committing the government to integrating the segregated military.

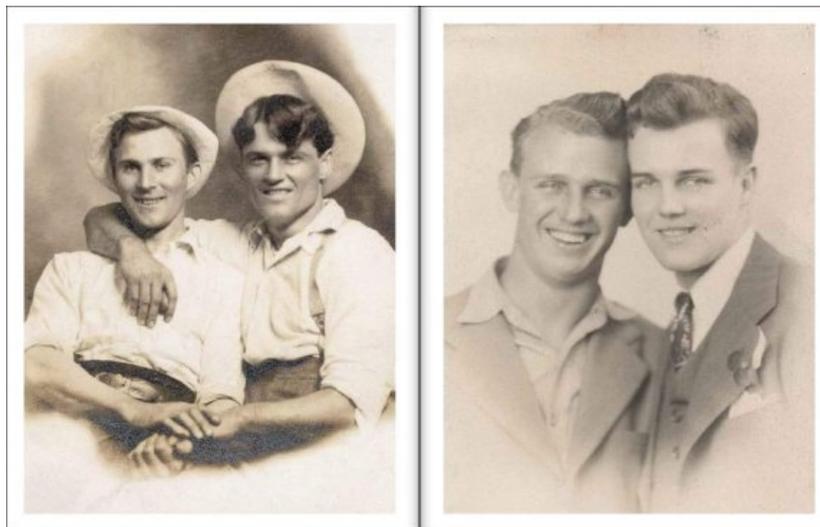
Thousands of LGBTQ+ service-members over the history of this country were harassed, overlooked for promotion, expelled, dishonorably discharged, or even prosecuted and jailed. "Blue discharges" were commonly issued for LGBTQ+ service members who, as a result, lost their right to various benefits, including retirement, VA hospital services and even the "GI Bill," which provided access to higher education and opportunity for those receiving honorable discharges.



Fast-forward to the Clinton administration and "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, which was in effect from February 1994 to September 2011. During that period, over 13,650 LGBTQ+ troops were discharged, averaging 600+ per year, ranging from a high of 1,273 in 2001 (the first year of the George W. Bush administration) to a low of 261 in the year it was repealed.



With the defeat of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in *United States vs Windsor* (2013)* and *Obergefell vs Hodges* (2015) recognizing same-sex marriage as the law of the land, LGBTQ+ individuals throughout the nation have been entitled to the same rights and responsibilities as heterosexuals. The photographs in this book become a sad, poignant but significant testament to a dark period in the history of the American LGBTQ+ rights movement.



To read the complete *Esquire* article:

https://www.esquire.com/lifestyle/a34277276/loving-book-men-in-love-photos-archive/?source=nl&utm_source=nl_esq&utm_medium=email&date=100920&utm_campaign=nl21646661

The book was released on 14th October 2020.

*For more on the Windsor decision, see "Book Review" above.

Don't Forget to VOTE!



LAS & HICAP 2020 Fall Webinar Schedule



Understanding Medicare: An Overview of Coverage and Options

Wednesday Dec 23rd 10am-11am

Financial Assistance: How to Get Help with Health Care Costs

Monday Dec 14th 11am-12pm



Consumer Fraud: Scams Targeting Seniors and Tips for Protection and Prevention

Wednesday Nov 4th 10am-11am

Wednesday Dec 2nd 10am-11am

LAS is supported by a variety of sources, including volunteers, individual donors, foundations, the Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, the Administration on Community Living, and the State Bar of California Legal Services Trust Fund Program.

To register visit www.lashicap.org

Medicare and the Annual Election Period: Changes for 2021

Thursday Oct 29th 1pm-2pm

Monday Nov 2nd 11am-12pm

Monday Nov 9th 11am-12pm

Monday Nov 23rd 11am-12pm

Monday Nov 30th 11am-12pm

Monday Dec 7th 11am-12pm



How to Age in Place: Hiring and Working with a Care Giver

Thursday Nov 19th 1pm-2pm

Thursday Dec 17th 1pm-2pm



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](#).

Well Connected Enriching lives and supporting well-being.

(FORMERLY SENIOR CENTER WITHOUT WALLS)

Community Phone Calls

This award-winning program offers activities, education, support groups, and friendly conversation over the phone or online.

Just a few of the things offered:

(The times are no longer listed in the generic catalog, once you have signed up you will get a link to a catalog with times in your time zone)

LGBTQ Chat 2nd and 4th Mondays

This group is open to all LGBTQ older adults to connect with others socially in a supportive environment where participants can share individual and collective experiences. Facilitated by Ariel Mellinger, ASW, Support and Wellness Coordinator, Openhouse SF

Music's Memory Lane Tuesdays

Each week we'll discuss a hit song, vintage television variety show, 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

Perplexing Questions Sundays

Have you ever wondered how a fly can walk upside down on the ceiling? Or how a camel can go so long without water? Find out the answers to some head-scratching questions. Facilitated by Sharon Schwartz

View the Current catalog of community phone calls [here](#). Check the [website](#) for more information. To participate in these or other Well Connected telephone



VOTE NOW (or by 3rd Nov)!

Out Standing Seniors - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Nov 3 & 17, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. (1st and 3rd Tuesdays)

Meets via Zoom email outstandingseniors2@gmail.com for info.

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

LezBold Peer Support Group

Nov 5,12,19, 2:00 p.m. (Thursdays)

Meets via Zoom email lezboldgroup@pacificcenter.org for info.

Find support and like-minded wonderful people!

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

Nov 6,13,20,27, 3:00 p.m. (Fridays) email to see if meeting on 27th

email Anne@pacificcenter.org for current meeting information.

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

Older & Out Therapy Group - Oakland - Sponsored by Pacific Center Nov

6,13,20,27, 2:00 p.m. (Fridays) email to see if meeting on 27th

email Anne@pacificcenter.org for current meeting information.

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

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

Nov 2,9,16,23,30 1:00 p.m. (Mondays)

email Anne@pacificcenter.org for current meeting information.

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

Rainbow Seniors - Sponsored by Pacific Center & Lavender Seniors

Nov 10 & 24, 12:30 -1:30 p.m. (2nd & 4th Tuesdays)

Meets via Zoom contact rainbowseniors@pacificcenter.org for info.

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

Living OUT in Livermore - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Nov 3, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. (1st Tuesdays)

Meets via Zoom email Anne@pacificcenter.org for info.

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

Lavender Seniors Board Meeting

Nov 11 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. (2nd Wednesday)

via Zoom

A portion of this meeting is open to the public.

Lavender Seniors Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch

Nov 14, 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. (see info above for joining us via Zoom)

Lavender Seniors LGBTQ Film Series

Look for announcements...returning soon via Zoom!

Tri-Valley Rainbows - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Nov 19, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. (3rd Thursday)

Meets via Zoom email Anne@pacificcenter.org for info.

A Peer Support Group is a space for LGBT Seniors 50+ to safely share thoughts, feelings, resources, information & to support one another.

Oakland Third Friday Lunch Bunch

Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging/Adult Services & Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

Nov 20, 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. (see info above for joining us via Zoom)

Don't Forget to VOTE!

**Lavender Seniors of the East Bay
Board of Directors**

President: Victor Aguilar Jr

Vice President: Gwendolyn M. Boozé

Treasurer: Carmen Chiong

Secretary: John David Dupree

Founding Member: Barbara Jue

Communication Director: Melissa West

Member: Ana Bagtas (on hiatus)

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

Message: 510-736-LGBT (510-736-5428)

Friendly Visitor Program: (510) 424-7240 or

karen@lavenderseniors.org

Mailing Address:

4100 Redwood Rd, Ste 20A #240

Oakland, CA 94619

Website: <http://lavenderseniors.org>

Newsletter Editorial
Board:

Beckie Underwood

John David Dupree

Contact
Us

