



Lavender Notes

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

August 2015

Celebrating 20+ years of service and positive change

Volume 22, Issue 8

Mourning the loss of another of our founding members.

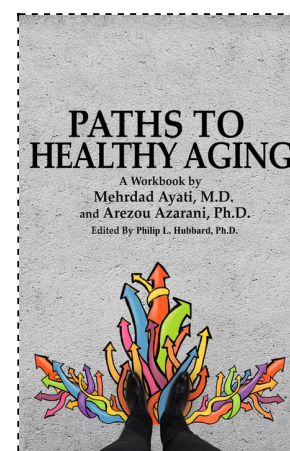
Natalie Zarchin

Natalie passed away on July 17, 2015 a couple of weeks before she would have turned 93. The next Lavender Notes will carry her story in greater detail. At this time Lavender Seniors has not received any notice of services for her. We know that her passing is an enormous loss to our community. Lavender Seniors of the East Bay send condolences to Natalie's family and to all who have shared her 92 years of vibrant living.



Monthly Book Review: Paths To Healthy Aging

Much medical information for seniors is confusing and unhelpful. This is a guide through the bureaucratic jungle. There are questions and answers about diet, going to the dentist, and social activities. Getting enough Vitamin D is especially important. Also we get advice on mental health and exercise. I find that going to a local gym is vital. - Frank Howell



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 www.caregiver.org.

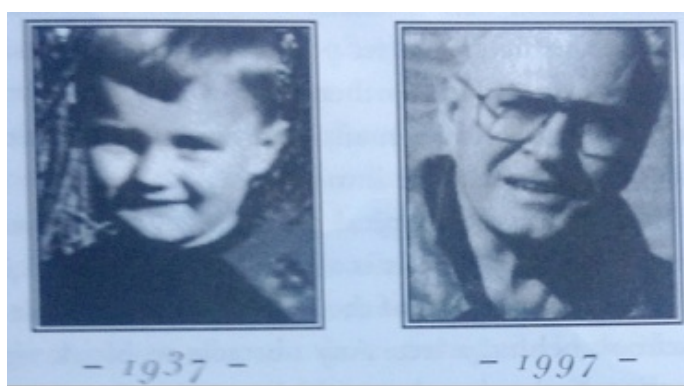
Lavender Seniors: Our Stories

Grant F. Peterson, Educator/LGBT Activist

"I remember as if it were yesterday: my mother making it very clear that she didn't want me messing around with girls. I never disappointed her!"

That was the brilliant opening paragraph of Grant F. Peterson's contribution to the 1997 GLSEN anthology, "Telling Tales Out of School", edited by Kevin Jennings. The second paragraph of "From Farm to Fulfillment" finished the beginning salvo:

"It was in 1935 when, at age seven, she caught me playing doctor with a girl who was visiting from a nearby farm and the dictum came down. The incident also put a damper on any aspirations I might have had for a medical career."



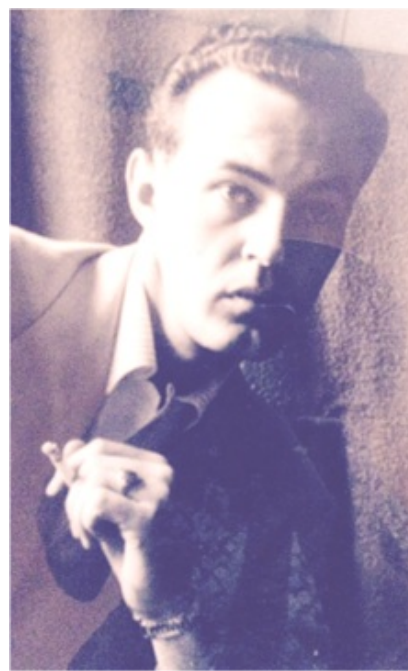
The photo accompanying that wonderful short story showed how Grant had changed in 60 years.

Grant, who turns 87 on 13th November 2015, was born in Bismarck, ND, to a farming couple. He was the eldest of three brothers, whose summer days were filled with doing farm chores, like milking the cows, slopping the pigs, collecting eggs from the chickens, driving the tractor and so on.

"Our Dad and our uncle, his brother, essentially ran the farm, with a little bit of help from us during the few pleasant North Dakota months," Grant recalled, "but in the six-plus months of winter, we boys didn't have to slog through the snow-drifts to feed the animals. That was up to the adults."

"Mom and Dad were married after 17 years of 'dating', so they weren't the youngest parents when we came along," Grant said. "When women's suffrage passed, Mom campaigned unsuccessfully to be elected North Dakota's Secretary of State. Senator Lynn J. Frazier then requested that Mom become an office secretary, accompanying him to Washington, DC, for several years. If she had won the Secretary of State post, I may never have been born!"

Grant and his brothers attended a one-room school-house nearby for the first eight grades. Students numbered between 5 and 8, so they generally got a lot of personal attention from the teachers. For his freshman and sophomore years, he attended a small high school (35 students) in nearby Braddock, ND, but asked to complete high school away from home in Napoleon, where the high school approached 100 students. He graduated high school in 1946.



Grant as a 16-year-old (1944) in front of the family car; then in "what looks like a cigarette commercial" at age 22

"I knew at age three that I had to get my ass out of North Dakota," Grant proclaimed, "so I chose Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota. It's a Lutheran school, named after a Swedish king - a place with mandatory chapel every morning - so how could my parents object? For me, the best part was that I was 500 miles away from home! However, I did get called into the Dean's office more than once for missing chapel, I must admit."

When asked if he dated girls during high school and undergraduate years, his response was simply "Only when necessary!" (e.g., when going to the prom). Though he consistently had crushes on fellow (male) students during that time, he didn't really date, but rather "ran around" with groups of students doing fun things.

"My friends were everything to me - and have always remained so!" he recalled.



Grant as a traveling young man - and as a dance student in Mexico.

It was during his first teaching job - far away from home in Astoria, Oregon (near the Tongue Point Naval Base - "love a man in uniform!") that Grant experienced his early sexual experiences, usually with sailors from the Naval base. That was in the early 1950's, when Grant was just in his early 20's.

"It was rather daring of me to bring a young sailor home with me to the room I was renting," he recalled, "as the elderly gentleman who owned the house also lived there. He had a daughter who was off teaching in another school system."

Grant really considers his "coming out" (to himself, as well as to others) as happening during his years in Tokyo (1952-55), two years as an enlisted soldier attached to the Central Command's Army Education Center, staying on an additional year as a civilian educator with the Department of Defense. He was 24 years old when this transition to self-acceptance began.



Grant in his Army uniform (age 24) and traveling by rickshaw from the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo (1950s)

As a civilian he was assigned to the Education Center in the U.S. Army Stockade in Tokyo. "Because I was looking dapper in my civilian clothes, it was not unusual to get whistles from the Stockade's confined inmates," Grant recalled. "We were in the middle of the Korean War and Tokyo was a major place for soldiers to fly in for R&R. There were lots of Americans, Europeans, Australians and New Zealanders longing to escape their reality with another man."

Grant recalled a Tokyo watering hole called the Rocker 4 Club, which had two ballrooms on the top floor, a cocktail lounge in the basement, a restaurant and Brute Bar (called by many the "Fruit Bar") on the main floor. Since the Japanese were not allowed in the club as patrons - only as employees - his interactions were primarily with white men from around the world.

"I spent time regularly for a year or so with an American soldier," Grant reminisced. "But when he was discharged and returned to his home in Atlanta, we never communicated again."

Grant landed in the San Francisco Bay area in 1957. He has lived in Berkeley, San Francisco and various locations in South Alameda County. He lives in Hayward now.

"In the early '60s, I had a two-year relationship with a man in San Francisco," he recalls. "But it soon became clear that we had very different goals. He was focused on climbing the economic ladder - making lots of money - and I was focused on helping people, particularly young people who might be struggling with their sexuality as I was back in the snowy plains states. I've had no close intimate relationships since that time, rather becoming increasingly active both in the educational and political arenas."

"On a personal note, however, it was not uncommon for me to entertain 18-20 people at a time - particularly on holidays, when LGBT people might be alone. I was a good cook and a hospitable host, so my friends remained paramount in my heart and soul."

Since, as a school teacher, he was at risk for termination - if not arrest and prosecution - in his chosen career, it was only in the early 1980s that he finally started telling family, friends and close colleagues about his gayness.

"My parents were long-gone before I was out to myself, much less to them," Grant recalled. "My next younger brother - who died three years ago - was fine with it almost immediately. My youngest brother - who lives near Sacramento - had a harder time with it initially, but both he and his wife have been supportive for a long time. Luckily, when I informed my Superintendent and the school board, they were more concerned about my keeping up high-quality work than my choice of bed partners, which is the way it should be!"

Grant was employed by the New Haven Unified School District in Union City for nearly 30 years (1961-1990).

His posts ranged from Counselor and Head Counselor to Assistant Principal, Vice Principal and Director of Pupil Personnel Services. He was elected to the Hayward Unified School District Board of Education - campaigning as an openly gay man - serving from 2003-2008.



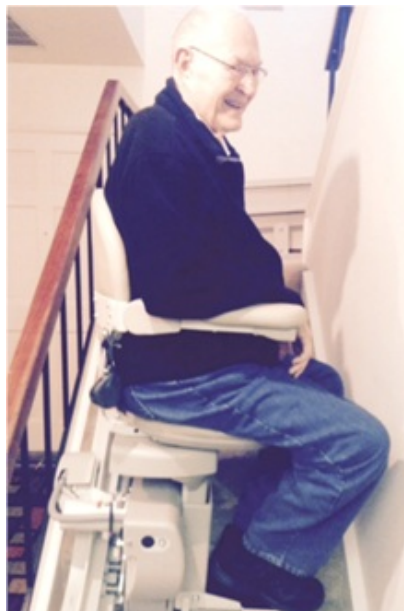
Grant as Assistant Principal; then as openly gay candidate campaigning for HUSD Board of Education, 2003

Among the activities that gave Grant the most joy over the years was participating in BANGLE (Bay Area Network of Gay and Lesbian Educators) from 1994 and watching the group morph into the SF-East Bay Chapter of GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Educational Network). He organized numerous BANGLE-GLSEN conferences, facilitating 150+ educational workshops between 1996-2004 for teachers, administrators, students, parents and families of LGBT youth. In 1996, he became a trainer with Building Bridges, a United Way-sponsored program assisting agencies and organizations to confront LGBT youth issues. He was also a co-founder of GLOBE, chair of the Lavender Seniors Advocacy Committee and a founder (1991-99) of We Care Bay Area, raising funds to assist people with HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening illnesses, along with a very long list of other activities and affiliations throughout his life.

"I've met some of the finest people I've ever known working with BANGLE and GLSEN," Grant recalls. "I never missed a GLSEN board meeting in eight years. I was so inspired by the work we were doing on behalf of LGBT youth. For instance, I met Mary Bonauto - a brilliant attorney who argued against DOMA and for same-sex marriage at the Supreme Court. In fact, she nominated me to replace her as clerk of GLSEN's National Board when she left. I met such marvelous people as Matthew Shepard's delightful parents. We definitely have had great fun!"

Toward the end of the interview for this profile, Grant wondered out loud how his life might have been different if the Supreme Court had issued an Obergefell decision 50-60 years ago. The stress associated with being closeted for so many years can't really be measured, he opines, though there is little he would change about his extraordinary life.

Grant really wanted to be in New York for GLSEN's 25th Anniversary Celebration the day after this interview(30th June 2015). Unfortunately, he and his half-day attendant, Edgar, and his close friend, Larry (also working with Edgar as a half-time attendant) decided it wouldn't be wise for him to try to travel so far.



"I'm afraid my days of traveling long distances are over now," he said, "but that doesn't mean my heart can't celebrate what we've accomplished. Picture me in a cheerleader skirt for this important work to continue! Hopefully, we won't NEED organizations like GLSEN a couple generations from now and people will wonder why there ever WAS a need for them!"

Understanding Our Aging Bodies



Don't miss this article in the Bay Times. It also includes links to LGBT resources.

<http://sfbaytimes.com/understanding-our-aging-bodies/>

Senior Center Without Walls Community Phone Calls



Pet Tales Saturdays 11:00 - 11:30am

Share stories of your animal companions, past or present, with others who also appreciate furry, feathered, and gilled friends. Facilitator Anne Sanabria enjoys the company of her three dogs, Ringo, Butchie, Freddie.

Book Appreciation & Discussion Now twice a month! 1st & 3rd Saturdays 3:00 - 4:00pm

Book lovers unite! Call in to share your favorite books and authors with other book lovers. Raquel de Knust and Andy Andersen facilitating.

When Mother Goose and Aesop Collide Wednesdays 4:00 - 4:30pm

A charming little rhyme, a funny little fable. What happens when the hardworking (and moralistic) Ant and the happy-go-lucky (devil-may-care) Grasshopper are squashed when Jack and Jill come tumbling down the hill? Can you imagine? Join the fun and wisdom shared as we create our own written versions of rhymes and parables, complete with moral lessons to be learned (or unlearned). Writers, philosophers, punsters, and cerebral artists are welcome! With Amy Schaible

View the [full summer catalog](#) of community phone calls [here](#). 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.

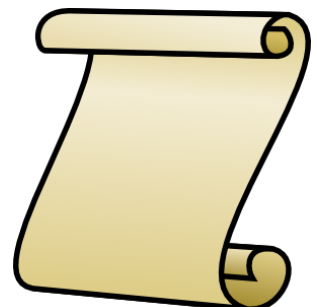
Letters to the Editor

Tell us what you think of this new column. Send your letters to the editor to: info@lavenderseniors.org

Hello Lavender Seniors staff,

That is an outstanding profile piece on my friend Charlene Shores in your June newsletter which I just came across and read this morning. You have just scratched the surface of one of the most effective activists for LGBT people that we have in the East Bay.

For 7 years, I also worked for San Mateo County, and am still being educated via your article about how much Charlene did through her union work to make that county a better place for gay people to work. She and I know each other through GLOBE, which did a lot in Hayward and Alameda Co (even though interest is dwindling since Marvin



died).

Charlene lives up the hill from me nearby, so I'm going to shout out the back door to her today: nice article in Lav Seniors newsletter Char!!

Sincerely,

Mary Lavelle



First Annual LGBTQ 'Senior' Senior Prom

Hayward Senior Center and H.A.R.D. put on a beautiful senior prom for LGBTQ Seniors over 50. Many of us were to allowed to attend our high school senior proms with our boy or girl friends. Check it out at

<https://youtu.be/TlHpZJCjib8>

Swim for Women's Cancer Research Center

Support Cancer Research

Since 1986, WCRC has provided programs and a network of support and essential resources for women with cancer and their families. Their programs include emergency financial assistance, psychotherapy, in-home practical and emotional support, cancer navigation, support groups, community health education and a wide range of wellness classes.



The best thing about their services: they are offered free of charge, thanks to the generosity of donors like you! Please make a contribution to your favorite swimmer at

<http://www.wcrc.org/swim/>

Lavender Senior member, Suzanne Schmutz, is swimming in this event again this year. Just enter her name on the web page to donate in her name. Please give generously.

Here are some donation suggestions, but feel free to contribute as much as you like:

\$36.00 = a dollar for every 50-yard lap!
\$72.00 = a dollar for every 25-yard length!
\$176.00 = ten cents for every yard!

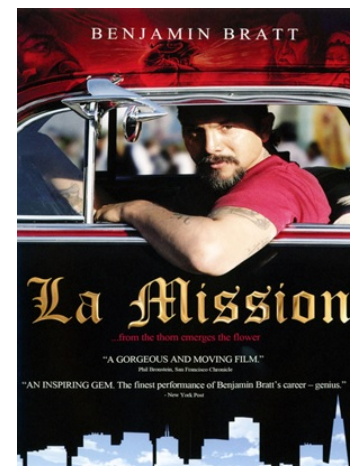
All donations are 100% tax deductible.

Third Wednesday Lavender Seniors Film Series: 19th August 2015

La Misión

This 2010 film takes place in San Francisco's Mission District, focusing on the Latino "low-rider" sub-culture.

Benjamin Bratt stars as Ché Rivera, an ex-convict and recovering alcoholic who returns to his tough Mission District barrio after serving time in prison. Ché re-enters a world of chopped and channeled metallic candy-apple-red Impalas and banana-yellow pick-up trucks. Ché has survived in this neighborhood over the years using his fists and his macho persona. He's working as a Muni bus-driver, really living for the love of his son, Jesse, played adroitly by Jeremy Ray Valdez. (Bratt & Valdez won 2011 Imagen Foundation Awards for Best Actor and Best Supporting actor, respectively).



Ché is working with his brother-in-law to convert, re-store and re-finish a vintage Impala he has bought as a high school graduation present for the son he adores, a teenager he has been raising as a single father. When Ché discovers his son is gay, he reacts violently, rejects his son and nearly destroys both their relationship and the dream-car he has been savoring as a token of his love.

Throughout the film, Ché tries to figure out his neighbor, Lena (played brilliantly by Erika Alexander), a beautiful black woman who works at a shelter for victims of domestic abuse. Though he succeeds at one point in endearing himself to her, his homophobic and violent reaction to his son's gayness seriously changes her opinion of him.

Powerful and challenging, "La Misión" is an emotional portrayal of redemption and fatherhood.

This fifth film in the Lavender Seniors LGBT series will be shown at 1pm on Wednesday, 19th August, in the Thunderbolt Theater at Marina Community Center, 15301 Wicks Blvd., San Leandro. Popcorn, bottled water and Martinelli's apple juice will be served. For those who are interested, there will be a discussion afterward of the issues raised by the film.

For those using public transportation, take BART to the San Leandro station, where pick-up between 12:30-12:45pm can be arranged by e-mailing JohnDavid@lavenderseniors.org or calling 510-532-8951 a day in advance.

For those driving from the north, get off I-880 at Marina Blvd, turn right to the first traffic signal, turning left on Merced Street, which becomes Wicks Blvd after a couple of miles. The Marina Community Center is on the right.

For those driving from the south, get off I-880 at Marina Blvd, turn left to the first traffic signal, then turn left on Merced Street, which becomes Wicks Blvd after a couple of miles. The Marina Community Center is on the right.

For more information about the Marina Community Center, call 510-577-6080.

Third Friday Lunch Bunch: Friday, 21st August 2015

Young at Heart:

"Fun" Tips on a Heart-Healthy Lifestyle for Older Adults

Two heart-savvy registered nurses - currently pursuing their B.S. degrees in Nursing at Cal State East Bay (Hayward) - will join the Third Friday Lunch Bunch this month to update us on the latest developments in heart health for us "mature" adults.

Maria Doria, RN, and Teresa Mroz, RN, have had considerable experience monitoring the heart health of their patients. They are looking forward to joining the group at noon on Friday, August 21st to share lunch and do a short, fun

presentation on heart health (**Emphasis on the FUN**). After their 15-20 minute presentation, they will be available for a Q&A session and will check blood pressure for attendees who are interested. They may also show us how to check our own blood pressures at home and/or develop a buddy system where we can regularly check each others' BPs during the course of our various routine friendship interactions!



As usual, the Third Friday Lunch Bunch - providing a healthy meal for all - is being held from noon until 2pm at the North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 Martin Luther King Way, corner of 58th Street, near the overhead BART tracks. The parking lot and entrance are around the back of the building (former Merritt College).

Anyone with questions about the program, Third Friday Lunch Bunch or Lavender Seniors programs, in general, may call Kathleen, Project Coordinator, at 510-574-2073.

Asian American LGBT Documentary

**Sat. Aug. 8, 2015, 1pm - Koret Auditorium,
main San Francisco Public Library**

One of the few documentaries to focus on Asian American LGBT families, four longtime couples speak out on Marriage Equality in the face of California's virulent Proposition 8 campaign. Narrating stories and experiences that personalize these issues, they speak of life and love, faith and family, and the challenges they faced under Prop 8, the U.S. federal Defense of Marriage Act, and immigration laws that have historically devastated LGBT bi-national families. The film follows the families over several years of struggle culminating in the historic events of the June 26, 2013 Supreme Court rulings striking down DOMA and Proposition 8, providing rarely seen historic documentary footage which should prove to be an important part of San Francisco, as well as California, Asian American, LGBT and immigrant history.

Join us for a panel discussion afterwards as we look at the significance of the most recent 2015 U.S. Supreme Court rulings on Marriage Equality. We will look at the history of LGBT inclusion within the history of Asian American exclusion, civil rights and its historic impact on Asian American families. Panelists will address the experiences of LGBT people of faith, the current status of Comprehensive Immigration Reform, and the ongoing work that still needs to be done.

Please help us spread the word:

Share our Event with your friends:

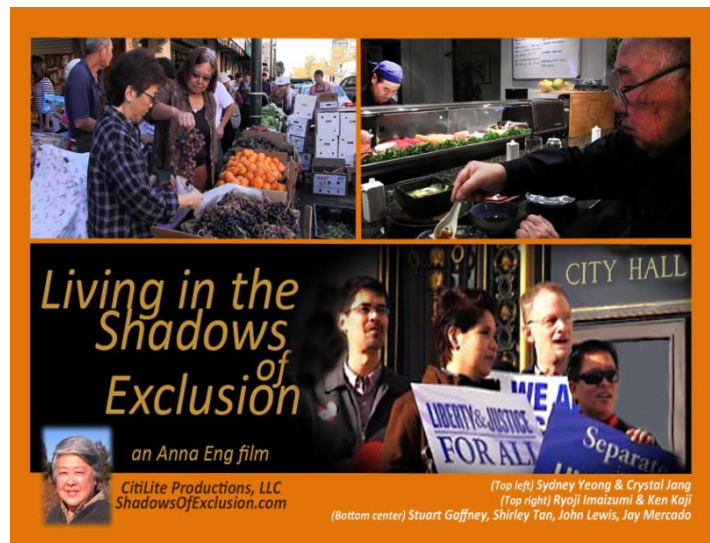
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1615000132113548>

To see more pictures, clips and outtakes, follow us and like us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/ShadowsOfExclusion>

To learn more about the background of our film or to schedule a screening for your school or community organization, please visit our website:

www.ShadowsOfExclusion.com



Monthly Events

Out Standing Seniors

August 4, 11:15a.m.-2:00 p.m.

August 18th 5:00-6:00p.m. Our 3rd Ice Cream Social with the teens at **Project Eden at their location**(1st and 3rd Tuesdays)

Hayward Senior Center, 22325 N. Third Street, Hayward

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

August 5, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

1420 Santa Maria Street, San Leandro

A portion of this meeting is open to the public.

Support Discussion Group for Aging Lesbian Women

August 6 & 20, 1:30 p.m. (1st and 3rd Thursdays)

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

Find support and like-minded wonderful people!

San Leandro Potluck

August 8, 12:00-2:00 p.m. (2nd Saturday of each month)

Corner of Joaquin & Santa Maria (Bancroft & E. 14th Street)

Come relax for a couple of hours. Share the love, meet others, talk and laugh!

Senior Men's Group

August 13 & 27, 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!

Oakland Lunch Bunch

Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging & Adult Services

August 21, 12:00-2:00 p.m. (3rd Friday of each month)

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

This month's program is: Young at Heart: "Fun" Tips on a Heart-Healthy Lifestyle for Older Adults

LGBT Film Festival

August 19, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (3rd Wednesday of each month)

Marina Community Center, 15301 Wicks Blvd, San Leandro

This month's movie is La Misión, see more information above.

Thank you to our sponsor, Chapel of the Chimes

[Chapel of the Chimes](#) is proud to be a Lavender Seniors "LGBT elder-friendly" business since 2007. A member of the Lifemark Group, [Chapel of the Chimes](#) is a family of premier Bay Area cemeteries, funeral homes, crematories, and mausoleums providing full end-of-life services.

Call and set up your Health Care Directive today!

Chapel of the Chimes, Oakland
4499 Piedmont Avenue
Oakland, CA 94611
FD# 1254



Allison Rodman, Family Service Counselor
... Care, Comfort & Plan
allison.rodman@lifemarkgroup.com
510-593-6978

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

Chair: D'Anne Bruetsch

Vice Chair: Akilah Bolden-Monifa

Secretary: John David Dupree

Treasurer: Carmen Chiong

Beckie Underwood

Frank Howell

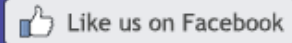
Barbara Jue

Mike Trutner

Lavender Seniors

is a project of

LIFE ElderCare



Follow us on **twitter**

Email: info@lavenderseniors.org

Website: <http://lavenderseniors.org>

3300 Capitol Avenue

Fremont, CA 94538

510-574-2073