



Born January 26, 1948, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Ron moved with his mother to the Chicago area when he was a toddler. His mother, Georgia Perry, pre-deceased him by just two days, dying on 2nd December 2015 at Berkeley Pines Senior Home. A joint mother-son memorial service was held for them at St. Paul's AME Church in Berkeley on 10th December. All four of the surviving beloved sisters who grew up with their older brother - Donna, Georgette, Laronette and Jacqueline - attended the service, as well as one of his half-brothers, Steven, many other family members and friends.

The first of seven children born to Georgia Perry, Ron spent much of his childhood and youth trying to plan for his future - and the future of his family. Would he be an athlete or a social worker? Would he be gay or straight? One of his first sexual experiences - with a famous musician performing at nearby Northwestern University - convinced him that he was indeed gay, something he felt he needed to hide from his family initially. After all, he was the "big brother" who needed to set a good example for his younger siblings.



Ron with his mother's second-born, sister Donna, 1955

Unfortunately, in the winter of 1971, when he was a 23-year-old college student - still trying to decide whether psychology was the field he would pursue - he was in a tragic car accident which resulted in his becoming a quadriplegic for the rest of his life.

After several years of hospitalization, rehabilitation and, finally, acceptance of the cruel blow that fate had played in his life, Ron took a deep breath and went back to Judson College to complete his bachelor's degree in psychology. He was NOT going to let his disability keep him from making a difference in this world - not only for himself and his family - but for the larger society!

Less than five years after his accident - having heard about the ground-breaking work at Center for Independent Living (CIL) - he decided to re-locate. He loaded up his van (twice), moving himself and his family to Berkeley, where he would be most likely to realize his potential and provide adequately for his family. Though the family - Mom and seven children! - struggled at first, trying to make ends meet, Ron is described by his surviving sisters as "more like a father than a brother to us", according to his sister, Georgette, "comforting us when we felt discouraged and inspiring us to tighten our belts and soldier on - which we did, with him leading the way!"

Ron spent several years as a counselor at CIL, inspiring him to (successfully) pursue a Master's in Social Work (MSW) at UC-Berkeley. Following a sit-in at the Federal Building in April 1977, he was one of the dozen or so disabled Berkeley residents to fly to Washington to protest on behalf of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (a section which eventually became ensconced in federal law as the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act - ADA).



Photos and video from display at CIL/Roberts Campus, showing role Ron and others played in DC demonstrations

Following the success of both the San Francisco and Washington, DC, demonstrations, Ron was hired by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), Department of Health Education and Welfare (HEW) in San Francisco. During his ten years in that post, he traveled extensively around the U.S. (including Puerto Rico, where he also took his sister, Laronette, on a brother-sister adventure of a lifetime), evaluating federal, state and local attempts at meeting ADA-mandated

regulations regarding accessibility and non-discrimination in housing, accommodations, employment and public services.

Meanwhile, in his personal life, he continued to be the supportive first-born child! He collaborated with his mother and sister, Georgette, buying a small compound on Haskell in southwest Berkeley, which included a large two-story house for his mother and six siblings. In addition, there was a wheelchair-accessible cottage in back, from which he could make it early each morning (sometimes before daylight) to the Ashby BART station and return each evening (frequently after dark) to his little sanctuary. Though he owned (and operated) an accessible van for several years, he thought it was important to take advantage of the accessible public transportation system that he had helped develop.

Ron experienced many of the health concerns that come with being a quadriplegic: repeated bouts of urinary-tract infections, pneumonias, acid reflux and decubitus ulcers, all of which occasionally became debilitating to him. In addition, he experienced several personal tragedies along the way, including the shocking suicide of his middle sister, Patricia; plus his much younger brother, James', premature death from congestive heart failure at age 40.

"He and our Mom always led our family to rally around each other in those times of adversity," said second-born sister-sibling, Donna. "I don't know how we would ever have faced those tragic events without their inspirational leadership."

Similarly, the family had to rally around Ron when he lost Duke, the love of his life, in a drug-related car accident. "In spite of its tragic ending, the long-term relationship between Ron and Duke was one thing that could always bring a smile to his face," sister Laronette said. "Even on the last day of his life - when he'd insisted life-support be withdrawn - he fell asleep with a smile on his face looking at the photos of them together."



Duke showing Ron a copy of one of the few photos of them taken together.

Ron was also involved in many other political actions. He was a board member of the Pacific Center for Human Growth (a mental health, social services and educational services agency for LGBTQ individuals in Berkeley); he helped organize the re-structuring of Sacramento and Ashby, including the Rumford Plaza; he sat on the Transportation Committee in Oakland and - with Barrier Breakers - was one of the many political activists responsible for the cutaway curbs and accessible buses we take for granted now in the Bay area - and gradually throughout the nation and the world.

"In spite of all the bad luck in his life, he always seemed to look on the bright side," sister Jackie recalls. "He had a wonderful singing voice and was frequently the life of the party, even when he might not be feeling very well."



Ron and sister, Georgette, decked out for fun at a Halloween party!

His sister, Jackie, and nephew, Ronell, brought Ron's mother (in her wheelchair) to see him the week before both mother and her first-born child died. Though he couldn't speak because of the ventilator he'd been hooked up to for nearly three months, he was able to respond to her parting "I love you, Ron" with his own lip-synced "I love you, too, Mama". He was devastated to find out that she had died two days before he chose to die. On the evening of Friday, 4th December, his sisters gathered around him for one last family portrait, then said their goodbyes, separately and together.



Ron, trying to smile one last time, with sisters, Georgette, Laronette and Jacqueline at his side

"Every time I see a cutaway curb - in Berkeley or the rest of the country - I think of the courage that Ron and his colleagues had back in the '70s," recalled David Dayog Black, who was on the staff at Pacific Center when Ron was on the board there. "Their motto, 'Patient No More', has resounded around the globe with its demand that disabled people be treated as first-class citizens, rather than second- or third-class!"



A cutaway curb near the CIL campus in Berkeley

"I'm sure those cutaway curbs have eased his way into wherever he is now - presumably partying with Mama, Patricia and James," Georgette said.

Editor's Note: Ron asked that his gratitude be expressed for the attention he received from his Lavender Seniors Friendly Visitor, Monica. He particularly appreciated her dedication in calmly reading to him on a regular basis, easing his occasional bouts of anxiety during the last few months of his life, when he couldn't speak.

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.

subject: Oakland Will Reimburse Senior Homeowners (Measure N)

Dear Oakland Homeowner:

The passage of Measure N allowed Senior Citizens (age 65 or over) to be exempt from Oakland Unified School District's Parcel Tax.

If you qualify for the exemption, the District will process the reimbursement for the full \$120 Measure N Parcel tax. In the meantime, pay your property taxes to the County as billed.

To qualify, submit 1) copy of your 2015-16 tax bill and 2) proof of age, which can be a copy of your driver's license or DMV identification card, Medicare card, birth certificate, passport or other government issued ID.

Next year, a 2016-17 application form will automatically be mailed to everyone who qualified for an exemption in 2015-16.

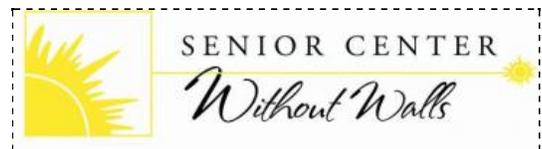
Application may be obtained from OUSD Fiscal Services Office at 1000 Broadway, Suite 450, Oakland, CA 94607 or by email ousdparceltax@ousd.org. Information and details are available at www.ousd.org/parceltax website or call (510) 879-8884.

Please forward this information to other seniors in your network.

Thank you,

Karen Anderson
President, region 3
Congress of California Seniors

Senior Center Without Walls Community Phone Calls



2016 catalog is not posted yet as of this mailing.

View the [website 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.

Hepatitis C: Hidden Epidemic in Seniors

"It's so important that aging Baby Boomers - as well as their younger AND older sisters and brothers - get educated about HCV - and get tested," according to Jay Fournier, Hepatitis C Community Educator for Northern California and Nevada. "For instance, the 1945-1965 group of individuals currently represent over 50% of the infections here in the US."

Jay will be on hand to eat lunch with us and then discuss all the factors that might be involved in HCV infection, detection, treatment and ongoing support.

Whether a person's risk for the virus might come from a blood transfusion (prior to 1992 in the U.S.), sharing unsterile injection equipment, being a health-care worker or caregiver accidentally exposed to needle-stick with contaminated blood, being HIV-positive, receiving a tattoo in an unclean environment, etc., it is just as important to know your HCV status as it is to know your HIV status. Undetected and untreated HCV infection can cause irreparable liver damage, which, in turn, can be life-threatening.

According to the Mayo Clinic website, a person's risk of infection is increased if s/he has any of the following:

- Are a health care worker who has been exposed to infected blood, such as may happen if an infected needle pierces your skin
- Have ever injected or inhaled illicit drugs
- Have HIV
- Received a piercing or tattoo in an unclean environment using unsterile equipment
- Received a blood transfusion or organ transplant before 1992
- Received clotting factor concentrates before 1987
- Received hemodialysis treatments for a long period of time
- Were born to a woman with a hepatitis C infection
- Were ever in prison
- Were born between 1945 and 1965, the age group with the highest incidence of hepatitis C infection*

Join us for a lunch with full-blown LGBTQ camaraderie, followed by an educational presentation on a health issue of vital concern to us, our families and friends.

The North Oakland Senior Center is at 5714 MLK Jr Way (corner of 58th Street). The entrance and parking lot are in the rear of the building.

*<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/hepatitis-c/basics/risk-factors/CON-20030618>



Tenth in Lavender Seniors Film Series: Wednesday,

20th January, 1-3pm, San Leandro Library

"Boys" ["Jongens"]

This 2014 Dutch coming-of-age movie - sub-titled in English - describes the sexual awakening of a handsome teenage track star (Sieger) who catches himself falling in love with another good-looking, athletic and slightly-older track team member (Marc). Though they have eyes for each other immediately after being chosen as teammates for the National Relay Race team, both seem to be struggling with whether to move on their suppressed feelings or not.



There are multi-faceted complications, of course, as in most dramas, LGBT-themed or not. In this case, a good-hearted widowed father is the single parent trying to provide guidance for Sieger and his less functional brother! Meanwhile, Marc witnesses Sieger being kissed by a girl, fueling more confusion in him.

The boys' same-sex yearning finally crystallizes, however, when the four team members go swimming at a rural pond after practice, after which the other two teammates have to go home for dinner. Marc suggests Sieger stay on for a bit more fun, which he initially rejects. But as soon as the other two boys headed home are out of sight, the uncertain and confused Sieger takes the brave decision to bike back to the pond. The boys' subsequent horsing around ends in a tender smooch in the water that director and cinematographer capture in an unexpected overhead shot (as on CD jackets). The rest remains to be seen!

For a really thorough *Hollywood Reporter* review of the film, check this out: <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/boys-jongens-film-review-699129>

The reviewer concludes with:

"Strong performances and an admirably loose-limbed screenplay elevate this mixture of sports movie and coming-out narrative."

The film has won numerous film festival awards and has been successful in theaters in Europe, the U.S. and Australia, which is why Wolfe Video picked up the option for distribution.

The Lavender Seniors film series started being shown in November (third Wednesdays from 1-3pm) at the San Leandro Public Library, 300 Estudillo, San Leandro. Reviews of the space so far have been uniformly positive, so the series will likely continue showing there at least through the end of 2016, at which time the series will be re-evaluated.

Lavender Seniors will provide popcorn, bottled water, Martinelli's apple juice and sparkling cider, plus miniature Reese's peanut butter cups. Following the 1-3pm screening, there will be a brief discussion/evaluation of the film and the issues it brings up for us as LGBT seniors.

The library is a ten-minute (five-block) walk up Estudillo from the San Leandro BART Station. For those with mobility issues, pick-up from the San Leandro BART station can be arranged (12:30-45) by either e-mailing David123Black@gmail.com or calling David (505-917-1616) at least a day in advance.

The AC-Transit 1R has a bus-stop at East 14th and Estudillo, which involves a 1.5-block walk up Estudillo to the library.

For people who are driving, the library is on Estudillo two blocks below Bancroft Avenue in San Leandro. It is accessible via either I-880 or I-580, as well.

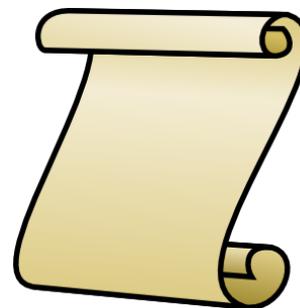
From I-880, get off at the Davis exit and head east toward the hills. Davis eventually becomes Callan, which passes the north side of the library two blocks above East 14th.

Coming on I-580, get off at the Estudillo Exit (#31B) and follow it until you reach 300 Estudillo.

There is ample parking at the library.

Letters to the Editor

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



Lost & Found

A new column for items left behind at Lavender Seniors Functions

If you've lost or found something at a Lavender Seniors event or function, please send your inquiry including the event, date & description of what you found or lost to: info@lavenderseniors.org. Items found while the function facilitator or LS board member is present should be turned in to them.



Monthly Events

Out Standing Seniors

January 5 & 19 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

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 !!! New More Accessible Location!!!

January 6, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

San Leandro Public Library, 300 Estudillo, Meeting Room C, San Leandro

A portion of this meeting is open to the public.

Queerly Aging Lesbians

January 7 & 21, 1:30 p.m. (1st and 3rd Thursdays)

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

Find support and like-minded wonderful people!

Senior Men's Group

January 12 & 26, 1:30 p.m. (2nd and 4th Thursdays)

The Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley

Co-sponsor: The Pacific Center, 510-548-8283

Feel alone? Need to find space to be yourself and chat with others? Join us!

San Leandro Potluck

January 9, 12:00-2:00 p.m. (2nd Saturday)

Unity Church, 1420 Santa Maria Street, San Leandro (Corner of Joaquin & Santa Maria)

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

Oakland Lunch Bunch

Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging & Adult Services

January 15, 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: "Hepatitis C: Hidden Epidemic in Seniors" see info above.

LGBT Film Series !!! New More Accessible Location!!!

January 20, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (3rd Wednesday of each month)

San Leandro Public Library, 300 Estudillo, lecture hall, San Leandro

This month's movie is: "Boys" "Jongens" see info above.



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