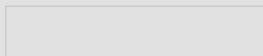




# Lavender Notes

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



July 2015

*Celebrating 20+ years of service and positive change*

*Volume 22, Issue 7*



## Supreme Court Rules in Favor of Gay Marriage 6/26/2015 White House Lit in Rainbow Colors

## EQUALITY CALIFORNIA

June 26, 2015

Today is one of the most historic days in the history of the LGBT rights movement. Just minutes ago, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a 5-4 ruling, swept away laws that bar same-sex couples from marrying in the 13 states that still have them in place. The ruling is a huge victory not just for couples living in those states; it means those of us in the other 37 states no longer will have to leave our rights at the border when we move or travel.

Our community as a whole should feel very proud; today is the culmination of decades of hard, often heartbreaking work by the many people who got us to this point: Mary Bonauto, of Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, who argued the case in front of the Court and won some of the earliest victories in the long fight for marriage; Lambda Legal, the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the organizations that represented our community in the consolidated Supreme Court cases and patiently paved the way here by developing decades of case law; former and current staff and board members at Equality California, Freedom to Marry, American Foundation for Equal



Rights, Human Rights Campaign and other organizations across the country who helped shift public opinion in our favor in a remarkably short time; and most of all, the countless LGBT people and allies who handed out flyers, manned phone banks, held demonstrations through city streets, and had the courage to allow everyone to see their weddings, meet their children and get to know them as friends, neighbors and co-workers.

It's important to remember that our struggle for equal rights is far from over. Across the country, we can still be fired, evicted or denied service in restaurants, hotels or other businesses because of who we are. LGBT youth still experience bullying in schools and are four times more likely to attempt suicide. LGBT adults also experience high rates of poverty and violence. Here in California, the transgender community is the target of yet another ballot initiative effort by right wing extremists that would strip away their most basic dignity. And more than a quarter million LGBT undocumented immigrants in California have no access to healthcare.

Although there is much work that remains, today is a time for celebration. Thousands of supporters of equal rights for everyone will turn out for rallies across the state.

Today, let's celebrate as a community. Tomorrow, let's recommit ourselves to the next stage in our fight for full equality.

In solidarity,

Rick Zbur  
Executive Director

---

*Equality California is California's largest statewide lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender civil rights organization focused on creating a fair and just society. Our mission is to achieve and maintain full and lasting equality, acceptance and social justice for all people in our diverse LGBT communities, inside and outside of California. Our mission includes advancing the health and well-being of LGBT Californians through direct healthcare service advocacy and education. Through electoral, advocacy, education and mobilization programs, we strive to create a broad and diverse alliance of LGBT people, educators, government officials, communities of color and faith, labor, business, and social justice communities to achieve our goals.*

---

## Karen A. Anderson, Outspoken Black Lesbian Civil Rights Activist

### *Lavender Seniors Monthly Profile*

Seniors in the East Bay and throughout California - LGBT and otherwise - are fortunate that Karen Anderson found her way from her beginnings in "the projects" of South Chicago to Oakland 3+ decades ago! When she was eight years old, her parents had saved enough money to move the family out of the projects and into a single-family dwelling in a 92% white neighborhood.



**Karen with her doll in South Chicago in the late 1940s - Karen's high school graduation picture in 1961**

"There was no overt violence," she recalled, "but we could quickly see the beginnings of 'white flight' from the Englewood neighborhood. When I started in the new school, there were only five or six other black kids; by the time I graduated, the school had become nearly all-black."

She described a geographical "dividing line" that everybody knew not to cross, even though her parents never told her explicitly about that segregation.

"We felt at an early age that we had it much better than our black brothers and sisters 'in the South', so we just lived with that division in our community as we were growing up. My siblings and I knew from an early age, however, that we were mandated to go on to college and 'make something of ourselves,' since we were aware how much our parents had sacrificed for us."

While she was finishing her bachelor's degree in Education at Chicago State University and her master's degree in Inner City Studies from Northeastern Illinois State University, however, she became involved in the Rev. Jesse Jackson's Operation PUSH. That activism continued while she pursued post-graduate work in Educational Administration at Northwestern University. Through that activism, she met many black activists - and other allies - at all levels of local, regional and national politics. She lived at home during her university years, a "commuter" student, never experiencing such things as dormitory or sorority life.



**Operation PUSH Ignites Activism: Karen with Mary Wilson (an original "Supreme") - Karen with Quincy Jones**

Other than her civil rights activism, however, she focused primarily on succeeding academically and focused primarily on group activities and trying to reconcile her own expanding values with what she was being taught in the Seventh Day Adventist church she attended with her parents.

"My religiously conservative upbringing, coupled with the discipline of academic concentration, pretty much consumed me during that time," Karen recalled. "It was important to carry myself with the family pride of 3 generations of service to the Black community, hearing about white people acting out during the period of Civil Rights activation. I certainly didn't buy the concept of a punishing, all-involved God who would continue to let all of these injustices keep happening."

After graduation, she worked at various jobs in and around Cook County, Illinois. She taught for 8 years in the Chicago Public Schools system, then became a Federal Probation Officer. It was during that time - having never before met any out LGBT people - that she had her "first date" with a woman to whom she was very attracted. She still didn't have the vocabulary to formally identify as a lesbian, but realized in her mid-30's that she had fallen in love with a woman.

"We moved in together," Karen recalled, "and I thought we were relatively happy. But one day, after about two years, my lover woke up and announced she wasn't through with guys yet. Obviously, we broke up. I was broken hearted, confused and exasperated for nearly another two years. There was no 'welcoming community' on the South side of Chicago to comfort me. I basically brought myself out in the '70s, finally admitting to myself that I was a lesbian, something I never formally shared with anyone in my family.

"By 1985, however, I was finally fed up with Bible Belt mentality, religious homophobia, 50-degree-below winters and failed relationships. I transferred my Probation and Military positions to San Francisco, arriving full of hope, excitement and trepidation during the height of the AIDS epidemic."

Shortly after arriving in the Bay area, Karen met Gwendolyn Booze, long-time owner of the Barn Restaurant, a legendary East Bay soul food restaurant. It was through Gwen that she became deeply involved in East Bay politics and was introduced to the lesbian community culture of the era.



**Karen as military recruit (later military instructor) - Karen, Chair, Congress of California Seniors, Region 3**

Six years later, they began a committed relationship. In 1998, they became registered domestic partners via the City of Berkeley. In 2006, they became registered domestic partners at the State of California level. Finally, on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2008, they joined fifteen other couples to become among the first legally married same-sex couples wed in Oakland and in the State of California. The ceremony was conducted by then-Mayor Ron Dellums and witnessed by Congresswoman Barbara Lee. Next year, Karen and Gwen will celebrate their silver anniversary as a committed couple.



**Karen with Gwen on "the happiest day of my life" (waving marriage license) - later in formal portrait**

After retiring from 20 years of service with the U.S. District Courts, as well as 20 years in the U.S. Army Reserves, she was hired by the Peralta Community College District as a Benefits Analyst. After ten years there, she made her 3<sup>rd</sup> retirement in 2008.

The list of Karen's past/current socio-political accomplishments and awards in promoting coalition-building across all boundaries reads like a "Who's Who" of California political activists, both during and after her work-life as a Human Resources Specialist and military instructor:

#### ***CURRENT AFFILIATIONS***

- Commissioner on the Alameda County Advisory Commission on Aging
- Chair, Congress of California Seniors, Region 3 (CCS)
- Activist, California Alliance of Retired Americans (CARA)
- Board member, United Seniors of Oakland-Alameda County (USOAC)
- Active Member, Black Military Women (a national organization-BMW)
- Active Board Member, East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club
- Current Board Member, Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County
- Current Board Member, California Senior Leaders
- Current Member, Past Board Member, NIA Collective
- Member, Lavender Seniors of the East Bay
- Past President, current state board member, Black Women Organized for Political Action, Oakland-Berkeley Chapter (BWOPA)

#### ***PAST AFFILIATIONS***

- Past Board Member, Oakland Human Relations Commission
- Past Board Member, League of Women Voters, Oakland Chapter
- Past Member, Parents and Friends of Lesbian and Gays (PFLAG)

#### ***AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS***

- Recipient, William "Brandy" Moore Lifetime Achievement Award for outstanding dedication to the Black LGBT Community (2004)
- Recipient, Volunteer of the Year Award, East Bay Area Business & Professional Women (2013)
- Recipient, Honoree Award, BWOPA Ella Hill Hutch Chapter (2012)

#### ***PARTICIPATIONS***

- Activist in the fight against DOMA and Proposition 8
- Activist in the fight to expand Social Security and Medicare benefits to Seniors

"It is important, as we grow older, to realize and recognize that we must participate in our future or it will be defined for us, whether we like it or not," Karen opines. "We are only as strong as the group we identify with. As seniors, we may find strength in our numbers but only as we use it. Let's not outlive our usefulness. We gotta do what we gotta do! THAT's our legacy."



**Karen ("baby" of the family) with older brother and sister**

In her retirement, Karen is particularly enjoying her role as mother to Gwen's sons as well as being grandmother to Gwen's grandchildren. She remains close with her siblings, their children and grandchildren. Her hobbies include Tai Chi, bowling and table pool. She is a licensed Practitioner with the East Bay Church of Religious Science.

Karen is a strong woman that we continue to appreciate as an advocate for so many under- and un-served, traditionally-marginalized populations in our culture!

For anyone interested in seeing Karen in action, please read the announcement below about her co-presentation - with others from Adult Protective Services - on psychological/emotional, financial and physical abuse of elders. This will take place during the Third Friday Lunch Bunch at the North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Way, Oakland, 17<sup>th</sup> July, 12 noon to 2pm. Please join us!

---

## 48 Years of Marriage

### Couple's half-century love story mirrors gay community's growth

This week the SF Chronicle had a feature article about Donald Bird and David Young. A gay couple together for 48 years and married 3 different times. Follow the link below to view and read the full article.

[Link to Donald and David](#)

---

## Monthly Book Review

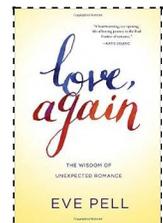
### *Love Again* by *Eve Pell* - *Ballantine Books*

Senior citizens emerge as an independent class. They are having love affairs on a large scale. They are the largest group in one line dating.

One gay male couple is Howard Solomon and George Oliver. The female couple is Dusty Miller and Dorothy Cresswell. Both couples are in their 60s.

This is a must read for gay and lesbian couples.

-Frank Howell



---

## Monthly Profiles

Beginning in May through December 2015, ***Lavender Notes*** will feature a profile of an East Bay LGBT senior (June's profile was a tribute to Hayward resident, Charlene Shores). This month's profile is of activist Karen Anderson.

If you - or someone you know and admire - would be interested in being interviewed and profiled in the newsletter for this monthly series, please either E-Mail [JohnDavid@lavenderseniors.org](mailto:JohnDavid@lavenderseniors.org) or phone him at 510-532-8951 to make him aware of the proposed East Bay LGBT senior. Otherwise, he'll be pulling names out of a hat or relying on his own feeble memory to come up with appropriate seniors to be profiled (in the most positive non-police-related sense of that word in this day and age).

---

## Issues of Psychological/Emotional, Financial and Physical Elder Abuse

### Third Friday Lunch Bunch at NOSC, 17<sup>th</sup> July:

Many of today's LGBT seniors have experienced rejection, discrimination, verbal and/or physical abuse over the years because of their sexual identity - even in their own families. In their childhood, youth and adulthood, they may have felt there was nowhere to turn for support, since people in authority - who frequently agreed that the abuse was "justified" and/or "deserved" - would either do nothing or join in the abuse.

Fast forward a half-century or more. An LGBT senior discovers that some electronic equipment is missing after a new "friend" has come to visit; another is pushed about roughly or shouted at during an argument at a lesbian bar; a third is aware that a much-younger lover is writing and cashing checks taken without permission from a checkbook.

Is there anyone who will listen, assess and act on these seniors' suspicions of elder abuse in 2015? Will their complaints be merely dismissed as "that one's getting what s/he deserves for being a pervert"?

Following the Lunch Bunch meal on Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> July, a pair of presenters will discuss the various psychological/emotional, financial and physical elder abuse issues facing seniors, including those issues that LGBT seniors may be particularly vulnerable to. Our own Karen Anderson (see profile in this issue), with the County Commission on Aging, will be joined by Anya Vines, who works with Adult Protective Services, to discuss the various forms of elder abuse and what recourse seniors have if they feel they (or someone they know) have been or are becoming victims of such mistreatment.

The buffet-style meal is served at 12 noon with the discussion following announcements by 12:45pm. The North Oakland Senior Center is located at 5714 Martin Luther King Way (at 58<sup>th</sup> Street) in the former Merritt College Building. Parking is available behind the building near the entrance, which is, of course, wheelchair accessible.

---

5 YEARS OF PRIDE!

# castro valley pride

AWARENESS, COMMUNITY, DIVERSITY

SATURDAY  
JULY 11

12PM - 5PM



CHARM ALINA  
MISTRESS OF  
CEREMONIES



THE  
ETHEL MERMAN  
EXPERIENCE



XAVIER  
TOSCANO



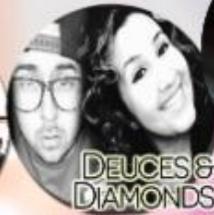
SHORTY  
DOOWOP



RAQUELA



KIPPY  
MARKS



DEUCES &  
DIAMONDS



SJS THEATRICAL  
PRODUCTIONS

CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL  
19501 REDWOOD ROAD  
CASTRO VALLEY, CA 94546  
REDWOOD ROAD SIDE  
NEAR HEYER AVENUE

VENDORS, FOOD AND MUCH MORE  
A FREE FAMILY-FRIENDLY, ALCOHOL FREE, LGBTQ PRIDE EVENT  
WEBSITE (DONATE, VOLUNTEER, SIGN UP TO BE A VENDOR): [WWW.CASTROVALLEYPRIDE.WIX.COM/HOME](http://WWW.CASTROVALLEYPRIDE.WIX.COM/HOME)  
20288 SANTA MARIA AVENUE, #2291, CASTRO VALLEY, CA 94546  
CASTROVALLEYPRIDE@GMAIL.COM | (415) 716-6315  
FACEBOOK.COM/CVPRIDE

Castro Valley Pride turns 5 years old! Once again we are bringing a fun-filled family event with food, games, booths, performers and speakers to Castro Valley. Our wish is to create a safe, welcoming space for the LGBT community, our neighbors, family, friends and allies to enjoy a beautiful summer day together.

We want to make Castro Valley a place for everyone to feel comfortable being themselves without being judged. There is NOTHING wrong with you, and we will accept you just as you are. You are welcomed and affirmed here. This is YOUR safe place in Castro Valley and this is your community!

WHERE: Castro Valley High School Stadium Plaza  
Redwood Road & Heyer Street.  
Castro Valley

WHEN: Saturday, July 11th, 2015, 12:00pm - 5:00pm

For sponsorship opportunities, please email us at [castrovalleypride@gmail.com](mailto:castrovalleypride@gmail.com).

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](http://www.caregiver.org).

## Chutney Popcorn

### *Lavender Seniors LGBT Film Series*

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays, 1-3pm,  
Thunderbolt Theater,  
Marina Community Center,  
15301 Wicks Blvd., San Leandro

15<sup>th</sup> July, Showing of "Chutney Popcorn".

The Lavender Seniors Film Series presents its fourth monthly film of the 2015 season beginning at 1pm on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> July, in the Thunderbolt Theater at Marina Community Center, 15301 Wicks Avenue, San Leandro.

"Chutney Popcorn" is a comedy-drama focusing on two sisters in an East-Indian/American family. Reena, the younger sister, is a newly-out lesbian involved in a committed relationship with a white woman. Sarita is being married to a white man, something the girls' mother has had some problems accepting, but her reaction to that is tame compared with her reaction to Reena's lesbianism.

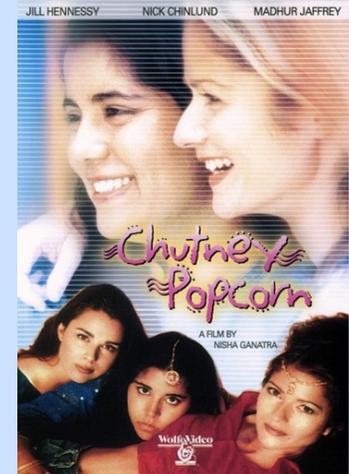
Reena, a motorcycle-driving lesbian artist (photography and designing elaborate henna tattoos), is considered by her very traditional mother (who invents traditions that don't even exist!) to be a renegade who is merely going through a phase. Though she perceives Sarita as the "ideal daughter," Mom does, however, depend on Reena to help take care of mechanical things around her house.

When Sarita's dream of becoming a mother and raising a family with her husband is thwarted by infertility issues, younger sister, Reena, steps in and suggests becoming a surrogate mother for the couple. Subsequent complications for the network of family and friends - plus Reena's lesbian relationship - are simultaneously very humorous and deeply thought-provoking. After all, the child would still be related by blood to Sarita and the rest of the family.

Refreshments (popcorn, water and apple juice) will be served to the audience.

To see a trailer of this very funny - and very deep - family drama, check it out either at <http://www.nytimes.com/video/movies/100000003311241/chutney-popcorn.html?playlistId=100000003277281> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-7RBW7PWY0>

Hope to see you there to share and discuss the film with other "kindred spirits" and like-minded individuals in the East Bay LGBT community!



# Billy DeFrank LGBT Center

*'Vintage Program' Offers Elder LGBT Support in San Jose*



The Billy DeFrank LGBT Community Center Vintage Program provides nutritional lunches, emotional support groups, recreation and social activities, and educational programs for LGBT seniors aged 60 and above. These activities reduce social isolation for LGBT seniors and promote integration into the larger LGBT community and the San Jose Community as a whole.

The program consists of several different components. The premiere program is the Vintage Lunch program, which has provided a free or low cost nutritious lunch since October 2002. Participants meet on Wednesdays and Fridays at 11:30 AM for lunch followed by activities that focus on promoting wellness, supplying relevant and culturally appropriate information, and reducing isolation. These activities have included:

- legal and financial seminars
- diabetes education and screening
- medical benefits workshops
- mental and physical exercise opportunities
- memoir writing classes
- art exhibits
- travel slideshows and talks
- dining out
- movies
- trips to various cultural events in San Jose and the greater Bay area.

The Vintage Program receives funding from Santa Clara County, and on occasion from the City of San Jose. We have a group of about 15-20 regulars and are always open to new attendees.

## EMAIL

For more information about the Vintage Program, please email [vintage@defrank.org](mailto:vintage@defrank.org).

## NEWSLETTER

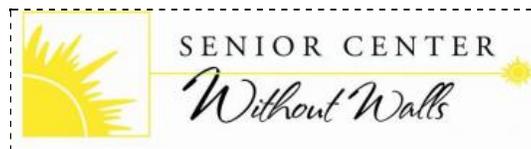
[Click here to join the Vintage email list or to manage your current email list subscriptions.](#)

Be sure to select "Vintage Newsletter List" in the Interests section of the form.

---

## Senior Center Without Walls

*Community Phone Calls*



### Personal Emergency Preparedness Training

**Fridays 10:00 - 11:00am** (English), **11:30 - 12:30pm** (Spanish)

July 3, August 7

Learn simple things you can do to prepare for an emergency, such as what items need to go into your basic emergency kit at home, safety tips, tools, and other health considerations. Presented by Community Resources for Independent Living and sponsored by Alameda County Public Health.

### Book Club

**Twice a month! Every 1st & 3rd Saturdays, 3 - 4 pm**

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

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](mailto:info@seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org).

---

## Monthly Events

### Support Discussion Group for Aging Lesbian Women

**July 2 & 16, 1:30 p.m.** (1st and 3rd Thursdays)

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

[Find support and like-minded wonderful people!](#)

### Out Standing Seniors

**July 7 & 21, 11:15-2:00 p.m.** (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**

**July 8, 7:00-8:00 p.m.**

1420 Santa Maria Street, San Leandro

A portion of this meeting is open to the public.

### **Senior Men's Group**

**July 9 & 23 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**

**July 11, 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!](#)

### **LGBT Film Festival**

**July 15, 1:00-3:00 p.m.** (3rd Wednesday of each month)

Marina Community Center, 15301 Wicks Blvd, San Leandro

Showing: See film information earlier in this newsletter.

### **Oakland Lunch Bunch**

Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging & Adult Services

**July 17, 12:30-2:00 p.m.** (3rd Friday of each month)

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

[Program: see program information earlier in this newsletter.](#)

### **Billy DeFrank LGBT Center**

'Vintage' support program.

Sponsored by Santa Clara County and the City of San Jose

Every Wednesday and Friday at 11:30.

**938 The Alameda, San Jose, CA**

[Click Here for more information.](#)

## **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

Frank Howell

Barbara Jue

Mike Trutner

Beckie Underwood

## **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!*

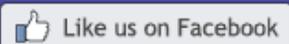
Chapel of the Chimes, Oakland  
4499 Piedmont Avenue  
Oakland, CA 94611

Allison Rodman, Family Service Counselor  
... Care, Comfort & Plan  
[allison.rodman@lifemarkgroup.com](mailto:allison.rodman@lifemarkgroup.com)



## Lavender Seniors

is a project of  
LIFE ElderCare



Email: [info@lavenderseniors.org](mailto:info@lavenderseniors.org)  
Website: <http://lavenderseniors.org>

3300 Capitol Avenue  
Fremont, CA 94538  
510-574-2073