



Lavender Notes

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March 2020 - Volume 26 Issue 3

STORIES OF OUR LIVES

Elena Condes, J.D.

Those of us who grew up in the '40s, '50s and '60s reading the novels of Jane Austen, Louisa May Alcott and Laura Ingalls Wilder can be forgiven for buying the all-consuming myth of the nuclear family – wagons circled around to protect the vulnerable young at all costs. Similarly, with the advent of television in the '40s and '50s – some of our families didn't have such a thing in their living rooms until the kids were teenagers or young adults! – the family fare available (e.g., "Ozzie and Harriet" or "Father Knows Best") still depicted the vision of nuclear family as Musketeers with "one for all; all for one" as its driving force.

Those romantic novels and pioneering family rom-coms on TV had no LGBTQ characters, however, so maybe that family togetherness motto might have been challenged. This month's featured "Stories of Our Lives," subject, Elena Condes, now a candidate for Alameda County Superior Court, knows first-hand something about how those stories may have changed with the introduction of a lesbian character.

Elena was born in Tucson in May 1962, the second child and eldest girl of four siblings. Her mother was born in Mexico and her father's family also came from Mexico, so the family was first- and second-generation Mexican-American (more frequently referred to as Latino/Latina or, more simply, Latin-x these days). Neither of her

parents went beyond high school education.

"Ours was a very close-knit, staunchly Catholic family with strong roots in Mexico," Elena recalls. "Each summer we would spend time with our grandmother, great-grandmother, many aunts, uncles and cousins in Nogales, Arizona, a border town just an hour away. My childhood was mostly carefree in a time when we kids could go out and play in the Sonora Desert all day and just come back at sundown with no questions asked."



Elena – Age 8 – "I still have the same hairdo today!"

She first became active in sports as a nine-year-old, when she began playing team softball.

"I came of age in an era when girls' athletics were just starting to be acknowledged and funded, in at least a token way," Elena recounts. "By the time I was a freshman at Santa Rita High School, there was at least a varsity-level girls' softball team; by my sophomore year, there was a junior varsity team I could join and hone my skills for varsity competition in my last two years. I hate to brag, but we came in second during my junior year and won the state championship in my senior year!"

At age 16, however, a less happy chapter of her life erupted on the scene of her family home, nestled in a primarily-white neighborhood with assimilation being promoted for the Condes kids!

"Someone sent a letter to my parents 'outing' me as a teenage lesbian," Elena remarks, noting thoughtfully what a life-changing moment it was in her life. "My parents took me into the bathroom – where all really personal or controversial conversations took place. After they made their initial accusation, I knew I had to make important choices right there on the spot. Within a few minutes, I'd decided to be honest with myself. I was not going to lie to them, which I knew would take the heat off somewhat. I chose to tell the truth – I'd known I was a lesbian for at least a year – though I doubt I even knew the word at the time – or whether it would've rolled off my tongue if I DID know it! I just knew I had to prepare for the consequences of my admission – guilty as charged!"

The consequences did indeed begin to become apparent the very next day.

"The first stop on that long and painful ten-year-long road was to the priest," Elena says. "After trying to set aside my feelings as a good Catholic, lots of praying and self-torture for so many years, wondering what was wrong with me, I was face-to-face with God's representative who put an exclamation point on my own self-doubts. He drew us one of those Venn diagrams with me, the family, the church, God and community the way it SHOULD be – all intersecting in significant ways – and showed me that I would be all alone – disconnected from family, church, God and community if I didn't mend my ways! Such a cruel thing it was to do to any adolescent who would already be struggling with her identity under the best of circumstances."

One of the most pivotal events early in her coming-of-age journey involved an

important referral from a high-school counselor, to whom she had confided some of her struggle

"She urged me to go see a specific counselor at Planned Parenthood," Elena recalls. "That was one of the most rewarding experiences in my young life. That counselor at Planned Parenthood asked me to describe all of the reasons why I felt the way I did and all of the reasons why I should NOT feel this way. She challenged me to do some very adult reasoning at the age of 15 or 16 about who I was and why. Her wise counsel helped me in my decision to link up with my first girlfriend at about age 16! I will always be a supporter of Planned Parenthood for what that counselor helped me do!"

From being "outed" (by a letter she never was allowed to see – she believes it may have been sent by somebody who didn't like her girl-friend) – through high school – Elena stayed mostly with friends and other family members until after she graduated at age 17. She immediately moved into an apartment with her girl-friend and other members of the athletic teams that made up the bulk of her friendships at that point.

"Many of the girls on the various girls' athletic teams were lesbians," Elena surmised, "which made for a safe community for us in a not-so-welcoming environment. My first girl-friend and I were together off-and-on for the better part of ten years. In fact, we bought a house together in Tucson when we were in our early 20s."

She supported herself during this re-grouping transitional period, working with (and eventually managing) a chain of donut shops in the Tucson area.

"Once I'd 'fled the nest,' I knew I wouldn't be getting support from home – my survival was up to me at this early age," Elena recalls. "I never thought of myself as brave or courageous; it was just what I needed to do to take care of myself trying my wings as an out lesbian."

She attended Pima Community College for a few semesters and then enrolled at the University of Arizona as a business administration major, focusing on finance. She had to organize her life around work and school, so took classes on her days off from work. In addition, of course, she was still trying to reconcile her new-found identity with what she had been taught by family and church for so many years.

"It was a difficult time to be a lesbian in Tucson," Elena recalls. "Police would still routinely show up at the bars and try to intimidate people by walking through authoritatively. If you were a teacher, a police officer or a politician, you would run out the back door rather than risk being arrested or otherwise exposed. The UA campus was not very progressive yet, either – no such thing as LGBT support organizations. 'Tucson Pride' was a cordial but laughingly-small picnic."

When she graduated in August '89, she decided to apply to law schools, where she felt she might learn the skills to do more good for more vulnerable people. She chose Golden Gate University in San Francisco, a city known to be hospitable to the LGBT (no "Q" yet in those days) community – and, for a Tucson girl, having more pleasant weather than some of the places where she had been accepted back east.

By January of '90, she was in the Bay area, embarking on what has turned out to be a 30-year immersion in the law. The first semester, she lived with a friend in Napa, but the commute – driving to Vallejo and taking the ferry across – soon became too tedious. She lived for a while in a Residence Club in San Francisco, then wound up in Berkeley, where she lives to this day. She spent that first summer of law school back at the donut shops in Tucson, but was hooked on the East Bay and never repeated that return to the past. She graduated from Golden Gate in December 1992, passed the bar the second time around and launched her legal career.

"I really wanted to be a criminal defense attorney, since so many in my community are wrongly accused, arrested, prosecuted, convicted and incarcerated," Elena submits. "After interviewing for posts with various Public Defender Offices, I had the good fortune to interview with a Hayward attorney who offered me sage advice. He reminded me that I would never be as poor as I was then; therefore, I might want to make the leap into a practice of my own now, since I really couldn't get any poorer – and wouldn't want to be this poor again. He warned me that – if I started my own firm – I'd likely not have a flood of clients at first, but that once the trickle became a steady stream, I would be grateful I'd taken that route. I did that and have never looked back. After 26 years in practice, I'm grateful I heeded his advice and made that choice!"

She has been active in the East Bay La Raza Lawyers Association, serving as its board president at one point. The group focuses on mentoring and providing scholarships for potential Latin-x lawyers, including undocumented students who may have been deemed ineligible for student loans. This situation became particularly acute after the controversial 1994 passage of Prop. 187, an attempt to deny access to non-emergency health care, public education and other services for "illegal immigrants" in California.

Beginning three days after its passage, the proposition staggered through the courts for five years – before being summarily killed in 1999, with its final death-knell in 2014 via passage of SB 396. The anti-immigrant sentiment symbolized by passage of Prop. 187, however, remains a challenge to this day – at the local, regional, state, national and international level.

"Aspiring lawyers from our community can have a tough time getting the education they need to make it through law school, much less to the bench" Elena explains. "In fact, there have only been two Latina judges on the bench at a given time in Alameda County, beginning with the Honorable Cecilia Castellanos in 1997. As a result, the bench doesn't reflect our place as Latinas in the community. That was one of the reasons I decided a few months ago to try to earn the seat of the amazing Judge Carol Brosnahan, who announced her retirement last October after more than 40 years!"



Meanwhile, the situation with family and friends has improved greatly over the years. And so has her personal life. In 2010, Elena met the love of her life,

Danielle. They became committed wives in a 2011 ceremony at Danielle's father's home in L.A.; then officially legalized in a second ceremony after the Supreme Court decision in Obergefell v. Hodges in June 2015.

"I was single for much of the '90s – when I was totally focused on developing my criminal law practice," Elena recalls. "Then I became a mother to my beautiful daughter at age 38, so spent those first ten years or so focused on juggling work and parenthood. As fate would have it, I guess I was ready to start dating again and was set up on a blind date at a wine-and-chocolate bar on Shattuck. We were asked if we wanted a 'flight' – a term I'd never heard before – but the waitress brought us a tray of different wines, we talked through the evening and the rest is herstory! We got married a year later – and again five years after that for emphasis!"



Elena and Danielle's Wedding, officiated by pastor and witnessed by Elena's daughter

In the course of making her decision to run for Judge, Elena participated in the Emerge California program, designed to help prepare women to run for office. Her wife, Danielle, has become her campaign manager, utilizing her many communication and organizational skills.



Elena (center) with the board of East Bay La Raza Lawyers Association – at her campaign kick-off party

No matter the outcome of the March 3rd election, Elena knows that her life will continue to be productive and rewarding.

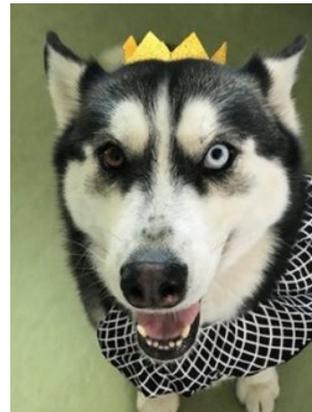
"I have an amazing wife and daughter, a successful law practice and my commitment to my community," Elena says. "If someone else is chosen outright, this three-month sprint will still have been worth it. If I'm one of the two chosen for the November ballot, that sprint becomes a marathon that I'm committed to running for my community."

When asked for any words of advice for other LGBTQ who might face somewhat repressive situations like she found herself in back in the 1970s, she invoked the "It Gets Better" campaign launched the year she met Danielle.

This campaign has included two- to three-minute videos created by people like then-President Obama in the wake of numerous suicides by teens – bullied for being LGBTQ (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzcAR6yQhF8> for that video).

“As hard as it might seem – to be ‘true to yourself’ when it feels like the whole world is against you and who you are,” Elena advises, “the ‘It Gets Better’ messages – which weren’t around when I was going through my own rejection and re-definition – are inspirational. You only have yourself and your character – don’t let anybody take that away from you, no matter what your religious or cultural background. My commitment to justice remains all the stronger because I had the crucial help I needed in my journey along the way.”

Some of the proof in her own personal life is that her Latin-x family members came by plane, train and car from near and far – from Tucson and Nogales, as well as the East Coast – to her L.A. wedding with Danielle.



Elena hiking Yosemite with daughter, 2000; and loyal Lila wearing her Ruth Bader Ginsburg “dissent collar”

“There were times when I thought I’d permanently lost my family and some of my friends,” Elena recalls. “But healing can happen before you even really notice it. When all of those aunts and uncles arrived from Nogales – and even from Virginia – I felt a bittersweet sense of comfort that I had made it this far in life with my integrity and character intact. Nobody can ever take that away from me!”

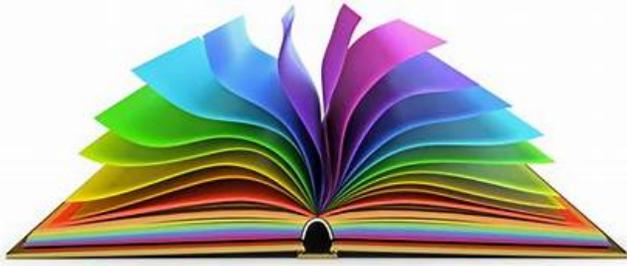
Thank you, Elena, for all you’ve done – and continue doing – for our community!

[**Editor’s note:** The above story - like last month’s story on Mark Fickes, as well as all previous and future “Stories of Our Lives” columns - is meant only to feature members of the LGBTQ community or our allies. As a 501(c)(3) organization, we are strictly prohibited from endorsing any political candidates per IRS regulations below. We apologize if anyone interprets any such story ever appearing in this column as an endorsement.

Per IRS Code for Tax-Exempt organizations:

The Restriction of Political Campaign Intervention Section 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Organization

Under the Internal Revenue Code, 501(c)(3) organizations are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office.]



Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution

By David Carter

Carter is a widely read author of books on Salvador Dali and George Santayana. The text is filled with drama, terror and inspired rebellion. In June 1969, drag queens, gays and blacks lead a riot. The police run in terror. The governor is stunned and baffled.

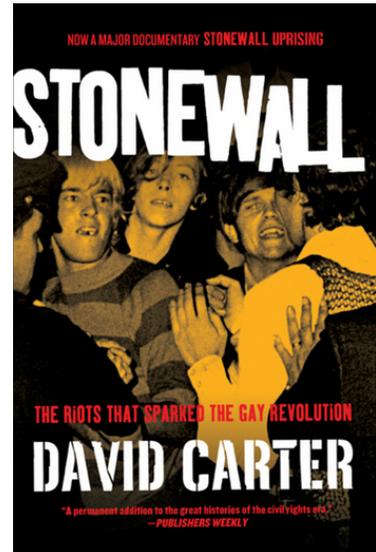
The book is loaded with pictures and eye witness accounts.

After the rebellion, Bill Katzenberg and Charles Pitts laid the foundation for permanent gay liberation groups.

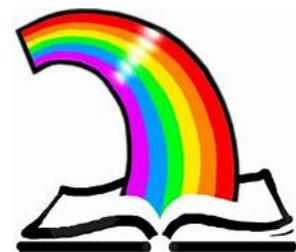
There is a joint meeting of the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis. Quick action is demanded. An official organization, The Gay Liberation Front is organized.

Seniors and young activists will be moved to continue the fight.

- Frank J. Howell



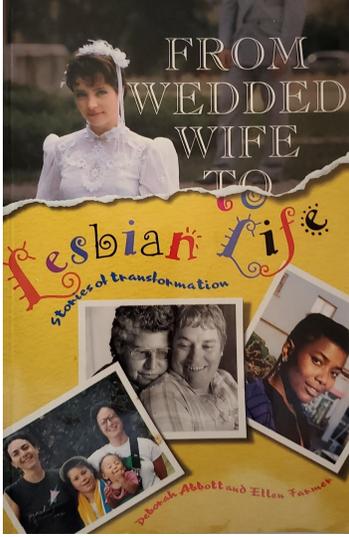
BONUS BOOK REVIEW



From Wedded Wife to Lesbian Life: Stories of Transformation

Edited by Deborah Abbott and Ellen Farmer

Old-timers from Lavender Seniors' early days, 1994-2010, may recognize the two women in the middle bottom photo on the cover of this sometimes delightful, other times dark and/or bittersweet 1995 anthology published by The Crossing Press. Two of our very own co-founders, Stella Lopez-Armijo and Ina Mae Murri – who we lost in a tragic Idaho car



accident nearly a decade ago – July 2010 – are featured among the 44 very moving personal stories published in this amazing never-outdated anthology. (The book's fourth edition is still available in libraries and at several places by googling it on line.)

Here's a quote from Stella on the back cover of the book (and page 18 of her chapter, entitled "For the Softness of a Woman.")

"I would be in bed with my husband and I would be thinking of my woman neighbor across the street. I'd be all turned on and really enjoying what I was doing. I thought there was something wrong with me, that I was the only one who had these feelings, because who do you ask? If I'd had a book or something..."

Like most of the other women in the book, Stella and Ina Mae had no regrets – but rather joy – about having the children and grandchildren in their lives that resulted from their heterosexual marriages. Several of the featured women mention that lesbians having children via adoption, "artificial insemination", via sperm banks, co-parenting with gay men, etc., was not on the horizon yet when they were making their early-life decisions.

This book includes stories of women from all over the country and all walks of life. There are inspiring stories from, for example, Black, White, Latina, Asian, Native American, Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist women of various ages when they discovered or re-discovered that they were actually lesbians who would be happier with a woman – or perhaps alone – than they were with their husbands. Thus, the book title! Indeed, most of the women in this book – if they are still alive – would be considered seniors by now!

Co-Editor Deb Abbott – who was long-time director of the LGBTQ Center at UC-Santa Cruz – was also one of the women featured in the book. Ellen Farmer, the other co-editor – who was an editor at UCSC – also has a contribution in the book.

Reviewed by Dr. John David Dupree

[Editor's Note: John David, Lavender Seniors Board Secretary, and his husband, Jumaane, live 4-6 months per year in their Costa Rican retirement home, where they have enough leisure time to read to each other a few hours most days. They alternate between LGBTQ literature, the classics and historical novels. They will be sharing reviews sporadically of some of their most-loved LGBTQ books. Stay tuned for next month's review of "Red, White and Royal Blue", the 2019 fictional account of the love affair – begun in fictional 2016 – between Alex Claremont-Díaz, the biracial "First Son" (FSOTUS) of America's first woman President, and Henry, the UK's Prince of Wales, heir to the British throne. Amazon Studios has reportedly bought the movie rights and it's rumored there'll soon be a film – probably destined for awards programs – made based on this NYTimes Best Seller. The author has already suggested some stars for the various key roles.]

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](mailto:karen@lavenderseniors.org) 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 Rainbow Lunch

March 14

All Saints Episcopal Church
911 Dowling Blvd, San Leandro

Program: Join Victor & Nolan for an informative program.

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



Tell it to the Bees

In 1952, Dr. Jean Markham (Academy-Award-winner Anna Paquin) returns to her Scottish hometown to take over her late father's medical practice. She soon becomes ostracized by the community when she begins a passionate romance with Lydia (Holliday Grainger) who has a young

son. With her failing marriage and young son, Lydia has connected with the returned doctor, who bonds with Lydia's son after he takes an interest in her bee colonies. However, in 1950s rural Scotland, the women's relationship raises questions after the mother and son start to live with the doctor after they are evicted from their home.



This award-winning 2018 film is based on the novel of the same name by openly-lesbian author, Fiona Shaw (not to be confused with Harry Potter actress, Fiona Shaw – also a lesbian), who posed one of those unique questions of LGBTQ individuals who are parents when they “come out of the closet”. That question was: “What’s harder than telling your parents that you’re gay? Telling your children!”



When Shaw and her husband – father of their two daughters – broke up, they had to break it to their daughters that they were **both** now involved in same-sex relationships, adding a level of potential “stigma” that the children of more “ordinary” divorces don’t have to contend with.

In July of 2019, Shaw expressed some concern about how the ending of her book had been changed from a “happy

ending” to a more typically “bittersweet” ending in lesbian-related films in order to have more appeal to “straight” audiences.

The film will be shown at 1pm on Wednesday, 18th March, in Conference Room B of the San Leandro Public Library, 300 Estudillo. Ostensibly, this will be the last time that we have to use the Conference Room instead of the theater in the Carnegie Lecture Hall, which is being renovated in the months of February and March. Once the built-in projector system is replaced and functioning again, we should be able to resume the theater feel of the five-year-old film series again. In fact, if all goes as scheduled, we will celebrate the five-year anniversary of the series on Wednesday, June 17th.



The women’s relationship evolves from shy awkwardness to passion during the film.

Following the showing, there will be a brief discussion and evaluation of the

film and its relevance to the LGBTQ community. The library is accessible from I-880, I-580 and Bancroft Avenue, as well as via public transport – five blocks above San Leandro BART station and two blocks above the AC-Transit bus stop at E. 14th and Estudillo.



Young Charlie mesmerized by the bees; being confronted by his father (Emun Elliott of BBC's "The Paradise" series)

There is ample two- and three-hour parking in the parking lot and as diagonal parking on Callan Street on the north side of the library.



Dealing with Life-Threatening or Potentially-Debilitating Diagnoses

As we age, we become more vulnerable to receiving frightening, life-threatening or potentially-debilitating diagnoses from our health care providers. At any age, however, the person receiving such news may go through a spectrum of reactions, including denial, depression, emotional paralysis, even suicidal ideation or, more frequently, acceptance of the situation and a quest for potential resolutions to deal positively and constructively with the diagnosis.



This month's presenter at the Third Friday Lunch Bunch has been involved personally and professionally over the years in helping with this quest. Kristina Morgan of Connect America West in Petaluma will be on hand to discuss various responses to such life-changing news.

Facing the prospect of losing part of her colon at age 21, due to an illness Western medicine could not heal, Kristina dashed into a health food store and began her life-long journey of educating herself about various diseases and holistic approaches to curing her ailment.

Having successfully healed herself, she continues to research various means to cure diseases for herself and others. As a result of her many years addressing those issues, she understands the value of connections as it relates to physical/mental health, a spiritual practice, and being open to technological advances that provide a better quality of life for herself and others.

She became a passionate spokesperson on breast cancer to help other women

going through this devastating experience after she was diagnosed in 1995. She also was involved in a severe accident where she lost a loved one, an accident leaving her with a long rehabilitation road.

It was in this context she was first introduced to Neurofeedback. She experienced significant results using this technology and began providing a service to others. She introduced this technology to the community of seniors and, through that technology, has helped others find that the elasticity of the brain can improve their quality of life.

She is sharing her journey with us, introducing us to the various technological advances that can help us improve our quality of life.

This month's Third Friday Lunch Bunch will be from 12-2pm on Friday, 20th March, at the North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Jr Way (corner 58th Street). A nutritious lunch (including vegetarian options) will be served promptly at noon. After a brief period for announcements, the program will be turned over to Kristina around 12:45. A robust Q&A will follow.

The NOSC entrance and ample parking are at the rear of the building (off 58th Street).

Founders Corner

By Barbara Jue, Co-Founder



This year marks the 50th anniversary of SF Pride. It is difficult to wrap the mind around the number of years it has been since the first parade. Many of our lavender seniors have been on the front line of activism for our LGBTQ community's civil rights for a very long time. Finally the work of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay has been noticed and now we will be recognized on the world stage as we have been nominated for one of the Grand Marshall positions in the SF Pride parade.



There is however, a distance from being nominated to actually winning the position of Organization Community Grand Marshall. And we have a lot of serious competition from other long time LGBTQ activist organization you will easily recognize. **The online voting is open as of Feb 18, 2020.** When the voting opens, there is only a month in which ballots must be completed. The announcement for the Grand Marshall's will occur about mid-April.

Voting Instructions follow:

2020 Community Grand Marshal Public Vote

Welcome to the public ballot for Community Grand Marshals of the 2020 San Francisco LGBT Pride Celebration and Parade. Every year San Francisco Pride recognizes individuals and organizations for their contributions to the LGBTQ community and movement. San Francisco Pride Community Grand Marshals are local heroes who have contributed greatly to the SF Bay Area LGBTQ

community or to society at large.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Voting for Community Grand Marshals is open to the general public.
2. Please cast **ONE** vote for the **Individual** of your choice, and **ONE** vote for the **Organization** of your choice.
3. Please vote only **ONCE**. Multiple ballot submissions will be disqualified.
4. **DEADLINE: Voting closes Tuesday, March 10th at 12 Noon.**

Go to this website to vote and make your submission:

<http://www.sfpride.org/grand-marshals/>

We hope that you will take the time to go to the website and vote for Lavender Seniors and that you will let all your friends and acquaintances be aware of the need for them to go to the website to vote. People from the straight community, our allies all are qualified to vote. This is an open public voting process. So tell a friend tell a friend and let's **make this happen!!**

Remember Census 2020

And to continue this link of empowerment **remember to complete the Census 2020**. They have made it simple by going online to complete the form. Go to **2020Census.gov** for more detailed information. It is not a long document but it has **enormous effect** on the social programs our various levels of government exercise.

You can also go to the **San Leandro Main Public Library on Saturday, March 14, 2 pm – 4 pm** to learn more at the live information session. The library is located at 300 Estudillo Ave., San Leandro at the heart of the city and within two blocks east of the San Leandro BART station.

You will learn: **Why the Census matters, Ways to take the Census, Data Privacy and confidentiality, the Timeline of the Census.**

You can RSVP to: jsahota@alamedahealthconsortium.org.

Not only do we have the power of election, but we also have the power to **stand up and be counted** to drive the programs that affect us. Let's **make it happen! ! !**

Matthew Shepard Oratorio Comes to East Bay!

Considering Matthew Shepard

by Craig Hella Johnson

Performances are February 29, March 1 & 7

Oakland's Cantare Chorale presents "Considering Matthew Shepard". This 95-minute passion oratorio recounts the life, death and legacy of Matthew Shepard, the 21-year old gay student at the University of Wyoming who was kidnapped in October 1998, to be robbed, pistol-whipped, tied to

a fence and left to die. His murder brought national and international attention to hate crimes, culminating in the Shepard-Byrd Hate Crimes Prevention Act in 2009.

This piece addresses humankind's inclination for cruelty toward those seen as different. But it also affirms the redemptive power of love and gratitude, encouraging us to stand for compassion, understanding, forgiveness, and justice in our families, local communities, and the world. Craig employs a variety of musical genres, including Broadway musical, Country & Western, Blues/Jazz, Pip, Southern Hymnody, and Gospel.



Craig Hella Johnson (l) & partner, architect Philip Overbaugh, at 2019 Texas Medal of Arts Awards

Cantare Con Vivo presents:

Considering Matthew Shepard

Music by Craig Hella Johnson
David Morales, Conductor

The Cantare Chorale presents the first East Bay performance of a new 95-minute choral work exploring the life, death and legacy of Matthew Shepard, the gay Wyoming teenager who became a national figure after he was beaten and left for dead in 1998.

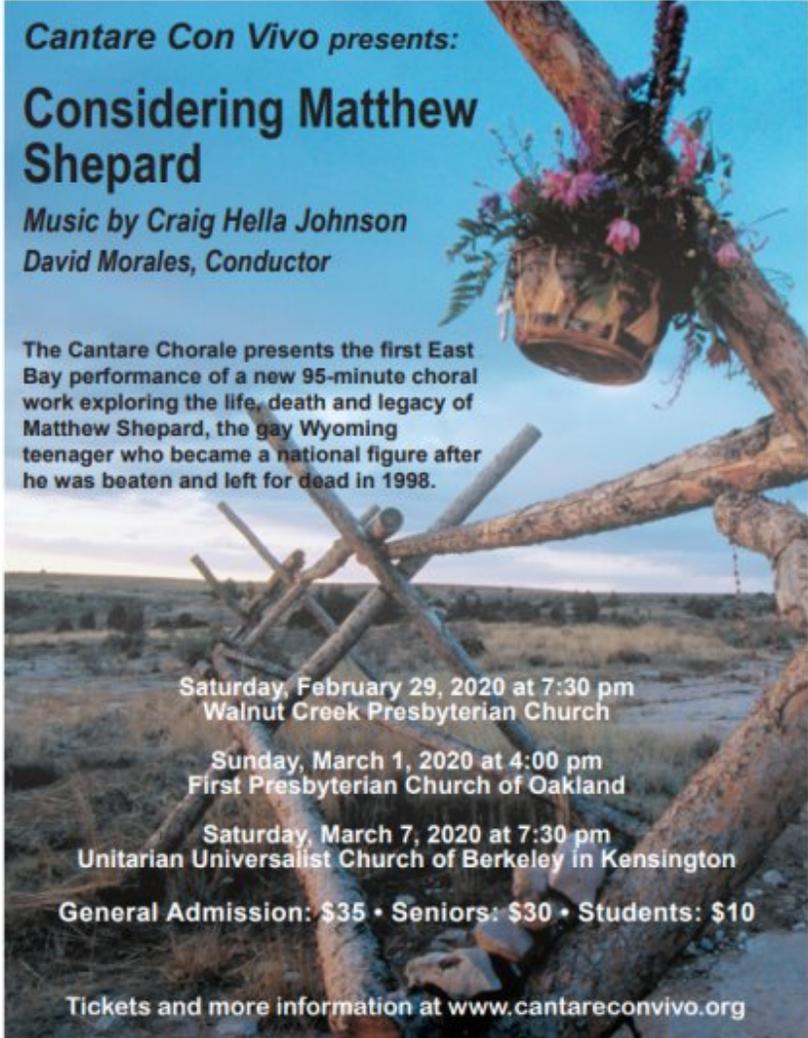
Saturday, February 29, 2020 at 7:30 pm
Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church

Sunday, March 1, 2020 at 4:00 pm
First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

Saturday, March 7, 2020 at 7:30 pm
Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley in Kensington

General Admission: \$35 • Seniors: \$30 • Students: \$10

Tickets and more information at www.cantareconvivo.org



End-of-Life Planning in the LGBTQ Community



End-of-life planning with LGBTQ community members should be approached with an awareness of the issues and concerns that impact the community to ensure patients receive the care they want. LGBTQ patients may experience reduced access to care, prejudice, and in some cases are more likely to be diagnosed with certain illnesses. Having knowledge of the unique challenges leads to greater empathy and better ability to support LGBTQ patients with the end-of-life planning process.

- Become familiar with unique challenges the LGBTQ community faces in accessing medical care and interacting with the medical community
- Become familiar with unique challenges the LGBTQ community faces as it relates to advance care planning and end of life care
- Learn techniques for acknowledging these differences in a supportive manner.

Event registration is required, seating is limited so please reserve your seat. Heavy appetizers included! To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/end-of-life-planning-in-the-lgbtq-community-tickets-93154779453>

The ACCMA shares the building with the American Red Cross at 6230 Claremont Ave., Oakland, CA 94618; please park in the spaces labeled ACCMA Reserved or Visitor spaces.

Please note, parking is limited and public transportation is suggested; Rockridge BART station (Antioch line) is a 10-minute walk from the offices if preferred. Once you are in the building, proceed to the 3rd floor.

CME Available

Accreditation Statement: ACCMA is accredited by the Institute for Medical Quality/California Medical Association (IMQ/CMA) to provide continuing medical education.

Credit Designation Statement: ACCMA designates this live activity for a maximum of 2.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)[™]. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Date and Time

Location

Alameda-Contra Costa Medical Association
6230 Claremont Avenue
Oakland, CA 94618

**An Alameda Contra Costa Medical Association event supported by
John Muir Health and the Pacific Center for Human Growth**

Opening First-Ever Bay Area Women's Theater Festival

One-Time Susan B. Anthony Play at Berkeley Rep

A one-time staged reading of Daphne White's new play, "Susan B.", will open the Bay Area Women's Theater Festival at Berkeley Repertory Theater, Monday night, 2nd March, at 7pm. The festival itself will run throughout March, April and May.

"Susan B." is about Susan B. Anthony and the ongoing struggle for women's rights. It is a story of passion, betrayal, rage and tragedy. (It's got some funny scenes too!) The play was a finalist in The Julie Harris Playwright Competition, founded by Neil Simon, and is included in the New Play Exchange of the National New Play Network.



"We have an amazing director, LeeAnn Dowd from Cal Shakes," Daphne reports. "Though it's going to be a staged reading, the actors will be walking around on the stage, making it quite theatrical. I'm very excited to be opening at this Festival!"

A few well-known and not-so-well-known facts about Susan B. Anthony:

- She was a fierce fighter for the rights of all women, but few people know she also engaged in loving, intimate relationships with other women. Decades before the word lesbian came into common use, Susan had relationships with a series of women she called "nieces." "Susan B." explores Anthony's love for one of these women, Anna Dickinson, a charismatic orator and abolitionist known as "America's Joan of Arc."
- Along with Dickinson, the play also features Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass. And it introduces a Trump-like character called George Frances Train, who agreed to fund Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton if they joined him in opposing black male suffrage.
- Susan B. was a fierce fighter who refused to let anything stand in her way: not the gun-toting mobs who burned her in effigy, not the blinding snowstorms that kept male speakers at home, and not the newspaper editors

who tried to deny her free speech.

- A Quaker and abolitionist, Susan B. had the outlandish notion that women and men were created equal. But in a world where women were considered the property of their husbands even after the slaves were freed, Susan B. had to make gut-wrenching choices. Should she support the Fifteenth Amendment, which offered suffrage to black men but not to women? Should she accept funding from a Trump-like racist who supported women's suffrage, but not black suffrage?
- More than 150 years before the #MeToo movement, Susan B. was defending women who had been sexually exploited, discarded, and left to die in insane asylums. She was called "shrill," she was called "unreasonable," and if she were running for office today she would likely face accusations like "she persisted" and would be called "unelectable." How can we understand the battle between the sexes if we don't even know our own history?

STAGED Monday, March 2 at Berkeley Rep's Peet's Theatre, 2015 Addison Street
Wine Reception at 6:30 pm; Reading at 7 pm

Reserve seats now for this ONE-TIME event:

https://www.flipcause.com/secure/event_step2/NzUzOTE=/67735

Pre-Sale for Reception and Reading: \$15

Regular Ticket & Artist Sponsorship: \$30

Though the Berkeley Rep's Peet's Theater holds 400 people, the WTF website says that are only about 100 of the \$15 tickets left, including those designated for wheelchairs/companions.

A few comments from people who have previewed the play:

"Susan B. is like Hamilton, but about women -- and without the music!"

"Susan B. Anthony is constantly in action, and constantly at war with people who oppose her. She is just a bad-ass!"

"The play helped me understand issues of intersectionality in a way I hadn't been able to before."

"The rug was continually pulled out from under me in this play, and I found that very satisfying."

Delve deeper into this history through Susan B. podcasts -- first episode features Lillian Faderman, author of *To Believe in Women: What Lesbians Have Done for America -- A History*.

Lavender Seniors Invited to Free Merola Opera Program

The Merola Opera Program has sent a special invitation to Lavender Seniors for a special evening featuring everything from Mozart to the Surreal – Wednesday, 11th March, 7 pm!

Widely regarded as the foremost opera training program for aspiring singers, coaches, and stage

directors, the Merola Opera Program has served as a proving ground for hundreds of artists. Many Merola alumni are now among the most recognized names in the opera world. Every summer the program offers 29 young artists the rare opportunity of studying, coaching and participating in master classes with established professionals for twelve weeks.



Participants also perform in two fully-staged opera productions and two summer concerts, all with full orchestra. The Merola Opera Program is a financially independent organization with a separate 501(c)3 which operates in close collaboration with the San Francisco Opera Center and San Francisco Opera.

Get a special behind-the-scenes preview of Merola's 2020 summer productions, Mozart's sublime classic "Le Nozze di Figaro" and Dominick Argento's surreal 20th-century gem "Postcard from Morocco", with Sheri Greenawald, Mark Morash, and dramaturg Kip Cranna. Performances by Merola alumni will illuminate these two exciting works, both cutting edge for their time.

Admission is free with advance registration. Seating is not reserved and is on a first-come basis. Reservations that do not follow these requirements will not be processed:

1. Please send your name (first and last) and organization you are affiliated with by visiting <https://form.jotform.com/merolaopera/march11> or email hli@merola.org.
2. You may bring one (1) guest. You must submit their name (first and last) plus their email address.
3. Each guest will receive a confirmation email.

Space is limited. Please be sure you and your guest can attend before you reserve.

Reservations will be accepted until Wednesday, March 4, 5:00 pm or on a space-available basis until capacity is reached.

Merola Opera Program's *"From Mozart to the Surreal"*
Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 7:00 PM
Taube Atrium Theatre (401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco, CA)

We hope you can join us for what should be a very exciting evening

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 activities, or to learn more about their programs, call 877-797-7299 or email coviaconnections@covia.org.



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](#).



THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

Out Standing Seniors - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Mar 3 & 17, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. (1st and 3rd Tuesdays)

Hayward Senior Center, 22325 N. Third Street, Hayward

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

LezBold Peer Support Group

Mar 5 & 19, 1:30 p.m. (1st and 3rd Thursdays)

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

Find support and like-minded wonderful people!

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

Mar 6, 13, 20, 27, 3:00 p.m. (Fridays)

North Berkeley Senior Center, 901 Hearst Ave, Berkeley

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

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

Mar 6, 13, 20, 27, 2:00 p.m. (Fridays)

Oakland LGBTQ Community Center, 3207 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland

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

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

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

Hayward Senior Center, 22325 N. Third Street, Hayward

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

Rainbow Seniors - Sponsored by Pacific Center & Lavender Seniors

Mar 10 & 24, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. (2nd & 4th Tuesdays)

San Leandro Senior Center, 13909 E 14th St, San Leandro

A confidential 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

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

Robert Livermore Community Center Senior Services, 4444 East Avenue, Livermore 94550

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

Lavender Seniors Board Meeting

Mar 11, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. (2nd Wednesday)

4300 Bermuda, Oakland

A portion of this meeting is open to the public.

Senior Gay Men's Group

Mar 5, 12, 19, 26, 1:30 p.m. (Weekly on 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!

Lavender Seniors Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch

Mar 14, noon - 2:00 p.m.

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

This month's program: "Victor & Nolan" (see info above)

Lavender Seniors LGBTQ Film Series

Mar 18, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. (3rd Wednesday)

San Leandro Library, 300 Estudillo, San Leandro

This month's movie: "Tell it to the Bees" (see info above)

Tri-Valley Rainbows - Sponsored by Pacific Center

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

City of Dublin Senior Center, 7600 Amador Valley Blvd., Dublin 94568

A Peer Support Group is a confidential 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

Mar 20, 12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

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

This month's program: "Dealing with Life-Threatening or Potentially-Debilitating Diagnoses" (see info above)

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Board of Directors

President: Victor Aguilar Jr

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