

Lavender Notes

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

May 2016

Celebrating 20+ years of service and positive change

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Stories of Our Lives

JUMAANE MAKALANI

The first of nine siblings - five boys and four girls - Jumaane Makalani was in his late 20s before he acknowledged he was gay. Within a few years, he also discovered that two of his brothers - number 6 and number 9 - were also gay.

"I had my first 'boy-friend' - a Frenchman - when I was stationed at Moffett Field Naval Air Station in Mountain View in the mid-'70s," Jumaane recalled. "He and I drove up to hit some of the San Francisco gay bars one Friday night in 1976. We were walking up the stairs at the Mabuhay Gardens and I heard somebody call my name. I looked around and - coming up the stairs behind us - was my brother - ten years younger who had driven with a friend from Salt Lake City! We looked at each other and chorused, 'What are YOU doing here?!' As the coincidence unfolded, it seems my younger brother had already come out to our mother, though it still took several years before I screwed up the courage to tell her that her first-born was also gay."



Jumaane Makalani, age 12, Artesia, New Mexico, 1956

In 1981, his youngest brother - last-born of the nine - joined the Marines soon after graduating high school and was stationed at Camp Pendleton in San Diego for boot camp. When he "left" the service unexpectedly after one month, he came back to visit his eldest brother in Oakland on the way home to Salt Lake City.

"It was another year or so before I heard the whole story about that," Jumaane recalled. "And I think it wound up being a bit of a shock to the entire family - particularly our mother - that three of her five boys were gay! But I was glad that my two younger brothers had done some of the ground-work with her and other family members before I finally came out in 1981."

Unfortunately, the last-born sibling - who had married and fathered a son by then - died in Oakland at age 34 of HIV-related conditions in 1996, after a lengthy struggle with the disease, leaving a fatherless 10-year-old behind with the boy's mother. That brother's lover died - also of AIDS - within two months afterward. Though both had been on Saquinavir, the first FDA-approved protease inhibitor, in those early days, most of the experimental drugs - tested primarily on white men - were generally not successful with black men.

"We were all devastated, of course," Jumaane said, "losing our baby brother like that. I'm not sure Mama ever recovered from having to bury one of her fully-grown and beloved children! And it's definitely been hard on the rest of us, of course, including his widow and son."

Born in November 1944 in Artesia, NM, Jumaane was raised by his grandmother and grandfather in Artesia, visiting his mother and eight younger siblings - who consider Salt Lake City to be where they "grew up" - in summers and on holidays.



Jumaane (upper right with 4 brothers), 4 sisters, 4 nephews, and his son (front row left), 1989

Jumaane (left), the eldest, then eight siblings in descending order of birth

After high school, Jumaane attended New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, where he earned his B.A. in Foreign Languages. He taught Spanish at high schools in Gallup and Roswell, NM, for a total of four years before he decided to enlist in the Navy. During his four years as a Navy Lieutenant, he spent time in Alaska, Hawaii, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea. When he left active duty, he became a reserve officer, returning to Moffett Naval Air Station in Mountain View, living in Oakland and working in San Francisco.

Soon after his promotion to Lieutenant Commander in 1984, the Defense Intelligence Agency began conducting the periodic security clearance necessary for him to continue doing his classified work for the Navy. Since he had come out to family, friends and co-workers (he had worked as a travel agent and as a civilian in the Navy by then), he wasn't terribly apprehensive about the outcome. Unfortunately, the Commanding Officer at Moffett disregarded the DIA recommendation that he be retained in the Navy, since he was at no risk of being blackmailed (the primary reason given for the thousands of LGBT service-members who were discharged - honorably or dishonorably - mid-career). On one of his active-duty weekends, he was called in and told he was no longer welcome on the base and was never to come back.



Ensign Jumaane C. Makalani, before his promotions to Lieutenant and then Lieutenant Commander

"I decided to fight the decision at a time when those struggles were rarely successful," Jumaane recalled. "We paid a lot of money for a lawyer who 'specialized' in 'gays in the military' cases, but he was worse than useless. He even refused to meet with us at the Pacific Center, since he didn't want to be seen going in or out of there! After a very painful hearing and a referral for 'psychiatric evaluation' at Oak Knoll Naval Hospital, I received an 'Honorable Discharge,' - largely because I was an officer - which, in my case, meant I only lost a Navy retirement. I was able to count my years of military service, however, in finally calculating my retirement age and benefits in 2006."

On a more upbeat note, in 1979, Jumaane met his third (and final?) boyfriend - who became his husband in their 30th year together prior to the Proposition 8 fiasco that threatened others coming after them. They and their first adopted son lived for three years (1991-94) in South Africa, where the couple made State Department history with Jumaane receiving a "dependent spouse" job, routinely given to married heterosexual couples to keep a husband/wife from becoming disgruntled and bored at home while with a foreign-service spouse. He worked for the U.S. Agency for International Development during that time - and has also worked in other federal posts (besides the Navy), including the Internal Revenue Service and Veterans Affairs.

When he was married in 2008, his brother (the first black senator elected in the great state of Utah!) and sister were his best man and maid of honor. The couple had a black gay South African and a white heterosexual woman (oncologist by day) co-officiate at the wedding, held at the First Unitarian Church of Santa Cruz County.



The Wedding Party, August 2008: Jumaane, his brother and sister; his husband with son and daughter, bookended by co-officiants from Soweto, South Africa, and Santa Cruz, CA (Monterey Bay in background)

In 1987, Jumaane and his husband adopted a "special-needs" three-year-old son via the Homes for Black Children program in Oakland.

"We heard a spot on the radio that pointed out there were nine black children needing homes for every adoptive 'black' family in the Bay area," Jumaane recalls. "It tore at my heart-strings that there could be a child who would benefit from living with and being supported by us. So we jumped in with both feet. Though it hasn't always been easy, that three-year-old has just celebrated his 31st birthday!"

Jumaane became actively involved in the North Oakland Senior Center soon after his retirement in 2006. He has served as Chair of the Advisory Board, the Travel Committee and has been actively involved in the "Healthy Meals" committee. He was one of the original members of the "We're Still Here" monthly support group that meets at the NOSC, made up of LGBTQ seniors, currently ranging in age from 60-94. Many of the group will be taking the train to Yosemite this month for a three-day stay in what Jumaane describes as "one of the most beautiful places in the world - and I've seen a LOT of the world!"

Since their retirement, the couple has sold their ocean-front acre in Ghana (where they lived for nine years) and has bought a small retirement hideaway in Costa Rica. They are returning on 3rd of May from a 4.5-month stay there. They bought their little 1893 Victorian farmhouse in Oakland back in 1981, which they both say they wouldn't be able to afford now with rising housing costs.

"When I look back on the first 72 years, I have few regrets," Jumaane says. "Though people have encouraged me to get involved in a 'class-action suit' against the military to regain some of the benefits I might've had after so many years of service, my fighting days are over. I'm just into loving my family and friends, enjoying whatever time I have left in this wonderful thing called life!"

Thank you, Jumaane, for being such a good example to us all and for being such an active participant in Lavender Seniors of the East Bay!

Book Review: The Lovers: Afghanistan's Romeo & Juliet, the True Story of How They Defied Their Families and Escaped an Honor Killing

By Rod Nordland

Nordland, a New York Times correspondent and a Pulitzer Prize winner, has traveled in 150 countries.

He has provided an incredible account of an Afghan ten-year-old girl

who flees her country to escape from the men who would deny her the freedom to live her life as a free human. Unfortunately the story has a sad conclusion. Justice is denied.

The Lovers is worth reading as a classic failure of simple justice. Lesbians take special note.

- Frank Howell

Rainbow Seniors

(aka Out Standing Seniors, San Leandro)

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

Our first meeting was a great success and well attended. Join us on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from noon to 2:00 pm. If you want, bring a bag lunch or order lunch from the San Leandro Senior Center by Monday. Coffee and snacks will be provided during the meeting.



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 <u>www.caregiver.org</u>.





CARA Alert - April 28, 2016

A publication of the California Alliance for Retired Americans CELEBRATE OLDER AMERICANS MONTH IN MAY!!

May 2nd Teleconference for CARA Lobby Day (4pm)

If you are planning to participate in the CARA Statewide Lobby Day on May 20th (see below), please join us for a teleconference on May 2nd at 4pm to learn about the format and plan for these in-district meetings.

Call toll free at 866-516-3949/ Passcode is 3948639#.

Visit your Legislator on May 20th - CARA Statewide Lobby Day

CARA is sponsoring our "in the district" lobby day on Friday May 20th. This event will give everyone in CARA a chance to meet with their State Assemblymember and Senator in their local district office on our priority bills and urge their support. If you would like to attend the meeting with your legislator(s), contact Jodi or Vishnu (information above) and we will put you in contact with the coordinator for your meeting. Everyone should mark May 2nd at 4pm on your calendar - we will have a statewide teleconference meeting to go over the details for our May 20th lobby day.

May 11th - Celebrate Older Americans Month in Sacramento

Join seniors from around the state (contact your AAA to find out about transportation from your area to celebrate May - Older American's Month and to tell our elected officials that the time is NOW to increase resources and services for older adults who are the fastest growing part of California's population. There is a special celebration on the North Steps of the Capitol starting at 10:30am, followed by lunch (free - rsvp to CARA if you plan to attend for lunch) and then visits to your legislator. You don't want to miss this event.

May 16th - Medical Students and Health4All Rally at the Capitol

One of the best events each year is when the CAHPSA medical students march to the capitol to rally and lobby legislators to demand single payer health care and other improvements to our healthcare system. This year the focus will be on SB 10 - which expands the ACA to allow undocumented adults to get coverage through the Covered California program. There are buses coming from the Bay Area and other parts of the state. The march will leave from the Embassy Suites on May 16th (100 Capitol Mall) at 10:30am and the Rally will be held at 11am - 1pm at the North Steps of the Capitol. If you would like to attend and/or find out about information from your area, contact angelica@cahpsa.org.

San Leandro Pot Luck

Second Saturday Noon-2:00 Mark your calendars ... we have some great programs coming up!

May 14: Our own Dan Ashbrook "Music off Your Rocker" Music of the 60's and 70"s. He will be playing for us. (This is our last meeting at Unity Church; check June Newsletter for the new location.)

June 11: Professor Al Schendan, S.F. State Political Science Professor-- What the political landscape looks like now

July 9: Tricia Hoekwater - Decluttering Your Environment - Certified Professional Organizer

August 13: Dan Ashbrook and Allison Rodman (Professional chef) - Recipes from our Ancestors (easy cheese-making demo)

Sept 10: Stev Taal - short classical piano pieces

We are looking for ideas that may pique the interest of Lavender Seniors participants, send your suggestions to <u>info@lavenderseniors.org</u>.

Lavender Seniors Film Series, Wednesday, 18th May, 1-3pm **CONTRACORRIENTE [UNDERTOW]**

A Peruvian fisherman is torn between his conscience as a closeted gay/bisexual man and the morals of his small Roman Catholic seaside fishing village (filmed in Cabo Blanco, Peru).

In this 2009 film, Miguel (played by Bolivian actor Cristian Mercado) has been carrying on an affair with Santiago (an artist played by Colombian novella heart-throb Manolo Cardona), who wishes they could live their relationship in the open rather than only meeting

clandestinely. However, Miguel is married, and his pregnant wife has no idea about the affair.

When Santiago drowns, the film takes a slight paranormal turn when his ghost asks Miguel to find and bury his body, forcing Miguel to confront the past - and, perhaps more painfully - himself. The reactions of people in the village (in the film, as well as in the real-life filming) is very interesting to watch or hear about.

This Spanish-language film (with English sub-titles) won the World Cinema Audience Award in the Dramatic category at the 2010 <u>Sundance Film Festival</u>. Other Audience Awards included Cartagena, Montreal, Miami, Chicago, Utrecht, Lima, and Galway, as well as Jury Awards in Madrid, San Francisco, Seattle, Toulouse, and Philadelphia. It received a nomination as Best Latin American Film at the 2011 Goya Awards in Spain.





A two-minute trailer can be seen at http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1368491/

The film - 13th in the free Lavender Seniors Film Series for LGBT seniors and their allies - will be shown in the Lecture Hall of San Leandro's Main Public Library, 300 Estudillo Drive, San Leandro, at 1pm on the Third Wednesday, 18th May. We will be evaluating the series afterward to determine whether it should continue and - if so - whether it should remain at the Library venue.

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 LGBTQ seniors, in addition to evaluating the series itself.

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 <u>JohnDavid@LavenderSeniors.org</u> or calling John David (510-532-8951) at least 24 hours 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.



Senior Center Without Walls Community Phone Calls

Altered State: Marijuana in California 5/27/16

OMCA presents the first-ever museum exhibition to focus on marijuana in California today. Designed as a catalyst for conversation and reflection, the exhibition explores the many ways that people consider cannabis, presented through the perspectives, knowledge, and opinions of a diverse range of community members and groups. Facilitated by OMCA Docent

Pride! 6/3/16

Celebrate Gay Pride Month by recalling the history of Gay Pride Celebrations and by listening to LGBT members of our SCWW community share their personal experiences of when they first participated in a Gay Pride Celebration. Learn about what is being planned for Celebrations in 2016 that will take place on the last week-end of June. Facilitated by D'Anne Bruetsch, Chairperson, Lavender Seniors Advisory Committee

Growing an Elder Community Mondays | Part 1 10:00am - 11:00am Mondays | Part 2 11:00am - 12:00pm

This is a two-part program. Participants may call into either one or both sessions. Part 1: By speaking with others, older people discover what is beautiful about the latter stages of life, and how getting older, especially as a disabled or homebound person, can contribute positively to our culture-at-large. This is an opportunity to experience what is noble about being human in this world. Part 2: This segment can be experienced as a continuation of Part 1 or separately, and represents a chance to deepen our experience. Facilitated by David "Lucky" Goff, Ph.D., "Growing an Elder Culture" Radio Host, and author and psychotherapist specializing in psycho-spiritual development.

Open Mic Thursdays 6:30pm - 7:00pm

All are welcome to call in and perform, big talent not required. Singing, spoken word, stand-up comedy, play your favorite instrument, read a poem or more. Enthusiastic spectators are also welcome to join. Facilitated by Kathleen Torres

View the **Spring catalog** of community phone calls <u>here</u>. 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 <u>info@seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org</u>.

Revamped 'Our Space' Inter-generational Meeting

Lots of fun with the Youth

by D'Anne Bruetsch

In years past the Our Space inter-generational meeting on the 3rd Thursday was not well attended by LGBT elders. The program was perceived as being too oriented only to youth and not inclusionary of elder participants. After receiving an email about an attempt to revive this meeting, my partner and I attended the April meeting. The program was led by 'Bee' and we had a really fun time with the youth. For some reason, the boys were elsewhere (maybe watching a basketball game) so it was an all-girls evening. Lots of fun getting to know details about each other and sharing what we learned with the group.

Definitely a meeting that Ary and I will be attending again when we have time. You should consider trying this meeting if you have never been, or if you were disappointed in the past.

Do you know **Our Family Coalition?** OFC advances equity for LGBTQ families with children through support, education, and advocacy.

On Friday, May 13^{th,} OFC is holding their annual fundraiser: 'Night Out' at the Intercontinental San Francisco. Co-Hosts: Senator Mark Leno & Bishop Yvette Flunder. Lots more happening - good time, good food, good people, good cause.

THIRD FRIDAY LUNCH BUNCH, 20th MAY, NOON – 2:00pm LGBTA – PAELLA – MUSIC – SINGING!

The LGBTA Resource Group of a mystery Bay Area organization will be on hand for this month's Third Friday Lunch Bunch, making paella for all (including vegetarians), providing music and important information for LGBT seniors about "Making Tomorrow, Today"...!

Some Lavender Seniors may not even be aware that there's an outside patio off the Lunch Bunch dining room at the North Oakland Senior Center. However, the LGBTA Resource Group will be setting up their own "open burner" out on that patio to throw together some delightful varieties of paella, a variation from our usual menu.



So there will be various paelleras (shallow round paella pans that can be anywhere from 12" diameter to room-size!) for lunch participants to choose from. For those unfamiliar with paella or wanting to know more about it, there are dozens of websites describing the delights that will be waiting for us, including <u>http://www.kitchenproject.com/history/Paella/</u>. Lavender Seniors will still provide the green salad and dessert courses for the meal.

While participants are watching the paella process out on the patio - or going through the buffet line to collect their favorite combination - the LGBTA Resource Group will also provide lively entertainment in the form of an accordionist, perhaps accompanied by a singer - or we can all hum along while we're eating!



Thomas "Main Squeeze" entertaining on a Bay cruise

The LGBTA Resource Group - which will be thoroughly explained after lunch - will include experts who regularly provide guidance to both private and governmental organizations (not to individuals) on putting the best policies in place to optimize employee skills, protect and provide security for retirees. Here's a brief blurb from one of their project descriptions:

"The LGBTA [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Allies] Resource Group is dedicated to helping the parent organization realize the full value of its lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender employees. The group organizes internal educational and social events, partners with external non-profit organizations, and identifies business opportunities and relationships that both realize this goal and align with the organization's operating imperatives."

The LGBTA team will be available to field any questions or concerns about optimizing use of professional talents, maintaining health, achieving the best possible retirement and investments along the way.

After the Q&A period, the entertainment - previewed during meal preparation - will begin again, this time with more audience participation. Please join us for this new variation on our theme of getting LGBT seniors entertained and informed!

As usual, the Third Friday Lunch Bunch will be held from noon until 2pm at the North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Jr Way (corner 58th Street) in the old Merritt College building, which has been retrofitted and is now shared with Children's Hospital Research Unit. Parking and entrance is at the rear of the building.



Gay Pride Dance

Friday, June 17th, Hayward Senior Center

The LGBT Senior Senior Prom here last year was such a wonderful event. This one is less formal and will be a lot of fun. Another formal one will happen in December.

Here is the link to a full-size poster for you to print out and share: <u>http://www.haywardrec.org/DocumentCenter/View/3336</u>



Women Caring For Women Caring for your Sick, Elderly, or Disabled Partner



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 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: <u>info@lavenderseniors.org</u>. Items found while the function facilitator or LS board member is present should be turned in to them.



Monthly Events

Out Standing Seniors, Hayward

May 3 & 17 11:30 a.m.-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.

Queerly Aging Lesbians

May 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!*

Rainbow Seniors (Out Standing Seniors, San Leandro)

May 10 & 24 12:30-2:00 (2nd & 4th Tuesdays) San Leandro Senior Center, 13909 E 14th St, San Leandro A safe and confidential space for LGBT seniors 50+ to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information, and support. See info above.

Lavender Seniors Advisory Board Meeting

May 11, 6:00-8:00 p.m. (Wed before Potluck Lunch) San Leandro Public Library, 300 Estudillo, Meeting Room C, San Leandro *A portion of this meeting is open to the public.*

Women caring for their woman partners

(new group) Every other Friday at 1pm Please R.S.V.P. to Patricia at <u>patricia@LavenderSeniors.org</u> (510) 574-2091 Facilitated by Dr. Shannon Dubach 2041 Bancroft Way, Suite 307 Berkeley *If you are a woman caring for a sick, elderly, or disabled woman partner, join us.*

Senior Men's Group

May 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

May 14, 12:00-2:00 p.m. (2nd Saturday) (last meeting at Unity Church, check June Newsletter for the new location) 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! This month's program: "Music Off Your Rocker, presented by our own Dan Ashbrook." Bring your shakers, bongos, etc. to rock along.



Lavender Seniors Film Series

May 18, 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: "Contracorriente [Undertow]". Info above.

Our Space Intergenerational Community Dinner May 19, 5:30-7:00 p.m. (3rd Thursday of each month) Our Space, 22245 Main St in Hayward Contact stephanie@baycyouth.org for information

Oakland Lunch Bunch Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging & Adult Services May 20, 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: "LGBTA – Paella – Music – Singing!" see info above.

Thank you to our sponsor, Chapel of the Chimes

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

Call and set up your Health Care Directive today!

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



Allison Rodman, Family Service Counselor ... Care. Comfort & Plan allison.rodman@lifemarkgroup.com 510-593-697

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Lavender Seniors is a project of LIFE ElderCare

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Email: info@lavenderseniors.org Website: http://lavenderseniors.org 3300 Capitol Avenue Fremont, CA 94538 510-574-2073