

Lavender Notes

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

Celebrating 20+ years of service and positive change

October 2015

Volume 22, Issue 10

Stories of Our Lives

Bobbie June "BJ" Jarvis

Only one person remains alive of the feisty foursome - "friends for life" - two lesbian couples - who first met at the founding meeting of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay. Whether it was held in 1990 or 1994 (there seems to be some difference in memory), all seem to agree that it was held in a meeting room offered by Macy's in San Leandro's Bayfair Mall on a Tuesday evening in November.

"Meg and I had been together for a bit over fifteen years when we heard about this meeting for organizing LGBT seniors," BJ recalls. "Surprisingly, there were 18 of us at that meeting, including Ina Mae and Stella, who were to remain life-long friends beginning that night! Such a wonderful mix of teachers, health care professionals and social workers!"

Bobbie June "BJ" Jarvis - soon turning 82 - was born in Blanchard, Oklahoma, two days before Christmas 1933. She and her younger brother - now deceased - were basically raised by their father and paternal grandmother. Later on, she had a half-sister, Denise Ann, when her mother re-married in California. Her sister lives in South Carolina.



Bobbie June "BJ" Jarvis on a "flea-bitten horse", Blanchard, OK, age 5, 1938

BJ and her brother went to a small elementary school - East Valley View - where she graduated as valedictorian of her middle-school class. In high school, however, she wasn't as successful, since she didn't take some of her classes seriously. She failed in Oklahoma Civics, for instance, since she never opened up the book, relying exclusively on the ramblings of her instructor, which had little or nothing to do with the exams he gave. After graduating in 1951 from high school, she attended Heald Business School for one year to become an accountant. The following year, she came to California to stay with her mother and has remained a resident here ever since.

For over 25 years, she successfully operated her own business, BeeJay Business and Tax Service, in Fremont.

Though BJ occasionally dated men in high school and college, she realized by the time she was 19 that she was only attracted to women. She spent a year or two in the lesbian "bar scene", where she recalled the rule of thumb was you had to always be wearing two articles of women's clothing to outsmart the police, who were always "monitoring" the gay/lesbian bars, looking for ways to arrest gay people. So she made a point of always wearing a bra and panties before going out to the bars.

Her first semi-serious relationship was with a woman named Nona, who is now deceased.

"I thought Nona and I were relatively happy until the night in November 1973 that we attended a gay men's house party in San Francisco," BJ recalls. "I saw this beautiful woman there - we had both come with other women - but I brazenly - and secretly - asked her if I could get her number and call her after the holidays. She agreed.

"Not only was she lovely to look at, I simply loved hearing her talk. She had such a magnetic charm - charisma, I'd say - that I thought about her non-stop over Christmas and New Year's that year. Even before I made that first phonecall in January 1974, I had to confess to Nona that I was very drawn to this woman named Meg and would be calling her. I knew I couldn't keep such a secret from Nona.

"And the rest, as they say, was 'her-story'," BJ chuckled. "From our first date - attending a movie I'd bought tickets for - since a friend's daughter was an extra in it - neither Meg nor I could deny the magic that was to keep us together, 'til death do us part'. We made it official on March 4th, 1975, moving in together permanently - and again on August 10th 2008, when we combined our wedding with Meg's 70th birthday party in front of about 100 celebrating guests!"



Meg and BJ on one of their first Christmases together in the mid-1970s.

Margaret "Meg" Bruynell was born on 10th August 1933 in Haddon Heights, New Jersey. Meg became a psychiatric technician - working full-time for 29+ years at Agnews State Hospital, as well as part-time at Valley Medical Center in San Jose for many of those years. Partly because diabetes had become a late-in-life medical problem for Meg, she retired from Agnews and briefly became the office manager for BJ's tax business.



Meg and BJ on their wedding day, 10th August 2008

Because Meg's health continued to deteriorate, however, they decided to close the business in 2011 so that BJ could devote herself to caregiving for Meg. Unfortunately, Meg wound up hospitalized the first three months of 2011, being discharged for only one day when she died peacefully on March 24th, 2011, at home where she had chosen to share her life with BJ. Their friends were holding vigil with them when Meg died.

BJ had informally adopted her son, Jeff Jarvis, during her years with Nona. Initially, Meg was worried that she might not be enough of a co-parent - that he might really need both a mother and a father to develop well. But BJ convinced her that all he needed was a lot of love, which they were both able to provide in abundance. He has since blessed them with four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

"We met so many of our closest friends through the formation of Lavender Seniors back in the '90s," BJ recalled. "Besides our closest chums, Ina Mae Murri and Stella Armijo-Lopez - who, unfortunately, died in a tragic car-crash in 2010 - Barbara Konecny and Barbara Jue, John Elifson, Marvin Burrows and Frank Howell - some of whom are also gone now - virtually our entire friendship network began on that wonderfully fateful night at the Bayfair Mall!"

BJ vows that she will soon be getting back into the swing of things with Lavender Seniors. Meanwhile, we are all grateful for the time and energy that she and her fellow/sister pioneers contributed to the well-being of LGBT seniors in the East Bay.



BJ at the Fremont home she shared for nearly 35 years with Meg, 22nd August 2015

Monthly Book Review: The Right To Be Parents: LGBT Families And The Transformation of Parenthood

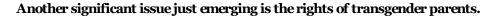
By Carlos Ball-New York University Press

Ball spans the last 40 years in the struggle of gay parents for their basic civil rights. In custody hearings lesbian couples were frequently overruled by homophobic judges.

Artificial insemination, rather than adoption, is frequently used by lesbians, as well as co-parenting lesbian and gay couples.

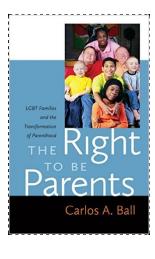
In the 1990s, courts began to rule in favor of gay parents. Evelyn Hooker, professor of psychiatry at UCLA, and Dr. Judd Marmor, a psychiatrist, gave major support.

All the major psychiatric and psychological associations declared homosexuality to be normal. Gay fathers were also active in fighting for their rights. The National Gay Task Force emerged. In one case a gay male couple adopted two baby boys in spite of the neighbors objections.



This informative overview of LGBT families and their rights should be required reading for all active lavender folks.







LGBT Online Support Group for Caregivers

If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender and caring for someone with ongoing health problems . . . you are not alone! Family Caregiver Alliance's online LGBT Caring Community Support Group connects you with others facing the day-to-day challenges of caregiving. If you're assisting someone with Alzheimer's, stroke, Parkinson's, traumatic brain injury, or other chronic health problems, you can get support from the convenience of your home.

Share experiences, resources, and ideas in a supportive, caring environment. Available 24 hours a day, all you need is e-mail, and it's free! Visit www.caregiver.org.

Senior Center Without Walls Community Phone Calls



Join Roger Anunsen's "Cognitive Crew"! Thursday's 1:00 - 2:00pm October 8 - December 10

Cognitive Activity Design explores the potential of applying emerging, evidence-based research in memory and aging to address real-life cognitive challenges. In this series, gerontology students will present 20 - 30 minute demonstrations of an innovative, brain-healthy activity designed as part of Roger's first-in-the-nation course, "The Aging Mind". Come with an open mind, this series is sure to be full of brain healthy surprises!

Roger Anunsen is co-founder and Principal at MINDRAMP Consulting and director of MINDRAMP's Brain Health Initiative.

Growing an Elder Community Mondays, Part I: 10:00 - 11:00am, Part II: 11:00am - 12:00noon
This is a two-part program. Participants may call into either one or both sessions. Part I: 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 become getting riper and be a real contribution to
our culture-at-large. This is an opportunity to experience what is noble about being human in this world.
Part II: This segment can be experienced as a continuation of Part I or separately, and represents a
chance to deepen our experience.

Sing! Saturdays 2:30 - 3:00pm

Join host Toni Tompkins and the SCWW Singers for a fun half hour singing Broadway show tunes, folk songs, and other favorites acapella. All voices are welcome! Song lyrics are available from the office.

View the **Fall 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>.

Letters to the Editor

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

Re: Natalie Zarchin

the

The many tributes to Natalie barely touched the effect she had in the LGBTQ community. If we are to recognize the pioneers of the LGBTQ activists through the decades she stood at the forefront. She not only was a champion for equality of gender, she also championed for equality of the aged. The spotlight she shed on the issues of our aging population should be a beacon for the younger generations to become activists on that matter. They will eventually grow old. What kind of a world would they like to face at that time of their lives? Will we have progressed beyond where we are today? Natalie's as tute observations will be missed. Her thoughts and leaders hip on many fronts

are honed by 92 years of living in an ever rapidly changing lands cape of our world and the LGBTQ experience. Her wise words will be missed.

Barbara Jue,
WOFF Co-founder with Barbara Konecny
Co-founder Lavender Seniors
Past Co-President GLOBE

"Preparing for the Golden Years, Rainbow -Style"

Preparing for the Golden Years, Rainbow-Style Panel Discussion and Workshop 10/01/2015 06:00 PM - 08:00 PM PT
BANANAS Childcare Resource Center 5232 Claremont Ave Oakland, CA 94702
Click here to register online

Are you raising children and also providing support to elderly parents? Senior-care experts explore issues associated with aging, especially as it relates to LGBT families. Whether you're "sandwiched" between kid and aging parent care, or looking at your own future, this workshop aims to help inform participants about aging services, long-term care and assisted living.

Pen and paper recommended for note-taking.

Child care and dinner provided upon advance registration.



Friendly OFC Staffer: Yusni. Contact

<u>vusni@ourfamily.org</u> with questions or comments.



We strive to make our programs accessible to all families. Please register for accommodations that would help your family participate to the fullest (e.g. ASL interpreter, translator, childcare providers experienced with kids with disabilities, large print materials, gluten-free food options, etc.). If registering within 48 hours of the event, please call 415-981-1960 to ensure receipt of your request.

The presenter bios are below:

Presenter bios:

Moderator/panelist **Linda Jacobson** is an aging-services consultant and technology teacher who helps people understand and use complex, novel information to improve quality of life. These days Linda teaches digital media to seniors, and also provides research and referral services to people needing long-term care or housing. Past credits: co-founding editor of *Wired* magazine; virtual reality industry pioneer; and patent-application writer. Linda and her business partner (who owned and ran legendary '80s SOMA lesbian nightclub, Baybrick Inn) are developing a social fitness club, PaddleSnap Urban Resort, to table tennis and live music to older adults and our friends. Linda lives in Berkeley with her 3 school-age sons. She is a former co-chair of Our Family Coalition's Board of Directors.

Panelist Sheri Hartman, LCSW, has been in practice as a geriatric social worker and geriatric care manager for

nearly 20 years. She has worked with older adults and families through the Institute on Aging Alzheimer's Day Center and PACE program in SF, Jewish Family and Children's Services of the East Bay, private care management companies, and home health and hospice agencies. Sheri has 20 years experience as a private Geriatric Care Manager. Sheri and her wife have been together for 30+ years and have a teenage son. Sheri has a BA in Women's Studies from SFSU, and a Master of Social Work from California State University.

Panelist **Jeffrey Braverman** is an entrepreneur, producer, and visual storyteller. Jeffrey is cofounder of NestingPad, an early-stage startup focused on providing alternative housing solutions to intergenerational individuals and communities. Previously, Jeffrey founded Flip Turn Productions where he oversaw the strategy and creative production for some of the world's leading brands, ad agencies, publications and online sites. Jeffrey lives in San Francisco with his partner and their cat, Max.

Free Estate Planning Seminar at GLIDE

Tuesday, October 13 at Glide, 330 Ellis Street, San Francisco, CA 94102 6:00 to 7:30 pm

Planning for your family and community- Please join GLIDE for this informal seminar that will cover the most effective means of providing for your loved ones after you are gone, while also ensuring your meaningful legacy in the community. We will cover estate planning basics with an emphasis on including giving priorities. In addition, we'll learn about probate (and how to avoid it), trusts and wills, charitable trusts that allow you to make a gift to charity and your family, and earmarking contributions from your retirement account, among other topics.

Please RSVP to: Kim Bender kbender@glide.org (415) 674-6146

Third Friday Lunch Bunch: Friday, 16th October 2015

Senior Helpline Services & Life Elder Care

"Rides for Seniors / VIP Rides"

Because many seniors may experience periods of limited mobility, it is important to have alternatives for necessary rides to doctor's appointments, meetings, for shopping and other activities of daily life. Many LGBT seniors may have fewer family members nearby who can provide that service. So Victoria Williams of Senior Helpline Services and Kathleen Miller of Life Elder Care will be making a presentation on "Rides for Seniors" and "VIP Rides" at the Third Friday Lunch Bunch at North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Way (corner of 58th) in Oakland. A buffet lunch (vegetarian and non-vegetarian) is served at 12 noon, after which Victoria and Kathleen will present.

The Rides for Seniors program provided by Senior Helpline Services serves senior residents in seven Alameda County communities (Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland, Piedmont and San Leandro), while VIP Rides serves seniors in Fremont, Newark, Union City, Hayward and Castro Valley. Both programs are funded via Measure B and administered by the Alameda County Transportation Commission. The presenters will also discuss the Measure B rides programs available in Dublin, Pleasanton and Livermore.





This program is designed to fill a gap in mobility services for seniors who no longer drive and cannot access other forms of transportation. Unless they are able to use public transportation, paratransit, vans, or cabs that provide only curb-to-curb service, seniors often have difficulty in accessing medical care and obtaining basic necessities.

In our society, mobility = independence, so without a safe and available alternative to driving, the end result for seniors is often premature placement in long-term care facilities. Senior Helpline Services and Life Elder Care help seniors age in their own homes by providing one-on-one, door-through-door escorted rides at no charge.

Lavender Seniors attempts to alternate educational presentations with entertainment during its Third Friday Lunch Bunch programs at the North Oakland Senior Center. The September program included a "Broadway Sing-Along" and exercise-in-place activity led by Bruce Bierman of StageBridge.

For more information about Lavender Seniors, please call Kathleen @510-574-2073, or e-mail her at Kathleen@lavenderseniors.org.

Women's Health Fair

Women's Health Fair



The NIA Collective, in partnership with the Women's Cancer Resource Center, will be hosting a Women's Health Fair on Sunday, October 18, 2015. The event will be at WCRC, 5741 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm.

This health fair is open to all members of the community! There will be breast cancer risk-reduction information, fingerstick glucose checks and blood pressure checks, HIV testing, information on mental health services, assistance with enrolling in Covered California and more.

If you have questions, please contact Mwamba @ 510-599-7971 or email lmdoc50@gmail.com.



REGISTER FOR CARA'S 12TH ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONVENTION MONDAY AND TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19TH AND 20TH DOUBLETREE by HILTON, ONTARIO, CA

Time is NOW to register for CARA's 12th Annual Convention on Oct. 19th and 20th. You can send in your registration to the CARA Office, 600 Grand Ave., #410, Oakland, 94610 (\$125) or register on the CARA website.

You can reserve your room directly with the Hilton by calling 909-418-4873. CARA's code is ARL. Don't be surprised if you get a voicemail message that doesn't indicate you have reached Hilton reservations. This is the correct number and if you leave your name, phone number and that you are calling to reserve a room for the CARA Convention on Oct. 19th and 20th, you will get a call back.

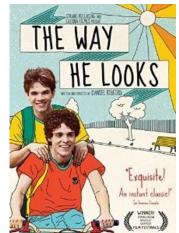
Rooms are selling out for the 19th, as well as the 18th and the 20th, so reserve soon at the CARA special rate of \$109 per night plus tax.

You won't want to miss this Convention - it is going to be great!!!!

Third Wednesday Lavender Seniors Film Series: 21st October 2015

"The Way He Looks "

This charming coming-of-age story takes place in 2014 Brazil (in Portuguese with English sub-titles). Our hero, Leonardo ("Leo"), a handsome teenager who was born blind, takes notes in the classroom with a Braille typewriter, which some of his cretinous classmates continue to make fun of. Leo and his best girl friend, Giovana ("Gi"), are practically inseparable, discussing such common topics of adolescence as when each will experience a "first kiss" (which Gi is happy to do with him, but Leo wants it to "mean something" and be with someone special, since Gi is his best friend, not a romantic interest). Though Leo continues to struggle for independence from his over-protective parents, as well as from Gi, she walks him home after school every day, though her house is several blocks in the other direction.



Enter gorgeous teenage heart-throb character, Gabriel, the "new kid" in class. Gi develops an instant crush on him, though Leo, of course, cannot see him to have an opinion either way. The threesome become fast friends and the outcome remains to be seen.

This delightful 2014 movie is based on a short film directed, written and co-produced by Daniel Ribeiro three years earlier (and a hit on the film festival circuit) called <u>I Don't Want to Go Back Alone</u> (Eu Não Quero Voltar Sozinho). The Third Wednesday Lavender Seniors Film Series will begin with a showing of that 10-minute short, followed by a brief discussion, then showing of the full 96-minute film, so attendees can get a sense of the evolution of a brilliant feature film idea. The same actors appear in both versions, which makes it even more interesting!

Lavender Seniors will provide popcorn, bottled water, Martinelli's apple juice and sparkling cider, plus some miniature Reese's peanut butter cups for an added treat this month. Following the 1-3pm screening at the 75-seat Thunderbolt Theater, there will be a brief discussion of the film and the issues it brings up for us as LGBT seniors. Evaluations have consistently requested that the discussion take place AFTER the credits have completed rolling (which makes some others impatient - can't please everybody all the time). Also, some attendees have requested there be an "intermission" mid-film for people to take bathroom breaks and gather up more refreshments, something we will try this time (to the annoyance of some, to be sure). A question on the merits of this "half-time" practice will be included in October's evaluation forms.

Thunderbolt Theater is part of the Marina Community Center, 15301 Wicks Blvd., San Leandro. For those using public transportation, take BART to the San Leandro station, where pick-up between 12:30-12:45pm can be arranged by e-mailing JohnDavid@lavenderseniors.org or calling 510-532-8951 at least a day in advance.

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

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

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

You are invited to a Memorial Celebration of the Life of Natalie Zarchin



Friends and family members of Lavender Seniors and LGBT rights pioneer, Natalie Zarchin, are all invited to gather on Sunday, November 1st, 1-5pm, to celebrate the life of this outspoken activist. It will be held at the Ed Roberts Campus, 3075 Adeline Street (opposite the Ashby BART station). Free parking at rear of building. This is an open and

accessible venue. No admission fee.

In addition to making time for people to give testimonials and make tributes to Natalie, organizers are planning to have music and refreshments. OLOC will be organizing an auction of some of Natalie's pottery pieces, generously donated by her family.

The Pacific Center, where Natalie was a long-time participant - including most recently co-facilitation of Queerly Aging Lesbians - has generously donated the funds for rental of the facility.

Questions about, suggestions for and donations toward the memorial can be referred to Marjorie Larney (MLarney@gmail.com or 510-595-1615).

Main Participating Organizations: Pacific Center for Human Growth, Lavender Seniors of the East Bay, Older Lesbians Organizing for Change

Educating the World

I had the opportunity to hear Priscilla Bertucci talk about her devotion to helping educate the people of São Paulo, Brazil about LGBTQ people. Her dedication and determination has become a world wide effort. Please check out her website and series of videos.

- Beckie Underwood

www.ssexbbox.com

WHAT IS [SSEX BBOX]?

[SSEX BBOX] - SEXUALITY OUT OF THE BOX is a multi-media social justice project that was created to shed even brighter light on the global gender and sexuality discussion. The [SSEX BBOX] project is dedicated to expanding consciousness, dismantling shame, reducing isolation and ignorance, facilitating community and education, as well as questioning old and obsolete concepts about sexuality.

Monthly Events

Out Standing Seniors

October 6 & 20 11:15a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Hayward Senior Center, 22325 N. Third Street, Hayward

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

Lavender Seniors Advisory Board Meeting

October 7, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

1420 Santa Maria Street, San Leandro

A portion of this meeting is open to the public.

Support Discussion Group for Aging Lesbian Women

October 1 & 15, 1:30 p.m. (1st and 3rd Thursdays)

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

Find support and like-minded wonderful people!

San Leandro Potluck

October 10, 12:00-2:00 p.m. (2nd Saturday)

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!



Senior Men's Group

October 8 & 22, 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!

Free Estate Planning Seminar at GLIDE

Tuesday, October 13, 6:00 to 7:30 pm GLIDE, 330 Ellis Street, Room 206, San Francisco, CA 94102 **See more info above.**

Oakland Lunch Bunch

Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging & Adult Services

October 16, 12:00-2:00 p.m. (3rd Friday of each month)

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

This month's program is: "Rides for Seniors/VIP Rides" see info above.

LGBT Film Series

October 21, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (3rd Wednesday of each month)
Marina Community Center, 15301 Wicks Blvd, San Leandro
This month's movie is: "They Way He Looks" see info above.

Lost & Found

A new column for items left behind at Lavender Senior Functions

If you've lost or found something at a Lavender Senior event or function, please send your inquiry including the event, date & description of what you found or lost to: info@lavenderseniors.org.

(items found while the function facilitator or LS board member is present should be turned into them.)



Thank you to our sponsor, Chapel of the Chimes

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

Call and set up your Health Care Directive today!

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



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

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Board of Advisors

Chair: D'Anne BruetschBeckie UnderwoodVice Chair: Akilah Bolden-MonifaFrank HowellSecretary: John David DupreeBarbara JueTreasurer: Carmen ChiongMike Trutner

Email: info@lavenderseniors.org

Lavender Seniors is a project of LIFE ElderCare

Like us on Facebook

Follow us on twitter

 $Website: \underline{http://lavenderseniors.org}$

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