



# Lavender Notes

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

*September 2017*      *Celebrating 22+ years of service and positive change*

*Volume 24, Issue 9*

## Stories of Our Lives

### Stephanie Ann Blythe

Born the youngest of three siblings in Carmel, Stephanie Ann spent the first four-plus decades of her life as Stephen or Steve before she acted on the fact that she had realized for some time that she was truly Stephanie Ann. Now, at age 67, she has lived as her true self for nearly two decades.

"My childhood was actually a very happy one," Stephanie Ann recalls, "perhaps because I was a bit of a 'spoiled brat', a terror, in fact! I broke many of my older brother's toys and - at a very early age - hammered nails into the tires on my father's truck because he had decided not to let me ride along on his deliveries anymore - and because he accidentally ran over my red wagon. Strangely enough, as the 'baby' of the family, I seemed to be easily forgiven."



Mom & Baby Steve  
his Dog



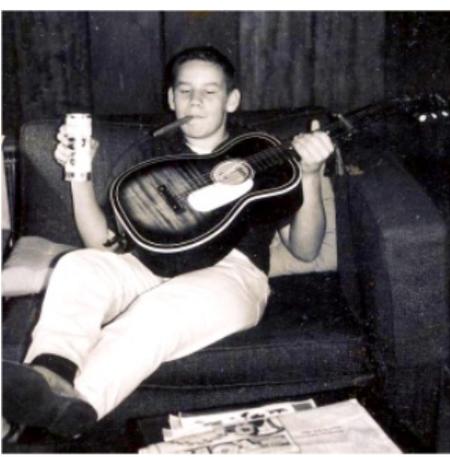
Toddler/Terror Steve (center) with Gary & Judy



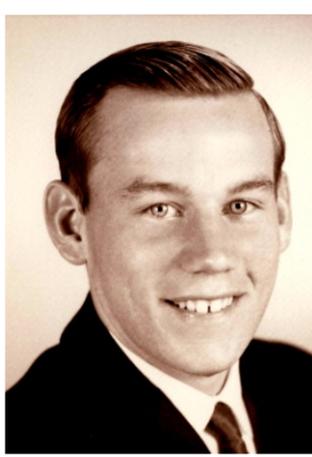
Young Stephen with  
his Dog

Her Anglo father was a chef and her Russian mother doubled as housewife and partner in a once-thriving tortilla-making business. Later they bought a restaurant in Monterey, where her mother was an elegant hostess, even if that style did not come easily to her. There was nothing particularly unusual about young Steve, being declared by one of their family physicians "A fine boy with no defects"!

"When my older sister went off to college, however," Stephanie Ann reminisces, "I inherited not only her room, but all of the clothing therein! I began cross-dressing, though I didn't really understand why at first. It just felt right and, surprisingly, I never got caught in the act, so never thought there was anything particularly wrong with it."



Steve trying to butch it up  
Roomie



Steve, High School Graduate



Steve (r) and College Roomie

In high school and college (self-described as an "indifferent student"), dates with girls began creating self-doubt ("Am I a lesbian in a man's body?").

"My confusion led me to focus on my education and finding a good job, instead of anything that could now be described as 'gender dysphoria'," Stephanie Ann recalls. "I got my degree in Geography at UCB in 1972. Then at age 23, I made the very adult decision to take a job as mail handler - or 'sack dragger,' as it was called - at the Oakland Post Office. I would wind up retiring from my only real employer 33 years later in 2006."

After two years, she was detailed to an office job, then promoted to management in 1978.

It was only after her father died in 1988 and her mother died in 1998, however, that she finally felt the freedom to deal with her confusion. Once she'd completed her duties as the executor of her parents' estate, she finally "came out" to her brother and sister.

"They both said that they had always known something was up with me, but they didn't know exactly what," Stephanie Ann says. "They weren't sure if I was gay, but they were relieved to finally find out the truth when I was 48 years old! They've both always been very supportive from the get-go."

She soon found various local and on-line support groups for transgender and questioning individuals. She became part of the Diablo Valley Girls in Contra Costa County, where she still writes a column for the *Devil Woman* newsletter. She began regularly attending functions of TransGender San Francisco (TGSF) and seeing therapists specializing in TG issues, like Dr. Rebecca Auge and Luanna Rogers, who wrote the second letter required for surgical interventions on the route to "gender affirmation."

Before she could begin that journey, however, she was required to live one year as a woman in all aspects of her life.

"The most difficult part for me was coming out at work," she recalls. "My manager circulated a memo informing other staff that Steve was becoming Stephanie Ann. Virtually everybody came by with encouraging words over the next few days - some within 20 minutes of the memo being issued. Only one co-worker made it clear that she didn't want to be in the ladies room with me, so consistently turned and went the other way if we accidentally met at the restroom door. The only other negative response has been one friend, who freaked out. Unexpected support came from a cousin in Australia who had her nephew become her niece."

After the decision was made to transition, Stephanie Ann identified the best match for her surgery was Dr. Toby Meltzer in Scottsdale, Arizona, where she made many trips over the next few years. She began with the gender confirmation surgery in 2003 followed by facial feminization surgery in 2006.



**"I call this my 'Isn't she lovely?' portrait to remind myself of how badly I wanted this change!"**

Though the transformation was anything but easy, Stephanie Ann has been pleased with how her life has changed now that she's in the body she was intended to have.



**The manager is "out" at work!**



**Second runner-up (left) in a pageant**

"I now consider myself a transgendered lesbian," Stephanie Ann responds when she's asked that question, "though I'm not a trans-woman who wants to crash womyn-only events where we're not welcome. I have a wonderful circle of friends and organizations where I'm unconditionally welcome, so why would I put myself - or unwelcoming people - through any such unpleasantness?"

She has occasionally "fallen for" women who preferred being with a man. She has, however, been in a "dose but uncommitted relationship" with a woman that she met in 2001. Though their relationship is no longer as intimate as it once was, they continue to travel together extensively, attending social, community and arts events as a couple.

She has done considerable public speaking to groups like Lavender Seniors and the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies at the Pacific School of Religion. She was asked at one point to speak to a group of retired Lutheran ministers - along with a transgendered female-to-male. She has become involved with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley in Kensington, where she has served on the board, including as chair.

"Being part of a 'welcoming congregation' has meant a lot to me," she says, "helping me to feel included personally, professionally and spiritually. I have traveled with others to our partner church in Transylvania, which has been a very uplifting experience."



Stephanie Ann (r) with members of Transylvania partner UU church congregation

Stephanie Ann has many outside interests, as well, including competitive cribbage, 3-D photography and globe-trotting around the world.

Asked if she had any advice for people who might be confused or questioning as she was for nearly two-thirds of her life so far, she suggested the biggest problem may be letting go of the fear; then she quoted from Anais Nin:

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to **blossom**."

Thank you, Stephanie Ann, for sharing so much of your life with Lavender Seniors readers!

### Mothertongue Feminist Women's Theater Collective Member Passes

## Ruth Michaels, Ph.D.

Long-time Mothertongue Theater stalwart, Ruth Michaels, died just a few weeks before her 93rd birthday. Born in Vienna, Austria, Ruth and her parents escaped the Nazis when she was just 14 years old. She had subsequently lived in New York, on a kibbutz in Israel, in Detroit and Ann Arbor - always active in Middle East politics - before finally moving to Berkeley in 1987.

She and her first husband, Alfred Michaels, had two children and adopted a third before their divorce in 1977. She married her second husband, Craig Wilder, in California, expanding her Israel-Palestine-related activities to include involvement in National Alliance on Mental Illness and other mental health organizations due to Craig's considerable mental health issues. After his death in 1989, she became involved in many Bay Area feminist organizations, wiccans and progressive political organizations.



Ruth (2<sup>nd</sup> from left), Mariya, Joan, Laura and Diana [photo: Sandy Morris]

She then came out as a lesbian, including several long-term relationships with women - her last being partners with

Julie Craig. She regularly stood with Women in Black, protesting Israel's continued occupation of the Palestinian territories. After living for 20+ years on Virginia Street near the UC-Berkeley campus, she spent 10 years at Strawberry Creek Lodge, a self-run senior resident facility on Addison in Berkeley, spending the last year of her life at the Reutlinger Community in Danville. The complete Aug. 28th Berkeley Daily Planet obituary can be seen at: <http://www.berkeleydailyplanet.com/issue/2017-07-28/article/45904?headline=Ruth-Michaels-br-1924-2017-Claire-Michaels>

Our deepest condolences go out to her sons, Jerry and Ronnie, their wives, Carrie and Kathy, her daughter Sandra, her grandchildren Claire, Julia, David, and Rafi, and her great-grandchild, Daan. We've lost another great leader in our community, but her spirit lives on in each of us who knew and loved her.

Mothertongue Feminist Women's Theater Collective will hold a performance in honor of Ruth, one of their fallen heroes, at the Third Friday Lunch Bunch, 12-2pm on 17th of November, the anniversary month of the founding of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay. The Lunch Bunch convenes at North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Jr Way.

A memorial service was already held by family and friends the week after her death.

### Passing of another East Bay LGBTQ Leader

## Celeste Newbrough

Celeste Newbrough, age 77, who was the subject of July's "Stories of Our Lives" column in this newsletter, died at Kaiser Hospital in Oakland on the 4th of August. A lovely full-page obituary regarding her life, headlined "Celeste Newbrough, Who Fought the Briggs Initiative, Dies", appeared in the 24th August issue of Bay Area Reporter, telling her story beautifully. To read the tribute in its entirety, follow the hyperlink here: <http://ebar.com/news/article.php?sec=news&article=72868>



Celeste (r) and Paula Lichtenberg, Gay Freedom Day 2017

We send our heart-felt condolences to Celeste's partner (they preferred that term to "wife" or "spouse"), Ilona Pivar, PhD, who had very pleasantly celebrated 40 years together in their Berkeley home the week-end before Celeste's death. Our hearts also go out to Celeste's daughter, Pamela; son-in-law, Louis; nephew, Halsey and niece-in-law, Jenny, as well as several grandchildren, grand-nieces, grand-nephews and, of course, her beloved long-time companion, Tibetan Terrier, Sara.

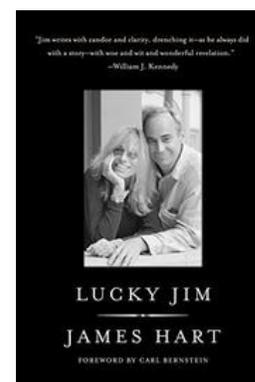
### Book Review:

## Lucky Jim

By James Hart

Hart weaves a spellbinding tale of gayness in his family. Several people are portrayed: Curly, Jim's wife of 12 years and Eamon Hart, his son.

Eamon excelled at horse racing but suffered from seizures. Doctors couldn't figure out what caused his condition.



Jim's second wife (of 20 years), Carly Simon, gained fame for her hit song, "You're So Vain", written in 1972 about Warren Beatty.

Hart recovered thanks to therapy from his doctor and a gay recovery group. His son was finally placed in a group home where he finally died.

James Hart gives us an unforgettable account of a gay man who survives all the odds. A compelling read.

- Frank Howell



© Can Stock Photo

## CONNECTIONS

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](#) 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 [info@lavenderseniors.org](mailto:info@lavenderseniors.org) and we will be in touch with you soon. Thank You!

## GGBA mixer...a successful event!

Thank you everyone who attended and supported this fund raiser for Lavender Seniors!  
Thank you to photographer, Sandy Morris, for sharing her candid shots.



Vincent serving up beverages



Barbara & GGBA members



John David & Marcelo



Beckie & Peter



Marcelo Acevedo & Pam Spevack



Mica, Carmen, Leslie & GGBA Member

## Some Changes may have Implications for YOU!?

# What's New with Lavender Seniors?!

This has been a busy summer for Lavender Seniors and its eight-member volunteer Board of Directors.

Almost three years after becoming a program of Fremont's Life Elder Care on 1st July 2014, the two organizations decided mutually that they should separate in order for Lavender Seniors of the East Bay to be more effective at serving the entire East Bay (which has traditionally meant all of Alameda County and at least West Contra Costa County). That separation was made final on 1st June 2017, when Lavender Seniors formally left Life Elder Care and became fiscally-sponsored by The Mentoring Center, located in Oakland's Preservation Park.

"This fiscal sponsorship is intended to be an interim arrangement until Lavender Seniors can re-activate its own 501(c)3 non-profit status," said board member, Beckie Underwood. "We gave up that status when we joined forces with the Tides Foundation and then Bay Area Community Services early in the 21st century. Since we've always had limited funds for paid staff, it was simply easier to rely on our fiscal sponsors to do all of the administrative reporting to keep their non-profit status intact and we could just remain under their umbrella."

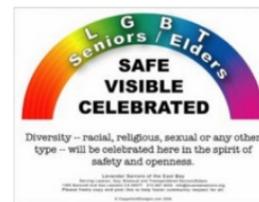
Unfortunately, until Lavender Seniors' official non-profit status has been re-activated - a fairly complicated and lengthy process - it makes it a bit complicated for some of our generous regular donors, since they may have to change their mode of giving twice in the same year. For the time being, however, this means that those giving through regular donations sent to Life Elder Care must re-direct those donations making checks out to The Mentoring Center (672 13th Street - Suite 200, Oakland 94621) with Lavender Seniors in the memo line and perhaps pointing out in a covering letter that the donation is intended for Lavender Seniors.

Those who make regular contributions through systems like Network for Good, but through Life Elder Care, must go to the donor website, cancel the donation through Life Elder Care and instead choose The Mentoring Center, then click on the "I want my donation to be dedicated to..." and specifically designate Lavender Seniors of the East Bay.

We apologize for this temporary inconvenience, but are also hopeful that the faithful among our current donors will hang in there and that, in fact, some new donors will pitch in to help us through this transition period in order to best serve LGBTQ seniors in the East Bay! We have submitted two grant proposals in the month of August trying to acquire funds to keep running at full speed.

Meanwhile, we plan to continue all of our current programs:

- **Friendly Visitors:** Providing skilled and compassionate volunteers to visit LGBTQ seniors in their homes on a regular basis - and take them out into the community, as well;
- **Bi-Monthly Lunches:** (Second Saturday at All Saints Episcopal Church in San Leandro; Third Friday at North Oakland Senior Center), featuring speakers, entertainment and lively discussion afterward, keeping LGBTQ seniors connected to their community;
- **Monthly LGBTQ-themed Film Series:** Currently held in accessible theater space at the San Leandro Public Library, targeting LGBTQ seniors who may have rarely seen a positive representation of themselves on the silver OR small screen;
- **Provider Training:** Promotion of provider training through our two videos ("Safe and Visible: Creating a Practice Welcoming to LGBTQ Seniors" and "Safe and Visible: Creating a Facility Welcoming to LGBTQ Seniors") both on-line and face-to-face, provides continuing education units for interested providers. We have won an Alameda County award for the first film and have recently proposed presenting a paper on these innovative training videos at the national convention of the American Society on Aging next March.
- **Information Tables:** We regularly provide information tables at Pride events, health fairs and other informational events relevant to LGBTQ seniors in the East Bay (e.g., see story on September 10th Oakland Pride tabling elsewhere in this newsletter);
- **LGBTQ Seniors Support Groups:** Lavender Seniors sponsors or co-sponsors support groups throughout the East Bay. One such group - dealing with how we care for our ailing same-sex partners - is currently in jeopardy of being discontinued during this transition period. We hope, however, to not only continue the group focusing on women caring for women partners, but to expand it to men caring for male partners;
- **Lavender Notes:** Our monthly newsletter which features people, news and events relevant to East Bay LGBTQ seniors;
- **The website:** [www.LavenderSeniors.org](http://www.LavenderSeniors.org) continues to be available for those seeking information relevant to LGBTQ seniors in general and, specifically, in the East Bay;
- **The Lavender Scrolls Project:** A traveling exhibit of eight 3'x6' photo-stories of typical LGBTQ seniors which is exhibited regularly - inside and outside - to make the LGBTQ senior community more visible. Since these scrolls have frequently weathered the elements in outdoor displays, they are in dire need of repair and updating, adding a new generation of seniors.
- **The Emblem LGBTQ Certification Project:** Helps identify LGBTQ-friendly service providers throughout the East Bay who - once certified - can proudly display this decal (clear or white background) on office doors and windows as evidence



that herein resides a non-judgmental and supportive service provider.

These and many other innovative ideas will continue via Lavender Seniors of the East Bay if we continue getting community support for our mission of "...improving the quality of life of older lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) residents of the East Bay through community building, education and advocacy. We strive to keep older LGBTQ individuals connected to their communities and thriving in place."

Plans are already underfoot to celebrate our Silver (25th) Anniversary of service provision in November 2019. With ongoing support, we will be around as long as the community needs us!

# San Leandro Pot Luck

Saturday, September 9th, noon-2:00 pm  
All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling Blvd. San Leandro



Jill Lessiy of Able Asp will be sharing strategies of aging with us. As we began our lives, vibrant and unstoppable, we forget that the aging factor will hit us when we least expect it. How do we recognize it, how do we prepare for it, how do we deal with our infirmities and physical limitations if and when physical limitations occur. Jill will help us strategize through the changes of our mind and body as we age. We are likely going to live longer than many in the previous generation did, How do we assure our quality of life continues and what do we do if it doesn't?.

We are looking for other program ideas for future potlucks that may pique the interest of Lavender Seniors participants. Please send your suggestions to [Lavender Senior Lunches](#).

# QUEER MEN!

**Celebrating Where We Come From, Envisioning Where We're Going**

*A Gathering Delving into Male GBT Spirituality, Politics and Psychology*



*An All-Ages, Male-Identified GBT*

*Mixer, Lunch & Panel Discussion*

**OAKLAND PRIDE WEEKEND**

*Saturday, September 9, 12:30 to 3:30 pm*

*Intergenerational Mixer and Non-Alcoholic Drinks • Catered Sit Down Lunch*

*Dessert: Finger Food Potluck to Share • Panel Discussion with Male GBT Trailblazers • Q&A*

**JOIN US, BRING A FRIEND, MAKE NEW FRIENDS, OWN OUR PRIDE**

Community Hall at St. Columba RCC, 6401 San Pablo Ave. (Alcatraz), Oakland, CA (free parking)

\$5 Cash at Door

RSVP: [tjfisher55@gmail.com](mailto:tjfisher55@gmail.com)

Oakland Pride 2017, Sunday, 10th September, 10:30am-7pm

## Lavender Seniors Participating in Oakland Pride

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay will once again have an information booth at Oakland Pride this year, as it has since the event was revived in 2008. Beginning in 2010, the organizers of Oakland Pride have distributed over \$50,000 to LGBTQ-friendly groups in the East Bay. The parade begins at 10:30, Broadway and 14th. Entrance to the Pride festivities is at Broadway and 20th. There is a \$10 entrance fee for adults and \$5 entrance fee for children under 12.



Lavender Seniors booth at Oakland Pride 2016



Revelers at Oakland Pride 2016

Some of us older folks can recall the East Bay Lesbian and Gay Pride Marches that were held annually in Berkeley back in the 1970s and 1980s - from downtown Berkeley up Durant to Telegraph, ending with an all-afternoon (with lots of booths!) Pride Rally in Ho Chi Minh (now Willard) Park at Derby and Hillegass. In those days, speakers and entertainers like Pat Parker, Audre Lourde, Holly Near, Chris Williamson, Margie Adam, Linda Tillery, Mary Watkins and Howard Wallace (outspoken union organizer during the "No on 6" anti-Anita-Bryant EBACABI-Briggs Initiative days of 1977-78) and even Harvey Milk (only one year before his assassination in November 1978) were on the single stage erected for the occasion. Oakland Pride now has several stages each year!

The East Bay celebration fizzled out in the mid-1990s, was resurrected in Oakland from 1997-2004, after which the Oakland Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Roundtable revived it as "Oakland Out in Oakland" in 2005 and 2006. Then there was a two-year hiatus. City Councilmember Rebecca Kaplan and a few colleagues are credited with reviving the idea of Oakland Pride in 2008 and it has been going strong ever since.

Anyone interested in helping staff the Lavender Seniors booth for a couple hours this year should contact [JohnDavid@LavenderSeniors.org](mailto:JohnDavid@LavenderSeniors.org) to see when there might be shifts available. To volunteer for other Lavender Seniors activities, please contact [Info@LavenderSeniors.org](mailto:Info@LavenderSeniors.org) and someone will get back to you.

For more info about Oakland Pride: <http://www.oaklandpride.org/>

Hope to see you there on September 10th!

### Third Friday Lunch Bunch, 12-2pm, Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> September



## Bringing Positive Energy into your Life

Studies have repeatedly shown that stress contributes to creating and prolonging disease. On the other hand, being positive and "thinking happy thoughts" has been touted by everyone in the healing (and spiritual) professions as at least contributing to just the opposite effect, wellness in mind and body.



Leading us in this discussion will be Johanna Jenkins of Beacon Home Care in Albany, who introduced herself to us during announcements at the July's Lunch Bunch "Paella Feast".

"All of us have bad days," Johanna reminds us, "perhaps more complicated by living as LGBTQ over the years. But with

a few simple tricks, we can find ways to maintain - and attract - positive energy that helps us smile on even the darkest days!"

Norman Cousins, an American political journalist, author, professor, and [world peace](#) advocate, wrote in his landmark 1979 book, *Anatomy of an Illness*, that even after very grim diagnoses in the 1960s - at age 49 - he adopted his own recovery plan, which involved massive doses of laughter brought on by watching comedy shows (especially "Candid Camera"). In spite of the negative prognosis, he lived another 26 years and died at age 75.

"I made the joyous discovery that ten minutes of genuine belly laughter had an anesthetic effect and would give me at least two hours of pain-free sleep," Cousins reported. "When the pain-killing effect of the laughter wore off, we would switch on the projector again and not infrequently, it would lead to another pain-free interval."

As an adjunct professor in UCLA's Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Science for the last 12 years of his life, his primary research focus was the connection between attitude and health. A lifetime believer in the power of hope, and in the realism of optimism, one of Cousins' best-known quotes is "Life is an adventure in forgiveness."

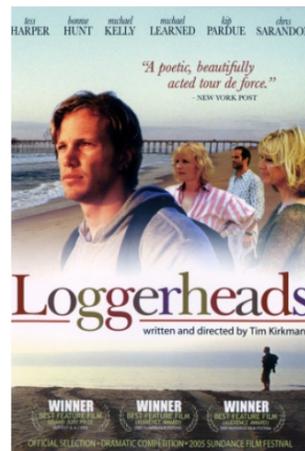
The Lunch Bunch is held at the North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Jr Way (corner 58th Street). Lunch is served promptly at noon (with vegetarian options available). Announcements follow at around 12:45 and either speakers or entertainment are presented, with ample time for Q&A and robust discussion afterward.

Parking and entrance are in the rear of the building. Please feel free to join us!

Lavender Seniors Film Series, Wednesday, 20th September, 1-3pm

## Loggerheads

Overlapping stories of estranged families in three Southern cities converge in a surprising way in this delightful and poignant film released as a DVD in 2006. Elizabeth Austin (Tess Harper), "preacher's wife" of Rev. Robert Austin (Chris Sarandon), pines for the adopted son who fled their uber-religious household as a teenager. Grace Bellamy (Bonnie Hunt), now in her 40s, wonders about the son she gave up for adoption when she was 16. And kind-hearted, gay and HIV-positive Mark (Kip Pardue) falls in love with motel owner George (Michael Kelly) while coming to the rescue of loggerhead turtles along the beach in coastal North Carolina.

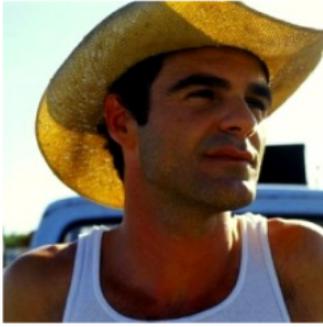


Those of us old enough to remember "The Waltons" will probably enjoy seeing Michael Learned playing the awkward role of a mother who a quarter-century earlier forced her teenage daughter to give up her child as an unwed pregnant teenager in a different time.

Taking place at the turn of the 21st century (which can be somewhat difficult to follow at first as we hear voice-overs of Bill Clinton warning about "Y2K" and George W. Bush touting his first 100 days in office to place the action in time), the events center around three Mother's Days, 1999-2001 in Charlotte, Eden and Kure Beach, North Carolina.

The characters are all dealing in one way or another with homosexuality and adoption. One of the characters provides a connecting link involving the others. That may sound like things are all figured out, but "Loggerheads" is not a movie where the emotions are tidy and the messages are clear. It is about people trying to deal with the situations they have landed in.

Most of the characters are hiding a secret (or six) and all are perfectly good people, doing what they think is right for them, though some are more likable than others. They are like all of us.



**George offers Mark shelter in his somewhat seedy motel; the young men wind up falling deeply for each other with limited time!**

The film will be shown at 1pm on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> of September, in the Lecture Hall of the San Leandro Public Library, 300 Estudillo, a ten-minute walk up Estudillo from the San Leandro BART station - or a five-minute walk from the AC-Transit stop at E. 14<sup>th</sup> and Estudillo.

Lavender Seniors will provide popcorn, bottled water, Martinelli's apple juice, plus miniature Reese's peanut butter cups. After the showing, there will be a brief discussion and evaluation of the film and the issues it brings up for LGBTQ Seniors and their allies.

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 14<sup>th</sup>.

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

There is ample free parking - some three-hour and some two-hour - at the library.

## Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

# Welcome, Two New Board Members!

The Board of Directors of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay welcomed two new volunteer members at their August 9th board meeting. Both Gwen and Gary bring valuable skills and diversity to the board. The ethnic make-up of the current eight-member board is: two African-American women, one Latino man, one Latina/Asian woman, one Asian woman, two Caucasian men and one Caucasian woman. The board is always looking for various skills and additional diversity to better reflect the East Bay population, since our by-laws call for a five- to fifteen-member board (e.g., we currently have no transgender men or women, no Native Americans, no Asian or African-American men). Anyone interested in volunteering for board membership can contact [info@LavenderSeniors.org](mailto:info@LavenderSeniors.org) for consideration and someone will get back to you.

Brief descriptions of our two new members follow here:

### Gwendolyn M. Boozé

Gwen has owned and operated five businesses, controlled the operation of four mid-sized companies (facilitated two in going public) and held leading roles in three non-profit organizations. She is current Treasurer of Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA), past Treasurer of the Congress of California Seniors of Northern California and Financial Manager of Accutech Auto Care. She is a graduate of Mills College with honors in Economics. She has two children and five grandchildren. She and her wife own a home in Oakland.

### Gary Turner

Gary is particularly adept at organizing events and fund-raising activities, having been Co-Chair of the Worcester LGBT Pride Committee for seven years and organizer of the annual LGBT Day at Six Flags New England from its inception for the next eleven years. He is very computer- and internet-savvy and helps maintain the Lavender Seniors website. He is very active in various local, national and international plant societies, organizing shows and other special events (e.g., as current President of

the San Francisco Orchid Society, he is organizer of its signature event, the Pacific Orchid and Garden Expo, the largest orchid show in the U.S.). He recently created an informative slide-show to attract passersby while Lavender Seniors tables at Pride events, health fairs and other community resource gatherings. He lives in Hayward.

Welcome and thank you to both Gwen and Gary!



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

## Gabriel Delgado is featured in a new film on KQED!

ON NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY  
KQED BROADCASTS THE PREMIERE OF  
A HISTORICAL COMING OUT DOCUMENTARY

For National Coming Out Day (NCOD) on October 11th, KQED will explore how LGBTQ visibility has changed over the past three generations with the world premiere of a new documentary entitled *COMING OUT: A 50 Year History*.

The film, narrated by transgender teen Jazz Jennings (star of TLC's reality TV series *I am Jazz*), features several Bay Area high school and college students interviewing older LGBTQ people who "came out" in different historical eras from the 1950s until today. Their combined stories offer insights into the modern LGBTQ movement and how the process of "coming out" has changed from the McCarthy era through civil rights, post-Stonewall and during the age of AIDS. And despite the politics and social climate of the times, the process of coming out has been oddly the same for each generation.

"We all stand on the shoulders of the activists that came before us," says director Phil Siegel. "Every person who is taking a non-traditional path in their lives has had the road cleared just a little bit by the generation that preceded it."

The documentary began as a series of short films "Coming out in the 1950s," "Coming out in the 1960s," "Coming out in the 1970s" and "Coming out in the 1980s". The Pye-Harris Legacy Project produced these short films for distribution to middle schools and high schools in California with an accompanying age-appropriate teaching curriculum. They have played in film festivals throughout the USA (including Frameline) and venues such as the Stonewall Museum.

The short films were re-edited and updated with narrator Jazz Jennings into a new one-hour TV program. "When we were looking at each of the films, it revealed a thread that runs through each of the subjects coming out stories - finding others who are like-minded, forging a community, working for equality and visibility – no matter what the opposition and adversity," says producer Wayne Kirchoffer.

The film includes some faces well known in the Bay Area LGBTQ community, including Phyllis Lyon, Jewelle Gomez, Adrian Ravarour, and Professor Ardel Thomas. The film also includes people whose untold stories add insight of what it meant to come out in in the conservative 1950s, or during the social upheaval of the 1960s or through the AIDS pandemic.

National Coming Out Day (NCOD) is an annual LGBTQ awareness day observed every year on October 11th. Founded in 1988 by Robert Eichsberg and Jean O'Leary marking the anniversary of the 1987 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. The initial idea was grounded in the feminist and gay liberation spirit of the personal being political, and the emphasis on the most basic form of activism being coming out to family, friends and colleagues, and living life as an openly lesbian or gay person. Since then, every October 11th, thousands of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people and allies celebrate NCOD; with workshops, speak-outs, rallies and other kinds of events all aimed at showing the public that LGBTQ people are everywhere. *Coming Out: A 50 Year History* is proud to be continuing in this tradition of sharing stories and bringing the community together.

The program airs on KQED October 11th and is rebroadcast on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>.\*

\*KQED will set times in September

# Rethinking Memory Loss



Are you sometimes confused or frustrated  
trying to communicate with an older adult who has memory loss?  
Do you ever wonder what's going on inside the person?

*In this interactive class you will learn about  
the language of symbols and how  
to use these to enhance your relationship*

**Saturday OCTOBER 28, 2017 9:30AM-3PM Fee: \$68**

There will be a short lunch break, bring your own lunch. There is no shopping area close to the school.

#### SANDI PETERS

*Sandi has a master's degree in psychology and has been working in the field of gerontology since 1986. Her area of specialty is lifespan development and the possibilities for renewal in older age. As a student of Carl Jung, she has particular interest in the role of symbolic expression in older age, especially for those with memory loss. Sandi uses sandplay, a combination of miniature figures and a box of sand, with elders to access and creatively express inner states. She also works as a consultant and trainer in long term care facilities. [www.sandplaydementia.com](http://www.sandplaydementia.com)*

#### ODILE LAVAULT

*Recreation therapist, musician and educator, Odile Lavault is passionate about communication with seniors with memory-loss and disorientation. Odile has worked in short and long term skilled nursing, acute psychiatric geriatric hospital and home care-partners support. She believes that there is a reason behind all behaviors. Through observing and listening with empathy she provides individual answers to "What to say?" and "What to do?" [www.soul2soul-seniors.com](http://www.soul2soul-seniors.com)*

Register on line at [www.piedmontadulthoodschool.org](http://www.piedmontadulthoodschool.org) Ph: 510-594-2655

Or in person at Piedmont Adult School office 800 Magnolia Ave, Piedmont, CA 94611

Approved for 4 CEUs by BBS: contact [sandi@sandplaydementia.com](mailto:sandi@sandplaydementia.com)



**CRISIS SUPPORT SERVICES**  
of Alameda County

## **Support Groups for Women**

Ages 55 and Above

Meeting in North Oakland

Monday Afternoon 12 pm to 2 pm

Tuesday Evening 6 pm to 8 pm

Pre-registration Required – Call 1-800-260-0094

Share your voice, your wisdom and your inspiration.



Gain support in navigating the challenges of aging and living to the full potential of later years in a friendly women only group.

### **Registration**

This group is limited to 8 participants and pre-registration is required. There is a sliding fee based on income – no one is turned away for inability to pay. For more information please call 1-800-260-0094

Services are provided by counselors in training supervised by licensed therapists.

### **We practice Trauma-Informed Care**

Crisis Support Services of Alameda County recognizes and understands the impact of trauma including the challenge of accessing supportive services. Our mission is to provide a welcoming and safe environment rooted in the belief that through collaboration with clients at every stage of services, healing is possible.

[www.crisissupport.org](http://www.crisissupport.org)

**24 Hour Crisis Line: 1-800-309-2131**

**Working Together to Improve the Quality of Life Today**

Join us for the **HICAP** presentation:

**Medicare and the Annual Enrollment Period (Oct. 15- Dec. 7): Changes for Next Year**

**Tuesday, November 7th 12:30-2:00 pm**

at the Hayward Senior Center, 22325 N. Third St, Hayward

Sponsored by **Out Standing Seniors**

Presented by **Legal Assistance for Seniors**



This presentation provides information on changes to the Medicare Prescription Drug (Part D) Plans and Medicare Advantage (Part C) Plans in the coming year.

Provides an overview of eligibility, costs, benefits, and changes in Medicare Parts A and B.

Explains options for supplementing Medicare and getting help with medical costs.

How to Reach LAS:

Call for an appointment today at:  
1-510-832-3040 (LAS)  
1-510-839-0393 (HICAP)

Mail at:  
333 Hegenberger Rd, Suite 850  
Oakland, CA 94621

Or on the web at:  
[www.lashicap.org](http://www.lashicap.org)

#### Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program

The Mission of Legal Assistance for Seniors is to ensure the independence and dignity of seniors by protecting their legal rights through education, counseling, and advocacy. We offer services in the following areas: Public Benefits, Immigration, Elder Abuse, Guardianship of minor children, and Health Care.

LAS is the parent agency for Alameda County's HICAP, a volunteer-based program helping people on Medicare and pre-retirees to navigate the health insurance maze. **HICAP provides free, unbiased Medicare counseling to anyone in Alameda County.** We help Medicare beneficiaries of any age make informed choices and we provide advocacy when their health care benefits and rights are threatened or denied. Individual appointments and group presentations are available throughout the county.

Medicare's Annual Enrollment Period runs from October 15<sup>th</sup>-Dec 7<sup>th</sup> and allows people to make changes in their Medicare plans for the following year. **If you have experienced changes in your health or financial situation this open enrollment period is your opportunity to ensure your health care needs are being met.** There is no cost to meet with our volunteer HICAP Counselors who provide individual appointments so that they can answer questions specific to each person's situation. By early October, we know what changes will affect coverage in 2018 and can provide accurate and detailed information for Alameda County Medicare beneficiaries.

If you would like us to schedule educational presentations about Medicare or any of our legal services for a group of seniors or service providers, you may contact our office and ask for the Community Education Department.



## *Community Phone Calls*

Just a few of the things offered:

**LGBTQ Chat 2nd and 4th Mondays, 9/11, 9/25 1:00pm - 2:00pm**

This group is open to all LGBTQ seniors and is an opportunity to connect with others socially in a supportive environment where

participants can share individual and collective experiences. We will create an inclusive place to share our stories with each other and build a sense of community. Facilitated by Sylvia Vargas, Openhouse Friendly Visitor Manager

### Short Stories Read Aloud Thursdays, 3:00pm - 4:00pm

Pull up your chair and come with me to a place where your imagination is engaged and where visuals are just what your mind creates. Selections will be read from stories written by a variety of authors - some you may have heard of, others may be new. Throughout our time, we will experience mystery, humor, inspiration, and love, with a variety of fictional stories. Facilitated by Dorothy Gager

### Personal Storytelling Tuesdays, 9/19 3:00pm - 4:00pm

Under the guidance of Master Storytelling Mary Gay Ducey, Stagebridge Storytellers have been exploring the art of personal storytelling, adapting folk and fairy tales, and creating vibrant stories from real events in history. Stagebridge tellers have taken personal memories, classic stories, and fascinating historical events, and turned them into engaging personal narratives. In this call-in Storytelling Concert, you will hear these stories come alive! Each story is followed by a Q&A and brief discussion. Facilitated by Stagebridge, California

View the [Summer catalog](#) of community phone calls [here](#). Check the [website](#) for more information. To participate in these or other Senior Center Without Walls (SCWW) telephone activities, or to learn more about SCWW programs, call 877-797-7299 or email [info@seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org](mailto:info@seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org).



## THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

### Older & Out - Hayward

September 11, 18, 25 1:15pm (Mondays)

Hayward Senior Center, 22325 N. Third Street, Hayward

*A topical therapeutic peer support groups for isolated LGBTQ older adults*

### Queerly Aging Lesbians

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

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

*Find support and like-minded wonderful people!*

### Out Standing Seniors

September 5 & 19, 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.*

### Older & Out - Berkeley

September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 3:15pm (Fridays)

North Berkeley Senior Center, 901 Hearst Ave, Berkeley

*A topical therapeutic peer support groups for isolated LGBTQ older adults*

### Older & Out - Livermore

September 2, 12, 19, 26 1:00pm (Tuesdays)

Livermore Senior Services, Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Ave., Livermore

*A topical therapeutic peer support groups for isolated LGBTQ older adults*

### Rainbow Seniors

September 12 & 26 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. FREE, though donations are welcome.*

**Lavender Seniors Advisory Board Meeting**

**September 13, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. (2nd Wednesday)**

**San Leandro Library, 300 Estudillo, San Leandro**

*A portion of this meeting is open to the public.*

**Senior Men's Group**

**September 14 & 28 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**

**September 9, noon - 2:00 p.m. (2nd Saturday)**

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

*This month's program: Jill Lessiy "Strategies of Aging" (see info above)*

**Lavender Seniors Film Series**

**September 20, 1:00 - 3:00pm (3rd Wednesday)**

**San Leandro Library, 300 Estudillo, San Leandro**

*This month's movie: "Loggerheads" (see info above)*

**Oakland Lunch Bunch**

**Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging & Adult Services**

**September 15, 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. (3rd Friday)**

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

*This month's program: "Bring Positive Energy into your Life" (see info above)*

## **Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Board of Directors**

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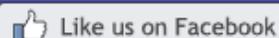
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## Lavender Seniors

 Like us on Facebook

Email: [info@lavenderseniors.org](mailto:info@lavenderseniors.org)

Website: <http://lavenderseniors.org>

Message: 510-736-LGBT

(510-736-5428)

Mail Address: 4021 Monterey Bl.

San Leandro, CA 94578