



Lavender Notes

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Estelle Eskenazi

Many people featured in this column over the years have had very complicated “coming-out” stories to share and compare with other members of the LGBTQ+ community. For Estelle – though there was the odd complication along the way – it worked like this: “One day I was sleeping with a man – the next day I was sleeping with a woman – and I never went back!”



Estelle was born in Manhattan, February 1950, the third of four sisters. Her father worked in a New Jersey glue factory and her mother was a stay-at-home Mom until Estelle was in junior high school. In 1951, the family moved to Eastchester – a newly-built ten-building public housing project in the Bronx, where she lived until she left for California at age 18. She was so eager to leave home that she skipped her 1968 graduation ceremony from Evander

Childs High School, one of five high schools and sixteen elementary and junior high schools built by the New York City Board of Education in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

"My childhood was basically pretty good," Estelle recalls. "Ours was a neighborhood within a neighborhood – the seven-story buildings had about seven families on each floor. Though we were relatively happy living there all those years, we never really fit in this community largely made up of Ashkenazi Jews and Italian-Americans. We were Sephardic Jews, darker-skinned, darker-haired and largely Ladino-speaking rather than speaking English, Yiddish, Hebrew, Russian, Polish or Italian as our first language. Ladino, also called Judeo-Spanish, Judesmo, or Sephardi, was brought from Spain to other places in the world, like Turkey, when the Jews were forced out of Spain after 1492. My grandmother and my parents always spoke Ladino at home, so we arrived at school – where only English was spoken – more than a bit disadvantaged."



Estelle (bottom right), sisters, mother & father

One of the other issues that challenged the young family was that Estelle was largely responsible for her year-younger sister, who was classified as "mentally retarded," a term commonly used for describing developmental and/or learning disabled at the time. When Estelle returned from many months recuperating from a severe bout of rheumatic fever at age 11, she realized that her sister had learned virtually nothing during that time. In fact, it was soon discovered that the "school" her sister was in had students only coloring all day!



Estelle, Younger Sister & Cousins

"My sister's disability had a profound effect on the entire family," Estelle recalls. "My mother would become impatient and even verbally abusive when it was clear my sister was unable to learn basic alphabet and numeric skills. It put a definite wedge between my parents, but it also made me fearful about my own abilities, since I didn't want to be treated like my sister was being treated. So I learned how to survive through school by such things as cheating on my spelling tests with the red-haired boy in front of me and letting him cheat on our math exams, since he was as poor in math as I was in spelling. I did what I needed to survive and keep my parents or the teachers from finding out how challenged I was, as well."

For most of her childhood, Estelle and her sisters rarely saw their father, since he would leave for work at 3am and not get home until after 10pm, long after they had gone to bed.

"It became clear by the time I was a teenager that the rumors about my father having another girlfriend were probably true," Estelle says. "It was confirmed for me personally when I was working at Woolworth's – beginning at age 14, by the way. He came to pick me up one night and the woman was in the car with him. After he dropped me off, he 'had to take her home' and he didn't come home that night. By the time I was 16 or 17, he just stopped coming home altogether and moved in with her in Jersey. After that, Mom took all of his clothes, tools, photos, etc., and hurled them out the fifth floor window. And that was the end of that!"

Though Estelle briefly had a boyfriend in high school, she was much more

interested in the girls around her and working to hide what she feared might be her own learning disability.

"I was never the swimsuit-model type, so I wasn't widely sought after by the boys," Estelle says. "In fact, the one high-school boyfriend I had basically said he wanted me to have his babies and I knew what that meant, so I ended that! Meanwhile, I'm afraid I had internalized a low self-image because I didn't have blonde hair and blue eyes like the most popular girls had. I continued spending time primarily working at Woolworth's, trying to keep ahead of academics and hanging out with my family, particularly my paternal grandmother, who seemed quite exotic to me. She had been a flamenco dancer who some Turkish king wanted in his harem, so she'd been whisked off to France to avoid that fate. She made Jewish holidays very special for us, with such Turkish-Greek treats as stuffed filo-dough pastries with spinach, eggplant, leeks, pumpkin, Greek cheeses, matzo fry and honey. We would spend weekends in her Lower East Side apartment, where she had a bathtub in the kitchen and a toilet outside."

Estelle was 12 years old when her grandmother's death suddenly eliminated one of the primary escapes from the increasingly-tense situation at home.

"Until that time, we had regularly gone to her place on Delancey Street in the Tenement-Museum District to hang out and to go with her to the nearby Sephardic Temple," Estelle – named after her grandmother – recalls. "I learned so much of what I know about Judaism from her – things like the need to keep a Kosher kitchen, making special Passover meals, having two or three sets of dishes to keep from mixing meat with dairy and so on. Shopping with our little pushcarts at the Chelsea Market – with barrelsful of pickles – was a highlight of my week!"



Estelle - Graduation 1968

When she finished all the requirements for high school graduation at age 18, she caught the first plane she could out to San Francisco, where her second older sister was pregnant and needed some assistance, particularly since the family didn't approve of the father, an older man who wasn't Jewish.

"My sister, her baby and I lived in a run-down house by the beach with no heat – I slept on a beat-up Army cot," Estelle recounts. "I hated doing child care, decided I never wanted to be a mother and after six months, moved into a Jewish women's residence on Page Street. I met lots of different kinds of women. We went to places like the Fillmore West, where I saw Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix perform. A couple of us would also go to the USO Club, where mostly guys back from the war were looking for company. We would sneak them into our rooms, trying to get them to give us their pea coats. Some of them wanted sex, but I never did that. Two of us finally got kicked out for bringing men into our rooms."

She and her evicted girlfriend got a one-bedroom apartment on Van Ness and then moved out to the Avenues, where three of them lived together. They took jobs with temp agencies, because nobody believed they would stay around long enough to become permanent. It was during that somewhat chaotic time that she met the man who became the father of her son.

"My girlfriend had a boyfriend and thought I should have one, too," Estelle recalls. "Though that girl got pregnant and later joined the army, she took the time and trouble to introduce me to this man. I wound up pregnant, too, but had an abortion. I didn't learn my lesson from that, however, and got pregnant again. Though the guy wanted to marry me, I decided he was far too much of a creep – a good guy for somebody else maybe, but definitely not for me. He had suggested that if I didn't want to have another abortion, I should put the child up for adoption, not something I could agree to, either. So I had my son, became a single mother on welfare.



Estelle, 23, and son, 2

But that wouldn't provide enough money to even buy your kid sneakers when he needed them, so I had to figure out some way to support myself!"

Estelle embarked on several career paths over the years.

"I went to John Adams Vocational School to earn my Licensed Vocational Nurse degree," Estelle says, "largely because I knew I didn't want to become a secretary. I hated being a nurse, I was probably not a very good nurse, but did everything from delivering babies and working oncology or HIV, but also began working in chemical dependency, methadone clinics and the like. I knew I needed to pursue higher education to get something that suited me better and made me feel I'd found my niche! A friend told me I could do it, helped me apply at SFSU in a special program for people with learning disabilities. I got three extra hours of teacher time each week. I got my bachelor's in social work, met Angela Davis, Sally Gearhart and a lot of feminist women and teachers. I applied for the master's program, got my MSW, then did the 3200 hours necessary to achieve my goal, Licensed Clinical Social Worker. After thinking I wasn't very bright – and being told by my own father to scrub my skin so I would be lighter and more attractive – I finally believed that I was both bright AND attractive!"

Estelle's attraction for women came into full bloom in her 20s. Two gay men friends started taking her out to the Elephant Walk and to Castro Street, before she discovered the women's bars, Amelia's, Maud's, Scott's and taking treks up to the gay/lesbian-friendly Russian River.

"It was truly like a natural evolution from sleeping one night with men and the following night with women – no real coming-out process," Estelle recalls. "It was just who I am! Since then I've had two loves of my life. The first felt like a 13-year honeymoon. She and I met at a women's nudist retreat in Willits – my girlfriend had decided not to go and HER girlfriend had decided not to go! What a coincidence – surely



Companion and Lover on a 13-year honeymoon

meant to be! She was a bit older and smart – graduated college at 16 – was a school principal. And we were beyond fascinated with each other from day one. We had her mother, daughter and grandson living with us. Unfortunately, after those 13 blissful years together, she had a heart attack, followed by a

metastatic breast cancer diagnosis and a stroke. She didn't want to go on living. We threw a month-long party with BLT sandwiches – her favorite – most days before she decided it was time to go."

Estelle has remained close to those "in-laws" to this day, feeling very much a part of the family so accepting of her and their relationship. It took her six years, however, to recover enough from that loss to consider dating anyone else again.

"I worked a lot with dialysis patients the last 10-15 years of my social work career," Estelle says, "and could see the way many of them were hanging on because their families didn't want them to let go. My sweetheart's family was not only supportive of our relationship, but they trusted her and me to make decisions about her life and our life together. I still feel close to them because of that trust and that support."

It was in the context of her hospital work that Estelle met the second love of her life – the woman she spent twenty years with.

"We were working in the hospital together," Estelle recalls, "and she started following me around. It was clear she'd never had a girlfriend before and I'd vowed never to date women who hadn't explored relationships with women previously. She was a competitive croquet player and started inviting me to her matches – and one thing did indeed lead to another! She was raising her niece. Her mother was also living with her, though she moved back to Jamaica, where Sharon had grown up. Since her daughter had just gone off to college, Sharon now felt free to explore her sexuality. We had a good couple of decades together, though it didn't come with the support of her family like I'd experienced previously. I also knew that the five-year-old niece came with the package, so I made the best of what I considered to be my not-so-great mothering skills. Sharon and I had fun taking these trips to croquet tournaments all over the country. As the youngest daughter, she had inherited a family home in Jamaica – plus one in Atlanta – both of which we jointly maintained over the years."

Estelle's two youngest granddaughters – ages 1 and 2½ - were left with her and "Aunt Sharon" by their mother "for a few weeks" while she got her act together. Those two girls are now 17 and 15½, thinking of Sharon's niece as their older sister through the years.



Estelle & "Aunt Sharon"

"My sweetheart was the primary 'mother' to all three of the girls, though I made – and continue to make – a perfect grandmother," Estelle says. "Neither my son nor the mother of my lovely granddaughters was able to be a good parent for them, so I became their official guardian early on. At one point, we had decided we were going to pick up and move to the Jamaican home, where Sharon felt she would be more comfortable. The girls were up for the move, too, so we had a 'going-away' party. But, unfortunately – though my sweetheart was younger than me – two nights before we were scheduled to make this major move, she had a stroke. Though her mobility was

not affected, her speech – and soon, her memory – was profoundly affected. When she was tested, she appeared to have the brain of an 80- or 90-year-old woman. She began forgetting, leaving the stove on, putting her phone in the freezer and such. Her daughter came from Maryland, picked her up and took her back east to live with her. My granddaughters were devastated – the younger one slept outside ‘Aunt Sharon’s’ room for weeks in a deep depression and crying a lot. Of course, I didn’t believe in marriage, so the connection with the family – and certainly the two houses – are all gone. I miss her terribly, but I’ve reconciled myself to the fact that we’ll most likely never get her back or hear about how she’s doing!”

Estelle held many and varied posts over the years at such places as the West Side Community Mental Health Center, UC Med Center, the rehab unit at Herrick Hospital in Berkeley and several battered women’s shelters. Some of the happiest years of her professional life, however, were the eight years she spent heading a program targeting adolescent girls with learning disabilities,

“This national program was funded with one of the first large grants for teenagers with learning disabilities,” Estelle explains. “We designed curriculum, traveled extensively providing technical assistance to facilities struggling with few resources for this under-served population. After the grant was over, we continued training educators on how best to help these young people realize their potential.”

Estelle’s sisters have all passed away, so she is the only one left of that Bronx generation.

“I am happy that at one point – though my mother wasn’t always ecstatic about my life choices – I was able to visit her and her second husband – a Frenchman – a few years back after they had built a cement sailboat and docked it in Richmond. When they retired, they took off for Baja in Mexico, then traveled around Europe in a VW van. I was happy for her, since her life with my father and us kids had been so hard. When she asked about my life, I told her I was very happy with my girlfriend. They both laughed, saying they already knew about us and were glad that I was happy! It felt good to have mutual admiration and appreciation with her at last”

As fate would have it, Estelle suffered a bout with congestive heart failure earlier this year, requiring three unpleasant and tedious months in hospitals and nursing homes.

“My family and friends rallied around to help support me and my youngest granddaughter,” Estelle says. “I think both of the girls were afraid they were losing me, since I – and their now-gone Aunt Sharon – have been their primary caregivers throughout their lives. The 17-year-old is staying with a friend of mine up in Grass Valley for now, which has been a good move for her. I’d say the best move I ever made for myself was leaving the father of my son, allowing me to live a very productive and satisfying life in my profession and in the lesbian community. The main thing left on my bucket list now is seeing these girls through college and launching them, hopefully, into their own productive and satisfying lives.”



Estelle at 72

Thank you, Estelle, for sharing so much of your life – from Eastchester to the Greater San Francisco Bay Area – and all the places you’ve traveled and served so well in-between!

Book/Film/Career/Legacy Review

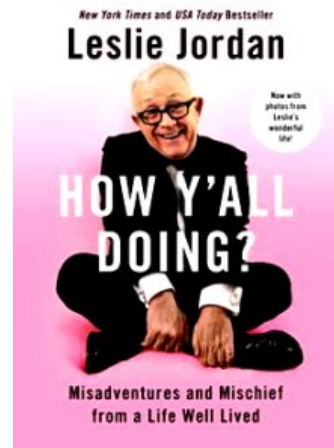
How Y’all Doing:

Misadventures and Mischief from a Life Well-Lived

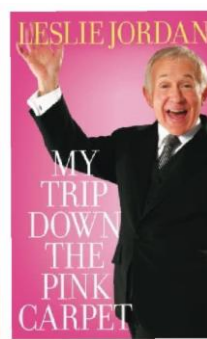
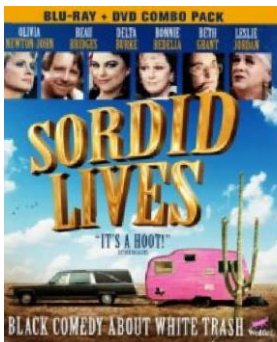
By Leslie Jordan (RIP: April 29, 1955 – October 24, 2022)



The world – particularly the LGBTQ+ world – was dealt another serious blow when Leslie Jordan died in a Hollywood traffic accident last week, on the morning of 24 October 2022. He had been complaining of shortness of breath, so the best educated guess prior to an expected autopsy, has been that he had a heart attack and crashed his beloved BMW into a building. He was pronounced dead at the scene.



A Chattanooga, TN, native, Leslie grew up in a family that knew he was “different” – but he made his way to Southern California soon after graduating from the local high school. His very supportive mother had “sewn \$1,200 into my underpants,” Leslie has told several interviewers and mentioned in this book. His early fame included appearing on Broadway as “Brother Boy” in “Sordid Lives” and subsequently starring in the 2000 film version of “Sordid Lives” along with stars like Beau Bridges and Delta Burke. That has also been released in both DVD (2000) and Blu-Ray (2014) versions, becoming a rather cult classic comedy in the LGBTQ+ community. It’s important to note that “Brother Boy” in this “comedy” was incarcerated in a mental institution by his family for being “different” – a role that some in our own community – who were perhaps forced into institutions, electro-shock therapy or other so-called “conversion/aversion therapies” – could resonate with and perhaps finally be able to laugh about and move on with Leslie’s help.



A few of the productions contributing to Leslie Jordan’s fame prior to his untimely death on 24th October

Leslie also became well-known on the original – and reboot – versions of “Will and Grace” as the openly-gay Beverley Leslie (2001-2020), for which he won an Emmy in 2006. Though he only appeared in a dozen or so of the episodes, this character remains etched in the memories of many W&G fans. Leslie was

co-starring with Mayim Bialik, Cheyenne Jackson and Swoosie Kurtz in “Call Me Kat,” the popular Fox sit-com that had just launched its third season a few weeks ago on 29th September. In fact, he was on his way to film another episode when the crash occurred, which has caused the series filming to be put on hold. Obviously, the cast and crew knew something was wrong that day, when his BMW didn’t pull up in the lot on time.

The fame of this diminutive gay man – with the sometimes-exaggerated Southern “twang” – sky-rocketed, however, during the Covid pandemic. When he was first introduced to Instagram, he soon amassed a few thousand followers, then 80,000 and ultimately nearly six MILLION followers, many of whom claimed his refreshing video tidbits kept them sane while they were in isolation. This book – released in 2021 – includes many of the stories that he told during his meteoric rise to super-stardom. Here’s an interview conducted with Katie Couric just a few months before his untimely demise:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZKHy_ZzA9w – this interview was actually conducted at the Masonic Auditorium in San Francisco.

In some of his many interviews, he repeats the story that – when he was in recovery from both alcohol and drug addictions (25+ years clean and sober at the time of his death), he was advised to confront his demons by going to the front of a macho group of men in recovery. When he confided to his sponsor that he was nervous about how he would announce his gayness in front of a group of his worst-feared people – macho heterosexual men – his sponsor reminded him that just by swishing up to the front of the room in his trademark walk, he would’ve announced it moreso than if he had a bullhorn.

This compilation of pieces from his years in Chattanooga, Hollywood and travels around the world can be a comforting way to spend a cold winter day in front of the fire. The author was somebody very public about his flamboyant gayness. Watching him perform or reading his words might help many gay and bisexual men – who may have internalized a lot of homophobia themselves – confront their own fears about being perceived by others as too swishy from behind their own closet doors.

The world – and particularly the LGBTQ+ community – has lost a national treasure with Leslie Jordan’s untimely death – though the internet and various publications will keep his wit, his energy and his boldness front and center for generations to come.

His beloved mother, Peggy Ann, who he lived with in Chattanooga for much of the pandemic, just pre-deceased him in May – which he never seemed to recover from, friends say. For more information about Leslie Jordan, starting with https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Jordan and following the many links there will give anybody a full picture of the mighty man himself.

-- John David Dupree (he/him/his), Oakland, CA

[Editor’s note: Several Hollywood celebrities have noted that Leslie Jordan’s accident was eerily similar to one that took the life of Anne Heche, Ellen de Generes’ former lover, in Hollywood just two months earlier. Heche’s Mini-Cooper had crashed into a house, setting it on fire, which ultimately caused the 53-year-old star’s death from burns and smoke inhalation.]

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 us at karen@lavenderseniors.org or (510) 424-7240 and we will be in touch with you soon. Thank You!

We have received this invitation from the Biden Administration's Office of Public Engagement, chaired by the former Atlanta Mayor, Keisha Lance Bottoms. All are free to participate. Please remember that 12:30pm EDT is actually 9:30am PDT:



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

LGBTQI+ Engagement **White House Office of Public Engagement** *November 2nd, 2022*

Please join Senior Advisor to the President for Public Engagement, Keisha Lance Bottoms and Senior White House Officials for a **LGBTQI+** Economic Impact Briefing on Wednesday, November 2nd at 12:30 PM Eastern Time. This special event will bring together community leaders from across the nation to discuss the Biden-Harris Administration's economic investments and impacts, with a particular focus on how these landmark achievements are creating lasting change for the **LGBTQI+** community. Please note, these briefings will

take place over Zoom. This invitation is open to all stakeholders - please forward to other community leaders as you see fit.

To confirm participation, RSVP

here: https://pitc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_aj8bCS0IQh-nt9pCfHQQuUA

As time permits, we will hold a brief Q&A period. If you have any questions you would like considered you may submit as a part of your RSVP.

WHAT: LGBTQI+ White House Economic Impact Briefing

WHEN: Wednesday, November 2nd, 12:30 PM Eastern Time

WHERE: Zoom – [RSVP HERE](#)

WHO: White House Policy Officials

And for some **Historical Context**, this information about a September 15, 2022 event we were also invited to participate in at the time:



On September 15th, 2022, President Biden hosted the "United We Stand" Summit at the White House from 10 AM – 5 PM ET. The vast majority of Americans agree that there is no place for hate-fueled violence in our country, and that when Americans stand united to renew civic bonds and heal divides, we can help prevent acts of hate and violence. The Summit highlighted the resilience of communities and individuals who are healing from hateful attacks, including mass shootings, and put forward a shared vision for a more united America. There was a celebration of "Uniters" – ordinary heroes from communities across the country who are working to prevent hate and violence.

The White House is announcing a package of new actions the federal government, civic, faith, philanthropic, and business leaders will take to address hate-fueled violence and advance national unity. The Summit is just the beginning of this work, and every American has a role to play in this cause. Communities across the country are invited to watch the summit live, engage in a national conversation about standing together against hate fueled violence, and use the summit as a launch pad for local service and bridge-

building.

Please visit <https://unitedwestand.gov/> to view the summit agenda, download an engagement toolkit, read the fact sheet, and watch the livestream TODAY, September 15th, from 10 AM – 5 PM ET.

We greatly appreciate all you do to protect LGBTQI+ people and advance LGBTQI+ equality each and every day. Follow [Hannah Bristol](#) (@HannahBristol46) on Twitter for updates from the Biden-Harris Administration.



The Alameda/Contra Costa & Solano County Ombudsman Program

Empowered Aging

There may come a time in all of our lives that we might need help from an impartial “ombudsman” who can advocate for us when we may feel powerless against the tides.

Whatever our station in life, we may need help with resolving problems with meals, finances, abuse, medications, lack of activities, community resources, placements, theft of personal belongings, lack of quality care, residents' rights, consideration and treatment with dignity. We might need a witness for our Advance Health Care Directives. Or we may need to know who can receive and help resolve general complaints.



Our guest at this month’s Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch can help answer any of those questions that we might have. Charmaine Brent, MSW, Ombudsman Program Manager, will introduce the goals and mission of the Ombudsman Program under its new name, *Empowered Aging*, which serves senior residents of skilled nursing facilities in Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano Counties.

Charmaine has over 15 years of experience working within Georgia’s Child Welfare Agency in various capacities. She worked primarily with abused, at-risk children and families. Prior to returning to Northern California, Charmaine held a Leadership role as a Continuous Quality Improvement Specialist where she played an integral role in training, coaching, mentoring, and advocating on all levels of the agency. She is very passionate about advocating for the rights of vulnerable individuals and those deemed voiceless.

She received a bachelor’s degree in Counseling Services from the University of New Orleans and a Master’s Degree in Clinical Social Work from Clark Atlanta University. Outside of her role as Ombudsman, Charmaine enjoys spending time with her family and exploring new places within Northern California.

Here are the Zoom coordinates for Saturday, 12th November, from 12 noon until

2pm:

Lavender Seniors invites you to a scheduled **Saturday Rainbow Lunch** meeting on Zoom.

Topic: Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch: Ombudsman – Empowered Aging

Date/Time: Saturday, 12th November, 2022 – 12 noon to 2pm Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89671026595?pwd=TGRtbkxaTzZGbWFFTTB1WWpQNFpWZz09>

Meeting ID: 896 7102 6595 – Password: 153953

Dial by your location: +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 896 7102 6595 – Password: 153953



"Today We Rise"

Mothertongue Feminist Theater Performs

As a few dozen people know from attending October's first experiment at in-person meeting (after 32 months on Zoom), we have successfully taken that leap into relative normalcy and will gather face-to-face again this month – and regularly – for the traditional Third Friday Lunch Bunch.

For this month's meeting, we are happy to welcome Mothertongue Feminist Readers Theater back for their now-traditional November performances with Lavender Seniors. Our November history together dates back to their performances in 2016, 2017 and 2018, then at our Silver (25th) Anniversary in 2019 and – once we had the technical expertise – even a well-executed Zoom performance in 2020 (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKbynOGDyIs&t=71s> or go directly to their website: <https://mothertonguefeministtheater.org/>).



The group has chosen **"Today We Rise"** as their theme for this return to togetherness. This topic promises to explore how people who have survived the pandemic, its social isolation and breaks from tradition are gradually and

guardedly returning to the relative normalcy of 2022. We have all experienced the variations on births, graduations, weddings, reunions and even funerals that have been necessary to cope with the pandemic. Now, taking a deep breath and rejoining society is not always easy for some of us.

Mothertongue Feminist Readers Collective began in 1976. Since then, over 100 women have come together to tell their truths by talking about and writing the sweet and sour stories of their lives. They have performed in colleges, coffee houses, senior centers, music festivals and at conferences and community events in the Bay Area and beyond. Forty-six years later, they still find joy in telling their truths to each other and performing them for audiences. At the end of every performance, they engage the audience in a discussion, inviting them to add their own stories and responses to the topic.

Over the years, the collective's familiar and loved themes have included Women and Food, Lesbian Erotica, Mothers and Daughters, Disability and Aging, and Turning the Lemon of Isolation into Lemonade, among many others. Mothertongue is open to all feminists who have ideas and experiences to share. Their structure reflects their feminist principals of inclusion and is non-hierarchical. The collective accepts all levels of writers and performers, making decisions through consensus.

Because, for the foreseeable future, we need to order individually-wrapped meals, it is necessary once again to request RSVPs for those people who plan to attend the November meeting. There was a bit of confusion last month – people RSVP'ing in several different ways. So – we're going to request that RSVPs be directed as follows (and received by 5pm on Thursday, 10th November), since the 11th is a holiday and the meeting is Friday, 18th November from 12:30-2:30pm:

- North Oakland Senior Center members, e-mail RSVP to Kayla at KBrown3@oaklandca.gov
- Non-NOSC members, e-mail to JohnDavid@LavenderSeniors.org
- People without internet, phone to NOSC: (510) 597-5085 between the hours of 9:30am-3pm M-F

- In RSVPs, please indicate name, phone number and e-mail address, if you have one
- Since the only November meal choices will be vegetarian or non-vegetarian lasagna, please indicate preference
- Please remember that – if you are not registered with NOSC already – you must bring vaccination certification.
- Everyone is required to wear a mask covering nose and mouth, when not eating.

The meal boxes will be distributed promptly at 12:30pm with performance beginning by 1:15pm. The North Oakland Senior Center is located at 5714 MLK Jr Way (corner of 58th Street) and the parking lot is located behind the building off 58th. AC-Transit buses #12 and #18 have stops in front of NOSC.

We look forward to seeing as many adventurous people as possible to experience Mothertongue and **"Today We Rise"**!

LAVENDER SCROLLS ARE ON THE MOVE!

In collaboration with Lavender Seniors of the East Bay, the San Lorenzo Library is displaying some of the life-size biographical Lavender Scrolls every month through July 2023. (to see the scrolls on the website: <https://lavenderseniors.org/lavender-scrolls-project/>)

The San Lorenzo Library is proud to exhibit these Scrolls as part of its "Every Month is Pride Month" program, which began in July 2022 and continues through July 2023. A new scroll and new life story of an East Bay LGBTQ+ senior will be featured every few weeks.

The scroll shown in the following photo is currently on display at the San Lorenzo Library, located at 395 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo, CA 94580:

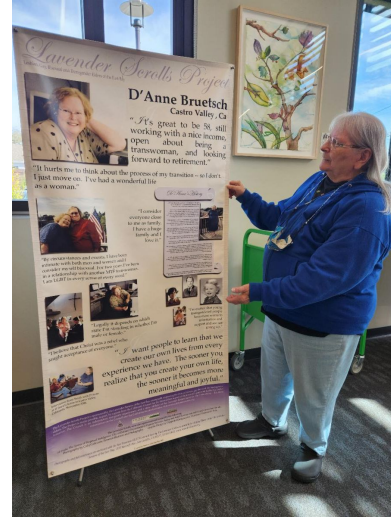


San Lorenzo Library hours are: Mon & Tues 12pm-8pm; Wed & Thurs 10am-6pm; Fri-closed; Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1pm-6pm.

Also, currently on display at the Cherryland Community Center, located at 278 Hampton Road, Hayward, CA 94541:



Yosmay del Mazo, library technician, at their desk



Beckie Underwood checking out the scroll

Cherryland Community Center hours are: M-F 10am-5pm

For more information about this program, feel free to contact
Beckie@lavenderseniors.org

Oakland LGBTQ Community Center official



Transgender Day of

Remembrance

"To Remember Is An Act of Protest"



Wednesday
November 16th, 2022
5:00pm- 9:00pm
Humanist Hall
390 27th st.
Oakland , Ca 94612



Our Sister Agency in Contra Costa County

Changes in Leadership at Rainbow Community Center

Rainbow Community Center in Concord – which recently held a grand opening of its new office location – has just announced a change of leadership. Kiku Johnson, who has been Executive Director since early 2020 (six weeks before Covid lockdown!) has accepted a post leading a Portland, OR, organization called Outside In, a federally-qualified health center.



"My last day with Rainbow is Friday, November 18th," Kiku says. "We are building a transition plan in collaboration with our board president, Robyn Kuslits, and our powerful Leadership Team of six talented directors. We are considering what form of interim and permanent leadership steps Rainbow will adopt moving forward as I provide succession plan documentation."

A formal announcement of this change was scheduled to go out in the Center's November newsletter.

"I have great faith as to the strength of Rainbow's mission, vision, and values being carried forth with centering our most marginalized identities," Kiku says. "Rainbow has re-defined and strengthened its identity, presence, service delivery, and partnership these last nearly three years. I do feel I was poised to be able to serve Rainbow in a very specific time of change and recovery. I have been committed and passionate about lifting our staff, culture, and our work and have complete belief Rainbow will continue to thrive in serving our communities as the next leadership representation is sought."

Contra Costa County's loss is Multnomah County's gain, though Kiku's leadership here will be felt for years to come. Good luck, Kiku and Laura, on your new adventure!



HOLIDAY SPECTACULAR

WE'VE GOT SOME *CHER* FOR YOU!

SFGMC rings in the holiday season with its much-anticipated annual tradition, *Holiday Spectacular*. The music will be joyous, the costumes will be fabulous, and the dancing will be thrilling. Audiences can expect the entertaining flair, fun, and heart that the Chorus always delivers.

There will be holiday favorites, including *Jingle Bells* and *I'll Be Home for Christmas*, classical choral works—including *Sure on this Shining Night*, and unexpected originals, including a holiday-themed Cher medley...yes, that Cher!

SAN FRANCISCO'S SYDNEY GOLDSTEIN THEATER

Friday, December 2 and Saturday, December 3

GET TICKETS

BERKELEY'S FREIGHT & SALVAGE

Sunday, December 11

[GET TICKETS](#)

ROHNERT PARK'S GREEN MUSIC CENTER

Saturday, December 17

[GET TICKETS](#)

CASTRO THEATRE

Saturday, December 24

[GET TICKETS](#)



LGBT Online Support Group for Caregivers

If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender and caring for someone with ongoing health problems...[you are not alone!](#)

Family Caregiver Alliance's online LGBT Caring Community Support Group connects you with others facing the day-to-day challenges of caregiving. If you're assisting someone with Alzheimer's, stroke, Parkinson's, traumatic brain injury, or other chronic health problems, you can get support from the convenience of your home.

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

Visit [LGBT Caring Community Online Support Group](#).

Well Connected Enriching lives and supporting well-being.

(FORMERLY SENIOR CENTER WITHOUT WALLS)

Community Phone Calls

This award-winning program offers activities, education, support groups, and friendly conversation over the phone or online.

Just a few of the things offered:

(The times are no longer listed in the generic catalog, once you have signed up you will get a link to a catalog with times in your time zone)

LGBTQ Chat Wednesdays, 11/9, 11/23, 12/14, 12/28

This group is intended for participants who identify as LGBTQ, 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 Kay George

Newcomers Welcome Mondays, 11/14, 11/28, 12/12

Are you confused about how to start "connecting" with Well Connected? We will guide you through the process of making that first phone call, or how to join online. Learn about what those icons mean in the catalog, and how to take a turn to talk. No question is too silly or simple! Facilitated by Well Connected Staff

View the Current catalog of community phone calls [here](#). Check the [website](#) for more information. To participate in these or other Well Connected telephone activities, or to learn more about their programs, call 877-797-7299 or email coviaconnections@covia.org.



NOVEMBER



Out Standing Seniors - Hayward - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Nov 1 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. (1st Tuesday)

Meets via Zoom email outstandingseniors@pacificcenter.org for info.

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

Living OUT in Livermore - Sponsored by Pacific Center

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

Meets via Zoom email livingoutlivermore@pacificcenter.org for info.

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

LezBold Peer Support Group

Nov 3, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. (1st Thursday)

Meets via Zoom email lezboldgroup@pacificcenter.org for info.

Find support and like-minded wonderful people!

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

Zoom - runs in 9 week sessions

Nov 22, 29; Dec 6, 13, 20; Jan 3, 10, 17, 24 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. (Tuesdays)

Please email olderandoutgroups@pacificcenter.org for more information. No drop-ins. Intake is required for attendance.

Free therapy group for LGBTQIA+ community members age 55+

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

person at Oakland LGBTQ Community Center - runs in 9 week sessions

Nov 30; Dec 7, 14, 21; Jan 4, 11, 18, 25; Feb 1; 1:15pm - 2:45pm

(Wednesdays)

Please email olderandoutgroups@pacificcenter.org for more information.

Intake is required for attendance.

Free therapy group for LGBTQIA+ community members age 55+

Older & Out Therapy Group - Berkeley - Sponsored by Pacific Center - in-person at N. Berkeley Senior Center - runs in 9 week sessions
Nov 18; Dec 2, 9, 16, 23; Jan 6, 13, 20, 27; 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. (Fridays)
Please email olderandoutgroups@pacificcenter.org for more information.
Intake is required for attendance.

Free therapy group for LGBTQIA+ community members age 55+

Rainbow Seniors

Nov 8 & 22 12:30 p.m. (2nd & 4th Tuesdays)

San Leandro Senior Community Center

email rainbowseniors@pacificcenter.org for info.

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

Lavender Seniors Board Meeting

Nov 9 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. (2nd Wednesday) via Zoom

A portion of this meeting is open to the public.

Lavender Seniors Rainbow Lunch

Nov 12 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. (Second Saturday)

This month's program: ('Empowered Aging' - see info above for joining us via Zoom)

Tri-Valley Rainbows - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Nov 17 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. (3rd Thursday)

Meets via Zoom email trivalleyrainbows@pacificcenter.org for info.

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

Oakland Third Friday Lunch Bunch

Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging/Adult Services & Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

Nov 18 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. (Third Friday)

North Oakland Senior Center

This month's program: ('Mothertongue' - see info above)

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Board of Directors

President: Victor Aguilar Jr

Vice President: Melissa West

Treasurer: Carmen Chiong

Secretary: Dr. John David Dupree

Founding Member: Barbara Jue

Member: Khilynn Fowler

Member: Nolan Quinabo

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

Message: 510-736-LGBT (510-736-5428)

Friendly Visitor Program: (510) 424-7240 or

karen@lavenderseniors.org

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Newsletter Editorial
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