



Lavender Notes

*Lavender Seniors of the East Bay
a Program of the Oakland LGBTQ
Community Center*

Volunteer

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Celebrating 28+ years of service and positive change

March 2023- Volume 29 Issue 3



**STORIES
OF OUR LIVES**

Keep Your Eyes on This Space

Due to unforeseen personal, medical and professional circumstances, the profile written for March will likely only be reviewed, edited and proofread, copy-ready for the April newsletter. Since February is such a short month, we couldn't hold out any longer for getting the March newsletter distributed (before 1st March)...

Anyone having suggestions for individuals, couples or organizations (including you/yours) to be profiled in this column in the future, please contact Jessie (jessie@oaklandlgbtqcenter.org). We have long taken pride in how this column helps keep us aware of each other in this amazing LGBTQ+ community!

Apologies – and thank you for your patience during this transition.

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



Continuing on Zoom for at least One More Month

Let's Celebrate the Women in Our Lives!

Lavender Seniors Virtual Support Group

As most of our readers know by now, Lavender Seniors of the East Bay has become a program of the Oakland LGBTQ+ Community Center. That transition was put into motion with the 1st February naming of Jessie Spivey, former Operations Manager of the Center, to the post overseeing all of the Center's senior-focused "Aging with Pride" programs, including Lavender Seniors activities.

March includes a number of celebrations for and about women (e.g., International Women's Day is 8th March). In addition, 1st March has long been designated International Women of Color Day. It was founded by the National Institute for Women of Color (N.I.W.C.), which has since become inactive. The objective of this day is to celebrate the contributions and achievements of diverse women of color. Today, we honor their supporters as well. The day was first celebrated in Washington, D.C. The day is a reminder that all the contributions made by women of color should be recognized and given fair treatment. It is celebrated in the U.S. and is a global event happening all over the world.



In addition, March is National Women's History Month, including [Peace Corps Day](#), [Caregiver Appreciation Day](#), Purim begins (6th), Goddess of Fertility Day (18th), Earth Day (20th), Spring Equinox (also 20th), Ramadan begins (22nd) and far too many others to mention here. What we are proposing this month – while we wait for it to be determined whether this virtual support group will continue – is that each of us discuss important women in our lives during our check-ins. Other options listed here including Peace Corps stories, Jewish or Muslim holidays or any of the others mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph. Surely a robust discussion will follow.

As mentioned at December, January and February Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch meetings on Zoom, it is unclear whether this activity will continue in its current virtual form as an LGBTQ senior support group on Zoom or return to an in-person format at some facility like its former home at All Saints Episcopal Church in San Leandro or to a new home at some place like the Center itself or the nearby Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church. Or it might be disbanded temporarily/permanently for lack of community interest.

This activity, originally called the Second Saturday Potluck, was designed to provide a community social event for LGBT (no Q then) seniors who were unable to attend events during the work/school week. In 2016, some participants began to complain that they were feeling somewhat burdened by having to get up on a non-work/non-school weekend and throw together their latkes, five-bean salads or apple pies for this event. At that point, the Lavender Seniors board, considering that feedback, decided to drop the potluck format and begin providing a catered nutritious lunch on that Second Saturday each month. This offered a more relaxing social time followed by either education or entertainment programs scheduled by the coordinator(s).

When Covid turned all of our worlds upside-down beginning in March 2020, this program – like others – had to revert to virtual programs on Zoom. Attendance dropped off from the usual 20-25 in-person participants to 10-15 over the subsequent nearly three years on Zoom. With this transition, it is important to determine whether there is a need for continuing this regular Saturday tradition and – if so – whether it should be virtual or in-person (complete with real rather than virtual hugs?) for those who might still be unable to attend such events during the week, for whatever reason, whether work/school schedules, mobility, transportation, allergy or other health reasons.

Though the Zoom format will be continued for March (using Zoom coordinates below), it will fall to participants, Jessie and other Center staff and the Lavender Seniors Advisory Council to determine whether this is a worthwhile service to continue providing in the near- or long-term. As mentioned last month, the fate of this activity might depend on identifying program person(s) to take over (e.g., facilitating on Zoom; or arranging a program, reserving the venue, ordering and paying for the food, etc., if it were to go in-person again). The people who were

performing those functions prior to Covid and the first three years on Zoom are resigning during this transition.

For this month, however, the Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch will morph into simply a virtual support group for LGBTQ+ seniors, similar to the one held every-other-Friday via the Rainbow Community Center in Contra Costa County (contact Christopher Holden or Christian Aguirre at 925-692-0090 for more information about that RCC program).

Meanwhile, here are the Zoom coordinates for the March session of the Second Saturday Rainbow lunch:

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

Topic: Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch

Time: Saturday, March 11, 2023 - 12:00 Noon Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89671026595>

Meeting ID: 896 7102 6595

One tap mobile

+16469313860,,89671026595# US

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 896 7102 6595



The Who, What, When, Where & Why of Hospice

Former President Jimmy Carter's beginning home hospice services in Plains, GA, in February has once again brought the concept of hospice into the national conversation. And those who attended last month's Third Friday Lunch Bunch have reported they appreciated hearing about how one of our community has used her viola to comfort people at their hospice bedsides.

One of the team from Oakland's Holistic Palliative Care (HPC) hospice is also known to use his musical skills (on bass) playing comforting music at the bedsides of hospice patients, as well as for any visiting families.

Michael Esterson, Vice President of this local hospice, originally from New York City, has had an active life as a professional musician, record producer and record label owner, as well as being the executive producer of the High



Times cannabis cup from 1996 to 2003. He came to the West Coast in 2012 and re-established himself first in Holistic Home Healthcare and then, in 2019, he became volunteer coordinator and VP of HPC, which he operates with his wife, Zenaida Penetrante, co-founder and CEO of HPC. Through his music and his love of holistic healing modalities, he has found a way – via his dual roles as volunteer coordinator and musician – to comfort those reaching the final stage of their life. You can find him often playing bass for hospice patients with a revolving crew of volunteer musicians in the music ministry.

The other HPC team member joining us will be Shelly Armstrong, BSN, RN, a Hospice Case Manager working with Hospice patients. She has worked in cardiac step-down and renal dialysis, emergency departments, and various in-patient/out-patient settings in her 25+ years as an RN.



Hospice is a service that can be ordered by your doctor when you, your patient or loved one's health is declining. Perhaps they are no longer able to perform their usual activities of daily living, or they prefer to focus on quality of life over further treatment. It can be a relief to know you can have comfort and symptom management at the end of life. Hospice staff can be there to support you when you need them most.

Please join us for this presentation, where the team can tell you more about hospice, you can meet some team members in person, and they can answer your questions. Their focus at this time will be on one of the most common reasons for hospice care, End Stage Renal Disease, what to expect, and how hospice can help.

Since we need to have individually-boxed meals until further notice (no more buffets for a while until Covid is finally gone, which doesn't seem to be on the foreseeable horizon), it is important to have RSVPs from people interested in attending this gathering. Since our long-time caterer, the Fountain Café in Oakland, has recently gone out of business, the specific March menu is currently unknown. So meal choices will simply be vegetarian or non-vegetarian. Deadline for RSVP receipt is Monday, 13th March, in order to get the order to the restaurant on time.

- Those who are members of the North Oakland Senior Center should RSVP to NOSC@oaklandgov.ca or call 510-597-5085, making sure to mention which of the meal choices are preferred.
- Those not members of the NOSC should RSVP to Jessie@OaklandLGBTQCenter.org with "RSVP" in the subject line, making sure to mention email address, phone number and which of the two meal choices would be preferred.

The March meeting is from 12:30-2:30pm on Friday, 17th March, at the North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Jr Way (corner 58th Street). The entrance and parking lot are at the rear of the building off 58th Street. Please be reminded that proof of vaccination is required for registering at the Center, plus the City of Oakland has reinstated the mask mandate in all City facilities through 31 March 2023. Obviously, the mask can be removed while eating or drinking and then be replaced back over both mouth and nose afterward.

Hoping to see you there!



LGBTQ+ Community Support: Caregiving for our Families and Friends

This online support group LGBTQ+ Community Support Caregiving for our Families and Friends offers a place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender caregivers of adults with chronic health problems to discuss the unique issues of caring for their loved ones.

Subscribe to [LGBTQ+ 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, 3/8, 3/22, 4/12, 4/26

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

Birds in Art: A Flighty History 3/22

We will trace how artists throughout history have tried to depict the appearance and behavior of our feathered friends, and why they have been such a compelling subject. Our tour takes us through religious art, crafts, architecture, and of course painting and sculpture. Presented by Mark Pohlad, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Dept. of History of Art and Architecture, DePaul University

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.



Out Standing Seniors - Hayward - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Mar 7 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

Mar 7 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

Mar 2, 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 Meets via Zoom Tuesdays 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

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

Wednesdays 1:15pm - 2:45pm

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

Fridays 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Please email olderandoutgroups@pacificcenter.org for more information.

Intake is required for attendance.

Free therapy group for LGBTQIA+ community members age 55+

Rainbow Seniors

Mar 14 & 28 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 Rainbow Lunch

Mar 11 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. (Second Saturday)

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

Tri-Valley Rainbows - Sponsored by Pacific Center

Mar 16 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 & Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

Mar 17 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. (Third Friday)

North Oakland Senior Center

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

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay a Program of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center Outgoing Board of Directors

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Lavender Seniors of the East Bay a Program of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

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