Next Meeting

Richard Wagner will speak on Managing Your Mortality. He is founder of Paradigm, enhancing life near death - an outreach resource for terminally ill, chronically ill, aging, and dying people from all walks of life. Sounds like a morbid subject. However Ruth Michaels attended a free 10-week program sponsored by Paradigm. She reports Wagner is an excellent speaker.

DON'T MISS IT

GAY TEENS VISITED BY LAVENDER SENIORS

by Frank Howell

Last fall Phil Evans, director of the Lavender Youth, a division of Project Eden, spoke before the Lavender Seniors and introduced us to four of the Gay youth. They shared their emotions and their stories with us. In January we returned the favor and spent an evening with them at Project Eden. The older generation recalled their own past before there were support groups, hot lines, or help of any kind. The silver haired generation revealed a world where one suffered in silence and simply hoped for a better world.

The four seniors who shared their lives were Dottie Fowler, Frank Howell, John Ellefson, and Donna. The youth were quite intrigued by the contract between the different lives we led and the historic events we encountered along the way. Phil Evans expressed the hope that in the future the Lambda Youth and the Lavender Seniors can create other opportunities for dialogue.

PRIDE RALLY IN SACRAMENTO

Pride & Equality Rally & Festival will be held on the west lawn of State Capitol Building facing 10th Street
Speakers include: Tom Ammiano, SF Board of Supervisors President
Spe

3:00pm to 6pm-Fund-raiser and social, CAPE Sacramento Gay & Lesbian Center Thank you reception, Faces 2000 K Street
Parking on Street.
10:00 AM Interfaith Service for the Community, West Steps of the State Capitol Building facing 10th Str

11:15 am Gay Veterans Memorial Service & Wreath Laying, California Veterans Memorial State Capitol Group
Parking Garage on 10th & L Street between L & K and also Garage on 15th & N Street.
It is important to have Gay Seniors represented at this major event!

Ed Note: Submitted by Frank Howell

A FRIEND IS A TREASURE

A friend is someone we turn to
When our spirits need a lift,
A friend is someone we treasure
For our friendship is a gift,
A friend is someone who fills our lives with beauty, joy, and grace
And makes the world we live in
A better and happier place.
SHORT NOTES by Sidney Prusse

♦ Congratulations to new FOUNDING MEMBERS of Lavender Seniors. Frank J. Howell, Camille Scontrino, Natalie Zarchin, Ina Mae Murri, and Doris M. Fischer. You also may become a founding member. All you do is contribute a minimum of $50. These funds will be used to pay to cost of obtaining non-profit status for Lavender Seniors of East Bay. The cost of getting legal non-profit status (501c) is about $1,000.

♦ Ina Mae Murri reports that mail sent to the Berkeley Voice, Montclairian and the Grand Times newspapers is returned. Does anyone know the current address? Are these papers out of business? Call the Lavender Senior Message phone with the new addresses. Do you know any other newspapers that should know about Lavender Seniors? Give us their name, address, and phone number.

♦ Rev. Lee Williamson, was Guest Speaker at the GLOBE as well as Lavender Seniors meetings last month. GLOBE, which stands for GAYS and LESBIANS ORGANIZED FOR BETTERMENT AND EQUALITY, is a politically active organization in our area. See the article about Rev Williamson in this newsletter.

♦ The Steering Committee is looking for an office for the new Volunteer coordinator. Some suggestions are the Pacific Center, Bay Area Community Service, San Leandro Church Community Church, and Area Agency on Aging. If you have any suggestions for a new office? Call Dottie Fowler 525-3864.

♦ Dottie Fowler is participating in the search for the volunteer coordinator. There have been several responses to our ad. Interviews with the applicants are underway now. It looks like the volunteer program may start soon.

♦ DON'T CARRY HEAVY COINS HOME. Remember to put those coins in the CHANGE JAR. Our treasurer reports $62 dollars was collected at the last few meetings. Small change really adds up.

♦ MS of Piedmont reports she is not getting her newsletter. I asked the editor about it. He says she is paid up. She should be getting it. MS should let the editor know which months were missed. He will send them to her.

♦ Did you see the article about Lavender Seniors in the Argus newspaper? I didn't either. Will someone send it to me? It included an interview of Ina Mae Murri.

♦ Shirley Dennett and Dee Nagy want to thank the Lavender Seniors in general and Peggy Alice in particular for sending a get well message to them.

♦ Do you know an Lavender Senior who is ill? Tell Peggy Alice (510) 632-6292. Peggy will send a card and message.

♦ Ina Mae Murri is having surgery this month to replace her left elbow. It is not sure what they will use to make the new elbow. We all hope she can go through airport security with it. Good Luck Ina.

♦ Meg Bruynell has a Right-Wing “Christian” Dictionary. It is hilarious. The first definition under “A” is Activist. “An Activist is anyone you disagree with. Thus, ‘activist’ judges, ‘activist’ unions, ‘activist’ school boards, and ‘activist’ homosexuals.” Thanks for sharing Meg. We will use more definitions as space allows.

♦ Calling all old Lesbians!! Save the dates August 12 through 15 for Summer '99 Old Lesbian Gathering at San Francisco State. More info later.

♦ More dates to save: May 14, 15, and 16. The Second Annual Southern Alameda County Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. They had some great films last year.
We Get Mail

The following is an appeal from PFLAG San Francisco for funds so that PFLAG can have a presence at several upcoming conferences for educators in San Francisco.

Thanks, Barbara Jue

PFLAG-SF Urgent Appeal

PFLAG-San Francisco wants to seize an extraordinary opportunity over the next two months to communicate directly with education leaders across the country. Three major national education associations are convening in San Francisco, and PFLAG wants to set up information booths at these conferences:
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, March 6-8, over 12,000 participants expected
- National Association of Elementary School Principals, March 20-23, 5,500 participants expected
- National School Boards Association, April 10-13, 15,000 expected.

We need your help to rent a booth and set up our displays at each conference. The total cost for all three would be approximately $5000. Your contribution would be tax deductible. Increasing our visibility among education leaders and decision-makers will help us achieve our goal of safer and more supportive schools and communities.

Mail donations to PFLAG/SF at PO Box 640223, SF, CA 94164. Call 415-921-8850 for more information.

Thanks, Hank Wilson

Thanks for all your efforts. - Doris M. Fischer

My partner and I are quite involved in our church which includes singing in our choir and facilitating the gay and lesbian prayer group. If our gifts and talents can be used to benefit a spiritual outreach program, we would be most happy to help. -- Carol Parker and Josie Martin

LAVENDERS WELCOME
REV. LEE WILLIAMSON
by Dottie Fowler

The Lavenders were pleased to welcome Lee Williamson, pastor for the Wesley United Methodist Church, at the February meeting. He began by describing the moving and highly publicized marriage ceremony performed in Sacramento recently between Jeanne Burnett and Ellie Charlton (both in their sixties). It was officiated by 95 United Methodist ministers - Safety in numbers for those who dared to engage in this most revolutionary of acts. One assumes that the UMC would hardly be in a position to remove 95 ministers and still be able to attend their flock. Williamson said that whatever moves the church makes usually take many months if not years shuffling charges from one committee to another before they finally appear before the policy making body. There are 300 some odd congregations in this conference, or area, which must review the policy since the Bishops are not empowered to make decision on this level. A significant trial took place last year of a pastor of the UMC church, Jimmy Creech, for the same reason (marrying gays) who commented, "Why would I turn them down. They are members of my congregation."

In Williamson's opinion the subject matter of sexuality, for most Americans and many religious groups, is too disturbing to discuss and to escalate potential dialogue to a level of hysteria. He used the quote, "...the church can't bear it and the bear(ers) won't stand for it." In general, the attitude of the church, He says, is "We're glad to have you here if we can work on changing you."

He ended his talk with this inspirational account of Martin Luther King's work; upon being told by his congregation to slow down and be more cautious in his activities on behalf of civil rights, he said, "If time is not used by good people, it comes down on the side of evil."
CALIFORNIA ACTION ALERT: Dignity for All Students Act
by Jennifer Richard, Consultant, Office of Assembly member Sheila Kuehl,

We desperately need to generate letters and calls of support for AB 222, the Dignity for All Students Act, into Assembly member Dennis Cardoza's office.

AB 222 would add "sexual orientation" to all the non-discrimination sections of the Education Code. Teachers and other public school personnel are already protected under existing law. This bill would enact non-discrimination protections for students in all public schools, K-12 through University. Discrimination would be prohibited in interscholastic athletics, admissions, and financial aid. School districts and teachers would also be prohibited from adopting or using materials that reflect adversely upon persons solely on the basis of sexual orientation.

Dennis Cardoza is the key vote on the Assembly Higher Education Committee. Without Cardoza's vote the bill will not get out of the assembly Higher Education Committee. If we cannot persuade him to vote for the bill, we will need to remove the provisions of the bill that relate to the University of California and the California Statue University systems, in order to avoid going to the High Education Committee.

Cardoza's district includes: Tracy, Modesto, Salida, Ceres, Keyes, Turlock, Delhi, Winton, Atwater, Merced, Planada, Le Grand, Patterson, Hilmar-Irwin, Newman, Gustine, Los Banos, South Dos Palos, Dos Palos.

It is very important for folks who live in his district to contact him in support of the bill as well as others who live in California. Below is his office contact information

Capitol Office
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0001
Phone: (916) 319-2026
Fax: (916) 319-2126

Turlock District Office
384 East Olive Avenue, Suite 2
Turlock, CA 95380
Phone: (209) 669-6115

Merced District Office
1810 ‘K’ Street
Merced, CA 95340
Phone: (209) 726-5465

It's also important for folks in the district to begin writing letters to the editor regarding the importance of AB 222 as well as pitching stories to the press about the need for the bill. Today's Modesto Bee www.modbee.com includes and article about school violence. I think the article could be used as a hook for a letter to the editor talking about the need to prevent violence against gay and lesbian students through prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation. After all gay and lesbian students are at a statistically greater risk of being victims of violence than their heterosexual peers. Check out www.safeschools-wa.org for more information about violence against gay and lesbian youth. Our Q & A sheet also includes statistics about violence against gay and lesbian youth.

Thank you for all of your good work in support of the Dignity For All Students Act.

Jennifer Richard, Consultant, Office of Assembly member Sheila Kuehl,
State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814, e-mail: Jennifer.Richard@asmca.gov
direct line: (916) 319-2346, fax: (916) 319-2141

Ed. Note: This article was submitted by Barbara Jue

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Beautiful young people
are acts of nature,
but beautiful old people
are works of art
BOOK REVIEW
by Frank Howell

Gay And Lesbian Couples: Voices From Lasting Relationships
By Richard Mackey, Bernard O’Brien, and Eileen MacKay
Praeger, $25.00 1997

Homophobia loomed heavily over many gay couples and caused undue stress. Twosomes would engage in avoidance behavior as sex decreased, but intimacy and warmth mushroomed.

Encouragement from families played a significant part. (Fifty percent of men’s relatives and forty percent of women’s kinfolk). Siblings were frequently more supportive than parents.

Religion was not a positive force in many of these marital dramas. This was especially true for men. Psychotherapy was a potent force for couples attempting to enhance their home life.

Friends were often taking the place of family support. Men did not find help from other gay couples.

A surprising finding from the study was that gays and lesbians were more affectionate. Both physically and psychologically, as compared to conventional families.

The writing style of Mackay and his associates is somewhat dry and academic and they tend to repeat themselves, but the journey is worth it.

So let us rejoice! Love is just another option. Gays can sit back and enjoy life. That’s the way the good Lord meant it to be.

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CHURCH BULLETIN BLOOPERS

✔ The Rev. Merriwether spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience.
✔ Due to the Rector’s illness, Wednesday’s healing services will be discontinued until further notice.
✔ Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.
✔ The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare’s Hamlet in the church basement on Friday at 7 p.m. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
✔ The concert held in Fellowship Hall was a great success. Special thanks are due to the minister’s daughter, who labored the whole evening at the piano, which as usual fell upon her.
✔ Don’t let worry kill you off - let the church help.
✔ Pastor is on vacation. Massages can be given to church secretary.
✔ The choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.
✔ The Associate Minister unveiled the church’s new tithing campaign slogan last Sunday: "I Upped My Pledged—UP Yours."
✔ A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.
CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

March 9 - Tuesday - 6:30 p.m. - STEERING COMMITTEE
Meeting at Harry’s Hof Brau, at 14th and Hesperian, San Leandro. (Across from Bay Fair). All Welcome. Meets monthly the Tuesday before the potluck meetings.

March 13 - Saturday - 12 Noon  MONTHLY MEETING

Managing Your Mortality

Speaker: Richard Wagner, Founder of Paradigm

Meeting at
San Leandro Community Church, 1395 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro

If your name begins with the letters
A through H  -  Bring a Dessert
I through P  -  Bring a Main Dish
Q through Z  -  Bring a Salad

San Leandro BART station shuttle is available.
Call voice mail: 247-2406 to arrange pickup.

SECOND SUNDAY - 5:30 - 8:30 P.M. - FELLOWS OF EAST BAY
Social Club for mature men and their admirers. Monthly Potluck dinner and social held the second Sunday of every month at the Parish Hall, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church (No affiliation), 1823 9th Street, Berkeley. Bring $3 door charge and food or drink to share.

VARIOUS DATES - WOMEN OVER FIFTY AND FRIENDS
WOFF, a social club for lesbians, has an active social schedule. Monthly potluck/planning meeting the first Saturday of each month at 6 p.m. For information, contact Barbara Konecny or Barbara Jue, 508 Broadmore, San Leandro, (510) 633-0398.