



Lavender Notes



VOL 5, No 6

NEWSLETTER OF LAVENDER SENIORS OF EAST BAY

P.O. Box 6044, Fremont, California, 94538 Voice Mail: (510) 247-2406

June 1999

Volunteer Services Program, 1395 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro, CA 94577, (510) 667-9655

June Meeting: by Frank Howell

Loren Javier, local president of GLADD will be the featured speaker. GLADD is the media watchdog for gays in the media. Whenever a newspaper, magazine, radio, or television station releases a story that is harmful or misrepresents the gay community GLADD is immediately on the scene meeting with those responsible for the offending or misleading item. Our image needs protecting as never before.

The organization holds an annual awards ceremony honoring those persons who have done the most to enlighten society about the various aspects of lavender living. Loren will no doubt regale us with horror tales about right wing groups who constantly distort the facts regarding gays and lesbians in America. We look forward to seeing all of you there!

**RETURN RAFFLE
TICKETS TODAY
SIX TICKETS-\$5**

RAFFLE

RAFFLE

RAFFLE

One dollar for one ticket. Six tickets for \$5. Write your name and phone number on the back of the ticket stub and keep the other half of the ticket. Return the ticket stub with your name and money in the enclosed envelope. Make Checks payable to to Bobbie Jarvis, Treasurer. There will be two winners. They will split half the money raised in the raffle. The drawing will be at the July Lavender seniors meeting.

The money raised will help pay the rent for the Cable Car for seniors in the Pride Parade in San Francisco.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES PROGRAM OFF AND RUNNING !!

Thanks to many Lavender Senior and community volunteers, the office is open and fully operational. There is a small group of volunteers that are ready for training and assignment. More referrals for clients and volunteers are needed.

Program Director, Rosa Zayas, expressed her appreciation to all those you donated furniture, supplies, paint, and valuable time to help get the program started. A full list of volunteers will be included in the next newsletter.

There are still some needs.

Here is the current **WISH LIST** for the program. If you can donate anything on this list, call Rosa, (510) 667-9655.

Fax machine, Grey table cloth, Tea pot (self heating), Microwave oven, (small), Decafe coffee, Plastic cups, Small paper plates, Napkins, Packets of sugar/sweet-n-low, Silverware (plastic or other) Two short book cases (30 inch tall or less), telephone extension cord (25 ft.)

PRIDE CELEBRATION & PARADE JUNE 26 & 27

Senior groups will be riding in the cable car again this year. Lavender Seniors are joining with GLOE, and G40 Plus to rent the cable car for those participating in the parade. Bring your lunch. Drinks will be provided by GLOE. Call Joyce Pierson at GLOE to reserve a place and find out where to board the cable car. (415) 255-2101

Volunteers are needed at the senior collaborative booth at the celebration in Civic Center. Two hour shifts are requested. Call Joyce Pierson for more information.

Lavender Seniors provides a Volunteer Services Program to isolated gay and lesbian seniors. The program is funded and managed by the Lesbian and Gay Senior Services Collaborative, a joint project with Gay and Lesbian Outreach to Elders in S.F. (GLOE), and Spectrum in Marin County. The collaborative is funded in part by the S.F. Foundation, Gateway Initiative, Marin Community Foundation, East Bay Community Foundation, Horizons Foundation, Donor Circle for Queer Youth and Elders, Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights, and Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund.

Lavender Notes:

The newsletter of
Lavender Seniors of East Bay,
P.O. Box 6044,
Fremont, CA, 94538,
Voice Mail: (510) 247-2406

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay is to improve the quality of life of older gay and lesbian residents of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties through community outreach, advocacy and education.

Founding Members

Bill Baillie, Doreen Brand, Meg Bruynell, Marvin Burrows, Shirley Dennett, John Ellefsen, Dottie Fowler, Beverly Hickock, Frank Howell, Doris Fischer, Bobbie Jarvis, James Joslin, Barbara Jue, Barbara Konechy, Stella Lopez Armijo, Donna Montgomery, Ina Mae Murri, Camille Scontrino, Don Silva, Margaret Shepherd, Bill Swenor, and Natalie Zarchin

There are no membership dues. All persons over 55, their partners, and guests are welcome. The cost of mail makes it necessary to request a donation of \$12 dollars per year to receive the newsletter. Visitors or persons interested in learning more about Lavenders Seniors may receive the newsletter for three months without charge. None will be turned away for lack of funds.

Lavender Notes is mailed on the first of each month. Entries must be received by the last Sunday of the previous month. Entries may be edited for space or clarity. Send entries to:

Editor, Jim Joslin,
1311 Webster St., E213,
Alameda, CA 94501,
(510) 522-6395,
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Monthly Advertisement Rates:

\$1 per line
\$10 for business card size ads.
Subscribers: Half price.

Signed articles represent the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of Lavender Seniors of East Bay.

Inclusion of a name in this newsletter does not necessarily indicate a person's sexual orientation.

BOARD SUPPORTS FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN Lavender Notes.

Lavender Seniors of East Bay will be a non-profit corporation soon. It will not be proper or legal for the corporation to take political positions or engage in political activity. However, our members, as individuals, can continue to use the newsletter to express their views on issuesregardless of how "inappropriate" or "unpopular" they may be with the corporation or membership. Contributions to the newsletter are identified as the views of the writer only. The corporation will continue to focus on the goals in the Mission Statement (See insert on this page) and refrain from any activities that would be inappropriate or illegal for a non-profit corporation

SHORT NOTES *by Sidney Poufte*

It was good to see so many Lavender senior enjoying the film festival at Chabot College last month. If you missed it, be sure to attend next year. There were some good films. It is good to see gay/lesbian experience in a positive was in a film.

Natalie Zarchin and **Bernie Miller** were are the festival with canes. Bernie asked me to report she has injured by her new partner who kicked her. She and her partner just moved together in Fremont. Natalie explained that she needs a new hip. She did not blame anyone else, just an active, long life.

Did you know hearing is the second thing to go. I forget what the first thing is.

Stella Lopez-Armijo is a natural at selling raffle tickets. You should have seen her operate at the film festival. She is a natural. How many did you sell, Stella? She was best with the young girls, I noticed.

Rosa Zayas and **Nancy Flaxman** of the Senior collaborative is ready to teach the first class of friendly visitors. The class will probably be set up in San Francisco. Did you see the lavender closet at the Volunteer Services office. **Marvin Burrows** and **Jim Joslin** painted it. Marvin and **Frank Howell** painted the main office. It is a sensible white. By the way, the walls are thin at the Volunteer Services office. Be careful with any loud speech. There are some "uptight types" sharing the space in offices along the hall.

You know it is going to be a bad day when you put your bra on backwards and it fits Did you hear? **Charles Pierce** died The famous SF drag show actor. Popular in the 60's and 70's in North beach and downtown cabaret bars.

Reserve the date, Saturday, July 17. Lavender seniors and GLOBE will be picnicking in the swim area at Cull Canyon.

**The day came when the risk it took to remain closed in a bud
became more painful than the risk it took to blossom."**

- Anais Nin

We Get Mail....

Editor: Subject: Vote YES for US! I want to be on record on this issue. I have just called 1-877-233-7725 and got a recording telling me that by placing the call, I have cast a YES vote for Anheuser-Busch, to run a Bud Light Beer national ad showing two men holding hands over the slogan, "Be yourself and make it a Bud Light." The Christian Coalition and its clones have organized callers in their camp who are dialing another number to vote NO. We MUST defeat them! Please call 1-877-233-7725.

This is the first ad of its kind on the national scene. I am grateful for it. I hope that all of you will join me and make that simple call. In paraphrase of a great astronaut, I suggest this may be a small step for straight man, but it represents a giant leap for OUR kind of man!



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P.S. I am a non-drinker and do not support the sale of alcoholic beverages, but I am overriding my principles here for something which I earnestly feel is for our COMMON GOOD. I am also a non-smoker, but if they were to show the Marlborough Man in lavender shorts snuggled up to Joe Camel on the beach, I'd vote for them, too! - Ben Boxer

Dear Friends: Write your assemblyman soon. This bill will add sexual orientation to the Fair Employment & Housing Act. This will cover employment, housing and public accommodations. The present coverage in the California Labor is rather weak. We're on a roll. Keep going! - Frank Howell

Editor: CALIFORNIA WITHDRAWS FROM COALITION OF STATES OPPOSING HAWAII'S SAME SEX MARRIAGE CASE Nebraska heads a coalition of states which filed "friend of the court" briefs against same sex marriage in the Baehr case. Former Attorney General Dan Lungren added California to the list. On February 12, it was announced that California had formerly withdrawn from this coalition. Thank you Bill Lockyer, our new Attorney General!! Thank you Gary Davis, our new Governor!! ...I am not sure if this will make your deadline for newsletter or not, but I thought I would give it a shot. - Justin Garrett

Editor: I attended a meeting in Oakland Wednesday May 26, 1999. (so here is what was said) A new group has been organized to fight the "Knight Initiative" called: "Californians for Fairness" Headquartered in San Francisco at 505 Howard St.. If you want to donate time or money write to: Californians for Fairness, 20 Park Road, Suite E, Burlingame Ca. 94010-4443.

Mike Marsall of this new org. gave a speech at SMACC headquarters in Oakland, sponsored by lobby group CAPE. He spoke of 3 main goals in this election. 1...Public Acceptance, 2...Build a Coalition 3...Create a voter file (of gay and gay friendly voters)

Also stated.....Why this Same-Sex Marriage Initiative is important. - It would end discrimination; It would help in how society views us; It would help on how we view ourselves; This is our Responsibility; We should have the same civil rights as everyone...How can we influence others? We can speak out that denial of this right is: Unfair; Unnecessary; We are denied benefits; That this is Discrimination; We should ALL have the same civil rights.

If you would like more information about this group...you can write to the address above or e-mail to mikeminsf@aol.com or telephone to Mike Marshall..(415) 252-9599. - Marvin Burrows

From Assembly Member Sheila Kuehl's Office: AB 222 failed passage... by a vote of 40-38. Reconsideration was granted and the bill can be voted on again sometime in January of 2000.... Thank you for all of your hard work in support of this bill. I know that you have been pouring your hearts and souls into its passage and we have put forth a valiant effort. I think we are winning peoples hearts and minds and we will eventually triumph on this issue. Keep up the good fight!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THERAPY STUDY

Psychologists Michael Schroeder and Ariel Shidio have been conducting surveys of gays who have undergone psychological therapy for bring gay. These hour long telephone interviews are conducted nationwide. Volunteers are still needed. So far 190 gays have been interviewed. The goal is 250 interviews. The evidence gathered from these interviews is needed to counter those who claim that gays can change their lifestyle. Lavender Seniors who wish to participate in these interviews can contact the psychologists at 1-800-592-9815. E mail is: TheraStudy@aol.com. Web Site is: www.jasperweb.com/TheraStudy. (Submitted by Frank Howell)

PUBLIC OWNED MEDIA COMMEMORATES PRIDE MONTH.

Did you see KQED TV Ch 9 beings Pride Month programming Thursday, June 3, 10:30pm.

On KQED 88.5 FM / MON, JUN 7, 1PM (REPEATED 7PM), "Fresh Air with Terry Gross" - Terry talks with gay rights activist Kelli Peterson about her controversial efforts to establish a gay and lesbian support group in her high school. Peterson is the subject of the new film "Out of the Past" which received the 1998 Sundance Film Festival's Audience Award for "Best Documentary." Then Terry speaks with teenage gay rights activist Michael Bisogno (bis-SOYN-yo) about being the victim of gay-bashing in New Jersey. Bisogno who served as co-president of his school's Gay-Straight Alliance group was brutally assaulted by 15 of his fellow high school students.

Digital Cable from TCI, On channel #505 Sundance Movie Channel. They are showing Gay themed movies this month too.

(Submitted by Marvin Burrows)

BOOK REVIEW

by Frank Howell

Gay Lives: Homosexual Autobiography From John Addington Symonds to Paul Monette

by Paul Robinson

University of Chicago Press \$30.00

When you want to understand history, study biographies. History is simply a record of people fighting or loving. This is soap opera in the larger sense. Paul Robinson, Professor of Humanities at Stanford University, has taken on the challenge of exploring fourteen personal confessions of gay men from Victorian times to the trendy 1980's. He also looked over some lesbian narratives, but ultimately decided to stick with the male sex. He selected French, British and American personalities of the 19th and 20th centuries.

John Addington Symonds was apparently the first writer to give us an intimate view of his life which included sexual orientation. He fell victim to the typical Victorian doctrines of his day, especially guilt and remorse. After his wife produced four daughters, he resorted to sordid street sex. Robinson felt Symonds demonstrated great potential but he could not escape the British surroundings of his day, Christopher Isherwood is familiar to most of us by way of Cabaret and his Berlin stories. He cavorted with W. H. Auden and Stephen Spender in the 1930's. Chris and Auden went their lavender, lighthearted way, but Spender tortured himself for the remainder of his life trying to live the proper straight life. He only came out late in life. This collection of fey men engaged in what Robinson refers to as "coy frankness." British gays frequently traveled abroad to escape the Puritan environment. Spender produced a restrained life account *World Within World* that reveals little.

Isherwood finally told all in Christopher And His Kind in the 1970s. J. R. Ackerly was an odd duck in the British school of confession. He and his father showed a restrained fondness for each other. They were both gay but never connected one with the other. Ackerly's father had three secrets: he sired three children before he finally married, he cultivated mistresses, and he expressed his gay urges with guardsmen, the butch soldier types of their day. Ackerly struggled with internalized homophobia, but in his final years he only gained emotional satisfaction with his canine pet. (*My Dog Tulip*). Quentin Crisp (*Naked Civil Servant*) wrote memories that are more entertainment than honesty. He saw masturbation as superior to sexual intercourse. This way he felt no victims were created. Crisp saw himself as an effeminate homosexual, not as transvestite. In the world of today he comes across as another exotic hippie.

As Robinson deftly dissects these provocative personalities, he observes that the French are largely free of guilt and shame. Gayness is simply a fact of life. Andre Gide defies all stereotypes. His bearing was masculine and he found joy in probing the mysteries of science, not the arts. Gide was athletic. He wins the honor of being the first openly gay person to publish

a frank autobiography in his lifetime (*If It Die*, 1920). Gide suffered no guilt over any kind of sexual expression and he displayed an active interest in the Bible and religion. He disapproved of Oscar Wilde and any open displays of effeminacy. Gide was preoccupied with handsome Moroccan youths, but he seemed to love types rather than individuals.

Jean Genet would strike us as a total opposite—passionate, romantic, and rather disorganized in his writing. His fame as a criminal and gay man related to his love affair with sex and illegal acts. "I was hot for crime." Genet felt no empathy for fellow gays and would frequently rob them.

Julian Green wrote what was probably the longest diary in literature. Green felt himself caught between Catholic theology and lust. When he asked a priest what the devil looked like, the reply was, "He is a handsome young man."

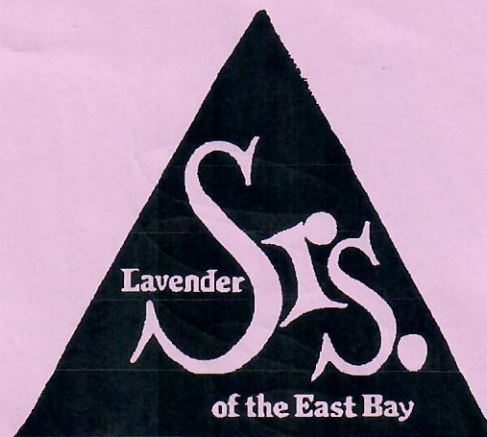
When Robinson turns to the American scene he is forced to rely on diaries. We meet two studies in contrast. Jeff Alexander (1918-1945) wrote of constant frustration with unrequited love and died a bitter, unfulfilled old man. Donald Vining, optimistic and resourceful, would have cast Alexander aside. Here was a lavender Norman Vincent Peale. Despite the usual disappointments ever seemed to get him down. He penned his thoughts and yearnings from 1933-1980. Vining finally found the love of his life and he never for a moment considered psychotherapy. Vining always learned from his defeats and improved his situation.

Andrew Tobias, (*Best Little Boy in The World*) gave us what is doubtless the most widely read gay confessional worldwide. He is now a highly regarded financial advisor. He was born into a sexually repressive family and as a result, he was still a virgin as he emerged from his middle class closet. Martin Duberman emerges as a highly respected professor of history in the ivy league tradition. He wore out three psychotherapists as he struggled to purge himself of gay demons. He graphically details all these psychic torments in *Cures*. During the 1960's he wrote the highly regarded drama "In White America," a vivid documentary play about racial discrimination. After the Stonewall uprising, he came out to all concerned and left his therapists and self doubt behind.

Paul Monette gained his chief fame as a chronicler of folks dying of AIDS, himself included. He received the National Book Award in 1992. His chief claim to fame was Borrowed Time. Ironically, AIDS created his career, otherwise Monette would be sinking into obscurity.

Robinson has created a sweeping survey of gay lives that is both sympathetic and when necessary, critical and biting. He shows these men no mercy when they have wasted their lives. But compassion flows when they have risen to the challenge.

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES



June 8 - Tuesday - 6:30 p.m. - Board of Directors

Meeting at the Volunteer Services Program office, 1395 Bancroft Avenue, San Leandro. All are welcome. Meets monthly the Tuesday before the potluck meetings.

June 12 - Saturday - 12 Noon MONTHLY MEETING

Loren Javier,
Local President GLADD

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

JUNE 17 - 27 - LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL - SAN FRANCISCO

Castro, Victoria, & Roxie Theaters - Ticket outlet, 2362-B Market Street, (415) 703-8663

JUNE 26 & 27 - SATURDAY AND SUNDAY - NOON - 6:30 P.M. -- SF CIVIC CENTER

Pride Celebration with booths, entertainment, speakers, food and drink

JUNE 27 - SUNDAY - 10:30 - GLBT PRIDE PARADE

VARIOUS DATES - WOMEN OVER FIFTY AND FRIENDS (WOFF)

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.