

Lavender Notes



VOL5, NO 9

NEWSLETTER OF LAVENDER SENIORS OF EAST BAY P.O. Box 6044, Fremont, California, 94538 Voice Mail: (510) 247-2406 Volunteer Services Program, 1395 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro, CA 94577, (510) 667-9655

September 1999

DUCAL COUNCIL AWARDS GRANT TO LAVENDER SENIORS

The Royal Grand Ducal Council of Alameda County awarded Lavender Seniors a check for \$1,200.00. Receiving the award were Natalie Zarchin, Marvin Burrows, and Frank Howell. Over a hundred people were in attendance, many in their finest drag. Royal Councils from all over California were there. Phil Evans and some young men from the Lavender Youth were also present to receive an award for \$1,200.00. Two AIDS organizations also received checks.

Our own Lavender Senior, Don Silva, (Mama Portugal), stepped down as the reining duke at the gala event. During his reign, the

Ducal Council raised over \$9,000 for gay/lesbian charities.

Volunteer Services Program

Temporary Staff Changes

by Dottie Fowler,

President of Board of Directors

After several medical emergencies caused by chest and back pains, Lavender Seniors Volunteer Coordinator Rosamaria Zayas has been ordered by her doctor to take seven weeks of rest, which she began on August 23rd. We wish her well for her rest and hope her health is restored soon.

The Lavenders, meanwhile, are most fortunate to have the services of our loyal office workers, Dot Hallinan and Marvin Burrows, who will carry on in her absence. They will be supported and supervised in their efforts by Nancy Flaxman, the Collaborative overall coordinator. Nancy helped develop the senior program for Spectrum of Marin and worked on it for many years. In this moment of what might have been a difficult situation for Lavender Seniors we see the strength of our own community history and the value of Collaborative programs.

Our office will be open: Mondays - 9AM to 1 PM Tuesdays -9AM to 4 PM Wednesdays - 9AM to 1 PM Thursdays - 9AM to 4 PM

Feel free to call and talk to the folks in the office anytime. If no

one answers be sure to leave a message.

Remember, we very much need to support our program effort and it's our community members and supporters who will help make this possible.

THE SEPTEMBER MEETING:

Our speaker will be Rev. Kay Wellington, pastor of the San Leandro Community Church. The church has been very supportive of us, providing a place for our pot lucks and office space for the Collaborative Project. Pastor Kay will speak briefly and informally and then entertain questions about her work and the on-going struggle with the American Baptist denomination to remain a welcoming congregation.

LIVELY POTLUCK ON SEX AND SIN CATHOLIC STYLE

by Frank Howell

The August meeting of the Lavender Seniors was called to order by Vice President Frank Howell. Ina Mae Murri reported on the Friendly Visitors outreach which is just getting organized. Volunteers have received training. The emphasis is now on obtaining a client base. Ina urged everyone to refer any Seniors in need to the project office. Call 510-667-9655.

Frank urged all who can to attend the California Senate hearings in Sacramento regarding efforts to strengthen the Fair Employment and Housing Act as it relates to gay rights.

He also encouraged everyone to support the ANTI-KNIGHT INITIATIVE. The Californians For Fairness can be reached at 505 Howard Street, San Francisco, CA-94105, (415-227-020) www.NOONKNIGHT.com.

Ken Miller, noted gay historian, delivered a lively, case by case documentation of Catholic priests who seduce young people and fellow priests. He underlined the massive coverup which has cost the Roman Catholic Church over a billion dollars in payoffs and legal fees. This money is, of course, diverted from other essential programs of the church.

Don't miss it!

ANNUAL SALLY ANDERS PICNIC.

It is for Gay/Lesbian residents of San Leandro, but everyone is invited. Sunday, Sept. 12, Chabot Park at end of Estudillo (east). Grill starts at 12 noon. Bring your own meeat and a dish to share. Bring prizes donation for raffels and door prizes. Expect some games and good visiting.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES PROGRAM: Lavender Seniors provides a Volunteer Services Program to isolated gay and lesbian seniors. The program is coordinated 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, 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, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered 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

Board of Directors Officers

Dottie Fowler, President Frank Howell, Vice President John Ellefsen, Secretary Bobbie Jarvis, Treasurer

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, E-mail: joslin1@gte.net

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

HORT NOTES by Sidney Poulte

• Meg Brutnell claims she overheard an interesting conversation in the line at a Lavender Senior potluck.

First Man: "I'd like to have a man with three dragons tattooed on his chest." Second Man: "I'd like to have a man with two dragons tattooed on his chest."

Third Man: "I'd like to have a man with one dragon on the ground!"

- During the discussion of expanding Lavender Seniors target group to include Bisexuals and trans genders, the point was raised that many lavender seniors have been married and have children. Are they bisexuals? Or are they gays and lesbians who made a mistake? Hmmmmm.......
- On the same subject, **Marvin Burrows** wants to expand our target group to include Trisexuals. He explains, "I am what you might consider a "TRI-SEXUAL". I'll try anything at least once. The I am slowing down a little, now that I am over 60! But I still try.
- Speaking of Marvin Burrows, (and isn't everybody), he and his partner, Bill Swenor, were off to the Russian River for a week. No TV, No Internet, No Phone, No Work and No Stress! They had a 2 room cottage at FIFE's Resort..
- Peggy Alices reports she has no items for the column. Now that is an item. Remember to call Peggy if you hear of anyone who is ill and needs a contact.
- Stella Lopes-Armijo, is always good for an item. Did you see her tee shirt at a recent pot luck? It read, "I'm retired. This is as dressed up as I get." The shirt looked like a tuxedo. No one asked her if she ever wore a tux. It was common for the butches to wear a tux in her hey day.
- Doreen Brand and her partner, Bev Hickok, kissed on national TV. No details. That is all I could get.
- Lavender Seniors will be at two senior fairs Sunday Sept. 19, Newark Days Celebration, 12-4 p.m.. You are invited to come help sit at our booth; give out information; and talk to people. Tuesday Sept. 21, Senior Fair at North Berkeley Senior Center. Volunteers are needed to set at the table. Call Ina Mae Murri, (510) 490-5425 for more information.

MORE COLLABORATIVE NEWS

Our Collaborative Project, which is busy recruiting volunteers and participants for its first goal of providing friendly visitors and phone support for isolated or home-bound GLBT seniors, is also getting ready to work on its second goal: to educate and sensitize mainstream senior services providers. To accomplish that goal we need a panel of Lavender Seniors, both women and men, who with the help of the Collaborative staff will tell their stories and answer questions at workshops and meetings at various local agencies.

Panel members will be trained and nobody will go out alone. We'll all support each other. And who better than us can tell about our experiences and needs? Just being there in person, being ourselves, will be a powerful educational too land will help our sisters and brothers get the medical and social services we deserve to have as we get older.

If you are interested, please call the Project office at 667-9655 and leave your name and phone number.

We are compiling a "INFORMATION & REFERRAL DIRECTORY" for Gay and Lesbian Senior Citizens in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. We would like to include a listing of Gay and Lesbian and Friendly Providers to the Directory to make it easy for our volunteers to refer other services to our participants. So if you are or you know anyone we can include, please contact: Lavender Seniors at: phone number:(510)667-9655 or E-mail: marvyburr@hotmail.com or mail: Lavender Seniors of East Bay, 1395 Bancroft Ave., Room#10, San Leandro Ca.

THIS CAN BE ANY SERVICE THAT YOU MIGHT THINK SOMEONE OVER 55 CAN USE. From Attorneys to Utilities Assistance From Churches to Travel Agencies From Doctors to Senior Centers And if someone just works in an office and understands Gays and Lesbians and Bisexuals and Trans genders and Questioning Seniors is a BIG HELP and would be appreciated. Anyone can use the list. It can be used by anyone in the Gay and Lesbian Community. We will make it available to other organizations. This is for the East Bay, but if you live elsewhere, feel free to submit your entry.



We Get Mail

A message from The California Alliance for Pride and Equality, the State's LGBT Political Organization.

The Governor's office has received thousands of calls, letters and faxes from the religious right demanding the Governor veto AB 26 by Assembly Member Carole Migden. They are calling AB 26 the MIGDEN GAY MARRIAGE BILL in an effort to create a scare and paint the Governor into a corner on this volatile issue. Our side has been silent! YOU MUST ACT TODAY TO SAVE THIS BILL!!!Call Governor Davis at (916) 445-2841 and urge him to support AB 26, including the Domestic Partners Registry. You can also fax a letter to (916) 445-4633. It is critical that you SPECIFICALLY URGE THE GOVERNOR TO SUPPORT THE DOMESTIC PARTNERS REGISTRY. This is the flash point in the right-wing attack

. ****Please forward this message to everyone you know!!!****

Hello Everyone, I recently signed on as one of the co-chairs of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Creating Change conference that will be held at the Oakland Marriott Nov. 10-14th. This conference is expected to bring 3,000 LGBT activist from across the country to Oakland. I have suggested that on the opening night of the conference a reception be held to welcome folks to the East Bay and that reception be hosted by as many East Bay Organizations as would care to participate. The other suggestion that I have is that Saturday afternoon of the conference we hold an East Bay town hall meeting. The purpose of this meeting would be two-folded to bring

together a multiracial group of LGBT organizations in the East Bay, so that we can become familiar with each other and re-enforce of commonalties and honor our diversity.

The second purpose of this meeting would be to determine how we can develop a coordinate effort to address some of the issues that impact the quality of our lives.— Such as The Knight Initiative. These are only my thoughts of how we can use the time, I am certainly open to other suggestions. So let me know what you think. If we like the ideas we certainly need to pull together a planning group ASAP. If you think it is a waste of time let me know that to. Looking forward to hearing from some of you.

Take Care, -- Brenda J. Crawford, Local Co-Chair

Hi, we have one more chance to get the crux of AB222 passed this session. It is the bill AB537 which will put the essentials of protecting all students in the State Education Code. Please take the time to again notify the legislators and the governor of your support for AB 537. There is a very short time frame for doing this. I think this week is it. Don't let this second chance slip by! Opposition groups already know about this effort and are mobilizing.

Contact your Assembly Member and Governor now. You may reach the governor at the following office: Sacramento: State Capitol, 1st Flr., 95814. Phone: 916-445-2841, Fax: 916-445-4633 Thank you for taking the time to do this for our kids.

- Barbara Jue

NGLTF LAUNCHES NEW PROGRAM ON GLBT AGING AND SENIORS

JULY 19, 1999---The Policy Institute of the National Lesbian and Gay Task Force today announced a major new program - the Aging Initiative - aimed at ensuring the inclusion of aging gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans-gendered (GLBT) people in all aspects of policy making and social life. The Policy Institute is a think-tank dedicated to research, policy analysis, strategy development and coalition building to advance the equality of GLBT people.

"The graying of the GLBT community presents new challenges to policy makers and to GLBT organizations," said Vaid,. "Current estimates put this population at more than one million people and that number will explode when large numbers of out-of-the-closet baby boomers reach retirement. This initiative makes along-term commitment to research, policy development and advocacy to ensure that the needs of old GLBT people are addressed in our communities and throughout society.

"The NGLTF Aging Initiative's overall goal is to ensure that GLBT people are a visible and conscious part of public policy frameworks and service programs that serve the elderly. The initiative also will raise consciousness about all forms of ageism within the GLBT communities. The NGLTF Policy Institute will

network with scholars and activists in the fields of gerontology and social services for the aging population to develop critical research on the realities facing GLBT people.

Over the next several years, NGLTF will engage in vigorous advocacy and propose collaborations among nonprofit agencies that serve and represent this population to make sure GLBT people are included in their programs. The Policy Institute has engaged the services of the Rev. Ken South, a minister in the United Church of Christ, to develop the Aging Initiative. Rev. South is a policy advocate with 27 years of experience in social service systems and organizing. He recently stepped down as Executive Director of the AIDS National Interfaith Network (ANIN), which he ran fourteen years.

(Founded in 1973, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force works to eliminate prejudice, violence and injustice against gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans-gendered people at the local, state and national level. As part of a broader social justice movement for freedom, justice and equality, NGLTF is creating a world that respects and celebrates the diversity of human expression and identity where all people may fully participate in society.)

LESBIAN IN FRUIT COUNTRY

by Hope J. Greene

always knew I was a lesbian from the age of four. I knew I was "different," and did not fit in with what was expected of me. My father gave me a doll once for Christmas but it didn't interest me and I never played with it. In all the years of my childhood I don't remember any person mentioning the words "lesbian," "queer," or anything like that.

It wasn't until I was about 10 years old that I became aware of a real lesbian living in this little town where I lived in Oregon called Milton-Freewater. She dressed and looked like a young man. Very short, mannish haircut. Very shy and she worked in one of the fruit warehouses there in Milton. I heard whispers about her from the adults in my home. It seems the men in the warehouse talked of ambushing her in the warehouse for the purpose of taking down her pants to see what her sex looked like. I don't know if this really did occur, but the next thing I heard was that she ran off with a woman who lived up the river and they both left town. This was approximately 1929. The woman with whom she ran off with was married and had, I believe, six children. It caused quite a scandal in the town and I don't know the ending of that story. Other than this lesbian. I did not see or know of any other lesbians or gay people. These were small towns in Oregon in the fruit country. I never heard the subject discussed or saw anything written about lesbians and gay people.

It wasn't until I was 23 years of age that somehow I found out about The Well of Loneliness, a book written by Radclyffe Hall. I read this book and was profoundly shocked. I had never had any experiences on this subject. But by this time I had had an affair with a woman. We thought we were the only ones in the world like that. But we knew we passionately loved each other. I was a student at the University of Washington and studying the art of violin playing. My lover left Seattle to return to Berkeley where her family lived. I was devastated at her leaving me. I believe she was feeling guilty about our relationship and thought it was "bad or shameful" or something like that.

After that I had a number of brief affairs with men. However, it was never satisfactory to me. I continued to be strongly attracted to women. It wasn't until two or three years later that I was introduced to the gay population in Seattle. What a revelation. The woman who was attracted to me took me to all the underground bars, dance places, and gay parties. A vast population of men and women with a culture all their own living side by side with "straight" people, who of course didn't have a clue. I was kind of exciting to be living in this under world.

At that time I was playing in the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. There was one woman, a cellist, who I recognized to be a lesbian, although we never became close. I didn't have any lesbian teachers to influence me.

Of course, some of them might have been, but kept it secret.

I, at the age of 10, was madly in love with my violin teacher, but after our family moved on to Kennewick, Washington, I didn't see her again. (Editors note: Hope Greene, was a musician who played with the Seattle Symphony, Oakland Symphony, Berkeley Symphony, and the Women's Philharmonic Orchestra. For much of her life she worked for a musicians' labor union. She was lucky enough to meet her partner through GLOE,



Hope Greene

Gay and Lesbian Outreach to Elders, and is a very happy woman.)

(Reprinted from Bar Area Reporter, Pride 99 Edition)
We are proud that Hope and her partner, Doris Wilkins, are active participants of Lavender Seniors of East Bay.

ELLEFSEN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY PUBLISHED ON INTERNET

John Ellefsen announced he has been working on a book since retirement. It is now available for reading on his personal web site. Titled: "Penetralia: A Psychosexual Autobiography." The book is primarily a therapeutic and analytical document, though he has tried to make it interesting to read. John warns that the book is more scholarly than sexy, though it is candid and explicit when necessary.

Part I covers his childhood and adolescence, from 1933 to 1953, and subsequent parts will be added later when ready. John started the book on an old-fashioned typewriter, but his son Sean gave him a computer several years ago and recently offered to help him put the material on a web site. (Also on the site is Sean's sci-fi novel, which he wrote while in the Marines.) John has mixed feelings about putting highly personal matters on the Internet, but autobiographies of people who are not already famous are rarely publishable. And in many ways the Web format is ideal for a project of this sort because changes and additions can be easily made, unlike a printed book.

Interested readers with access to the Internet are invited to take a look at Penetralia (the word means "the innermost or most private parts). The Web address is: www.penetralia.org. Comments or feedback will be welcome!

Remember Matthew Shepard

Ed. Note: The following article is <u>not</u> presented in an effort to explain or excuse the murder of Matthew. It is an excellent description of a pathology in our society that enslaves us all.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO PASS AS A MAN?

by Jack Nichols

Gazette Staff Harper's September cover story by JoAnn Wypijewski, "A Boy's Life: For Matthew Shepard's Killers, What Does it Take to Pass as a Man?" examines 'masculine' codes in Laramie, Wyoming in an attempt to get beyond the simplistic demonizing of two rather ordinary males — Henderson and McKinney — both products of Laramie's reigning male "culture".

Author Wypijewski shows how Henderson and McKinney grew into "maturity" in this sick culture. They were Wyoming products and not only because they were straights who happened to hate gays. Laramie's officials – even Wyoming's officials – now want desperately to distance themselves from the murder. In their disingenuous attempts to get Laramie off the hook, they excuse themselves, saying, "This isn't what our town/state is about." Phooey, says, Wypijewski, quoting county records detailing the area's 'masculine' deportment. Albany County's approximately 30,000 residents were treated in 1997-98 to nearly 4,000 phone calls for help from women reporting "battering, stalking, sexual assault, and other physical or emotional hurts, almost all committed by men."

And yet, as students of antiquated masculine role-playing know, straight men and many gay men are really just fragile beings generally bent, hysterically bent, on denying their fragility. Wypijewski quotes a dominatrix to shore up this point: "When I think of how fragile men are," says the dominatrix, "I feel so much pity. All that fear, all that self-mutilation, just to be 'men.' " And then there's the "heterosexual" guy who, Wypijewski notes, expresses the fear of being thought unmanly that's so pervasive in Laramie, allowing a tabooed glimpse of the West's wussy macho men that they seek to keep well-hidden.

The would-be macho's unfortunate fear of showing his feelings, obviously, are near the core of the whole matter. Wypijewski asks: "So what do you do when things hurt?" The "heterosexual" answers: "That's why God created whiskey, don't you think? You get drunker than a pig and hope it drains away or you go home and cry." "Is that true for most guys?" she persists. "Yeah, pretty much," he replies. It is here that Wypijewski strikes hard with perceptions that only experienced women (and some gay men) have. "So secretly, you're all wusses, and you know you're wusses, but you can't let anyone know, even though you all know you know." "You could say that," the "straight" interviewee agrees. "Can you talk to girls about this stuff?" asks the author. The "heterosexual's" reply is classic: "Unless you know this is the one, like, you're going to get married, and then

you're in so deep you can't help yourself, but if not, if you think she might break up with you, then no, because she might tell someone, and then it gets around, and then everyone thinks you're a wuss, unless you are a wuss, and then you know you're a wuss and it doesn't matter."

I shared this quote with pioneer Arthur Evans, author of Critique of Patriarchal Reason, and a founder of New York's most effective post-Stonewall gay liberation group. He replied: "Yes, most men are terrified that they're not butch enough. It's a sad situation, and dangerous, too. Historian Lyndal Roper calls this fear 'the fragility of maleness.' She thinks it was a factor in the demonization of women during the witch hunts in Germany: "Beneath the phallic confidence of sixteenth-century German culture was a distinct awareness of the fragility of male potency and an anxiety about female power, a sexual dynamic which may have more than a little connection with the themes of the witch fantasies." [Lyndal Roper, "Oedipus and The Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe", p. 138.]

McKinney wore a kind of drag to enhance his unhappy sense of failed maleness. "Wussitude," says Wypijewski, haunts a Laramie boy's every move and McKinney, surely, was similarly haunted. He was, according to an old roomie, "a little thing" and had "tiny arms, a tiny tiny chest, no definition in his body." His drag costume was "gangsta style" – "droopy jeans, baggy shirt, Raider's jacket, gold chains, gold on all his fingers. He'd ape hip hop street talk, but 'he couldn't get it going if he tried.' His nickname was Dopey." Drug use helped McKinney hide – even from himself – his role-conditioned sense of "masculine" shame for his perceived wussiness. He was both a seller and a user. Off of drugs he remained a quiet nobody. But on crystal meth, a pushy little maniac emerged, eager to prove himself a Big Guy.

Wypijewski tells how Laramie's unfortunate styles of masculinity came into being; how the Old West, now mythic and long gone, still influences intimate daily life among moderns. By putting Matthew Shepard's murder in this context, she rescues larger questions that men in the West (and elsewhere in America) would otherwise leave happily unanswered. It isn't just a matter of their intolerance for gays, she explains. It's culturally imposed ideas of manliness that are greatly to blame. Gay males and women, straight or gay, pay the awful price.

Thank you, Harper's and JoAnn Wypijewski. (Ed Note: reprinted from Greenwich Village Gazette, August 19, 1999 New York, NY)

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES



September 7 - Tuesday - 6:30 p.m. - Board of Directors

ALL WELCOME!! Meeting at at Harry's Hof Brau at 14th and

Hesperian Blvd., San Leandro, (Across from Bay Fair) Meets monthly the Tuesday before the potluck meetings.

September 11 - Saturday - 12 Noon MONTHLY MEETING

Rev. Kay Wellington San Leandro Community Church.

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.

SEPTEMBER 12 - 12 NOON - ANNUAL SALLY ANDERS PICNIC.

It is for Gay/Lesbian residents of San Leandro, but everyone is invited. Chabot Park at end of Estudillo (east). Grill starts at 12 noon. Bring your won meat and a dish to share. Bring prizes donation for raffles and door prizes.

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 (no alcohol) 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.