



LAVENDER NOTES

Newsletter of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

Volume VII, No.8 – August 2002

A Volunteer Services Program — project of The Tides Center
• 1395 Bancroft Ave. • San Leandro, CA 94577 • (510) 667-9655 •

Project Director's Report

Here it is mid-summer, perhaps a good time to look forward and backwards upon the fulcrum of 2002.

Lavender Seniors has moved steadily forward developmentally since its inception late in 1994. With the help of the Horizons Foundation and collaborative partners – Spectrum in Marin and New Leaf in San Francisco – and most important the strong body of volunteers in the East Bay, our program became a living entity. Now almost eight years later Lavender Seniors continues to grow, becoming more visible within the LGBT community as well as mainstream care providers to the entire senior population.

Recently our project received two grant awards from the Goldman fund and the California Endowment, to expand the community education part of our program. This effort will include outreach to those Alameda and Contra Costa programs which serve all elders in order to train personnel in the programs about the lives and needs of LGBT elders as they grow older.

Other parts of our program continue to provide services to our own elder group with friendly visiting, phone reassurance, support from our newsletter and monthly presentations, and referral through our office at the San Leandro Community Church.

www.LavenderSeniors.org

Last month Lavender Seniors' website became a reality through the efforts of one of our board members, Jeanine DeBacker, to whom we say "Thanks so much for your contribution." It is through the efforts of our staff and supporters that our project continues to thrive. Web address is: www.LavenderSeniors.org.

More Developments

Very soon, and for the first time, the world will view our new brochure! With the help of Jessica Bucciarelli, graphic artist, and Cathy Cade, photographer, we will soon see a new four-fold brochure complete with text and photographs. To all those who made a special trip to be photographed – *Myra Williams, Dot Hallinan, Frank Howell, Peter Hart, Bob Lindeborg, Ina Mae Murri, Stella Lopez-Armijo* – we say again, "Many thanks. You are among the people who continue to make Lavender Seniors grow." *go to page 5*

Elders Conference

Come to the 2nd Annual LGBT Elders Conference on Thursday, August 29, from 9 A.M. – 5 P.M. at the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, 685 14th Street (corner of Castro) in downtown Oakland. \$20 if you pre-register by August 15, \$25 if you register at the door. The cost includes both a continental breakfast and a catered lunch.

Three vital and informative workshops are to be featured. The morning session, "Our Stories, Our Needs: Creating Caring Resources" will be moderated by Nancy Flaxman from Spectrum Services in Marin. Nancy is one of the most inspirational and articulate leaders we have in the LGBT senior community. Other representatives from local LGBT and mainstream senior services and agencies will also be there to share information and networking.

The afternoon sessions includes "Put It in Writing," on legal issues and essential protections for LGBT elders, led by Joyce Pierson, our esteemed past Senior Services Coordinator, and others from the National Center for Lesbian Rights. The other afternoon session is on housing issues, which will be led by Jan Faulkner of the Rainbow Adult Housing Committee, which is in the midst of creating, with spectacular success, new answers for the question that serves as the title of the workshop: "Where Are We Going to Live?"

We are thrilled to announce that Ronnie Gilbert, formerly of *The Weavers*, the famous and beloved folk-singing group from the 1970's, will be lifting our spirits in a special performance. The conference is wheelchair accessible and sign language interpretation will be available.

Please, no scents or colognes. Shuttle service from the City Center/12th Street BART station will be available. Pre-registration can be done by several easy methods, thanks to our fiscal sponsor and dedicated supporter, PRTA (Progressive Research and Training for Action); E-mail to: LGBTelders@prtaonline.org or fax to: PRTA at 510-705-8922, or mail to: LGBT Elders c/o PRTA, 2809 Telegraph Ave., Suite 208, Berkeley, CA 94705. Registration is also available in Adobe PDF format online at www.prtaonline.org/lgbtelders. For further information, please call 510-705-8918.

—John Ellefsen

Lavender Seniors provides a Volunteer Services Program to isolated gay and lesbian seniors. It also presents LGBT educational panels to care providers who offer services to all seniors. Lavender Seniors is a member of the Lesbian and Gay Senior Services Collaborative along with New Leaf Outreach to Elders in San Francisco, Senior Spectrum in Marin. Lavender Seniors is funded in part by Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, The California Endowment, Gateway Initiative of the SF Foundation, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, Horizons Foundation, The Jay Cohen Philanthropic Fund, The Nathan Cummings Foundation, Royal Grand Ducal Council of Alameda County and "100 Lesbians and Our Friends." We acknowledge support from all our donors.

LAVENDER NOTES

is the newsletter of
Lavender Seniors of the East Bay
 1395 Bancroft Avenue
 San Leandro, CA 94577
 510-667-9655
 fax 510-667-9909
 lavenderseniors@email.msn.com

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.

Advisory Board

Frank Howell & Ina Mae Murri,
 Co-Chairs

Jeanine DeBacker, Secretary

Bobbie Jarvis, Treasurer

Meg Bruynell, John Ellefsen,

Eugene Marangoni,

Natalie Zarchin

Project Director *Dotty Fowler*

Site Coordinator *Susan Kalmus*

Administrator *Nancy Fugett*

Editor *Bert Hendriksen*

Founding Members

Carol Beth, Bill Baillie, Doreen Brand, Meg Bruynell, Marvin Burrows, Shirley Dennett, John Ellefsen, Dotty Fowler, Dorothy Hallinan, Beverly Hickock, Jerry Holmes, Frank Howell, Doris Fischer, Bobbie Jarvis, James Joslin, Barbara Jue, Barbara Konecny, Stella Lopez Armijo, Bonnie Jean MacKenzie, Donna Montgomery, Ina Mae Murri, Diane Nagy, Ray Robb, 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 \$15 dollars per year to receive the newsletter. Visitors or persons interested in learning more about Lavender Seniors may receive the newsletter for three months without charge. None will be turned away for lack of funds.

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

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

Advisory Board Message

from Co-Chair Ina Mae Murri

It is my pleasure to serve as Co-Chair, along with Frank Howell of the Advisory Board of the Lavender Seniors. We have difficult shoes to fill, as this office has been so ably filled by Dotty Fowler and John Ellefsen.

I hope we can continue the fine work done by them and have good potluck meetings, speakers, employees, a great program for our community. We are filling a need for the GLBT people of the East Bay and I am confident that we can keep on doing that.

What I would like to see is more commitment of those who attend our potluck meetings and receive the newsletter to become more involved in the advisory board or committees that are needed from time to time. We need an infusion of energy on the board from those who have not been involved thus far. As we get older, our energy is less and we need new ideas from those who use our services.

We are fortunate to have had a solid core up to now but there is always a need for people waiting in the wings to continue the leadership.

I look forward to this new year as co-chair and hope to hear from many of you ready to make a commitment to help where needed.

from Co-Chair Frank Howell

Exciting events are beginning to unfold for gay and lesbian seniors! In August John Ellefsen and I will attend an organizational meeting for a group called *Queer Development Professionals*. This will be a group for gay fund raisers and it will provide networking and educational opportunities for those who raise money specifically for lavender organizations. We hope to get in on the ground floor of this effort.

In September we will present a program at the monthly potluck on efforts to build housing for seniors in our community. All across the country there are plans unfolding for this type of housing. So stay tuned for further developments.

Outreach Message

Hello everyone:

Hope all is well with you all. Just a reminder, the next volunteer meeting will be in September due to the fact that most of our "regular" volunteers will be at the Picnic. So, we'll see you there... and (hopefully) again at the August Potluck.

As you may know, we've been growing in leaps and bounds. I've been working on expanding the program, writing letters in an effort to schedule panel trainings. We will be hiring a consultant to help us design the evaluation component of our outreach efforts. This is all very exciting, and we hope to be able to keep up with all of the new activities.

I hope you all were able to catch the article in the Oakland Tribune last month. We've received a number of calls based on that article.

Again, don't forget: the next volunteer meeting will be in September.

Ciao,

Suzi, Coordinator

Subscription Renewals

When renewing your subscription, please make the check payable to **The Tides Center/Lavender Seniors**

This newsletter is available in **Adobe Acrobat Reader** via E-mail; request: **hendriksen@aol.com**
 510-652-6906

Lavender 'Punk' (Person unKnown) of-the-Month

A true Queen – and not just-for-a-day – this is our Punk of the month. He was born in Oakland on May 2, 1935, at Providence Hospital, one of three children, all sons. His childhood was spent in Berkeley in a home rented from the U.S. Government who had put the Japanese owners in a camp.

At the end of World War II, the family moved to San Lorenzo where our Punk graduated from 6th grade at Martin School and moved on to Bret Harte Junior High and then to be in the first graduating class (1953) from San Lorenzo High School. As a youngster growing up, he did not question himself about his sexual preferences, although he enjoyed dressing up in women's clothes from an early age and he knew he enjoyed watching the boys' bodies in the shower room. A ninth grader teased him about his tendencies, but there was no question of "coming out" at that time.

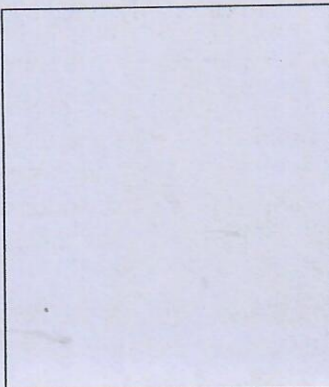
Then the Navy called in 1954, where he served for eight years during the Korean conflict. As an officer, he had the benefit of much traveling. He was in New Orleans for 18 months where he enjoyed his first Mardi-Gras. During eight months on the SS Coral Sea in the Operations Department, he visited Italy, France, Portugal, and other mediterranean countries. As the ship was to be de-commissioned in Washington State, he and his shipmates enjoyed partying through Brazil, San Paola, the Rock of Gibraltar, Chile, and then on to Bremerton, Washington. His next commission was San Diego. Not a bad tour of duty!

Coming home finally to Hayward, he lived in his own private quarters in his parents' downstairs flat. He began to entertain a series of lovers. His favorite cruising places were the Turf Club in Hayward and around Lake Merritt in Oakland. Bill, his soon-to-be partner, was there at the Turf Club that fateful evening when they cruised each other and rode home together. They were quickly roommates. Our Punk worked at a job when he wasn't cruising or entertaining. He was aware of only one time that he felt discrimination on the job. In the Hayward area of the late 50's and early 60's, gays were happy to enjoy the 8 - 10 bars available to them. It was at the Aloha Bar, the first after hours dancing bar, and owned by lesbians, that the original "Hayward Harlots" performed. They were 12 guys doing drag, both serious numbers and comedy. Our punk was bartending one night when he decided that he would enjoy doing drag on the week-ends when he didn't have to work. A career was launched!

His parents enjoyed a drag show that featured our punk's good and beautiful friend, Mickey St. Cyr. When our punk was invited by Billy de Frank to perform himself at the Club Carnation in Oakland, he invited his parents. He did Shirley Bassie singing "The Impossible Dream." His dad was touched by the emotion of the song. Bill leaned over to whisper to the parents: "It's Don." Surprised parents and they loved it. His father came from a family of 13 in Union City, then known as Decatur, while his mother was from a Portugese family in Massachusetts. They enjoyed many shows.

After celebrating their wedding in Hayward, our punk and his lover settled in a home near the family. And he didn't do drag for 30 years.

In Hayward, at the Rumor's Bar, he realized that drag shows were now raising money for worthy causes in the community. So, our punk queen came out of retirement to become active in the Royal Ducal Courts. He ran for and was voted in by Alameda County members to reign as Duchess for a year, putting on fundraisers. Don Silva – as you must have guessed his name by now – raised \$21,000 for charities that are not corporately sponsored: Children with Aids, Lupus Foundation, Breast Cancer, BAWAR, and were able to rent the auditorium for the Lambda Youth Prom.



Punk

This year Don is the Regent Duchess; and he is preparing himself for the Royal Ducal Ball at the Rainbow Room, where he will be roasted. Will he be surprised when the "Regent" title is removed only to be replaced with the title of Grand Duchess? You bet! And will Don continue performing for charitable causes? You can bet on it!

While Don was raised catholic as a child, he now attends an episcopal church with Bill. There is a gay priest and a lesbian priest and a welcoming community. Recently Dan and Bill were blessed before the congregation in honor of their 35-year wedding anniversary. Soon to retire together, they enjoy cruising – on the seas now – and partying. "I wouldn't want to be young now. I'm very glad to be the age I am, living together with Bill here in our home in Oakland."

—Dorothy Hallinan

Only For Edification

Question: If you could live forever, would you and why? Answer: "I would not live forever, because we should not live forever, because if we were supposed to live forever, then we would live forever, but we cannot live forever, which is why I would not live forever."—Miss Alabama in the 1994 Miss U.S.A. contest.

"Whenever I watch TV and see those poor starving kids all over the world, I can't help but cry. I mean I'd love to be skinny like that, but not with all those flies and death and stuff."—Mariah Carey

"Smoking kills. If you're killed, you've lost a very important part of your life."—Brooke Shields, during an interview to become spokesperson for a federal anti-smoking campaign.

"I was provided with additional input that was radically different from the truth. I assisted in furthering that version."—Colonel Oliver North, from his Iran-Contra testimony.

"It's no exaggeration to say that the undecideds could go one way or another."—George Bush, U.S. President

Book Review

Sex Crime Panic: A Journey To The Paranoid Heart Of The 1950's

By Neil Miller Alyson Press – \$14.95 – Paperback

We all remember the curious world of the 1950's. All was not sweetness and light. This was the gray era of fear and political conformity. All minorities were in a closet of one sort or another. Sioux City, Iowa was a typical rural town of devout religious folk and ordinary folk who tried to mind their own private lives.

But a bizarre dread crept over the land of corn and country music. In the early years of the decade two young children – Jimmy Bremmers and Donna Sue Davis were murdered. Community outrage stalked the minds of the townsfolk. Scapegoats were desperately needed. The police department must demonstrate they are performing their proper duty. Gay men who cruised the public toilets fit the bill to a tee.

The first victim to walk the plank was Ernest Triplett. He became a prime suspect when he confessed to killing little Jimmy and then declared his innocence. He was held for months with no attorney and no specific charges were filed. The local newspaper emphasized Triplett's love of listening to Liberace on the radio. ("A man who does that is liable to do anything!")

A number of men were rounded up via parks and restrooms and the state legislature pushed through legislation called the Criminal Sexual Psychopath Law. The district attorney was especially fond of this legal magna carta. When a case was weak, the individual accused was not a criminal. A petition was filed with the court declaring the defendant a sexual psychopath. He was then committed to the state mental hospital for an indefinite term. The law failed to distinguish between consenting adults in private and child molesters.

Neil Miller, author of *In Search of Gay America*, who teaches journalism at Tufts University, points up the hysteria of the times. Newspaper editorials fanned the flames by advocating preventive detention of all known suspects just to reassure the public. These unfortunate men, some 25 in all, were transported to the state institution at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, in 1955 and placed in a newly formed unit for the sexual criminal. Some of the hospital staff were apprehensive of the new patients; one staff person explained, "I can't stand the sight of a man in a pink shirt."

The psychiatrists were not sure how to deal with their new charges. Castration was suggested. The accused men were all living on the same ward and grew supportive of each other. They remained at the hospital for three or four years.

Billy, one of the men being treated recalls, "I don't believe they knew what to do with us. We were very normal people, except for our sexuality." The doctors decided against hormone and aversion therapies. Group and individual counseling was the guiding principle.

After a period of time the decision was made to go through the motions of psychiatric therapy. The goal was simply to return the men to the community as soon as possible. From the psychological perspective there was really nothing to treat. Gradually the men were released.

In 1956 the Sexual Psychopath Unit was officially closed. The time of the great anxiety was passing. In 1958 another uproar ensued but the men arrested were finally placed on probation to their attorneys. Only 13 men were arrested this time.

In 1995 Neil Miller revisited Sioux City and attempted to locate all the actors in the massive upheaval of the past. Some of the men were deceased, some refused to be interviewed. A few were quite talkative. The district attorney and a local police office were visited. They defended their role in the sordid events and saw no reason to question events that occurred so long ago. Two of the men became lovers. Others moved out of state to California.

go to next page

¡Happy Birthday!

Patrick Russell

August 1

Mary Jane Sepulveda

August 2

Natalie Zarchin

August 4

Josef Prochnow

August 8

Margaret Bruynell

Robert Tharp

August 10

Howard Curtis

August 14

Kathleen Bucher

Barbara Marques

August 16

Richard L. Hicks

August 18

Peggy L. Alices

August 20

Ruth Michaels

August 22

Martha Walker

August 24

Jerry Latimer

August 30

¡Feliz Cumpleaños!

Presentation of the Month:

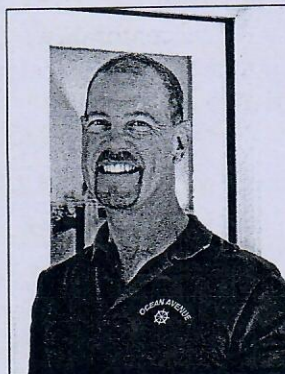
Saturday, 12 Noon • Potluck Meeting
• Program at 1 P.M. • August 8 •

Your name begins with the letters
A through H — Bring a Salad

I through P — Bring a Dessert

Q through Z — Bring a Main Dish

San Leandro BART station shuttle is available. Call voice mail day before: 667-9655 to arrange pickup.



Frank Gurucharri, the dynamic Executive Director of the Pacific Center for Human Growth in Berkeley, will be our speaker. He has been the Chief Executive Officer of the Pacific Center since August 1998. Before coming to the Center, he had a 30-year career as Clinical Director in Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention, a private practice clinician, and a faculty member.

Project Director's Report

One of the goals Lavender Seniors has prioritized for this period is to continue to seek to diversify our program ethnically, racially, and class-wise. Toward this end we have recently submitted a grant proposal to the City of Oakland, written by our own Development Director, John Ellefsen. This excellent proposal seeks to organize focus groups in diverse communities in Oakland regarding LGBT needs in those communities. We hope to receive this funding later this year.

Now about the mid-summer's continuing schedule of activities -- for information and pleasure consider enjoying the annual LGBT East Bay picnic on August 17, the Aging Conference August 29 and East Bay Pride Day on August 31. Call our office if you would like more information about any of these events. Enjoy!—Dotty Fowler,
 Project Director (from page 1)

Hope Along the Wind: The Story of Harry Hay

Monday, August 19, 6:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Originally presented at the Gay and Lesbian Film Festival last year, this remarkable documentary takes us through the fascinating and extraordinary life of Harry Hay, who has been at the forefront of the gay rights movement for more than half a century. The film features poignant interviews with Harry and many of the surviving members of the Mattachine Society. His story is the story of our era.

Presented at Spectrum:
 1000 Sir Francis Drake Blvd. #10,
 San Anselmo, CA 94960,
 415-457-1115.

For information call
 Nancy Flaxman, ext. 213.

A Journey To The Paranoid Heart Of The 1950's

(from page 4)

In the Sioux City of today homosexuality, as such, is no longer a crime. There is even a gay civil rights group in the area. The murder of Donna Sue Davis was never solved. The process of reforming our laws relating to sexual conduct continue to evolve at a snails pace.

The sodomy laws still remain on the books in 22 states. We are told they must remain as a symbol of social disapproval even though they are rarely enforced. Neil Miller, winner of the 1990 American Library Association prize for gay and lesbian nonfiction and the Lambda Literary Award has provided us with a compelling tale of well meaning folk and how they can go so terribly wrong.

—Frank Howell

Our Mailing List: Lavender Seniors does not lend, sell or give away its mailing list to any outside organization.

Your support is crucial to enable the *Lavender Seniors* to continue its role as a vital resource to our community. Please take a moment and send your donation today.

Here's my gift of: \$10 ____ \$25 ____ \$50 ____ \$75 ____ \$100 ____ other ____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Telephone _____

E-mail address _____

Please make checks payable to
The Tides Center/Lavender Seniors
 and mail to:
 Lavender Seniors
 1395 Bancroft Avenue
 San Leandro, CA 94577

Thank you for your generosity!

☐ Please contact me about including Lavender Seniors in my will. ☐ Please contact me to volunteer.

Community Listings

Senior Men's Afternoon 1:30 – 3:30 P.M.

2nd and 4th Thursdays

August 8 and 22

**2712 Telegraph Avenue,
Berkeley**

Co-sponsored by *Pacific Center
and Lavender Seniors*

East Bay Women's Support Group

Meets 2nd and 4th Fridays each
month

August 9 and 23: 1:15 – 3 P.M.

Meets at *Pacific Center*,
2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley

Sponsored by Lavender Seniors &
New Leaf Outreach for Elders

Women Over Fifty and Friends **WOFF**

**10th Annual Talent Show/
Bar-B-Que & Potluck**

Saturday August 3

(in lieu of August Meeting)

Chuckwagon Grill at 3:00 P.M.

Hoe Down (Talent Show) at

5:30 – 8:00 P.M.

Suggested Donation \$7.00

At Dos Barbaras

(Barbara Konecny & Barbara Jue)

508 Broadmoor Boulevard,

San Leandro, CA 94577

Bring something to grill for you and
a potluck dish to share.

Hosting:

Olivia Partridge 510-337-9167

olivia@partridgelawcenter.com

Debra Paschke 510-769-0108

passkey1@earthlink.net

Susan Calico 510-464-5956

scalico@pacbell.net

Marianne Nolte 510-317-0410

mdnolte@aol.com

Pride Picnic - Aug. 17

Come to the Pride Picnic on Saturday,
August 17, at 11 A.M. at the Cabana
near the entrance to Cull Canyon Re-
gional Park in Castro Valley. The en-
trance fee to the Cabana is \$2 for Se-
niors and Youth, \$3 for all others. Park-
ing is free.

Folks from 25 different LGBT organi-
zations and groups in the East Bay will
be there. Bring a dish to share, swim-
suit, and prepare to greet old friends and
meet new ones for a day in the park!

Fellows of East Bay

Second Sunday, 5:30 – 8:30 P.M.

Social Club for mature men and their
admirers. Monthly Potluck dinner and
social held the second Sunday of every
month at Oak Center Towers, 1515
Market Street, Oakland.

Bring food and drink to share and a
\$4 donation.

August 11

East Bay Senior Games 2002

Swimming

Friday, August 16

Mills College, Oakland

5000 Mac Arthur Blvd.

12 – 4 P.M.

Registration (by July 29) fee and
other information, contact Shannon
Pedder, 415-703-7200X204
(shannon@prime-time.com)

Basketball

(Men and Women)

Friday, August 16

Merritt College Gymnasium

12500 Campus Drive, Oakland

Check-in 8 A.M.

Registration (by July 29) fee and
other information, contact Tom
Krajewski, 510-893-8337X118
(tkrajewski@pankow.com)

Alameda County Leather Corps

presents

PETS ON PARADE

Saturday, August 3, 3 – 6 P.M.

at the Rainbow Room, 21859

Mission Blvd, Hayward. Entertain-
ment, food, plus a drawing for a
top-rated DVD player.

100% of proceeds will go to bene-
fit East Bay PAWS, which provides
canine and feline companionship
and care for persons with AIDS.