We Remember

Barbara Marquardt-Konecny

February 2, 1936 – April 11, 2003

Barbara made the transition peacefully at home, comforted by the prayers of many and surrounded by her loving family.

Born in Paris, Arkansas, her family migrated to the Bay Area during the 1940’s. Determined, focused and bright, she excelled in Real Estate while raising her five daughters, Barbara Ann, Kathy, Karen, LaRee and Judi, as a single parent.

Barbara was a Real Estate Broker, a member of the Oakland Board of Realtors, Board of Directors of Women’s Council, California and National Association of Realtors, GRI, member of RHANAC, Rotary, Eastern Star, White Shrine, Bananas, founding member of Lavender Seniors and founder of WOFF.

She was intuitive, spiritual, compassionate, stubborn, strong, kind, generous, dedicated, driven and funny. (An excellent cook too!) One life that has touched so many.

She has left her five daughters, 14 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, two sisters, nieces, nephews, life partner, husband, family and friends, to celebrate her life.

In lieu of flowers, the family appreciates donations to American Cancer Society or Hospice in memory of Barbara Marquardt-Konecny.

Our very dear friend and supporter.

Have you had a Lavender Seniors Moment today?

By Jeff Vessels, Interim Project Director

All of us have had them. In fact, I had another one today. It was another Lavender Seniors Moment.

Unlike a Senior Moment—such as suddenly forgetting the name of a person you have known all of your life (I had one of those today, too)—a Lavender Seniors Moment occurs when you feel extreme appreciation for Lavender Seniors of the East Bay and decide to commit or recommit yourself to our organization and its mission.

My most recent Lavender Seniors Moment occurred when visiting with two Lavender Seniors participants. One (whom I’ll call Martha to protect her privacy) told a story about the personal challenge of deciding to attend her first potluck. Since childhood Martha heard consistently that her sexual orientation somehow made her an unfit person, so coming to our monthly potluck became an act of personal freedom. The experience of her first potluck was an important step in Martha’s continuing journey. Later she received a call from one of our staff persons and quickly felt the warmth and caring of Lavender Seniors—a feeling of finding a loving, accepting family for which she had longed for many years. Soon she became a regular at potlucks. More recently, a health setback made it more difficult for Martha to get out of her home. Our staff introduced her to another Lavender Seniors participant (whom I’ll call Elijah), who began accompanying her on shopping trips and to potlucks. Martha and Elijah told me of their joy in coming to know one another as friends and, in a real sense, as family-members.

There are countless other Lavender Seniors Moments stories, and I am anxious to hear them.

For many, Lavender Seniors Moments come from attending a monthly potluck, talking with a Lavender Seniors volunteer or staff person about participating in the Friendly Visitor program, joining the Advisory Board, speaking to service providers about the needs of LGBT seniors as part of our Speakers Panel, or simply reading about our organization. Lavender Seniors Moments ‘Lavender Seniors Moment’ on page 3

Special Appeal for New Volunteers

Please see page 2, in the report from Suzi Kalmus

Senior Services Coordinator
Report from Senior Services Coordinator

by Suzi Kalmus, Senior Services Coordinator

Hope this finds all of you well and happy. Happy Spring, Easter, Passover! A very warm welcome to our new Interim Project Director, Jeff Vessels.

So... we did a panel training at the Over 60 Health Center in Berkeley; more than 20 professionals were there, and we had a wonderful session. Marvin, Frank and Ina Mae told their stories, and we had some good feedback.

If you are interested, we are doing an “in house” provider training on May 7th, from 9:30 a.m. – 11:30, at 1395 Bancroft. If it is as successful as we anticipate, we’ll do more that way. So, save the date and let me know if you’d like to come.

We’re steady at 17 participants in our Friendly Visitor program, and I am always looking to match those who are waiting with people who don’t live too far (knowing full well how huge Alameda county is). Also, we’re looking for volunteers who can come into the office on a regular basis to place friendly check-in calls to our participants, remind everyone of potlucks and other upcoming events, and also help out some of our participants who are unable to drive. If any of these is feasible, please let me know (510) 667-9655 or you can e-mail me at: shoshanna53@hotmail.com.

There will not be a volunteer meeting in May as I’ll be at my son’s college graduation in beautiful downtown Webster Groves, Missouri. See you all in June, when we’ll be seeing the Phyllis and Del film “No Secrets Anymore.”

We need more of YOU – to volunteer!

We’re looking for volunteers to help out in the office and on the phones. Some of our participants would love to hear a cheerful voice, and we need help organizing our new office. Call Suzi at (510) 667-9655. Our volunteers are the GOLD of this organization.

Lavender Seniors Wants You!

Thanks for all that you do; we couldn’t do this program without YOU, our volunteers!

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 – or at www.lavenderseniors.org/newsletter
**Book Review**

Love The Sin: Sexual Regulation and the Limits of Religious Tolerance
By Janet Jakobsen & Ann Pellegrini

In American life we are constantly told that privacy rights are the cornerstone of our free life. But a paradox rears its problematic head. There is always the Puritanical fear that the man in the street has too much freedom and is committing all manner of sin during the more intimate moments of his or her life.

Later this year the U.S. Supreme Court will rule on the constitutional implications of the sodomy laws. The justices always fall back on religious principles to make their case against sexual deviation. Janet Jakobsen and Ann Pellegrini are disturbed by this trend. To them the separation between church and state is under constant challenge. Jakobsen is Director of the Center for Research on Women at Barnard College. Ann Pellegrini is Associate Professor of Drama at the University of California Irvine.

The government is especially fond of quoting spiritual wisdom on public issues but ignores biblical insights in other areas of concern such as economics and war.

The authors observe that morality is always defined in terms of the traditional family. Alternate family arrangements don’t count. Sex is usually guilty until proven innocent. Justice Antonin Scalia believes that if sodomy is wrong that all other aspects of gay and lesbian life are also suspect. We are on trial not only for what we do but simply because we exist.

Jakobsen and Pellegrini pinpoint the American social dilemma when they observe that, “The majority of Americans do not hate anyone, but neither do they grant the same democratic freedoms to everyone.” They argue that mere tolerance is not enough. We must aim for total acceptance of minority groups. We must emphasize freedom not biology. The constitution is about freedom from religion as well as freedom of religion. Let us have freedom regardless of how we were born.

The authors argue that we need to become a sex positive culture, i.e. gay and lesbian sex can be good in and of itself. Why must we be defensive? When we base our arguments solely on the right to a private life we in effect give up significant areas of public influence. Enriching social discourse is inhibited. Conservatives generally rely on the slippery slope arguments. If you allow homosexual conduct in the bedroom then child sex or intercourse with the German Shepherd down the street will be next. The history of human sexuality demonstrates that this simply does not follow. Why should some types of morality have preference over others?

The fierce debate raging over love and how we choose to express it has been brilliantly clarified by Jakobsen and Pellegrini. Let us recast the entire debate and allow a wide range of moral and social adjustments.

—Frank Howell

**Lavender Seniors Moment**
*(from page 1)*

recur, reminding us of the vital role Lavender Seniors plays in our lives and the lives of all area LGBT seniors.

I had my very first Lavender Seniors moment several months ago. Still living in my home state of Kentucky, I read an announcement online that Lavender Seniors was seeking its first paid director. The announcement gripped me with its compelling organizational mission – to improve the quality of life of LGBT seniors – and its clearly articulated values of dignity, mutual support, inclusiveness, and unabashed LGBT pride. I had to learn more. I needed to get involved.

I later spoke with and met long-time Advisory Board member John Ellefson and past Director Dotty Fowler. They inspired me. This feeling has grown immensely since I arrived in the Bay Area a few short weeks ago and began meeting other staff members, co-chairperson Frank Howell and other Advisory Board members, newsletter editor Bert Hendriksen, participants, funders, and more.

All of us are indebted to those who have sustained our Lavender Seniors family for years, including many who work quietly behind the scenes. They have given

What has reminded you of our vital role since then? What keeps you involved?

all of us many Lavender Seniors Moments. This month, I pay special tribute to Dotty and John. Both will soon take well-deserved breaks but will remain involved.

As I meet more and more of our Lavender Seniors family members, my Lavender Seniors Moments are a near daily experience. And I want more.

Tell me about your Lavender Seniors Moments – those times when you felt most inspired by and committed to our mission and our work. What was your first Lavender Seniors moment, leading you to get involved? What has reminded you of our vital role since then? What keeps you involved?

Please submit your brief stories to me by post or by e-mail (jeffvessels@aol.com). Also let me know whether I have your permission to print your stories in upcoming editions of *Lavender Notes*, and whether I can publish all or part of your name with your story.

I am anxious to hear from you. And I am deeply honored to be your Project Director, working and participating with you in Lavender Seniors’ important work.
Preventing And Dealing With Identity Theft

In the last edition of Lavender Notes, we wrote about protecting your credit from identity theft. In this edition, we provide additional information about preventing and dealing with identity theft. This information is taken from the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, www.identitytheft.org and an April 18 article by Tammy Joyner in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

What is identity theft?
Identity theft occurs when someone steals personal information — name, address, Social Security number (the same as your Medicare number), and/or birth date — to apply for loans or credit cards. The loans aren’t repaid, and the fraud may go undetected for years because bills are usually sent to a false address.

What should I do if it appears that someone has stolen my identity for purposes of getting credit?
In mid-April, the nation’s credit-reporting industry simplified the way victims of identity theft notify credit bureaus. Consumers now can call just one of the three major credit agencies — Equifax (888-567-8688), Experian (603-353-0809) or TransUnion (800-680-7293) — instead of each individually if they suspect identity theft. The agency would then contact the other two. Under the new voluntary plan, a security alert is placed in your credit file after you notify one of the credit bureaus. That alert tips merchants, retailers, banks, credit unions and other credit lenders to any possibility of identity theft. Your name is then removed from any direct-mail offers for credit, and you can get a free file of your credit history for three months following the call.

How can I prevent identity theft?
1. Make sure that you do not throw anything away that someone could use to become you. Anything with your identifiers must be ripped in small pieces or shredded (cross-cut) before throwing away — especially pre-approved credit applications and credit card receipts.
2. Do not put checks in the mail from your home mailbox. Drop them off at a U.S. Mailbox or the U.S. Post Office. Mail theft is common.
3. When a person calls you at home or at work, and you do not know this person, never give out any of your personal information. If they tell you they are a credit grantor of yours, call them back at the number that you know is the true number, and ask for that party to discuss personal information. Provide only information that you believe is absolutely necessary.
4. Do not put your Social Security Number on your checks or your credit receipts. If a business requests your Social Security Number, give them an alternate number and tell them why. They do not need that to identify you. If a government agency requests your Social Security Number, there must be a privacy notice accompanying the request.
5. Get credit cards and business cards with your picture on them.
6. Do not put your credit card account number on the Internet (unless it is encrypted on a secured site.) Don’t put account numbers on the outside of envelopes, or on your checks.
7. Monitor all your bank statements from every credit card every month. Check to see if there is anything that you do not recognize and call the credit grantor to verify that it is truly yours. Consider canceling credit cards you haven’t used in six or more months.
8. Since 1994, your Medicare / Social Security Number has appeared on all CMS Medicare Summary Notices mailed to you, making identity theft possible through mail theft. Consider asking CMS and your congressional representatives to see if it that this number is no longer printed on these notices.

¡Happy Birthday!
Jan Faulkner
Jim Joslin
May 1
Peter Hart
Joan Norry
Don Silva
May 2
Edward Majul
May 6
Shirley Dennett
Angela Hunkler
May 9
Bill Baillie
Mickey Barker
May 13
Ed Tanovitz
May 16
Tita Caldwell
Berni Miller-Ibarra
May 20
Joe Horsington
Norma Metz
Myra Williams
May 21
Carol Martin
May 23
Lynn Rayburn
May 26
Shirley Sarton
May 28
Joan Emerson
May 29
Frances Franco
May 30
¡Feliz Cumpleaños!
Saturday • 12 Noon • Potluck Meeting  
• Program at 1 P.M. • May 10 •

Your name begins with the letters
A through E — Bring a Dessert/Fruit
F through R — Bring a Main Dish
S through Z — Bring a Salad

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

Presentation of the Month:
Celi Adams, of the Center for Caregiver Training (San Francisco)

People feel overwhelmed when they suddenly take on the unexpected role of caregiver and amateur nurse. How do I cope with symptoms and side effects? How do I build a personal support team? How do I deal with doctors and nurses?

The Center for Caregiver Training emerged in 1988 when some friends were attempting to help a patient dealing with AIDS. The CCT has provided FREE classes to over 3,200 lay people. Celi Adams has been awarded the Rosalynn Carter Caregiver Award from the former first lady.

Notable Quote

"Young gay people are often told, 'You’re going to grow old and alone.' I was terrified that I was going to grow old alone. We need to change both the perception and the reality. Some 20% of gay and lesbian elderly don’t have people to help them get their medications and do things for them, as opposed to 5% of heterosexuals, because of familial ties and the way things are. I just know that this isn’t a culture I want to grow old in as it currently exists. Terms like ‘troll’ and ‘old queen’ and ‘lech’ – this is how we refer to our elderly. Unlike Eastern and Native American cultures, who revere their elderly, we’re completely turning our heads away from an untapped resource, which is the wisdom and experience of our elderly.”

—Robert Gant, openly gay actor who plays Ben in the hit LGBT cable television series Queer as Folk, as quoted in The Advocate, April 15, 2003.

SHORT NOTE by Sidney Proust

Lucky ladies, Ina Mae Murri and Stella Lopez-Armijo, have won a Two-for-One drawing! And that means that they are soon setting out on a cruise to Alaska with Olivia’s Cruises. It’s a $3,000 windfall and they are looking forward to “Early Women’s Music” performed by Meg Christian, who comes out of retirement for this wonderful cruise.

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

New Rap Group
Lighthouse Community Center
2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 5 – 7 p.m.
Support Group for Seniors
(gay/lesbian)
Come join this Seniors’ Rap Group. Discuss what’s on your mind. Facilitated by Fred Baneulos and Frank Howell.
510.881.8167 or e-mail Fred at Latinofred@aol.com

This space could be yours for an announcement important to our community. Space is also available for paid advertisements; rates are $1 per line on a three-column page, $10 for a business card-size advertisement.
Remember, one of your benefits as a subscriber, is a discount of 50%.

Senior Men’s Afternoon
1:30 – 3:30 P.M.
2nd and 4th Thursdays
May 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
May 9 and 23: 1:15 – 3 P.M.
Meets at Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley

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.
May 11

Think Julie Andrews . . . and don’t feel so bad!

Maalox and nose drops and needles for knitting.
Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings,
Bundles of magazines tied up in string,
These are a few of my favorite things.

Cadillacs and cataracts and hearing aids and glasses,
Polident and Fixodent and false teeth in glasses,
Pacemakers, golf carts and porches with swings,
These are a few of my favorite things.

Hot tea and crumpets, and corn pads for bunions,
No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions,
Bathrobes and heat pads and hot meals they bring,
These are a few of my favorite things.

Back pains, confused brains, and no fear of sinnin,
Thin bones and fractures and hair that is thinin,
And we won’t mention our short shrunken frames,
When we remember our favorite things.

When the pipes leak,
When the bones creak,
When the knees go bad,
I simply remember my favorite things,
And then I don’t feel so bad.

(passed on and shared by Robert Carr)

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