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Lavender Seniors of the East Bay
a Program of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

Celebrating 30 years of service and positive change

January 2024 - Volume 30 Issue 1

Lavender Notes



Happy New Year! What an amazing year 2023 has been for this program. While nothing is ever easy about change, I want to personally thank our program participants and those of you in the community who have supported the program over the year and through the transition. I would like to also re-introduce myself to those program participants who I have not had the chance to meet yet. I hope to meet you soon virtually or in person at one of our events.

Lavender Notes has and continues to exist through the tireless efforts of volunteers in the community who have been dedicated to ensuring communication for our "gay and gray" does not get forgotten about. We have made that promise to keep it going and can ensure Lavender Notes will continue as a part of this program. Although there will be a formal recognition and celebrations soon to be announced, I would like to thank Beckie Underwood, John David Dupree, Jennifer Pardini,

Jamie McGrath, Barbara Jue, Carmen Choing, Gwen Booze, Karen Anderson and all of the other volunteers for their work and contributions to Lavender Notes over the last year (and beyond) on behalf of Lavender Seniors, Elder Services and The Oakland LGBTQ Center.

As we move onward into 2024 there are many exciting things on the horizon for Lavender Seniors and The Elder Services Program at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center. You will see the direct services component of our program start to roll out soon. Program participants can meet with our new, dedicated Elder Services Coordinator for an intake and get connected to a host of resources.

Local Artist Derrick Bell has partnered with The Oakland LGBTQ Center to offer the "Heart to Art" program for LGBTQ+ Seniors. Find out more about Derrick and the awesome work he is bringing to our elder community in this month's issue of Lavender Notes.

There will be an announcement later this month about the long-awaited return of The Friendly Visitor Program. I understand there have been a lot of questions and uncertainty around this group as well as the former Therapist led caring support group, but we have been working extensively behind the scenes to reformat and restructure both of these groups to the highest standards. We look forward to bringing these services back.

2024 is also Lavender Senior's Pearl (30th) Anniversary! Stay tuned for a big announcement in the coming months...

A huge thank you to The Oakland Gay Men's Chorus and our sponsors Ghirardelli, Comcast, LAM Research and Exelixis for helping us make the Holiday season that much more special for our Seniors and Elders. Check out some of the joy from our Holiday Extravaganza below!

Please click [here](#) if you would like to sponsor and support our program in the future.

In gratitude and love,

Jessie R. Spivey

Director of Elder Services, Oakland LGBTQ Community Center







SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT



Our team is growing!

Meet our new Elder Services Coordinator, Julian Leus!

Julian (they/them), is a proud Bay Area native, born in Hayward, California and raised by hardworking Filipinx immigrant parents, grandparents, and aunts. As a queer non-binary person and one of the first in their family to grow up in the United States, Julian naturally found a passion for advancing the social justice, visibility, and welfare of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC folx.

After obtaining their B.A. in History from the University of California, Davis, Julian worked in a variety of human/social services positions throughout the Bay Area, ranging from educational support services, local elections, child welfare, family caregiver support, and now as a social services professional for the LGBTQ+ and senior community. Julian is delighted to work at the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center to help LGBTQ+ seniors get connected with vital services and support, such as food assistance, housing and relocation, mental health support, sexual health services, and more.

In their free time, Julian enjoys cooking recipes from different cuisines, traveling, attending concerts and music festivals, collecting crystals, reading Tarot, visiting the ocean, spending time with friends and family, and cuddling with their Beagle, Rover.

STORIES OF OUR LIVES



Tribute to a fellow traveler by John David Dupree

Former Lavender Seniors board member, Michael J. "Mike" Mora, passed away on 7th December, just 12 days before he would've turned

86. He had dealt successfully for 40+ years with a diabetes diagnosis but had recently suffered from complications.

Mike was born in Albuquerque, the oldest of four. His two sisters, Laurie and Lupie, survive him. His brother, Gilbert, the youngest of the four, died about ten years ago. The family was active in the Catholic Church, including stints for Mike as an altar boy in the local parish.

Mike attended Ohlone College in Fremont and St. Mary's College in Moraga. While he was working at Capwell's in El Cerrito, a co-worker named Jean took a shine to him, asked him out for lunch and the rest is history. They were married for over 30 years until her death in 1999. Their marriage produced one son, Mike Jr., who survives his parents at age 60.



Mike worked for 30+ years for Bank of America. One of Mike Jr's fondest memories came after his Dad won a bank trivia contest in 1986 and the family was able to have an all-expenses-paid week in Switzerland.

"As a result of winning that contest, the three of us took the one holiday I can remember that didn't involve visiting family in New Mexico," Mike Jr. recalls. "We stayed in Zermatt with a spectacular view of the Matterhorn, then drove all over the country exploring cities like Geneva and areas famous for skiing and other athletic and cultural activities. It was such an exciting adventure!"

After a year or so mourning the loss of his wife, Mike told friends it was time for him to deal with something he'd known about himself since childhood. He became involved with Lavender Seniors in the early 2000s, became a board member and joined a group called "We're Still Here" in 2008. He last attended the December 2022 holiday dinner party and had been planning to attend that holiday party again this year on 7th December. Unfortunately, his son, Mike Jr., found him at home in a diabetic coma a few days earlier, from which he did not regain consciousness. He died the same day as the group's holiday party.



Meanwhile, Mike Jr. had come out to his mother as gay in the mid-1990s, a few years before she died. In fact, she met and spent time with one of the men he was dating at the time. When he came out to his Dad a few years later, however, he was somewhat surprised by the response he got.

"Dad – who didn't come out to me until several years after Mom died – initially said things like I had 'broken his soul'," Mike Jr. recalls. "I think he may have been feeling some guilt about influencing me unconsciously in some way, perhaps afraid I would become an unhappy stereotypical gay man, sleeping around with one-night stands and no commitments. But my husband and I have been together for 24 years and officially married for 8 years. I know how happy he was for us."

For many years after Mike Sr. came out to Mike Jr. and his husband, the three spent a lot of time together, including a standing Sunday night dinner date – usually with Mike Sr. cooking for and hosting the trio.

"That weekly gathering went on for years," Mike Jr. recounts. "We became closer and closer. Only in the last few years, his cooking and entertaining energy had begun to wane, so we had lots of breakfasts out together instead. It was so good to see Dad accepting himself and sharing openly about his life and relationships these last two decades."

"We're Still Here" continues to meet on Zoom each month since Covid and in-person for the holiday celebration each December since 2021.

"For the 12 years before Covid, the closing group circle hug that became our monthly tradition – following 'one-two-three' – and 'we're still here! – was always something we looked forward to," says Jumaane

Makalani, a long-term member of the group. "That tradition and our numbers have both dwindled considerably since then. We lost two of the co-founders, Morris and Marlene, in 2022 – and now losing Mike in 2023. We're seeing the life-cycle in action here and will miss Mike a great deal. Like any family or group of close friends, we have to learn how to move on, keep their memories alive and celebrate the time we've had together."

If you or someone that you know are interested in being featured in Stories of Our Lives, please email: info@lavenderseniors.org



Derrick Bell launches Heart to Art Project for LGBTQ+ Seniors

Discover the captivating work of Derrick Bell, an accomplished artist hailing from Cincinnati, Ohio, and now based in Oakland. Bell's art is a powerful force that breaks through barriers of ethnicity, nationality, and generations, evoking deep emotions and a sense of spirituality, history, and strength.

Driven by his personal journey and his love for music, nature, and spirituality, Bell's mission is to make a lasting impact on the world through his creative expression. His vibrant and impactful artwork aims to stir emotions and inspire viewers. Bell's unique style incorporates vivid colors, rhythmic patterns, and mesmerizing storytelling. He draws inspiration from various artistic movements such as Realism, Cubism, Abstract Expressionism, and Afrocentric iconography. By skillfully combining geometry, harmonious colors, and design motifs, he creates a distinctive and resonating statement that captivates his audience.



Bell's ultimate goal is to encourage viewers to question their perspectives on racism, human trafficking, the wealth gap, and more. Like a dancer responding to the rhythm of the music, he wants his art to serve as the key that unlocks a fuller, more humane understanding of oneself. Bell believes his work can give people a voice, instill hope, and provide a means of finding meaning in a chaotic world.

The Heart to Art Project is an art healing and empowerment offering for seniors and elders who are part of the LGBTQ+ community. This project is designed to take you on a transformative journey where your creativity meets a healing process. You will create art that is centered around expressive identity, self-healing, social justice, and community empowerment. Throughout this journey, you will hear from people who will speak on their own life experience and transformation. The end goal is for you to walk away feeling seen, celebrated and continue your journey of healing and affirmation.



The Heart to Art Project launches Tuesday 1/30. This group will meet in-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Center. Space is limited. For sign up and more info, please email: info@lavenderseniors.org



January Activities



LAVENDER
SENIORS
of the East Bay

T H I R D
F R I D A Y


LUNCH BUNCH


O A K L A N D


Third Friday
Lunch Bunch


**RSVP
REQUIRED**


Every **Third Friday @ 12:30pm**
North Oakland Senior Center
5714 MLK Way



 **Oakland**
LGBTQ COMMUNITY CENTER

 **LAVENDER
SENIORS**
of the East Bay

 **AGING
& ADULT
SERVICES**
CITY OF OAKLAND

 **Elder Services**
A Program of The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

For more info please call **510-882-2286** or email: info@lavenderseniors.org

RSVP

Come out with Lavender Seniors on January 19th to kick off the 2024 season of Third Friday Lunch Bunch in partnership with The North Oakland Senior Center and The City of Oakland. Meet our new Elder

Services Coordinator and learn about the upcoming and exciting things happening with the program in the new year!

This is a FREE event, however, RSVP is required to attend. Please use the button above to register and submit your RSVP. Lunch will be provided for all registered guests. We cannot guarantee that we can accommodate guest who do not RSVP. The deadline to RSVP is 1/16.
Thank you for understanding!

For more info please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org



December's Third Friday Lunch Bunch Holiday Extravaganza featured a performance from The Oakland Gay Men's Chorus

STAGEBRIDGE PRESENTS

THE LARAMIE PROJECT

BY MOISÉS KAUFMAN

and the Members of Tectonic Theater Project

DIRECTED BY ELY SONNY ORQUIZA



JANUARY 19TH, AT 7PM

JANUARY 20-21ST, AT 2PM

AT THE HILLSIDE CLUB

2286 CEDAR ST. BERKELEY, CA 94709

Stagebridge is proud to announce the launch of our all student-led production of **THE LARAMIE PROJECT**. Born out of Ely Sonny Orquiza's Spring Play Production class, the work not only commemorates the 25th Anniversary of the THE LARAMIE PROJECT, but the first time students have taken the reins to raise the funds, select the play and venue, and manage the production process from top to bottom. It's truly an extraordinary effort!

Moisés Kaufman is a Tony and Emmy nominated director and playwright. His play 33 VARIATIONS, starring Jane Fonda, was nominated for five Tony awards (including one for Ms. Fonda). Previous to that, Mr. Kaufman directed the Pulitzer and Tony award-winning play I AM MY OWN WIFE, earning him an Obie award for his direction as well as Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, and Lucille Lortel nominations. His plays GROSS INDECENCY: THE THREE TRIALS OF OSCAR WILDE and THE LARAMIE PROJECT have been among the most performed plays in America over the last decade. Mr. Kaufman also directed the film adaptation of THE LARAMIE PROJECT for HBO, which was the opening night selection at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival and won the National

Board of Review Award, the Humanitas Prize, and a Special Mention for Best First Film at the Berlin Film Festival. The film also earned Mr. Kaufman two Emmy Award nominations for Best Director and Best Writer. He is the Artistic Director of Tectonic Theater Project and a Guggenheim Fellow in Playwriting. Other credits include BENGAL TIGER AT THE BAGHDAD ZOO (Mark Taper Forum); MACBETH with Liev Schreiber (Public Theater); THIS IS HOW IT GOES (Donmar Warehouse); ONE ARM by Tennessee Williams (Steppenwolf Theater Company); MASTER CLASS with Rita Moreno (Berkeley Repertory Theater); and LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN (Williamstown Theater Festival).

For more info please visit: <https://www.stagebridge.org/>



present



A GALA CELEBRATING
QUEER
PERFORMANCE ART &
CINEMA

IG: OaklandLGBTQCenter
IG: FishnetsAndFilm



Amoura Tease



Host Robby Kendall
Award-Winning Filmmaker



La Chucha

SUNDAY
JAN 21
12:30p



Feature Film Trailer



NOBODY'S GIRL



Film Screening



Film Screening

SCAN for SHOW INFO



TICKETS:

SPONSORED, IN PART, BY








AT: 
474 24th Street
Oakland

**Fishnets and Film and The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center present
Drag Me to the Cinema**

A gala celebrating Queer performance art and cinema.
Sunday January 21st at The New Parkway Theater.

For more info please scan the QR code or visit:
<https://sweetnothingproductions.com/>

Tickets!



RAINBOW WOMEN'S CHORUS PRESENTS

A Million Dreams

Songs of Justice, Hope and Community

★ ★

2024

JANUARY 27, 7:30 PM
JANUARY 28, 3:00 PM

BUY TICKETS AT [RAINBOWWOMEN.ORG](https://rainbowwomen.org)
OR AT THE DOOR



LIVESTREAM OPTION
AVAILABLE FOR
JAN 28, 3 PM (PST)



CAMPBELL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
400 W. CAMPBELL AVE. CAMPBELL

Rainbow Women's Chorus Presents A Million Dreams

Songs of Justice, Hope and Community
January 27, 7:30 PM & January 28, 3:00 PM

Tickets (in person):

\$20 in advance, \$25 at the door
(online sales close Thursday, January 25)

Tickets (Livestream - Sunday only):

\$25 per household (online sales available until the concert)
Campbell United Church of Christ, 400 W Campbell Ave., Campbell, CA
<https://www.rainbowwomen.org/tickets>

Tickets



The Heart to Art Project

Bi-weekly on Tuesdays starting January 30th 4:30pm - 6:30pm

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Center

A new art program for LGBTQ+ seniors facilitated by local Artist Derrick Bell. Space is limited! Pre-registration is required to attend this offering. For more info please email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Lavender Seniors Third Friday Lunch Bunch

January 19th 12:30pm - 2:30pm (Third Friday)

In-person at The North Oakland Senior Center

A monthly luncheon for LGBTQ+ Seniors/Elders. A guest speaker or informative presentation is followed by a Lunch provided for registered guests. FREE but RSVP is required to attend. For more info please email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Social Seniors

Social Seniors will return in February 2024

In-person at The Watermark Emeryville

A monthly social group for LGBTQ+ Seniors/Elders. A themed luncheon that usually includes music and/or performances. FREE but RSVP is required to attend. Lunch is provided for registered guests. For more info please email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Older & Out Social

1st Thursdays 1:00pm - 3:00pm

In-person at The North Berkeley Senior Center

SPONSORED BY: Pacific Center for Human Growth with support from N. Berkeley Senior Center. Questions, Ask Keith, 510-685-7691 or email: kcarroll@lmi.net.

Outstanding Seniors

1st & 3rd Tuesdays 12:30pm - 1:30pm via Zoom

A confidential space for LGBTQ+ seniors (50+) to safely share thoughts, feelings, resources, information & to support one another. For more info, please email: OutStandingSeniors2@gmail.com.

Living OUT Livermore

1st Wednesdays 4:00pm - 5:00pm via Zoom

A safe and confidential peer support group for LGBTQ seniors 50+ to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information and to support one another. This is a free drop-in group facilitated by trained peers. For more info + link to join email: livingoutlivermore@pacificcenter.org.

Rainbow Seniors

2nd & 4th Tuesdays 12:30pm - 2:00pm

In-person at The San Leandro Senior Center

Rainbow Seniors LGBTQ Peer Support Group is a safe & confidential space for LGBTQ seniors (50+) to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information & to support one another. It is a peer support group, facilitated by trained peers. For more info and to join email: rainbowseniors@pacificcenter.org.

Tri-Valley Rainbows

3rd Thursdays 5:30pm-7:30pm via Zoom

Tri-Valley Rainbows is a safe & confidential peer support group for LGBTQIA+ older adults age 50+ to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information & to support one another. It is a drop-in peer group, facilitated by trained peers. For more info + link to join email: trivalleyrainbows@pacificcenter.org.



Resource Hub



Oakland

LGBTQ COMMUNITY CENTER



The Center's Food Pantry Is Open

Monday thru Friday, 1pm-4pm

Please call 510-882-2286 for more information.

Let's Get Excited About...

SEXUAL HEALTH

The **Glenn Burke Clinic** offers our community high-quality, full-service, STI & HIV prevention and treatment services, to help you to stay sexually healthy all year long.



**GLENN
BURKE**
WELLNESS CLINIC



Schedule an appointment by
using the QR Code or call
510-781-2639

The Glenn Burke Wellness Clinic is a project of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

Community Phone Calls

This award-winning program offers activities, education, support groups, and friendly conversation over the phone or online.

View the Current catalog of community phone calls [here](#). Check the website for more information. To participate in these or other Well Connected telephone activities, or to learn more about their programs, call 877-797-7299 or email coviaconnections@covia.org.

Friendly Voices Phone Buddies for Seniors

Our mission is to create a vital human connection for isolated seniors through weekly phone conversations with trained, compassionate volunteers. Sign up [here](#) or call (650) 395-8017
<https://friendlyvoices.org/>

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay, a Program of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

Mailing Address:
490 Lake Park Ave. #10530,
Oakland, CA 94610-8019

Donations:

*Please make all checks payable to "The Oakland LGBTQ Center" and include
"Lavender Seniors" in the memo section*

510-882-2286

info@lavenderseniors.org

<http://www.lavenderseniors.org>

<http://www.oaklandlgbtqcenter.org>

Contact

Donate

Lavender Seniors | Oakland LGBTQ Community Center, 490 Lakepark Ave. #10530, Oakland,
CA 94610

[Unsubscribe jessie@oaklandlgbtqcenter.org](mailto:jessie@oaklandlgbtqcenter.org)

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