



LAVENDER NOTES

Newsletter of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

A Project of the Tides Center

Volume IX, No. 3

March 2004

1395 Bancroft Avenue ▲ San Leandro, CA 94577 ▲ 510-667-9655
 email: info@lavenderseniors.org ▲ www.lavenderseniors.org

Calendar of Events

▲ **March 13, Noon-2 p.m.:**
 Lavender Seniors monthly potluck. StageBridge: storytelling at its best.

▲ **March 28, 2004**
 Pat Bond Old Dyke Awards. For more information, visit www.patbondawards.com or call 415-392-6267, ext. 321

▲ **April 17, 10:30 a.m.**
 Senior LGBT Community Forum, sponsored by the Lesbian and Gay Aging Network of the American Society on Aging. Free. Hilton Hotel, San Francisco. See back page for more information.

(Note: Monthly potlucks are held at 1395 Bancroft Avenue, San Leandro.)

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Historic Same-Sex Marriages in San Francisco!

On February 12, San Francisco became the first American city to grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples after Mayor Gavin Newsom ordered city officials to find a way to do so. City officials and others volunteered their time over the Presidents' Day weekend so that as many couples as possible could marry before any legal challenge could stop the proceedings.

As of February 29, about 3,600 couples have gotten marriage licenses. In a fitting tribute to their life-long work and their partnership of more than 50 years, long-time LGBT rights advocates Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon

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We Got Married!

by Marvin Burrows

On February 15, 2004, at about 2 p.m., Bill and I were married in San Francisco City Hall. Mark Leno officiated our ceremony. (Mark Leno is an ex-San Francisco Supervisor and current California State Assembly person.)

It was an awesome experience for us—even overwhelming at times. After our 50

years together as partners, it was very emotional. We were interviewed by several radio and television stations but not sure if we made the news or not.

Even if the marriage is declared invalid or unlawful, it was great to go through about 6½ hours before we were married. And wonderful to be able to place a burr in

(continued on page 3)

The programs of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay are made possible by individual and corporate donors as well as Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, Alameda County Leather Corps., The California Endowment, City of Oakland, Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, The Horizons Foundation, The True North Foundation, Royal Grand Ducal Council of Alameda County, and The San Francisco Foundation. We gratefully acknowledge the support of all "Friends of Lavender Seniors."

Lavender Notes

is the newsletter of
Lavender Seniors of the East Bay



Mission Statement

The mission of Lavender Seniors of the East Bay is to improve the quality of life of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender seniors (age 55 and older) residing in Alameda and western 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, Dotty Fowler, & Natalie Zarchin, members at-large

Next Advisory Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 9, 7 p.m., El Greco, 25010 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward. Interested persons are welcome.

Staff

Jeff Vessels, MSSW, Director
Peggy Moore, Outreach Specialist
Nancy Fugett, Administrator

Newsletter Editor

Charles A. Aiken

Lavender Seniors welcomes all persons age 55 and older, their partners, and guests. Cost of production & mail makes necessary a request of \$15 minimum annual donation to receive the newsletter. Visitors & others may receive the newsletter for three months without charge. No one is turned away for lack of funds. For gifts, make checks payable to *Tides Center / Lavender Seniors*. Signed articles represent opinions of the authors & not necessarily those of Lavender Seniors. Inclusion of a name in this newsletter does not necessarily indicate a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

LGBT Seniors of Color

Are you a member of Oakland's LGBT African American, Latino, Native American, Asian, or Pacific Islander communities?

We want to hear your ideas for improving health & human services in Oakland. (Non-seniors can participate, too.)

Through a project funded by the City of Oakland, Lavender Seniors collects information to make recommendations to city officials to improve services for our community. Share your ideas. Help with the Project. Call Peggy Moore, Outreach Specialist at Lavender Seniors, 510-667-9655. ▲

What We Do ...

Founded in 1994, Lavender Seniors of the East Bay provides the following:

- ▲ The Oakland Outreach Project, to improve access to health and human services to LGBT seniors in the African-American, Latino, Native American, Asian, and Pacific Islander communities.
 - ▲ Friendly Visitors Program, to match volunteers with isolated and/or frail LGBT seniors for social support, light household and shopping assistance, and telephone assurance.
 - ▲ Speakers Panel Program, to educate service providers and urge them to change policies and practices to make services more accessible to LGBT seniors.
 - ▲ Potlucks on the second Saturday of each month, to provide a safe and welcoming social environment, entertainment and information from invited speakers.
 - ▲ Monthly discussion groups, co-sponsored and hosted by the Pacific Center (see back page for schedule).
 - ▲ Monthly newsletter, *Lavender Notes*.
 - ▲ A website at www.lavenderseniors.org.
- To get involved as a participant or volunteer, contact us at (510) 667-9655 or info@lavenderseniors.org. ▲

(Married...continued from page 1)

the pants of those against our attaining equal rights in California and the United States as well.

It has been said that Mayor Newsom is committing civil disobedience, and that our certificates are not worth the paper they are written on. Just the fact that it was offered and that 1,600 [now more than 3,600-editor's note] have been given marriage certificates the last four days is testament that some in the LGBT community want to have our relationships recognized.

Hugs to All!

Marvin and Bill (Spouses for Life)

Thanks, Ginny and Mario!

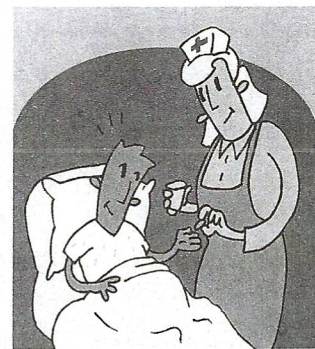
Lavender Seniors thanks Ginny Garrett of Alameda County Adult Protective Services for her recent training of our Friendly Visitor Program volunteers. Ginny helped us more fully understand how to recognize signs of elder abuse and neglect and what to do about it, and how these issues impact LGBT people. Ginny also will be a speaker at an upcoming Lavender Seniors potluck.

We also thank Mario Kashou of the San Francisco law firm Wang & Kashou, LLP, for his February potluck presentation on California's new domestic partnership law, AB205. Mario provided a very useful overview & answered lots of good questions. ▲

Gerson Recuperating

We are pleased to share news that Gerson, Lavender Seniors founder and long-time potluck attendee, is on the mend after major back surgery.

Gerson is now at Kaiser Permanente's rehab facility at 1440 168th Avenue in San Leandro. He would



love to hear from you!

Lavender Seniors Forms "Lavender Juniors" Group

In response to requests from non-seniors who want to work in support of LGBT elders, Lavender Seniors has started a new group tentatively called "Lavender Juniors."

Many LGBT non-seniors have approached Lavender Seniors about wanting to participate in the organization, to support LGBT elders and to help ensure that the organization is strong for when future generations will need our services.

In coordination with our Advisory Board and staff, "Lavender Juniors" group members will choose one major educational and/or fundraising project to work on each year to complement Lavender Seniors' other programs.

To participate, contact Jeff Vesels, Director of Lavender Seniors. ▲

UPTOWN
BODY & FENDER

Giovanna Tanzillo

TEL: (510) 251-8009

FAX: (510) 251-0605

401 TWENTY-SIXTH STREET

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94609

UPTOWN@UPTOWNBODY.COM

(Same-Sex...continued from page 1)

were the first to be married. Photos of their wedding graced the front pages of many American and international newspapers.

Among others married were Lavender Seniors' very own Marvin Burrows and Bill Swenor, partners for nearly 50 years. Marvin and Bill appeared on the front page of the *Oakland Tribune*, in national TV news broadcasts, and on several radio shows.

If you have gotten married and would like to send a picture and/or article for *Lavender Notes*, please send them to Jeff Vessels. We would love to hear your story! ▲

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| March 4 Charles Betcher Steven Maluka Kelly Van Meter | March 16 Bob Davis | March 25 Glenn P. Lee, Jr. |
| March 5 Patricia Sarant | March 19 Joe Vanderkooy | March 26 Roberta (Bert) M. Hutchison |
| March 6 Brendalynn Goodall | March 20 Arlene De La Mora | March 27 Doreen Brand Robert Carr Rob McCallum |
| March 7 Rita Kresha | March 21 Stella Lopez-Armijo | March 28 Ken Bradley |
| March 9 Laurence Stickney | March 22 Pnina Tobin | March 29 James H. Thomas |
| March 11 Jerry Holmes | March 23 Daryl Halverson Carrie Oyama Thomas Packard | |
| March 12 Barbara Gould | March 24 Dee Nagy | |

Become a "Friend of Lavender Seniors" Today!

Your support is crucial to Lavender Seniors' continuing role as a vital resource to our community.

Become a "Friend of Lavender Seniors." Please take a moment and send your gift today. Your annual giving entitles you to a subscription to our monthly newsletter, *Lavender Notes*.

Here's my gift of: \$15 \$25* \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other: \$ _____

(* Please give this amount or more if possible.)

- Enclosed is a check made payable to Tides Center/Lavender Seniors
 Please charge my (circle one): AMEX Mastercard VISA

Card #: _____ Expires: ____/____ Signature: _____

Name: _____

Home Telephone: (____) _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____ @ _____

- Please contact me about including Lavender Seniors in my will.
 Please contact me about participating in Lavender Seniors' programs and/or volunteering.
 Please do **not** list me in Lavender Seniors publications as a "Friend of Lavender Seniors."

Please mail to Lavender Seniors of the East Bay, 1395 Bancroft Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94577

Thank you!

Lavender Seniors never lends, sells, or gives away its mailing list.

Children's Theater Group Will Reveal Story Telling Skills

At the March 13 potluck of Lavender Seniors, Cathryn Wellener, an internationally known weaver of spellbinding tales, will talk about the work of StageBridge, the well known Oakland organization that specializes in children's theater. Let your imaginations go and enjoy this enchanting afternoon of drama and fun. ▲

March Book Review

The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government

by David K. Johnson

University of Chicago Press

\$30

reviewed by Frank Howell

Historians of the 1950s lavished much attention on the reign of terror unleashed by Sen. Joseph McCarthy. Much of the spotlight shone on victims of the anti-communism crusade. Thousands of gays and lesbians were early lambs led to the slander mills, but little attention is paid to them today in the media focus on current events. In fact, many politicians and citizens are more obsessed with the lavender aspect than the red menace.

David Johnson, a history professor at the University of South Florida, plowed through a mountain of research and unearthed secret congressional testimony unseen for years.

In 1951, the *New York Post* wisely observed, "McCarthy had an inspiration: sex was the answer to all his problems. Not plain, old fashioned sex, of course, but homosexuality. If the facts about communists were missing, why not substitute fairy tales?"

After the initial years of

probing passed, the emphasis shifted to the Russian Bear. A hornets nest of half-baked theories were tossed about: the foreign service of the State Department was said to be especially attractive to gays, alcoholism was linked to security risks, and those attracted to the same sex were supposed to be incapable of keeping any kind of secret.

Confidential Magazine confided that Washington, DC was the world capital of fairyland.

The Republican Party used McCarthyism to embarrass the Truman Administration. Many recalled the Sumner Wells scandal of 1943. Wells, an indiscreet and highly placed State Department official, threw a wild sex orgy and was promptly fired.

A handful of responsible journalists attempted to lend a sane prospective (Max Lerner, and Joseph and Stewart Alsop). Herb Block, noted cartoonist, created the term "McCarthyism."

Some psychiatric experts also insisted the pink problem was overdone, but the senators grew impatient. Psychiatrists failed to deliver what the public wanted to hear. They wanted to know how to detect and cure homosexuality. ▲

Monthly Potluck

Saturday, March 13

Meal at Noon ▲ Program at 1 p.m.

If your name begins with the letter

H through M _____ bring a Main Dish

N through Z _____ bring a Salad

A through G _____ bring Dessert/Fruit

Shuttle from San Leandro BART station is available. Call Lavender Seniors one day ahead to arrange pickup: 510-667-9655

The shadow cast by the senator from Wisconsin lingered into the 1960s and 1970s. In 1957 the Crittenden Report discredited the so called evidence of the Hoey Committee, but the Pentagon buried the report. It was given new life in 1976.

This peculiar virus of fear spread into all governmental agencies and even the United Nations.

Allen Drury, author of *Advise and Consent*, based a gay scandal in the novel and film on a politician he actually knew in Washington. Johnson paints a picture of young, idealistic men and women who were drawn to the Washington of the New Deal Era. A whole subculture emerged during this time. Conservative Republicans resented the new climate and sought political revenge.

It wasn't until 1974 that the United States Civil Service Commission reversed its position on the hiring of gays.

In this age of the abuses of the Patriot Act, it is fitting that we revisit this terrible time and never forget. It could always happen again. As the ACLU constantly reminds us, "Eternal Vigilance is the price of liberty." ▲

When aging-related needs and services are being discussed, who will say the words lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender?

Who will ensure that a lesbian couple can stay together when they move to an assisted living facility?

Who will provide support for an isolated gay elder who has lost a life partner?

Who will ensure that respectful services are available to a bisexual elder in need of care?

Who will advocate for the rights of a transgender elder in a skilled nursing facility?

Who will voice the concerns of LGBT older adults who cannot advocate for themselves due to fear of discrimination and rejection?

The American Society on Aging
and the
Lesbian and Gay Aging Issues Network
Invite You to a

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Elder Forum

Saturday, April 17, 2004

10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Parc 55 Hotel
55 Cyril Magnin St.

San Francisco

Cost: Free ■ Advance Registration Required

A Daylong Opportunity for...

Information-Sharing ■ Community-Building ■ Discussion

Bringing together...

**LGBT Elders ■ Social Services, Health and Housing
Professionals ■ Interested Members of the Community**

Join us for this free special program in conjunction with the 2004 Joint Conference of the American Society on Aging and the National Council on the Aging. Learn about LGBT milestones in the field of aging; innovations in policy, programs and services; and ways we all can work together for a caring future for LGBT elders.

Lesbian & Gay Aging Issues Network

C E L E B R A T I N G A D E C A D E O F S E R V I C E ■ 1 9 9 4 - 2 0 0 4

REGISTRATION FOR THE LGBT ELDER FORUM

The LGBT Elder Forum workshop is presented as part of the Joint Conference of the American Society on Aging and the National Council on the Aging in San Francisco, April 14-17, 2004.

The LGBT Elder Forum is free of charge, but the number of places available is limited and advance registration is required. Please complete the form below and return it no later than March 29 to Rodney Jackson, American Society on Aging, 833 Market St., Suite 511, San Francisco, CA 94103-1824; fax: (415) 974-0300.

The planning committee is working to obtain funding for free box lunches for those who attend the LGBT Elder Forum. If we succeed, we will inform all those who have registered. We also are working to arrange transportation for Bay Area elders.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For information on the LGBT Elder Forum, contact the LGBT elder program in your area or visit www.asaging.org/lgain.

East Bay

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

Phone: (510) 667-9655 • E-mail: info@lavenderseniors.org

North Bay

Spectrum Center for LGBT Concerns

Contact: Nancy Flaxman • Phone: (415) 457-1115, ext. 213

E-mail: nflaxman@spectrummarin.org

San Francisco

New Leaf Outreach to Elders

Contact: Bill Kirkpatrick • Phone: (415) 255-2937, ext 313

E-mail: bkirkpatrick@newleafservices.org

ASA-NCOA JOINT CONFERENCE

Only the LGBT Elder Forum is free of charge. If you wish to attend any other sessions at the ASA-NCOA Joint Conference, conference registration and fees are required. For information on the ASA-NCOA Joint Conference, visit www.agingconference.org or call (415) 974-9643.

MEMBERSHIP

If you are interested in learning about membership in the American Society on Aging and the Lesbian and Gay Aging Issues Network, visit www.asaging.org/lgain or call (415) 974-9641.



LGBT ELDER FORUM REGISTRATION

Yes, I want to attend the LGBT Elder Forum in San Francisco on April 17!

Return this form no later than March 29 to Rodney Jackson, American Society on Aging, 833 Market St., Suite 511, San Francisco, CA 94103-1824; fax: (415) 974-0300.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Daytime Phone _____

E-mail Address _____

The contact information above is for (check one): Home Office

I have a disability which may require accommodations for me to fully participate. Please contact me.

Transportation Needs (check one)

I need transportation. I can provide transportation.

The committee is working to develop transportation options. You will be contacted if we can arrange transportation.

Organizational Affiliation. If you are affiliated with an organization, please fill out the following section.

No affiliation is required for attendance; these details are requested for information purposes only.

Title _____

Organization _____

