

LavenderNotes

A Project of the Tides Center

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Homosexual's Importance in Society by Pat Skillen, President, PFLAG, Fremont/East Bay

Excerpts from Fremont Argus, June 30, 2005

We at PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) hope you have noticed our advertisements appearing in Fremont, Union City and south Hayward BART stations. The first ad begins "Are you gay? Well, you're in good company!" then follows with a short list of famous historical gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders

such as Alexander the Great, Eleanor Roosevelt and Langston Hughes. A second ad asks, "Are you straight? Well, not everyone is? Still everyone deserves your love." Its list includes neighbors, co-workers, doctors, ministers, et al. Why do we need to remind everyone homosexuals always have been and remain an important part of our society?

(Continued on page 4)

August 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Not in Fremont	9	10	11 Senior Men's Afternoon	12	13 Pride Picnic Cull Canyon
14 Fellows of the East Bay	15	16	17	18 Lavender Lunch Bunch	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Senior Men's Afternoon	26	27 Steppin' in Pride
28	29	30	31			

Schedule of Events

August 8, 7 PM - 8:30 PM - "Not in Fremont" All who are dedicated to making Fremont safe for ALL people to live, work and go to school are welcome.

August 13, No Lavender Seniors potluck this month. Please attend the Pride Picnic at Cull Canyon Park in Castro Valley, Noon to 5 PM.

August 18, 12:30 - 2:30 PM - Lavender Lunch Bunch, Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue, Oakland. FREE catered food. Co-sponsored by Oakland Department of Human Services. Open to ALL LGBT Seniors. Third Thursday of each month.

August 27, 12 PM - 6 PM - Sistahs Steppin' in Pride March and Festival. Gather at the Pillars of Lake Merritt at 11 AM. March starts at 12 PM.

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay is funded by individual 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, The San Francisco Foundation, Sociological Initiatives Foundation, East Bay Community Foundation & Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. We gratefully acknowledge the support of all Friends of Lavender Seniors.

LavenderNotes

is the official 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) through community outreach, advocacy, and education.

Advisory Board

Frank Howell & Ina Mae Murri, Co-Chairs
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Bobbie Jarvis, Treasurer
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Natalie Zarchin, Members at Large
Rose White, Member at Large
Fred Banuelos, Member at Large

Next Advisory Board Meeting

August 10 at 7PM. Call the office for more information. Interested persons are welcome; public comments take place at 7PM.

Staff

Barbara Faulkner, Director
Mitchell Foudray, Care Coordinator
Nancy Fugett, Administrator

Newsletter Editor

Charles A. Aiken

Webmaster

Bert Hendriksen

Lavender Seniors welcomes all persons age 55 and older, their partners, and guests. Cost of production and 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 the opinion of the authors and do 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.

United Way Donors, Remember Lavender Seniors!

Do you donate to United Way of the Bay Area? You can support Lavender Seniors by designating your pledge or gift for us. No special code is necessary—just write in "Lavender Seniors"!

What We Do...

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

- **The LGBT Seniors of Color Project.** Improves access to health and human services to LGBT seniors in the African-American, Latino, Native American, Asian, and Pacific Islander communities.
- **Friendly Visitors Program.** Matches volunteers with isolated and /or frail LGBT seniors for social support, light household and shopping assistance, and telephone assurance.
- **Speakers Panel Program.** Educates service providers and urge them to change policies and practices to make services more accessible to LGBT seniors.
- **Monthly Potlucks each 2nd Saturday.** Provides a safe and welcoming social environment and information from invited speakers.
- **Lavender Lunch Bunch.** Provides a social gathering with food and drinks, on the third Thursday of each month.
- **Lavender Juniors,** Organizes support from LGBT non-seniors and guides intergenerational programming.
- **Monthly Discussion Groups.** Co-sponsored and hosted by the Pacific Center (see back page for schedule).
- **Monthly newsletter, *Lavender Notes.***
- **Website.** <http://www.lavenderseniors.org>

To get involved as a participant or volunteer, contact us at 510-667-9655 or e-mail info@lavenderseniors.org.

(Continued from page 1)

As Gerald Unks, author of *The Gay Teen* explained, "Within the typical secondary school curriculum, homosexuals do not exist. They are "non-persons" in the finest Stalinist sense. They have fought no battles, held no offices, explored nowhere, written no literature, built nothing, invented nothing and solved no equations. The lesson to the heterosexual student is abundantly clear: Homosexuals do nothing of consequence. To the homosexual student, the message had even greater power: no one who has ever felt as you do has done anything worth mentioning"

The results can be devastating. For one, GLBT people remain the prime target of hatred and violence, as revealed by two recent surveys of harassment in the Fremont Unified School District (and virtually every other such survey nation-wide): and as manifested so horrifically two years ago with the slaying of Gwen Araujo. She paid the price for our silence about sexual/gender minorities and their accomplishments. And so have the four youths accused in her death. You see, we in PFLAG recognize that those alleged assailants are the product of our culture. No matter what their verdict, we're all guilty. Murder, though, is but the tip of the iceberg. According to a 1989 congressional study, which the Reagan administration suppressed, GLBT teens are six times more likely than their peers to abuse drugs and alcohol, and three times more likely to commit suicide. The centers for Disease Control report GLBT youth are six times more likely to contract AIDS. They are a minority facing disproportionate, terrible risks. Respect is the root of the problem and the solution.

The suppression of GLBT history and role models has bred a dangerous self-loathing among homosexuals, and an irrational revulsion among too many others. When everyone recognizes homosexuals are important, respected members of our history and community, then GLBT's will believe in themselves and make healthy choices for their futures: and the rest of society will embrace them just as they are: beautiful manifestations of God's diverse creation.

Fortunately, there is a growing movement in the Tri-City area to achieve this, not only for GLBT students, but also for all minorities. New Haven Unified has a long-standing policy of educating new teachers about GLBT issues.

The city of Newark has undertaken similar trainings, and Newark Unified will pilot comprehensive school programs to prevent bullying and name-calling. An anti-hate forum in Fremont focused on the treatment of our Muslim and Sikh neighbors. Organizations such as **Not in Newark** and **Not in Fremont** work to create safe and welcoming communities.

There is much reason to hope; and our **BART** ads are a celebration of that hope.

PFLAG proudly provides them as a gift to all children: and we extend our appreciation to Kaiser Permanente for its support through the organization's HIV Community Service grant program, which made them possible. We trust the ads enable you to reflect on your own beliefs, and even more importantly, on your own responsibility for building a neighborhood where everyone knows they are safe, welcome and included.

AHCD Update

Each month I look forward to receiving the Lavender Notes and sometimes I even get to the Lunch Bunch, which I greatly enjoy.

Upon reading Vol. 10, Issue 7, page 4, "Power of Attorney for Health Care" readers need to know that any DPAHC executed before 1992 has expired. This document in California has been replaced and is now called "The Advanced Health Care Directive." It includes a Living Will and can be completed with two witnesses or a notary.

Most persons do not need a lawyer to complete the form, but may want to consult a medical professional concerning health care instructions and how the body responds to various procedures.

To get a free copy, simply ask your doctor or hospital (Kaiser has a good one with notations in front and ID wallet card). To order copies of the AHCD kit from the California Medical Association go to www.cmanet.org.

—Pam Spevak

UPTOWN

Body & Fender

Giovanna Tanzillo

Tel: 510-251-8009

Fax: 510-251-0605

401 Twenty-Sixth Street

Oakland, California 94609

Eriksen Chiropractic

Gentle, Effective Care Dr. Trevor Eriksen, B.A., D.C.

- Headaches
- Arthritis
- Back & Neck Pain
- Injury Rehabilitation
- Arm & Leg Pain

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Phone: 510-582-8222
1634 'B' Street, Hayward

Elizabeth Callaway Trust Services

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I can do it all or provide crucial help

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A 7 Week Writing Course for Lesbians!

• Writing from Life Experience •

Aug 23rd – Oct. 4th, 2005, Tuesdays 6:30-9:00
3506 Woodruff at MacArthur in Oakland's Fruitvale

With Elana Dykewomon, award winning author
and editor (see www.dykewomon.org)

\$200-300 sliding scale, some scholarships available.

For info: 510-562-2605, or dykewomon@yahoo.com

Aug. 1st-20th: call 510-383-9858 or taxmomsusan@yahoo.com

Priscilla Camp

Attorney at Law, Mediator

Law Offices of Priscilla Camp

827 Broadway, Ste 200

Oakland, CA 94607

510-465-3885 fax 465-1732 priscilla@pcamplaw.com

Elder Law, Probates, Conservatorships, MediCal counseling,
Wills, Powers of Attorney, Trust Administration,
Guardianships of Minors' Estates



Editor's Note:

Graphics on some ads were not available at press time. This issue is available in full color by e-mail in PDF format or can be downloaded from our website:

<http://www.lavenderseniors.org/newsletter.htm>

Saint Cuthbert's Episcopal Church

7900 Mountain Blvd.

Oakland, CA 94605

**A warm, diverse, inclusive, joyous, loving
alternative family where you are wel-
come!**

Sunday Worship 8 & 10AM

Sunday's @ St. Cuddy's 7PM

Potluck & Bible Study, Wednesdays, 7PM

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**Business, Not Politics:
The Making of the Gay Market**
by Katherine Sender
Columbia University Press

Over the years there have been an avalanche of book and articles about every conceivable aspect of gay and lesbian life. But the economics of lavender living are usually glossed over. But in 2001 lesbian economist M. V. Lee Badgett confronted us with *Money, Myths, and Change: The Economic Lives of Lesbians and Gay Men*. Badgett shattered the myths surrounding the checkbook world. Many gays were not living the high life of expensive restaurants and yearly trips to Europe. Our yearly gross was often below that of the average straight family.

Now Katherine Sender, assistant professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School For Communication, sharpens the focus even further.

She dissects the attitudes of the corporate world as it attempts to woo the shifting values of the pink shopping world. Big business is not the least intrigued by the politics or eroticism of our universe.

It is simply a matter of profit and loss statements. Businessmen are reluctant of running specifically gay ads. The "Ellen Show" rejected ads from Olivia Tours.

Sender tells us that "a culture that separated sex from reproduction and valued the pursuit of leisure interests." Gay culture is being overtaken by the temptations of the marketplace.

Sender has a style that is highly academic and filled with sociological jargon. But one main point emerges: The media tends to focus on gays who are already empowered to come out. The poor and the racial minorities are totally obscured. *Queer Eye For The Straight Guy* is a classic for instance.

The Advocate led the way when David Goodstein transformed the publication from a street rag into a glossy, middle class lifestyle magazine.

A major tipping point exploded when the internet overcame other outlets in the 1990s. Planet Out led the way.

Gay income is now estimated at \$202 billion per year.

Some lavender folks react to prejudice by becoming a "professional homosexual," working on the staff of alternate publications, non-profit groups, or working as a self employed entrepreneur.

It is largely a man's world. Women dominate only in the social service careers, teaching, social work or church work.

But advertisers are starting to reach out. Showtime invested ten million dollars on promoting *Queer As Folk*. The biggest media dollars are not spent nationally but at the local level with such newspapers as *BAR* and *The Gay Times*.

The internet favors gays because the right wing does not monitor the computer world. More dollars are exchanged here than in all the other media combined.

Racial groups are ignored unless AIDS drugs are advertised.

Lesbians as a group cast a fairly small shadow in the commercial market. The lesbian is viewed as difficult and hard to reach.

Lesbians are women first and lavender second. Sender does not predict an increase in power for the ladies in question.

A host of questions are raised here. Has the gay movement been co-opted by the marketplace? Are we just another consumer niche? Will we change the culture or simply be absorbed by it? Sender has aroused our curious, inquiring minds and now we must pursue the matter further. As the old saying goes, "Follow the money."

—Frank Howell

An Important Tax Letter from Bee Jay Jarvis

According to the US Census Bureau, the number of life partners is on the rise. According to Census 2000, the number of households with unmarried partners has climbed to 5.5 million.

Despite their increasing numbers, however, life partners continue to face some unique tax planning and compliance issues. In general, the tax rules are trickier and more stringent than for married couples.

For example, unlike married couples, life partners are barred from filing joint federal income tax returns. On the other hand, if one partner supports the household, he or she *may* be able to claim the other partner and any children living in the household as dependents, but it pays to check to make sure other conditions are met. In addition, the new \$600 child tax credit *may* or *may not* be available to an unmarried partner who supports a child. Under current tax rules, the child tax credit may be claimed only for a child who is a *direct descendent* of a taxpayer (e.g., a child or grandchild, a stepchild, or an eligible foster child).

Joint home ownership may also present some unique compliance issue for life partners. Life partners who own a home jointly may each deduct their shares of mortgage interest and real estate taxes on their individual returns. However, a mortgage lender may report the mortgage interest as having been paid by only one joint owner. In that case, special tax filing rules must be followed to make sure that each partner benefits from the deductions. Similar reporting complications may arise when life partners own interest or dividend producing investments in their joint names.

In response to pressure from employees, an increasing number of employers are extending health benefits to employees' life partners. But, here again, the tax rules are more complex than for married couples. While employer provided coverage for a spouse is tax free, benefits for a life partner may or may not be taxable.

Sincerely, Bobbie Jarvis, EA, ATA

Sacramento Trip

Recently, an all-day meeting was held at the California Department of Aging on the subject of services to senior gays and lesbians. Personnel who serve the lavender population always assume that older people are heterosexual. For example, couples living in senior centers are frequently separated because they are "single."

Brenda Crawford and Joyce Pearson chaired the meeting. Brenda is from PRTA (Progressive Research and Training for Action). Joyce represents the National Center For Lesbian Rights. Four men and fifteen women from various parts of northern California related stories of lack of services.

Many of the participants were from rural counties such as Mendocino and Trinity. Crawford emphasized that the text of the proceedings will be sent to the California State Legislature. Pearson announced that an attempt would be made to include a gay and lesbian presence at the forthcoming White House Conference on Aging.

—Frank Howell

LAVENDER MILESTONES

Birth Announcements:

Our Board member, Jeanine DeBacker, and her partner, Jennifer Sprinkles gave birth to a baby boy in July. Jeanine just beams all the time!!

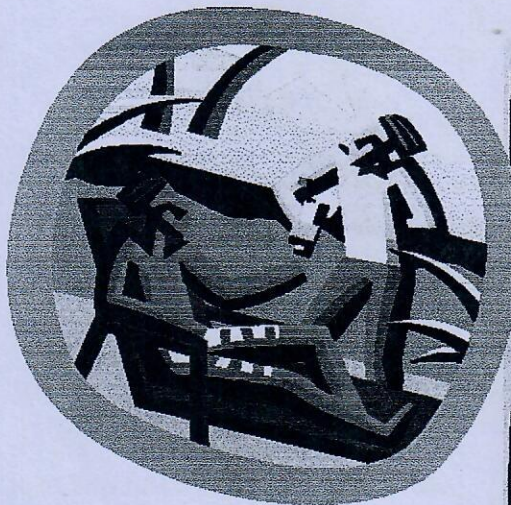
Obituaries:

Hope Greene

Barbara J informed us that Hope Greene passed on Saturday, June 24, 2005. No services were planned and the Neptune Society will handle the funeral arrangements.

Lorraine Brooks

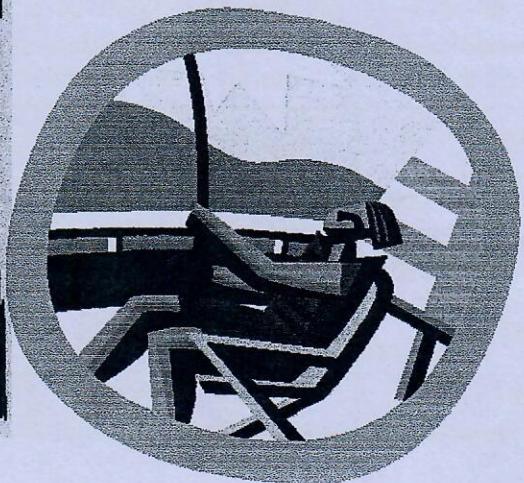
(from BJ) I am saddened to inform you of the passing of Lorraine Brooks. Lorraine was a long-time WOFFER. Her funeral was held the week of July 17 in Arizona, I believe. She was very much an animal lover and cared very much about people. Those who knew her will miss her and her dry sense of humor. She performed at the WOFF talent shows with tall tales of her life and brought smiles and laughter to us all. She will be missed.



HAPPY



SUMMER



Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Official Newsletter

Senior Men's Afternoon
 2nd and 4th Thursdays
 of each month, 1:30—3:30PM
 August 11 & 25
 at Pacific Center,
 2712 Telegraph Avenue
 Berkeley
 Co-sponsored by Lavender Seniors
 and Pacific Center

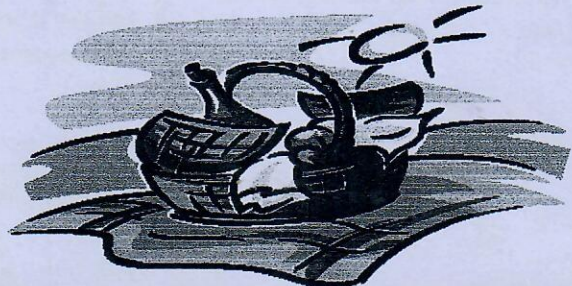
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 Walnut Creek, CA 94696



Fellows of East Bay
 2nd Sunday of each month
 5:30—8:30PM
 August 14
 Social club for mature men and
 their admirers. Monthly potluck
 dinner and social held at Oak
 Center Towers, 1515 Market
 Street, Oakland. Bring food and
 drink to share and a \$4 donation.

WHCOA UPDATE
The planning
 session for the WHITE HOUSE
 CONFERENCE on Aging is tentatively
 scheduled for September 16 or 23. The
 session will run from 9AM to 3PM. The
 actual date and more details will be
 released in the September edition of
 Lavender Notes

MONTHLY POTLUCK
 Saturday, August 13
This Month's Potluck Features...
 No Lavender Seniors potluck this month. Please attend the
 Pride Picnic at Cull Canyon Park in Castro Valley, Noon to
 5 PM.



ADVERTISING RATES * FOR LAVENDER NOTES

Ad Size	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
Classified Ad	\$2 per line (per month) on a 3-column page			
Business Card	\$25	\$65	\$125	\$235
Quarter Page	\$40	\$100	\$185	\$350
Half Page	\$75	\$185	\$350	\$650
Full Page	\$135	\$350	\$650	\$1,200

* Individuals and non-profit organizations who have made an annual contribution of \$25 or more are entitled to discounts of 40% on classified ads and 20% on ads of other sizes. Lavender Seniors reserves the right to accept or reject any ad submitted.