

LavenderNotes

A Project of the Tides Center

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WHCOA UPDATE

White House Conference On Aging Information Sharing

Put it on your calendar. The informational meeting to gather your opinions of the most important issues for LGBT seniors to share with the White House will be held on September 30TH from 9:00AM to

(Continued on page 4)

Why I DO care about the White House Conference On Aging (WHCOA)

by an anonymous Lavender Senior

I care about the White House Conference on Aging for three important reasons: my rights, my rights, my rights. I am a 60 year old lesbian who has worked the majority of my life since I was 15 years old. There was a little time out for college when I was energetic and in my teens and 20's. But as soon as I got older

(Continued on page 4)

September 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 Board Meeting	8 Sr. Men @ Pacific Center	9	10 LS monthly potluck
11 Fellows of East Bay	12	13	14 Healthy Aging Fair	15 Lavender Lunch Bunch	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 SL Senior Resource Fair	23	24
25 Newark Days	26	27	28	29	30	

Schedule of Events

- September 7, 7:00PM-8:30PM. Board Meeting (Long-range planning will start at 6:00PM)
- September 10, 12:00PM-2:00PM. LS monthly Potluck, 1395 Bancroft, San Leandro. Program is Pat Skillen, President of P-Flag-Fremont Chapter.
- September 14, 10:00AM-12:00PM. Healthy Aging Fair, Centennial Hall, Hayward.
- September 15, 12:30PM-2:30PM. 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.
- SEPTEMBER 22, 10AM-2PM. San Leandro Senior Resource Fair, Marina Community Center, 15301 Wicks Blvd., San Leandro.
- September 25, 12:00PM-4:00PM. Newark Days Community Information Fair, 3550 Cedar Blvd., Newark.
- September 30, 9:00am-1:00pm. White House Conference on Aging Information Sharing Session, location T.B.D.—Check our Website or call the office for information.

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

Jeanine DeBacker, Secretary

Bobbie Jarvis, Treasurer

Meg Bruynell, Michael Mitchell, Natalie Zarchin,
Frank Banuelos & Rose White, Members at Large

Next Advisory Board Meeting

September 7 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.

September Birthdays

September 3

James Ortiz

September 5

Robert M^cKenna, Jr.

September 9

Linda Spencer

Rose White

September 10

Pat Branch

September 11

Donna Montgomery

Rosalind Barnett

September 13

Carol North

September 14

Pat Kemper

September 16

Kathy Carnahan

Sue Carol Witt

Carol Witten

September 17

Fred Banuelos

September 19

Chester Curtis

September 21

David Hinogosa

September 23

Mary Atkins

September 25

Jerry Fishman

September 28

Marilynn Austin

September 29

Marilyn Gentile

September 30

Diane Esposito

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.)

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

(WHCOA Update—continued from page 1)

1:00PM. Visit our website: <http://www.lavenderseniors.org> or phone the office (510-667-9655) for details on meeting location. We want to hear from you who have experienced difficulties of growing older in a society that refuses to accept our truths as a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender people and allow us the same rights as are allowed to heterosexuals. ▼

(anonymous—continued from page 1)

and grayer, I just didn't ever stop working.

Also, I am blessed to have begun a life partnership with the love of my life. We both came into the partnership owning homes. We both work; as my partner once said, "I am going to die at my desk." So what does this all mean?

It means that whichever one of us dies first is the lucky one; she won't have to deal with the IRS over the "exchange of property" dilemma that we created when we quit-claimed deeds of our houses to each other. It is possible that, because we are not legally married, the surviving partner may have to pay a gift tax of 35% on the benefit from owning our property.

You see, if I had the rights bestowed on legally married

couples, I wouldn't have to worry about this. I would be able to quit claim that deed into the hands of my partner with no possibility of future misgivings. I would also appreciate Social Security survivor's benefits to be bestowed upon me or my partner whichever one of us is left upon the other's death. I don't even know yet the other benefits that I am losing because I cannot legally marry my partner.

I understand the attempts by the legislators of the State of California who have tried to resolve this problem by creating domestic partnerships. I also know that state laws do not govern the IRS, Social Security and the other potential laws that will benefit me as I grow older.

I just know that I would like this federal administration and all other administrations to pay attention to my needs for legal parity along with all the legally married heterosexual couples who benefit from being officially recognized by their state and country.

I just want my rights as an American worker and citizen to be honored. ▼



LAVENDER MILESTONES

Obituaries:

by Bobbie Jarvis

HOPE GREEN: *artist, musician*

Hope came to WOFF (Women Over Fifty and Friends) late in her years. The first time she attended a WOFF event was at a swimming party in Oakland. There she met Doris Wilkins and it was *love* at first sight. She shared her life with another before Doris, and her late partner's children embraced her as their own. How lucky for both Hope and Doris to find a love to share so late in life. Together they entertained us at our WOFF talent shows with music and humor. In an earlier life, Hope was a violinist playing with the Seattle Symphony. In the WOFF talent show she sang while Doris strummed the guitar.

One cannot speak of Hope without Doris. They were

linked like salt and pepper. They were both artists, and it seemed that their works grew until they were almost indistinguishable from one to the other. Their works graced the walls of the Lighthouse GLBTQ Center in Hayward when it opened its doors to our community.

Doris was the fixer upper in this partnership, while Hope was indeed the 'lady of the house'. She passed away peacefully in her sleep. Hope is survived by an older brother as well as her many friends in Lavender Seniors and WOFF.

LORRAINE BROOKS: *nurse*

Lorraine was an Indianan who came west to settle in California. She was a nurse who, in her later years, worked for an outpatient agency. She was very good at her craft and loved to minister and care for those to

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Giovanna Tanzillo

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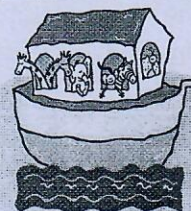
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Beyond The Down Low: Sex, Lies and Denial in Black America

by Keith Boykin

Carroll & Graf \$25.00

Ever since K. L. King's book on the *down low* controversy appeared, the furor has refused to die down. Living on the 'down low' refers to black men who have intimate relations with white men while living a respectable middle class life with wife and children. But now the phenomenon has taken on a life of its own.

Boykin has taken up the challenge of examining the situation with a keen mind and a built-in bias detector. He broadens the definition to include any gay man, black or white, who is living The Big Lie.

The author points out that during the height of the AIDS era in the 1980s, whites attempted to face up the implications of sexual disease but the black community continued to burrow deeper into the community closet. In 1995, there appeared a pop song on the radio called "The Down Low," by Brian McKnight:

*"My body wants you so
For what I miss at home
Nobody has to know
Keep it on the down low"*

The songs further reflected the woman's view of the issue. One sample, "just a queen...that thought he was a king", or "How do a woman compete with a man for another man?" That same year, the AIDS rate for black men passed the rate for Caucasian males.

Boykin had discussed King's book with him by decided not to assist in writing the King book. He feels that King merely exploits the problem and then walks away.

Boykin's central thesis is that we must stop stigmatizing black men and pitting their women against them. For the real enemy is the AIDS virus. A frank dialogue must begin. The ingrained homophobia of the black community needs to be combated so total honesty can have a fighting chance.

King's figures also come under attack. King is claiming that 68% of the women have AIDS but according to U. S. government statistics the true amount is 18%.

Despite all the education and outreach, 40,000 new AIDS cases are reported each year. Part of the dilemma is that sexual partners frequently don't want to bother with condoms during the heat of passion.

One of the most challenging predicaments faced by black females is the shortage of black men who do not represent damaged goods. There are more Negro men in prison than in either college or the military; one is four is unemployed, many have AIDS. There are over two million more black women in the population than black men, according to the author. Another major difficulty is the homophobia of the traditional black church, which has a "don't ask, don't tell" policy; yet the pews and choir are filled on Sunday morning with the very people they oppress. Boykin concludes that gay organizations must stop fighting each other for AIDS funding, pitting old against young, and gays versus straights.

Keith Boykin is a graduate of Harvard Law School and served as a special assistant to Bill Clinton during his white house years. He is currently president of the National Black Justice Coalition. He is the author of *One More River To Cross*.

—Frank Howell

Senior Access Project

We are looking for a great deal of your input this year; we will bring to you our study of the reasons that LGBT seniors hesitate to or don't use mainstream health and social services agencies. We will bring this important work to you at our monthly Lunch Bunch and Potluck gatherings and our Friendly Visitor program this winter. The focus of this work will be to develop the reasons that we don't always feel welcome at the offices of health and social services providers. It will also help us to define what makes a provider a healthy provider for LGBT seniors to access. We have discovered that there are many agencies that care about this and want to improve their services to the LGBT population; and, of course, others who don't care. We will work on that issue also.

The Sociological Initiatives Foundation provided funding for us to study this issue. We intend to use this information to help us establish an LGBT-friendly system of care providers. ▼

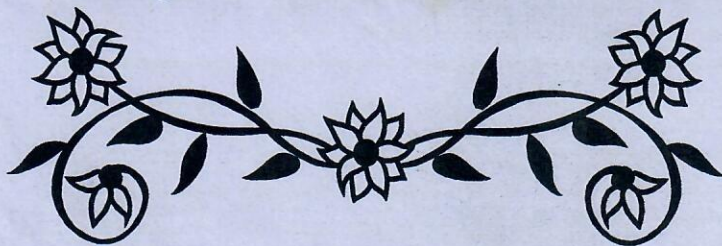
From One of Our Friendly Visitors:

Last year I heard about the Friendly Visitor Program at Lavender Seniors. When Mitchell Foudray suggested it, I readily signed up. It was only after I got home that some real trepidation had set in. "I'm not always friendly," I thought. "And then, I'm not an ideal visitor. What if my senior finds me boring?" What if... what if?

When I rang the bell at Mr. R.'s senior center, I felt like a nervous boy on his first gay blind date. My fears now seem so silly. As planned, Mitchell was there to make those first awkward moments go smoothly. Mr. R. and I got along right from the start. Though there is a large age difference, we found we had much in common. We both like to talk and to laugh. On our first visit, Mr. R. and I talked about our families, politics, where we were from and so much more. Since that time, we have really opened up with each other. Mr. R. has done so much and lived in so many different countries. He has shown me books and art works that I never knew about. His memories about being gay and Jewish in Germany in the 1920's could be made into a best selling suspense novel.

Our times are not all seriousness. Our weekly meetings are almost always punctuated by our mutual love of fine cookies. I get a warm feeling knowing that he, too, looks forward to our visits. It feels solid and real knowing that just by taking time out of my crazed schedule I can bring a smile to someone's face who has given so much.

The Friendly Visitor Program has proved to be a win-win opportunity. I am grateful to Lavender Seniors for introducing me to a wonderful new friend. ▼



(Continued from page 4)

whom she was assigned. Lorraine was caring to all. She was there with advice and concern when Barbara Konecny suffered her last illness. She was the "giving" partner to her beloved Lorna as she nursed her through her last illness. Lorraine suffered through the indignities of her partner's family who could not accept their

relationship. Lorna died about 2001. Lorraine was bereft for years and never really recovered from her loss.

She loved her cat and her friends. She loved hummingbirds and spent many an hour watching the antics of one that came visiting her porch now and again. She was a member of Out On the Island and ALPS in Alameda. She came upon WOFF (Women Over Fifty and Friends) and enjoyed sharing tales of her life at the WOFF talent show bringing smiles and laughter with her dry sense of humor. She was active in civic programs. She attended annual dinners given by the Alameda Police Auxiliary for which she volunteered her time.

Alone, she would drive across the United States once a quarter to visit her friends and her brother. She had a sister in Livermore who married a Lockheed vice-president and had another brother back East, but they were not close. She was close to Bob, a younger brother who is a math professor. It was to Arizona where her brother, Bob, lived that she gave up her homes in San Francisco and Alameda to move when her illness worsened and she became frightened. She was an incessant smoker, but tried and failed many times to quit.

It took more than five years bridging two states for the medical profession to make a diagnosis of her illness, and even at her death a definitive diagnosis had not yet been made. She was undergoing tests yet again for symptoms of headaches that made her lose her balance and fall. Her doctors asked her if she was drinking. She did not drink. They did nothing; she got worse. When she got to Arizona she lived in an assisted living facility and went to see doctors who finally went further in testing for her condition. She gave up driving which was becoming dangerous. Finally, they took her car keys away from her. She had gone to Arizona and left all her friends behind in California.

When she sold her San Francisco home, she gave \$100,000 to the Guide Dogs for the Blind. She grew too ill to travel back to California for a dinner to honor her. She communicated with her friends via e-mail and writing. When her brother "lost" her new computer, she wrote or called her California friends. She missed her computer very much as it was an important way for her to keep in touch with them.

Lorraine's services will be held in Indiana and she will be buried there near her father. ▼

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Official Newsletter

<p style="text-align: center;">Senior Men's Afternoon</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2ND and 4TH Thursdays</p> <p style="text-align: center;">of each month, 1:30–3:30PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">September 8TH & 22ND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">at Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue Berkeley</p> <p>Co-sponsored by Lavender Seniors and Pacific Center</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">www.21st-centurypsychology.com</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • psychological/business consulting • psychotherapy—hypnosis—EMDR <p style="text-align: center;">Carolyn S. Stroebe, PhD</p> <p>Licensed Psychologist</p> <p style="text-align: center;">#PSY11564</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(510) 843-9207</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Stroebe@mindspring.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1200 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 318 Walnut Creek, CA 94696</p> <div style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">Ψ</div>	<p style="text-align: center;">Fellows of East Bay</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2ND Sunday of each month</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5:30–8:30PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">September 11TH</p> <p>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.</p>
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LGBT Aging — Are We Prepared?

A Horizons Workshop on Wednesday, September 7, 2005 from 12:00PM to 2:00PM at Wells Fargo, 420 Montgomery Street, Penthouse, San Francisco.

As individuals, couples and a community, we need to plan for our senior years. This workshop will explore issues ranging from senior services, housing, long-term care needs and insurance, provide helpful information on advance health care directives, and durable powers of attorney. You will walk out of this session with a clearer strategy for what you need to do to prepare yourself for aging as well as for completing those important documents that may need attention. Presenters will include Helen Wenzel, an LGBT elder law specialist and Joyce Pierson from NCLR's Elder Law Project.

Due to limited capacity and strict building security, an RSVP is required. Contact Henry Pacheco at 415-398-233X350 or hpacheco@horizonsfoundation.org. ▼

MONTHLY POTLUCK

Saturday, September 10TH

This Month's Potluck Features...

Pat Skillen, President of P-Flag-Fremont Chapter.

A thru L	bring a Main Dish
M thru R	bring a Salad
S thru Z	bring a Dessert/Fruit

POTLUCK

San Leandro BART station shuttle available. Call one day ahead to arrange: 510-667-9655.

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.