

LavenderNotes

A Project of the Tides Center

1395 Bancroft Avenue

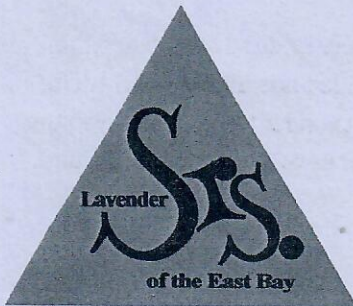
San Leandro, CA 94577

Web: <http://www.lavenderseniors.org>

Phone 510 667-9655

Fax: 510-667-9909

Email: info@LavenderSeniors.org



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Growing Old Together, in New Kind of Commune

From the New York Times, 2-27-06

By **PATRICIA LEIGH BROWN**

DAVIS, Calif., Feb. 23 — They are unlikely revolutionaries. Bearing walkers and canes, a veritable Merck Manual of ailments among them, the 12 old friends — average age 80 — looked as though they should have been sitting down to a game of Scrabble, not pioneering a new kind of commune.

Opting for old age on their own terms, they were starting a new chapter in their lives as residents of Glacier Circle, the country's first self-planned housing development for the elderly — a community they had conceived and designed

themselves, right down to its purple gutters.

Over the past five years, the residents of Glacier Circle have found and bought land together, hired an architect together, ironed out insurance together, lobbied for a zoning change together and existentially probed togetherness together.

"Here you get to pick your family instead of being born into it," said Peggy Northup-Dawson, 79, a retired family therapist and mother of six who is legally blind. "We recognized that when you're physically closer to each other, you pay more attention, look in on each other. The idea

(Continued on page 4)

April 2006

Schedule of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5 Brd Mtg	6	7	8 Potluck
9 Fellows	10	11	12	13 Sr Mens	14 Coming Out	15
16	17	18	19	20 LunchBunch	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 Sr Mens	28	29
30						

- April 5 - 7 - 8:30 PM** - LS Board Meeting - 1395 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro. Public is welcome.
- April 8th - 12 - 2 PM** - LS Potluck - 1395 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro. See food to bring schedule on p. 8. Program is Brokeback Mountain, Eugene Marangoni.
- April 9th - 5:30 - 8:30 PM** - Fellows of the East Bay - Change location this month to: Church of the Good Shepherd, 1823 9th St. (near Hearst), Berkeley.
- April 13th and 27th - 1:30 - 3:30 PM** - Senior Men's Afternoon - 2712 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley at Pacific Center. Co-sponsored with the Pacific Center.
- April 14th - 10 - 12 PM** - Coming Out Again Group - 1801 Hearst St., Berkeley. Co-sponsored by Lavender Seniors and North Berkeley Senior Center. April Adventure: Lunch afterward at Fenton's Creamery on Piedmont.
- April 20th - 12:30 - 2:30 PM** - Lavender Lunch Bunch, Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue, Oakland. Co-sponsored with the City of Oakland Aging and Adult Services Department. Free lunch and program. This month: Sharing our poetry and that of guest poet, Jewelle Gomez.

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, The Horizons Foundation, Royal Grand Ducal Council of Alameda County, Sociological Initiatives Foundation, East Bay Community Foundation & Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, Berkeley Community Fund, True North Foundation. *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

Fred Banuelos D'Anne Bruetsch, Meg Bruynell,
Rose White & Natalie Zarchin Members at Large

Next Advisory Board Meeting

April 5th 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
Christina Cappelletti, Outreach Specialist
Charlie Wilson, Asst Case Coordinator
Brenda Williams, MSW Intern

Newsletter

Barbara Faulkner, Editor
D'Anne Bruetsch, Publisher

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.

Who did you hang out with 10 years ago? AND...Where are they now?

We have Friendly Visitors who want to visit with and help them to stay connected to the LGBT community. Call us at 510-667-9655

What We Do...

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

- **The LGBT Seniors of Color:** 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.
- **Cultural Competency Trainings:** Through LGBT Senior panelists, educates service providers to comply with state laws to change policies and practices to make service 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:** Coming Out Again and Seniors Men's Afternoon co-sponsored and co-hosted by the North Berkeley Senior Center and Pacific Center (see back page for schedules).
- **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

April Birthdays	April 3 Laura Tow	April 13 Tracy O'Kates	April 26 Dr. Claudia Kenworthy Dr. Kate Rosenblatt
	April 5 Earle Brown	April 14 Julia Craig Ruth Hurvitz	April 27 Charlie Priest
	April 7 Dorothe Carter Don Green Gordon Osser	April 15 Dorothy Chevalier Iris Crider	April 28 Norman Terry
	April 8 John Olesen	April 22 Mitchell Foudray	April 29 Amoi Leung
	April 12 Ray Robb	April 24 John Ellefsen Susan Levinkind	April 30 Ron Ermini

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: _____ E-mail Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____ @

Referred by: _____

- 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
REMEMBER THAT YOUR DONATIONS TO LAVENDER SENIORS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE

(Growing Old Together from page 1)

was to share care."

The four couples, two widows and two who are now living solo live in eight individual town houses, grouped around an inner courtyard. Still under construction is the "common house" with a living room and a large kitchen and dining room for communal dinners; upstairs is a studio apartment they will rent at below market value to a skilled nurse who will provide additional care. It is their own self-styled, potluck utopia.

"It's an acknowledgment that intimacy doesn't happen by chance," said John Jungerman, 84, a retired nuclear physicist and one of several Ph.D.'s in the group, who is perpetually clad in purple socks and sandals.

"At first John said, 'I'm not old enough,' " his wife, Nancy, said of the commune. "I said, 'You're 80 years old. How old do you have to be?'"

There are about a dozen co-operative housing developments for the elderly in development, from Santa Fe, N.M., to St. Petersburg, Fla., a fledgling movement to communally address "the challenge of aging non-institutionally," said Charles Durett, an architect in Nevada City, Calif., who imported the concept he named co-housing — people buying homes in a community they plan and run together — from Denmark in the late 1960's.

Though communal housing for the elderly is new, intergenerational communities have been around since 1991, when the first opened in this politically progressive university town. There are now 82 across the country.

In Abingdon, Va., residents are beginning to move into ElderSpirit, a development founded by a 76-year-old former nun, Dene Peterson. The community of 37, 10 years in the making, includes a "spirit house" for ecumenical prayer and meditation.

"I just thought there had to be a better way for older people to live," said Ms. Peterson, who formed a nonprofit development corporation with three other former Glenmary sisters, a Catholic order, and knit together a variety of private and governmental funds (16 of the 29 units are subsidized affordable housing).

Ms. Peterson says she was haunted and inspired by her work with elderly public housing residents in Chicago in the 1960's.

"The elderly were dying," she recalled, "and they were anonymous."

With millions of baby boomers moving toward retirement, gerontologists and developers are looking to communal housing for the elderly with growing interest, building on a generation's mythology that already includes communes and college dormitories.

In co-operative housing, said Janice Blanchard, a gerontologist and housing consultant in Denver, "the social consciousness of the 1960's can get re-expressed." Baby boomers, she predicted, "are going to want to recreate the peak experience of their lives. Whether a commune or a college dorm, the common denominator was community."

Twelve friends' buying land at age 80 requires a certain leap of faith. By its nature Glacier Circle will change over time. A homeowners association, consisting of one resident from each unit, has the right of first refusal to buy any home when a vacancy arises, for whatever reason, or what Dr. Jungerman nonchalantly calls a visit from "the great father in the sky."

Glacier Circle is too small to legally mandate age restrictions, but Ray Coppock, 83, a retired editor, thinks that will take care of

itself. "They'll take one look at us," he said. "That should reduce the potential buyer situation."

At ElderSpirit in Virginia, which will be fully occupied in late spring, spirituality is the major draw. Ms. Peterson defined spirituality as "people finding meaning in their lives, acknowledging ways to give up the ego and grow the soul." Six more ElderSpirit communities, in St. Petersburg, Fla., Wichita, Kan., and elsewhere, are in planning stages, with some financing from the Chicago-based Retirement Research Foundation.

Not surprisingly, a streamlined form of community housing may be in the wind, as efforts spring up around the country to speed up the planning process, which normally takes two and a half to three and a half years.

Unlike intergenerational co-operative housing, a niche market of about 5,000 people, communal housing for the elderly has "far more market potential," said Jim Leach, president of the Wonderland Hill Development Company in Denver, which is building Silver Sage, a communal housing development for the elderly scheduled to open in Boulder next year.

Dr. William Thomas, who developed the "Eden Alternative," a widely publicized effort to make nursing homes less institutional, is developing Eldershire in Sherburne, N.Y., south of Syracuse, a hybrid between co-operative housing and a traditional development. The idea is to build first and then attract residents who will run it themselves.

Dr. Thomas compares co-operative housing, and its time-consuming community planning, with "homemade bread — people get together, mix the ingredients, let the dough rise." He's trying to adapt the concept for broader consumption — "100 million people," he says, "buy bread at the store."

Even revolutionaries need to be flexible. At Glacier Circle, where the first tulips of spring are popping up, the group had approved special wall insulation for Mr. Morrison, who has a penchant for playing Mahler's Ninth Symphony at 3 a.m. When the bass and timpani pulse through his subwoofer, his neighbor Dorie Datel, a youthful 80-year-old, just lets it slide. For Ms. Datel, whose husband left her for "the other woman" he met at Elderhostel, this group's wisdom and resolve are embedded in the square footage.

"We've all lived through the Depression and war and the big stuff, so we know that things don't always stay the same," Ms. Datel said. "All of us are interested in living."

Glacier Circle and ElderSpirit are self-developed cohousing communities. The Elder Cohousing Network, founded four years ago, offers for-profit how-to workshops. General information is available through a national non-profit, www.cohousing.org.

(Edited to fit the page—Ed)

New Lavender Seniors Yahoo Newsgroups

Join the new Yahoo newsgroups for Lavender Seniors. There is a true newsgroup for announcements and reminders and a discussion group for more personal communications. Visit these websites to join and for more information:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lavenderseniors>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lavenderseniorsnews>

Preventing Identity Theft

Identity theft has become an unfortunate part of life here in California, but there are ways to stop identity thieves in their tracks: The California State Legislature continues to pass new laws to make it more difficult for identity theft to happen. But the easiest way to stop ID theft is for US to become more active in prevention. The basic ideas:

Order your credit report twice a year and examine it thoroughly to make sure no one other than you has added anything to it.

Consider placing a "security freeze" on your credit file that restricts creditors from granting credit without calling you to remove the freeze.

Make it harder for ID thieves to get "identifying information" from your mail and mailbox.

Do not carry your social security card with you; carry only the credit card you would use in an emergency. Keep all other credit cards at home, in a secure place.

If you do carry all of your cards, make sure that you have the bank names, card numbers and customer service numbers in a secure place at home.

Watch anyone who asks to "swipe" your credit or debit card.

Shred or secure all documents with important identifying information on them, especially your social security number and credit card account numbers.

On the back of each credit card, write "ALWAYS CHECK ID" with a black marker.

Do NOT have your driver's license or social security number printed on your checks.

Do NOT give personal information over the telephone, through the mail or over the internet, unless you are the one who has initiated the contact.

Senior Center without Walls

Free Group Activities for Homebound Elders

114 Montecito Ave., Oakland, CA 94610
510-444-0243

Check out the Winter/Spring 2006 program of activities: Humor Group, Bingo, Reminiscence, Singalong, Comedy Radio Classics, News Perspectives, Current Events, Spirituality through Aging, Brain Aerobics, Play Reading, Yoga Breathing and Relaxation, Coping with Depression Support Group, and Senior Spotlight Interviews are this session's. There are also a number of health related groups. This is a mainstream agency (i.e. managed by non-LGBT's). However, the principle staff are Terry Englehart and Jennifer Cancino who are interested in serving LGBT seniors.

**FOUNTAIN GROVE
LODGE**

■ AN LGBT ELDERS COMMUNITY


WES WINTER
SENIOR MARKETING DIRECTOR

4210 THOMAS LAKE HARRIS DRIVE • SANTA ROSA, CA 95403
T 707 576 1101 • WES.WINTER@FOUNTAINGROVELODGE.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@pcamlaw.com

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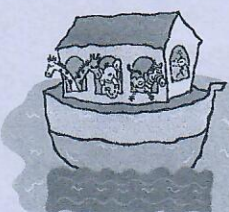
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Licensed Acupuncturist



Examples of treatable Conditions:
Chronic pain, headache, High blood pressure, menopausal symptoms, insomnia, sciatica, gastrointestinal issues, diabetes, stress & anxiety

510-557-4715
Senior Discount on Tuesdays 595 Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro
wendyd23@gmail.com



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alternative family where you are welcome!*

Sunday Worship 8 & 10AM
Sunday's @ St. Cuddy's 7PM
Potluck & Bible Study, Wednesdays, 7PM

Sexual Metamorphosis

"An Anthology of Transsexual Memoirs"

Edited by Jonathan Ames

Vintage Books, \$13.95

Jonathan Ames has put together a very sweet, and slightly poignant, selection of auto-biographical memoirs of transsexual stories. He presents stories that span more than a century from one of Kraft-Ebing's patients in the 1800s, to today. Both male to female and female to male stories are included.

Personally, I found the older stories of Patient 129, Lili Elbe, and Christine Jorgenson to be the most interesting. These people were true pioneers, venturing into totally unknown futures. Many people have transitioned since then, but they have knowledge of the success of others to buoy them through. Their courage in the face of the unknown

Homeward Bound

Bringing Alameda County Library to you !

Volunteers bring the riches of Alameda County Library to seniors and other home- and institution-bound of any age who live independently or in senior housing facilities in Alban, Castro Valley, Dublin, Fremont, Newark, San Lorenzo, Union City and Additional unincorporated areas in Alameda County.

Lots of materials are available:

Regular and large-print books, CD, Audio and video tapes, feature films, documentaries, and descriptive videos with background narration during breaks in dialogue for those who are blind or have low vision. Talking Books – books on tape and cassette available free from the State Library for the visually impaired. Applications are available at all Alameda County Library Branches or call 510-745-1499,

If you do NOT live in any of the cities or unincorporated areas mentioned above, call the number listed and request contact information for the library in your city.

Lavender Seniors Chat

Our new Lavender Seniors newsgroup is where you can chat and discuss things of interest with people having similar interests. Sign up today at

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lavenderseniors>

is still inspiring today.

Each story is just a snippet from more extensive writings that are available elsewhere. In choosing his selections, Mr Ames, has highlighted many of the common elements of transition: Christine's unwanted fame and publicity, Calpernia Adam's tragic loss, and the family battles and crises expressed in many different ways.

Overall, these are uplifting stories of courage and triumph. Each selection is only a small look at one life. The full stories of these individuals are fascinating, and more interesting, in my opinion, for the pain and setbacks that had to be conquered. Some selections do include the darker details, but overall these are rosy glimpses into their lives.

In his introduction, Ames writes "The third act to these stories – first act: gender dysphoric childhood; second act: the move to the big city and the transformation – is the aftermath of the sex change". I think he has identified the third act correctly, but his selections are weakest on this point. We don't see these lives as complete, only incomplete fragments. I want to know how each life has turned out. For myself, it is a wonder and miracle of life and science together.

Submitted by D. Anne Bruetsch (Male to Female, 1975).

Community News:

Women Sing-Songwriters of the '60's and '70's celebration

Lessie Hassberg sings with Carrie Gerendasy - Special Guest Appearance by Gwen Avery. Sunday April 2nd at 4 PM at the Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists, 1924 Cedar x Bonita, Berkeley.

Benefits singer/songwriter, GWEN AVERY. \$15/\$12 (students and seniors) children under 12 free. Wheel-chair accessible. For more information, contact LGMESZZO@aol.com.

Forwarded by Jan Couvillon, New Leaf, San Francisco:

Got a letter from a lesbian in Dallas who lived in SF until last summer. She is 60 years old, feeling very isolated and would love to exchange letters with other lesbians here in the Bay area. She will move back to the Bay area in '07. Can't imagine why she would like to leave Texas? You can write her at: Gayle Wood, 13005 Audelia Rd. #4236, Dallas, TX 75243.

Friendly Visitors' Corner

From Sheila, a Friendly Visitor:

"During the past year, Joan (not her real name) and I have had breakfast together each week. I have suggested doing other things many times but she hasn't shown any interest. Then, suddenly, two weeks ago, she accepted my suggestion to attend a movie at her local senior center! She also asked for a copy of the center's monthly newsletter to see what else they offered.

I have been worried that Joan was depressed, since she really doesn't seem to have any hobbies or interests to occupy her time each day. Now, she's beginning to look for things to do. It's the best Christmas gift she could have given me."

Lavender Seniors e-News!

Our new Lavender Seniors News newsgroup is where you can receive email notification about events of interest to LGBT seniors in the bay area. Sign up today at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lavenderseniorsnews>

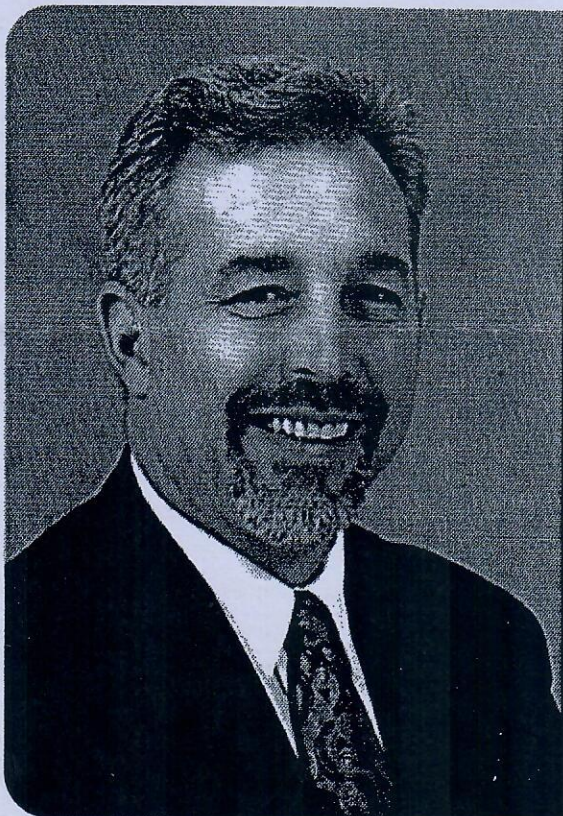
Openhouse needs your help!

Moli Steinert, Director of **openhouse**, San Francisco-based nonprofit organization, is forwarding this message to you about an important survey that her agency is conducting to help them build senior housing for LGBT older adults. Your participation will assist them to better understand what LGBT seniors truly need, want, and can afford so **openhouse** can design the facility and its services with precision.

It makes no difference what your income is, or whether you would be interested in **openhouse** for yourself. The only requirement is that you live in the Bay Area and are 55 years of age or older.

To participate: On the Internet, please go to www.vitairesearchsurveys.com/openhouse (between March 21 and April 6) to fill out the online survey. Your response is completely anonymous. You can also learn more about **openhouse** and their plans to build senior housing and services for the LGBT community by going to www.openhouse-sf.org.

Your participation will be making an important contribution to the work of **openhouse** and to understanding the needs of our senior LGBT community.




ROB MILLS

REAL ESTATE BROKER & PARTNER
 GRADUATE, REALTOR® INSTITUTE

www.VIPRealtyTeam.com
Rob@VIPRealtyTeam.com

Mobile / Voicemail 925-207-6662
 Facsimile & Messages 925-825-7158
 Toll Free in the USA 877-VIP-TEAM


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Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Official Newsletter

<p>Senior Men's Afternoon 2ND and 4TH Thursdays of each month, 1:30–3:30PM April 13th and 27th at Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue Berkeley Co-sponsored by Lavender Seniors and Pacific Center</p>	<p>Coming Out Again 2ND Friday of each month 10 AM to 12 PM April 14th at North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst St., Berkeley. Reed Wilgoren and Bea Howard, co-facilitators</p>	<p>Fellows of East Bay 2ND Sunday of each month 5:30–8:30PM April 9th Social club for mature men and their admirers. Monthly potluck dinner and social held at Church of the Good Shepherd, 1823 9th St., Berkeley. Bring food and drink to share and a \$4 donation.</p>
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Milestones

From Ina: "Bernie Miller broke her arm and is not going back to assisted living. She is at Baypoint Health, 442 Sunset Blvd., Hayward, CA 94541 for the foreseeable future. The phone number is 510-582-8311. She would appreciate cards and calls."

From WOFFNOTES: "Ruth Michaels and Julie Craig announced that they are more than just friends. Julie said she is 79 ¾ and Ruth is 82; so, I guess, there is hope for the rest of us."

From John Ellefson: "Dear Friends at LS: Mac and I tied the knot here (Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada) on Feb. 20th at a beautiful ceremony. Maybe someday we can celebrate marriages in the USA, too, Love, John and Mac"

Please submit any Lavender Milestones to Rose White at 261-8766 or email at: arrapaho99@yahoo.com.

490 2684

MONTHLY POTLUCK

Saturday, April 8th

This Month's Potluck Features discussion of Brokeback Mountain with Eugene Marangoni

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| A thru H | bring a Salad |
| I thru R | bring a Dessert/Fruit |
| S thru Z | bring a Main Dish |



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	\$30	\$75	\$140	\$250
Quarter Page	\$50	\$125	\$225	\$400
Half Page	\$90	\$220	\$400	\$750
Full Page	\$200	\$450	\$800	\$1400

* 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.