

# Lavender Notes

*A Project of the Tides Center*

1395 Bancroft Avenue  
San Leandro, CA 94577

Phone 510 667-9655

Fax: 510-667-9909

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

Email: [barbara@LavenderSeniors.org](mailto:barbara@LavenderSeniors.org)



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## The Sit-In at the Altar: No 'I Do' Till Gays Can Do It, Too

from Dec. 3, 2006, New York Times

By KAYLEEN SCHAEFER

Last July, Kelly White and her boyfriend became engaged. They had a cozy picnic of wine and cheese on a hill before he presented her with a watermelon-flavor Ring Pop and asked her to marry him. "I'd rather not say if he got down on one knee or not," she said. "It's embarrassing."

But they won't end up at the altar anytime soon: they said they would not marry until

gay and lesbian couples are also allowed to. "I usually explain that I wouldn't go to a lunch counter that wouldn't allow people of color to eat there, so why would I support an institution that won't allow everyone to take part," said Ms. White, 24, a law student at the University of California, Davis. "Sometimes people don't buy that analogy."

Whether it makes sense or not, some heterosexual couples, mostly in their in 20s

*(Continued on page 4)*

# February 2007

## Schedule of Events

February 7<sup>th</sup> – NOTE NEW DAY AND TIME, 1 PM to 3 PM – Coming Out Again Group – 1901 Hearst St., Berkeley Co-sponsor: North Berkeley Senior Center.

February 7<sup>th</sup> – 6 to 6:45 PM Fundraising Committee AND 7 to 8:30 PM – Lavender Seniors Board Meeting – 1395 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro. Public is welcome

February 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> – 1:30 to 3:30 PM – Senior Men's Afternoon – 2712 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley at the Pacific Center Co-Sponsor: Pacific Center.

February 10<sup>th</sup> – 12 PM to 2:00 PM – Potluck -- 1395 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro. See schedule on p. 8 for food to bring. Guest: Doug Brown, from Social Security.

February 11<sup>th</sup> – 5:30 to 8:00 PM – Fellows of the East Bay – Social and Potluck, 1515 Market St., Oakland. \$4 donation requested.

February 14, 2007 – VALENTINE'S DAY SOCIAL – Lake Merritt Hotel, 1800 Madison St., Oakland, 6 PM to 9 PM, live music with the Average Dyke Band! Food, drink, raffle prizes!

February 15<sup>th</sup> – 12:00 to 2:00 PM - Lavender Lunch Bunch, Garden Center, 666 Bellevue, Oakland. Guests: GLBT Historical Society. Co-Sponsor: City of Oakland Aging and Adult Services Dept.

February 23<sup>rd</sup> – 12-2 PM – South County Lunch and Talkabout, 40086 Paseo Padre Pkwy, Fremont, Co-Sponsor: City of Fremont, Human Services Dept. \$6 to non-members Fremont Senior Center, \$4, members.

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

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay is funded by individuals as well as Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, Alameda County Leather Corps, Berkeley Community Fund, California Council for the Humanities, The California Endowment, City of Oakland, City of Fremont, East Bay Community Foundation, Gay Chemists Support Fund, Horizons Foundation, Royal Grand Ducal Council/Alameda County, San Francisco Foundation, Bay Area Physicians/ Human Rights, and Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. We gratefully acknowledge the support of all Friends of Lavender Seniors.

## *February Birthdays*

February 2 Tom Daniel	February 10 Tom Lane	February 23 Robert C. Scharff
February 3 Larry Laikam	February 15 Barbara Jue	February 24 Cathy Cade
February 6 Frank Howell	February 17 Jack Bowman	February 26 Dorothy Taylor
February 7 Eric Larson	February 19 Marvin Burrows	February 29 Elizabeth Ruth
February 9 Chuck Barod Lynn Riordan	February 20 Duaine Imhoff Ellen Levin Corky Wick	

## Milestones

### Congratulations!

Marvin Burrows is one of 30 elders (out of a pool of 100 nominees) to receive the 2007-2008 California Senior Leaders Award, from the UC Berkeley School of Public Health via the California Wellness Foundation.

### In Sympathy

Knox Price passed away peacefully in his Alameda home on December 6, 2006. He is survived by his partner of 39 ½ years, Tom Kasilger.



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*(Continued from page 1)*

and 30s, are protesting the inability of gay and lesbian couples to marry by putting off their own marriage. Unless wedded bliss is available to everyone, in every state, they say, they want no part of it.

These couples have gone mostly unnoticed (except by parents waiting to send out wedding announcements). Then Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie took up the cause. In an Esquire article in October called "(My List) 15 Things I Think Everyone Should Know," Mr. Pitt writes, "Angie and I will consider tying the knot when everyone else in the country who wants to be married is legally able."

They are not the first celebrity couple to have the idea. In 2005 on the television show "Extra," Charlize Theron said of her relationship with the actor Stuart Townsend, "We said we would get married the day that gays and lesbians can get married, when that right is given to them."

A number of the heterosexual holdouts live in California, where in February 2004, Gavin Newsom, the mayor of San Francisco, issued marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Some couples cite that act as the catalyst for their protest.

Some of those delaying marriage are cynical types who seem happy to stick it out. They think the idea of marriage is antiquated and want to be tied to a spouse as much they might want to move in with the in-laws after the honeymoon.

"I didn't have the wedding fantasies some little girls have," said Sarah Augusto, 25, a sociology graduate student in Davis, Calif., who has been committed to Jon Bell, 26, a museum exhibit designer, since college graduation three years ago. But some honestly wish they would walk the aisle, Mr. Bell for one. "Sarah has changed the way I thought about things a ton," he said. "I was really excited about getting married. Going into high school that was the goal, to meet a nice girl and get married to her."

Gay and lesbian organizations working to have same-sex marriage legalized don't officially sanction what these couples are doing. They said the gesture is sweet, but don't want anyone to put off marriage...

Those delaying marriage also meet resistance from friends and relatives who say they are using politics to avoid real commitment. Some of Mr. Bell's family and friends say he and Ms. Augusto are not serious about their relationship because they haven't exchanged marriage vows. "I don't feel like I can meet anyone more wonderful than her," Mr. Bell said. "But I can't clearly communicate that to everyone around me until we're married. I think that my family thinks that once we love and care for each other enough, that our politics will break down."

Mary Lunetta's grandmother, 77, doesn't understand why her granddaughter is putting off marriage, either. Ms. Lunetta, 24, a community studies major at the University of

California, Santa Cruz, explained to her grandmother that she is waiting to make it official with Max Hartman, her boyfriend of five years, because her aunt, who is a lesbian, can't marry.

Ms. Lunetta said she did not expect her grandmother to get it or agree. "And she didn't." Her grandmother, though, did tell her about Mr. Pitt and Ms. Jolie. "They're copying us," Ms. Lunetta said.

According to the Government Accountability Office, a marriage license comes with 1,138 federal rights, including the ability to claim a dead spouse's Social Security benefits and to make medical decisions for a spouse in an emergency. Massachusetts is the only state that allows gay marriage. In 44 states it is forbidden by statute, constitution or both. Still, most unmarried heterosexual couples acknowledge that it would be easy for them, unlike a same-sex couple, to pass for husband and wife if they need to.

"As we continue together, people will just assume we're married," Mr. Hartman said. "If I'm sick in the hospital, and she says she's my wife, they're not going to ask for documentation."

Most of these couples don't have children, but said they wouldn't cave in when they did. The stance tends to be entirely personal. Holding a picket sign in front of the local courthouse isn't on the agenda.

But some couples see no point in resisting marriage unless they're going to publicize it. They do so mostly by correcting people who assume they are legally married.

Sam and Fawn Livingston-Gray of Portland, Ore., have the same last name and wear matching white-gold rings engraved with Celtic designs. Still, when someone refers to Sam, 31, a computer programmer, and Fawn, 33, an administrative assistant, as husband and wife, they point out the mistake, even if it's the guy at the car-rental counter.

"I go out of my way to say we're not," Ms. Livingston-Gray said. "It's a really important dialogue with people I wouldn't get to talk to otherwise."

Referring to each other as "partner" usually helps avoid the misperception, but that can be tricky, too. When Ms. Augusto, the sociology graduate student, speaks of her partner, people ask if she's a lesbian. "I say, 'My partner is male,'" she said. "We're not getting married because it's not a universal right, and I feel that the word boyfriend trivializes our relationship.' It's really shocking to the people I tell that to. Probably as shocking as if I were a lesbian."

Mollie McKay of Marriage Equality U.S.A. said heterosexuals can be instrumental in the push for gay marriage. "It's a very powerful decision to stand up against discrimination in a system where you benefit," she said. "There's no more powerful way of saying, 'I object.'"

## Old, Smart, Productive

Excerpts from Business Week Online, July 5, 2005

In coming years, more Americans reaching their 60's and 70's are going to want to work, at least part-time. Researchers are finding that far from wearing people down, work can actually help keep them mentally and physically fit. Many highly educated and well-paid workers – lawyers, physicians, architects – already work to advanced ages because their skills are valued. Boomers, with more education than any generation in history, are likely to follow that pattern. And today's rapid obsolescence of knowledge can actually play to older workers' advantage: It used to be considered wasteful to train people near retirement. But if training has to be refreshed every year, then companies might as well retrain old employees as young ones.

Equally important, high-level work is getting easier for the old. Thanks to medical advances, people are staying healthy, enabling them to work longer than before. Fewer jobs require physically demanding tasks such as heavy lifting. And technology – from memory-enhancing drugs to Internet search engines that serve as auxiliary memories – will help senior workers compensate for the effects of aging. "Assuming that the improved health trends continue, boomers should be able to work productively into their late 70's, if they choose to, say Elizabeth Zelinski, dean of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology at the University of Southern California.

But, realizing that potential requires that government and business discard the outdated rules, practices, and prejudices that prematurely retire people who would prefer to keep working. In many corporations, there's an unspoken assumption that older workers are much less capable than their younger counterparts. So, in addition to ensuring older workers get their fair share of training, CEO's may also need to directly confront unintended age discrimination.

Society will also have to grapple with the tricky question of how to change the Social Security system to suit an aging but healthier population. A balanced approach might be to increase the Social Security retirement age at a more rapid clip while beefing up the Social Security disability program – which now covers 8 million disabled workers and dependents.

This optimistic vision of aging in America stands in sharp contrast to the conventional wisdom, which

looks ahead with dread to the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday parties of the first boomers in 2006. Pessimistic pundits expect that boomers will retire in droves soon after hitting 60, as their predecessors did, while those who do keep working will dial back to less challenging and less productive jobs. The fear is that boomers will finally heed Timothy Leary's call, dropping out (of the workforce) and turning on (the TV). "This explosion in the number of elderly Americans will place an unprecedented economic burden on working-age adults," investment banker Peter G. Peterson wrote last year in his latest book, Running on Empty.

But the burden won't be nearly so heavy if people's productive careers stretch out in synch with their extended lifetimes.



### ARE YOU CONFINED TO YOUR HOME OR YOUR ROOM?

If you are or you know someone who is, let us know. We have Friendly Visitor volunteers who want to meet you!! Call Pat, 510-667-9655

## LGBT Film Festival

**Cesar E. Chavez Branch Library, Saturday Feb 24, 10am to 5pm. 331 East 12<sup>th</sup> St., Ste. 271, Oakland, CA**

Come enjoy LGBT films, popcorn and other refreshments, and enter to win one of their door prizes!

They'll also have an OPL collection of LGBT themed books, DVD's, and magazines for you to check-out!

Easy access by BART Fruitvale Station. Exit the station into Fruitvale village and take a left at #. 12<sup>th</sup> St. Library is on the corner of 33<sup>rd</sup> and E. 12<sup>th</sup> St. Or you can take AC Transit buses 19, 47, 50 53, 54, 62, 63. There is also a Fruitvale exit which intersects E. 12<sup>th</sup> St. from 580 and 880 freeways.

The Chavez Branch is wheelchair accessible.

For more information on the event, contact Sharon Senser or Pete Villasenor at 510-535-5623 or 510-238-7232.





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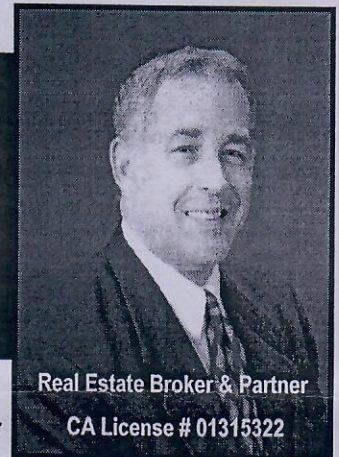
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# Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Official Newsletter

<p><b>Senior Men's Afternoon</b>                  2<sup>ND</sup> and 4<sup>TH</sup> Thursdays                  of each month, 1:30–3:30PM                  Feb 8th and 22nd                  at Pacific Center,                  2712 Telegraph Avenue                  Berkeley</p> <p>For more info, call 510-548-8283. Co-sponsored by Lavender Seniors and Pacific Center</p>	<p><b>Coming Out Again</b>                  1<sup>ST</sup> Wed of each month                  1 PM to 3 PM                  Feb 7th                  (NOTE PERMANENT DAY CHANGE!)                  at North Berkeley Senior Center,                  1901 Hearst St., Berkeley.</p> <p>Bayla Bower , Coordinator</p>	<p><b>Fellows of East Bay</b>                  Meeting/Potlucks are held every second Sunday of the Month                  at 1515 Market St. in Oakland                  Next Date is Feb 11<sup>th</sup>                  Social Hour: 5:30 to 6:30 – Dinner: 6:30 to 8 PM                  \$4 Donation at the Door                  Bring Food for Yourself and to Share with Others</p>
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## COME ONE, COME ALL

Lavender Seniors is having a

## VALENTINE'S DAY SOCIAL

**Wednesday, Feb. 14th 6-9 PM**

**At the Fabulous Lake Merritt Hotel**

**1800 Madison, Oakland**

\$20 Suggested Donation

(if received by Feb. 7th)

\$30 Suggested Donation

(after Feb. 7th.

Friends, Music, Food, Drink, Raffle Prizes

Valet Parking, \$5

## MONTHLY POTLUCK

**Saturday, February 10th 12 noon to 2pm**

Program is Social Security Information.

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



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
<b>Classified Ad</b>	\$2 per line (per month) on a 3-column page			
<b>Business Card</b>	\$30	\$75	\$140	\$250
<b>Quarter Page</b>	\$50	\$125	\$225	\$400
<b>Half Page</b>	\$90	\$220	\$400	\$750
<b>Full Page</b>	\$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.

\* A one-page insert to Lavender Notes for one month may be purchased for the fee of: Non-Profits, \$250; For-Profits, \$500; 1/2 half page inserts are the same amount. Must be received by 10<sup>th</sup> of preceding month.