

Lavender Notes

A Project of the Tides Center

IAVENDER SENIORS of the East Bay

1395 Bancroft Avenue San Leandro, CA 94577

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HAPPY HOLIDAY

Holiday Greetings

Everyday I wake up and count my blessings, because even though we are in the midst of many crises from the economy, Proposition 8 and the wars overseas, I am surrounded by a close community that empowers me to remain positive. The staff, advisory board, and the Lavender Seniors members collectively have made 2008 a very successful, upbeat year in the face of chaos, and you have done it through staying dedicated to our vision of a larger, stronger community. I want to thank all Lavender Seniors members, staff, volunteers, and the advisory board for the impact you have had on this organization and on each other by the ways in which you have created community in 2008. Participating in lunch programs, visiting the homebound, telling your stories to social workers, and being civically engaged by your activism efforts against Proposition 8 or other causes, have created stronger communities in our homes, neighborhoods. churches, government, and mainstream institutions. Even our fundraising efforts are seeing greater returns in the face of the economy and it is because of the collective power of each of us working together. Every time we connect another person to our Lavender Seniors community we increase our power by much more than one person. It is my holiday wish that all of you will understand the effect you have on one another when you show up, when you tell a friend about this organization, and when you remind each other that you have an organization that is looking out for you. By doing so, you reduce isolation not only for yourself, but also for those who may be feeling isolated by uncertain times. This is especially important during the Holidays. I wish everyone a happy holiday season and hope that you will remember the power you hold through your participation. You created change at the booths,

and you are doing the same for our Lavender Seniors community. I am in awe of you! Thank you kindly, and God bless you and your loved ones this holiday season.

Holiday Potluck

This year's holiday potluck on Saturday December 13th from 12:00PM until 2:30PM will be one to remember as Gabriel Delgado and the Lavender Seniors Board of Directors prepare a holiday feast with all the trimmings.

The entertainment will be the East Bay Gay Men's Chorus followed by a White Elephant gift exchange. **To participate** in the gift exchange we ask that you bring a very inexpensive or gag gift valued at \$10. Remember, the term White Elephant refers to a gift whose cost exceeds its usefulness. Please wrap your gifts.



WINNING RAFFLE TICKET

Our winning raffle ticket was #0110, to Dr. Margaret Moreland of UC Berkeley. Congratulations!

Dr Moreland won a weekend for Two at the Galleria Park Hotel including \$750 of entertainment expenses. Don Greene was very happy to have sold her the winning ticket.

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay is funded by individuals as well as Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, Alameda County Leather Corps, California Council for the Humanities, The California Endowment, City of Oakland, City of Fremont, Contra Costa County Area Agency on Aging, East Bay Community Foundation, Gay Chemists Support Fund, Horizons Foundation, Royal Grand Ducal Council/Alameda County, San Francisco Foundation, Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights, and 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 through direct service, community outreach, advocacy, and education.

Advisory Board

Mike Mora, Chairman D'Anne Bruetsch, Vice-Chair Mitch Foudray, Secretary Bobbie Jarvis, Treasurer

Marvin Burrows, Gabriel Delgado, Meg Bruynell, Frank Howell, Ina Mae Murri, Pat Skillen, Tomi Smith Members-at-large

Next Advisory Board Meeting

Dec 10th - 7PM. Call 510-667-9655 for more information. All are welcome; public comments take place at 7PM.

Staff

Dan Ashbrook, Director
Melissa Taylor, Outreach Coordinator
Tomi Smith, Project Administrator

Alpha Mulugeta, Intern

Newsletter

Tomi Smith, Editor D'Anne Bruetsch, Layout

Webmaster

Bert Hendriksen

Lavender Seniors welcomes all LGBT persons, their partners, allies, and guests. Cost of production and mail makes necessary a request of \$20 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 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.

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 Melissa, 510-667-9655

What We Do...

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

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 Training: 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 Informative Social Gatherings: Help build informal social networks and individual's knowledge of issues affecting seniors at the Monthly Potluck in San Leandro, Lavender Lunch Bunch in Oakland, and South County Lunch and TalkAbout at the Fremont Senior Center.

Community Involvement: Engages in community building and partnering processes with local governments in order to insert LGBT elders' needs into their planning efforts.

Monthly Discussion Groups: Coming Out
Again, Fellows of East Bay and Seniors Men's
Afternoon co-sponsored and co-hosted by the
North Berkeley Senior Center and Pacific Center (see back page for schedules) provide
LGBT support group settings to elders in the
North County.

Monthly newsletter: Lavender Notes.

Website: http://www.lavenderseniors.org
To get involved as a participant or volunteer,
contact us at 510-667-9655, press 1, or go to:
http://www.lavenderseniors.org

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Dec, 23rd Dec. 1st Dec. 13th Lynne C. Jim J. Bobbie J. Barbara F. Dec. 3rd Dec. 24th Dec. 15th Richard R. Gerson G. Joyce P. Dec. 9th Brenda C. Dec. 18th Carly R. Dec. 26th Melba H. Dorothy T. Dec. 12th Dec. 19th Daniel N. Dec. 29th Mike M. Josephine T.

Donate to Lavender Seniors online! Now you can go to www.lavenderseniors.org and click the Donate Now link. This is an easy way to make a difference in your community.

MONTHLY POTLUCK

Saturday, Dec. 13th - 12 noon to 2pm

Program: East Bay Gay Men's Chorus

A thru K bring a Main Dish

L thru R bring a Salad

S thru Z bring a Dessert/Fruit



Become a "Friend of Lavender Seniors" Today!

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay need your help! LGBT seniors are among the most overlooked and underserved population. Your donation provides general operating support for programs that help LBGT seniors live better lives by addressing issues of stigmas based on age and sexual orientation, limited biological families and social support, health disparities, insensitive health and human services providers, and economic insecurity exacerbated by ineligibility for spousal or survivor's benefits.

Please take a moment and send your gift today. Your annual giving entitles you to a subscription to our monthly newsletter, Lavender Notes.

□ \$100

□ \$50

Annual Courtesy Giving Levels

Here's my gift of:

Card #:

Address:

Lavender Leader \$10,000 ☐ Lavender Supporter \$5,000

□ \$35*

☐ Lavender Friend \$1,000

VISA

□ \$1000

☐ Other

\$250

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

Enclosed is a check made payable to Tides Center / Lavender Seniors

□ \$20

☐ Please charge my (circle one): Mastercard

> Expires: Signature:

Name: Home Telephone:

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

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Why A Friendly Visitor?

I became involved with Lavender Seniors as a Friendly Visitor in August of 2008. The first assignment seemed like a good match. On my first visit we talked, I looked and appreciated a few pieces of my client's art work. We began the process of becoming acquainted.

Just as I was about to leave, this most brilliant idea popped into my head. "I'll give her a copy of my book!" I thought, "She will learn so much about me and my journey and come to know and understand me." BAD IDEA! The following week she called Lavender Seniors and me to say that, after reading this book, she no longer felt comfortable with me as her Friendly Visitor.

It had not occurred to me that, for this type of relationship, knowing too much, too soon about one's visitor could be a problem . In hindsight, it does make perfect sense. The "Friendly Visitor Program" is a service before it is a personal friendship. Now that is not to say that friendship cannot evolve. This also does not mean that we, as Friendly Visitors cannot come to care about the people we visit. In fact, my primary and perhaps my only motive for doing this volunteer work is that I do care about people. I want to give people a sense of value. I want them to know that they still matter in this world - that they have wisdom and experiences to share and a purpose in just being.

I am grateful for that first experience and the insight I received from it. I am grateful that I did not allow it to end my career as a volunteer with Lavender Seniors. Though my visitee was obviously affected by my book, I can only hope that it was in some way helpful to this person as well.

A couple of weeks later, I was matched up with a new person. He is 89 years of age and still able to do many things for himself, though his hearing is limited. This match has been absolutely delightful. Basically, I have a standing Friday date to play gin rummy with him for a few hours each week. Playing cards works better than strictly conversation because of his hearing.

He is not gay, but his lesbian daughter is his primary caregiver. Caregivers also need attention, support and some time apart from their parent or partner (without feeling guilty). She has given a great deal to both the LGBT Community and the Community at large throughout her life. I am honored to be able to give back to someone who has been OUT in the trenches, paving the way for others.

Lavender Seniors has a great purpose in supporting the aging LGBT Community, and the "Friendly Visitor Program" fills a part of this growing need. There are many who do not have family members available to fulfill these needs for various reasons. These LGBT seniors deserve to be noticed. We must acknowledge that they exist and care for them. And for those who are giving care to parents or to partners, we must support and care for them as well.

I believe what we do for the weakest; we do also for the rest of the community. In caring for our seniors, we are creating a better world for all . Until the day when being Gay is accepted as normal, "being true to our nature", we must take care of our own until we are all truly "One Family".

Please don't let the passing of Prop 8 take away our hope and determination for "Equality for All" – let it only move us to: Care More! Be More! Love More! - Rev. Carol A. Hanson

SENIOR DROP-IN BOWLING

Bring a friend and come join us! NO COMMITMENT to Joining a League

Where: Manor Bowl

887 Manor Blvd.

San Leandro, CA 9579

When: Monday's and Friday's at 1:00 PM

\$8.00 per person includes:

3 games of bowling and weekly cash jackpots and stats.

Sr. /Manor Bowl Employee Tournament December 19th

12:30 Lunch, 1:00 Bowling, Cost \$10.00 per person.

For more information contact Nathan, Manager – 351-2101



Lavender Leader Opportunities

Cultural Competency Speakers Bureau – Tell your story to health and human service providers to help them better serve the needs of LGBT seniors.

Friendly Visitors – Visit, make phone calls, and provide shopping assistance to reduce isolation and help LGBT seniors Age in Place.

Fundraising – Assist Lavender Seniors with raffle or event ticket sales.

LGBT Aging Coalition Members – Be a part of a network of seniors and community leaders whose mission is to increase access to health and human services. Various levels of participation are available on the coalition. Attend meetings, participate in government forums, and assist projects that improve the lives of LGBT seniors in the East Bay.

Meal Program and Event Assistance – Help set up for monthly potlucks and social events or facilitate monthly lunch bunch programs.

News Crew – Assist with the mailing of Lavender Notes.

Outreach – Host tabling for senior and LGBT community events.

If you are interested in any of the above opportunities, please call Tomi Smith at 510-667-9655 to request a Volunteer Application Package or go to

www.lavenderseniors.org, click "volunteers," click "volunteer pack," print the application, fill it out, and mail to the Lavender Seniors.

Training is provided!

Lavender Seniors: Bridging the Gap between Black and Gay

Gays and lesbians celebrated with millions of people across the nation as the product of decades of political struggle for equality came to fruition in the rise of a biracial man to the country's highest government office. But on the coattails of this tremendous achievement came a huge step back for gay rights in the passing of Proposition 8 in CA. Amidst the post-election celebrations of Barrack Obama's historic appointment to presidency, many in the LGBT community have expressed disappointment and even outrage over what they felt was a hypocritical betrayal by African Americans -a majority of whom was said to have voted in favor of Proposition 8 - whose struggle for equality in their eyes plainly paralleled their own. Of course, there are those who would contest any comparison between the African American Civil Rights Movement and the plight of LGBT Americans—making the ill-quided assertion that being gay is a choice whereas being black is not. It is sentiments such as these that highlight the vast rift that divides these two historically oppressed communities and hinder our pursuit for equality.

One only has to look at levels of black participation at LGBT events, in LGBT organizations, and the number of openly gay figures in the African American community to see that there is a significant disparity in representation. Several modes of thought exist as to why this may be the case. Prevailing theories point to the relatively large role that religion plays in the lives of many African Americans and how this effects their beliefs and psyche. However, one cannot discount the role that discrimination within the LGBT community itself (no matter how covert) has played in distancing the two communities from each other and how this may have sabotaged the efforts of the No on 8 campaign. Clearly there is much work to be done to promote solidarity between black and gay communities in order to unite our efforts and put an end to mutually detrimental divisiveness.

In the past few years, several groups in the San Francisco Bay Area such as LGBT Black Rap, And Castro for All, and Lesbians and Gays of African American Descent for Democratic Action, have sprung up in response to the problem of discrimination within the gay and lesbian community. These community organizations consisting mostly of black LGBTs have made inroads towards inclusion, but it has not been enough. It is imperative that the greater community step-forward to tackle racial issues on a larger scale.

Like many other LGBT organizations, Lavender Seniors has found it difficult to recruit a diverse population of participants despite targeted outreach efforts to people of color. In doing preliminary research to discover why this may be the case, Lavender Seniors was unable to identify literature dealing specifically with LGBT seniors of color. As a result, the organization has taken the initiative to launch its own study of the senior population in an attempt to assess the factors that hinder ethnic minority LGBT seniors from accessing LGBT specific services.

"All cases are unique and similar to others"
-T.S. Eliot

"It is not good to have zeal without knowledge"
-Proverbs 91:2

"The truth is rarely pure and never simple"
-Oscar Wilde

The goal of the research being conducted by Lavender Seniors is to identify ways in which the agency can best serve its constituents by mitigating obstacles to minority access. However, this research could ultimately provide valuable insight as to how we as a community can begin to bridge the gaps that exist between African Americans and gays. The work being done by Lavender Seniors and other agencies in the Bay Area and across the country will hopefully be a continuing trend and part of a growing movement to reach out across the divide so that we might present a more united front against discrimination.

-Alpha Mulugeta MSW Student, UC Berkeley

Linkages

Our Mission: to ensure maximum independence and autonomy for our clients. Our case managers are committed to mobilizing any and all available community supports needed to maintain independent living and avoid premature hospitalization and nursing home placement.

Eligibility:

Ages 18-100 plus

- Frail elderly or adults with disabilities
- Need assistance to maintain
- Have unmet needs (that do not exceed program's capacity)
- Be willing and able to participate in the case management process.
- Have a current residence in alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland or Piedmont

Services:

- Care planning to address needs
- Care management to arrange needed services
- Comprehensive in-home assessment to determine needs.
- Information about community services and assistance in assessing those services.

We link people in their homes to community services such as:

- Counseling
- Transportation
- Money management
- Government/benefits programs
- Support and respite programs for families
- Telephone reassurance
- Social/health day care
- Legal advocacy/assistance
- Medical referrals
- In-home chore/personal care

For more information call (510) 238-3931 Monday through Friday 8:30 A.M.—5:00 p.m. Program Funded By: Alameda County Area Agency on Aging & city of Oakland

Dec Book Review

America's War on Sex: The Attack on Law, Lust and Liberty

By Marty Klein, PH.D, Praeger, Paperback Fundamentalist Christians hold the basic premise that the sexual impulse is something that should be avoided at all costs. Experts advise that parents have a dialogue with their children, but Parents frequently don't want to have any discussion at all and silence remains the golden rule. Dr. Marty Klein, a certified sex therapist challenges the basic attitudes that hinder significant legislation in his new book. The Abstinence Only program promoted by the Bush administration provides a classic illustration of wrong headed thinking. Students need comprehensive sex education rather than education materials that avoid vitally needed information. The sham resulting from this program is laid bare by a Columbia University study in which 20,000 students were interviewed. Of the students who pledged to remain abstinent until marriage, only 12% kept the promise to abstain. The basic truth of the situation is that 90% of Americans engage in some form of sexual activity before marriage. Conservative's religious fervor extends beyond

sex-education in the classroom. In Alabama, for example, one can readily purchase a gun but not a sex toy. Another example of the Christian right's zeal for censorship is the Child Online Protection Act. This piece of legislation was a frantic attempt to shield minors from "inappropriate" online content. A good deal of legitimate material was blacked out for teenage consumption. Any material from gay organizations was automatically ruled as obscene simply because of the subject matter. Students using computers in public libraries would encounter major problems. Filtering systems were not sophisticated enough to discriminate between harmful materials and simple facts. Luckily the Supreme Court over-ruled the act as being far too broad.

There lurks a certain aura of anti-intellectualism among political advocates such as Robert Peters, President of Morality in Media. He declares that, "conclusive scientific data is not necessary when restricting sexual activity."

Klein sees a problem of psychological projection in these views where fears of one's own sexuality is cast onto the enemy.

The World Association of Sexuality has proposed an eleven point declaration of sexual human rights. They conclude that "sexual human rights are universal human rights based on the inherent freedom, dignity and equality of all human beings." "America's War on Sex" keeps us alert to the constant challenge from those who would crush these basic natural freedoms. Keep up the good fight Dr. Klein!

-Frank Howell

Board Members Marry Before the Ban

The LGBT community's loss against Proposition 8 in CA earlier this month was a devastating blow to gays across the US. Mere months after the repeal of Proposition 22, same sex-couples throughout the state were denied marriage yet again. Still, in that brief window period between May 15th and November 4th, gays and lesbians all over California exercised their rights by marrying—and in some cases remarrying—their partners. Lavender Seniors' board members Meg and Bobbie Bruynell were among those couples who chose to formally celebrate their union in this way.

Meg and Bobbie Bruynell were married on August 10th, 2008. The event was attended by 104 of Meg and Bobbie's family and friends and was catered by Meg's generous sisters. Meg describes the wedding as "the most marvelous, wonderful event... and," she says", it was also my 70th birthday!" She maintains that it was Bobbie's idea to have the wedding on her birthday, "It was very last minute. Bobbie suggested it, and I thought it was a wonderful idea, so we somehow threw it together in three weeks!" Instead of accepting wedding or birthday gifts from their guests, Bobbie and Meg urged their friends and family to make donations to Lavender Seniors of the East Bay, raising over \$2,500 for the agency.

In the aftermath of the Nov 4th elections, Meg and Bobbie were disappointed by the decision of CA voters to redefine marriage in the state as between a man and a woman. Both Meg and Bobbie have attended anti-Prop 8 rallies in Hayward and contributed monetarily to the No on 8 campaigns. Despite the recent loss, the couple remains optimistic that the proposition will be overturned and are hopeful that with the election of Barrack Obama to the presidency, change is on the horizon.



Lavender Seniors Women's Book Group

Lesbian Lavender Seniors are invited to join the new book reading group. We're all old lesbians and yet we have such different ways of thinking. We meet once a month to enjoy the great variety of understanding and reactions we have to an agreed upon reading.

Where: North Oakland Senior Center 5714 MLK Jr. Way, Oakland

When: December 5th from 2:00PM to 400PM The next meeting will be on January 9th, and on the 1st Friday of every month thereafter. Look on the schedule

Are you about to turn or have you just turned...

65

years old?

Could you use some help deciphering Medicare Parts A, B and D?

Your window may be closing on your opportunity to get a guaranteed issued medical plan. Did you know that some of the plans are FREE?

I can help!

I can match you with a medical plan that suits your lifestyle and budget. I also offer life insurance, dental insurance and financial services.

FREE consultation \sim Offices in Oakland and San Rafael 510.334.3550 / 415.453.4300

DIANE SICKMEN

Insurance Services

CSA

Certified Senior Advisor (CSA)

A member of Lavender Seniors since 2004

Confidential Advice You Can Trust 25 Years Experience CA Insurance License #0601814

African American Lesbians 40+

Monthly meetings for social activities, potluck, card & board games, theatre outings and sports events.

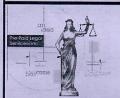
For more Information email tsmith3565@comcast.net

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San Leandro, CA 94577



December 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Coming Out	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Newark PFLAG	10 Board Mtg	11 Sr Mens	12	13 Potluck Fellows
14	15	16	17	18	19 Lunch Bunch	20
21	22 Hanukkah	23	24	25 Christmas	26 Kwanzaa	27
28	29	30	31			

Schedule of Events

Dec. 1st -.1:00 PM to 3:00 PM – Coming Out Again Group – (1st Mon.)1901 Hearst Ave., Berkeley, Dining Area, Co-Sponsored by Lavender Seniors and North Berkeley Senior Center. 4th Anniversary. Please bring a dish to share.

Dec. 9th – (2nd Tues.) PFLAG Meeting, 7:30 PM Holy Redeemer Lutheran, 35660 Cedar Blvd., Newark.

Dec. 10th- 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM – Lavender Seniors Board Meeting –(Wed. before Potluck) 1395 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro.

Dec. 11th– 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM - Seniors Men's Group. (2nd Thurs.), 2712 Telegraph Ave. Berkeley at the Pacific Center Co-Sponsor: Pacific Center 510-548-8283

Dec. 13th – 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM – Lavender Potluck (2nd Sat.)1395 Bancroft Ave, San Leandro; Program: East Bay Gay Men's Chorus - White Elephant Gift Exchange

Dec. 13th - Fellows of the East Bay (2nd Sat.) 1823 9th Street (at Hearst), Berkeley. Social Hour 5:30, Dinner 6:30.

Dec. 19th - 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM - Lavender Lunch Bunch, (3rd Fri.) North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Jr. Way. (58th St.) Oakland. Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging and Adult Services. Program: Mary Gallahue, Pianist/Vocalist

Dec. 26th – No Lunch or Program due to the Christmas Holiday for the South County Lunch Bunch and Talk About.

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.
- * A one-page insert to Lavender Notes for one month may be purchased for the fee of: Non-Profits, \$250; For-Profits, \$500; ½ half page inserts are the same amount. Must be received by 10th of preceding month.