

July 2008

Volume 13, Issue 7

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay Official Newsletter

Lavender Notes

A Project of the Tides Center

1395 Bancroft Avenue

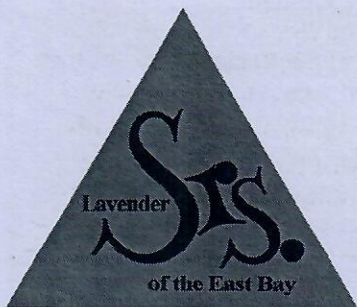
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Making Sense of Wandering Seniors

By Steve Bariam, CMC, LCSW

Wander residents can be a danger.

Here's how to keep them safe.

Robert, a 75-year-old Alzheimer's resident, incessantly walks the halls of his assisted living facility looking for his wife, Sally, whom he married over 50 years ago and is now deceased. His wandering during supervised day hours causes him no harm, and the exercise seems to help relieve his anxiety.

However, one day, Robert finds a door left unlocked and walks out, thinking his actions will lead him to Sally. In reality, the door leads to a parking lot and, beyond that, a street where he maneuvers dangerously in rush hour traffic until he fortunately is recovered and returned to the facility.

In every community, care giving professionals and families struggle with seniors who wander. It is not uncommon for seniors suffering from dementia to move about an area in response to confusion or anxiety. In fact, wandering can be harmless as long as it occurs during the day or in a safe, supervised environment.

Problems occur when seniors wander off at night, or wander to the extent that they are lost, as illustrated in the case above. If left unmanaged, wandering behavior can cause harm to seniors, and continual worry for those who care for them.

WHO ARE WANDERERS?

While all wanderers may appear to behave similarly, there are actually two distinct subpopulations.

The first group is composed of those who are physically

active or "on the go." These individuals may wander because of impaired concentration, a compulsion to remain busy, a highly mobile past vocation or lifestyle, boredom or anxiety, or external factors such as medications or stimulants. For these individuals, caregivers should choose interventions that reflect the specific reasons for the behavior.

For instance, if attention is short, activities should last no more than 15 minutes. If the senior spent his or her past life being extremely active, the community will want to provide activities such as walking, swimming or physical tasks that can consume some of the individual's energy. Other ideas that may prove effective include integrating meaningful games or puzzles, or adjusting medicines or diet.

Seniors whose emotional states compel them to flee their environments comprise a second group of wanderers. They may feel anxious, unsafe, persecuted, disoriented or lost. Their goal through wandering is to return to a place and time when things made sense to them and they felt



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/ 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

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Next Advisory Board Meeting

July 9th - 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

Newsletter

Tomi Smith, Editor
D'Anne Bruetsch, Layout

Webmaster

Bert Hendriksen

Lavender Seniors welcomes all persons age 55 and older, 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 Pat, 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>

July Birthdays

July 1 Patty Overland Will Oliver	July 13 Bea Howard	July 22 Toby McGrath
July 7 Nina A. Torcoletti	July 14 Daniel Burr	July 23 Luiz Diaz
July 8 Cindy Smith	July 15 Bill Kepner Suzanne Templeton James Eilers	July 24 Marion Abdulah Pat Cull
July 9 Toni Langfield J.O. DePoe	July 16 Nancy Fugett Marie Kochaver	July 26 Reed Wilgoren Jennifer Sprinkles
July 10 Julie Newman	July 17 Kenneth Athey Brenda Williams	July 27 Charlene K. Shores Thomas Daniels
July 11 Verne Nelson	July 19 Paul Martinez, Jr. Cynthia Dunn	July 30 Nacho Aguirre
July 12 Paul Minar Patricia Sousa		

MONTHLY POTLUCK

Saturday, Jul 12th 12 noon to 2pm

Program: Rev. Byron Williams

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



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: \$20 \$35* \$50 \$100 \$250 \$1000 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**

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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

(Continued from page 1)

secure. When caring for these individuals, design interventions that are closely tied to reducing the anxiety. When considering alternatives for this group, caregivers need to think about how to redirect or distract the senior through environmental changes. Elements such as noise, activity or even people may be creating additional stress for this wanderer, so caregivers want to consider that external stimulation may be driving the behavior.

DESIGNING A PROGRAM

A program to prevent wandering—one that yields maximum safety and minimum inconvenience—should take into consideration the individual, the reasons behind the wandering behavior, and the available alternatives. Here are five factors commonly considered:

Cues and Clues: A good place to start in understanding the wanderer is to simply observe the senior. Get to know his or her needs, preferences, history and values. Note details about wandering episodes: Does it appear to serve a particular need? Are there patterns, such as time of day, the presence of others, the physical location? Is the wandering linked to other primary needs such as feeding, sleeping, or toileting? Careful observation may reveal previously overlooked clues that will provide meaningful information about wandering behavior.

Environment: Physical environment can greatly affect a senior's sense of security and comfort, especially if the senior suffers from a disease such as Alzheimer's which magnifies a sense of loss, confusion, and anxiety. Take a good look at the environment, including colors on the wall, patterns in the carpet or wallpaper, and artwork. Do they enhance security or add to agitation?

Keep in mind that visual-spatial changes associated with dementia may make it difficult for seniors to discern two- or three-dimensional objects. So visual barriers can be an effective tool for keeping a senior within safe boundaries. Visual markers can help create barriers or camouflage exits. Communities have found that a large, black circular carpet design in front of an exit deters wanderers because they view the two-dimensional rug as a hole in the ground. Likewise, murals to camouflage doors work because when the doors are "removed," it effectively removes the trigger to escape.

Creativity knows no bounds when considering environment changes. One client, whose wife was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, installed a motion detector so that when his wife entered a room, the lights would turn on. This one idea prevented her from having to remember how to turn the lights on, and thus reduced her fearfulness and increased her comfort. Finally, it's a good idea to provide plenty of quiet locations that seniors can access on their own.

Communication: Communication, human connections and movements can greatly affect seniors' anxiety levels, contributing to their desire to wander. It's important to maintain

a calm, patient, reassuring attitude and style when communicating with them. Consider that an estimated 65 percent of what we communicate comes through our body language (including posture, gestures and facial features), 28 percent is via vocal tone and pitch, and only 7 percent is through the words we speak. Here are a few tips to ensure greater physical communication success:

- Slowly approach the senior from the front, then move to the side.
- Maintain good eye contact.
- Extend hand out with palm up while greeting the senior as they prefer.
- Be sure to smile.
- Be patient and wait for a response from the senior.

Exercising any of the above helps to establish a friendly, non-threatening impression with the senior and immediately creates a comforting setting.

Activity: Incorporate activities that connect seniors to their past interests and activity levels. Whether they previously enjoyed an extremely active, moderately active or sedentary lifestyle, connecting a present activity to that past lifestyle helps reinforce a sense of self which lessens anxiety and wandering. Activities should also consider physical capabilities and attention spans.

Gero-Psych/Pharmacological Interventions: Gero-Psych evaluations are particularly effective in dealing with those individuals who are considered at high risk for wandering. Such evaluations include a review of current medications, and a discussion of whether the current dosage should be continued or changed, and whether a new medication should be introduced. Often, feelings of persecution or severe anxiety may be relieved by medication, thus reducing the wandering behavior.

Creating an effective management plan to alleviate wandering begins with understanding the wanderer, the reasons for wandering, and the environment itself. Through consistent communication, teamwork and observation, caregivers and others can maintain a program that promotes maximum safety, security and peace for seniors.

Steve Barlam is chief professional officer and co-founder, LivHOME, Los Angeles, Calif.

Smiling is infectious; you catch it like the flu,
 When someone smiled at me today, I started smiling too.
 I passed around the corner and someone saw my grin.
 When he smiled I realized I'd passed it on to him.
 I thought about that smile then I realized its worth,
 A single smile, just like mine could travel around the earth.
 So, if you feel a smile again, don't leave it undetected.
 Let's start an epidemic quick, and get the world infected!

Jane Rule



by Todd Richmond
365Gay.com Features Editor

Born in New Jersey on March 28, 1931, Jane Rule was raised in the American Midwest and California. In 1952 she graduated from Mills College and

moved to Canada four years later, settling in British Columbia. Rule taught intermittently at the University of British Columbia until 1976 when she moved to Galiano Island.

Jane Rule is celebrated internationally for her fiction and her non-fiction. Her career began in 1964 with the publication of her novel *Desert of the Heart*. One Toronto critic wrote, "But all the time you keep turning to the photograph of the author on the jacket and wonder how such a nice looking woman could ever have chosen to do such a distasteful subject." And, that is why Jane Rule is so important. Rule was one of the first out-writers to write openly about being a lesbian in major fiction.

But, it was her 1975 book "Lesbian Issues" that catapulted her onto the world stage. Rule attempts to set down what it means to be a dyke. To do this, she beautifully measures her own attitudes toward sexuality against the images made by other women writers including Gertrude Stein, Willa Cather, Radclyffe Hall, Vita Sackville-West and others.

In all, Rule has authored twelve books all showing her to be a keen observer of social and emotional relationships, and she writes with warmth and candor.

Rule served on the executive committee of the Writers' Union of Canada.

On the subject of British Columbia's natural spaces, she is both passionate and effective. On B.C. Author Achievement Day, she was noted for having steadfastly and uniquely displayed exceptional and inspirational leadership, courage, and creativity in the literary arts since her arrival in Vancouver. She is mentor to many writers and artists.

Fremont Proclamation

On June 9, 2008, the Mayor of the City of Fremont proclaimed June 2008 as LGBT Pride Month in the city of Fremont and encouraged everyone in their community to celebrate the spirit and dedication of this vibrant community and to participate in as many festivities of Pride Month that will take place in the bay area.

Hurray for Fremont!!!!

Welcome Melissa Taylor!

We are pleased to announce that Melissa Taylor has joined our team here in the Lavender Seniors office. Melissa will fill the role of Outreach Coordinator and will be working on special projects that strengthen awareness of LGBT seniors among health and human services and our community at large. Melissa is warm, friendly and makes a great addition to the Lavender Seniors family. Welcome Melissa!

The Department of Human Services Information & Referral Specialists is here to assist you

Please call or stop by for information such as

- Area Agency on Aging funded providers
- City, County, State and Federal Agencies
- Senior Resource Guide
- Mental Health/Geriatric Care Resources
- Senior Housing Guide
- Retirement Residences
- Long-Term Care
- Medi-Cal
- Intakes for Linkages and Multi-Service Senior Program (MSSP) Care Management Services

Information and Referral for seniors and adults with disabilities is available Monday through Friday, 8:30a.m. – 5:00p.m. by calling (510) 238-3931

Department of Human Services
150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 4340
Oakland, CA. 94612

Program Funded By:
Alameda County Area Agency on Aging City of Oakland

LOVE AND MARRIAGE

Trying to decide whether to tie the knot? Experts in gay relationships say it's important to make the decision based on what marriage means to you and your partner. Younger couples, who haven't individuated fully, may feel pressure by family, friends and society, says Walnut Creek psychologist Rodney Karr. To navigate the decision, ask yourself these questions, from Karr and Berkeley psychologist Walt Odets:

- What does marriage mean to me? To my partner
- Do I want children, and how does marriage play a part?
- Why is it important for me to get married? Is it for my relatives, society, or for me?

- Jessica Yadegaran

July Book Review

The Fall of the Evangelical Nation: The Surprising Crisis Inside The Church

By Christine Wicker

Harper Collins-\$24.95

For the past 30 years the American public has been skillfully hoodwinked by the Fundamentalist Christians who arrogantly declared that they alone spoke for the Protestant wing of religion in America. This must have been a surprise to organizations such as the National Council of Churches that speaks for mainline denominations such as the Methodists, Baptists and others. The media meekly went along with the new trend. When moral issues such as homosexuality or abortion came up CNN and other networks would rush to consult Jerry Falwell, Pat Robinson, or Billy Graham for their revered opinions. The pastors on the left were usually ignored.

Now Christine Wicker, who worked as a feature writer and religious reporter for the **Dallas Morning News**, has blown the whistle. The pious emperor has no godly clothes left to wear. Wicker has patiently poured over church

records and surveys, including data provided by George Barna. The right wing claims to constitute at least 25% of the religious in America. But close scrutiny of official figures reveals they only represent 7% of the grand total.

Many of those who profess their faith only attend services occasionally and give even less when the collection plate is passed. Statistics can be quite misleading. One person may attend several churches over a period of years. But he or she will be counted as a lifetime member. Many of these folks are no longer on the membership rolls. Remember that whenever you hear the Southern Baptists claim to head an army of 16 million faithful.

The fastest growing group is actually the non-believers, especially among the young.

Let us also keep in mind that those church goers who aggressively attack gays for attempt to marry have many beams in their own eyes. The highest rate of divorce is found among fundamentalists in the South. They also have problems with abortion and premarital sex.

Evangelicals who are surveyed regarding their opinions on gay life are divided. 25% disagree that homosexuality is a sin. In this survey sex between the unmarried, 40% don't think it is wrong.

Wicker feels that mega churches may be a fad. They are forced to maintain huge budgets based on high attendance. Whenever a charismatic minister leaves the flock, attendance and dollars plunge. The younger generation is now leaning toward the midsized neighborhood church. Wicker believes only 17% of the

faithful will continue to support the right wing churches.

One significant aspect of the religious scene neglected by Wicker is the clear emergence of the religious left which has been largely silent since the 1970s. A classic example is the Sojourner Movement lead by Rev. Jim Wallis, who is pro gay and believes that younger religious folks are more interested in climate change and poverty than gay marriage or abortion as pressing issues.

Christine Wicker shines a piercing bright light on the current social scene that cannot be ignored. -Frank Howell

Rev. Byron Williams to Speak at July Potluck

The subject of same sex marriage continues to dominate the headlines. Rev. Williams, pastor of a small non-denominational church in Berkeley, is a widely read columnist whose articles appear twice a week in the Ang newspapers in the East Bay. In a recent column he pointed out that the time for gay unions has arrived. He spoke recently to the Hayward Democrats and appeared on a panel last year on gay marriage sponsored by the Lighthouse Community Center. - Frank Howell

HIV/AIDS Among People 50+

The number of persons aged 50 years and older living with HIV/AIDS is on the rise. In 2005, persons aged 50 and over accounted for:

15% of new HIV/AIDS diagnoses

24% of persons living with HIV/AIDS (vs. 17% in 2001)

19% of all AIDS diagnoses

29% of persons living with AIDS

35% of all deaths of persons with AIDS

HIV/AIDS rates in this age group were 12 times as high among blacks and 5 times as high among Hispanics compared with whites. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends routine HIV screening for adults up to age 64 and adolescents, including pregnant women. Those 64 and over should be counseled to receive HIV testing if they have risk factors for HIV.

Source: CDC HIC/AIDS Update, 2/29/08

Interested in participating in HIV prevention programs?

Lavender Seniors seeks to determine if any of our members would like to participate in HIV research and prevention programs. If you are HIV positive and interested in participating in a focus group or speaking to other seniors and youth groups about living with HIV/AIDS, please contact Dan Ashbrook at 510-667-9655 Ext 3 or by email at dan@lavenderseniors.org.

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.

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 25 Years Experience
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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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Vicki Harris, RDHAP

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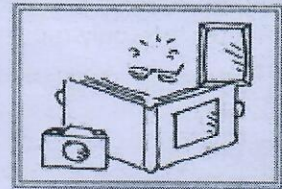
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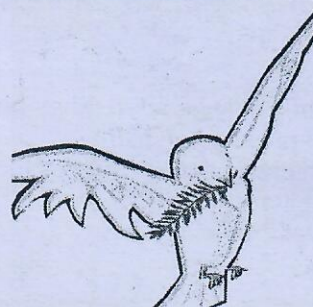
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Sunthie Calalo
 Operation Manager

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 San Ramon, CA 94582

925-560-0490
 510-305-8557
 Fax: 510-583-1954
jmcalalo@sbcglobal.net



July 2008

Schedule of Events

Jul. 7 - 1:00 PM to 3:00PM- Coming Out Again Group – (1st Mon.) 1901 Hearst Ave. Berkeley, in the library. Co-sponsored by Lavender Seniors and North Berkeley Senior Center

Jul 9 - 7:00 PM – 8:30PM – Lavender Seniors Board Meeting –(Wed. before Potluck) 1395 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro.

Jul 10 and 24 - Seniors Men's Afternoon. (2nd & 4th Thurs) 2712 Telegraph Ave. Berkeley at the Pacific Center Co-Sponsor: Pacific Center 510-548-8283

Jul 12- 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM –Lavender Potluck (2nd Sat.) 1395 Bancroft Ave, San Leandro- Program: Rev. Byron Williams

Jul 13 – 5:30 to 6:30 PM – Fellows of the East Bay – (2nd Sun.) 1288 9th Street, Berkeley. Please bring \$4.00 (Donation) Door Charge, Plus Food, Dessert or Drink to Share. Social Hour 5:30 - Dinner 6:30.

Jul 18 - 12:30 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: Stagebridge

Jul 25 – 12:00PM – 2:00PM – South County Lunch Bunch and Talk About, 40086 Paseo Padre Pkwy, Fremont. (4th Fri.) Program: Stagebridge. **FREE LUNCH** for LGBT Residents. Sponsor: City of Fremont, Human Services Dept. For more info. Contact Ina Mae Murri 510-490-5425.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 Inde- pendenc	5
6	7 Coming Out	8	9 Board Mtg	10 Sr Mens	11	12 PotLuck
13 Fellows	14	15	16	17	18 Lunch Bunch	19
20	21	22	23	24 Sr Mens	25 South County	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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; 1/2 half page inserts are the same amount. Must be received by 10th of preceding month.