

**LAVENDER
SENIORS**
of the East Bay

Lavender Notes

A Project of the Tides Center

1395 Bancroft Avenue

San Leandro, CA 94577

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Happy New Year!

Lavender Seniors have a busy year ahead! Yes the economy is bad and I don't doubt that most people are tired of hearing about it. What can we do? What will we do? Lavender Seniors goal in 2010 is to focus on quality in our core services and continue to demonstrate to our foundation, government and individual donors what a valuable asset Lavender Seniors is to the East Bay.

We will improve our Friendly Visitor program with better volunteer training and management, improve our cultural competency training with updated curriculum, expand our advocacy efforts by engaging in statewide health and human service coalition work and continue outreach with our senior and LGBT community partners. Currently Lavender Seniors is planning a smart nutrition initiative to improve our member's ability to prevent chronic conditions through a healthy diet. If funded, we could see an array of fresh new choices at our meal programs, monthly health and wellness segments in the newsletter, nutritional coaching trainings, educational events and on-site nutritionists. I will personally stay positive, continue to raise a positive impact on the community and have fun doing it! 2010 will be an exciting year and I wish everyone a fantastic one!

Peace- Dan Ashbrook, Director



Did Social Security Stop Your Benefits Because You Had an Arrest Warrant?

You may be able to start your benefits again and get thousands of dollars back in benefits. A class action lawsuit settlement (*Martinez v. Astrue*) says: Social Security cannot deny or stop benefits because of most outstanding arrest warrants; Social Security must stop collecting overpayments based on most outstanding warrants; For 80,000 people, Social Security must pay back all benefits that didn't pay or that it collected as overpayments. These benefits may total over \$500 million dollars. Many can get their benefits back with over 200,000 people being helped by the lawsuit. The benefits you can get back are: Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Special Veterans Benefits (SVB). This case will not help you if you were convicted and sentenced for a crime and violated your probation or parole or you have an outstanding warrant for flight and/or escape which is very rare. Social Security will send notices to class members; Make sure they have your current address. People who receive Social Security (not SSI or SVB) can update their current address online at www.socialsecurity.gov/changeofaddress. If you receive SSI benefits, you should visit your local Social Security office and ask them to put your name, address, Social Security number and phone number on the "Martinez list."

Source: National Senior Citizens Law Center, December 9, 2009

Lunch Bunch Date Changed

For January, 2010, the Lunch Bunch will be held on, January 22nd.

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, Rob Mills
Pat Skillen, Tomi Smith,
Members-at-large

Next Advisory Board Meeting

Dec 9th, 7PM. Call 510-667-9655 for more information.
All are welcome; public comments take place at 7PM.

Staff

Dan Ashbrook, Director
Tomi Smith, Project Administrator

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>

January Birthdays

Jan. 1 st Ed J.	William P. Jan. 14 th Ann B.	Jan. 24 th Godfrey W.
Jan. 2 nd Peg P.	Jan. 15 th Ina M. M.	Jan. 25 th Bob C.
Jan. 6 th George C.	Jan. 17 th R. D.	Sr. Clarice S.
Jan. 11 th Ellen G.	Jan. 22 nd Anna R. M.	Jan. 27 th Susan V.
Jan. 13 th		Fran K.

MONTHLY POTLUCK

Saturday, Jan. 9th - 12 noon to 2pm

Program: Lou Ceci, Author of "Comfort Me".

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



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.

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 LGBT 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.

Here's my gift of: \$20 \$35* \$50 \$100 \$250 \$1000 Other \$ _____

Annual Courtesy Giving Levels

- Lavender Leader \$2,000 Lavender Supporter \$5,000 Lavender Friend \$1,000

(* 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: _____ @

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- 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

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS FOR THE TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY:

TENANT & HOUSING LAW

Part II

PUBLIC HOUSING, SHELTERS, SECTION 8, OR SINGLE RESIDENT OCCUPANCIES (SROs)

All relevant state and federal laws govern public housing, shelters, section 8 programs, and single resident occupancies

(SROs), just as they apply to typical landlord-tenant situations.

What can I do if I am denied public housing?

You have the right under federal law to challenge the Housing Authority's decision. If you are denied admission to public housing, the Housing Authority must notify you in writing and explain the reasons for the denial. If you are told verbally of

a denial, do not assume that this is true. Always ask for the denial in writing.

If I am living in an SRO, can I be evicted before thirty days to avoid being subject to more stringent tenant law?

No. It is unlawful for a landlord to move a tenant before the thirty day deadline simply to avoid the attachment of additional tenant rights.

Can a homeless shelter legally house me with people of my birth sex against my wishes?

San Francisco shelters are required to house you according to your gender identity. Outside of San Francisco, there is no explicit law governing placement in shelters. Many shelters have individual policies regarding housing for transgender people.

TAKING ACTION

What should I do if I experience housing discrimination?

Keep track of any and all incidents of discrimination you experience, and keep any records of communication with a landlord, seller, or other tenant regarding the incident. When you are ready to move forward, contact Project Sentinel for further assistance. Project Sentinel is a non-profit agency that provides services to help people in California resolve housing problems. They can be reached by phone at (888) 324-7468, or online at www.housing.org. Depending

on your residency

and the location of the discrimination, you will then file local, state, and federal claims.

In San Francisco, file a complaint with the San Francisco Human Rights Commission reporting a violation of Article 33 of the San Francisco Charter and Administrative Code. In Oakland, file a complaint with the local human rights commission or contact the city or county clerk to report a violation of Chapter 9.44 of the Oakland Municipal Code. For a state claim, file a complaint with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) in order to report the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) violation. There is no charge to file a complaint, and it can be done with an attorney. Though state law is currently more favorable than federal law to an aggrieved tenant, it may be prudent to file a federal claim as well. For

a federal claim, file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

-From The National Lawyers Guild Bay Area Chapter

Crab Feed!

Celebrating Martin Luther Kings Birthday & Black History Month

Presented by:
East Oakland Senior Center
9255 Edes Ave.
Oakland, CA 94603

Saturday: January 23, 2010

Time: 6:00 – 10:00 PM

Donation: \$40.00

No host cocktails from 6:00 – 7:00PM - Feast Served at 7:00PM

Menu incl.: Cracked Crab, Salad, Spaghetti, Garlic Bread, and Desserts

Enjoy an evening of dancing to music by Jewels, Raffles, Games, and Door Prizes.

For Tickets and Information Contact: Lucille Jackson, Janet Hill, Wm. August, Richard Leftridge, Clovis Long, Agathia Gibson, Florence Wallace, and Kay Barrett

(510) 615-5731

Senior Issues Explored at Cathedral Meeting

The first Annual Healthcare Policy Forum was held at the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland on November 20th. Frank Howell and Marvin Burrows represented the Lavender Seniors.

The morning session presented a panel of speakers spearheaded by California State Senator Loni Hancock. The other panel members included

Joanne Handy President and CEO of Visiting Nurses Assoc. of Boston, State Assemblymembers Joan Buchanan and Nancy Skinner. Peter Szutu, President and CEO of the Center for Elders Independence presided over the panel.

All of the panel members emphasized the critical shortage of state and federal funds available for services to the elderly. The ultimate conclusion reached is that non-profit organizations must look to themselves and their major donors for financing in the future.

Loni Hancock made the key point that the courts may be our last governmental ray of hope since the legislature and the governor have made it quite clear that no more funds will be forthcoming." Put a bad crisis to good use" seemed to be the motto of the panel.

The most challenging part of the day long conference emerged as the afternoon workshops got underway.

The four groups of about forty people each included, Dementia & Alzheimer's, Planning For The Future, Bridging Silos in the Continuum of Care, State & Federal Policy Changes Affecting Bay Area Seniors, and Promoting Aging in Place Through Housing & Service Options.

We attended the session on Aging in Place. A major highlight was provided by Daniel Sawislak, Executive Director of Resources For Community Development. He specializes in the building and development of housing especially designed for senior citizens. In his twenty years of experience he discovered the vital need for specialized services that are necessary for the elderly. Simply providing housing is not enough.

Transportation and attention to the architecture of the building is important. There should be no stairs and hand rails serve a necessary role in prevention of falls.

Models for Aging in Place were explored as well as

the connections that must be established for a successful program.

Let us hope that future programs will emerge as a result of this promising conference.]

-Frank Howell



John A. Perez

History was made Thursday, December 10, 2009, when Assemblymember John A. Perez was chosen by the California Assembly's Democratic Caucus to become the first openly-LGBT Latino Assembly Speaker.

His selection is a testament to what he has already accomplished in the Legislature and his history of leadership in the fight for worker's rights, the environment, the civil rights movement and full equality for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, and the trust his colleagues have in his leadership at this critical time in California.

Geoff Kors,

Executive Director, Equality California

Lavender Seniors Members Receive Leader Awards

Congratulations to Frank Howell and Natalie Zarchin who were selected from a large outstanding pool of statewide nominees as two of 30 exceptional senior volunteer leaders to receive the 2010 California Senior Leaders Award and participate in training, recognition and networking programs. Funded by the California Wellness Foundation with technical assistance from the School of Public Health at UC Berkeley, the California Senior Leaders Program provides an opportunity to bring visibility to the often unacknowledged role of older volunteers and community activists in our communities. By supporting Frank and Natalie, the Senior Leaders Award will help shed a brighter light on all elders who making a difference in our communities.

"The Sodomy Cases: Bowers v. Hardwick and Lawrence v. Texas"

By David A.J. Richards

University of Kansas, Paperback

Conservatives often complain that their freedom in the marketplace is being threatened. But they don't appear to have much difficulty in violating the privacy rights of American citizens. The right to make love in private has meant a long and tortuous struggle throughout our history. But the major breakthrough came in 1965 in *Griswold v. Connecticut* when the Supreme Court ruled that we grownups could practice birth control. Then privacy rights began to creep forward toward court consideration of gay rights in this area. Obscenity laws were struck down, women's rights emerged and then *Bowers v. Hardwick* came before the court.

When the court ruled in favor of *Bowers* it was a crushing blow. The state of Georgia presented a pathetic case arguing that

even though the law was rarely enforced it was needed to prevent polygamy! Michael Bowers, the attorney general of Georgia was caught up in an adulterous affair as he stood arguing the case.

Justice Powell proclaimed that he had never met a gay person, even though he was surrounded by a sea of lavender law clerks. It was a narrow ruling. Justice Powell emerged as the swing vote, admitting later that he had made a mistake.

Seven years later the issue again presented itself. Gay attorneys had assumed it would be years before such a case would again be considered by the court. The majority decision was written by Justice Kennedy, a Reagan appointee from California. Kennedy wrote, "When sexuality finds overt expression in intimate conduct with another person, the conduct can be but one element in a personal bond that is more enduring. The liberty protected by the Constitution allows homosexual persons the right to make this choice." Kennedy drew on the European Court of Human Rights when they affirmed this basic human need.

Justice Scalia had reasoned that a favorable decision could lead to such things as gay marriage. Such foresight!

David Richards, professor of law at New York University and author of "The Case For Gay Rights: From Bowers to Lawrence and Beyond," has given us a meticulous and riveting account of the legal and

social issues that drove the issue of LGBT rights to its logical conclusion. Now it is up to us to carry the struggle to the heights of Constitutional fulfillment.

-Frank Howell

Cleaning for a Reason!

If you know any woman with cancer or currently undergoing Chemo, please pass the word to her that there is a cleaning service that provides **FREE** housecleaning - **1 time per month for 4 months** while she is in treatment.

All she has to do is sign up and have her doctor fax a note confirming the treatment. Cleaning for a Reason will have a participating maid service in her zip code area arrange for the service.

<http://www.cleaningforareason.org>

Joke of the Month

A couple in their nineties are both having problems remembering things. During a checkup, the doctor tells them that they're physically okay, but they might want to start writing things down to help them remember

Later that night, while watching TV, the old man gets up from his chair. 'Want anything while I'm in the kitchen?' he asks. 'will you get me a bowl of ice cream?'

'Sure..'

'Don't you think you should write it down so you can remember it?' she asks.

'No, I can remember it.'

'Well, I'd like some strawberries on top, too. Maybe you should write it down, so as not to forget it?'

He says, 'I can remember that. You want a bowl of ice cream with strawberries.'

'I'd also like whipped cream. I'm certain you'll forget that, write it down?' she asks.

Irritated, he says, 'I don't need to write it down, I can remember it! Ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream - I got it, for goodness sake!'

Then he toddles into the kitchen. After about 20 minutes, the old man returns from the kitchen and hands his wife a plate of bacon and eggs.. she stares at the plate for a moment.

'Where's my toast?'



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January 2010

Schedule of Events

Jan. 1st - 2:00PM – 4:00PM - Lavender Women’s Book Group (1st Fri.) North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MKJ Jr. Way, (58th St.) Oakland – **Reading: “Remedios: Stories of Earth and Iron from the History of Puertorriquetas, by Aurora Levins Morales.**

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

Jan 6th - 7:00 PM to 8:30PM – Lavender Seniors Board Meeting (Wed. before Potluck) 1395 Bancroft Ave, San Leandro

Jan. 7th and 21st - 1:30PM to 3:30PM – Support / Discussion Group for Aging Queer Women, (1st and 3rd Thurs.) -The Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Ave. (at Derby) Berkeley.

Jan. 9th – 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM –Lavender Seniors Potluck (2nd Sat.)1395 Bancroft Ave, San Leandro; **Program: Lou Ceci, Author of “Comfort Me.”**

Jan. 12th - (2nd Tues.) PFLAG Meeting, 7:30PM, Holy Redeemer Lutheran 35660 Cedar Blvd., Newark

Jan. 14th and 28th - 1:30PM to 3:30PM - Seniors Men’s Group. (2nd and 4th Thurs.), 2712 Telegraph Ave. Berkeley at the Pacific Center Co-Sponsor: Pacific Center 510-548-8283

Jan. 16th - Fellows of the East Bay (3rd Sat.) 1823 9th Street (at Hearst), Berkeley. **Social Hour 5:30, Dinner 6:30.**

Jan. 22nd ONLY - 12:30 to 2:30 PM – Lavender Seniors Lunch Bunch, (4th Fri.) North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 MLK Jr. Way. (58th St.) Oakland. **Sponsored by City of Oakland Aging and Adult Services. Program: Integrative Therapies, Holistic Approaches to Self-Care by Pathways.**

Jan. 22nd - South County Lunch Bunch and Talk About (4th Fri.) 40086 Paseo Padre Pkwy, Fremont. **Program: “Laughing Lydia.” 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 Book Group	2
3	4 Coming Out	5	6 Board Mtg	7 Womens Group	8	9 Potluck
10	11	12 PFLAG Newark	13	14 Senior Men	15	16 Fellows
17	18	19	20	21 Womens Group	22 LUNCH No/So	23
24	25	26	27	28 Senior Men	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; ½ half page inserts are the same amount. Must be received by 10th of preceding month.