



Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

a Program of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

*Celebrating 30 years of outstanding service and positive change
January 2025, Volume 31 Issue 1*



Happy New Year!

We hope everyone had a nice holiday season! The Lavender Seniors Holiday party was such a fun way to end the year. Thanks to our community partners at Ghirardelli and SCAN, all of our guests were sent home with a little extra holiday cheer and a very special holiday gift box. We even had a visitor from the North Pole! Check out some of the fun and smiles below.

2025 is off to a fresh start as Elder Services resumes with our regularly scheduled monthly program of activities and events. We will be launching more in the coming months, too, so make sure to check out Third Friday Lunch Bunch to find out more.

The second cohort of Heart to Art with Derrick Bell is currently in session and continues this month on **1/14**. Stay tuned for info about the final art show and reception to be held next month. To inquire about our next cohort or be added to the mailing list, please email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Our **1/17** Third Friday Lunch Bunch will feature an introduction to Elder Services and a sneak peek into the 2025 program of activities and events. The new Elder Services Coordinator, Maya O. is highlighted in this month's Lavender Notes. Get to know her better in our special Q&A feature and find out how you can get connected for services.

Social Seniors returns on **1/31**, and we'll end the month with some fun - so grab a friend and come out or come out and make a new friend!

You can **RSVP** for Third Friday Lunch Bunch by clicking [HERE](#)

You can **RSVP** for Social Seniors by clicking [HERE](#)

The deadline to RSVP is Tuesday 1/14.

In gratitude and love,
Jessie R. Spivey (he/him)
Director of Elder Services

Please click [here](#) to become a donor and supporter.



Gary T. and Stuart C. always in the spirit



Former LSEB Board Member Carmen C. enjoying the photo booth with Pam S., Angelica C. and Meri F.



DJ Caprice played our favorite holiday hits



Elder Services welcomes Jen C. and our new partners from SCAN



Q&A



WITH

**MAYA
ORGAN**

ELDER SERVICES
COORDINATOR



Q: As a member of a different (and much younger) generation, why is working with seniors important to you?

A: Working in Elder Services is incredibly beneficial to ensuring that aging is normal and beautiful, and should be embraced and taken with ease, though that is not always the easiest with life's curveballs and societal changes. Also, I have elder parents who had me at an older age. I see the difficulties and challenges faced that life has thrown at them, and at the end of the day, what they have needed most is a sense of community. I do not want my family to go through life challenges alone, and I don't want my community to have to go through that either. I am available if you ever need to give me a call, to shoot me an email, or meet in person. We can always be of support to one another, and I look forward to furthering through with that commitment.

Q: What significance or influence has living in the bay area had in your life?

A: I was born and raised in Berkeley in a mostly single parent household with an amazing, yet crazy mother, and older brother. I have lived in quite a few places while furthering my studies and career, but a few years ago I landed back where my heart belongs: right here in Oakland. My mom raised us as any Berkeley parent should, teaching us to love yourself and share that love with others in your community. As an activist and member in the early days of ACT UP, she instilled in me the importance of the shared struggles between Black Americans and the Gay community, as well as the struggles faced by Black Americans within the queer community. She embraced me in the struggles that family members have gone through and ensured I would never have to go through similar things. This is why my work here is so important to me. I was fortunate to be taken to countless protests and community gatherings from as early as 4 years old. These protests dealt with saving the oak trees at UC Berkeley, the occupied

movement of Oakland, peace measures for communities abroad, and policy meetings over the legalization of gay marriage. My mother had lost many friends to the AIDS epidemic and participated in the AIDS Lifecycle ride for 15 years. I started my early days putting up lemonade stands to fundraise every year alongside her for future rides and the SFAF organization. I owe everything I do to my mom, for she is the one who raised me to be happy with myself and who I am in this life.

Q: Why did you want to become a part of The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center?

A: As a member of the queer community, I am fortunate to have not gone through trauma growing up with how I identify and was embraced to do so from an early age. This is why I focus on public and community service, as it is in my nature to be in an environment focused on giving back to others. I feel that is what love is in this life. The benefit of formulating bonds and connections with those in my community is a joy I gladly receive. I realize not everyone is as fortunate to have that experience, and this is why the work I do here at the center matters so much to me. It matters that people feel they have a sense of shared community, and that their voice is never lost or gone unheard. It is important that in vulnerable times, community members have a community to receive help from, that stands on ensuring their needs are heard and met. I do this work to give back to what I was originally given, and to offer that same love and acceptance to all.

To get connected to Elder Services or schedule an intake with Maya, please call 510-500-5823 or email: maya@oaklandlgbtqcenter.org.



Book-to-Screen Review

Lie with Me (2022 Film)

Based on the 2017 Novel, *Arrête avec les mensonges*, by
Philippe Besson

Translated into English (2019) by Molly Ringwald

Directed (2022) by Olivier Peyon (with English subtitles)



When my husband and I made our annual winter pilgrimage to Costa Rica for 5-6 months in December 2019, we expected we'd be staying until late May or early June 2020. As virtually everyone on the planet knows now, many plans for 2020-21 were

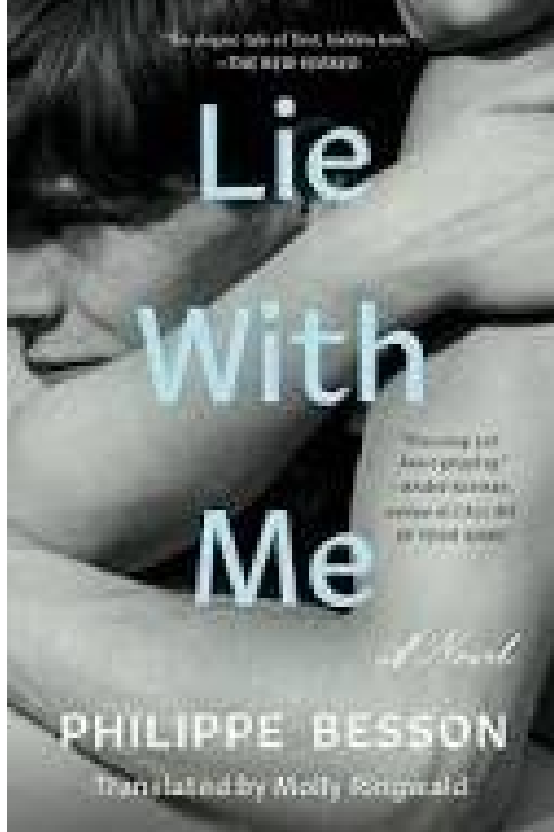
turned upside-down by Covid-19. We ultimately spent 18 months (until June 2021) somewhat stranded in our rural “upgraded-tico” house – with 20,000 acres of tropical rain forest as our back yard – since there were no planes going in or out of the country. There was not even any mail being exchanged with the U.S. (by Costa Rica or 107 other countries, who refused to deal with U.S. mail)!

In fact, I casually approached our little post office in nearby Pérez Zeledón to send a graduation check – and a grandfatherly cheerleading letter, of course – to my first-born granddaughter, who was graduating in that awful upending-for-graduates year (they held “drive-by” graduation for Horizon High that year – and in 2021 – no whirling mortar-boards in the air with all of your fellow/sister classmates)! The correo agent serving the “preferencia” line (for disabled, old or pregnant customers, who go to the front of the line) just laughed at me when – after a bit of a chat about things – I plunked down my nicely-printed envelope and told him what I wanted to do. This was NOT going to happen that year! I had to give up my plan of the USPS actually delivering the letter and \$\$\$ – I learned instead about Venmo and emailed the letter. It was hard to miss my first grandchild’s first graduation, but that was the rules, grampalonghair!

Normally, since both of my bio-kids are avid readers (my daughter and her husband also started a now-world-renowned literary school in Denver – Lighthouse Writers Workshop), we receive a number of good books as Christmas presents (family tradition: each person opening a gift-book reads aloud the first couple paragraphs for the assembled family members). Those books – frequently with LGBTQ+, African or Aging themes – usually hold us, since we read to each other a couple of hours each day. Everything moves slower down here in Central America.

By the time it had become clear we would be spending our first full calendar year down here, we had run out of newly-published books to read. Did we really want to read “Little Women,” “Maurice” or “Anne of Green Gables” again? As fate would have it, the highly-acclaimed Besson novel mentioned above had been translated into English (by Molly Ringwald of “Breakfast Club” fame) in 2019. So I promptly downloaded that version on my Kindle when it became available as an e-book. I had a feeling that – since there was no Walt Whitman Bookshop or Mama Bear’s down here – it might be years before such a translation would be available in Tinamastes.

(Incidentally, the only foreign language offered in my small-town Michigan high school was Latin, so semi-fluency in Russian, French and Spanish only happened in adulthood – much of that fluency lost during 30 years in mostly Anglophone – and sometimes Francophone – Africa).



Once we'd finished reading that amazing book, I immediately wrote a review of it for the September 2020 *Lavender Notes* newsletter. I've just re-read that (immodestly, brilliant!) review and was struck by one paragraph in that review:

“Though this widely-acclaimed LGBTQ+ themed book is being compared with *Call Me By Your Name*, the André Aciman book made into an award-winning 2017 film, there's no word currently about negotiations to make a film out of this book. Incidentally, Aciman himself reviewed the Besson book as follows:

“This one sentence: *'I remember the movement of his hips pressing against the pinball machine'* had me in its grip until the end. Two young men find each other, always fearing that life itself might be the villain standing in their way. A stunning and heart-gripping tale.” André Aciman, author of *Call Me By Your Name*

For the whole review: <https://lavenderseniors.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Lavender-Notes-September-2020.pdf>

Well, imagine our surprise, poring over last summer's 2023 Frameline Film Festival schedule, we discovered that the book HAD been made into a movie in 2022, subtitles added in time for the rigorous 2023 film festival circuit around the world, and is scheduled to be in “a theater near you” this month sometime (the DVD is also available on line as of 15th February). We streamed it by ourselves (at home) twice and once more with a friend. It was a remarkable book-to-screen adaptation of an amazing French novel (with star-studded eye candy, no less, including Victor Belmondo, whose grandfather was the famous French film actor, Jean-Paul Belmondo, a star many of us seniors may remember well).

The thrust of the book – captured very well from the outset of the film – is that a renowned author, Stéphane, has been requested to return to his home near Cologne,

France, to give a speech, sell some books and be recognized by the local community.

During a signing ceremony for one of his novels, Stéphane is confronted by Lucas, the son of Thomas, who had been the love-of-Stéphane's-life when they were teenagers.



With a swarm of brilliant flashbacks, the very secretive love life of Stéphane and Thomas is described in breathtaking fashion. Thomas was much more afraid of being “found out” at school or in the community than Stéphane was. After being secretive lovers through much of their high-school years, Thomas suddenly disappears and moves to his mother’s family’s farm in Spain. Stéphane is devastated, permanently damaged, having spent much of his life sublimating the pain of that unrequited love. He has even named one of his best-known heroes after his lost love. For 35 years, he’s been dreading (though subconsciously eager to know more about what happened to Thomas) any re-visit to his home turf.

The narrator of this film is a gay senior – and he has secretly spent the remainder of his life in love with this gorgeous youth from his teen-age years. Many of us who have our own past that we may dwell on – or be haunted by – from time to time, may be very moved by this film. Whether a person reads the book first or not, I guarantee this film will make you think back on your own life.

- Dr. John David Dupree, Tinamastes, Costa Rica

STORIES OF OUR LIVES

We are currently seeking participants to be interviewed for Stories of Our Lives

If you or someone that you know would like to be featured in

Looking 4 Facilitators!



We have been working to get a Gay men's and a Lesbian women's affinity group for seniors, up and running. While we have received a lot of interest from participants, we have yet to find facilitators for the groups.

The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center offers a free facilitator training for interested participants. For more info, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

January Activities

Third Friday Lunch Bunch

**RSVP
REQUIRED**

Every **Third Friday @ 12:30pm**
North Oakland Senior Center
5714 MLK Way



For more info please call **510-882-2286** or email: info@lavenderseniors.org

Jan 17

Third Friday Lunch Bunch

Join us for our first Third Friday Lunch Bunch of the new year. Learn about all the amazing offerings available to you through Elder Services including Heart to Art, Elders Therapy Group and more. We will also be introducing a couple of new programs and activities that will launch in 2025!

[Register](#)

Free



SOCIAL SENIORS

EVERY LAST FRIDAY 12:00PM

RSVP REQUIRED

A MONTHLY SOCIAL FOR LGBTQ+ SENIORS
THE WATERMARK, 1440 40TH STREET, EMERYVILLE, CA 94608
FOR MORE INFO PLEASE CALL 510-882-2286 OR EMAIL: INFO@LAVENDERSENIORS.ORG

The poster features a group of five diverse senior citizens smiling. The background is white with colorful confetti and comic-style speech bubbles containing event details.

Jan 31

Social Seniors January 2025

Join us at the Watermark in Emeryville for the highly anticipated return of Social Seniors. We'll be raffling off some very cool prizes to some very lucky people, so come out for some great company, good food and fun!

Register

Free

COMMUNITY
CALENDAR

RSVP, please email Dawn Edwards at ms.edwards73@gmail.com.

Trans Masc Affinity Support Group

Every second Wednesday 7:00pm - 8:30pm

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

A monthly Affinity group for community members who identify as Trans Masculine only. For more info, please call 510-882-2286.

POSTPONED - Senior Gay Men's Affinity Group

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

A monthly Affinity group for Gay Men ages 55+. Group start date and facilitator TBA. For more info or to be added to the mailing list, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

POSTPONED - Senior Lesbian Women's Affinity Group

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

A monthly Affinity group for Lesbian Women ages 55+. Group start date and facilitator TBA. For more info or to be added to the mailing list, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Resource Hub



[Sign up for Direct Services](#)

The Center's **Elder Services** promotes a positive and healthy quality of life for elder LGBTQ+ individuals 55+ by ensuring they continue to be supported, respected, and connected as they advance in age. We collaborate with existing agencies working with LGBTQ seniors to connect people to needed resources and work to identify gaps in services so that we can find ways to fill those gaps.

The Center's Elder Services Program participants also have access to other Center services to include:

- Benefits Enrollment

- Care Management & Service Coordination Assistance
- Emergency Rental Assistance*
- Food Pantry
- HIV/STI testing and treatment
- Linkage to Primary Care
- Mental Health Subsidies*
- PEP/PrEP enrollment
- Transportation Assistance*

*rental/transportation assistance and other subsidies are limited and provided to qualified enrolled program participants as they become available.

To inquire about case management/direct services, please click the button above. For more info, please email: maya@oaklandlgbtqcenter.org or call 510-500-5823.



The Center's Food Pantry Is Open
Monday thru Friday, 1pm-4pm
 Please call 510-882-2286 for more information.

Let's Get Excited About...

SEXUAL HEALTH

The **Glenn Burke Clinic** offers our community high-quality, full-service, STI & HIV prevention and treatment services, to help you to stay sexually healthy all year long.



Schedule an appointment by using the QR Code or call 510-781-2639

The Glenn Burke Wellness Clinic is a project of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center



A recovery meeting for LGBTQIA+ Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Mondays 7pm - 8:15pm
 Starting May 15th at the
 Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

This is a discussion meeting with different topics read each week.


For information contact
 The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center
 Call 1(510) 882-2286 or visit their website at



Narcotics Anonymous®

Every Tuesday @ 7pm





Alameda County District 3 Winter Shelter Resources

**Need shelter or housing this winter?
Help is just a call away!**

Call 211 (Eden Information and Referral) for assistance.

Shelters have limited capacity. Please call ahead before arriving.

OAKLAND

East Oakland Community Project
7515 International Blvd.
Oakland, CA 94621
(510) 532-3211

St. Mary's Center
925 Brockhurst St.
Oakland, CA 94608
(510) 923-9600, Ext. 297

St. Vincent de Paul
675 23rd St.
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 638-7600

ALAMEDA

The Village of Love
431 Stardust Pl.
Alameda, CA 94501
(510) 995-8936
info@thevillageoflove.com

City of Alameda Warming Shelter
Rotations among three churches.
(628) 233-2545

Rotations among three churches:

Christ Episcopal Church
1700 Santa Clara Ave.
Alameda, CA 94501

Trinity Lutheran Church
1323 Central Ave.
Alameda, CA 94501


Twin Towers United Methodist
1411 Oak St.
Alameda, CA 94501

SAN LEANDRO

Building Futures
1840 Fairway Dr.
San Leandro, CA 94577
(510) 613-5268
(510) 686-2332

**UNINCORPORATED
AREA**

First Presbyterian Church of
Hayward
2490 Grove Way
Castro Valley, CA 94546
(510) 581-6203



City of Oakland Senior Centers

Four senior centers are located throughout the City of Oakland and managed by the City's Human Services Department - Aging & Adult Services Division. Senior centers provide social, recreational, nutritional and educational activities to older adults in our community.

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/senior-centers>

Downtown Oakland (DOSC)

200 Grand Ave | Oakland, CA 94610
(510) 238-3284 | DOSC@oaklandca.gov

East Oakland (EOSC)

9255 Edes Street | Oakland, CA 94603
(510) 615-5731 | EOSC@oaklandca.gov

North Oakland (NOSC)

5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way | Oakland, CA 94609
(510) 597-5085 | NOSC@oaklandca.gov

West Oakland (WOSC) **TEMPORARILY CLOSED**

1724 Adeline St | Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 238-7016 | WOSC@oaklandca.gov

Pacific Center for Human Growth

Founded in 1973, Pacific Center for Human Growth is the oldest LGBTQIA+ center

in the Bay Area, the third oldest in the nation, and operates the only sliding scale mental health clinic for LGBTQIA+ and QTBIPOC people and their families in Alameda County.

<https://www.pacificcenter.org/>
2130 Center St Suite 200 | Berkeley, CA 94704
(510) 548-8283 | info@pacificcenter.org

Rainbow Community Center

The Rainbow Community Center of Contra Costa County started in 1995 and continues to envision a society that embraces acceptance, safety and equality for all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

<https://www.rainbowcc.org/>
2380 Salvio Street, Suite 301 | Concord, CA 94520
(925) 692-0090 | rcc@rainbowcc.org

Community Phone Calls

This award-winning program offers activities, education, support groups, and friendly conversation over the phone or online.

View the Current catalog of community phone calls [here](#). Check the website for more information. To participate in these or other Well Connected telephone activities, or to learn more about their programs, call 877-797-7299 or email coviaconnections@covia.org.

Friendly Voices Phone Buddies for Seniors

Our mission is to create a vital human connection for isolated seniors through weekly phone conversations with trained, compassionate volunteers.

Sign up [here](#) or call (650) 395-8017.
<https://friendlyvoices.org/>

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay, a Program of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center



Mailing Address:
490 Lake Park Ave. #10530,
Oakland, CA 94610-8019

Donations:

Please make all checks payable to "The Oakland LGBTQ Center" and include "Lavender Seniors" in the memo section

510-882-2286
info@lavenderseniors.org
<http://www.lavenderseniors.org>
<http://www.oaklandlgbtqcenter.org>

Contact

Donate

Lavender Seniors | The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center 3207 Lakeshore Avenue |
Oakland, CA 94610-8019 US

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