

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

a Program of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

Celebrating 30 years of outstanding service and positive change November 2024, Volume 30 Issue 11



Happy Pearl Anniversary to Lavender Seniors of the East Bay! Celebrating 30 years of outstanding service and positive change, by some amazing members of the community, we look forward to honoring all year long. To kick things off, our friends at the City of San Leandro are hosting a special ceremony and reception to commence Lavender Seniors 30th Anniversary. Celebrations will continue throughout the upcoming months and will conclude in the Spring with a formal Gala. Save the date coming soon...

I am happy to announce and welcome Maya Organ (she/her) as our new Elder Services Coordinator. She is a Berkeley native with a background in healthcare administration and passionate about working with the senior community. Meet Maya at our next event or stop by the center and say hello.

The Lakeshore LGBTQ Cultural District will host a Progressive Pride Flag Raising and Dedication Ceremony on Wednesday November 13th at Noon in front of The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center. Please do not miss this historic day!

Save the date and join us on Tuesday 11/19 as we honor Transgender Day of Remembrance at Fluid510. Doors open at 5pm, with a heartfelt program from 6pm to 8:30pm. Together, we will share food, celebrate performances, and hold a moment of silence for those we have lost.

Please join us at the San Leandro Library on 11/22 in your "purple best", for an incredibly special ceremony to honor Lavender Seniors. This special ceremony will be followed by a lunch and reception. Please note - This event is happening instead of our regularly scheduled Third Friday Lunch Bunch and will be one of our last gatherings of the year. We hope to see you there!

RSVP for San Leandro Library Ceremony & Reception <u>HERE</u>

The deadline to RSVP is Tuesday 11/12.

Due to the Holiday, November's Social Seniors is postponed. See you in December for our annual Holiday Gala at The North Oakland Senior Center!

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

Please click here to donate and support our seniors.





Boss Ross (Craig M.) made a cameo at October's Social Seniors Halloween Bash

Ally and friend of LSEB Veronica L. joined by our costume costume winner, "Crazy Dog Lady" Bobbe L at October's Social Seniors.



Thank you to our presenters from October's Third Friday Lunch Bunch, Joanie from BACS, Michael from Captel and Jenni from LASHICAP



Costume contest runner-up, JoAnne C joined by longtime LSEB participant and friend Harry O at October's Social Seniors.

STORIES OF OUR LIVES

Stories of our lives will return in January 2025



Lavender Seniors of the East Bay 30th Anniversary, 1994 - 2024

Celebrate with us!

The Lavender Seniors Advisory Council (please consider joining!) and the Oakland LGBTQ+ Community Center will start celebrating Lavender Senior's 30th "Pearl" anniversary, this month with a special ceremony and reception in San Leandro and culminating with a gala to be held in late spring 2025 prior to the flurry of Pride Month activities. Date, venue, menus, entertainment, and other logistical details will be announced in an upcoming issue of Lavender Notes.

Meanwhile, we are taking the liberty of including scanned copies of a few previous newsletter pages to show how the 10th anniversary was celebrated in November 2004. We are hoping that other community members may have clearer and more identifiable photos of that 2004 occasion to share in future newsletters.

We have been unable to verify (via old newsletters) whether there was a 5th anniversary celebration in November 1999 or a 15th in November 2009, though the tradition of MotherTongue Feminist Readers Theater performing seems to have begun before the turn of the 21st century! As many of you know, the choral group once called the Oakland East Bay Gay Men's Chorus – which had its first performance at a Lavender Seniors event in January 2000 – has regularly provided entertainment in conjunction with their holiday concerts in December and has performed at each Lavender Seniors anniversary celebration, as well.

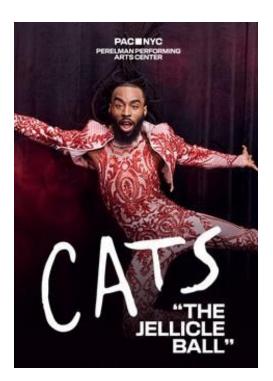
In this newsletter and throughout our 30th (Pearl) celebration, we will also gather photos of how the 20th (Platinum) and 25th (Silver) anniversaries were celebrated in 2014 and 2019. Interesting to note, the 10th (Diamond) anniversary in 2004 also included a "swing band" called Deuce, as well as the Gay Men's Chorus. It was held at the Montclair Women's Cultural Arts Club at 1650 Mountain Boulevard in Oakland - which has reportedly been converted into a Montessori school, so is no longer available. Suggestions for other appropriate venues appreciated from other Lavender Seniors participants (again, join the Lavender Seniors Advisory Council and help plan this event)!

Here are a few compiled old newsletter pages (also available in our web archive (https://lavenderseniors.org/newsletter/) showing the diamond anniversary in 2004.



LGBTQ+ seniors witness musical revival in Manhattan

Tenth Anniversary Gala Celebration.

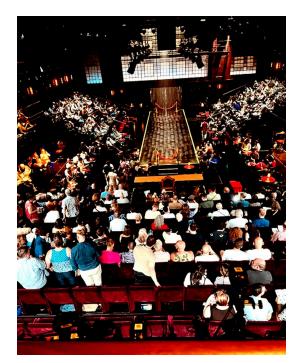


Lavender Seniors & Queer Cats

The long-awaited queer-themed "Cats" revival opened at the Ground Zero Memorial's Perelman Performing Arts Center in Manhattan, deliberately scheduled during June, Pride Month. Using the "ballroom scene" in an LGBTQ+ night club – complete with runway/catwalk, competition categories and surrounded by cabaret tables, the play is already earning Tony award buzz in next year's potential Best Revival category. Because it has been sold out every night since its opening, the run – originally scheduled through July – was extended through September!

The New York Times rave review of the production in the 20th June issue trumpeted: "A 10th Life for Those Jellicle 'Cats,' Now on the Runway"

Resetting the "Memory" musical in the world of ballroom competition makes for a joyful reincarnation!



Ballroom Scene from the Balcony

Inspired by Andrew Lloyd Webber's longrunning musical, "Cats" (it ran for 18+ years on Broadway) – which was based on Americankum-British poet/essayist/playwright, T.S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats," – this "queer" production melds the phenomena of ever-so-gender-fluid Vogue, Ballroom, Music and Dance scenes in a delightful and energetic new way.

Bill Rauch, Artistic Director of the Perelman, provided one of his many fan bases – Lavender Seniors of the East Bay – with ten tickets – in the front row of the balcony for some of the best views of the ballroom, the runway/catwalk and the colorful cabaret tables surrounding the catwalk. These tables might be occupied by members of the various competing "houses" (e.g., House of Glamour, House of La Beija, House of Aviance and the House of Eminence) or just by eager observers of the ballroom scene.

https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/20/theater/cats-the-jellicle-ball-review.html? unlocked_article_code=1.100.lJ0f.lHwFprZKogpg&smid=url-share



Some of the Lavender Seniors in that front row of seats admitted to having issues with acrophobia ("fear of heights") sitting somewhat suspended over that whole ballroom scene.

Besides the beautiful music and the calisthenic/athletic gymnastics and choreography involved in this production, the audience participation reminded some of the Lavender Seniors of the cult classic film, "Rocky Horror Picture Show," since a majority of the audience seemed to know the time to applaud, to laugh and to scream for joy!

A creative "Cats" Umbrella in the Gift Shop!

One of the most magnificent scenes was when a suspended ladder dropped down from the rafters, allowing the "least likely" of the competition winners to ascend dramatically – step-by-step – up into "cat heaven" to be reincarnated – while the audience held one of very many standing ovations during the two-act performance.

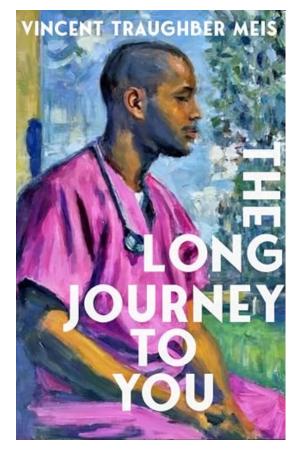
Some of the most emotional moments for many – at least the Lavender Seniors perched high above it all – would have to be the three renditions of the world-famous "Memory," which indeed brought memories to most of the LGBTQ+ seniors who had flown across the country the day before to be part of this historic moment in LGBTQ+ musical history.

Though the far northeast was experiencing something of a heat wave, our intrepid troupe experienced only the low 80s, trekking across the iconic and often-photographed Brooklyn Bridge, through Central Park, hanging out at Rockefeller Center, spending a couple days out on Fire Island, virtually everybody meeting up at some point with family members and old friends, re-visiting places from their past (and new places, as well, of course).

Who knows whether it'll be the last trans-continental trip for any/all of us old folks, but, once again, Lavender Seniors came through with another once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Some of this troupe had also been among the 15 who journeyed up to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in October 2018 for the first-ever all-LGBTQ+ version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Oklahoma," also produced and directed by openly gay/married/father of two, Bill Rauch.

Congratulations again, Bill, on another very innovative production, and thank you for your ongoing kindness to Lavender Seniors, helping keep us in the 21st century loop!





The Long Journey to You

By Vincent Traughber Meis

This 2024 novel by local (San Leandro-based) author, Vincent Traughber Meis, is a 40-yearslater follow-up ("...I'm not sure it counts as a sequel," Meis wonders out loud in the book's Acknowledgments) to the story of young Nathan Landis from Meis's 2021 book, "The Mayor of Oak Street." In the earlier book, the adolescent Nathan – who mows most of the lawns on Oak Street – has the unusual habit of doing reconnaissance on neighbors' homes and finds ways to enter them when he knows people are not at home (no serious motives just nosiness/curiosity). He becomes indirectly involved in a major small-town scandal, since the older man (Dr. B) he has fallen in love with is forced to leave town after his wife shoots another male boyfriend after she finds out about the gay relationship between these two tennis partners.

Fast forward four decades and we find Nathan having survived two major losses: Dr. B, with whom he's been re-united in New Orleans when he attends Tulane, has died of HIVrelated illnesses in Barcelona. Most recently, his husband. Anthony – a chef with whom he's happily bought a home in suburban San Leandro – has been killed in one of those horrendous random shootings on the MacArthur Freeway. He's had several other checkered relationships with men from various places around the world. Now he's feeling like his life is cursed – that everyone he loves winds up dying or disappearing and there's no point in seeking happiness any further. He seems at least passively suicidal.

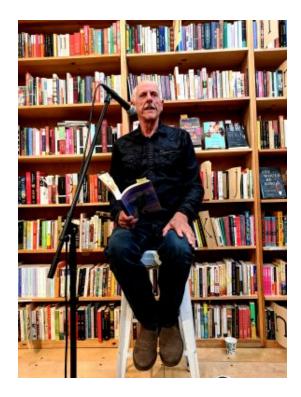
Nathan seems to be hopelessly struggling to move forward with survival – perhaps dealing with his grief by selling his husband's fancy BMW – and maybe even their home in suburbia in order to escape indulging his latest drug (travel). He accidentally encounters Mateo, a young male nurse, near Kaiser in San Leandro – and soon becomes semi-obsessed with the younger man, born in the U.S., but raised in Colombia. He and his mother had immigrated from cartel-infested Colombia when he was 12 years old. Does Nathan take a chance and become vulnerable to love again? Is it too late for this 50-something, who has an

VINCENT TRAUGHBER MEIS

incredibly low self-image? With the gay community's stereotypical emphasis on youth and good looks, would anybody ever fall in love with this middle-aged world-weary poet and teacher?

It's definitely worth reading this 347-page novel, particularly if you've read the "Oak Street" predecessor – though it's certainly not necessary to have read it beforehand. It very interestingly and intricately traces Nathan's involvement in many of the significant LGBTQ+ community highs and lows (e.g., the Up Stairs Lounge fire in New Orleans, the assassination of Harvey Milk, and the AIDS epidemic).

Some may remember reading about Vincent in a "Stories of Our Lives" column in the November 2021 Lavender Seniors newsletter:



Vincent Reading at Dog Eared Bookstore, 2019

https://lavenderseniors.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Lavender-Notes-November-2021.pdf . Though it was always intended to have Vincent present at the Third Friday Lunch Bunch once the Covid epidemic had subsided, that hasn't happened yet.

Reviewed by Dr. John David Dupree, Tinamastes, Costa Rica

November Activities

Soin us

Wednesday, November 13th · 12-2pm

Lakeshore LGBTQ Cultural District

Historic Flag Raising & Dedication Ceremony



AS WE CELEBRATE THE NEXT MILESTONE

IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OAKLAND LGBTQ CULTURAL DISTRICT

IN FRONT OF THE OAKLAND LGBTQ COMMUNITY CENTER 3207 LAKESHORE AVE, OAKLAND, CA 94610



www.lakeshorelgbtq.org

SAVE THE DATE Transgender Day Ob Remembrance

NOVEMBER 19TH, 2024 DOORS OPEN @ 6PM

FUB

1544 BROADWAY OAKLAND





Nov 22

Lavender Seniors 30th Anniversary Ceremony & Reception

Join us for special ceremony and unveiling in the San Leandro History Room at the San Leandro Library followed by a lunch and reception.

Register

Free



Lavender Seniors 30th Anniversary Ceremony & Reception Friday November 22nd 12:30pm - 2:30pm

San Leandro Library Main, 300 Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro 94577 A special ceremony to honor Lavender Seniors 30th Anniversary with the City of San Leandro. The ceremony will be followed by a lunch/reception. RSVP Required. Please use RSVP links to submit your RSVP. For more info, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Lavender Seniors Third Friday Lunch Bunch

<u>No Third Friday Lunch Bunch in November due to San Leandro Library</u> <u>Ceremony and Reception</u>

In-person at The North Oakland Senior Center

A monthly luncheon for LGBTQ+ seniors. A guest speaker or informative presentation is followed by a lunch provided for registered guests. FREE but RSVP is required to attend. For more info, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Social Seniors

<u>No Social Seniors in November due to Holiday</u> In-person at The Watermark Emeryville A monthly social group for LGBTQ+ seniors. A themed luncheon that usually includes music and/or performances. Lunch is provided for registered guests. FREE but RSVP is required to attend. For more info, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

The Heart to Art Program

Cohort 2 in session

Bi-weekly on Tuesdays 5:00pm - 6:30pm

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center A new art program for LGBTQ+ seniors facilitated by a local Artist. No dropins, pre-registration is required. For more info or to be added to mailing list for next cohort, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

LGBTQIA+ Elders Therapy Group

Wednesdays 1:00pm - 2:00pm

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

This group provides a therapeutic space in which LGBTQIA+ (includes questioning) older adults, age 55+, feel welcome to express their thoughts and feelings in an environment that is non-judgmental, inclusive and supportive. The group process works to reduce isolation, stigma and discrimination related to LGBTQIA+ identities, mental health issues and all the issues that affect each group members life. This group meets weekly for multi-week sessions. No Drop-ins. <u>Pre-Registration is required to participate</u>. For more info, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Older & Out

Mondays in-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center SPONSORED BY: Pacific Center for Human Growth. For more info, please call 510-548-8283 or email: olderandoutgroups@pacificcenter.org. No dropins. Intake is required for attendance.

Bay Area Old Lesbians Organizing for Change (OLOC) Online and In-Person

For further information or to be included in the Bay Area OLOC email list, contact Pat Cull at patcull70@gmail.com or 415-637-5002.

Black Women Connect

Every 3rd Sunday @ 11:00am In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center This groups designed for Black Lesbian and Queer Women to connect, network, build community, have engaging conversations and authentically express themselves in a safe, inter-generational space. For inquiries or to 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.





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

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)

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 <u>here</u>. 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 <u>coviaconnections@covia.org</u>.

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 <u>here</u> or call (650) 395-8017 <u>https://friendlyvoices.org/</u>

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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