

Old Lesbians Organizing for Change



2008 Gathering: California Dreaming: Building a Better World for Every Old Lesbian *by Mina Meyer, 68*

You will begin your 2008 Gathering with an Opening Evening Reception and Concert by Gaye Adegbalola on Wednesday, July 30th. Gaye writes many of her own songs and sings both the blues and jazz. Not to be missed! An opportunity to greet old friends, make some new ones, munch on some goodies, have a few drinks and then listen to some fabulous music stylings from one of our own!

We are fortunate to have an extraordinary group of women leading workshops on various topics of interest to us. Examples are: *A Panel on Lesbian Activism in the 70's & Now*, with three women from different parts of the country speaking; Jeanne Cordova from the west coast, Susan Wiseheart from the center of the country, and Alix Dobkin from the east coast. There will also be a workshop by Billie Potts, a very well-known healer and author of books on healing, doing a workshop titled *Herbal Medicine in the 2nd Half of Our Lives*.

Earlier articles in *The Reporter* have detailed the wonderful keynote speakers, Jewelle Gomez, Jackie Goldberg & Gaye Adegbalola as well as other highlights of the Gathering such as the Mothertongue Feminist Readers Theater, the L.A. Women's Community Chorus, and Robin Tyler.

We will also have videos for you to view, a silent auction for your participation, the June Mazer Lesbian Archives, a hospitality suite in which you can relax, and much, much more!

The excitement continues to grow, as we have been able to add new components onto the 2008 OLOC Gathering. On Sunday, August 3, we are offering a bus tour to the City of West Hollywood to visit sites of interest. First we will go to the June Mazer Lesbian Archives, then lunch at The French Quarter (LGBT) and on to A Different Light Bookstore and other places of interest. This add-on will cost only \$25. and will be from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. What a way to end your Gathering stay!

If you are on our mailing and/or email lists, you will already have received a Registration and Information Packet for the 2008 Gathering. If you didn't receive one, or need additional copies for friends, you can write to us at info@oloc.org or call us toll free at 888-706-7506. See you at the Gathering!

Ageism in Action

You'll find several good examples of ageism in this issue; an article on page 7 and references to three others on page 12. When you see examples of ageism in the media or in your everyday life, send them to us at info@oloc.org or mail them to OLOC, POB 5853, Athens OH 45701. Full information on examples submitted to us can be downloaded from our website or you can request a PDF from Susan@oloc.org.

Unbelievable... All This In One Issue!

08 Gathering Update	1
Correspondence	2
Mainstream News	2
Medical Corner	3-4
Oral Herstory Update	5
Book Review	5
Memorials	6
PayPal	7 & 12
Ageism in Action	7
Chapter News	8-9
OLOCers in the News	9-10
Upcoming Event	10
Video Library List	11-12
Old or Older?	13
Financial Report	13
Housing	14

And More!

The Reporter ... A quarterly publication of OLOC

March 2008 VOLUME 18 ISSUE 1

OLOC is a nonprofit 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization.

Correspondence

Responses to the birthday cards that our volunteer, Margaret, sends out:

- *Thanks for the birthday card from the OLOC Steering Committee*
- *It really meant a lot to me- I felt 'the spirit of friendship'*
- *I truly appreciated it (having no 'friends, family, church/temple, acquaintances.)*

From our fundraising responses and newsletter renewals:

- *The arrival of OLOC is a joy in my life.*
- *You're doing a great job. I talk you up all the time.*
- *Keep on, sisters! We may be old, but we are LIVELY!*

From emails after receiving on-line copies of the newsletter:

- *Wow, great newsletter! I'm 55, my partner is 59 we'll talk about the info over the weekend. Thanks.*
- *I just printed out the entire 16 pages, and I am planning on reading it from cover to cover. I had no idea that this organization even existed, I will spread the word to my friends. Thank you.*

From a letter from Elsie Gauley Vega, 79

Dear Friends,

As always, I enjoyed Dr. Jean's "corner" – interesting what is done with symbols and language. And thanks to Arden for her work. My best to all of you!



Of Interest In the Mainstream Press

A few tidbits from the mainstream... we have electronic and print copies of the articles. Drop us an email (susan@oloc.org) and we'll send you the link for the full article. For print copies: send an SASE to OLOC with your request.

Disability Rates Decline for over 65

A surprising decline in disability rates among older Americans since the 1980s is enabling millions more to lead longer, richer, spryer lives.... The entire 65-plus population has the best odds ever of living disability-free. *Growing Older May be Getting Easier*, by Frank Greve | McClatchy Newspapers, truthout, 12-11-07 (sent in by Alix Dobkin)

Prescription Drug Plan Costs Rise

Medicare prescription drug plan premiums are scheduled to rise by an average of almost 25 percent in 2008. Betting that beneficiaries are pretty much stuck with their existing plans, the insurance companies have adopted the whack-granny strategy. By Dean Baker, truthout, Perspective, January 7, 2008. (sent in by Alix Dobkin)

Gay Seniors Rely on Friends When Ill

Older adults who are lesbian, gay or bisexual have a "history of caregiving," creating networks who support each other when sick or aging, a U.S. survey found. The survey of 199 lesbian, gay or bisexual U.S. adults found that more than two-thirds of the participants had provided care to one or more people during the previous five years. January 3, 2008 UPI story (sent by Alix Dobkin)

Women's Friendships are Sources of Stress Relief

A landmark UCLA study suggests friendships between women are special.... hanging out with our friends can actually counteract the kind of stomach-quivering stress most of us experience on a daily basis.... The discovery that women respond to stress differently than men was made in a classic "aha" moment shared by two women scientists who were talking one day in a lab at UCLA.... "women are such a source of strength to each other. We nurture one another. And we need to have unpressured space in which we can do the special kind of talk that women do when they're with other women. It's a very healing experience. Dr. Ruthellen Josselson"

UCLA Study On Friendship Among Women By Gale Berewitz, 2002 (sent by Carolyn Werner, who wonders if Dr. Jean might like to comment on this some time.)

OLOC provides Old Lesbians with the chance to meet like-minded women in our common struggle to confront ageism, to share mutual interests, and to experience the joy and warmth of playing and working together.

This article is in response to a request for a discussion of pelvic examinations and Pap smears. A thorough pelvic examination includes several steps.

The usual start is a look into the vagina. This where the speculum (a duck-billed instrument) is used to spread the walls of the vagina so the cervix (tip of the uterus) can be viewed. Specula come in a variety of sizes. Women who have never had a child delivered vaginally will often require a narrower speculum.

While this part of the examination may be somewhat uncomfortable, it should not be painful. Obviously, if you no longer have a cervix because your uterus has been removed (hysterectomy), there is no reason to go looking for it. The only exception may be if you have had cancer of the cervix and need to be checked for possible recurrence in the vaginal wall. This is the point in the examination that the Pap smear is taken. I will discuss the Pap smear in a bit.

The next part of the examination is called bimanual. The practitioner inserts a couple of fingers in the vagina with one hand and then feels (palpates) the pelvic organs from above by pressing on the abdomen. This is the only way to feel the contents of the pelvic cavity, looking for abnormal size of the uterus and ovaries.

Again, if you have had a radical hysterectomy where both the uterus and the ovaries have been removed, there is no purpose in this examination except for follow-up of cancer in either of these organs. If you have had a total hysterectomy (uterus and cervix) but still have ovaries, some sort of bimanual examination should be done. The ovaries can be palpated if the practitioner inserts a finger in the rectum and presses downward on the



No one can tell you how many Pap smears were done, how many were abnormal, and of those, how many proved to be cervical cancer.

abdomen.

The Pap test or smear was developed by Dr. George Papanicalou in the 1930's to screen for cancer of the cervix. The current incidence of cervical cancer is said to be 6%, a decline from 8.5% 50 years ago. This represents a 75% drop in incidence.

The Pap test is done by scraping cells from the cervix with a little flat stick (spatula), or more recently with a tiny stiff brush. The value of the test depends greatly on how well the specimen is taken.

The cells used to be spread on a microscope slide and "fixed" by spraying with a substance that is actually the same as hair spray. However, if the scraping technique was poor or the slide dried too much before being fixed, the test was unreadable. Currently the best method is using the tiny brush, which is then immediately submerged in a vial of fixative. The laboratory then makes its own slides.

A lot of women have had a lot of Pap smears over the years, to which the drop in the incidence of cervical cancer is attributed. One of the unfortunate things about our private health care system is that we do not have a central registry for things like the results of Pap smears. No one can tell you how many Pap smears were done, how many were abnormal, and of those, how many proved to be cervical cancer.

Pap smears are read as dysplasia to 3 different degrees of severity. An abnormal Pap smear leads to further testing from repeat smear in the mild case to actual cone biopsy (taking a cone shaped piece) of the cervix. Again, there is no good national statistical data on how many or what percentage of biopsies prove to be cancer.

So what causes cervical cancer? Because of its national system, the UK knew plenty about HPV (Human Papilloma Virus). HPV type 16 or 18 is the cause of 80% of cervical cancers. Other causes are said to be multiple male sexual partners, weakened immune system and the things that lead to it, like drug abuse, smoking, and poor diet. Cells taken for a Pap test can also be tested for HPV.

So, what about us? We have two things going for us. We are Lesbian and we are menopausal. Do Lesbians have this nasty virus and can they pass it to one another? This data has been accumulated at an STD/HIV clinic in Seattle and published by Jeanne Marrasso, MD, MPH et al through the University of Washington. "...most lesbians (53%-99%) have had sex with men, and many (21%-30%) continue to do so.... in one study HPV was present in 19% of lesbians who reported no previous sex with men... In several studies of lesbians, the number who are HPV positive ranges from 3% to 30%. 47% of these positives were positive for HPV 16... HPV among women who reported previous or current sex with men did not differ from that of women who reported no previous sex with men --Given this--one can conclude that--genital HPV is sexually transmitted between women...".

If you have this HPV type, how likely are you to get cervical cancer? We don't really know. In a recent study to test the new vaccine, 11%-12% of women between the ages of 15 and 26 tested positive for HPV. The current incidence of cervical cancer is said to be 6%.

Before you run out to be tested for HPV, consider a study published through UCSF looking at menopausal women. The study included 2561 women with the mean age being 66.7 years. One year after a normal baseline Pap smear, 78 women (3%) had an abnormal pap smear and two years later, an additional 32 women (1.4%) had an abnormal Pap smear.

These 110 women underwent a total of 231 procedures and 109 of them had false positive results, meaning that no significant abnormality was found. They concluded that there is more risk in screening because menopausal women will have a high incidence of false positive results, which result in needless stress on the woman and needless procedures.

"Most women who get cervical cancer in the United States and who die from it are over 50 years old, but that is largely due to the fact that they have never been screened or not recently screened. This means that a woman who has a long history of normal Pap smears and who is over 50 years old has a very low risk of developing cervical disease."

I would add here that this group of women was at a higher risk simply because they were all enrolled in a heart study and were being treated with hormone replacement therapy.

In summary; if there are no uterus, cervix, or ovaries, there is not an issue; if you have no uterus and cervix, make sure your check-up includes a bimanual exam of your ovaries; if you have all those parts, do a Pap test.

If you've had an abnormal Pap test out of your last 3, also do a Pap test, otherwise just make sure your ovaries are checked.

The OLOC Reporter

The OLOC Reporter is published by Old Lesbians Organizing for Change:

- www.oloc.org
- Email: info@oloc.org
- Post Office Box 5853 Athens, OH 45701

This Newsletter Brought to You By: Susan Wiseheart, Editor; Ruth Debra & Susan Howe, Proofreaders; Mina Meyer and Jan Griesinger, Content Review; Margaret Purcell, Design/Layout; all of the writers plus the mailing crew.

Let your voice be heard.

Deadline for the next issue is May 1, 2008.
Send articles to OLOC: info@oloc.org
or OLOC, PO Box 5853, Athens, OH 45701

An Amazing Florida Trip *by Arden Eversmeyer, 76*

While attending the Feminist Hullabaloo in Santa Fe last summer, Charlotte and I met Connie Kurtz and Ruth Berman, legendary lesbian/feminist activists from Florida. In awe and with butterflies, I approached them about doing interviews for the Oral Herstory Project. And they responded with "of course, Arden".

Upon returning home I started "trolling" for more old lesbians to interview. An old friend and OLOC member, Shewolf, in Melrose, started sending me information. And then we planned our route to visit/and have dinner with women who have participated in the project on our way to West Palm Beach - the furthest point from our home.

We parked our motorhome at Shewolf's for the five days it took to do the six interviews in the Ocala/Melrose/Gainesville area. Shewolf managed to schedule a breakfast, a luncheon, a dinner party, a peace demonstration, a trip to the local coffeehouse, and an evening at the Pride Center for pizza and a movie. Nothing like sitting around and getting bored! We met some wonderful old women (and some young ones too), and left with the promise of two more interviews when we next return to Florida.

When we completed this trip there were 119 life stories in the collection. And I will say again these wonderful old women have truly enriched my life, and I am grateful for the many new friends.

Demographics Help

Help us obtain grants: Send or email us with demographic information (unless you are sure we already have it). Birth date, Disability Status and Ethnicity. We frequently need the information for grant applications (unattached to any names) and to look at how we are doing regarding diversity. susan@oloc.org or OLOC, POB 5853, Athens OH 45701.

Deep in the Heart – A Memoir of Love and Longing by Sheila Morris (a new OLOC member)

Book Review by rainbow williams, 74

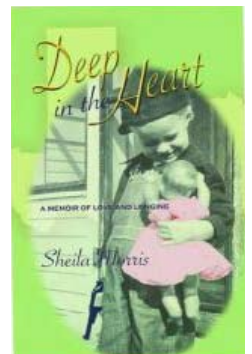
What a wonderful title that is!

Immediately, I am singing along with this over-sixty lesbian as she introduces us to her very southern family of eccentric personalities- (that's redundant, isn't it?)

She can make your mouth water describing the savory dishes of the south. And your heart will bend a little at the closeness of generations, and her longing for a girl of her own in spite of Bible Belt conditioning and the repressions society placed on us all.

Even to wear britches at that time, and especially to ask for boxing gloves for Christmas, was met with disapproval by most of her (and our) guardians. How did we prevail? How did she find her true self? She brings us along on her journey. Each story stands alone and is woven into the fabric of a life flavored with deep connections of three generations in a rural piney woods Texas town.

Did I mention the cover? I love it. An old black and white photo of a tiny cowboygirl, with her doll on one side and her six shooter on the other, her cap on backwards over her very blonde hair, and a smile that shows self satisfaction.



Sprinkled through the book are photos from her life. I especially related to the grim prom dress photo, (me too!) and her witty story of the hoop worn to support that dress had me laughing out loud with my own past. I too am a crinoline survivor.

(2008 Nominee for a Lambda Literary Foundation Award. \$14.95 + \$2.00 shipping: available from: Red Letter Press, 6148 Rutledge Hill, Columbia, SC 29209. <http://redletterpress.googlepages.com/> You can also reach us at RedLetterPress@gmail.com. Also available from amazon.com)

Regina Shavers (1941 - 2008)

Regina was a proud member of OLOC and began the discussion about having GRIOT Circle (A Griot is a story-teller in western Africa who perpetuates the oral tradition and history of a village or family) and OLOC work together, something that is now underway. In 1995, Regina co-founded GRIOT Circle to combat the lack of community that she had observed amongst LGBT Elders, particularly those of color. She assumed the role of Executive Director of GRIOT in 2000. Regina Shavers founded the GRIOT Circle as "an intergenerational and culturally diverse community-based social service organization responsive to the realities of older lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, two-spirit and transgender people (LGBTST) of all colors." Regina received countless awards for dedication to the LGBT community, including the New York Lesbian and Gay Task Force's first annual Allan Morrow Community Service award. She had a long history of community involvement and activism in many organizations and efforts affecting lesbians and many other groups. She created and implemented curricula for HIV prevention and treatment, including curricula specifically tailored towards older populations.

Jane Rule (1931 - 2007)

Jane Rule lived openly with her partner Helen Sonthoff for nearly 50 years. She was the author of a dozen books, including the novels *Desert of the Heart*, *This is Not for You* and *Memory Board*, and the non-fiction essays *Lesbian Images*. As she grew old, she wrote more about aging. Her novel *Memory Board* addresses many of the issues Old Lesbians may face. Her work has greatly influenced the Lesbian community for decades.

Brenda Henson, (1945 - 2008)

Had she been in better health after she turned sixty, Brenda would surely have added OLOC to her many interests. As it was, she accomplished a huge amount for lesbians during her life. Her life partner and wife Wanda Henson and she began Gulf Coast Women's Festival in the late 80s. They then founded Camp Sister Spirit, a feminist educational retreat in Jones County, Mississippi. Their work and trials there were the subject of national news and propelled then-Attorney General Janet Reno to order a Department of Justice intervention in the situation. Brenda was devoted to working for justice for lesbians and many other groups.

Dorothy Elizabeth Davis Hoffman (1917 - 2008)

Dorothy would have been 91 on February 15, 2008, and was planning a party at the Marathon (Iowa) Public Library, a favorite place of hers. She worked as a registered nurse for about 40 years and was a world traveler. She was a strong, active, healthy and happy person, living at home with her long-time partner, Lois Olson. In addition to traveling, she enjoyed reading, cooking, gardening, camping and RVing. She had a strong interest in Native American culture and the southwest. She split her time in her latter years between Arizona and Iowa. She had a love for food, parties, antiques, her pets and people. Her involvement with OLOC was more active in the early 1990s than later in her life. She was a supporter of OLOC during her times in Arizona, where many of her friends were also involved.

Myra Riddle (1926-2008)

Myra was prominent in the gay community for decades. She founded Southern California Women for Understanding in 1976 as a social and political network of gay career women. In 1977 she was one of 14 gay and lesbian leaders invited to the Carter White House to brief administration officials on discrimination against homosexuals by government agencies, the first time openly gay leaders met there. She was on the Los Angeles County Commission for Women for 12 years and was a psychotherapist.

Upon request by many of you, OLOC has added the convenience of paying for your Gathering experience online with PayPal. You don't even have to have a PayPal account to do so. Once you have calculated your Registration fees, you can click on the Pay Now button at the bottom of the Registration page and you will get to choose to login to your PayPal account (or setup one on the spot) or to use a credit card to pay without registering with PayPal. The choice is yours.

Some of us have little experience with computers compared to the generations after us. It's important for us to inform ourselves so we can enjoy the convenience of the Internet without falling prey to the scammers and spammers.

Even if you have never used PayPal before, you may have heard stories of the awful things that can happen if you do. Most of those stories are urban myths. But, since they sound so likely, it is important to be able to check them out. One of the best places for checking out questionable



by Mary Henry, 68

facts at www.snopes.com. It provides the information you are looking for on those I-wonder-if-this-can-be-true claims.

Another problem often said to be PayPal's fault is phishing email. That's those emails you get saying they are from banks or credit unions as well as PayPal. They suggest that something is wrong with your account that you need to correct by clicking on a link in the email. These are identity theft attempts, not real emails. In order to help defeat the problem, PayPal developed an anti-phishing quiz. You can find it here: www.paypal.com/fightphishing. There are five questions to help teach you what to look for.

Armed with the right information, we can have good experiences when we do business on the Internet. After you register for our National Gathering, don't forget you can use this same, convenient method to donate to OLOC too. Just use the Donate button on the Home Page.

Ageism in Action...

Rush Limbaugh Hits Bottom Attacking Hillary Clinton for her Age *by Sharon Raphael, 66*

Rush Limbaugh's column and radio show transcript Dec 18th, starts with the headline. "Does Our Looks-Obsessed Culture Want to Stare At An Aging Woman?" He goes on to ask after a few paragraphs, "So the question is this: Will this country want to actually watch a woman get older before their eyes on a daily basis?"

The same day The Drudge column headlines with a picture of Hillary looking old with wrinkles and other lines on her face. There is a double standard applied, as the male candidates have not been subjected to the same close-up scrutiny regarding their facial markings or wrinkles. This thinking is the pits and the most sexist and ageist comment I have seen so far in regard to the campaign for President. But interesting, as I think others have been subtly attacking Hillary for the same reason.

I doubt most of America listens to anything Limbaugh says. However, the headline does have a touch of truth which is that Americans are obsessed with age. Something to ponder and fight against-blatant ageism directed at a presidential candidate. The thing of note about Limbaugh's obvious ageism is that when he says everyone is ageist, he pointedly leaves out any way of countering ageism or any public way of dealing with it; instead implying there is no way to prevent the country from looking at Hillary in this negative way. It is like saying yes, this country is terribly racist and there is no way out. And now I am going to emphasize the fact by saying again how much people will resent that Hillary is aging. If it were racism, he would emphasize again how much the country would not accept a person of a different race. He is clearly ageist and/or using ageism in the worst of ways to make his point.

http://www.rushlimbaugh.com/home/daily/site_121707/content/01125114.guest.html.guest.html

OLOC Ohio Update by Sharon Deevey, 63

Members of Ohio OLOC are active individually on LGBT issues in several ways. Gigi Kent, 63, is one of nine lesbians in a DVD made for LGBT outreach by Equality Ohio. Karen Grieser, 66, and her brother Steve have funded a training course for future pastors on LGBT issues at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, with resources from her late brother Eric's legacy. Donna Voelkel, 73, and Ruth Murray, 74, will be the guest speakers in one session of this course. Jan Griesinger, 65, asked the admissions director and the human resources manager at the retirement home where her parents currently live if lesbians are welcome and would enjoy being there. Sharon Deevey, 63, is the volunteer Diversity Outreach Consultant on LGBT Issues for AARP Ohio, and was greeted with a round of applause when introduced to the 40 other AARP volunteers. Pam Jackson, 66, received the 2005 Lavender Triangle Award for her long time lesbian activism in the Toledo area. Cyndi Freedom, 60, lives in a senior building, and when her visiting lesbian friend was harassed by one of the staff, she complained to the management. The inappropriate staff member was told by the management to "leave those girls alone" and there has been no further problem.

OLOC Southern California Celebrates 1 Year Anniversary by Mina Meyer, 68

On January 8th the members of our Southern California Chapter went out for a celebratory lunch together to celebrate our first year of working and playing together. We went to Arnolds Restaurant, a well known place that many of Long Beach's senior residents enjoy because of the good food and low prices. After our meal, we went back to our regular meeting space at Bixby Knolls Towers for our monthly meeting.

Our official videographer, Cristina Vegas, presented us with a very large photograph album of pictures of all of our meetings and events from our first year, 2007. It's at least three inches thick! What memories! This wonderful book is to go to the OLOC Archives after they have been seen by others at the Gathering this coming summer. What a wonderful gift. We thank you, Cristina.

Regional OLOC Group Contact List

OLOC would love to have regional groups form all over the country! If you're interested in helping form a group, email us at info@oloc.org or write or call Jan or Sally (on SC contact list)

New York City	Myra Brahms, 65	212-535-9633	myra@oloc.org
Hudson Valley New York	Alix Dobkin, 67	845-679-7586	alix@oloc.org
SouthEast	Olivia Cammack, 61	301-920-2043	olivia@oloc.org
Ohio	Sally Tatnall, 70	216-932-0977	sally@oloc.org
Minnesota	Annalee Stewart, 80	612-724-6541	annalee@oloc.org
St. Louis	Charlotte Ellis, 64	314-962-2188	charlotte@oloc.org
Northern Colorado	Cindy Bear, 60	303-258-9424	cindy@oloc.org
Southern California	Mina Meyer, 68	562-420-3555	mina@oloc.org
San Francisco Bay Area	Joan Emerson, 72	415-388-5001	40 Camino Alto #12209 Mill Valley, CA 94941
Portland, OR	Mary Beth Brindley, 68	503-286-3575	marybeth@oloc.org
Puget Sound Area/WA	Mary Henry, 68	253-565-0829	mary@oloc.org

OLOC Is On a Roll *by rainbow williams, 74*

Here is what is happening in regional organizing in the southeast.

The Silver Threads Celebration for Lesbians over Fifty, St Pete Beach, Florida, Jan 17-21, 2008, provided opportunity for our OLOC workshop Sunday afternoon. Sally Tatnall of our national Steering Committee presented, with the help of Carole Stoneking of South Carolina, Rainbow of Florida, Myra Brahms of NYC, and Olivia Cammack of Washington DC, who had to fly out early.

Having five planners for meetings concerning our Columbia SC, July 17-19, 2009 Regional Planning Event meant we were able to make some decisions: choice of Clarion Hotel, our welcoming Friday night format: all day Saturday, and all morning Sunday. With no workshops, no vendors, but small circles for getting to know each other, with five guided questions, a scribe to write answers, and an egg timer, we tried a modified CR technique. Sally Tatnall then proceeded to West Palm Beach Florida to present to 25 Lesbians who attended Ruth and Connie's open house for OLOC, Sunday Jan 27. There will be a chapter forming there in the near future.

For four months, I have been emailing a group of 30 or so, beating the bushes for more eligible OLOCs, networking and asking: What are your issues? For all of us: isolation is more and more a problem; Poverty stalks us, health issues, abilities on the fade, but friendships with others our age; that emotional support can help us through.

Rose Lamatt, a new email friend, came in on the fourth group email and is trying to organize a blog for us, at Jackie Mirkin's suggestion.

Personally I feel very encouraged with the support and participation of Steering Committee members and positive response from everyone in our regional attempts. I have the definite feeling that OLOC is on a roll.



OLOC Lesbians in the News!

Sally Miller Gearhart

OLOC member, teacher and activist Sally Miller Gearhart has been honored by an anonymous donation supporting Lesbian studies at the University of Oregon. The fund will contribute to the production of historical and contemporary research in Lesbian studies in the humanities and social sciences. Gearhart was among the first openly gay professors to be granted tenure in the United States. <http://tinyurl.com/26dp23>

Alix Dobkin

OLOC Steering Committee member Alix Dobkin was quoted at length on the EdgeBoston website in early January in an article called Ageism: The Other Phobia. Here is a sample: "I feel that some of our (OLOC's) most important work is to educate and fight ageism and to be visible. In parades when we carry our banner, they're shocked that we're saying we're old and they're shocked that we're saying we're Lesbians ..."
<http://www.edgeboston.com> – enter Alix Dobkin in the search box

Robin Tyler & Diane Olson

National Gathering MC and comedian/activist Robin Tyler, along with her partner Diane Olson, make up the Lesbian couple in the suit to be heard by the California Supreme Court in early March. Attorney Gloria Allred will argue that two same gender couples should be granted equality and enjoy the fundamental right to marry the person of their choice in California. The two couples were denied marriage licenses in Beverly Hills because each couple was the same gender. Go Robin and Diane!

Elsie Gauley Vega

"I will never forget our first Pride Festival at Mt. Rushmore. Elsie had called us and had decided to come out and be more public about the fact that she was a Lesbian. At 75 she took part in the Walk to Mt. Rushmore and then rode in the lead car to finish the walk."

From a November 2007 entry in an online blogspot Old Man's Lavender World.

<http://lavenderworldrc.blogspot.com/2007/11/elsie-is-leaving-us.html>

Mina Meyer

OLOC Co-Director Mina Meyer was featured in the January issue of *Blade Magazine* (Gay mag) of Orange County, talking about the lively Southern California Chapter of OLOC and about other OLOC matters. "We're trying to effect a world without ageism... We're also trying to affect the way women think about themselves in terms of aging and how we are dealt with by society," said Mina.

Chris Roerdon

OLOC member Chris Roerdon's 10th book, *Don't Murder Your Mystery*, has won accolades in several prestigious places to do with mystery writing. A dozen authors who teach writing are using the book in their classes. It has been picked up by a book club and there will soon be a new version aimed at writers of all genres. If you haven't read it yet and you like to write anything at all, give it a try. It's an enjoyable read with many excellent tips. www.MarketSavvyBookEditing.com

Note that OLOC has copies of the materials for which links were provided. If you want to see the entire article, send an SASE to OLOC with your request or email Susan susan@oloc.org.

Shaba Barnes

OLOC past Co-Director Shaba Barnes is quoted in an article in the online Lesbian magazine, *Jane and Jane: Sophisticated Living for Lesbian Lifestyles*. The article is in their Over Fifty-Five section and is titled Older Lesbians: Finding Ms. Right. In it, Shaba talks about OLOC and other things: "A lot of lesbians themselves have internalized ageism," Barnes says. "Sometimes the perception is we get to a certain age, and that's all there is. It's only when we come together we realize, we still have those feelings, desires and needs. Things we don't feel comfortable talking about with younger people, we can say it. We have been there." Article: <http://janeandjane.net/over55.html>

Upcoming Events

Gals' 50+ Gala Celebration will be held in Provincetown MA June 19-22, 2008. (Golden Threads was previously held at this location but will not be held this year.) For details contact: 978-546-5192 or weldpol@juno.com web site: gals50plusgaylacelebration.com

Fourth National Conference on LGBT Aging

October 13-14, 2008 in New York City. Sponsored by SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders). Details: www.sageusa.org/national_conference Or email nationalconference@sageusa.org

Gathering in Australia March 08

Lesbians over Forty are holding an Easter Gathering, 20-24 March 2008 on the north coast of New South Wales, Australia, close to Byron Bay. If anyone is going to be in Australia anyway, you can find out more by emailing Lavender at lavender75@bigpond.com She says: "It would be SO good to see any of our North American sisters who can make it here, especially from OLOC (which Alix has told me a bit about).

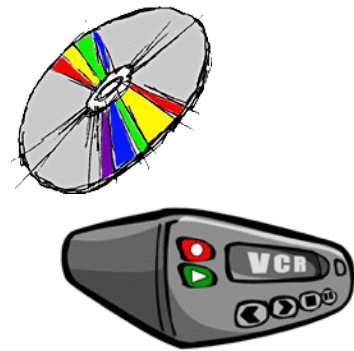
In lesbian sisterhood, Lavender.

OLOC's Video Library

Here are the videos we now own and make available to you. Cost is \$5.00 within the U.S, no matter which format, and you will be able to keep them for 2 weeks. For outside the U.S., contact Susan for cost.

Check in with Susan before making any donations of videos and remember that we are focused on Old Lesbians, though we may have a few that feature young ones, too.

Plans are to keep an updated list available on our website, oloc.org. We'll let you know when it is up. We will tell you of new acquisitions, if any, in each issue of the Reporter. You may also request a list by email from susan@oloc.org or by sending a self-addressed-stamped-envelope (SASE) to Susan Wiseheart, HC 73 Box 169C, Drury MO 65638.



DVD Documentaries

Barbara and Tibby: A Love Story in the Face of Hate They had been together for 39 years when this was made. A law passed in Virginia in 2004 led to them leaving their home to escape oppression as Lesbians. Gaye Adegbalola featured. Gaye's partner Suzanne Moe made the film. DVD 38 minutes. 2004

High Heels on Wheels One of eight "outstanding Lesbian Short Films" on *She Likes Girls 2*, distributed by Wolfe Video, Donna Cassyd (OLOC member) and Leslie Sloan document Lesbians of women's roller derby from the late 60s and early 70s. DVD 11 minutes. 2005 The other shorts do not feature Old Lesbians but are interesting and engaging. The entire DVD is 129 minutes. Compilation made in 2008.

Ellen Spangler & Mary Alice Stout: Alapine Village Interviews with OLOC members Ellen and Mary Alice about their lives and their present home at Alapine Village with an emphasis on building Lesbian community and building environmentally sound houses. Part of a series about Lesbian Landykes that is underway by Lesbian and Landyke Documentary Media Projects. DVD 110 minutes. 2006

Look Us In The Eye: The Old Women's Project Features many Old Lesbians, along with some other old women. It's the story of the activist

project in San Diego and there are many great anti-ageist quotes within it. DVD 25 minutes. 2006

Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible Shows members of a group of "white" people telling stories of how they have worked to "gain insight into what it means to challenge notions of racism and white supremacy in the United States". Not focused on Old Lesbians, but of deep interest to all of us. DVD 50 minutes. 2006

All Aboard: Rosie's Family Cruise No Old Lesbians that I saw, but still a moving film of 100s of gay, lesbian, bisexual and straight families who join Rosie and her family on a cruise from New York to the Bahamas and back. DVD 91 minutes. 2006

still kicking Six artistic women of Project Arts and Longevity in San Francisco. "Very old women, still active artists, living with zest." No out Lesbians, but fascinating women with a variety of interests. DVD 36 minutes. 2006

Winnie Freed: Alapine Village An interview with OLOC member Winnie, who lives in a Lesbian village and talks about why she does and about how they address issues of aging plus tells stories of her life. Part of a series about Lesbian Landykes that is underway by Lesbian and Landyke Documentary Media Projects. DVD 91 minutes. 2006

VHS (video-tape) Documentaries

Golden Threads The story of the founding of Golden Threads featuring founder Christine Burton, with footage of the summer Golden Threads events in progress. VHS 57 minutes. 1997

Living With Pride: Ruth Ellis @100 The story of Ruth's life as a Lesbian in Springfield, Illinois and Detroit. Born in 1899, she was at one time the oldest "out" African American Lesbian. VHS 60 minutes. 1999.

No Need to Repent: The Ballad of Rev. Jan Griesinger This is a Jan-authorized copy of a film made about one of OLOC's present co-directors. An inspiring and moving look at her activist life. It's fun to see her at various ages, too. VHS 27 minutes. 1989

Some Ground to Stand On Features Blue Lunden, a working class activist who, beginning in the 1950s, was involved with lesbian, feminist and anti-nuclear movements. Filmed by Joyce Warshow, who also worked on a film about Shevy Healy. VHS 35 minutes. 1998

West Coast Crones: A Glimpse Into the Lives of Nine Old Lesbians Yes, indeed, exactly as it says and at least five of them are or were OLOC members. Given to us by Lucille Frey. A real treasure. VHS Approximately 30 minutes. 1990.

Available on both DVD and VHS Documentaries

Project Visibility A film to bring awareness and a face to the issues of aging as an LGBT and partially funded by Northern Colorado OLOC, it is for those who provide service to LGBT Elders. Includes a manual, a 39-slide power point presentation with many facts and the film. Film is available in both DVD and VHS and is 22 minutes. 2004

Radical Harmonies Many Old (and some young) Lesbian musicians (including lots of Alix Dobkin) appear in this story of "the movement that exploded the gender barriers in music",

Women's Music. Available in both DVD and VHS. 90 Minutes. 2002

Drama on DVD

Strangers in Good Company The Film Board of Canada classic about a group of women stranded together on a bus trip and how they cope and interact. One is an out Lesbian (in the story and in life) Mary Meigs (now deceased). DVD 105 minutes. 1990

We Wish We Had...

If anyone wants to donate them, they would be greatly appreciated:

No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon

Any others featuring Old Lesbians that you would recommend and give us.

Ageism in Action X 4

Disney: What do the Wicked Queen in *Snow White*, Cruella de Vil in *101 Dalmations*, and Ursula in *The Little Mermaid* have in common? Recently, Disney has been called on their propensity to depict their villains as old.

Suicide: According to several studies, the elderly are one of the highest risk groups for suicide. Yet this risk appears to be of little concern social and health services.

Spilsbury Catalog: Open a recent copy of the Spilsbury catalog, or happen upon their website, and you may notice that this company seems to find Grannies using walkers or wheelchairs an easy target for ageist humor.

For more details or full articles on these examples of ageism, go to oloc.org, email info@oloc.org, or for a print copy, mail a SASE to Susan Wiseheart, HC 73 Box 169C, Drury MO 65638.

Planning your travels? Be sure to pull out your copy of the OLOC Travel Directory. Need a copy? Contact info@oloc.org, call or write us.

Old or Older?

Cristina Vegas, 63, an OLOC supporter since 1989, wrote to ask why the OLOC website uses the word *older* instead of *old* in one of the articles.

On the OLOC web page... The wording should be stressed to be old, not older! Don't you agree? ... Or has the organization forgotten about fighting ageism? We really should pay more attention to what we write and say. "Older" is a euphemism created by society. Same as Senior ... I just thought I'd let you know that some of us OLOC members are watching. If what we, as an organization, want is more members then I guess the use of "older" is kind of understandable. If what we want, as an organization, is to really fight ageism, we cannot, in good conscience, accept the use of the word "older" instead of the word "old". We are supposed to be "claiming" the word; not accepting euphemisms created against us by society at large. OLOC needs to send an unequivocal message against ageism. Remember the original Statement of Purpose? I think we need to return to it. We need to eliminate ageism; first in ourselves then society and then, maybe go on into all the other lofty ideals of the organization.

Response: The article Vegas refers to is about the Project Visibility efforts in Boulder CO. We are quoting the language they use in describing their own project, thus we did not edit it to reflect OLOC's preference for "old."

OLOC Mission Statement

- OLOC, Inc. is the national organization of Lesbians of all races, age 60 and over, and will:
- Support, respect and empower Old Lesbians.
 - Recognize and challenge ageism in our lives and in society.
 - Celebrate our strengths, our talents, our experiences, and document our lives.
 - Convene national gatherings for Old Lesbians.
 - Encourage, establish, and support local groups and regional events.
 - Provide educational materials and consciousness raising about ageism.

2007 OLOC Financial Report

INCOME	Budget	Actual
News subs	4,500	4,195
Individual donations	16,000	17,982
Grants	21,500	21,500
Local chapters	1,000	785
Sales	200	307
Transfer from reserves	1,000	1,000
Assistance: 08 Gathering	0	1,175
Misc.	550	764
Total	44,750	47,708
<i>(see note below)</i>		
EXPENSES		
Administration		
Rent	1,500	1,498
Supplies, equipment	2,400	1,899
Administrative Ass't	6,000	6,193
Accounting	600	514
Fund Raising	750	1,059
Steering Comm. mtgs	12,000	7,937 *
Outreach/education		
Newsletter	2,000	2,356
Delegates to confs	1,000	1,035
Advertising	500	550
Web site	1,000	879
Field Organizing	15,047	13,888
Oral Herstory	3,900	5,069
Stipends: Co-Directors	4,800	4,800
Misc	375	1,249
Total	51,872	48,926

Note: In addition, Deb Wehman contributed \$21,669 designated for the Oral Herstory project. A HUGE thank you to Dr. Wehman.

** HUGE thank you to Mary Henry and Margaret Purcell for hosting the fall Steering Committee meeting in their home, which saved OLOC several thousand on expenses.*

Contact List for Current Steering Committee Members

Co-Directors:

Jan Griesinger, 65, Athens OH	jan@oloc.org	(740) 448-6424
Mina Meyer, 68, Long Beach CA	mina@oloc.org	(562) 420-3555

Steering Committee Members:

Sally Tatnall, 70, Cleveland Heights OH	sally@oloc.org	(216) 932-0977
Alix Dobkin, 67, Woodstock, NY	alix@oloc.org	(845) 679-7586

Housing

**France:
Dear OLOC,**

I'm a 68-year-old Lesbian, expatriate, living in France since 1971. I'm part of a small group trying to organize not only support & oral history, etc., but a physical (house, home, community) alternative to the "old folks' home." As far as I can tell from your literature, you're not into that. But maybe some of you have had some ideas &/or experience along those lines, in which case, I really wish to hear about it.

Thanks for any info you have for me.

Lots of sisterly & lesbianly love & xxxxxxxx

Paula Yoni
Le Gouleyron
07600 VALS LES BAINS
FRANCE
paula.yoni@wanadoo.fr



Germany:

Berlin is to open the first LGBT nursing home in Europe soon according to the Advocate's online news in January. It will accommodate 28 residents in high-tech rooms with private bathrooms.

California:

Looking to live in Luxury with other Old Lesbians?

"How can I let your members know we are here for them if they need us?" asks one of the staff members of Camellia Assisted Luxury Living. Well, now you know it is available. Luxury Living for Seniors. "We are a new 6 bedroom LGBT Assisted Living Home for seniors in Sacramento California. Our website is www.CaliforniaCareHome.com We are not a corporation, we are a small family run business. We take private pay, long term health care payments at this time but open to other ideas." Tisa Cadway tisacadway@kw.com Senior Living at its best 916-241-8990

**When Is the Last Time
You Sent in Money For
the Reporter?**

By Mina Meyer, 68

There are a lot of Sisters out there who work very hard for OLOC, and even send in a donation periodically when we ask for one. Some of you are members of a local chapter and are very involved in that chapter, and others of you don't have a chapter nearby, but read the *Reporter* regularly.

We want you all to read the *Reporter*, that's how we get our news out to you. And we do have a policy, that if you can't afford to pay us for it, we will continue to send it to you anyhow, because we value all Old Lesbians, regardless of the ability to pay. On the other hand, if you can afford to pay for a subscription, which isn't a lot, we do expect you to pay each year, so please, send in your yearly subscription to the *Reporter* when it is due.

Thanks for understanding and paying your share when you can.

OLOC Subscriber/Supporter Form

Lesbians 60 and over: We urge you to subscribe to *The Reporter* as an expression of your commitment to be with old Lesbians in your own area, working to confront ageism. If no such group exists, become an OLOC Contact Woman and work with a mentor to start a local group. If you are not yet 60, we welcome you as a Supporter. By giving OLOC your generous financial contribution you can show your commitment and support for challenging ageism.

Please check all that apply:

_____ I am (we are) 60 or over and wish to subscribe (or renew) my (our) current subscription to *The Reporter*.
\$25 to \$50 for a one-year subscription.

_____ I (we) want to receive *The Reporter* but I (we) can contribute only \$ _____

_____ I am (we are) not yet 60 but want to Support OLOC. Enclosed is \$30 to \$60 for a one-year subscription to *The Reporter*.

_____ I (we) want to keep OLOC alive and strong. Please accept my (our) tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____ or my (our) pledge of \$ _____ / month.

_____ I (we) want to purchase the *Travel Directory*. Enclosed is \$3 for costs.

_____ I (we) want my (our) names to be included in the *Travel Directory*.

_____ I (we) would like to give a \$25 gift subscription to the name(s) listed below.

_____ Please send a sample of *The Reporter* to the name(s) listed below.

OLOC Endowment

An additional way to help OLOC grow is through the OLOC Endowment. It was created to receive bequests from OLOC Subscribers and Supporters. The bequest can be an outright gift listed in a will or a percentage of assets.

A copy of the OLOC Endowment brochure is available by calling 888-706-7506 or by emailing info@oloc.org.

Also Available:
OLOC T-Shirts and
Cloisonné OLOC Lapel Pins, Buttons
(email or write for full details)

Date of birth enables us to keep accurate Subscriber/Supporter records for grants and other purposes. Your Ethnicity and disability status is requested as part of our ongoing awareness of and commitment to diversity. **OLOC's mailing lists are for OLOC's use only and not available to any other persons or organizations.**

Name _____ Additional Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Additional Date of Birth _____

Ethnicity _____ Ethnicity _____

Disability _____ Disability _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Out of United States? If so, additional address: _____

Telephone(s) _____ / _____ Email _____

Would you prefer receiving the newsletter as a print copy? _____ or a PDF via email? _____

Skills you can offer OLOC: _____

OLD LESBIANS ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE
OLOC • P.O. Box 5853 • Athens, OH 45701
www.oloc.org • email: info@oloc.org toll free 888-706-7506



OLOC
PO Box 5853
Athens, OH 45701

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID
ATHENS, OH
PERMIT NO. 82

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Subscription Expired?

Your label tells you the date of your last official issue. If your label says 2008.03 or earlier, then your subscription has ended and it is time to renew.

