

# Old Lesbians Organizing for Change



## Making Connections in July *By Myra Brahms, 1942*

The July 17–19, 2009, Regional Gathering, Making Connections, will begin Friday afternoon in the Clarion Hotel in Columbia, SC, with registration and gathering at the hospitality room to meet and greet new and old OLOC friends. Snacks and beverages will be available, also. The OLOC Marketplace will be open both Friday and Saturday. Books, CD's, jewelry, and OLOC-logoed apparel will be sold for cash, check, or charge. On Friday night we will also hear some results of the research Dr. Paige Averett and her team have been conducting on Old Lesbians.

After dinner Friday night on your own, Harriet Hancock will welcome us to an eventful weekend of Old Lesbian Pride workshops and live performances. A musical evening will follow provided by Barbara Ester and Beth York, singers and songwriters "who celebrate loves and our lives." And what a delight that will be!

Early Saturday morning, wake up your body, mind, and energy with before-breakfast activity. Sally Tatnall will provide line dancing instruction and practice in preparation for our 60's or 1960's (however you recall age sixty or the decade) dinner dance. Remember to wear your pink-and-black outfits to complement the evening with an excellent DJ and a fine singer(s).

The Saturday morning opening panel on Old Lesbian Pride will be followed with discussion in small groups. Afternoon workshops include Learning to Grow Old by Sally Tatnall and Relaxing Massage Techniques to Enhance

Our Old Lesbian Bodies with Carole Stoneking. Carren Strock will present Writing and Sharing of Old Lesbian Stories. Barbara Ester and Beth York will conduct a workshop on The Power of Women's' Music. Memory and Aging in Old Lesbians will be presented by Myra Brahms. Don't forget the dinner dance Saturday night. The OLOC auction and raffle will conclude that night.

After our extensive brunch on Sunday, a panel on Continuing Activism: What we've accomplished, how we benefit and moving ahead will be presented. Mandy Carter and several other speakers will contribute to a

stimulating discussion. Carter has served as the Executive Director of SONG (Southerners on New Ground), founded to build movements connecting culture, gender, race, class, and sexual orientation. She is a community organizer and was a keynote speaker for a national NOW convention.

Remember to bring your bathing suits for the outdoor pool. Additionally, please bring items for the OLOC Auction. The optional bus tour begins at 12:00 noon and will visit Columbia's

Lesbian, Jewish, and African American sites.

Many have already registered. Forms for the Gathering and for financial assistance can be found at the [www.oloc.org](http://www.oloc.org) site. Hotel accommodations should be arranged directly with the Clarion Hotel at 800–221–2222, and be sure to tell them that you are with OLOC for the July 17–19, 2009, Gathering.

***See you there!***



*Mandy Carter*

**The Reporter ... A quarterly publication of OLOC**

**June 2009 VOLUME 19 ISSUE 2**

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

### Apology

In the March, 2009, *OLOC Reporter* we used the term “southern belle” hotel to describe the Clarion, in Columbia SC. This is the hotel where we will meet for our regional event in July. The national OLOC Steering Committee held its recent meeting at this hotel. We witnessed African Americans as patrons, overnight guests, and staff members. We want to apologize for using the phrase, which we believe is both racist and classist. “Southern belles” were white women of leisure who could only be so because oppressed slaves were doing all the work. This is not an image OLOC wants to support.

The following comment was made by OLOC co-founder Vera Martin, 1923, an African American Lesbian, on this topic:

“It appears to me most non people of color are pretending racism is over and it is absolutely not. We still have to be alert and ready to speak up. If we don’t get honest and start talking, sharing on both sides of the issue, it will never get better.”

Another comment came from Sandra Haggerty, associate professor of journalism at Ohio University, also an African American woman, who said, “When southern belles were comfortable, Black women and poor women were not among their ranks.”

And from Shaba Barnes, 1935, emeritus co-director of OLOC: “The term ‘southern belle’ used by one of our members screamed loudly to me that it is time to revisit CR or consciousness-raising sessions of the 60’s and 70’s. I say thank you to the Sister who wrote the phrase ‘southern- belle.’ You have renewed the consciousness of many of us that we still have work to do.”

*(Note that the article in which the term appeared was given the byline of Kitty Sorell and, while Kitty wrote much of it, the term itself was added by Myra Brahms)*

### Support Single-Payer National Health Insurance

OLOC once again urges you to contact your representatives in Washington. Urge them to support HR 676 and to advocate for Medicare to include dental care and hearing aids.

John Conyers, a congressman from Detroit who has long supported activist causes, including reparations to African Americans for the horrors of slavery, introduced the single-payer national health insurance bill.

Knowing that our health needs will be met will do more for most Old Lesbians than almost anything else. It can be paid for by taking the profit out of the middle (insurance companies), a national health service negotiating for lower drug prices, continued but smaller payments by employers for employee health coverage, and some contribution from those of us who are not low income.

For very good information, go to the Website of Physicians for a National Health Program at [www.pnhp.org](http://www.pnhp.org). For more information about grassroots organizing, go to [www.hr676.org](http://www.hr676.org). To contact your representative, you can find contact information at [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov). You can also contact [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) to send a message to President Obama.

#### Mission Statement for OLOC

Old Lesbians Organizing for Change is a national organization for Old Lesbians age 60 and over, and will:

- Promote Old Lesbian Pride.
- Educate, support and empower Old Lesbians.
- Challenge ageism in our society and educate the general public about the effects of ageism and oppression.
- Celebrate our strengths, our talents, our experiences, and document our lives.
- Convene National Gatherings of Old Lesbians.
- Encourage, establish, and support local chapters and regional events

## Steering Committee Sets Priorities

The national OLOC Steering Committee met for four days in early April in Columbia SC. We met with folks at the local LGBT Center for their monthly potluck and were able to distribute lots of literature about our Regional Gathering there this summer, July 17–19. We also finalized many details for this event and feel good about the hotel chosen for the event.

We confirmed a date for our next National Gathering, July 14–18, 2010, in Cleveland and are making good progress on keynote speakers.

We worked hard on vision and re-committed ourselves to OLOC's historic mission of activism and feminist analysis (political, economic, etc.). We believe strongly that activism (Old Lesbians organizing for change) is good for our social and emotional health and is important in giving us a purpose in life, friends, and continued learning.

We affirmed again our strong support for universal, single-payer health insurance, and we added a new issue for advocacy — including dental and hearing aid benefits in Medicare.

As usual we covered a lot of ground on ordinary business — financial reports, budget and grant planning, policy changes, improving the newsletter and Website, job descriptions, PR, outreach, and oh so much more. Sort of like “business as usual” but oriented toward change!

NOTE: Given our interest in good analysis of the big picture — what is going on in our world, most all of which affects Old Lesbians — we are seeking writers who would consider developing newsletter articles. The next deadline is August 1. What a good way to spend your summer!

## More on the OLOC Del Martin Old Lesbian Pride Award

OLOC is actively seeking nominations for the first Del Martin Old Lesbian Pride Award. Of course, we all realize that there was only one Del Martin, but many other wonderful Old Lesbians contribute to our Lesbian community or have in the past. Please start thinking of Old Lesbians, 70 or older, whose life and work you think are deserving of this honor. Nominations, 500 words or less, should be postmarked by 12/31/09. Contact OLOC for guidelines.

The award will be given to a Lesbian 70 years or older whose life and work have impacted and will continue to impact the lives of Old Lesbians. The first award will be presented at the 2010 National Gathering.

Del was out, proud, and unapologetic when few were. She and her lifetime partner Phyllis Lyon forged an enduring image that continues to inspire generations of Lesbians around the globe. In 1955 they co-founded The Daughters of Bilitis, the first U.S. Lesbian organization, and in 1972, co-wrote the equally groundbreaking *Lesbian/Woman*. In 1976, Del's book *Battered Wives* shattered the silence surrounding domestic violence. Her writing and tireless activism on behalf of women earned much praise, many awards, and an invitation to the White House, and drew upon the great strengths of Lesbian tradition, advancing our visibility and pride and carrying that heritage forward.

### Contact List for Current Steering Committee Members

#### Co-Directors:

Jan Griesinger, 1942, Athens, OH	jan@oloc.org	(740) 448-6424
Mina Meyer, 1940, Long Beach, CA	mina@oloc.org	(562) 420-3555

#### Steering Committee Members:

Alix Dobkin, 1940, Woodstock, NY	alix@oloc.org	(845) 679-7586
Myra Brahms, 1942, New York City, NY	myra@oloc.org	(212) 535-9633
Ruth Debra, 1944, Palm Springs, CA	ruth@oloc.org	(760) 318-6794
Sally Tatnall, 1937, Cleveland Heights, OH	sally@oloc.org	(216) 862-0598

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Arcus Foundation and the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice.**

### **Two OLOCers Report on the National Black Justice Coalition Summit**

#### **An Outsider's View** *By Simi Litvak, 1942*

Several hundred people gathered in San Francisco in March for the Summit sponsored by the National Black Justice Coalition, a civil rights organization dedicated to empowering Black LGBT people.

California's Proposition 8 was the subtext for the whole day. Not once did the discussion turn to the flurry of debate within the LGBT community over the role of Black folks in the passage of Prop 8. Instead, the day focused on debates internal to the Black community. Speakers argued that Gay marriage is important to Black LGBTs. It is a civil, human rights, and social justice issue.

The highlight of the day was a rapturous sermon from the Rev. Frederick Haynes, the non-LGBT minister of a Black mega church in Dallas. He talked about a boy and his dream that was so beautiful it was even in color and HD. In the middle of this dream a huge bear ran in and spoiled his dream. The dream was the election of Barack Obama, and the bear was the passage of Prop 8 on the same day.

Most moving for me was the assertion that Black LGBTs need to be able to go home. For many, home is the Black Church. People are in the closet because they want to be able to go home to their church. The don't ask, don't tell conspiracy of silence must end.

At the end, I spoke for OLOC from the floor and said, "It was a privilege to be here. The day was a moving experience for me. If there is any way OLOC can work with you, let us know."

#### **Friendships Build Coalitions** *By Joan P. Emerson, 1935*

On March 28, 2009, in San Francisco The National Black Justice Coalition held a Town Hall Meeting to discuss homophobia in the Black community and racism in the LGBT community.

The first question from the floor: Where are the white gay organizations we invited? The moderator, Karen Williams, answered: "If we had diverse friendships, we naturally would have diverse organizations." Marjorie Hill said "We need to accept feeling discomfort and be willing to change to have coalitions with people from different subcultures." The theme of the discussion was friendships are crucial to coalitions.

In response to a Black woman's objection to putting a lot of energy into the gay marriage issue, Karen Williams said, "You cannot build coalitions on large issues until you have worked on lesser issues."

The last question from the floor came from OLOC member Simi Litvak. When she identified herself as OLOC, there was applause. Simi ended with, "If you need something, call on us; we'll be there."

### **Two Conferences of Interest to Old Lesbians** *By Shaba Barnes, 1935*

I had the privilege of attending two conferences this year, Creating Change, held in Denver January 28 – February 1, 2009, and The American Society on Aging in Las Vegas, March 15 – 19, 2009.

Creating Change has always been my favorite conference, second to the OLOC Gathering of course, and was the best ever this year. The organizers of Creating Change waive the registration for those of us over 65 years old whether we are members or not.

Full meals at no cost were served in the Penthouse Hospitality Suite for LGBT Elders, hosted by Gay and Gray in the West. If you were looking for a friend at Creating Change, you could hang out in the Penthouse Hospitality Suite and were sure to find



her. Creating Change has made some positive moves by including a Preconference Institute for Aging in addition to workshops for people interested in the intersection of aging and LGBT issues. Somehow, many people still do not get the difference between Ageism and Aging. After attending Creating Change for more than six years, I asked, "When will OLOC be recognized?" It would be a great idea to raise money for more OLOC members to attend Creating Change in Dallas, TX in 2010. We will show up in force and be in a better position to be reckoned with.

The ASA Conference was very impressive. It is designed for academics, health care professionals, and those working with the elder workforce. I enjoyed the LGBT track of ASA, with workshops and speakers to interest the LGBT attendees.

### **Birthdays Gifts to OLOC**

We might want to follow the examples set by Ruth Silver, 1919, and Sally Tatnall, 1937, who, on the occasions of their 90th and 70th birthdays, asked friends to make a donation to OLOC in place of traditional birthday gifts.

Ruth was one of OLOC's early organizers. In the early 1990s, she and her partner Shevy Healey traveled the country in an RV to give OLOC a national constituency. Sally, a current member of the OLOC Steering Committee, will serve as onsite coordinator for the upcoming 2010 National Gathering in Cleveland, OH.

### **Reporter Subscriptions**

We do not want any of you who want to receive *The Reporter* to go without. If paying for it is difficult, let us know or send what you can. We do need to hear from you. If your subscription expires and we have had no communication, we will take you off the list. Please remember that your subscriptions help us keep going as an organization. Without subscribers, there would be no OLOC.

Women in their 80s are an important part of our population. We would really love to feature stories by any of our over-80 OLOCers, so if you are one and inclined to write, please do.

### **Assist OLOC**

OLOC needs help with public relations, organizing photographs on computer, and several other jobs. If you have time and skills you would like to volunteer, let us know at the post office box or by e-mail at [info@oloc.org](mailto:info@oloc.org).

### **Old Lesbian *Sinister Wisdom* Issue**

Fran Day, editor of *Sinister Wisdom*, announces that vol. 78, the forthcoming Winter 2009 – 2010 issue of *Sinister Wisdom*, is the second edition to focus on the concerns of Old Lesbians/Dykes. For further information, contact [fran@sonic.net](mailto:fran@sonic.net). If you are interested in submitting an article to a future issue or subscribing to the magazine, check out the website at [www.sinisterwisdom.org](http://www.sinisterwisdom.org).

### **Media Library**

OLOC has added more videos to the Media Library. OLOC Lesbians can borrow from the library for a suggested donation of \$5.00 each to cover our costs of sending out the videos. To see the list, go to [www.oloc.org](http://www.oloc.org) under Resources, or send an SASE to Susan Wiseheart, HC 73 Box 169C, Drury MO 65638

### **Ageism — Do They Get It?**

A DVD of the 2008 OLOC National Gathering CR session on ageism is available for loan or purchase. It is for use with OLOC groups and the general public. Several Old Lesbians share their experiences with ageism and reflect on its effect throughout society. One free copy was distributed to each OLOC chapter. Cost to individual OLOCers is \$5. Cost for organizations and agencies is \$15. Contact Susan Wiseheart (address in *Media Library* above) to borrow or buy the DVD.

### North Bay: New Chapter Formed and Underway

*By Sandy Tate, 1935*



*Donna Watson, Fran Day, Rosemary Hathaway,  
Terry Decker, Seneca Rising*

I'm thrilled to announce the formation of a new chapter called North Bay OLOC. Jane Herman turned 60 last year, went to the National Gathering in Los Angeles and loved meeting the Lesbians of OLOC from all over. She came back determined to start a new chapter here (60 miles north of San Francisco) in Sonoma County, California.

Ten of us Old Dykes met at a restaurant and discussed where to meet, what to focus on, what we wanted from the group, how to join if we haven't already, and how great it was that we had such a good turnout at the first meeting. Thanks to Jane we're on our way with the second meeting scheduled in a few weeks.

### More About North Bay's New Chapter

*By Jane Herman, 1948,  
and Terry Decker, 1942*

Ten Dykes attended a lively discussion at our first official North Bay OLOC meeting. We made plans to develop a series of workshops on topics such as What does it mean to be old?, body image, Environmental Illness (EI) and Multiple Chemical Sensitivities (MCS), classism, anti-racism, and disability.

We made several important group decisions. First, we will create an Old Lesbians' Readers Theater, which will hold its first meeting on Friday, May 24th. Second, our membership will be open to female-born Lesbians over 60. Third, our decision-making method will be consensus (with a time limit). Finally, to make our events and meetings accessible to Lesbians with EI/MCS, North Bay OLOC will have a fragrance-free and cell phone-free policy. Luna Lester, 1925, will be our EI/MCS Educator; she will be available at North Bay OLOC gatherings to answer questions about what it means to be fragrance-free and why this is important.



*Sandy Tate, Thelma Jean Edwards, Jane Herman, Luna Lester*



### Bay Area (CA) Chapter

The Bay Area OLOC March meeting included Simi Litvak, 1942, Pnina Tobin, 1941, and Joyce Pierson, 1933, facilitating a discussion on Class and Financial Situation. We divided into small groups by age to discuss:

1. How does your class background (present and past) impact you at the age you are now?
2. How are you surviving financially?
3. What commonalities and differences did you discover in discussing your class backgrounds, current age, and financial situations?

We returned to the large group to discuss our experience in the small groups and begin brainstorming on how we can create ways to help each other cope with our financial situations.

### Reaching Out to Our Portland, OR GLBT Community

*By Mary Beth Brindley, 1939*

In December, 2008, at our monthly OLOC meeting we discussed goals for 2009, and our membership came up with two goals. Our first goal is working monthly with the MCC Church in providing food for their pantry. After much discussion and brainstorming we decided upon contributing canned or boxed nonperishable foods monthly to the People's Pantry at Portland's Metropolitan Community Church as well as getting involved twice a year to serve lunch to a group of 30 HIV-positive women that the church helps. Second, we are looking for Old Lesbians who need help of any kind, and, as far as finding Old Lesbians, we have started with helping one 88-year-old Lesbian who had her left leg amputated below the knee due to diabetes complications. After speaking with her several times over the phone, we found she has several needs that we can help her with, so we started with a visit and serving her lunch in March, hoping to continue this monthly.

*The photo below is just some of the Portland chapter members. Standing, left to right: Betty Marino, Nancy Fasciani, Betty Nelson, Mary Beth Brindley, DeAnn Mayberry, and Kathie Hitchcock. Sitting and kneeling, left to right: Eddie Siedelman, Hazel Hale, Sally Cohn, Mim Mimmack, Julie Martin, and Kathy Bambeck.*



### **Puget Sound (WA) Chapter** **Old Lesbians of Puget Sound Awarded Stimulus Package!** *By Gloria Stancich 1935, Co-Coordinator, Puget Sound OLOC*



The Northwest Pride Foundation has just announced that Puget Sound OLOC is one of 32 groups (out of 91 that applied) in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho to receive funding in the spring granting cycle. The money is earmarked for organizational infrastructure support to allow us to increase networking opportunities. We will use it to become more visible to Old Lesbians in the Puget Sound area and to the agencies and entities who are or should be providing services to us. Some of this money will also be used to gather and preserve the herstories and ephemera of Old Lesbians in our area. The herstories will be stored in the OLOHP (Old Lesbians Oral Herstory Project: [www.olohp.org](http://www.olohp.org)) archives, and the stories and ephemera will be housed in the NW Lesbian Archives at the Washington State Historical Society in Tacoma. We are very pleased to have had this grant request go forward successfully as we believe that this is recognition that the issues of aging, isolation, and under-funding of services in the Lesbian population are important.

We hope that other OLOC chapters and groups will share with us any successful projects that have helped you work toward these goals. We will gladly report on our progress. Please contact [Mary@oloc.org](mailto:Mary@oloc.org) and/or [Gloria@oloc.org](mailto:Gloria@oloc.org) with any helpful information you may have to share.

## Memoriam

### **In Memoriam: Ethel "Ricci" Bronson**

Born in 1924 in Brooklyn, Ricci was the youngest of two. She and her brother "Ace" spent their early years in an orphanage and were fostered together to several families. Ricci left foster care when she was 16.

In job hunting in the newspaper, she found an ad looking for an "exotic dancer." She didn't know what an exotic dancer was, but knew she could dance and figured she was exotic. She tried out for the job, was hired, and spent over 20 years dancing the burlesque circuit. Ethel Bronson had become "Ricci Cortez, The Sleepytime Gal."

Early in her dance career, Ricci got pregnant and married. Her daughter was born in 1949. When she met her first long-term lover (Marion) in Houston she was traveling.

After ten years with Marion she met Rita, and was with her ten years.

Ricci and Rita opened the first women's bar, Roaring Sixties, in 1967 when it was subject to periodic raids. They were instrumental in the legal challenges to stop harassment at gay bars. Rita was known as "Papa Bear" and Ricci was "Mama Bear."

Ricci is in the Burlesque Hall of Fame in Las Vegas. She remained active and lived independently until her death September 3, 2008.

Her story is one that is included in the soon-to-be-available book based on the stories in the Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project.



*Memorial article submitted by Arden Eversmeyer, 1931, OLOHP Project Director [www.olohp.org](http://www.olohp.org)*



## OLOC's Memorial Program

*By Shaba Barnes, 1935*

The Memorial Program was created to announce the deaths of an Old Lesbians 60 years or older in *The Reporter* and/or on the website. We presently have two Memorial Plaques, with only six remaining plates on the second one. All of the names on the plaques will be featured on the OLOC Website in the very near future.

We ask donors who submit the name of an Old Lesbian for inclusion on the Memorial Plaque to please include a short summary, something personal about the individual such as her work, her hobbies, what she was best known for, and so on. We ask for a donation of \$10.00 or more to cover the cost of the plate on the plaque and to support the Memorial Program at each Gathering. In addition, we appreciate the birth date, the end-of-life date, a picture of the deceased, and an address to send a condolence card to a remaining loved one.

### **The OLOC Reporter**

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

- [www.oloc.org](http://www.oloc.org)
- E-mail: [info@oloc.org](mailto:info@oloc.org)
- Post Office Box 5853 Athens, OH 45701
- 888-706-7506

This newsletter brought to you by: Susan Wiseheart, 1941, Managing Editor; Jennice Thomas, 1940, Copy Editor; Malinda McCain, 1940 and Nancy Krody, 1939, Proofreaders; Mina Meyer, 1940, and Jan Griesinger, 1942, Content Review; Margaret Purcell, 1951, Design/Layout; All of the writers and the mailing crew.

### **Let your voice be heard.**

Deadline for the next issue is August 1, 2009. Submission guidelines: copy due by Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1 and Nov. 1. Limit submissions to 500 words.

Articles may be edited for clarity and length.

**Send articles to OLOC:** [info@oloc.org](mailto:info@oloc.org)  
or OLOC, PO Box 5853, Athens, OH 45701

## Our Thanks to Dr. Jean Eckerly, 1937

Jean has written the Medical Corner for many years and has made a significant contribution to medical information very useful to all of us. We send her a huge thank you for her wonderful columns.

## Hazardous to Our Health!

(Help Keep OLOC Spaces Safer for Everyone)

*By Carole Stoneking, 1937*

Chemicals linked to asthma, cancer, lupus, Parkinson's disease, and many other illnesses can be commonly found in personal care products. The chemicals found in these products are toluenes, phthalates, petrochemicals, parabens, and formaldehyde. A hypersensitivity to these chemicals affects more than 15% of Americans and an even higher percentage of people with disabilities. Many OLOC members have disabilities and/or Environmental Illness. Here are a few things we can do to help improve the safety and comfort of our Gatherings:

- Avoid wearing perfumes or fragrances of any kind.
- Wash new clothing in fragrance-free detergent or baking soda before wearing.
- Refrain from smoking and wearing smoke-filled clothing.
- Leave cell phones off during Gatherings to reduce emitting electromagnetic fields (EMFs).
- Regarding service animals — please don't apply pesticide spray for at least two weeks before attending a Gathering.

*Diane Germaine's wonderful drawings will be featured in The Reporter often*



### **A View from 80 By Marge Nelson, 1928**

Regarding the question of why OLOC requires that you be 60, here are some brief notes of our important history. A major theme in organizing OLOC in 1989 was our experience of "ageism" from younger Lesbians. We complained that they spoke for us, defined feminism and Lesbianism for us, while ignoring our experiences.

What is key here is that we, too, had been raised to ignore our experience. We needed to create space and time where we would not have to defend ourselves or be outshouted and could explore together. So in the mid 1970's we began gathering and talking and writing about "older women's liberation." Who were we? What was our experience of oppression? What were our dreams? This history is little known or respected.

I was part of this. From my initial awakening in 1963 from reading Betty Friedan's brilliant analysis of our generation's "problem that has no name" until a decade later when I met Polly and came out with her, I was incredibly alone in everything I did, all the liberation struggles I was part of. I was a mother of three children and had spent years as a housewife doing unpaid labor 24/7. This lack of income affects me as it does other women today. And the young women called me middle-class? They wanted to talk about how much they hated their mothers and really couldn't hear me.

Because of our particular generation's experience, our aging has its own flavor. Future generations may not need these limits. It is important to end with a note that we are still experiencing ageism in our local Dyke march where young women thank us and wiggle their tits at us as they march by our viewing seats, but limit and deny our access to the mike. What do you think about that?

## OLOCer News

### **OLOCer Lucy Frey, 1932, Inducted into Alaska Hall of Fame**

I was recently inducted into the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame as a part of that state's 50th year celebration. A group of women noticed that all the planned recognition for the event involved what white men did. So they organized a women's event. They decided on the 50 Alaskan women who had made the most impact, and I was among them.

One of my former students works for the *Anchorage Daily News* and wrote a small tribute which touched me deeply: "I remember Lucy Frey for two things: She was my most memorable teacher at Clark Junior High. I loved social studies in seventh grade. Getting to stay after to work on the bulletin boards was a big treat. She put up with troublemakers. She furthered a passion for school that carried me through many years.

"And she often played Scrabble with my mother, a school secretary and diehard Catholic. I went along for the games. I had no idea at the time that Lucy Frey had a life outside Scrabble and classrooms. But last week, she was among 50 women named to the first Alaska Women's Hall of Fame induction, alongside such notables as civil rights leader Elizabeth Peratrovich and Mary Louise Rasmuson of the Rasmuson Foundation.

"Now I find that she was a peace activist, noted Alaska feminist, and rabble-rouser. She handed out pledge cards downtown, asking people to resist violence. She co-owned the Alaska Women's Bookstore. She helped launch the Alaska Women's Political Caucus.

"I always knew Lucy Frey was a special teacher. Now I know she was a special human being too."

*(Anchorage Daily News article written by Rosemary Shinohara)*

## OLOCer Betty Marino Receives Award

On May 1, 2009, Portland retiree Beatriz “Betty” Marino, 1939, was one of 25 people from across the country honored with an Older Volunteers Enrich America Award in Washington DC.

These annual awards, given by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and the MetLife Foundation, recognize contributions of volunteers who are older than 50 and promote volunteering among older Americans. Marino was chosen for her work with Multnomah County’s Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance program, helping low-income seniors figure out the best benefits for their situations. Marino also took on the task of keeping current with 2003 Medicare changes that were implemented in stages and helped other volunteer staff understand them. In all, she has contributed 600 hours and helped more than 500 seniors with Medicare benefits.

## A National Holiday Celebrating Women’s Right to Vote

Gertrude Chasens, one of the founders of OLOC, suggested July 19th as a national holiday celebrating women’s suffrage in a letter published in the Spring, 2009, issue of *Ms. Magazine*. She pointed out that except for Mother’s Day, Thanksgiving, and religious holidays, our special “days” celebrate only famous men and military subjects.

## Carole Stoneking Receives Massage Therapy Award

Carole Stoneking, 1937, was recently given both a certificate of appreciation and a meritorious award from her chapter (South Carolina) of the American Massage Therapy Association. She will be given a national award at a meeting in Orlando this September. Carole lives in Columbia, SC, and is actively involved in the upcoming Regional Gathering there in July.

## Pride Celebration at Senior Center

Marion Abdullah, 1936, has sent us notice of an LGBT pride celebration June 16 at the North Berkeley Senior Center, Berkeley, CA. If the senior center near you does not have such an event, start organizing one now for next year!



## Ruthie and Connie Receive Human Rights Award

On April, 25, 2009, Ruthie Berman, 1934, and Connie Kurtz, 1936, received the Human Rights Award from Gaywest2009 in Tucson, AZ. The award-winning film *Ruthie and Connie: Every Room in the House* chronicles their love and friendship — and the price they paid to be themselves.

The film follows their lives from their meeting in the 1950s to their historic struggle to win domestic partnership benefits from the New York City Board of Education for themselves and all New York City employees in the 1980s.

Today, they’re still activists. Their workshops for homophobic gays and Lesbians and their families are a comfort for many. Whether marching in the Gay Pride Parade or dancing on the Coney Island boardwalk, they are funny, passionate, angry — and always entertaining.

Check out their Website for more details ([www.ruthieandconniethemovie.com](http://www.ruthieandconniethemovie.com)) about this interesting and informative film. The film is also available for loan from the OLOC Media Library.



**Technology: Who, Me?** *By rainbow williams, 1934*

Omi Goddess, what a tool is in my hands! It's called e-mail. It's not yet nine in the morning and I have had word from Melrose, Sugarloaf, Orlando, and wherever Fran Day is, making *Sinister Wisdom*, without phone charges (thank you Jesus).

It's staggering, really. I am on the edge of exploding my small world. All this is happening to a seventy-five-year-old Dyke.

I have not entered the world of chat rooms or blogging, but I have my toe in by way of two little Websites that friends did for me. I didn't have a camera, but about five folks had that covered. My daughter has a new printer with all the tricks.

You don't have to do everything that your computer is capable of. One of us knows one trick, another shares another, and just one new thing is like brand new muscles and abilities I never had before. I yam drunk with power!

So, my laptop goes everywhere I go now. Next weekend we will go wireless at one of the cyber cafes. Freedom, yeah.

I have learned I can watch DVDs on my laptop (you would think the screen would be small? Well, check it out. It seems more distinct and clear than on a TV screen).

A miracle, when you don't have to have your damn TV set, to watch a movie! I have Frida and love to watch Selma doing a tango with the Ryder woman. Hot, Hot, Hot!

I've just learned to e-mail photos and am able to enter my artwork to exhibits, calendars, and magazines. I'm having more control over my own life in almost every way possible, using the systems.

My oldest and dearest all live 99 miles away and so do my grandkids. I keep in touch by e-mail and see them once a month. One friend last seen in 1964 has reconnected and sent me film I never knew existed, home movies of my family when my daughter was one year old, being hugged and held by her Missouri granny, uncle and nephew. We never knew of this film footage and we can share it around on DVD. I keep saying "Amazing," and it is.

I was technology shy and reluctant to get on board with the new age of magic tricks but NOW I am wired and fired about some of the access. I love researching on Wikipedia and Google and having more democratic, open, and gay-friendly information. Twitter: not yet, Facebook: not yet, but there is a listserv for landykes, OLOC committees can work together without long-distance phoning, and Websites can link us up.

O, I get it! The GEEKS will inherit the Earth. I think I will become one!

**Poetry Contest Deadline June 15, 2009**

*Persimmon Tree, An Online Magazine of the Arts by Women Over Sixty*, is holding a regional poetry contest for those who live in the Southern United States. (States include AZ, NM, TX, OK, AR, LA, MS, AL, GA, FL, TN, KY, WV, VA, DC, NC, SC, MD). Jill Breckenridge is the guest poetry editor for this contest. The selected poems will appear in the September 2009 issue. Deadline for submitting poems is June 15, 2009, only at poetryentry@comcast.net. See the "Submissions" link on the Website (you have to log on first) for necessary further details. This is the second in a series of regional poetry contests. Check [www.persimmontree.org](http://www.persimmontree.org) for the current issue with poems from the West Coast.

**Ageism in Action**

**Please send us your Ageism Action Alerts to be posted on our Website and for possible articles in *The Reporter*. These alerts will be focused on ads, cards, and any other ageist things that we can respond to in a national way. Please send information on who needs to be targeted on ageism, what they did, their contact information, etc. to OLOC, PO Box 5853, Athens, OH 45701 or e-mail [info@oloc.org](mailto:info@oloc.org).**

# OLOC's 2009 Regional Gathering July 17-19, 2009 in Columbia SC

## Registration Form

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_



**Cost:** Registration for the Gathering includes Saturday night dinner & dance and Sunday brunch. Pre-registration for the Gathering only: \$170 before June 30. After July 1st it is on-site only and \$180.

Add \$20.00 for optional Bus Tour and check here

Check here if you **do not** want to be included on the attendee list to be given to those in attendance

**Meal Preference:**  Meat  
 Fish  
 Vegetarian

Registration Fee (see dates above) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Bus Tour (\$20) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution toward assisting low-income Lesbians to attend \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please don't forget to bring items for the auction.**

Make check payable\* to OLOC and mail with completed registration form to:



Myra Brahms, 235 E. 80th St. 3A, New York City, New York, 10075  
 Phone: 212-535-9633 E-mail: MYRABRAHMS@aol.com

\*To pay by PayPal or with a credit card through PayPal (you do not need a PayPal account for credit card payment) go to [oloc.org](http://oloc.org) and click the donation button. Be sure to spell out what your payment covers.

**Hotel Accommodation:** Please make your own reservation. Room rates 89/night plus taxes and choice of beds; two double or one king size. For the best rates, be sure to let them know that you are with OLOC

Reservations must be made directly with the hotel:

Clarion Hotel, 1615 Gervais Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201, 888-221-2222

Regional Gathering Program		Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Morning		Line Dancing Plenary & Group Discussions Workshops	Brunch Panel: Mandy Carter
	Afternoon	1 pm: Registration, meet and greet, hospitality, snacks	Workshops	Optional Bus Tour
	Dinner	Dinner on Your Own	Dinner Dance Auction	
Evening	Welcome: Harriet Hancock, PFLAG; musical performance, raffle			

<b>OLOC Chapter Contact List</b>		Help form an OLOC chapter in one of our regions. Write to the Ohio address or e-mail susan@oloc.org		
<b>South West</b>	Northern CO	Cindy Bear, 1947	303-258-9424	cindy@oloc.org
	Southern CA	Mina Meyer, 1940	562-420-3555	mina@oloc.org
	Coachella Valley/ Palm Springs, CA	Ruth Debra, 1944	760-318-6794	ruth@oloc.org
	San Francisco Bay 40 Camino Alto #12209	Joan Emerson, 1935 Mill Valley, CA 94941	415-388-5001	pelicanpansy@ yahoo.com
	North Bay CA	Jane Herman, 1948	707-528-4554 (11 am to 11 pm PST)	
<b>North West</b>	Portland, OR	Mary Beth Brindley, 1939	503-286-3575	marybeth@oloc.org
	Puget Sound/WA	Gloria Stancich, 1935 Mary Henry, 1939	253-851-9864 253-565-0829	gloria@oloc.org mary@oloc.or
<b>South East</b>	(no chapters yet)	Carole Stoneking, 1937	803-748-9490	stonekg@aol.com
<b>North East</b>	New York City	Myra Brahms, 1942	212-535-9633	myra@oloc.org
	Hudson Valley NY	Alix Dobkin, 1940	845-679-7586	alix@oloc.org
<b>So. Central</b>	St. Louis, MO	Charlotte Ellis, 1943	314-962-2188	charlotte@oloc.org
<b>North Central</b>	Cleveland, OH	Judy Benson, 1946	216-227-1243	judb@cox.net
	OH except Cleveland	Sally Tatnall, 1937	216-862-0598	tatnalls@yahoo.com

## **OLOC Support for Gay Marriage in California** *By Cathy Cade, 1942*

On Tuesday, Feb. 24, I attended a committee hearing in Sacramento to support Mark Leno's resolution for the California legislature declaring the recent passage of Proposition 8 (the anti-gay marriage initiative) illegal because it denies equal protection to minorities. Leno gave a very clear and impressive presentation.

About 50 supporters from the audience stated their names and the groups they represented. When I said I represented Old Lesbians Organizing for Change, looks of astonishment and delight were followed by cheers and clapping. My experiences are that our presence on this day, and at other demonstrations, opens people's minds and brings them a sense of great hope. It's really fun when this happens.

### **Ageism Goes Two Ways**

"When older women generalize about the political values (or lack thereof) of younger women — when they can remain ignorant of the radical feminist revival among women in their 20s and 30s — they are engaging in ageism. Likewise, when younger women characterize older women as "dinosaurs" and "throwbacks" and consider "second-wave" Lesbian-feminism irrelevant — even when they're unfamiliar with the major tenets, theories, political activism and writings thereof — they too are participating in ageism. One of capitalist patriarchy's oldest tricks is splitting the bonds between generations."

*From "Ageism and Radical Feminism," Feb. 4, 2009, Amy Winter's Blog, Amy's Brain Today, at [www.feminist-reprise.org/wpblog/](http://www.feminist-reprise.org/wpblog/) (Search for the date).*

**OLOC only publicizes research done on Old Lesbians after our Research Gatekeeper, Sharon Raphael, 1941. approves it based on criteria available at oloc.org. Write to her care of the OLOC post office box or e-mail her at [smraphael@aol.com](mailto:smraphael@aol.com).**

**Nothing about us without us!**



If you want to receive *The Reporter*, please let us know even if you can't contribute.

## 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:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am (we are) 60 or over and wish to subscribe (or renew) my (our) current subscription to <i>The Reporter</i> . \$25 to \$50 for a one-year subscription. | <input type="checkbox"/> I (we) want to purchase the <i>Travel Directory</i> . Enclosed is \$5 for costs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I (we) want to receive <i>The Reporter</i> but I (we) can contribute only \$ _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> I (we) want my (our) names to be included in the <i>Travel Directory</i> .       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am (we are) not yet 60 but want to Support OLOC. Enclosed is \$30 to \$60 for a one-year subscription to <i>The Reporter</i> .                           | <input type="checkbox"/> I (we) would like to give a \$25 gift subscription to the name(s) listed below.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I (we) want to keep OLOC alive and strong. Please accept my (our) tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____ or my (our) pledge of \$ _____ / month.          | <input type="checkbox"/> Please send a sample of <i>The Reporter</i> to the name(s) listed below.         |

#### Also Available:

**OLOC T-Shirts • Denim Shirts**

**Sweatshirts • And More!**

**Cloisonné OLOC Lapel Pins, Buttons**

**(e-mail, check [oloc.org](http://oloc.org) or write for details)**

#### 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](mailto:info@oloc.org).

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 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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