

Bay Area OLOC

Old Lesbians Organizing for Change



Newsletter – July, 2022

This group of old dykes is about empowerment and visibility, moving into the next phase of our lives with panache and activism, talking about taboo and difficult topics including our inevitable deaths, long-term planning, community and connection. Open to old lesbians 60 and over.

WE'RE HAVING A PICNIC!!

Sunday, July 31, 12:00 – 4:00 Live Oak Park, Berkeley

On July 31st, Bay Area OLOC will return to Live Oak Park in Berkeley from 12:00-4:00. We invite all lesbians 60 and over—plus partners and caregivers of any age—to this annual summer picnic. It is a great way to get to know new friends and connect with women you may not have seen for some time. Picnics have been our only in-person events during the pandemic, and women who have attended one have raved about the sisterly fun.

By this point, most of us have been vaccinated and boosted. If you have, you can choose whether or not to wear a mask. We ask that you wear a mask if you have not been vaccinated. Be aware that some of us can't get vaccinated for health reasons. Because some of us will have a choice and others won't, please don't make assumptions about mask wearers.

The other issue is food. Some of us will feel comfortable sharing food. If you want to, bring a dish to share. Others may not feel comfortable sharing, so it is perfectly acceptable to bring your own. There is a charcoal grill in the picnic area, and we will bring a small gas grill. OLOC will supply paper plates, cups, and utensils.

The site has water, ample seating, and there is an accessible indoor restroom at the Berkeley Art Center right by our area. A public restroom for able-bodied women is across the street. Parking is on the street. The wooded, shady site is accessible and served by paratransit. For a ride from North Berkeley BART or to participate in a carpool, call Ginny Garrett ahead of time at 510 495-4285. **Our site is Picnic Area 2, between Oxford and Walnut** at the Berkeley Art Center, 1275 Walnut Street.

Hope to see you there!

You Are Welcome to a New Zoom “Check-In” Group: Wednesdays – 3:00 to 4:30 pm

A number of Bay Area OLOC women have been meeting weekly on Zoom since the beginning of the pandemic. It’s been a wonderful way to get to know each other better and participants have joined from a wide geographic area including one from Barcelona Spain! It’s on a drop-in basis, and anyone with a phone can participate by dialing into Zoom even if you don’t have access to a computer or smartphone.

We are now offering a new time option, a drop-in Zoom meeting on Wednesdays from 3:00 to 4:30 pm. The format is open, but if the existing group is any indication, we’ll talk about how each of us is faring, health, family, books and movies, pets, etc. With the state of the world today, you can also expect a dose of politics, women’s rights, and thoughts about feminism. Send an email to susanchnew@gmail.com to receive reminders about the group.

The link to join is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85377518443?pwd=WTErNDhSWjAwUnZEYlB0MFR5MWZZQT09>

Meeting ID: 853 7751 8443

Passcode: 702822

One tap mobile

+16699009128,,85377518443#,,,,*702822# US (San Jose)

Recap: Bay Area OLOC’s May Zoom Get-Together: “Life Stories: What We’ve Done & What It All Means”

On May 29, 2022 BA OLOC hosted an on-line meeting with Rebecca Silverstein from the Bay Area Lesbian Archives (BALA) speaking on the importance of archiving our personal stories, valuing the richness of our lives, and honoring the impact we have had in the world. Some 26 women logged in; and after Rebecca’s presentation, we went into smaller “break-out rooms” online. Then we got back together as a large group for reflections and feedback.

A central idea from the discussion was that as Lesbians, our lives matter. Younger women and researchers working with BALA are eager to learn about what we experienced and what we DID “back in the day.” Photos, letters, fliers, and diaries are all worth keeping so that our stories don’t disappear. Anyone who wants her material to be kept confidential can specify a date until which access is not allowed. BALA has a special focus on Lesbians of Color as Lenn Keller, its founder, preserved many items documenting the vigorous culture of Black and Latina dykes in the Bay Area. Of course the archives is interested in newsletters and documents about Lesbian organizations, but everyday life in the community is also of interest. For more information about BALA including how to donate papers and memorabilia, go to

<https://www.bayarealesbianarchives.org/>. A wonderful article about Lenn Keller and BALA's founding which appeared in the Oaklandside newsletter can be accessed at: <https://oaklandside.org/2020/12/18/remembering-lenn-keller-founder-of-bay-area-lesbian-archives/?gclid=CjwKCAjw2f-VBhAsEiwAO4INeNz9B2nQAGF7u0VP58zyRin1Et7u5LkNEd3n9gh30USECLxZpHe31hoCjSAQA vD BwE>

Bay Area OLOC will be planning future meetings in person, and we hope to follow up with time for women to share stories about what we have experienced and done.

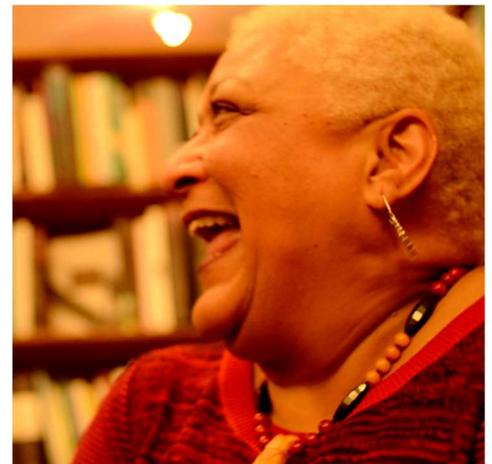
Bay Area OLOC was featured as a community partner at the free film

festival sponsored by the **Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project (QWOCMAP)**. The festival presented films in-person at the Presidio Theatre in San Francisco, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, June 10, 11, and 12,



2022, and they also offered all the films through a “streaming” portal for a few days. Windsor Young spoke eloquently about Bay Area OLOC from the stage at the Saturday afternoon screening and our banner and new brochures were displayed too.

As part of the festival, QWOCMAP's director, Madeleine Lim premiered her new documentary, “Jewelle: A Just Vision” celebrating the life, activism, and writing of OLOC luminary Jewelle Gomez. Madeleine has been working on the film since 2016 and it is groundbreaking in its depth of insight into Jewelle's trajectory. Plans for future screenings and distribution will be forthcoming. Jewelle announced several projects at a Q & A after the screening, including a sequel to her best known novel: The Gilda Stories, a multi-part video version of Gilda's story directed by Cheryl Dunye, a recently released volume of poetry, and a new play. She says she is “cutting back!” You can watch a YouTube recording of Jewelle at the San Francisco Public Library at:



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSj50Y9rVHY

Bay Area OLOC is proud to be the home of a new OLOC national Steering Committee member: Michiko Thorne

Michiko has been volunteering with Bay Area OLOC for some time. Before the pandemic, she was part of our Coordinating Council (CoCo) and helped find a bookkeeper, her sister! During the pandemic, Bay Area OLOC is run by the Organizing Committee, and Michiko has been active on it. One of her first contacts with OLOC was at the National Gathering in Tampa FL in 2017. The first day of that Gathering was exclusively for Lesbians of Color and a number of Bay Area women were present.



National OLOC's commitment to building more diversity has continued. Steering Committee Co-Director, Ali Marrero Calderon, was a Bay Area resident for many years before relocating to Puerto Rico in 2019. The Lesbians of Color Day at the National Gathering in 2019 was even larger and more inspiring according to several participants.

Photo of participants in the Tampa 2017 OLOC National Gathering Lesbians of Color day. Michiko is third from the left in the back row, and Ali is third from the left in the front row. Windsor Young, a member of the Bay Area OLOC Organizing Committee is forth from the left in the back row.



OLOC has announced that its 2022 National Gathering, planned for Phoenix AZ has been cancelled. The national Steering Committee decision was based on pandemic-related concerns. Many women had already decided not to travel to the Gathering. It was also feared that if one sick person attended, she could spread Covid leading to fatal consequences. Instead, the organization will offer **Zoom Gathering-type events from Thursday, October 27 through Saturday, October 29.** The schedule will probably include a Lesbians of Color Day. The theme remains: *The Focus is Lesbian: Body, Mind, and Spirit* and will include several engaging events. National volunteers are working diligently to come up with a viable Zoom schedule for this online Gathering. Please hold the dates and watch the national website, OLOC.org, for more information coming soon!

National OLOC offers a variety of Zoom programs and support groups – Join now to stay up-to-date!

The national OLOC website offers a wealth of resources and material of interest to Lesbians 60 and over. There are recordings and links to Zoom programs going back to 2020, and links to support meetings for such groups as widows, caregivers, and Lesbians who are fluent in American Sign Language among others. A series of presentations on ending White dominance has had a number of sessions and is ongoing. Bay Area OLOC member Terry Baum and Caroline Myers presented dramatic readings from Terry’s new book, [One Dyke’s Theater](#) on June 22.

If you sign up with national OLOC, you will receive notices of up-coming Zoom events. The email notices are the only way to register and get access to online events, and these events are restricted to Lesbians. Everyone is asked not to post notices of OLOC Zoom events on social media so the events stay safer. There is a downloadable form for joining, and a link (which wasn’t working the other day...) to join online. You decide how much you are willing and able to pay for joining – if money is an issue you can join for free. **If you are not signed up yet, do it now!**

National OLOC has recently adopted the term “affiliate” for women who join the organization. In the national OLOC world, “affiliate” equals “member.” Locally, Bay Area OLOC refers to everyone on our mailing list as “members” but you won’t receive notices of national events unless you sign up at www.OLOC.org

You can help the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) reach senior voters before the mid-term elections!

If you are worried about the November mid-term elections, join the Bay Area OLOC members who are volunteering with CARA’s “Senior Ambassador” program. We’ll educate seniors in key districts on candidates and issues. Volunteers will get 100 senior voters and contact them by mail and telephone. Seniors vote, but they are misled by right-wing scare tactics. If the wrong candidates are elected, conservative forces could do terrible things such as privatizing Social Security and Medicare and taking away our right to marry.

While a majority of California’s elected representatives support seniors, women, and LGBTQ people, there are many issues we need to advocate for. With the political crisis we are living through, we need to turn out everyone and vote right. YOU can play a crucial role in defending our rights and democracy!

Sign up here to join this CARA project:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdW9YSRWdQuArwKqc7xQ_LFX3K5aHnCSJ8EhP4WvqJuz12MVw/viewform