

Old Lesbians Organizing for Change



2008 Gathering: California Dreaming: Building A Better World for Every Old Lesbian By Mina Meyer, 68

Every week more of our plans fall into place for what we are sure will be an extraordinary experience for all of our Gathering participants!

One of the many exciting workshops for you to attend will feature representatives from the only two non-profit organizations providing housing for low-income LGBT people, Gay and Lesbian Elder Housing in Hollywood and Open House in San Francisco. They will describe how they did it, what exactly they are doing, and how you can perhaps replicate what they did.

Well-known activist and author Chris Roerden will lead a workshop titled "So That's What Action Is!" The Bay Area Chapter Lesbians will present a workshop on White Anti-Racism work. Other topics to be addressed in workshops include classism, ageism, grief and loss, herbal medicine, intimacy, meaningful life and death, spiritual expression and many others.

Also among the twenty four workshops, which cover the gamut from serious to fun, is one that will no doubt be very popular "Single and Loving It, Single and Looking". Open to both beginners and the more seasoned, "Line Dancing" and "Belly Dancing" will get us moving.

A special treat is Australian artist Suzanne Bellamy's "Lost Culture of Women's Liberation" presentation, which was a hit at the Feminist Hullabaloo last summer. Any of us around in the 70s will find this one touching our deepest memories in a very pleasant way.

Sue Fink will conduct both The Los Angeles Women's Community Chorus and the OLOC Chorus as they sing at the Banquet on Saturday night before the Dance. The OLOC Chorus will be made up of attendees who join at the Gathering. We are so fortunate to have Sue and the Los Angeles Women's Chorus as a part of the event.

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California Dreaming Cont. from pg. 1



Robin Tyler is not only our Mistress of Ceremonies at the Banquet, where she will delight us with her wonderful humor, she also promises a funny and controversial workshop on the debate within our community about same-gender marriage

and how this is also a race and class issue. Robin & her partner, Diane Olson, were the first lesbian couple to file suit for marriage equality in California and were heard in the Supreme Court in March. "Humor impaired need not attend," says Robin.

The Bay area's venerable **Mothertongue Feminist Reader's Theater** performs its moving and entertaining new work on Thursday evening, followed by a discussion on disability. If you have never been part of the Mothertongue experience, mark this one for must-attend.

Each Keynote speaker will contribute and share her unique perspective. **Jewelle Gomez** is a renowned poet, critic and community activist.

Gaye Adegbalola is a founding member of the band Saffire, The Uppity Blues Women. She also has quite a resume devoted to community activism and Black History as well as Lesbian and Gay activism.



Jewelle Gomez

Jackie Goldberg spent twenty-two years as an "out" elected official in the state of California. During that time, she accomplished many firsts toward the equality of our community.

On Sunday, August 3, those who sign up for this extra will take a bus tour of West Hollywood. The Lesbian Visibility Committee of the City of West Hollywood has arranged for the buses to take us to the following places of interest: A Different Light Bookstore, with enough time for a bit of browsing; a stop by the Gay & Lesbian Community Center's Activity Center, The Village; A famous LGBT restaurant, The French Quarter; Gay & Lesbian Elder Housing, where we will be able to see an apartment as well as the public space; and then the Mazer Lesbian Archives, where those who want to will participate in a cross generational dialogue. We will enjoy the archives and have refreshments. The Tour, which leaves the hotel at 10 am and returns at 5 pm, costs \$25 in addition to your Gathering fee and you must sign up for it on your Gathering Registration Application. I look forward to seeing you all at the Gathering! It is an experience not to be missed!

How do you feel about being Photographed ?

Okay? If so, please sign the photo release given to you at registration and hand it in.

Not okay? In addition to being aware of and avoiding photographing and filming that will occur during the Gathering, you will be given a way to identify yourself so that photographers and film makers will also be aware of and avoid filming you.

Chapter and Regional News

Steering Committee Accomplishments for March 2008 **By Jan Griesinger, 65**

OLOC's national Steering Committee (SC) met in Los Angeles March 28-30 at the Hacienda Hotel where the summer gathering will be. We met there partly to try to troubleshoot any site problems we see. It is a beautiful old hotel with some accessibility issues but we think it will be a great place for our 20th anniversary national gathering. We spent lots of time confirming final plans for this event. We even began talking about where to hold our gathering in 2010.

We welcomed 2 new full members of the SC – Myra Brahms from New York City and Ruth Debra from Palm Springs CA. We had a lovely lunch with members of the Southern California OLOC chapter.

One of the ways we do outreach for OLOC is to send women to conferences across the country. We chose Saundra Tignor of Los Angeles and Sally Tatnall of Cleveland to represent us at the National Black Justice Coalition national conference recently in Baltimore. See their report elsewhere in this newsletter. We also plan to send folks to the Fourth National Conference on LGBT Aging in New York City in October and the National Black Lesbian Conference in Las Vegas July 10-13. See details on both in the Upcoming Events section of The Reporter.

We will honor OLOC's founders this summer for our 20th anniversary. Some will attend the conference and be recognized there. Others are not able to attend or are no longer living but their names will appear on a Founders' Plaque we are designing.

We have had new OLOC banners designed for our chapters who needed them – something to carry in pride parades or put up at displays.

We crafted a new regional system for OLOC so that we can be sure chapters across the country are represented on the OLOC Steering Committee. We also solidified some of our guidelines for starting new chapters to give women out in the field more support.

We approved a plan to order new OLOC T shirts and sweatshirts, giving us a greater variety of options when we want to be blatant, out and proud.

We regretfully accepted Mary Henry and Margaret Purcell's decision to greatly reduce the amount of time they spend working on OLOC tasks. Mary has managed our web site and email systems for many years. Margaret, formerly the OLOC Office Manager and more recently a volunteer, has done our newsletter layout as well as designing our fliers, brochures, stationery, travel directory, Gathering registration packet, and various other brochures and documents plus other tasks. She will continue work with Arden Eversmeyer on the OLOC Herstory Project and is preparing the OLOC Herstory document for printing so it will be available at the summer gathering. (*steering committee continued on pg 12*)

Chapter and Regional News

Regional OLOC Chapter Contact List

OLOC would love to have chapters form all over the country. If you are interested in helping form a chapter within one of our 6 regions, **contact susan@oloc.org** or write to the Ohio address on the front of this newsletter. We will send you basic information and direct your inquiry to a Field Organizer who will work with you.

South West

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 #12209, Mill Valley, CA 94941	Joan Emerson, 73	415-388-5001	40 Camino Alto
Coachella Valley/Palm Springs, CA	Ruth Debra, 63	760-318-6794	ruth@oloc.org

North West

Portland, Oregon	Mary Beth Brindley, 68	503-286-3575	marybeth@oloc.org
Puget Sound Area/WA	Mary Henry, 68	253-565-0829	mary@oloc.org

South East

Olivia Cammack, 61 mack@gmail.com		301-920-2043	OCam-
Carole Stoneking, 70		803-748-9480	stonekg@aol.com

North East

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

South Central

St. Louis, Missouri	Charlotte Ellis, 64	314-962-2188	charlotte@oloc.org
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North Central

Cleveland, Ohio	Judy Benson, 61	216-227-1243	judb@cox.net
Ohio except Cleveland	Sally Tatnall, 70	216-932-0977	tatnalls@yahoo.com
Minnesota	Annalee Stewart, 80	612-724-6541	annalee@oloc.org

Antiques Road Show, OLOC Road Show

By Rainbow Williams, 74

A strong OLOC presence was felt the first week of January 2008 in Melrose Florida. At Noon Sunday at Blue Water Bay, six sisters gathered for lunch with Arden Eversmeyer. She's the traveling herstory interviewer who every year leaves Houston Texas with her partner Charlotte Avery in their self contained 24 foot Chinook. Arden gathers the stories of Lesbians over seventy for OLOC. Last year they parked in my back yard in St Augustine, and this year they were at Shewolf's in Melrose for a week of interviews in the Gainesville area.

The Medical Corner Dr. Jean Eckerly, MD

I recently obtained a copy of “Nutrition Guide for Clinicians”, published by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM). My intent was to offer a critique, and this statement in the initial section struck me: “Previously, nutrition had been thought to play a fairly minor role in health.” My internal response was, that seems like an absurd thought, and how previously?

When I was in the fifth grade our class got a pair of guinea pigs (Romeo and Juliet), and the teacher thought we should do a little experiment. Romeo got a normal diet and Juliet a deficient diet. Juliet died attempting to give birth. I told the teacher in no uncertain terms that he had killed her. I subsequently adopted Romeo and possibly launched my somewhat less than illustrious career. Ironically the PCRM has its origins in preventing the use of animals for teaching and research in the medical field.

As a result of my sense that the relationship between what one eats and one’s health seems like a no-brainer, I began to reflect upon what I thought I was trying to say in the Medical Corner. My first article was in the March 2000 issue where I introduced myself and said I was trying to look at medicine from a feminist perspective, but I wasn’t sure exactly what that meant. As I look through past articles, I seem to emphasize the point that if something doesn’t “sit right” internally, trust yourself. As it turns out, that is more easily said than done.

My somewhat simplistic version of feminism has to do with a belief in something like a feminine principle that is more easily expressed in the female form. Feminist thought, movement, politics, etc. seemed to come out of the recognition that societal and cultural structures (for the most part) do not reflect an ability to perform what is our internal sense of fruitful function.

To me, the notion of duality stems from the fact that pure energy becomes form and vice-versa, and the difficulty our minds have in trying to grasp the concept that this is a simultaneous continuous occurrence. Energy and form are not two separate (but equal) things. They are the same. One does not exist without the other. Obviously there are limitless manifestations of form while ultimately energy is just energy. Or one could say that energy is.

As a biologist, it is apparent to me that there is always more than one way to interpret what was being observed, or in other words, anything can be spun.

During my lifetime I have watched my profession become absorbed into a powerful developing industry capitalizing on the creation and manipulation of everything from genes to replacement body parts, no doubt heading toward a bionic person or a viable clone. By lumping us all together (regardless of race or gender) in statistical analyses, they paradoxically appeal to an inherent knowledge of “oneness” within us.

The Medical Corner...cont.

“It is not failure to become old. It is not failure to experience change in physical limits.”

Because this “power” approach really only represents a part of the universal paradigm, it must rely on further manipulation and the engendering of fear in order to keep us convinced that it represents the universal paradigm that I call truth.

Hence, not only are we fearful of becoming ill or infirm and especially dying, we are fearful of life itself because it contains all of that potential. A necessary factor in health is one’s recognition of self as a being. Body, mind, and spirit (or energy) are not three separate things. There are numerous approaches attempting to address this fact that are referred to at worst “quackery”, better “alternative”, and best “complementary”, by “real” medicine. There have been attempts to attach some of these approaches, but so far, they have not met the acid test of increasing the bottom line (\$\$). They never will, nor can they be successfully absorbed (disappear into) our current system, because they are inherently more representative of truth.

It is our individual responsibility to continue to pursue the recognition of self as a reflection of the universal paradigm. What naturally follows is the recognition of that reflection in others and all of nature. What also follows is the ability to recognize fraudulent representations of the paradigm. We become confident in ourselves as beings. We become confident in our bodies as form, realizing that this form had an entrance and will have an exit. It is not failure to become old. It is not failure to experience change in physical limits.

I have shared my opinions on what I consider to be either supportive or detrimental to this interpretation of life. I usually start with a question. If the squirrels in my yard (or even my family doctor 65 years ago) seem to know that what they eat will affect their health, why would I, or any member of my species think anything different or have to scientifically prove (innumerable times) that it is true?

OLOCers in Print

What a nice surprise to open the handsome new issue of LC (Mar/Apr 2008) and find "Notes from our Elders", an article by shewolf on pages 7 and 8. She of course brings up all the connections and importance of supporting our own. Well done! rainbow williams, 74

OLOC is supported in part by grants from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation and the Astrea Lesbian Action Foundation.

“When a women tells the truth she is creating the possibility for more truth around her.” *Adrienne Rich*,

Updated Travel Directory Coming. Price Now \$5.00.

OLOC's Travel Directory is undergoing a revision. Lanna Rodgers phoned many of you who are listed and Susan corresponded with many more of you. The new updated version will make its appearance at the National Gathering July 30 – Aug. 3 in Los Angeles. The new price of \$5.00 (it was \$3.00) reflects the rising costs of producing the directory.

If you act quickly, it's not too late to be listed in the revised version. Are you an Old Lesbian who is willing to be contacted by other Old Lesbians traveling to your area? We will list only contact information, not what exactly you will provide. You can determine at the time of contact how extensive a contact you want to have. Some of the possibilities are to: provide local information, meet with travelers for a meal, serve as a local tour guide, offer a guest room, offer sufficient parking for an RV, discuss possible housing swaps for vacation and

other purposes, give directions to and recommendations about hotels, events and places of interest.

To be listed, please send your information (name, complete address, phone number(s) and email address(es) (if any)) to Susan by June 18th. susan@oloc.org or 888-706-7506 (spell everything out if you leave a message) or Susan Wiseheart, HC 73 Box 169C, Drury, MO 65638.

If later than June 18th, she will hold it until the next issue of the Travel Directory.

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 46701



This newsletter brought to you by

Susan Wiseheart, Editor

Ruth Debra & Susan Howe, Proof readers

Mina Meyer & Jan Griesinger, Content Review

Melanie Jones, Design and Layout

Plus all writers and mailing crew

Let YOUR Voice be heard!

Deadline for submissions is the next issue is August 15, 2008. It is usually the 1st. However due to the Gathering and the National Black Lesbian Conference, we are extending the deadline.

Please send articles to OLOC : info@oloc.org or OLOC, PO Box 5853 Athens, OH 45701

**A big thank you to our 34
current under 60 supporters
and congratulations to the 31
current subscribers who
reached their 60th by
June 1, 2008.
Welcome to Old!**

Memorial Program By Shaba Barnes, 72

I am again honored to be in charge of the Memorial Service for the Gathering and would appreciate your increased participation and support, for you are the heart of this organization. How wonderful it would be to see posters and collages of our sisters now departed from us. How meaningful it would be if you were to create such a memorial for someone who is dear to your heart and soul.

The posters are to be about any Lesbian who was 60 years of age or over when she died. The suggested size of the poster is 12 x 24, lightweight for display at the Gathering.

So that we don't have more than one poster of the same person, we ask that you let me know ahead of time who your poster represents. This is not a contest of any kind, just another way to acknowledge our sisters gone before us. Suggestions include pictures, letters from or to or about her, awards, facts about her life, memorabilia, etc. You can send a poster even if you are unable to be at the Gathering. Write info@oloc.org or the post office box to find out where to send it.

Those of you who are flying or traveling from a distance may plan how you want to design your poster, pack your items to go on it and complete in your room after you arrive. The Fedex Kinkos store directly across from the hotel sells 18" x 24" poster board in red, green, white and black for .69 each. They don't have a huge supply on hand, so if you will want to obtain it from them, let Susan know at susan@oloc.org or 888-706-7506 (leave a clear message about how many and what color) and she will communicate with them about it. Or you can call them directly at 310-322-9241.

I am excited to know who is interested in participating in this project. Please email me at Shaba@oloc.org at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your continued support.

Mission Statement

OLOC has been created to:

- 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.

" Your cards say I'm wrinkled and old
Never happy or lovely or bold
So, quick as a bunny
I'll just take my money
And shop where your cards aren't sold"



This poem was written by Marlene Feingold (now 76) of New York City and appeared in the OLOC newsletter in September 1994. It is included in the new "Herstory of OLOC" which will be available for purchase this summer at the Gathering and afterward by mail.

Memorials



Evelyn Hall (1938-2008)

Evelyn was a vital part of the Portland Oregon chapter of OLOC with plenty of community activist experiences. She was born in Memphis, Tennessee and worked as a dental technician until she retired in 2006. With her partner of 49 years, Mary Beth Brindley, she was closeted for 30 years while living in Texas. When they moved to Portland in 1996, they came out. Evelyn, with Brindley, founded SHARE (Senior Housing and Retirement Enterprises) after they visited a friend who was forced back in the closet when she moved to an assisted living facility. SHARE's purpose is to "develop affordable housing for LGBT seniors." The first unit is named Brindley Hall in honor of Mary Beth and Evelyn. Evelyn loved live theater, musicals and basketball and tried never to miss a Portland Gay Men's Chorus performance.

Please Note: OLOC has a scanned copy of an article from *Jane and Jane* Magazine's Nov/Dec 2007 issue about Evelyn and Mary Beth's work with SHARE. Email susan@oloc.org or write to the PO Box for a copy.

Or look it up yourself at janeandjane.net



Joyce Warshow (1937-2007)

Joyce died with her partner of 25 years, Dorothy Sander, at her side. Joyce was a psychologist turned filmmaker. She was a formidable champion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights. She worked with Shevy Healy on an unfinished film about Shevy's life and also made the film about Blue Lunden that is in our lending library.

Memorial Plaque

Shaba Barnes also oversees the placing of names on the OLOC Memorial Plaque. The plaque is open to memorialize the lives of any Lesbians 60 or older who have died and whose names are sent in by an OLOC subscriber/supporter. The suggested donation to have the name of someone you want to memorialize on the plaque is \$10.00 - \$25.00. Of course, more is always welcome.

San Francisco Bay OLOC **By Joan Emerson, 73**

San Francisco Bay Area OLOC was revitalized in 1996 and recently has expanded considerably from the influx of baby boomers now reaching their sixties. We have received a \$2,000 grant from the Horizons Foundation. Our newest project is to offer free groups to Old Lesbians on aging, ageism, illness, and death. These groups meet for six sessions with a facilitator, one of our members with a psychotherapy background who has learned a lot from participating in one of our support groups. We hope to reach closeted Lesbians with the publicity for the groups.

In May and September we hold weekend retreats at a former mansion with spacious grounds, a swimming pool, and labyrinth. Twenty women used to come; now it is more like forty. In the winter we have two general meetings lasting a few hours or all day. Four support groups, one of which has been meeting with the same nine members for eight and a half years, deal with personal issues, particularly how to have a meaningful life despite the losses of old age. Some of us attend peace demonstrations with our banner. Last August we started a race awareness group, now attended by white lesbians, where we discuss our experiences with issues of race, women of color and how to ally with women of color organizations.

Our proudest achievement is the creation of a climate of trust that allows us to discuss emotionally charged topics without splintering the group. Recently, we have had three different fishbowls with life long lesbians, the seventy and eighty year olds, and the sixty to sixty-five year olds talking about their experiences while the rest listened. This year we have focused on ageism, the dependency which results from aging, and social class. Our own members provide so much talent that we rarely bring in outsiders for our programs.

St. Louis Chapter **By Charlotte Ellis, 64**

The St. Louis group held a movie night and potluck on April 27th. We invited younger members to come visit. We showed the movie "Forbidden Love" followed by a discussion. We talked about many issues including coming out in the 60s and earlier and about butch/femme dynamics. Some of our older members could relate to those times. Everyone seemed to enjoy it.

Charlotte Ellis has been asked to be on the St. Louis LGBT Elders Task Force that is just forming. There is a possibility of a SAGE chapter starting here. Our OLOC group may work with the task force as they tackle various issues.

Fishbowl

By Marge Nelson, 79

They sat in a circle in the center of the room; six “lifelong” lesbians talking to each other about how it had been back then before there was a gay movement or anything called feminism.

We were all at an OLOC meeting in San Francisco, March 15, '08. We who had come out later in our lives—who'd married or just been too frightened, or simply didn't know, sat around the little circle and listened without interrupting.

“Growing up in the Midwest was hard. San Francisco was heaven.” There was McCarthyism, all kinds of homophobic remarks, alcoholism, and stories like *The Children's Hour* and *The Well of Loneliness*. The word ‘lesbian’ was hardly used, hardly known, she was ‘gay.’ She identified ‘cross role’ and lived in the men's world and didn't know any words. She only knew that she had to survive.

“It was me or the church. I chose me.”

“I just left home, didn't tell anybody.”

“I thought there was something wrong with me.”

“Even the bars weren't safe, especially at election time when there'd be raids. We'd be checked then for male apparel.”

“It's always a matter of overcoming fear. You have to come out as an ‘in your face lesbian.’”

“I didn't want to violate who I am. I want to be me.”

“I knew by age 11 I'd have to make a living. I had a friend and never lived in the heterosexual world. I missed out on some things, too”

What happened when gay liberation met feminism?

“Betty Friedan was afraid of lesbians but Rita Mae Brown demanded admittance to NOW.”

“Feminists came to bars and danced in groups. We all wondered what they were doing.”

We had a chance to do just that. We broke into small diverse groups and talked about our experiences. Some of us also thought of ourselves as lifelong lesbians but had felt terribly confused and frightened. One woman said that although she'd always loved women, she'd wanted children and saw no other way back then.

It's called a fishbowl technique, useful for highlighting sub-groups within an organization. At earlier retreats we'd invited lesbians over 70 to be in the center, and lesbians in their sixties. The 60 year olds were too big a group to be in the center of a smaller population of 70's and 80's, but we worked it out. We like the technique and recommend it to other chapters.

The fishbowl was held at the Bay Area OLOC meeting in March 08. This story, since slightly revised, was previously published in the Bay Area OLOC Newsletter, April 2008.

Steering Committee continued.....

We are pleased to welcome Cristina Vegas, who attended OLOC events as a helper when she was not yet 60 and video taped many of the early SC meetings, as OLOC's new email manager. She will assure that the SC list serve works well.

We also welcome a new web site queen, Darlene Duncan. She will work hard to improve the site, make it easy to navigate, and keep it updated.

Ruth Debra has agreed to make sure our birthday cards are sent out to all of you.

The SC meets twice a year in person, which is costly but absolutely essential to the work of OLOC. A lot of our ongoing work does happen by email or on the phone. But by meeting face to face we establish the sisterly connections, hugs, and strong ties that keep us together when controversies or difficulties might set our teeth on edge.

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.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Sinister Wisdom #78
"Old Lesbians/Dykes II"
Due March 1, 2009
Editor Fran Day, fran@sonic.net
P. O. Box 1180
Sebastopol, CA 95473 - 1180
Details forthcoming at
www.sinisterwisdom.org

Doing research about Old Lesbians? Asked to be a research subject? Nothing about us without us!

For information and assistance on how to go about your research work so that Old Lesbians are involved or about whether or not a project is recommended by OLOC, contact our Research Gatekeeper, Sharon Raphael, 67, by writing to the OLOC post office box or by emailing her at: smraphael@aol.com

Ageism In Action

What About People Over 64?

A woman in Prince George, British Columbia wrote her local paper challenging their reporting about people in the community "between the ages of 18 and 64 who have education beyond the secondary level." She pointed out that "if the assumption is that those over 64 don't contribute to the economy, ageism is again apparent."

OLOC Attends Creating Change

OLOC was well represented at the annual national conference for LGBT activists called **Creating Change**, sponsored by the National Gay/Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF). It was held in Detroit Feb. 6-10. OLOC Field Organizer Sally Tatnall, Co-Director Jan Griesinger, South East Region Contact Lesbian Olivia Cammack, and members from Ohio - Sharon Deevey, Judy Benson, Jane Young and Nancy Thrans - were present.

OLOC was present at a daylong forum on LGBT Aging and had significant input. Olivia spoke on a panel as part of that forum. Mandy Carter, keynote speaker at the 2006 OLOC national gathering, received the "Susan J. Hyde Activism Award for Longevity in the Movement."

OLOC was mentioned from the platform (no mean feat in a highly structured conference of 2000 people) by Barbara Satin, winner of the "Allan Morrow Community Service Award for Outstanding Leadership and Advocacy in Aging and Elder Concerns." Her introduction included her age of 73 and she thanked OLOC for raising her consciousness and encouraging the use of the word "old."

Lori Young, formerly the Executive Director of OWL (once known as the Older Women's League) is now the "Aging Policy Advocate" for NGLTF and will be hard at work exploring federal policy and resources to benefit LGBT old people. She is an OLOC fan and is ready to assist us.

We participated actively in a wide variety of workshops. In addition OLOC hosted a caucus attended by the Ohio women mentioned above as well as 2 women from Rochester NY and 2 from the Detroit area. OLOC was new to these 4 women but they left enthused, thrilled at the opportunity to have had dinner with Old Lesbians, and with a new understanding of ageism. One fun idea we played with for next year's conference is to have a booth "Ask an Old Lesbian" and charge \$1 for advice!

A letter from first nations (from both US and Canada) people in the conference program book asked that we **NOT** use these phrases: **circle the wagons, hold down the fort**. The reason is that these are rooted in colonial and imperialist history. To be clear, this is not about what conservatives like to complain about - "political correctness." This is about honoring what people are asking us to understand about the history from which we white people have benefited and to help us stop giving offense to our sister and brothers.



A Roundtable on Aging By Cathy Cade, 66

On Jan 16, 2008 I attended a gathering in San Francisco of about 100 LGBT folks from around the country who work on issues of aging. Organized by Amber Hollibaugh, senior strategist for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, we were introduced to the new web site on organizing around LGBT aging issues www.sageconnect.net and participated in exercises discussing priorities for lobbying in Washington.

It was inspiring to hear of all the efforts going on around the country on health, housing, employment, etc. for LGBT elders. I was grateful for the surprising amount of warmth at this gathering—across the identities of L, G, B and T.

In speaking of Bay Area OLOC, I talked of the need to help each other go through the personal process of coming out of denial, learning what it is do be old and lesbian—and how to build support for ourselves.

Amber Hollibaugh can be reached at: ahollinbaugh@thetaskforce.org or
Check out www.sageconnect.net

Affordable and Welcoming to Lesbians

Openhouse, a non-profit organization working to build senior housing that is one hundred percent affordable and welcoming to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) seniors received unanimous approval from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in the chambers of City Hall early in April. Permanent headquarters of Open house is now 55 Laguna and from there they plan to “reach out to those of us who will be aging in our homes with the support we need to stay vitally connected in the city we call home.”



OLOC Video Library

We've added videos and some are now available on DVD that were only VHS before. If you want a complete and updated list of the

OLOC Video Library, send an sase to Susan Wiseheart, HC 73 Box 169C, Drury MO 65638 or email susan@oloc.org. To rent a video, send \$5.00 to Susan and, if in both formats, be sure to specify which you prefer.



The Power of Us **By Sandra Tignor, 70 and Sally Tatnall, 70**

All social justice organizations need to be allies with each other. As we come together we are a formidable force. What does that mean for OLOC? For one thing, thanks to a donor-advised grant from the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, OLOC was able to send 2 representatives to the National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC) in April of 2008.

Sandra Tignor, an African American Old Lesbian and Sally Tatnall, a Caucasian Old Lesbian, attended the conference, which was held in Baltimore. The conference, titled “The Power of Us”, was for Black LGBTQ persons and allies.

On Friday the focus was on the Black church. The Black church has always been a focal point, a connecting point, a community center, and a source of support. As such it is an arbiter of life styles and behavior in the African American community. NBJC must be commended for bringing LGBTQ and Heterosexual clergy together for open dialogue and for interpreting Scripture to include the LGBTQ lifestyle.

There was a walk through Black LGBTQ history. The phrase “The Beloved Community” was used to describe all people living freely and openly. There was emphasis on honoring the elders upon whose shoulders we stand. OLOC’s mission is about and for Old Lesbians. We met many Old Black Lesbians who were interested in what OLOC does. We have a lot in common.

For OLOC to be a good ally will sometimes mean giving money, sometimes a letter of support. Sometimes it will mean sending a representative to a conference, sometimes just emails back and forth for support, and all the time it will mean remembering that there are others in the same struggle. In the words of Martin Luther King, “a threat to justice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

PayPal is OLOC’s Pal

You can now pay anything you want to OLOC by way of PayPal. Find one of the buttons on oloc.org that says PAY NOW or DONATE and click it.

It will take you to the OLOC account at PayPal. There you can use one of your existing PayPal accounts, if any, or you can set up a new PayPal account to use. You can instead use a credit card if you prefer. Whatever you choose will allow you to send OLOC however much money you want.

Possibilities include: Donations (we love them) to the general fund or to something specific such as the Oral Herstory Project or the Financial Assistance Fund; subscriptions; pin orders; t-shirt orders; and travel directory orders.

The drawback is that right now we won’t know what it is for unless you send us a form or note with the information (how much and the PayPal transaction number). Forms can be attached to an email addressed to susan@oloc.org or can be printed out and mailed to OLOC. The one exception is the online Gathering Registration form. If you decide to sent your registration form electronically and use PayPal to pay for it, we will have the information we need.

Save the Date!!

National Black Lesbian Conference 08: Time to Be Renewed. July 10-13 in Las Vegas. contact: www.zunainstitute.org or email nblc@zunainstitute.org The conference features “powerful workshops and seminars that focus on the social and political injustices that impact the lives of women, in particular Black Lesbians.” It is “the preeminent assembly of Black Lesbian activists, educators, community organizers, and professionals.” OLOC will be represented at the conference so you will read more about it in the Reporter.

SAGE’s Fourth National Conference on LGBT Aging: It’s About Time: LGBT Aging In a Changing World, sponsored by AARP.

October 13-14, 2008 in New York City. SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders) is producing this conference.

Details: [www.sageusa.org/national conference](http://www.sageusa.org/national%20conference)

Or email nationalconference@sageusa.org

OLOC members will be attending and offering information about Old Lesbians.

Speaking of SAGE, SAGE Connect is a national resource for service providers and advocates on the needs of LGBT seniors. It is a website that encourages exchange on important LGBT aging issues. You can register for SageConnect membership on line at: <http://www.sageconnect.net/join>

OLOC Needs You!

OLOC is seeking a volunteer outreach coordinator to help us get OLOC better publicized in women’s, LGBT, and aging publications. It would help if anyone interested has done PR work for organizations before. The position would probably include coordinating paid ads (when we have money for these), press releases, and notices to list serves. It would begin after the Gathering this summer.

We are also looking for a volunteer (or more than one) who might take on some of our many desk top publishing tasks, including but not limited to: Design and layout of newsletter, fliers, brochures, stationery, travel directory, Gathering registration packet, and various other brochures and documents. Much of it was formerly done in In Design, so access to that software would be a plus, but other desk top software would work, too. If you are interested in any of this, contact susan@oloc.org



Philadelphia Cross-Generational Collaboration **By Alix Dobkin, 67**



The "Cross-Generational Collaboration" was convened at the University of Pennsylvania on Saturday, April 5th, by Jordan Pascucci, a very capable young Lesbian feminist organizer. There were about 30 attendees, mostly from Philadelphia, with some New Jersey and Baltimore women & one from Washington DC. At 67, I was the oldest, with one other old enough (59) to join OLOC. The group was about evenly divided by decades, including one under 20. There were several Jewish women and three or four Black women, 2 of whom are cofounders of "The Women's Village" in Philadelphia: (www.myspace.com/the_womensvillage).

We described how we feel about our age and the difficulties of starting a conversation with someone substantially older or younger. We talked about the difference in cultures, thinking patterns, and attention spans of different generations, and communication between us. Everyone desires more interaction.

There was an explanation and description of the pros and cons of the "Second Wave." Some didn't know what it was and some expressed regret at having missed it. We discussed the fear of losing our history, of Old Lesbians dying off, and of our role models being invisible.

Conversations focused on racism, anti-racism and the way that the strong bi-racial foundation of SisterSpirit has strengthened it and helped it last longer than most other women's festivals. We also focused on a variety of definitions, wondering if issues change or just our names for them? (I believe that what changes is how we talk and listen to each other) What is old? What is feminism? Everyone identified herself as a feminist and offered a different definition. In an atmosphere of mutual support and commonality we talked about inclusivity: racism, anti-racism, class, able-ism, transgender, the effects on and of, women-only space, how vulnerable and rare it is.

The most notable thing I brought away from the day was a deeper understanding of how important it is to really listen to and take these young women seriously, and for us old women to attempt stretching our minds for, perhaps, a glimpse into how these very different minds operate as well as a fundamental commonality of values and desires for wholesome community life on a healthy planet.

Contact List for Current Steering Committee Members

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Resources

The Audre Lorde Project in Brooklyn NY seeks to build the collective power of LGBTSTGNC (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two Spirit, Trans and Gender Non Conforming) People of Color to achieve self-determination and justice, by directly confronting institutions and individuals that are oppressive. It is led entirely by people of color and "supports and builds leaders and organizers, specifically among people facing the least access to resources and greatest barriers." To learn more, go to www.alp.org. Audre Lorde, an incredible lesbian poet and writer well known for saying, "Your silence will not protect you", died in 1992 after a 14 year struggle with breast cancer.

Beyond (Straight and Gay) Marriage: Valuing All Families Under the Law is a new book that features a persuasive argument for why married couples, gay or straight, should not receive special rights denied to other families. It challenges LGBT rights advocates to see beyond gay equality arguments and question the fundamental fairness of limiting family recognition based on marriage. Beacon Press publishes it. www.beacon.org. \$25.

Ageism in Action: Speak Up!

Healthy Aging? A woman wrote her local newspaper in Kansas expressing her dismay to find that the paper had featured an article on the front page that focused on staying youthful looking. In her letter to the editor, the woman took the paper to task for allowing Botox, hair dye and cosmetic surgery to be portrayed as "healthy aging." She went on to challenge everyone to Google ageism and "learn about the socially accepted practice of discrimination against a group of people we will all eventually belong to: the older adult."

Ageism In Action

Letters to Editors (also see pg.12)
available at www.OLOC.org.

Follow the links for Ageism In Action.

For print copies, send an SASE to
OLOC POB 5853, Athens OH 45701.

OLOC Subscriber/Supporter Form

6-08

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 \$5 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.

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

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.**

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Help OLOC Celebrate 20 Years

attend the

6th National Gathering

“California Dreaming”

July 30th-August 3rd

In Los Angeles, CA

More details inside!
