

Bay Area OLOC



Old Lesbians Organizing for Change

Newsletter - January 2025

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.

Shake, Rattle, & Roll with Us!

Women's Valentines Dance

Saturday, February 15th, 3:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Berkeley Unitarian Universalists Fellowship Hall

1924 Cedar St at Bonita

You are invited to a women's dance celebrating LOVE. Jessie Ortiz and her band will play live music - with a focus on oldies but goodies - and there will be light refreshments. This event will be open to all women on a donation basis with contributions gratefully accepted. If you haven't attended an OLOC event, this is a great way to get to know us, and if you have a friend who likes to dance, bring her along.

The Organizing Committee hopes you will join us for this event!

Plan ahead: OLOC's next retreat at Enchanted Hills is May 2nd - 4th

We'll spend two nights and three days in the beautiful Napa hills from Friday May 2nd through Sunday, May 4th. All meals are provided with vegetarian and gluten-free options. Accommodations are comfortable beds in sturdy cabins and linens are provided. Car pools will be arranged from San Francisco and the East Bay, and the site is accessible to disabled women. (Kinks we experienced in transportation around the camp last September are being ironed out.) All are welcome on a sliding fee basis. There will be group sessions, time for chatting, impromptu topic discussions, swimming and hikes for those so inclined. Saturday night features a salon with presentations and performances by those attending, and there will be time for games both evenings. Judith Dambowic plans to lead a healing exercise class in the heated pool and swimming is always clothing optional. (Judith teaches a Feldenkrais inspired Senior Water Aerobics class at Berkeley's West Campus Pool on Wednesdays and Fridays at 10:00 a.m. To attend, buy a pass online at the Berkeley City Aquatics website.)

OLOC Member Teya Schaffer Launches Her New Book

Teya Schaffer read selections from her new book of poetry and prose, *Reflections in a Rearview Mirror* at the Rockridge Library in Oakland on January 11th. Teya read her work in the Saturday salon at our last retreat. She also was part of our Writers Night way back in 2014 at the National OLOC Gathering held in Oakland. Her third book *Reflections* is tender with loving references to her lifetime connection with Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*. Teya provides access her books and more information on her literary journey at <https://www.teyaschaffer.com/>

Chris Williamson Concerts Celebrate 50 Years of Lesbian Music

Many of us remember women's music playing a positive note in our coming out stories. Records were passed around and concerts provided joyous vibrations: proof that we were not alone. A key part of that experience in the 1970s was *The Changer and the Changed*, the first long-playing disc produced by the new company Olivia. It is still the label's best-selling record, and Chris has gone on to put out an amazing 33 albums. She sang selections from her latest, *Ravens and the Roses* as well as performing the entire *Changer* score at concerts on January 11th and 12th at the Freight & Salvage in Berkeley. Her new pieces reflect her commitment to women and nature, with pieces celebrating the Michigan Women's Music Festival, commemorating her mother's passing, and denouncing the lack of women's reproductive health care. You can access her music at her website, and revisit some of those memories online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdfCuFxFiQs>. Her lyric: "**Come to your life as a warrior, nothing will bore you,**" could not be more appropriate for our current situation "**...and we can sing for a long, long time!**"

Our Post Election Zoom Provided Solidarity and Space to Vent

On Sunday, November 17, 2024 about 35 OLOC members got together to share reactions to the presidential election. Planned before November 5th, the event had been titled "Who knows where we'll be?" and indeed many of us still wondered where we were. Thoughts and feelings were still very raw, but meeting gave us a sense of solidarity. A number of women logged on who had not participated in previous Bay Area OLOC events. Of course, many "regulars" also chimed in. After initial introductions, we split up into discussion "rooms," and then reconvened for a final wrap up. As we go through the opening weeks of the new presidency, let the organizing committee know if you want to see us schedule similar or different events to help us support each other.

Upcoming Bay Area OLOC Activities:

OLOC will be a community partner of QWOCCMAP for their Annual Film Festival June 13 – 15, 2025

Bay Area OLOC volunteers and donates as a community partner at the Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project's annual free film festival. QWOCCMAP has been offering free film-making workshops to queer women of color for over 20 years. Wonderful short films produced by queer women of color will be shown at each of the screenings. QWOCCMAP also offers screenings of films that have been shown at past festivals. If you are interested in organizing such a show, let the Organizing Committee know.

Old Lesbian Picnic - July 20th, 2025 – Live Oak Park, Berkeley, 12:00 to 4:00 pm

Bay Area OLOC will hold our annual picnic again at the site outside the Berkeley Art Center. The event is a pot luck and a great way to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones. Paratransit service is available and we don't do any grilling so there's no smoke to contend with.

OLOC National Gathering – August 20th – 24th, 2025

Embassy Suites, Columbus Ohio

Old Lesbians from all over the country, and a few from around the world, will gather in Columbus Ohio next August. The theme this year is ***PREVAILING: Old Lesbians United for Our Future***. Wednesday, August 20th will feature groups for Lesbians of Color and White Lesbians to continue OLOC's process of overcoming White dominance. The organizers are thrilled to announce that the keynote speaker will be Washington State Supreme Court Justice G. Helen Whitener. Justice Whitener was appointed to the Court in 2020 and subsequently elected by voters twice to retain her position. Before becoming a judge, she was a prosecutor and defense attorney for 14 years.

If you haven't attended a national gathering, believe women who report it being a wonderful new experience. If you have participated in one, you may remember the excitement of seeing old friends and making new contacts. National OLOC and Bay Area OLOC collaborate so Old Lesbians who want to go have resource support to be there. Be sure to affiliate with National OLOC so you receive updates. In coming months, there will be a call for women who would like to present a workshop to pitch their topics, and there is always time for groups of Lesbians who share a common interest or concern to meet. Stay tuned and mark your new calendar.

Bay Area OLOC Fall Retreat at Enchanted Hills: September 12th – 14th, 2025

Sign Up as an Affiliate with National OLOC Access More Old Lesbian Resources

National OLOC offers a wonderful assortment of support groups, Zoom events, and other resources. Joining is easy, and dues are on an ability-to-pay basis. Members of national OLOC are termed “affiliates,” and you have to be connected as an affiliate to receive notices and links to their events. The website to gain access to all this is www.OLOC.org

Your Local Newsletter Editor is Susan Chacin susanchnew@gmail.com , (510) 332-8569 (text 1st.) Laura Tow and Ginny Garrett help with proofing and suggestions. Send articles, poems, artwork and photos to Susan for upcoming editions. (Please put BA OLOC Newsletter in the subject line.)

Editor’s Warning: I’m looking forward to celebrating my 80th birthday in June. Can I PLEASE step down from the task of editing our Newsletter? It feels like it’s time for a second retirement! Susan Chacin, 1945.

The Bay Area OLOC Organizing Committee meets on Zoom monthly to plan events and stay in touch with our 300+ mailing list. We welcome ideas for future meetings and volunteers - get in touch with us by contacting Pat Cull at patcull70@gmail.com , (415) 637-5002 . We appreciate ideas for programs, events, and ways to reach “young” Old Lesbians.