

Bay Area OLOC



Old Lesbians Organizing for Change

Newsletter – April, 2026

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

Come to Bay Area OLOC's Spring Retreat! **Friday, May 15 – Sunday, May 17, 2026** **3 Days & 2 Nights in the Napa Woodlands**

Old lesbians, their partners, and caregivers are all warmly invited to Bay Area OLOC's spring retreat. We will be enjoying Enchanted Hills Camp again, owned by the Lighthouse for the Blind. The wooded setting is ideal for a restful getaway. Women who come for the first time consistently report feeling welcomed. Many meet old friends and everyone finds new connections. There are a variety of sleeping accommodations, a central building for group discussions, and a dining hall accessed by shuttles. We meet, play games, schmooze, take walks, and swim in a large heated pool. All facilities are wheelchair accessible. Typically about 40 Lesbians 60 and over attend. OLOC takes over the whole camp, *it's just us!* (Plus the helpful staff.)

The sliding scale registration means that all who wish to attend are welcome. It covers lodging including linens for Friday and Saturday nights, and five meals. Arrival begins Friday at 2:00 pm. The pool will be open from 3:00 – 5:00. For Friday dinner we'll bring our own brown bag meals, with something to share if you like, and eat inside or outdoors, weather permitting. We'll have access to a refrigerator and microwave Friday and throughout the weekend. Friday evening is informal with crafts (bring supplies of any kind!), music, and a variety of games.

Structured activities kick off Saturday morning at 10:00 after breakfast with our traditional check-in circle. **"How are you? What is going on in your life now?"**

Our afternoon topic will be "Wellness: Taking Care of Ourselves and What We've Learned." Three panelists will share their personal experiences, then we'll break into small discussion groups to talk about our own wellness explorations, challenges, and insights. There will be

time to reconvene for comments and reflections before we head off to rest or swim before dinner.

Saturday evening is our Salon, an opportunity to share music, spoken word, art, skits, WHATEVER! ***Bring your writing, paintings, and musical instruments!*** After the Salon we can play games, have a sing-along, put on dance music and/or hang out with snacks.

After Sunday breakfast, we're planning a facilitated workshop on "How to Get Up After a Fall." We'll also spend some time planning future Bay Area OLOC events and activities. There will be a bit of entertainment and a closing circle. After lunch, the pool will be open and we can enjoy the premises until 3:00 pm.



Throughout the weekend participants are welcome to initiate small group discussions during free time. Groups can self-organize to hike, or discuss topics such as caregiving, creativity, bereavement, or politics.

COST: We ask everyone to pay what is comfortable for you on a sliding scale for the full weekend. BA OLOC's cost is approximately \$315 per person. BA OLOC covers EVERYONE'S registration on a sliding fee scale thanks to generous donations and past bequests.

LOCATION: Enchanted Hills Camp is outside Napa. Driving time is about 90 minutes from San Francisco and 75 minutes from Berkeley. *If you can provide a ride, or if you need a ride, please note that on your registration form.*

FOOD: All meals will be provided starting with Saturday breakfast through Sunday lunch. There will be vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options at all meals. Women with other food concerns are welcome to bring items they need to supplement what is offered.

Remember to bring a brown bag supper on Friday and anything you like to share.

LODGING: The sleeping accommodations are shared rooms (2-3 beds to a room) with shared baths. There are wheelchair accessible rooms and bathrooms available. You are welcome to request a particular roommate. Women who wish to camp will have space to put up a tent or to park and sleep in a vehicle. The registration form asks if you snore or use a CPAP machine. Earplugs will be available at camp on request. Please contact Laura (see registration form for contact details) if you have any sleeping accommodation needs not addressed above.

POOL: The pool will be open Friday 3:00 - 5:00, Saturday 3:45 - 5:30 and Sunday 1:00 -3:00 pm. We will not have a lifeguard on duty but a member with CPR training will be on site. The pool is located down a short hill - we will have transport available to and from the pool. There is a built-in pool lift. Everyone who wishes to will able to enjoy the pool! Enchanted Hills policy requires swimsuits in the pool – nudity is not allowed on the grounds. Thank you for respecting this relatively new stipulation.

If you plan to come, see “More information for Retreat Participants” and “Retreat Registration” at the end of this newsletter. Registrations must be received via US mail by Friday, May 2nd. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT ENCHANTED HILLS!

Caste Action Alliance: What can we do?

Bry’Andi Brandon answers a common question about how to take action against racism and white supremacy. What can we do about these forms of social injustice? Bry’Andi and her co-founder started reading Isabel Wilkerson’s work in a book club in 2020. Motivated by “Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent;” they founded Caste Action Alliance (CAA) in March 2021. Now celebrating their fifth anniversary, Bry’Andi is proud of their accomplishments. Members continue to advance their education by meeting monthly for book discussions and completing 3 books a year. CAA has distributed 305 books, collected \$100,000, awarded 40 scholarships to descendants of enslaved ancestors, and participated in numerous educational and cultural events.



Bry’Andi’s energy and organizing skills are impressive. Newly “out” since the end of Covid, she was already familiar with our community as she has a queer daughter and grandson. She has mobilized an active and diverse group of donors and supporters. By focusing on descendants of enslaved ancestors, CAA works from a commitment to restorative justice. CAA prioritizes support to students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), but also awards scholarships to students at other colleges, trade schools and apprenticeships. CAA recognizes that non-academic post secondary training is also an important source of African American and mixed heritage resilience and agency. To find out more about CAA, go to www.casteactionalliance.net or email casteaalliance@gmail.com for membership information or to attend their May 17, 2026 fun “Games Day” event.

ELDER LESBIANS OF COLOR WILL MEET SUNDAY, APRIL 19TH, 2:00 – 5:00 PM
Fireside Room, Kehilla Community Synagogue - 1300 Grand Avenue in Oakland

Welcoming the opportunity to hang out with other old Lesbians, a growing group of elders are gathering to share light snacks, conversation and a friendly atmosphere-perfect for connecting and getting to know one another. Please RSVP to Michiko at michiko@oloc.org or text/call 510-325-4374. “Hope to see all of you elder lesbians of color there!” (If you are not getting notices of these gatherings, get in touch with Michiko even if you can’t attend so you hear about future events.)

Everyone Is Welcome at the QWOCMAP 2026 Film Festival!

WE RESIST, AND WE ROLL

OLOC is a community partner of Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project (QWOCMAP). **This year their free film festival takes place on June 12 – 14 at the Presidio Theater.**

Bay Area OLOC donates and members volunteer, attend screenings, and help publicize this fabulous free festival. Many of the films are shorts, and often they have been created by participants in QWOCMAP’s workshops held around the country. Bay Area OLOC will be introduced with other community partners at the Sunday 4:00 pm screening. This show will run a new restoration of the 1996 feature film, “A Litany for Survival: the Life and Work of Audre Lorde,” released in January, 2026.

The Presidio is easily reached via public transit and special festival shuttles. Check out the festival programs (and don’t miss info on the reception with food!) at <https://qwocmap.org/festival/>

VALENTINES’ DANCE A BIG SUCCESS



With a DJ new to our dance floor, some 70 women of all ages enjoyed a fine time dancing, chatting, and nibbling on a selection of sweet and savory snacks. Many women new to Bay Area OLOC attended. Thanks to the popularity of this and previous dances, we are planning a Halloween dance on Saturday, October 31, 2026. Start designing your costume as inspiration strikes you!

Photo by Sandy Morris

Bay Area OLOC sponsors weekend afternoon Games get-togethers:

Sign up with Karen Orlando at korlando1007@gmail.com to be added to an email notification list for face-to-face games events.

How We Brought Color to SF Pride



When Simi Litvak was encouraged to join the San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Freedom Day Parade Board in the mid 1980s, the Parade and festival lacked color. At the time, Simi was part of a large group of activists committed to fighting racism and war. She was on the lesbian/gay beat for Frontline Newspaper. The co-chair of the Parade board, Larry Burnett, a member of Black and White Men Together, wanted to broaden the parade to welcome and celebrate people of color. Simi and Larry formed a committee to build the first “People of All Colors” Parade

contingent. A committee member was able to recruit Asian and Pacific Islander marchers. Simi reached out to TriKone, a newly formed group of Lesbian and Gays of south Asian descent from Stanford. Albert Lucero decided a good way to include the Latino community was through the bars. “Albert and I managed to assure two Latino bars on 16th Street, that they were more than welcome to create floats for our contingent.” The committee garnered publicity in the Lesbian and gay newspapers. Pre-internet, the committee distributed flyers and posters all over the Lesbian and gay bars and restaurants in San Francisco and the East Bay. Larry helped them get the much prized second parade contingent position right after Dykes on Bikes. Sistah Boom, a popular multi-color Lesbian percussion marching group joined the contingent along with the Women’s Building and many other groups that shared the committee’s vision. In their second and third years the committee renamed the contingent “Hot Colors.” Several years later the Parade board diversified performances at the festival, and eventually set up separate stages for entertainers representing communities of color. Sadly, several of the early organizing committee members died of AIDS, but their legacy lives on in SF Pride’s diversity. *For more*



on Sistah Boom, listen to the 2021 radio documentary created by OLOC member Chana Wilson at: <https://kpfa.org/featured-episode/sistah-boom-forty-years-in-the-streets/>

A Bay Area OLOC anti-racism working group for white women is open to additional participants.

This is an on-going monthly facilitated meeting, with links to suggested readings, videos, activities, etc. We share our personal histories around racism, our thoughts about the various links provided, and each month discuss what our own individual “next steps” could be. The group (currently nine of us) is open to adding a couple/few more participants. We have been meeting since the fall on Zoom, every fourth

Sunday at 6:30 pm. This month we will meet in person at 2:00 pm, still on the fourth Sunday (**April 26**) in the East Bay. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact Laura Tow at msslaura@earthlink.net or (925) 980-3842 cell/text.

Outdoor Potluck, Sunday, July 26, 12:00 – 4:00

An annual chance to socialize in a shaded picnic area at Live Oak Park, Berkeley

Newsletter:

You are invited to send articles, poems, and other items for the newsletter to: susanchnew@gmail.com . (Please put OLOC NEWSLETTER in the subject line.) The newsletter and an occasional Bulletin come out periodically to announce upcoming events.

More Information for Retreat Participants

To register for the retreat, fill out the form that appears on the last page of this newsletter. **The DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REGISTRATION by mail is no later than Friday, May 2, 2026**. This is a firm deadline, required to plan food, staffing and lodging details. We would appreciate receiving your registration as soon as you can send it in! Late registrations will be put on a wait list. We cannot accept telephone or email registrations, and ask that you send a check in with the registration. If necessary, the check can be post-dated.

If you plan to come to the retreat, please read the following information carefully and keep it handy for reference as you pack! Registrants will also receive an email with last-minute information.

Several OLOC members deal with chemical sensitivity. PLEASE DO NOT USE SCENTED PRODUCTS BEFORE COMING OR AT THE RETREAT! This includes hair products, deodorant, and fabric softeners. It is awkward to have to address this issue in person, however women's health is at risk when someone attends wearing or bringing scented items. Thank you for your assistance.

GETTING THERE: Enchanted Hills Camp's address is 3410 Mt Veeder Rd, Napa, CA 94558. You can find directions on Google Maps. The route from the East Bay takes Hwy 80 east to exit 33 for CA 37 west toward Napa. Turn right at exit 19 for CA 29 (Sonoma Blvd) toward Napa. Take exit 18-A toward 1st Street. At the traffic circle, take the 3rd exit onto 1st Street which becomes Browns Valley Rd, then it becomes Partrick Rd. Turn right onto Browns Valley Rd, then turn left onto Redwood Rd. and continue onto Mt. Veeder Rd. The camp is on your right.

ARRIVAL & LOGISTICS: The parking area and an unloading zone are clearly marked. Start at the Welcome building, where you'll get a map of the camp, a name tag, handouts, and baggage tags. All rooms will have been preassigned reflecting information from your registration form. You can arrive any time after 2:00 pm. Mayacamas Hall, where we gather for all group activities, will be open at 2:00. Staff will be at the Welcome building to provide transportation for you and your belongings. Access to your sleeping accommodations and delivery of your baggage will depend on when the rooms are ready, but will be no later than 4:00. Linens will be in the rooms. The pool will open at 3:00 and transportation to the pool will start then.

BRING: Swimsuits! Bring writing, artwork, music, or whatever you would like to share at the Salon on Saturday evening. Also bring games, musical instruments, dance music, ideas for discussions or activities, etc. **ALSO** bring fragrance free soap, shampoo, a water bottle, flashlight, sunscreen, bug spray and something warm to wear for cool evenings.

If you have clothes, books, jewelry, or posters that you would like to give away, you may bring them, but **please commit to taking home anything that is left at the end of the retreat.**

COVID: Masks are optional. We recommend taking a home test prior to coming. **Please test if you feel unwell** and do not come if you test positive. (Your registration fee will be fully refunded.)

PLEASE provide an OFF-SITE emergency contact on your registration.

PHONES: In an emergency, the camp phone is (415) 526-7111. Cell phones mostly work at camp, but you may need to ask where to find the best reception.

SMOKING is only allowed in one designated area. Fire danger is high, and others' health and welfare is a concern. This policy will be strictly enforced and applies to cannabis as well as tobacco. We request that cannabis vaping be done privately for the comfort of all.

REFUNDS: Your registration will be refunded in full if you are unable to attend

Enchanted Hills is peanut free. The camp serves a wide range of people including many children. Please take this seriously, do not bring granola or candy with peanuts, crackers containing peanut butter, etc. A few crumbs left in your room could sicken the next occupant.

GENERAL RETREAT & TRANSPORTATION QUESTIONS: Contact **Ginny Garrett at 510-495-4285** or email her at ginnygarrett@hotmail.com. Ginny helps arrange carpools to and from camp.

RETREAT REGISTRATION FORM

May 15 - 17, 2026

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM (OR WRITE ALL THE INFORMATION ON A SHEET OF PAPER) **AND MAIL IT WITH YOUR CHECK TO THE ADDRESS BELOW. Please print clearly.**

The deadline for receipt of your registration is Friday, May 2, 2026

(We appreciate receiving registrations early. We’ve never exceeded the camp’s capacity but it could happen.) WE CANNOT TAKE TELEPHONE OR E-MAILED RESERVATIONS. Thank you!

NAME _____ **PHONE(S)** _____

ADDRESS _____ **CITY** _____ **ZIP** _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

MY EMERGENCY OFF-SITE CONTACT PERSON’S Name: _____

Phone: _____ **Relationship:** _____

FEE: Sliding fee scale for Friday through Sunday including five meals.

(Our cost is \$315 / person - Please pay what you can.)

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____ Make check payable to “Bay Area OLOC”

Please note if you are post-dating your check.

RIDES: I need a ride I can offer a ride to ____ women

BEDROOMS: Do you have medical or physical disability requirements for sleeping accommodations? Please describe: (See LODGING paragraph on page 3.)

The Lodge, where many bedrooms are located, is about 75 yards from Mayacamas Hall where we gather. The path between them is paved and a portion has an up (or down) hill grade. Would you be able to walk between these two locations comfortably?

Yes No

Do you use a CPAP machine? Yes No

Do you snore? Yes No Sometimes I don’t know

Is someone else attending whom you would like to room with? (Make sure she registers!!)

FOOD RESTRICTIONS: Vegetarian Gluten-free Vegan

DO YOU NEED A RAISED TOILET SEAT? Yes

MAIL REGISTRATION FORMS to:

Laura Tow, 881 Coachman Place, Clayton, CA 94517

Registration questions? Call/text (925)-980-3842 or email msslaura@earthlink.net