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**SAGE Focuses on Women**  
» In this issue of *SAGE Matters*,  
we highlight various women  
who are making an impact  
at SAGE. See inside.

**SAGE's 4th National Conference  
Will Address Aging in the  
21st Century**  
» For more information on SAGE's  
Conference, see page 7.

## SAGE and Village Care Partner to Serve LGBT Older People

BY ALAN FRANCISCO-TIPGOS

Led by its motto, "We're here for you," Village Care has worked hard to serve New York City — providing care and support to the elderly, persons living with AIDS, and those in need of medical help and rehabilitation. Last year, Village Care joined hands with SAGE in a partnership that combines the two organizations' complementary strengths and resources to increase the life choices for LGBT older people. Village Care's history makes the agency a natural partner for SAGE in its work on behalf of LGBT seniors.

### Village Care's History of Community-Based Support

The story of Village Care began in 1975, when a large, for-profit nursing home in the West Village was failing, leaving more than 240 residents and their families in potential jeopardy. When the home's owners abandoned the facility at 607 Hudson Street, leaving residents and staff on their own, the New York State Department of Health stepped in and commenced procedures to close the home's doors. This shutdown would have been a disaster for the Hudson Street residents. All faced relocation to unfamiliar nursing homes far from the neighborhood they had come to love.

The community quickly rallied to save the facility and to keep their loved ones and friends nearby. For two long years, neighborhood activists and everyday individuals came together to help raise the millions needed to purchase the nursing home, holding bake sales and other fundraisers. Though the campaign started as a local community effort, news of the cause quickly spread, eventually gaining the high-profile attention of then-First Lady Rosalynn Carter. With her help and the dollars and cents of many supporters, the new, not-for-profit Village Nursing Home opened its doors on September 20, 1977.

### Strong Ethos of Service Applied to Serve People with HIV/AIDS

The hard-fought effort to save Village Care's first nursing home and transform it into a skilled nursing residence came from individuals deeply invested in doing what was right for their community. This philosophy has gradually evolved into Village Care's strong ethos of service and responsiveness to the changing needs of the community.

This tradition was never more challenged than in the mid-1980s, with the dramatic emergence of the AIDS epidemic. The West Village and surrounding communities were losing many of the neighborhood residents and activists who had helped to create and sustain the Village Nursing Home. Reviving the spirit that had saved the nursing home a few years earlier, Village Care's leaders rallied to action.

The result was the creation in 1988 of the first AIDS day treatment program in New York  
Continued on page 9

## Lesbian Leaders Take the Helm at SAGE

BY BETH KLING

In its 30th year, SAGE has made two strong additions to its senior staff, hiring two lesbian leaders with long histories of service to both the LGBT and women's communities. Paula Pressley, a fundraising professional with a background in philanthropy for women's organizations, has returned as SAGE's director of development. Karen Taylor, former director of SAGE/Queens (a program of Queens Community House), has taken on a newly created position as director of advocacy and training.

With the addition of Paula and Karen, SAGE is adding to the momentum that is steadily building to advance SAGE's national role and to strengthen our presence and commitment at home. Meeting these twin goals is only possible with significant financial growth, and SAGE is poised to tap into an increasing pool of support both from the LGBT community and from mainstream funding sources as baby boomers age into their senior years.

Heading SAGE's development department and steering this fundraising effort, Paula Pressley brings over twenty years of development experience in various nonprofit organizations, with a special emphasis on women's organizations (see sidebar, page 2), as well as a valuable background as SAGE's first formal director of development from 2001 to 2005.

When she was first hired in 2001, Paula was the only development person on staff. Her return marks a very different time for SAGE, with organization-wide participation in fundraising. In addition to a fully staffed development department, SAGE now has a program for members to provide consistent, significant financial support.

"I was really excited to return and learn about SAGE's Investors in our Future," says Paula, referring to the individual giving program started last year. "Individuals at the  
Continued on page 2

## S A G E G E A R S U P F O R P R I D E



SAGE prepares for Pride with a look back on past years. Far left: The SAGE contingent carrying the banner bearing SAGE's old logo and name. Center: Roy Strickland and William Wynkoop marching proudly down Fifth Avenue. Right: Bruhs Mero and Gean Harwood serving as Grand Marshals in the 1985 parade.

## Lesbian Leaders with Strong Community Ties Hired to Head SAGE Departments

Continued from page 1

heart of SAGE will continue to help us grow into a vibrant and strategic organization.”

SAGE's financial growth is facilitating its increasing role as a leader in national advocacy efforts for LGBT seniors. This will be a primary focus for Karen Taylor as director of advocacy and training, a position created from funding through the Arcus Foundation. Karen brings over twelve years of experience in both advocacy and program work on behalf of seniors in New York. As director of SAGE/Queens, she worked to connect LGBT seniors in that borough to community resources, oversaw the development of programs, and advocated on behalf of the aging LGBT population. Her new position at SAGE will enable her to carry her experience into a larger arena.

“Individuals at the heart of SAGE will continue to help us grow into a vibrant and strategic organization.”

“I want every senior, regardless of gender, race, community of origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity to have access to the same services and benefits that every other senior in the community gets,” says Karen, who will represent SAGE as it works to build a nation-wide network of LGBT elder organizations in advocating for LGBT senior rights.

The combination of advocacy and training that comprises Karen's position demonstrates SAGE's recognition that advocating successfully for LGBT elders requires educating mainstream service providers, agencies, and legislators in how best to serve this growing population. Karen will work to carry out this goal, conducting trainings for providers and developing workshops and panel presentations on LGBT aging issues for conferences. For last February's Creating Change Conference, sponsored by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), Karen designed and helped lead an all-day Pre-Conference Institute on LGBT Aging.

Currently, Karen is devoting significant energy to ensuring that SAGE's upcoming 4th National Conference on LGBT Aging, October 12 -14 at the New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge (see page 7 for more information), will offer policymakers and mainstream service providers the training in capacity building and program development they will need to successfully serve LGBT seniors. ■

### Paula Pressley, SAGE's Director of Development

Paula has a long history of serving the women's community. In the late 1970s, while a graduate student at Drake University in Iowa, she worked at the women's center, which served disadvantaged workers and displaced homemakers. In 1980, she joined the staff of the Young Women's Resource Center (YWRC) in Des Moines, and later became its executive director. YWRC was distinguished at the time for being one of only two centers in the nation dedicated to empowering girls and young women ages 12 to 21.

On moving to New York in 1985, Paula joined the staff of the A.I.R. Gallery, which had established itself in the early 1970s as the first non-profit artist-run gallery for women in the country. After serving as the gallery's director, Paula took a position as deputy director of planning and development at NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, a public-interest legal organization dedicated to advancing women's rights. She has since worked in development for various women's philanthropic organizations, including the Astraea Foundation, as well as for SAGE, the Partnership for the Homeless, and the CORO Leadership Center.



Photo courtesy of Mark Golebioski

Paula Pressley

### Karen Taylor, SAGE's Director of Advocacy and Training



Karen Taylor

Karen has been working with the aging community since moving to New York in 1996, when she joined the programming and policy department at UJA-Federation. She oversaw the aging portfolio, working with Jewish aging services in the metropolitan area, and worked to develop an LGBT Aging Task Force.

In 2002, Karen became director of SAGE/Queens, a program of Queens Community House. In keeping with the settlement house philosophy of Queens Community House, Karen sought to bring out the

individual strengths of senior LGBTs and to foster their collective ability to create community.

While at SAGE/Queens, Karen served as co-chair of the Senior Issues Committee of the New York State LGBT Health & Human Services Network, a coalition of 55 LGBT agencies that work with the Empire State Pride Agenda to secure state funding for non-HIV related services. She continues to serve on the Steering Committee for the Network.

## *sagematters* The Newspaper on LGBT Aging

**PUBLISHER:** David Rubeo. **EDITOR IN CHIEF:** Beth Kling. **EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:** Liz Ferris, Mike Nadeau, Garrison Phillips, Trumbull Rogers. **DESIGNER:** Ken Pfeifer. **BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** Lawrence N. Chanen, Esq., *Co-Chair* Judith E. Turkel, Esq., *Co-Chair* • Caroline G. Garcia, *Treasurer* • Jon Nathanson, *Secretary* • Phillip A. Saperia, *Executive Committee Member-at-Large* • David W. Canter, Esq. • Peter Catenacci, CFP • Brian C. Craig, MBA • Casey D. Crawford Mark D'Alessio • Beth Jones, RLP® • Joan Koenig • Melora Love • Stacia Murphy • Ralph M. Randazzo, Esq. • Frank Stark Michael Adams, *Executive Director*.

Published three times per year by SAGE, Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders, 305 7th Avenue, NY, NY 10001. [www.sageusa.org](http://www.sageusa.org). [sagematters@sageusa.org](mailto:sagematters@sageusa.org). SAGE is supported in part by the United Way, New York City Department for the Aging, New York State Department of Health, and through the generosity of foundations, corporations, and individuals. ©SAGE 2008.

To learn more about SAGE, please call (212) 741-2247 or visit [www.sageusa.org](http://www.sageusa.org)



30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
2008



# Turning 90 with SAGE

BY BETH KLING

**As SAGE celebrates its first 30 years, three long-time SAGE members are marking a milestone in their own lives — turning 90 years of age.**

Renee Rosenfield and Gladys Sille each became 90 last December, on the third and on the 31st of the month, respectively. Jerre Kalbas's 90th birthday came on March 3, when she celebrated at the Pearl Oyster Bar with 12 of her close friends.

Jerre Kalbas had two other 90th birthday celebrations in the following weeks as well, first with the SAGE Socials Committee and later with SAGE's Women's Dance Committee. Jerre has been a part of both groups for more than 20 years, and she has been a SAGE member since the organization was founded.

Jerre says her involvement with SAGE over the years has made a big difference in her life, which is as busy now as ever. She is extremely active — seeing friends, making jewelry, visiting art galleries, and swimming, among other things. She credits SAGE with introducing her to many people and with helping to improve her life.

Jerre has a long history of volunteer service at SAGE, starting as a sort of "poster woman" to advertise the organization's services when it was just beginning. ("They used my face to recruit people," she says.)

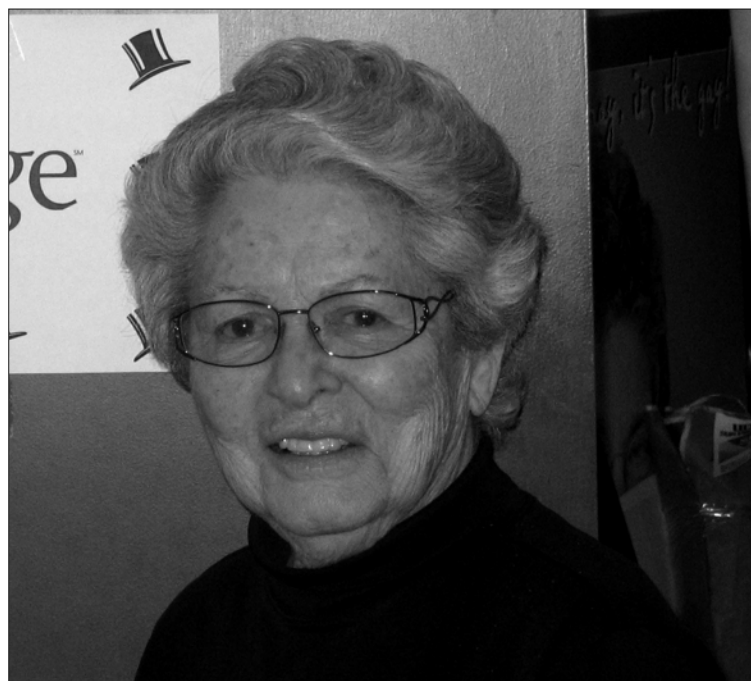
In the early years, Jerre helped out with clerical duties in SAGE's office, did carpentry work as needed to set up, and then in the 1980s became host with Adrian Mayer of SAGE's newly formed senior drop-in center. She joined the Women's Dance Committee and the Socials Committee, and has stayed involved ever since.

"I don't even notice I'm ninety," she says, when asked to comment on how her life is going these days. "Life is so much better now — I'm not as shy as I used to be, and I'm very busy. I have great friends, and I'm interested in things."

Like Jerre, Renee Rosenfield has been involved with SAGE since the beginning. Back when the organization first started, Renee began attending SAGE's weekly women's discussion group, which met every Friday night. It was in this SAGE group that Renee met her life partner, Madelin Alk; the two have been together now for 23 years.

Renee says that at age 90, she's not as physically active as she used to be. ("I don't mind being 90 but I can't jump over puddles anymore," she says, explaining that she was very athletic throughout her life.) But she continues to create art, adding to her long list of artistic achievements.

Renee is a gifted ceramicist, woodworker, painter, and a published photographer. Her imaginative



cooking and her remarkable indoor and balcony gardens are appreciated by all who visit her in her Penn South apartment. She enjoys the challenges of working with a variety of artistic media and loves to figure out how to create complex artistic projects despite, nowadays, the limitations imposed by arthritic hands.

For many years, SAGE was a central part of Renee's life, providing her with an opportunity to connect with other lesbians her age.

Although she always felt an attraction to women, she had not been introduced to the gay community until her late forties, after being married, raising three children, and having a secret relationship with her

valuable. She enjoys real camaraderie with the members.

"It's the first time I've been in a group with men that has worked. I love the guys in the group; they're my buddies."



Gladys Sille with Bernice Mapp and Dee Johnson (above), her co-guardians, at the Cabs Nursing Home on Dekalb and Nostrand Avenues in Brooklyn. Gladys sends her love to all and welcomes visits from friends from SAGE and the LGBT Center. She loves company.

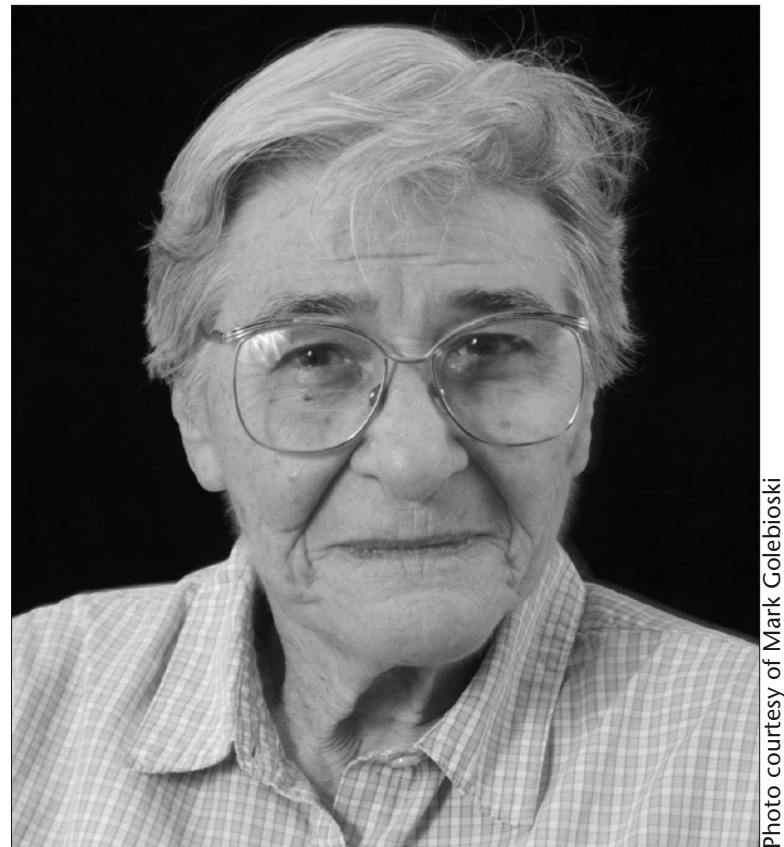


Photo courtesy of Mark Golebowski

Renee Rosenfield (left) is a ceramicist, woodworker, painter, and published photographer who attends SAGE's Conscious Creative Aging Group.

Jerre Kalbas (above) makes jewelry, visits art galleries regularly, and participates in SAGE's Socials Committee and Women's Dance Committee.

Gladys Sille has been well-known at SAGE for many years, particularly as a vital presence at SAGE's parties and events, where she could dance anyone under the table, even when she was well into her 80s. "Gladys was at the first SAGE Women's Dance, and she was there five years ago when we celebrated 20 years," says Dee Johnson, Gladys's guardian.

Dee first met Gladys at a SAGE Women's Dance and the two got to know one

started to advocate for better living conditions for Gladys, getting her moved to Cabs Nursing home and having themselves named as co-guardians.

Because Dee and Bernice visit her regularly and oversee her care, the staff at Cabs is extremely attentive to Gladys. She no longer suffers from bedsores, has regained some lost weight and is back to being as spirited as ever, particularly when music is playing on her portable CD player. ■

## National Center for Lesbian Rights' Elder Law Project Works to Change the Law

BY LIZ FERRIS

Even in the progressive San Francisco Bay area, protecting the legal rights of aging LGBTs is still a relatively new concept. "Elder law" has only been around for about ten years and has mostly been thought of as estate planning. Although this is certainly an important concern, even the best estate planning cannot combat systemic and legally sanctioned discrimination, as well as homophobia and elder abuse.

This is where the San Francisco-based National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) has stepped in. NCLR is a 31-year-old non-profit public interest law firm that works to change the legal landscape for LGBTs through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education. And for close to a decade, the organization has been working to secure legal rights for seniors.

In 1999, just as the first wave of baby boomers was on the cusp of turning fifty-five, NCLR started the Elder Law Project with the goal of "changing both society and the law to give LGBT elders

equal dignity, protection, and respect," as their web site states. The NCLR Elder Law Project also works "to provide the information and resources [LGBT elders] need to protect themselves, their partners, and their children."

A stellar example of the work of the Elder Law Project can be found in *Burrows v. ILWU*, a high profile case in California. Marvin Burrows and his partner William Swenor were together for 51 years and did everything in their power to demonstrate their commitment to each other, including registering as domestic partners.

Bill worked for the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) for 35 years, but when he died in March 2005, the ILWU refused to recognize Marvin as the surviving spouse and denied him Bill's retirement and pension benefits. As a result, Marvin lost his home and became financially bankrupt.

With the help of an appeal by the Elder Law Project, the ILWU examined its policies and changed

*National Center for Lesbian Rights was founded in 1977 by Donna Hitchens and Roberta Achtenberg. Today the organization has 29 employees in San Francisco, and offices in Florida and Washington, D.C. NCLR has literally helped rewrite the law with its precedent-setting and sometimes historic cases focused on the particular needs of LGBT people. For more information contact NCLR at (415) 392-6257, [www.nclrights.org](http://www.nclrights.org).*

them to become more inclusive of LGBT domestic partners. ILWU also made restitution to Marvin, retroactive to the date of Bill's death, and ensured his right to all of his partner's benefits.

Precedent-setting lawsuits such as this have an impact far beyond San Francisco because they improve the lives of all LGBTs. The Elder Law Project's substantial education and advocacy work also extends their reach across the nation.

Elder Law Project Consultant Joyce Pierson, who coordinates all aspects

of the program, strives to bring the voice of LGBT senior issues into the national dialogue by utilizing her extensive network of LGBT and mainstream senior organizations. She travels regularly to present LGBT-friendly practice to people in the caring professions and to offer workshops on elder law at conferences around the country.

The Elder Law Project also works with attorneys to create public education models for outreach to elders. They continually strive to meet the chal-

lenges of reaching the people who need assistance, particularly the hidden and the closeted, helping them access the services that are available and addressing homophobia within mainstream organizations.

"I think we've learned so much," says Joyce. "People are recognizing our existence in a national way more than ever before. A lot of people call for help thinking they need a lawyer, but maybe they need other types of help. The Elder Law Project helps steer them in the right direction." ■

## Silver Anniversary for Women's Dance Committee

This year marks an important anniversary at SAGE — the Women's Dance Committee is celebrating 25 years of producing dances for women in the community. For over two decades, this dedicated committee has met monthly to plan the events, which take place three times per year at Manhattan's premier dance clubs. Women of all abilities and ages, from legal drinking age to 90-somethings, get together to enjoy an eclectic combination of dance music spun by popular DJ Nancy B. The dances bring out hundreds of women, and all proceeds go to SAGE. Next dance will be held on October 26th. Call SAGE at (212) 741-2247 for tickets. ■



Some Women's Dance Committee members: (L-R top) Anita Raizman, Hedy Hauptman, Jerre Kalbas; (bottom) Betty Weems, Shirley Thomas, Carol Garcia

Photo: Mark Golebiowski

# SAGE Talks to AARP

**SAGE and AARP are hardly strangers to each other. But the relationship between the two organizations is taking a big leap forward with AARP's decision to be the lead sponsor of *It's About Time: LGBT Aging in a Changing World*, SAGE's 4th National Conference on LGBT Aging. SAGE's Executive Director Michael Adams recently talked with AARP's Carmelita Tursi.**

**Michael Adams:** When AARP made the decision to sponsor and promote SAGE's 4th National Conference on LGBT Aging (to be held in October), it was a very exciting moment for SAGE. For many SAGE seniors who have worked so hard to raise the visibility of LGBT aging, AARP's sponsorship is a profound statement of support. What led to AARP's decision to support the Conference?

**Carmelita Tursi:** Given the evolution of AARP's interest in and awareness of the needs of LGBT persons as they age, supporting the conference is a natural next step for AARP. We are acutely aware of the intersection of aging and diversity as we go farther into the 21st century. It is one of the reasons we held the Diversity and Aging Conference last year and sought to integrate diversity, including LGBT aging issues and SAGE's input, into the topics that were presented.

We also support the notion that mainstream aging organizations — those serving the general population — need to be more fully aware of the growing LGBT community, because whether they know it or not, more than likely, they are already serving LGBT individuals.

Speaking of conferences, we at AARP have started to plan for a Diversity and Aging in the 21st Century conference in 2009 and hope that you, Michael, and SAGE, once again will be part of our efforts.

**MA:** Absolutely — I look forward to partnering with you on that! It was fantastic for me as the head of SAGE to participate in last year's conference. I was really excited to sit on a plenary with other CEO's

running national minority aging associations — like the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged and the National Hispanic Council on Aging — and explore the opportunities and challenges we all face. Can you talk a little bit about how AARP's interest in LGBT aging issues has evolved and how that relates to your work in AARP's Office of Diversity & Inclusion?

**CT:** Over the past several years, AARP has been incrementally building its capacity to understand the particular issues faced by LGBT individuals as they age. AARP has a strong LGBT and Allies Employee Resource Group (ERG), which has been instrumental in raising awareness about both the needs and strengths of LGBT communities. Some of the educational activities and programs we've offered include:

- Sponsoring, participating in, and presenting at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's first Aging Institute at the Creating Change National Conference.
- Working with the Task Force to sponsor and convene "Outing Age," a briefing and publication on public policy issues affecting aging LGBT persons. Since then, AARP through the Office of Diversity and Inclusion has provided partial support to update this important publication.
- Continuing to raise awareness about the LGBT community among AARP's senior staff by hosting an opinion leaders luncheon led by

Tom Nelson, AARP's Chief Operating Officer with the leadership of SAGE and the Task Force.

- Enlisting the support of Martina Navratilova to serve as an AARP ambassador for health and wellness.

Our work on LGBT issues is part of a larger organization-wide initiative to enhance diversity, which encompasses all the ways in which we might differ from one another. In particular, as Director of Corporate Diversity, I work closely with our Office of People



Michael Adams, Executive Director of SAGE, talked with Carmelita Tursi, AARP's Director of Corporate Diversity.

ment, expanding job opportunities so people can keep working as they get older, and strengthening Social Security. Can you tell me why AARP believes it's important that LGBT voices be included in this initiative?

**CT:** It's important that LGBT voices be heard and included because Divided We Fail is for all Americans. As you know, Michael, social, demographic and economic changes have placed new stresses on individuals, their families, and society. Millions of Americans are concerned about their health and long-term financial security. Health



Photo by Bob Levy/American Society on Aging (ASA)

toward practical solutions on these priorities. Further, we will begin to lay the groundwork for 2009 and beyond by informing the public and opinion leaders about the various options to address health care and financial security, along with the trade-offs that accompany each of these.

The LGBT community must be part of this conversation so that the solutions truly serve everyone's needs. By supporting Divided We Fail, informing our LGBT members, families and friends about the issues, and encouraging their civic engagement, AARP and SAGE are building a lasting foundation for progress.

**MA:** SAGE is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, and as the oldest and largest organization of our kind in the country we're doing everything we can to provide leadership on LGBT aging issues.

But at SAGE we know that we need to integrate LGBT aging concerns into broader aging policy discussions if we are going to be successful in our advocacy work. One of our main goals is to end the many ways in which government programs for seniors discriminate against us, and we know we need to work with our allies in mainstream aging.

We see AARP as a uniquely important partner because your organization shares the concerns LGBT older people have for health care access, affordable housing, safety, and workplace protections. Carmelita, do you see opportunities for us to work together in these and other areas?

**CT:** The concerns you mention are indeed primary for AARP. Michael, you've had a chance to meet with our COO and other AARP leaders to discuss and further illuminate the issues in the LGBT community that AARP must pay attention to. As you could see, our leadership — both staff and volunteers — is genuine in wanting to

Strategy to make sure we have an AARP that is diverse and inclusive and fully engages its staff.

We do not view diversity as an initiative with a beginning and an end — it is the way we do business and it is everyone's job. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that issues of diversity and inclusion — including LGBT issues — are addressed and considered when we develop policy, programs, products and services in the marketplace and in the workplace.

**MA:** Carmelita, you mentioned AARP's participation in the Task Force's 20th Annual Creating Change Conference. I'm particularly interested in hearing about the platform that AARP presented at that conference, entitled, "Divided We Fail."

This platform seems to address a lot of the things that matter to many LGBT seniors: working for affordable quality health care and prescription drugs, creating incentives to save for retire-

care costs are out of control for both individuals and employers. One in four Americans has problems paying medical bills and one in three says they have skipped treatment, tests or prescriptions because of costs.

We know that LGBT people must be facing the same concerns and going through similar experiences. Everyone needs access to quality healthcare, and contrary to stereotypes that depict LGBTs as overwhelmingly wealthy, LGBT people can and do face the same economic hardships as any other family.

That's why AARP along with the Service Employees International Union, the Business Roundtable, and the National Federation of Independent Business are leading the Divided We Fail initiative. Our goal in 2008 is to ensure that the next President and other newly elected officials commit publicly to making health and financial security their top domestic issues and to working cooperatively

## SAGE Offers Services for LGBT Older People

SAGE provides dozens of activities, groups, and programs to encourage LGBT seniors to connect with each other and with the community.

### Support Groups

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group  
SAGE HIV Positive 50+ Support Bereavement Group  
Caregiver Support Group  
Friendship Circle  
Gay Widowers Support Group  
Men's Coming Out  
MS Support Group  
New Beginnings – Harlem Gay & Bisexual Men's HIV Positive 50+ Support Group  
New Connections - Women's 40's & 50's Support Group  
Older Than Springtime - Men's Support Group  
Wednesday Afternoon Women's Support Group  
SAGE Harlem Women's Support Group

### Discussion Groups

Conscious Creative Aging  
Life Issues: Beyond Retirement  
Listen & Laugh - Women's Monday Night Discussion Group  
Men's 40+ Rap  
Men's 50+ Rap  
Our Birthdays, Our Stories – Women's Monthly Birthday Discussion Group  
Senior Elders: 75+ Support  
Tuesday Daytime Discussion  
Women: Our Spiritual Journeys

### Community Meetings

Monthly Drop-In Community Meetings  
SAGE HEAT Monthly Program Planning Meetings

### Art & Cultural Programs

Annual SAGE Senior Artists' Day  
Art Studio  
Booklovers' Discussion Group  
Book Readings  
Creative Writing Workshop  
Discounted Theater Tickets  
Drama Class  
Harlem Book Club  
Harlem Cultural Programming at Casa Frela Gallery  
Morning at the Opera Appreciation Group & Discussion  
Movement & Dance Workshops  
SAGE Film Series  
SAGE Singers  
Women's Music Salon

### Social & Wellness Programming

Brunch Bunch  
Bus Trips  
Dating & Relationship Workshops  
Daily Drop-In Center  
Drop-In Monthly Birthday Party  
Drop-In Parties  
Gay Pride Activities  
Holiday Parties  
SAGE Fabulous Fridays  
LGBT Senior Health Fair  
SAGE Socials

SAGE Walks  
SAGERCIZE Class  
Scrabble & Bridge  
Women's Monthly Birthday Party  
Women's Dances  
Women's Parties

### Helping Services

Benefits Counseling  
Friendly Visitors  
Legal Clinic  
Lend-a-Hand

### Informational Programming

Health and Wellness  
Heritage and History  
Money & Finance  
Safety & the Law

### Women's Programming

Harlem Women's Mixer  
SAGE Harlem Women's Support Group  
Women's Dances  
Women's Discussion Groups  
Women's History Month events  
Women's Monthly Birthday Party  
Women's Music Salon  
Women: Our Spiritual Journeys  
Women's Parties  
Women's Support Groups

### Clinical/Counseling Services

Case Management  
Individual Counseling

HIV Related Counseling  
Group Counseling  
Benefits Counseling  
Legal Counseling  
Walk-In Social Services Clinic  
Help Finding a Safe & Friendly Long-Term Care Facility  
Help Finding Homecare

### SAGE Communities

Community street fairs & tabling  
SAGE Harlem NORC (Naturally Occurring Retirement Community)  
Planning Meetings  
Social Activities  
Informational Presentations  
Information & Referral  
HIV Services  
Uptown SAGE Neighbors Monthly Socialization Programming

### Education & Advocacy

HIV & Aging Advocacy  
National Black HIV Awareness Day  
SAGE National Conference on LGBT Aging  
New York City Senior Advocacy Day  
New York State Equality & Justice Day & Senior Summit  
Older Adults & HIV Training Initiative  
SAGEConnect

### SAGE Curriculum:

"No Need to Fear, No Need to Hide"  
SAGE Matters Newspaper  
Website [www.sageusa.org](http://www.sageusa.org)  
World AIDS Day activities

### Services for Caregivers

Respite Services  
Caregiver Support Group  
Financial Assistance for Caregiving Needs  
Friendly Visiting  
Subsidized Home Care  
Subsidized Adult Day Services

### SAGE Positive Programming

Gay Men's HIV+ Social w/Village Care  
HIV Case Management & Counseling  
HIV 50+ Men's Support Groups – SAGE at the Center  
HIV 50+ Men's Support Group – Harlem w/Harlem United  
HIV Testing w/GMHC – Harlem  
HIV Prevention & Education – Harlem  
HIV Testing w/other community partners – Harlem

### Volunteer Services

Friendly Visitor Trainings & Support Meetings  
Monthly Volunteer Orientation  
Volunteer Advocate Meetings

## Do They Have That at SAGE?

BY TRUMBULL ROGERS

### Does SAGE offer programs specifically for women?

Yes, SAGE offers programs for women, and they range from weekly and monthly groups to annual events at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center, at the SAGE-in-Harlem office, and at other venues in the city.

Michele D'Amato (above, left), SAGE's program manager, oversees the women's programs that are held at the Center. These include two wonderful monthly programs facilitated by SAGE volunteer Amy Ellison, entitled — Women: Our Spiritual Journeys and Women: Our Birthdays, Our Stories. For those who want something a bit more frequent, there is a Women's Support Group, which is an on-going drop-in group that meets weekly to discuss various topics that touch on life issues. The musically inclined might enjoy the monthly Women's Classical Music Salon.

In addition, SAGE sponsors three other annual events for women at the Center: the Annual Lesbian Holiday Party, which is held in December and includes the usual holiday activities such as lunch and a movie or a live performance; the Annual Lesbian Pride Party, held in June; and the August Annual Women's Barbecue, which is usually held in the garden and includes music, dancing, and real barbecue.

SAGE also holds an evening event in March to commemorate Women's History Month. This year, SAGE celebrated the life of a prominent lesbian, Stormé DeLarverie, who was a male impersonator and the emcee in the legendary Jewel Box Review, America's first integrated female impersonation show. A documentary, "Stormé: The Lady of the Jewel Box," directed by Michelle Parkerson, was shown and light refreshments were served.

SAGE's women's programs also include three dances held annually at dance clubs in the city. These dances are fundraisers planned and run by SAGE's Women's Dance Committee (see page 4 for more information).

### Services You May Not Know SAGE Offers to LGBT Older People



Michele D'Amato (left), and Doreen Bermudez

In addition to these programs, SAGE offers a range of programming for women in Harlem, from support groups to social events. Doreen Bermudez (above, right), manager of SAGE in Harlem, oversees these programs.

Programming for Women's History Month at SAGE's Harlem office has included HIV testing for women only, as well as a drop-in program for women called Harlem Fabulous Fridays. This past March, SAGE also held the first women's mixer in Harlem at Big Apple Jazz.

Another recent program held at the SAGE-in-Harlem office was a screening of a video about Ruth Ellis, African-American LGBT rights activist, who, when she died in 2000, was the oldest known open lesbian (she came out around 1915 at about age 16).

SAGE in Harlem is also developing a Spanish-speaking component for some of our women's programming. A new drop-in group for older lesbians, titled SAGE Women's Roundtable or Mesa Redonda para las Mujeres de SAGE, will be split into two groups, one in English and one in Spanish. This will be a support group for women, where such topics as finances, ageism, and housing issues, among others, will be discussed. The meetings will be held in the office of Melissa Mark Viverito, the New York City Councilwoman for East Harlem and a strong supporter of SAGE, who has generously made her space available.

In addition to these ongoing groups and events, more women's programming is being planned for the future. For more information, or to register for a program, please contact SAGE at (212) 741-2247, or call Doreen Bermudez, at (212) 741-2247, ext 242, for information on programs for women at SAGE-in-Harlem.



## It's About Time: LGBT Aging in a Changing World

REGISTER NOW!

**SAGE's Fourth National Conference on LGBT Aging – sponsored by AARP**

October 12-14, 2008

New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge

[www.sageusa.org/nationalconference](http://www.sageusa.org/nationalconference)



Join aging service providers, policymakers, practitioners, activists, LGBT seniors and others who want to learn and share with each other. Over 75 sessions offering information, skills-building, best practices, and networking opportunities.

**For more information and to register visit [www.sageusa.org/nationalconference](http://www.sageusa.org/nationalconference)**

Are you an LGBT activist? A long-time SAGE member? Are you interested in offering your input into SAGE's Fourth National Conference on LGBT Aging? Contact our Community Advisory Board, chaired by Dr. Harold Kooden, at (212) 579-4650, or [halkooden@att.net](mailto:halkooden@att.net)

### Programación solo para mujeres en SAGE y su subdivisión en Harlem

SAGE ofrece una variedad de programas y actividades solo para mujeres en Harlem; desde grupos de apoyos y eventos sociales.

Actividades durante la celebración del mes Nacional de la Mujer en Harlem incluyó pruebas del VIH y un lugar de reunión social solo para mujeres llamado Viernes Fabulosos. Este pasado mes del Marzo SAGE en Harlem disfrutó de una tarde solo para mujeres en un histórico restaurante de la comunidad. Entre otros programas y actividades en Harlem se debe mencionar la presentación de la película de la vida de Ruth Ellis, una activista Afro-Americana en la comunidad LGBT.

SAGE en Harlem está creando una nueva etapa para programación de apoyo en español para mujeres lesbianas, bisexuales y transexuales. Un nuevo grupo de apoyo llamado Mesa Redonda para las Mujeres de SAGE está en sus pasos de creación. Este concepto va a ser dividido en dos grupos; uno en inglés y otro en español. Este grupo primordialmente es de apoyo con un concepto educativo y social. Entre los temas de discusión se encuentran las finanzas, relaciones entre familias y salud. Las reuniones se formarán y se llevarán acabo en la oficina de la concejal Melissa Mark Viverito, quien ha apoyado el programa de SAGE en Harlem desde sus comienzos.

Para más información puede llamar a Doreen Bermúdez al 212-741-2247. Además puede visitar nuestro sitio en la red a [www.sageusa.org](http://www.sageusa.org). ■

## Doug Uses His IRA to Build a Legacy for SAGE — and for Himself

A teacher for over 35 years, Doug is looking forward to retirement. Being single, he'll have plenty of income from his IRA to support a comfortable lifestyle (he loves to play golf!), and still have capital left after he passes on. But his mother has passed away and he is no longer close to his siblings. At the suggestion of his HR specialist, Doug has decided to leave this IRA to one of his favorite charities.

He was amazed that it could be so easy — no attorneys, no accountants, no extra fees — to leave a legacy. "I thought of SAGE." The HR specialist assured Doug that the IRA would remain in his hands during his lifetime and that upon his death, the remaining funds would go to SAGE.

Doug chose SAGE because he remembered how helpful the organization had been to his friend, Alex, who died recently. Alex was comforted by weekly visits from Sam, one of SAGE's Friendly Visitors. "Sam even showed up at the funeral and worked with Alex's family to settle the estate. The work that SAGE does is so important, and even though I'm many years away from thinking about this for myself, it comforts me to know that I'll be helping others and SAGE will be there for me, too."



The  
Taylor  
Society

*To learn more about how Doug created a SAGE legacy for himself, call us at (212) 741-2247 and ask about The Taylor Society, SAGE's new planned giving program. ■*

# VILLAGE CARE OF NEW YORK

is a community-based, not-for-profit organization serving older adults, persons living with HIV/AIDS and individuals in need of medical and rehabilitation services. We are guided by the people we serve in alliance with staff, administration and the board of directors.

## SeniorChoices

- » Skilled Nursing Care » Day Health Centers
- » Senior Information Centers » Home Care
- » Care Advocate Services » Assisted Living
- » Rehabilitation Services » Primary Care Health Center

## Network of AIDS Services

- » Skilled Nursing Care » Day Treatment Centers
- » Treatment Adherence » Home Care
- » Community Case Management
- » Primary Care Health Center



*We're here for you.*

*healing body, mind and spirit*

A Proud Sponsor of  
**sage**



## SAGE Partners with Village Care

Continued from page 1

City, an initiative that became a model for other agencies across the nation. This first-of-its-kind program provides medical care to HIV-positive individuals while also offering social and support services. Eventually, Village Care also established New York City's first AIDS-specific certified home health agency and the Big Apple's first community case management program for people with HIV/AIDS.

In 1995, Village Care returned to its roots to open Rivington House, a 219-bed residential skilled nursing facility for AIDS care. Dedicated solely to patients with HIV, Rivington House to date has housed thousands of individuals needing comprehensive clinical care in an encouraging and supportive environment.

### SAGE and Village Care Work Together

"There is no reason for SAGE to do what Village Care does, or vice versa," says Michael Adams, executive director of SAGE. "But if we can work together, if we can bring together the strengths and know-how of both organizations in a thoughtful manner, we can accomplish some really exciting things."

Among other things, the two agencies are getting ready to launch an exciting new series of social programs for older people with HIV.

"Our older clients with HIV struggle with isolation every day," explained John Genke, senior social worker at SAGE. "Many of them feel cut off by the community-at-large, because of the combination of their

age and of their HIV status. So the new programs that SAGE is starting up with Village Care are a wonderful opportunity for our clients to have fun again, to get out and meet new people beyond SAGE's support groups, and to feel as if there is a broader community of their own."

Though SAGE has had this kind of social program in mind for a while, it would not have been possible without the help of Jan Zimmerman, Village Care's AIDS Day Treatment Director. "I was exchanging thoughts with Jan about SAGE's HIV support groups and mentioned my idea of a mixer," said John. "She surprised me and said, 'Let's do it here at Village Care and bring our folks together.'"

SAGE and Village Care also joined forces to produce a first-of-its-kind health fair for LGBT seniors in New York City. "Village Care is an invaluable community health resource," says Tom Weber, director of community services for SAGE. "Not only are they a deep fount of knowledge on the medical issues that affect older adults — they know how to deliver that knowledge in an easy-to-access, consumer-friendly manner."

"Working with SAGE is one of the more exciting opportunities that Village has had in its fight against AIDS," says Arthur Webb, president and CEO of Village Care. "This new collaboration that Village is building with SAGE will more effectively use our mutual strengths, which will improve access to a fuller and more effective response to AIDS care."

\* \* \*

*The events described above are just two examples of the important partnership between Village Care and SAGE. For more information on these events and all future events, visit either organization's website at [www.vcn.org](http://www.vcn.org) or at [www.sageusa.org](http://www.sageusa.org).*

## SAGE Talks to AARP

Continued from page 5

make sure that AARP is relevant in the LGBT community. I am hopeful that SAGE and AARP will continue to collaborate in developing the next steps that will make the most sense for both organizations—next steps that will always move toward greater impact and substantive leadership in securing a society where everyone can age with dignity and respect. This is critical, whether it is caring for a loved one, getting the services and support you need to stay in your home or having access to health care and financial security. So, yes, I do see future opportunities to work together.

**MA:** Carmelita, in addition to the steps AARP has taken to become more aware of LGBT issues, I understand that AARP is working hard to address the needs of its LGBT employees and their domestic partners. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

**CT:** Yes, Michael, AARP is an association that is dedicated to a World Class workplace that is inclusive and respectful of everyone. We offer a progressive benefits and employment policies package that includes comprehensive domestic partner benefits and spousal equivalency policies. We're also proud of our inclusion of "sexual orientation" and "gender identity and expression" in AARP's non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies and our strong support for PriSM LGBT employee network.

## SAGE Summer Events

Join us for these exciting events this summer!  
A great way to meet in a relaxed and festive setting while supporting SAGE with your donations. Come have some fun in the sun.

June 14, 2008

16th Annual Fire Island Pines Celebration

5 – 7 PM

Fire Island Pines Community House  
Honoring William Hayden & Ron Perkov  
And

Kay & Charles Corso

Event Chair: Crayton Robey

Admission: \$100

Sponsoring tickets starting at \$350

July 26, 2008

SAGE Cherry Grove Celebration

4 – 6 PM

At the home of Jack Dowling (event chair)

251 Bayview Walk at East Walk

Donations to SAGE are welcome and appreciated.

August 2, 2008

SAGE Summer Sizzle

South Orange, New Jersey

5:30 – 8:30 PM

Join SAGE for a "summer sizzle" at the beautiful home of Casey Crawford and Matt Moore (co-hosts)

Additional host committee:

Jim Lomax, M.D. and Jeffrey Allison, Craig Lodewyks and Craig Hutchison, Roseanne Duruthy, Melora Love

Admission: \$125

Stay tuned for news about SAGE's Hamptons Celebration.

To purchase tickets for these events, please call our Special Events office at 212-741-2247 ext. 225 or visit [www.sageusa.org](http://www.sageusa.org)

## SAGE Brings LGBT Aging Issues Out in the Media

2008 is the year for LGBT aging issues to really come out of the closet, and SAGE is helping to make it happen. SAGE is working to expand media coverage of issues surrounding aging in our community, and we are striving to get the word out about the many services we provide to LGBT aging people. In early January, SAGE staff and members helped to shape a *New York Times* series on aging with HIV. The coming months will bring television programming specifically geared to older LGBTs, some of it featuring SAGE.

### In the Life, PBS

An upcoming segment on this PBS newsmagazine for LGBTs will focus on SAGE and will include interviews with SAGE members. The episode is slated to appear in July. For more information, visit [www.inthelife.org](http://www.inthelife.org).

### Living Out Loud, Logo

A television series for 45+ LGBT Americans, "Living Out Loud" is scheduled to air in the fall on Logo. SAGE is working closely with the network to shape the content of the program, which will follow a magazine format, covering arts, culture, current events, celebrities, and human interest stories. Comedienne Michele Balan and radio personality Joseph Montebello will host the program. Visit [logoonline.com](http://logoonline.com) for information on airing times.

# Even when Caregiving Spans Hundreds of Miles, SAGE Can Help

BY GARRISON PHILLIPS

Recent studies indicate that LGBTs may be more likely than their heterosexual siblings to serve as caregivers for family members, and some have to travel long distances to carry out their responsibilities. The story of SAGE volunteer Garrison Phillips, below, describes some of the challenges (and rewards) faced by a long-distance caregiver, and demonstrates how SAGE services can make a difference even for caregivers looking after family members hundreds of miles away. See the box for a description of SAGE's Caregiver Support services. — Ed.

I'm a long-time resident of New York City, but I have been returning to my hometown of Elkins, West Virginia, for over 50 years — first, to visit my family, and then to aid in the care of my two Great Aunts, my Grandmother, and now my Mother. I began my family caregiving in the mid-1980s when my maiden Great Aunt lost her vision due to macular degeneration. And then, five years later, her younger half-sister crashed into Alzheimers. I was driving monthly to visit one Aunt in a nursing

home in Annapolis, then to see the other Aunt in a home in Alexandria. Eventually I began driving to West Virginia as well to help in the care of my Grandmother.

At the time, I was working full-time and doing occasional acting gigs. I had the sole responsibility of caring for my first Aunt and played such a big role in assisting the others because my older brother and cousins simply did not respond to my requests for help. Without the aid of SAGE, I would not have

been able to handle it.

SAGE advised me on everything from what to look for in a nursing home to how to be a companion to an 85 year-old blind woman. They let me know what to expect from a person with Alzheimer's disease, and they offered suggestions on how best to deal with the problems I would likely face. And equally as important, SAGE held a discussion group for senior men who were acting as caregivers. I took advantage of this group, and was able to relate to others and to vent some of the difficulties I had encountered as a caregiver.

Caregiving for my Mother, Valentina, has been a different experience for many reasons, not the least of which is that she is still active, healthy and living independently at 101

## SAGE's Caregiver Support Services

SAGE's Caregiver Support Program offers support to both caregivers and care recipients. If you are caring for or receiving care from a partner, friend, family member or neighbor, you may be eligible for free services under SAGE's Caregiver Program.

SAGE's Caregiver Program Services include the following:

- Individual counseling
- Caregivers support group
- Benefits & entitlement assistance
- Friendly Visitor Program
- Limited subsidies for home health care and adult day care
- Guidance in choosing LGBT-affirming long-term care options
- Help in identifying appropriate home-based care services
- Temporary respite for caregivers

To find out if you qualify for these services, contact Catherine Thurston at SAGE at (212) 741-2247.



Garrison Phillips with his Mother, Valentina, who celebrated her 101st birthday on Valentine's Day with about 20 friends and neighbors. "Last year, on her 100th birthday, we hosted about 140 guests at her Odd Fellows Lodge Hall," says Garrison. "The local newspaper gave her front-page coverage, and the Secretary of State of West Virginia visited her, bearing greetings from the Governor." She has also been honored by several organizations which she has served as a volunteer in various ways, including the local West Virginia Homemakers, the Odd Fellows, the Rebekahs, and the local hospital.

years of age. She is in excellent physical condition and takes no medication other than vitamins, some fiber and Fosamax for bone density. She walks every day, attends meetings at her lodge hall and belongs to a monthly circle arranged through her church (friends drive her to these meetings). Even with short-term memory loss, she keeps an eye out for necessary repairs and maintenance in her home and collects rent from her four little rental bungalows.

Despite all of her activities, my Mother still needs some help, although she sometimes declines it. (Valentina is very stubborn, refuses to have a companion, and has asked Meals on Wheels to stop delivering food to her.) Fortunately, my step-sister, who lives close by, serves as the responsible caregiver. She calls Mother every day and takes her shopping as needed. And her granddaughter recently started handling her bank account online from over 75 miles away.

I visit Mother for about 10 days every month. My chores are cleaning the house, taking care of her flowers and gardens in

season, and helping in any other way that is needed. Basically, it gives my sister a break and it gives me the opportunity to spend time with my Mother, who still gets lonely despite all of her activities and sometimes forgets when she has had a visitor.

My family caregiving experiences have taught me that one of the most important aspects of caregiving is providing companionship. (This is something SAGE has addressed for 30 years by offering a Friendly Visitor Program.) I've also come to realize that spending time with my family members has benefitted me as much as it may have helped them. I have learned so much and am so grateful for the experiences.

I am honored to have been given the responsibility of caregiving which came to me as a surprise when I was in my 50's. I also appreciate being able to share what I have learned at senior centers and other groups throughout the city where SAGE asks me to speak.

Do I get tired? Of course I do; I'm 78 years old. But I had no idea that being a senior could be so exciting and so rewarding. ■

# Travel Opportunities Abound for LGBT Older People

## Some Things to Consider when Planning a Trip

BY MIKE NADEAU

LGBT-friendly travel opportunities have grown significantly in recent years, and much of the focus these days has been on LGBT baby boomers. Despite paying increasing attention to this segment of the LGBT community, the travel industry is not necessarily considering the particular concerns of LGBT seniors when designing travel packages. This means that seniors may need to do more research to determine which travel options best suit their interests and needs.

I spoke with Ed Salvato, editor-in-chief of *The Out Traveler* magazine, about gay-friendly travel options, as well as some ideas to consider when planning a trip. The following guidelines are based on our conversation.

**It's okay to opt for comfort and familiarity:** Every vacation need not be an adventure to exotic and undiscovered locales. Occasionally it's nice to return to vacation areas that feel like

a home away from home. According to Community Marketing, Inc. (CMI), a marketing research firm specializing in the gay and lesbian consumer market, several domestic vacation spots continue to attract the LGBT community year after year. These spots have long catered to the community and offer a unique combination of camaraderie, safety and excitement.

CMI's demographic survey indicates that lesbian seniors tend to return to Provincetown, San Diego and San Francisco while the top four vacation spots for gay male seniors are New York City, Fort Lauderdale, Palm Springs and Las Vegas.

**Consider a more active vacation:** While lounging poolside with a tropical drink is a wonderful way to spend your vacation time and dollars, a more physically challenging getaway may be an option for you. Travel organizers such as Out West Global Adventures ([outwestadventures.com](http://outwestadventures.com))

create travel packages that dare the adventurers among us.

This summer, for example, you could choose horseback riding at a 12,000-acre cattle ranch in the mountains of Montana or kayaking through the beautiful waters of British Columbia. According to OWGA, vacationers range in age from Gen-Y'ers to Seniors and are typically 70 percent single. One of the company's mottos is: "Your age isn't important; your attitude is." The company rates the trips from "easy" to "challenging" in terms of physical activity. The term "easy" is relative, so before making any plans ask what physical challenges await you.

**Don't let the men in the Speedos (or the women in bikinis) intimidate you:** One look at a glossy advertisement for a gay cruise and one is left with the impression that the median age is 27 and the maximum body fat index hovers in the single digits. Not so, says Salvato, who once told a friend, "You would have to pay me to go on a gay cruise." Six cruises later, Salvato is a believer.

Gay and Lesbian cruises have grown in popularity over the past several years and attract a wide age range of vacationers whose one common goal, "to have a good time," seems to discourage the exclusionary attitude that many expect.

Travel companies such as Atlantis ([atlantis-events.com](http://atlantis-events.com)), RSVP Vacations ([rsvpvacations.com](http://rsvpvacations.com)), and Olivia ([olivia.com](http://olivia.com)) offer a diverse range of destinations and activities. Travel to the Mexican Riviera with Billie Jean King on an Olivia cruise to celebrate women's accomplishments in sports and music. Or experience an Atlantis cruise that takes you from London to Barcelona by way of Paris and Lisbon.

Though the ages of the models in the ads are not indicative of all the passengers on board, destination may affect diversity, so ask

about age range. The Caribbean Fantasy cruise, sponsored by RSVP, may attract a younger range of passengers than their Alaskan Gold Rush cruise.

**Look for provocative alternatives in your own backyard:** It's not always necessary to travel thousands of miles to discover new vacation spots. Many are no more than a car or train ride away. Travel shows can be a great resource for discovering local vacation spots that you may not have considered.

Shannon McDonough, host of Canadian television's Bump travel show, recently provided viewers with an LGBT travel view of Boston and Northampton, Massachusetts. McDonough spent two episodes discovering LGBT highlights in cities that do not typically make the list of top LGBT vacation destinations. Opting for a nearby unfamiliar city could provide a stimulating travel experience without much of the hassle of distance traveling.

Whatever your idea of an optimal vacation, be sure to do your research. Visit LGBT travel sites such as [outtraveler.com](http://outtraveler.com), as well as other gay and lesbian web sites that include travel sections (such as [gay.com](http://gay.com) or [curvemag.com](http://curvemag.com)). If you opt for a destination not known for its friendliness to the LGBT community, use Google to find LGBT-friendly hotels or bed and breakfast establishments in the area ([purpleroofs.com](http://purpleroofs.com) is one helpful site). Or try to find a travel agent who specializes in LGBT travel.

If you're still at a loss for ideas about where to travel, you can catch one of a growing number of travel shows on TV, such as Logo Network's "Round Trip Ticket." You can also pick up *The Out Traveler* magazine or one of the Damron Gay and Lesbian travel guides, or consider attending the LGBT travel expo ([gaylifetravelexpo.com](http://gaylifetravelexpo.com)), which is held in major cities around the country. ■

## 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala and SAGE Awards

*Co-Chairs:*

Henry van Ameringen  
Dorothy Sander

October 14, 2008  
Metropolitan Pavilion  
125 West 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York City

Cocktail Reception 6PM  
Dinner & Awards Ceremony 7PM

*Silent Auction throughout the evening*



# Faces of SAGE



SAGE members, volunteers, staff and colleagues gathered for an open house in our new offices at 305 Seventh Avenue. The greatly expanded space increases our capacity for clinical services, gives us room to grow our staff, will feature a cyber center opening this year, and creates a more welcoming reception area for seniors.

Pictured clockwise from left: Sandy Kern; Emma DeVito from Village Care; Howard Sedlitz; Michael Adams flanked by SAGE Board Co-Chairs Lawrence Chanen and Judith Turkel; Jerry Thompkins; Ray Razeed; Board Member Carol Garcia (center).

Photos courtesy of Mark Golebioski and SAGE



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