



Web Site: <http://www.owlsf.org>

January - February 2010

Email: [owlsanfran@juno.com](mailto:owlsanfran@juno.com)

OWL is the ONLY national membership organization to focus exclusively on critical issues facing women as they age. We work together to improve the status and quality of life for midlife and older women through national, state and local networks.

## **OWL SF Planning Meeting for 2010**

**January 23, 2010**

**10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**Mechanics Institute, 57 Post Street, 4th Floor**  
(1/3 block from Market & Montgomery BART/MUNI)

**Lunch provided**

**RSVP necessary**

**Call OWL office to leave message: 989-4422**

At this very important meeting, we develop priorities, plans, and programs for the coming year. It is essential to have your input – what directions do YOU want OWL to take in this coming year?

We hope to encourage as many of you as possible to attend. In addition to providing your program input, enjoy lunch with other OWL SF members. In order to be sure there's enough lunch for everyone, you must RSVP.

Last year's successful planning meeting was organized by professional facilitator and OWL, Judi Sahagen, and she has agreed to assist us again this year.

Please join us. We need your ideas and want your company! Members and guests interested in OWL are welcome.

## New OWL SF Board Members Elected

The following new members were elected to the OWL SF Board at the December Holiday party and general meeting .

**Carole Isaacs**, BA in Art, MS in Counseling, has been involved in neighborhood politics for many years. She worked at City Hall as Special Assistant to Mayor Willie L. Brown and Deputy Director of the San Francisco Film Commission and is now a realtor.

**Meryl Glass**, BA, MA in ECE (early childhood education) worked in the field of education for over 40 years. Recently retired, she has been active in organizations involving advocacy for early childhood, early childhood teachers, child care issues and programs and international exchange of health and social service professionals. She was an OWL in the 1980's and has returned to be co-editor of the Newsletter.

**Melanie Grossman**, MSW and PhD in Social Work, is presently working at UCSF's Institute for Health and Aging. She's a longtime member of OWL, joining when she moved to San Francisco from the East Coast over 10 years ago.

**Margaret Lew**, BA in Political Science and MLS, worked for several years in the municipal financing world, then as a free-lance computer consultant and editor. She manages two web sites devoted to genealogy. New OWL member and co-editor of the Newsletter.

**Sheila Malkind**, MA Clinical Psychology and MPH (public health), is Director of the Legacy Film Series ([www.legacyfilmseries.com](http://www.legacyfilmseries.com)), presenting programs that celebrate older adults, and Curator, International Film Festival on Aging presented February 2009. An OWL since 1991 and President of the OWL Chicago NE chapter, she immediately joined the San Francisco chapter when she moved here in 2006.

**Helene Peckerman**, (Bio in the next issue)

**Rachel Rassen**, (Bio in the next issue)

### New Officers elected at the January Board Meeting

<b>President</b>	<b>Kathie Piccagli</b>
<b>Co-Vice Presidents</b>	<b>Amy Hittner</b>
	<b>Jonee Levy</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Jane Swinerton</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Esther Wong</b>



Newsletter editors Meryl Glass and Margaret Lew.  
photo by Jonee Levy

**Do you have something to say?** Write to the editors at: [merylglass@sbcglobal.net](mailto:merylglass@sbcglobal.net) or [mclew@pacbell.net](mailto:mclew@pacbell.net) or c/o the OWL office, 870 Market Street #805, San Francisco, CA 94102.

**Kathie Piccagli, President**  
E-mail: [kpiccagli@gmail.com](mailto:kpiccagli@gmail.com)  
**Amy Hittner, VP**  
**Jonee Levy, VP**  
**Jane Swinerton, Secretary**  
**Esther Wong, Treasurer**  
**Meryl Glass**  
**Melanie Grossman**  
**Lorraine Honig**  
**Carole Isaacs**  
**Margaret Carlson Lew**

**Nan McGuire**  
**Sheila Malkind**  
**Helene Peckerman**  
**Rachel Rassen**  
**Judi Sahagen**  
**Marcia Soffer**  
**Allyson Washburn**

Newsletter- Co-Editors:  
Margaret Lew  
Meryl Glass

**SF OWL Board meetings:** first Monday of the month, 3:30-5:30 pm, 870 Market St.  
**Phone:** (415) 989-4422  
**Email:** [owlsanfran@juno.com](mailto:owlsanfran@juno.com)  
**Web:** [www.owlsf.org](http://www.owlsf.org)  
**Mail:** 870 Market St., Room 905, San Francisco, CA 94102

## Advocacy Update, Elder Justice

For the past several years, OWL SF has spent some time at each monthly meeting writing advocacy letters/postcards about some issue relevant to the organization. At our November 2009 general meeting and at the December holiday party, we sent postcards to Senators Feinstein and Boxer, asking them to support the inclusion of the Elder Justice Act in the crafting of the health care bill.

The Elder Justice Act would provide important new resources for the prevention of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. It was included in the Senate health care reform bill, the first time the full bill ever passed the full Senate. But it was not included in the final House bill. Its fate will be decided when Congress reconvenes to finalize the health care bill to be signed by President Obama.

Our advocacy now should be directed to the House leadership, to ensure that the Elder Justice Act, which is so vital to seniors, be included in the final health care bill.

If you have any issues you think OWL SF should be supporting, please contact our Owl President and/or newsletter editors who will refer them to the board.

—**Eunice Rosenberg**  
outgoing Advocacy Chair

*Note from the editors:*

*Thank you so much to Eunice for a spirited, active, never flagging chairwomanship! And with Eunice we want to stress again the call for advocacy postcard writing at the general meetings. Postcards and letters really do make a difference.*

## It's Not Too Late to Donate!

In past years, you have generously responded to our end-of-year appeals. Some members do so before December 31st, others in the New Year. Either way, your donation is tax deductible; just in different years' tax returns. And your donation is truly appreciated and needed.

This time around, we have made it possible for you to donate appreciated stock rather than send a check, if you so desire. The advantage of donating stock is that you don't end up paying capital gains on the appreciated stock were you to sell it, an attractive feature if you've held the stock for a long time. And in addition, you get to take the full amount of the donation as a tax deduction. Once your stock is transferred, it is sold by our transfer agent, and the cash is deposited for our use.

Should you decide to make such a donation in the future, your broker will know how to start the process. You need to call the OWL office for stock donation transfer instructions that you must provide your broker, so that the transaction can be completed.

I decided to make my donation this year in this manner. Setting up the "stock transfer account" for OWL SF was quite a bureaucratic nightmare. However, the deed is done, and yours truly survived the process. I hope others will avail themselves of this opportunity now, or in the future.

—**Nan McGuire**

*Note from the editors:*

*Many thanks to Nan for this Herculean effort! We need the income! And if you can't do stocks, you can still write a check!*

### Welcome to NEW MEMBERS:

**Myrna Elgie**  
**Florence Edelman**  
**Faith Petric**  
**Juliet Rothman**  
**Barbara Champion**

#### **Corrections:**

The Golden Owl Award was presented at the October 2-4 OWL Annual Meeting in Burlingame to Carolyn Negrette from the Sacramento Area. Belated congratulations to Carolyn from OWL SF!

## February General Meeting Save the Date Taking Control—Planning for the Future

February 20th, 10 a.m. to Noon. Location to be announced (contact OWL office or web site)

Catharine Pinkas offers an update to her popular presentation of March 2009 for women who want to create a personal plan for their economic future.

An Economic Update: Now that the crisis is easing what do midlife and older women need to do next?

Join us for an update and discussion of how to move forward and plan for our financial security.

Pinkas is an experienced financial advisor serving individuals and small business owners. She also teaches at UC Berkeley Extension and the University of San Francisco. She is a past president of our OWL chapter!

Refreshments will be served. Pre-registration is required; contact OWL office or web site for details.

## First Year of Peer Groups A Great Success

2009 saw the creation of two successful Peer Groups to fulfill a need expressed at last January's planning meeting. Peer Groups NE (northeast) and CENTRAL were formed. These groups provide small interactive settings for discussion, entertainment, recreation and friendship. The groups meet monthly and enjoy a variety of activities and outings: city walks, luncheons, movies, play readings, and other lively interactions.

CENTRAL group usually meets on the first Sunday of the month. Their current outing is January 10th, a visit to the SF Jewish Museum, followed by refreshments and discussion.

NE usually meets the third Monday of the month, at the home of one of its members. However, last month they met at the Carlisle, a residence for both active seniors and those who need help with daily living activities. The Carlisle treated the group to a holiday lunch in their dining room, and gave a tour of available units. For more information about the Carlisle, call Nan McGuire at 673-7074.

Both groups always welcome new members, new connections, new friendships and new ideas.

For further information about Peer Groups, contact Marcia Soffer at 661-8019, [mksoffer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mksoffer@sbcglobal.net), or Nan McGuire at 673-7074, [nanmc@jimstevens.com](mailto:nanmc@jimstevens.com).

## OWL National Annual Meeting in Washington, DC

On Oct. 30th, OWL National held their annual meeting in Washington, DC. Attendance by grassroots members was encouraged, and there were many OWLs from across the country. From California, in addition to Shirley Harlan and me, who are National Board members, we had the following chapter members: Jonee Levy from San Francisco, Roberta Battle from Sacramento, and Mary Lembke from Ohlone/East Bay.

The meeting started off with welcomes and speakers. I was particularly interested in Bob Blancato, National Coordinator of the Elder Justice Coalition, because I'm finally beginning to get a handle on the Elder Justice issue. It was the subject of the excellent Mother's Day report in 2009 and I am getting interested in the issue "locally" as well as nationally.

The highlight of the meeting – for all of us, I think – was meeting with our legislators to advocate for issues about health reform. All of our California Senators and Speaker Pelosi advocate reform, but we had a chance to discuss some of the lesser discussed aspects of the bills before Congress, such as age rating and the inclusion of a "state option". Shirley and I met with staff in Senator Boxer's office; Jonee and Roberta met with staff in Senator Feinstein's office; and Natale, Ashley and Donna met with Speaker Pelosi's staff.

—*Kathie Piccagli*



Jonee Levy at OWL National Annual Meeting.  
Photo from OWL National web site.

## November 21st General Meeting — California Constitutional Convention?

When Jonee Levy announced that our scheduled speaker Steven Hill was unable to participate due to an unexpected family emergency, our ever resilient OWL attendees reorganized the meeting into an information sharing round table on the topic: *A California Constitutional Convention: a means to address the state's many problems?*

Allyson Washburn, SF OWL President, urged those in attendance with information to share to participate. Several non-OWL members were among the group of about thirty in attendance, attracted by the topic, concerned, and interested in participation in the movement toward a constitutional convention and new state constitution.

Information shared included the fact that the State of California is currently operating with a constitution adopted in 1879 that now includes over 500 amendments.

***As a measure of complexity, the California Constitution with amendments requires 165 pages while the US Constitution written in 1787 with 28 amendments requires only 29 pages.***

Discussion included the ways that a constitutional convention can be called and how delegates are chosen. Several groups are at work on calling for a constitutional convention: California Forward and Repair California. Both these groups are looking to overturn the two-thirds majority vote for taxation funding, and they see our current, very serious budget woes, the dismal outlook for public education and state-supported health care and other critical problems, directly linked to the required two-thirds vote. There is also a growing perception by the general public that our current system is not working.

The question was asked: how do OWL SF and OWL CA fit into this push toward reform and a new state constitution? It was suggested that we maintain and strengthen linkages with organizations such as the Commission on Aging as a way to stay current, and that we take this topic up again in the new year with an expert panel of speakers.

### **Don't Miss Celebrating Art With Elders!**

The SF Public Library, Main Branch, from January 9th through February 28th, is presenting an exhibit entitled *Celebrating Art with Elders*. This is an exhibit of approximately 90 artworks by African-American, Asian, Filipino, American Indian, Hispanic and Caucasian seniors who have found fresh meaning in life, and a new way of expressing themselves through watercolor, acrylics, oil pastels, crayon, pen and ink, pencil, and collage.

This exhibit is a joint presentation by the SF Public Library and the San Francisco-based, nonprofit ELDERGIVERS organization, which is committed to reconnecting the isolated elderly with our communities. For more information about ELDERGIVERS, visit <http://www.eldergiver.org/>

***Youth is the gift of nature, but age is a work of art.***  
—Polish proverb

### **And Don't Miss Films on Artists, Art Lovers, and Aging – February 20th!**

As part of the exhibit, *Better with Age*, there will be a screening of three documentary films on artists, art lovers, and aging, on Saturday February 20th at 2 p.m. in the Koret Auditorium, Lower Level, Main Library.

The films to be shown are *Bella Bella*, profiling Bay Area artist Bella Feldman, *Shadow & Light*, focusing on the art of San Franciscan Elaine Badgley, and *Smitten*, the story of art collector Rene di Rosa.

Our own OWL Sheila Malkind, Director of the Legacy Film Series, will be moderating a panel discussion following the films. So come early and enjoy the art exhibit, or after the Pinkas workshop and enjoy this special and topical film event.

There is also a newly reopened café in the lower level adjacent to the exhibit and auditorium.

For more information contact Sheila Malkind at: [smalkind@sbcglobal.net](mailto:smalkind@sbcglobal.net), <http://www.legacyfilm-series.com/index.html>

### ***Sign of Aging***

*Where have all the hot flashes gone?  
Now my forehead is barren of sweat  
And wrinkles have settled in,  
no hot flashes to wash away.  
Where have all the hot flashes gone?  
Now my forehead is barren  
of sweat.*

—**Sally Love Saunders**  
10/20/09

### **A New Documentary: *What's the Matter with Kansas?***

A new documentary is in town: *What's the Matter with Kansas?* This film examines how “wedge issues,” such as abortion and a woman’s right to choose, continue to fuel the conservative movement in America. It is a must-see for anyone interested in the current state of progressive politics, and how those politics are being challenged by the rise of conservatism. This thoughtful and timely film presentation could provide OWL with plenty of opportunities for discussion, education, and outreach!

The film is based on the New York Times best-seller by Thomas Frank, *What's the Matter with Kansas?* Frank wrote about the ascendancy of conservatism and how conservative political strategists have won the hearts and minds of so many Americans.

Director Joe Winston (*The Burning Man Festival*) follows the lives of two conservative Kansas families. Their fortunes suddenly and precipitously decline; their candidates lose elections; their church splinters over its controversial pastor, moves to an amusement park, and when that fails, becomes a makeshift congregation at a Best Western Motel. Meanwhile, an idealistic Kansas farmer revives the state’s formerly progressive tradition, and takes his message to Washington, D.C. Also of note is the film’s coverage of recently slain Kansas abortion provider Dr. George Tiller and his adversaries in the pro-life movement.

The film’s running time is 90 minutes and is not rated.

—**Meryl Glass**

### **Public Health Concerns Re: Seniors**

Emergency departments (ED) treated more than 2 million seniors for broken bones, head wounds, cuts and other injuries caused by falls in 2006 (the latest statistics). This costs hospitals \$7 Billion for the emergency and subsequent inpatient care. Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries among Americans 65 and older. These costs are paid mainly through Medicare and are expected to increase as the population ages. This data is from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and further reveals that: One in ten emergency visits by seniors was for fall-related injuries; Of the seniors who went to the ED due to falls, 41% had fractures of an upper extremity or a hip. These often lead to long-term disabilities and greatly increased medical expense.  
[www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb80.pdf](http://www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb80.pdf)

### ***Q to Newsletter Readers: Is it time for an OWL SF Fall Prevention program? Who would like to work on this?***

Want to know if the shampoo or hand lotion you use everyday contains ingredients that are hazardous to your health? The California Department of Public Health has launched a new database that will allow people to find out if personal care products they use contain harmful chemicals. The product of a 2005 law championed by the Breast Cancer Fund, the California Safe Cosmetics Program requires cosmetics manufacturers to report to the state any ingredient in products sold in California that causes cancer or reproductive harm such as birth defects. Manufacturers had until December 15<sup>th</sup> to report toxic ingredients to the state, and consumers will be able to view the data online in a few months. For more information, go to [www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cosmetics](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cosmetics).

**From: CPHA-N E-Mailer, December 09 (California Public Health Association-North).**

—*submitted by Sheila Malkind*

### **2010 Poetry Workshops with poet and OWL Sally Saunders**

Dear Live Poets,  
The Cultural Integration Fellowship invites us to return in 2010!! The following dates have been set - all at 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Feb. 6, Mar. 20, June 12, July 10, Aug. 14, Sep. 11, Oct. 2, Nov. 13. And, we will meet January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at the new Richmond Library from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The address is 351 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Clement in San Francisco. I am looking forward to seeing as many of you who can attend.

—*With warmth, Sally Love Saunders*

## CALENDAR

For a complete and current listing see the OWL web site: [www.owlsf.org](http://www.owlsf.org) (click Calendar)

Jan 23 Saturday — **OWL General Meeting**, Planning for 2010 (see front cover)

Feb 1 Monday — **OWL Board Meeting**, 870 Market, 3:30–5:30 pm  
(check OWL web site for room number or call office 989-4422)

Feb 20 Saturday — **OWL General Meeting**, Financial Planning with Catherine Pinkas (see article, page 4)

Feb 20 Saturday — Films on Artists, Art Lovers and Aging, SF Public Library, 2:00 pm (see article page 5)

### “Smart Travel” Workshop for Older Adults

A workshop on *How to Travel better, Cheaper and Smarter* will be given by Nick Maffei on Wednesday January 13th, 12:00 to 3:15 p.m. at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), S F State Downtown Campus, 835 Market St., 6th floor. This workshop is one in a series organized by the Aging Explorers, members of OLLI.

Nick Maffei will discuss how computer technology has changed today’s travel landscape, and how to use the internet to travel better and smarter. He will also cover travel web sites that provide us free information, sites that are not useful, and those that can enrich the travel experience. He will focus on affordable travel for seniors and for singles, and for those who wish to experience “learning” vacations. His presentation is partially based on Arthur Frommer’s budget guide *How to Travel Better, Cheaper and Smarter*.

This workshop is free for OLLI members, and \$10 or sliding scale for nonmembers. For more information contact Earl Frick at Osher, phone 415-285-0430, or email him at [earlfrick@hotmail.com](mailto:earlfrick@hotmail.com)



Enjoying the OWL Holiday party,  
Sheila Malkind and Helen Hansma.  
Photo courtesy of Helen Hansma.

### FREE Lifelong Learning Opportunities in San Francisco

Hope Levy, Lifelong Learning Specialist, is offering two free programs at the San Francisco Public Library:

#### MENTAL AEROBICS

Exercise your brain in fun, challenging and creative ways, and improve your cognitive vitality and your memory. This is a FREE non-credit class through City College San Francisco’s Older Adults Department. Mondays, January 25 - May 24, 2010, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. join anytime, location: San Francisco Main Public Library, register on site.

#### CREATIVE WAYS TO TELL YOUR LIFE STORY

Review your life by exploring the past, examining the present, and planning for the future. This hands-on workshop will include samples of memoir projects, a brainstorming session, and individual and group activities.

Bring pens, pencils and paper. Workshop is limited to 25 people. Thursday, January 21, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. Location: Richmond/Senator Milton Marks Branch, 351 9th Ave. (near Clement), registration: call (415)355-5600

For other programs offered by Hope Levy through There’s Always Hope, visit her web site, [www.TheresAlwaysHopeConsulting.com](http://www.TheresAlwaysHopeConsulting.com). ph: 415.931.8679

YES! I WANT TO JOIN OWL!

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State ZIP

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual dues of \$50 are recommended: half this amount goes to OWL-National, \$10 goes to OWL-CA, and \$15 are retained by the chapter. When you pay dues to the San Francisco Chapter, you automatically become a member at all levels –National, California and San Francisco. (If you are unable to pay the recommended amount, OWL has established a sliding fee scale from \$50 –\$5.) Members receive SF OWL bimonthly, OWL CA quarterly and National OWL Observer quarterly newsletters.

Make a check out to and mail to:  
OWL, SF Chapter  
870 Market Street, Room 905  
San Francisco, CA 94102

OWL  
San Francisco Chapter  
870 Market Street, #905  
San Francisco, CA 94102

## The Founding of OWL

OWL was born in 1980 in Des Moines, Iowa, during one of the pre-conferences held around the county in preparation for the third White House Conference on Aging, which was held in 1981 in Washington, DC. At the pre-conference in Des Moines, TISH SOMMERS noted that little attention was being paid to the ways in which aging was different for women. She called for a special “ad hoc” meeting to discuss this concern. OWL has been a voice for the special concerns of midlife and older women ever since.

Comments or questions? Please contact the SF OWL Office at (415) 989-4422; FAX: (415) 989-4050; e-mail: [owlsanfran@juno.com](mailto:owlsanfran@juno.com)  
Office hours: Monday 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The date on your mailing label is the date your membership expires.

# **January Planning Meeting**

**Saturday, January 23, 2010**

**10:00am to 2:30pm**

**Mechanics Institute, 57 Post Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

The annual planning meeting will assist the OWL Board in determining the types of programs and activities which can most benefit the entire membership. This meeting will also be used to better define and strengthen the committee structure.

OWL will provide a catered lunch. All members are urged to participate and come with unique ideas. We need your input! Please RSVP to the OWL office (989-4422) in order to ensure there is lunch for everyone.

Plan for the day:

## Morning

Registration and coffee.

Building on an overall theme for OWL-SF in 2010, focus on programs and activities through structured brainstorming. What programs are of most interest to you? How many programs should there be on any given topic? Your input is essential to making OWL successful in 2010.

## Lunch

Catered lunch provided by OWL – enjoy the opportunity to socialize with other OWL-SF members.

## Afternoon

Focus on committees, membership outreach, and peer groups.

There will be a discussion of each current committee led by the chairperson followed by brainstorming on how to improve the committees.

Membership outreach is a critical issue for OWL. We will discuss how to keep current members engaged and to reach out for new members.

Peer groups were established in 2009. This very successful activity will be reviewed and input sought on how to expand in 2010.

Please plan on attending. We want your company and your good ideas!