



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

*April - June 2019*

*Email:* [owlsf@owlsf.org](mailto:owlsf@owlsf.org)

OWL focuses 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 presents**

## **Water And Food Are Essential For Life**

**How much do we know about where our food and water come from or, what chemicals might be found in them?**

**What legislation is currently in process that will affect them, thereby affecting us?**

**Elizabeth Solorio**, a 6 year member of **Food and Water Watch**, will address these and other topics concerning our food and water

**When: Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 10am to Noon**

**Where: Community Room, Northern Police Station**

**1125 Fillmore Street at Turk**

Muni #5, 22, 31 & 38 (4 block walk)  
(no parking in the police parking lot)

All Welcome  
Wheelchair Accessible

**OWL SF \* 870 Market Street, #905, San Francisco, Ca. 94102**  
**Phone 415-712-1695 \* Web site: [www.owlsf.org](http://www.owlsf.org)**

## Reflections on Comforting Those Who Mourn

Standing near a grieving widow after church, I heard a well-meaning woman make perhaps the least helpful, but so often used remark one can direct to a person who is so recently bereft. “How are you doing?” What, really, does the questioner expect in answer to that question? Most of us, when on the receiving end of such a question automatically respond “I’m doing okay” or something like that. This set me to thinking again about comforting those who mourn. Some of this is based on my personal experiences of mourning and some on experiences as a friend and/or pastor of a mourner.



### Some Don'ts:

Ask how the person is doing unless you are truly prepared to listen to an honest response and are in a place at a time when that could occur possibly including the shedding of tears.

Offer platitudes such as “he’s at peace now” or “she’s in a better place.”

Compare this person’s experience with your own previous experience.

Ask if the mourner believes there is another life after this one or talk as if you assume that, of course, s/he believes that.

Tell the mourner “it is time to move on” or say “aren’t you past that yet?”

### Some Possible Do's:

Go to the memorial service or funeral. A large number of people came to my husband’s memorial and I saw and appreciated every one of them. Each one mattered and became part of my comfort.

Send a card or brief note expressing your condolences but avoiding platitudes.

Make a memorial gift as indicated in the death announcement. It helps.

Remember that grief does not end with the end of the service. It may go on for a long time, exacerbated by loneliness. Reach out to the mourner with something specific – brunch, a walk along the beach, a movie or performance invitation, etc. Do this for months ahead.

Understand that grief brings mixed feelings of anger, sadness, relief, fear, guilt, remorse, regret and more. Listen without judgment. Grief also brings insomnia, depression, difficulty concentrating or making decisions. Offer specific help as you are able, such as weeding the garden or getting papers in order or walking the dog (preferably along with the mourner, as exercise is also healing), or minding the children or sitting with another person for whom the mourner is the caregiver, etc. **Listen.** You will receive clues for what is needed.

Listen. Listen. Listen. Even if you have already heard the story. Hear it again. A part of healing is telling the story until it no longer needs to be told.

*Note to OWL members:*

If you have other thoughts about this complex topic, please send them to Margaret for a future newsletter.

—*Glenda Hope*

**Board Members**  
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Margaret Lew, Editor

**Political Advocacy Committee**  
Glenda Hope  
Melanie Grossman  
Co-Chairwomen

**OWL SF Board meetings:** first  
Monday of the month, 4:00-6:00 pm,  
870 Market St.  
**Phone:** (415) 712-1695  
**Email:** [owlsf@owlsf.org](mailto:owlsf@owlsf.org)  
**Web:** [www.owlsf.org](http://www.owlsf.org)  
**Mail:** 870 Market St., Room 905,  
San Francisco, CA 94102

## CARA Update

### Upcoming Programs

You are invited to “Your Rights in a Hospital” forum, which CARA is co-sponsoring with Senior and Disability Action (SDA) and the Community Living Campaign. (see details on page 5)

We will also have two other programs this spring. One will be on why seniors should support the Schools & Communities First Campaign, closing the corporate loophole written into Prop 13. Another will be Medicare for All – A Senior Perspective. We understand that change can be scary to retirees, and certainly corporations benefiting from Prop 13 are using scare tactics to get seniors to resist a change in Prop 13. We need to explain how the changes would really impact the seniors.

### Priority Bills

We also need your support and your stories for SB 512, a Pan/Kalra bill on Long-Term Support Services (LTSS). CARA may make this bill a priority because there are a lot of us faced with the problem of having too much income to qualify for subsidized home care but not enough money to pay for it on our own--whether it's for ourselves or another family member.

But to make our case compelling we need stories from people who have faced this dilemma. If you have such a story, please let me know ASAP because SB 512 is getting scheduled for a hearing.

### Other bills CARA is supporting, opposing, or just watching.

We are fully supporting HR 1384, Medicare for All. As of March 14 113 have signed on to this federal bill. Nancy Pelosi is not one who has, however, so we urge you to call her to co-author and get the bill scheduled for a hearing. This is the national level, and even though we know that President Trump isn't going to sign such a bill, we need to make it a major campaign issue in 2020. As for California's state version of this bill, Governor Newsom said he wanted to take charge of this and hold hearings on systems, so we're asking him to get on with this.

We also discussed SB 228, introduced by Hannah-Beth Jackson, to appoint an “aging czar.” It directs the Governor to appoint an Aging Czar and a 15-member Aging Task Force to work with representatives from impacted state departments and with stakeholders to identify the policies and priorities that need to be implemented in California to prepare for the aging of its population and to develop a master plan for aging.

The White House's proposal for a revised North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that would grant new rights for pharmaceutical companies to lock in high prices was discussed. We've been asked to contact Nancy Pelosi to oppose this. There's now a letter circulating Congress that demands the removal of language in this NAFTA 2.0 that gives too much power to Big Pharma. Among the groups opposing the provisions are Doctors without Borders, Consumer

Reports, the Alliance for Retired Americans, the American Medical Student Association, the AFL-CIO, Public Citizen, and Oxfam. Now we need our legislators to speak out against it.

### Funding drive for 2019

CARA really needs to have a drive for donations because we will not have the funding that it had the past two years, when Long's Drug formed a foundation and provided \$125,000 to CARA. Long's has been sold to CVS. Now each of 17 CAT groups within CARA needs to come up with \$3,000 for 2019.

We discussed joining the garage sale held every August in Bernal Heights, which means getting things like furniture over to the home of Jodi Reid, who lives in that area, pricing the goods, and working shifts. We also liked the idea of selling home-baked goods at this garage sale. (Apparently, they don't want our used clothes, which is too bad because I was about to part with clothes I wore in the 1980's, when I got them from GoodWill.)

We also plan to have a “stay at home tea” making it possible for supporters to make a donation while staying in the comfort of their own home on May 12, 2019. CARA supporters provide the donation, and CARA provides the tea bag for this designated day! We now have our snazzy tea bags for your stay-at-home tea party. Please let me know if you would like to make a donation in exchange for the chance to stay at home and sip this fine “Newman's Own 100% Profits to Charity Organic Green Tea” or “Keep Calm Brew Tea.” Otherwise, I'll have to hunt you down.

—*Tina Martin*

## 2019 Disability and Senior Capitol Action Day in Sacramento May 23<sup>rd</sup>

Each year CARA has a Lobby Day to talk to legislators and their staffs about several important bills for the senior and disability community. In alternate years lobby day is local or in Sacramento. This year we are joining with Disability Action Network in Sacramento; the program will include a Resource Fair, a rally, and meeting with legislators to lobby on key disability and aging issues. Not only is this day a lot of fun and very interesting and informative, a free lunch is provided to participants and transportation at no cost is available.

Reserve your place on the bus, if you haven't already, by calling 510-663-4086. (The bus pick-up point is the San Francisco Main Library at Larkin and Fulton, so it's convenient.) Hope to see you there!

—*Kathie Piccagli*



### Save the Date — October 22-23 CARA's Annual Convention

More information in next newsletter, but for now, put it on your calendar.

## California Senior Legislature

OWL's March 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting was filled with informative news on legislation important to seniors with not only Jodi Reid from CARA telling us about the legislation they are supporting, but also Anne Warren with the California Senior Legislature (CSL) giving a report on their group which is less well-known to most of our members. Begun in 1981, CSL has a unique approach to choosing legislation to help seniors and people with disabilities with housing, elder abuse, healthcare and many more areas. As their name implies, they mirror the actual state of CA legislature, with 80 senior assembly members and 40 senior senate members elected to represent CA's senior population. They meet each October in Sacramento to convene a model legislative session in the chambers and hearing rooms of the State Capitol. The CSL members participate in hearing testimony, debating issues, and voting to approve or disapprove up to 120 legislative proposals, one per member. They have succeeded in getting over 200 bills signed into law since their beginnings.

Anne Warren, a Senior Assembly Member and Chair of CSL's Legislative Committee, told us about the top ten State legislative proposals and two Federal proposals chosen in 2019, that include areas of transportation access, prescription drug labeling, elder abuse, affordable housing, homeless count, and more at the State level and two related to Medicare at the Federal level. As of our meeting, nine of the State bills have legislative sponsors. Now they need OWL and others to learn about these bills and advocate for them through Alerts to members, official letters of support to legislators, and even going to the Capitol on Senior Rally Day, May 7. The OWL-SF Political Advocacy Committee will be looking at these bills and welcomes other OWL members to join us. Anne wanted us to know that the CSL is only supported through donations and urged those of us who fill out a State 540 form to make a contribution on the form to the Senior Citizen Advocacy Voluntary Contribution Fund, Code 438. That is their main source of support. Please see more information about CSL and all ten of their legislative proposals for 2019 at [www.4csl.org](http://www.4csl.org).

—*Betty Traynor, OWL PAC member*

## Join OWL's PAC: Make an Impact

OWL's Political Advocacy Committee is welcoming new members. There is so much to know and to do regarding political issues which especially affect midlife and older women, as well as those affecting everyone such as protecting our planet. The Committee meets once a month to discuss items the members feel are of major concern and possible action OWL may take. The decisions are brought to the Board for farther for consideration and implementation. Meetings are tentatively scheduled for the third Monday of every month, 1-3 PM in the OWL office at 870 Market Street, Room 905. Call Melanie Grossman (415 923 0850) or Glenda Hope (415 585 4636) for more details and to confirm meeting time.

—*Glenda Hope*



Anne Warren Senior Assembly Member and Chair of CSL's Legislative Committee and Glenda Hope. Photo by Tina Martin



Jodie Reid presented CARA's Legislative priorities to OWL at the March membership meeting. Photo by Tina Martin

## Cara's 2019 Priority Bills

**SB 228 Jackson – Master Plan on Aging**  
(See details on page 3 CARA Update)

**SB 512 Pan/Kalra – Long Term Support Services**  
Lays Groundwork to establish subsidies to help middle-income seniors and people with disabilities, who do not qualify for Medi-CAL or ISHH, buy long term support services, including home care.

**AB 1434 Kalra – Increasing SSI/SSP grants and COLA**

Reinstates the SSI/SSP COLA in 2020, bring monthly payments to 100% 2019 poverty level. An incremental step toward full restoration of recession-era cuts to the SSI/SSP program which awards monthly grants to seniors and disabled adults who get no or minimal Social Security benefits.

## Legislative Information Resources

California Legislative Information  
<https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov>

Federal Legislation  
<https://www.Congress.gov>

League of Women Voters San Francisco  
<https://lwvsf.org>

California Alliance of Retired Americans (CARA)  
[www.californiaalliance.org](http://www.californiaalliance.org)

### Save the Date

#### OWL SF April Monthly Meeting

### Water and Food Are Essential For Life

How much do we know about where our food and water come from or what chemicals might be found in them? what legislation is currently in process that will affect them, thereby affecting us? Elizabeth Solorio, a 6 year member of Food and Water Watch, will address these and other topics concerning our food and water.

We have had speakers from this organization come to us in the past and found their presentations to be eye-opening. What, for instance, do you understand about the “1 tunnel or 2” debates concerning how water (and what water) is to be conveyed from Northern California to Southern California? Why should we care? What can we do? Several California counties with oil reserves have voted to ban fracking in their counties. But there are other places where fracking is being done as well as continued drilling for oil and natural gas. Why wouldn't Jerry Brown ban fracking? Is this truly a concern and, if so, what can we do about it?

Join us to become informed and enlivened by Liz Solorio and by OWL members

**Where: Community Room, Northern Police Station 1125 Fillmore Street at Turk**

**When: April 27<sup>th</sup> at 10am - Noon**

You can learn more about this remarkable organization by going to Food and Water Watch at: <http://www.fwaction.org>

### Hospital Stay? Know Your Rights

Do you have questions: Who will help you when you are taken to the hospital?

Coming out of surgery, will you have decisions to make? What about insurance, care instructions, observation status or hospital admission and safe discharge planning? Learn how many people taken to the hospital become victims of the system and how you and your caregiver can avoid serious pitfalls. Then, get started on your action plan. Learn about the Vial of Life Program, Advanced Directives, and more.

On Thursday, April 11th, a workshop will be held from 1:00 to 3:00pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church, MLK Room, 1187 Franklin Street, San Francisco, to empower those who want to protect themselves, their loved ones or patients when taken to the hospital. The workshop is co-sponsored by Community Living Campaign, Senior & Disability Action and California Alliance for Retired Americans. Admission is free and refreshments will be provided. RSVP to Michael at 415-215-7575 or David 408-939-5149

### Loneliness & Brain Health An Open Conversation

How does loneliness affect our brain health and our overall health? An open conversation was held at St. Anne of the Sunset on March 13<sup>th</sup> by OWL Board President Glenda Hope, founding member of Community Connectors who coordinates local activities to foster intergenerational connection, with Dr. Sergio Lanata, MD, MS, Assistant Professor in Neurology at University of California San Francisco (UCSF) Memory and Aging Center and Phaedra Bell, PhD, Atlantic Fellow for Equity in Brain Health, Global Brain Health Institute, UCSF. A participant remarked that San Francisco is the city with the highest percentage of seniors living alone, but Sergio made the valid point that living alone doesn't mean living lonely. Finding ways to stay connected were suggested and promoted by the presence of several organizations, including OWL SF whose representatives manned tables with information encouraging participation. Some participants were: The Community Living Campaign, Cayuga-Connectors, UCSF Memory Care, Covia, Institute on Aging and Little Brothers. Thanks are also due to OWL volunteers Tina Martin and Sy Russell whose slide-show of photos from monthly meetings was a feature on our table of information.

### Fight that Other “Ism”

Josh Kornbluth says we can't fight aging, which is a natural process of living, but we can fight ageism in “Age Without Ageism” a short video. This is the second episode in his *Citizen Brain* series and explains how fighting ageism can help us live longer—and make the world better. Watch “Age Without Ageism” on <http://joshkornbluth.com/>

Also interesting is the first episode in *Citizen Brain* series, “The Empathy Circuit” which explores the intersection of brain science and social-justice issues.

Kornbluth's web page offers a printable page “Active Minds, Healthy Brains, How to love and care for your brain” which lists these topics with specific suggestions to help ourselves to keep aging in an active and healthy way:

- Tend to your personal relationships
- Practice good sleep hygiene
- Stimulate your mind
- Control your chronic ailments
- Get moving
- Have a positive outlook
- Eliminate vices
- Nourish yourself

—Joan Downey, Margaret Lew

**WELCOME NEW MEMBER!**

**Cathy Haller**



Marina Lazzara presented Kitchen Herbalism to OWL members at our February 23rd meeting. Photos by Tina Martin

### OWL SF Monthly Meetings for 2019

The OWL SF Board has scheduled the following topics using suggestions gathered at the January Planning Meeting. Changes and updates will be announced, postcard reminders will be sent.

<i>February</i>	Kitchen Herbs
<i>March</i>	California Legislation for Seniors
<i>April 27</i>	Climate: Food & Water Issues
<i>May 25</i>	Community Housing
<i>June 22</i>	Immigration Update
<i>July 27</i>	Summer Party
<i>August</i>	No meeting
<i>September 28</i>	Election Issues
<i>October 26</i>	Aging and Memory
<i>November</i>	Not yet scheduled
<i>December 14</i>	Holiday Party

### Shanta's Raw Cashew Chutney

This chutney makes a tasty sandwich filling. Or thin it with water and serve as a dipping sauce.

- 1 cup raw cashews,  
soaked in  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of hot water for 30 minutes
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh cilantro leaves, stems removed
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, chopped
- 1 or  $\frac{1}{2}$  fresh hot jalapeño chili,  
seeds and veins removed
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt

Place all of the ingredients, including the water\*, in a blender or food processor. Blend for a few minutes to the consistency of crunchy peanut butter, keeping some texture. Let the mixture sit unopened for a few minutes before use. Leftover chutney will keep for a week if refrigerated in a tightly closed container. Makes  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups

\* Tina's suggestion: To make it thicker, do not add the water the cashews soak in.

After enjoying the February OWL meeting on Kitchen Herbs Tina was inspired to bring this to the meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup> and several of you wanted the recipe which was created by Shanta, the author of *Flavors of India*.

—Tina Martin

### NASA Honors And Disappointments

In February 2019, NASA officially renamed a facility in West Virginia after Katherine Johnson. Her barrier-breaking career was featured in the book *Hidden Figures* by Margot Lee Shetterly and the 2016 film depicting the struggle of black women for equality at NASA during the height of the space age and segregation. Called colored computers, she and other black women who worked in NASA's computing pool more than a half-century ago were separated from their white colleagues while they calculated the trajectories of crucial missions in the 1960s.

In March 2019, NASA disappointed many women by cancelling the participation of one of two women selected for an all-women space walk due to wardrobe failure — inability to find space suits to fit both of them. A male was substituted for the mission.



Some of the OWL members who gathered in January to propose and vote on topics for the year's membership meetings. Photos by Tina Martin



## What Are You Reading?

***Cutting For Stone*** by Abraham Verghese

***The Kite Runner*** by Khaled Hosseini

I heartily recommend these two books. Both of these books are very well written, interesting, with excellent character development. They will hold your attention but will not keep you awake into the late hours wondering “who done it?” The first book is set in Ethiopia and the second in Afghanistan. I can guarantee that you will never see either of these countries in the same way again and that is a good thing. At the July OWL gathering, we had a book exchange during which various women presented books they had brought for someone else to take. One woman who had already read *Cutting for Stone* remarked that the mystery book she had brought was good entertainment but the Verghese book was literature. As an enjoyer of mysteries, I understood and seconded her critique. *The Kite Runner* has been made into a movie, but there is no way a movie could have captured the dialogue, emotions or people as fully as a book does. I recommend you read it even if you saw the movie.

—Glenda Hope

***Working the Roots: Over 400 Years of Traditional African American Healing*** by Michele Elizabeth Lee

I heard an interesting interview on KPFA related to OWL’s February meeting topic. <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/37970601-working-the-roots> *Working the Roots* is the result of first-hand interviews, conversations, and apprenticeships over several years of living and studying in the rural South and West Coast. It combines a novelist’s keen ear for storytelling and dialogue and a healer’s understanding of folk medicine arts into a book that makes for both pleasant, interesting reading, and serves as a permanent household healing guide.

—Betty Traynor

***A Legacy of Spies*** by John le Carre

***Transcription*** by Kate Atkinson

I love reading novels about espionage and mystery and recently have read two which seem to complement each other. Both of them center on the world of British spies of WWII who find themselves entrapped in the web of their secret service in the ‘40’s. In *Transcription* Juliet Armstrong, eighteen-years old, finds a job in the world of espionage and is sent to an obscure department of MI5 where she must monitor the activities of British Fascist sympathizers. The work is at the same time tedious and terrifying. After the war ends she presumes that these experiences are to be memories until she is confronted by figures from her past. Once again she finds herself under threat as a new kind of war is being fought and a bill of reckoning is due. In *A Legacy of Spies* Le Carre brings back figures from earlier novels, the circle of colleagues and disciples of George Smiley, who are to be scrutinized by a generation of British Secret Service that has no memory of the Cold War and no patience with its justifications. Secrets, thrills, suspense as the story looks back on *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold* and *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*. Le Carre and his narrator Peter Guillam present us a legacy of unforgettable characters old and new. You may want to read or re-read those earlier books after finishing *A Legacy of Spies*.

—Margaret Lew

### Spring Cleaning, Downsizing?

Take your items to the  
Community Thrift store  
623 Valencia Street  
(on the corner of Valencia and  
Sycamore, near 17<sup>th</sup> street.)  
(415)861-4910



Access the loading dock from  
Mission onto Sycamore between 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Tell  
them: ***These are for the Older Women’s League of San  
Francisco.*** OWL SF receives 40% of anything that sells!

**Like OWL SF on Facebook!**

<https://facebook.com/OWLSF/>

## Calendar

For a complete and up to date listing see the OWL website: <http://www.owlsf.org/calendar/>

**April 1 Monday — OWL Board Meeting, 4:00-6:00pm (Flood Bldg. Room 665)**

**April 11 Thursday — Know Your Rights - Hospital Stay 1:00-3:00pm co-sponsored by CARA,  
Community Living Campaign & Senior and Disability Action (details page 5 )**

**April 27 Saturday — OWL General Meeting 10:00-Noon Water and Food are Essential for Life  
(Northern Police Station) (See cover for details.)**

**May 6 Monday — OWL Board Meeting, 4:00-6:00pm (Flood Bldg. Room 665)**

**May 23 Saturday — OWL General Meeting 10:00-Noon Community Housing  
(Northern Police Station) (details to come )**

**May 23 Saturday — CARA Disability and Aging Capitol Action Day Sacramento (details page 3)**

**June 3 Monday — OWL Board Meeting, 4:00-6:00pm (Flood Bldg. Room 665)**

**June 22 Saturday— OWL General Meeting 10:00-Noon Immigration Update (details to come )**

YES! I WANT TO JOIN OWL SF!

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

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

CITY STATE ZIP

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

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

Annual dues of \$50 are recommended. (If you are unable to pay the recommended amount, OWL has established a sliding fee scale from \$50 –\$5.) Members receive the quarterly OWL SF Newsletter.

***OWL SF will not share or sell our membership list or any information about our members.***

Make a check out to and mail to:

OWL SF  
870 Market Street, Room 905  
San Francisco, CA 94102

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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) 712-1695;  
e-mail: [owlsf@owlsf.org](mailto:owlsf@owlsf.org)