



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

April - June 2021

Email: 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.

Join OWL on Zoom

Stiff and Draggy, Focused on Aches and Pains?

Staying Agile in Body Helps Keep Our Brains Agile

Kyra, a professional dancer, movement coach, and functional aging specialist, will use her diverse movement background to blend many modalities into stretches & exercises that can easily be done sprinkled throughout your day

Plus: A Preview of The 10th Film Festival on Aging

**Saturday, April 24, 2021
11 AM to Noon**

Zoom Meeting with telephone access
Link to follow in e-mail
For more information see page 2

OWL SF * 870 Market Street, #905, San Francisco, Ca. 94102
Phone 415-712-1695 * Web site: www.owlsf.org

Spring Political Advocacy Report

The new post-election landscape of 2021, though better than that of the last 4 years, did not reduce the number of important issues before the Political Advocacy Committee. The Covid -19 vaccine rollout, local issues like homelessness, and continued environmental concerns in California give us much to focus on. Front and center is universal health care. This has been the topic of several OWL alerts asking Gov. Newsom to apply for a waiver from the Biden administration allowing the use of federal Medicare and Affordable Care Act money to set up single payer system for California.



In March, the Political Advocacy Committee sponsored a membership meeting on this topic. Jodi Reid from California Alliance for Retired Americans presented a nuts-and-bolts overview to OWL members about what Health Care for All would look like across the nation. Additionally, she pointed out that this is not only an important step in improving health care, but it is also a human justice issue. Additionally, OWL is supporting AB1400 and has added its name to Healthy California's petition asking Gov. Newsom to apply for a waiver and to start a single payer system in California.

Vaccine issues are also in the forefront for the Political Advocacy Committee's work for the 2021. Not only is a fair distribution of Covid vaccine in San Francisco vital, but correct information about the vaccine itself, delivered by people who represent various communities is equally important. To that end, the committee was able to get a UCSF Professor of Medicine and Dean of Admissions, Dr. Michelle Alpert, speak to Network for Elders in the Bayview neighborhood. More recently committee members have collaborated with Senior Disability Action and Community Living Campaign to advocate for older people, the homebound, and those with disabilities who do not have access to Wi-Fi or transportation to vaccination sites. We are also looking into vaccine equity worldwide. The pandemic has increasingly pointed out that viruses are not national issues but global ones that impact us all.

The environment is another social justice issue. The committee will help organize a membership meeting on this subject for May. Topics will include understanding why fracking continues in California and how SB 467, introduced by State Senators Weiner and Limon, would address this and other environmental considerations, especially clean water. We are also looking into collaborating with Grandmothers 4 a Green New Deal, another group of older women making their voices heard.

Many past issues again need our attention in the new year as well. Among them are continuing cuts to City College, holding Sutter Health accountable in their continuing downsizing of community services, and the rise of racism and violence against certain groups, including women. The Political Advocacy Committee meets on the third Thursday of every month and is open to all. Email us at info@owlsf.org or call us at 415-712-1698 with your comments and ideas.

—*Melanie Grossman*

Fight Voter Suppression

Since the January 6th insurrection, a total of 253 voter suppression laws have been proposed in 43 States. Some have passed. If we do not get people like Feinstein, Biden and Harris to really push for ending the filibuster, sensible Voter Protection such as HR1 legislation will never be passed on a Federal level. It takes 5-10 minutes to call in a message to each of them. What will each of our readers do to protect our democracy?!

—*Submitted by Glenda Hope*

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OWL SF Board meetings: first Monday of the month, 4:00-6:00 pm, 870 Market St. Currently held on Zoom, link available on request

Phone: (415) 712-1695
Email: owlsf@owlsf.org
Web: www.owlsf.org
Mail: 870 Market St., Room 905, San Francisco, CA 94102

OWL's April Program: Stay lithe and limber with Kyra Plus a Preview of the *Legacy Film Festival on Aging*

Feeling stiff, draggy, too focused on aches and pains? With our enforced isolation and resultant too much sitting this can happen. Kyra, a professional dancer, movement coach, and functional aging specialist who uses her diverse movement background to blend many modalities into stretches and exercises that can easily be done sprinkled throughout your day, will lead us in simple things we can do to keep us moving and feeling more energized so we can do more for the betterment of the world.



Sheila Malkind will share information about the films to be seen at the 10th annual *Film Festival on Aging*. Get a preview of the uplifting films that will be shown online for the first time in May. Learn how you can see films in your own home.

Tune in to the Older Women's League's April 24th program on Zoom. Watch for email which will give you the details to join on Zoom by computer or phone. Hint: if you do not have a computer, maybe a friend would let you join us on hers.

Free Taxi Rides To Vaccination Sites

Community Living Campaign is proud to be able to offer the following transportation support for San Francisco residents aged 65+ or who have a disability:

Free taxi rides each month for residents in our networks! Could you benefit from free taxi rides for the next few months? (See eligible zip codes below.) If residents in our network sign up for the SFMTA's Essential Trip Card program, CLC will pay the residents' portion of the taxi fares, while funding lasts. To qualify for the program, residents must be 65 and older or have a disability.

Free taxi rides to vaccination sites. Even if a San Francisco resident lives outside of one of our networks, we can help them get to their vaccination appointments through the SFMTA Essential Trip program. Residents are eligible if they are 65 and older or have a disability. CLC will subsidize \$60 of taxi rides.

For more information on how to get subsidized rides, email cathy@sfccommunityliving.org or call 415-638-9183.

Zip codes for CLC networks: 94103, 94107, 94109, 94110, 94112, 94114, 94115, 94116, 94117, 94122, 94124, 94127, 94131, 94132, 94134, 94158

COVID-19 Vaccine Access

If you haven't been vaccinated and would like to be, here are some options:

The state's website is My Turn - California COVID-19 Vaccine Scheduling & Notifications

<https://myturn.ca.gov/>

If online is not an option, call 1-833-422-4255.

Within San Francisco, you can also check this centralized site: <https://sf.gov/getvaccinated>

The City has set up a call center to help people who are 65 and older and those with disabilities who are unable to access the internet easily or schedule an appointment through their provider. Individuals may call to learn about vaccine options and receive assistance in booking an appointment to some locations. The number is (628) 652-2700

A Note About Vaccine Equity and Availability

What do you know and what can you do? First check the phone numbers and web sites for scheduling vaccinations but use all your contacts. Talk with your friends about the COVID-19 vaccine. Ask them whether they have been vaccinated and what their experience of availability has been. If you have not been contacted by your medical provider yet, your friends may have advice for you. I have seen postings on social media (Nextdoor for instance) from neighbors with such advice for finding an earlier date to get the jab. After you are vaccinated, share your experience with others too.

Free \$50 Lyft Vouchers For Seniors 60+, Adults with Disabilities & Caregivers

Community Living Campaign is partnering with Lyft to help get San Francisco residents to their vaccine appointments. Individuals who receive services in San Francisco but live outside of the city may also be eligible. For more information, contact:

Cathy DeLuca
415-638-9183
cathy@sfccommunityliving.org

*Offer valid while vouchers last
www.sfccommunityliving.org • 415.821.1003 •
info@sfccommunityliving.org

WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

Valorie Villela

10th Legacy Film Festival on Aging ONLINE For the First Time

The 10th Legacy Film Festival of Aging, the only international screen event exploring life in the world of aging, is scheduled for May 24-31, 2021. For the first time, this year's mostly-documentary film program will be presented ONLINE ONLY across the nation – and the globe.

We are still working on our final schedule, but here are some of the key concepts that the films highlight: racial justice, women's equality; family caregiving; memory; resilience –and fearlessness. Plus art and dance. And even fun!

We'll let you know when the website goes up in April, so you can see everything, and even order tix.

—*Sheila Malkind*



Coming Back From My Stroke

You may remember that in the July-Sept 2020 *OWL Newsletter*, I wrote about experiencing a stroke in May 2020 that paralyzed the left side of my body — my left hand, leg, and foot. I was in the hospital for almost the entire month, receiving much therapy: mainly physical, and occupational (working with my disability to handle my environment) — and more. Then recuperating at home, with a caregiver paid by my long-term care insurance. Presently, still incapacitated – extremities stronger, but need an 'assistive device'— my walker — to function 'ably'. Still going for outpatient therapy once a week, and keeping up with exercises at home; having my family caregiver, who lives downstairs, preparing my breakfast, and doing the heavier cleaning. I do the rest. One great pleasure are my daily walks in my neighborhood, with my assistants — both device-wise and human. Will I regain former functioning? I don't know, but I'm working at it. And I'm still working every day on the *10th Annual Legacy Film Festival on Aging*—this time, in virtual (online) programming. So, coming soon:

—*Sheila Malkind*



Sheila with her 'assistive device' on a daily neighborhood walk.

Signs and Symptoms of Stroke For a Brain Attack think F-A-S-T

F=face numbness or weakness especially one side

A=arm numbness or weakness especially one side of the body

S=speech slurred or difficulty speaking or understanding

T=time to call 911 if these occur suddenly, even if they go away.

15th Annual Walk Against Rape

San Francisco Women Against Rape (SFWAR) announces a virtual march on April 24, 2021. In celebration of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, this year, the 15th Annual Walk Against Rape is a virtual march that raises awareness and funds for SFWAR—San Francisco's community based rape crisis center.

Register now & join virtual community events scheduled throughout the month of April.

Registration is open for the Walk Against Rape! www.SFWAREVENTS.org

San Francisco Women Against Rape
<https://sfwar.org/>

Privilege

by *Mary Gayle Thomas*

This beautiful planet we're on amazes me constantly.
I walk in the open air, joyfully filling my lungs,
simply because I can.
Because I feel like it.
Simple acts of walking and looking
and my chest rising and falling
as air fills my lungs and then is released-
These are the ultimate feelings of being alive.

Walking in new areas offers new experiences.
I look at houses and gardens and dogs
Children play games and smile,
I remember my own childhood games.
I walk to enjoy the architecture of different buildings and
Wonder about street names I've never seen before.

Sometimes walking makes me so happy,
I have to run for a bit.
Just because I can.

These are no small blessings, and they aren't lost on me.
Having the free time to walk,
being able to walk at all --
These are blessings indeed.

But having the freedom to walk in public places,
to walk in different neighborhoods,
That's not a blessing.
That's a privilege.
That's my white privilege.

Because my muscles and blood and organs
Are wrapped in pale, white skin,
I have the privilege to walk, anywhere, looking around.
To walk - or even run - anywhere
with no reason except that
I. Want. To.

I walk, or I run, with no expectation of being questioned,
No anticipation of being accused.
That's my white privilege.

A privilege I didn't earn. A privilege I accidentally fell into.
No one wonders why I'm wandering around
Because I have the privilege.

And because I have the privilege to do so,
The air continues to fill my lungs,
My chest continues to rise and fall,

And *I* can breathe.

Privilege was recently chosen by the San Francisco Public Library for their Poem of the Day.

The poem was written by an OWL member and one of my Cayuga neighbors who is also a regular standing in the Vigil for Justice (Black Lives Matter BLM) that we have been doing since June.

—*submitted by Glenda Hope*

Save the Date

OWL's May Meeting The Environment and Social Justice *What can we do to affect change for the common good?*

How are climate concerns, poverty and racism intertwined? The environment is a social justice issue and OWL will explore the topic of continuing fracking in California and other environmental concerns including clean water. A fascinating video from Grandmothers 4 a Green New Deal will be shown with time for discussion to follow.

When: May 22 — 11:00 AM to Noon
Where: Zoom Meeting
address and password
details to follow

Spring in the Presidio: Women at Work and Fresh Air

On the Presidio Tunnel Tops a historic all-female team is managing the build out of the project that will convert the area to a park space connecting the hills to Crissy Field. Senior project manager, Rania Rayes says the idea was to make use of the natural bluff. Earlier this month, the Birds Nest arrived at the "Outpost," the two-acre play area for kids. The Presidio Tunnel Tops will be one of the biggest improvements ever made to the park. For more information go to <https://t.co/xgBaRJ20lt> [pic.twitter.com/WDySKqkvuy](https://t.co/pic.twitter.com/WDySKqkvuy)

The Presidio is the place to walk these sunny days. For bay views there is Crissy Field's long and level path where you can enjoy fresh air, birds, wild flowers and Golden Gate Bridge views. A bit more challenging are trails and walks near El Polin Spring. In March I explored El Polin Spring trails where a family of early Spanish settlers lived along the little creek that runs from the hills to the lagoon on San Francisco Bay. On the trail I could imagine settlements there well before the Spanish and the miners of '49 changed the city into an urban environment. No coyotes were seen on my walks, but many birds and a lizard among the shrubs. Parking is available at the trail entrance. See maps and information:

<https://www.presidio.gov/places/crissy-marsh>
<https://www.presidio.gov/places/el-polin-spring>

—*Margaret Lew*



On El Polin Trail looking north, Photo by M.Lew

Why Seniors Should Continue Working For Medicare For All — Single Payer Health Care

Although the new national health care legislation does provide benefits to seniors – it begins to close the donut hole, reduces overpayments to the Medicare Advantage providers, and requires insurance companies to enroll consumers even if they have pre-existing conditions, it fails to address many of the problems of our unraveling health care system. By expanding the role of private, for-profit insurance companies, health care costs will continue to rise and many Americans will continue to remain uncovered, or will have such expensive co-pays and deductibles that they do not seek timely medical attention, or they may face huge medical debts. Medicare covers less and less each year, and we pay more and more for supplemental insurance, premiums, co-pays and for uncovered procedures and medications. Here are some of the problems with the Affordable Care Act:

- Approximately 23 million people will remain uninsured, many of them older workers and early retirees (50-64) who cannot afford the high premiums. Insurers can charge three times more based on age, plus more for certain conditions such as high blood pressure or diabetes.
- Drug prices remain costly through a deal preventing the government from negotiating prices. Name brand drug makers get 12 years of marketing monopoly from generic competition on biologic drugs, including cancer treatments.
- The bill drains about \$40 billion from Medicare payments to safety-net hospitals, threatening the care of the millions who will remain uninsured.
- People who have employer-based coverage will be locked into their plan's limited network of providers and face ever-rising costs and fewer benefits. Most will face steep taxes on their benefits.
- There are no real checks on premium hikes and insurers may continue to rescind policies for “fraud or intentional misrepresentation,” the main pretext now used.

The Solution: Medicare for All: America already has the best universal single payer health care system in the world- Medicare. Let's get back to the original model of Medicare, but expand it to cover everyone. With everyone in the risk pool – young and old, healthy and sick, rich and poor – we can cover everyone with the 3% overhead under which Medicare now operates, compared to the private insurance companies' overhead of 15-30%. Everyone pays – government, employers, and individuals, based on income. We get to choose our providers and we all get equal access to quality care.

California Leads the Way: The California Alliance for Retired Americans is part of a coalition of groups working to pass a universal, Medicare for All (single payer health care) solution for the state. With everyone “in” and nobody “out,” a Medicare for All system outlaws private, for profit health insurance companies. The savings in wasteful overhead and other administrative costs we now pay will provide complete coverage for all Californians at a far lower rate than is now being paid. With no co-pays or deductibles, the bill expands health care coverage to include all doctors and pharmaceuticals, dentistry and vision care, hearing aids, chiropractic care and much more. CARA is part of the Campaign for a Healthy California which is working to bring a Medicare for All proposal to the voters by 2020.

CARA/ 600 Grand Ave. #410/ Oakland, CA 94610/ 510-663-4086/ www.californiaalliance.org

OWL's March program was presented by Jodi Reid of CARA who provided us with this information.



Sign CARA's Petition to Governor Newsom

California Alliance for Retired Americans and Healthy California Now (healthyca.org) would like you to sign their petition to the Governor. In part it reads:

Petition to Governor Newsom: *We are Californians who believe that healthcare should be guaranteed as a human right. We are calling on you, Governor Newsom, to fulfill your promise to fight for single-payer healthcare in California. A single-payer system would mean comprehensive healthcare for all Californians.*

Read the full petition online at <https://bit.ly/CARA-Healthcare>

What Are You Reading?

If you like trying to figure out just what is going on here and whodunit, you will love *Invisible Murder* by Lene Kaaberbol and Agnete Friis. In this well written book which spans Finland, Hungary and Denmark, these two women lay out the lives of their disparate characters like ribbons side by side but not touching. What do the lives of desperately poor and despised Romas, a Red Cross nurse, a man hiding illegal immigrants, a police inspector, a married couple who are breaking up, a retired building inspector and his wife, a sex trafficker, a rebellious teenager, an oil rig worker have to do with each other? what is it that causes those ribbons to become so tightly woven together? Above all, what is it that was done and whodunit? I predict you will be astounded by the revelation of the ultimate culprit and the reason for the culprit's actions.



Odd Numbers by Anne Holt is the third recent book by a Scandinavian woman I have read in the past 2 months. All these books are well written, have good character development, will surprise you with the outcome, and have a theme (among other themes) of resurging racism, nativism, and xenophobia. They also have prominent leaders who say things like "if you don't fight like Hell you're not gonna have a country anymore." Who knew Scandinavia was also struggling with this problem?

However, the intriguing plot will ask you to figure out how a reclusive paraplegic, her wife, a librarian, a troubled and perpetually angry young adult, an alcoholic cop, a questioning 10 year old, a brain damaged pigeon fancier, a weary police inspector, a ramrod straight military intelligence officer, a homeless veteran, a newly appointed female police chief, a missing woman with blue hair, a fascist member of Parliament and two Pakistani men are connected other than being part of the human family.

—Glenda Hope

Threads of Life: A History of the World Through The Eye of A Needle by Clare Hunter is a beautiful book that explores the lives of women and men as revealed by their textile creations. It begins with the author's visit to the famous Bayeux tapestry, an embroidered mural record of the Norman conquest of England. Her joy at seeing the tapestry in person was nearly overcome by her indignation at the exhibit's omission of any mention of the hundreds of seamstresses who created it. In the world of "serious art work" needle work has been relegated to a lower status but many women (and men) have found a voice in needle and thread and Hunter describes some fascinating examples from the personal creations of samplers, quilts and baby clothes for family, to the wider world of political and social works including the Hmong people's story cloths, Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry created for shell-shocked, housebound veterans of WWI, the *Arpilleras* created by Chilean women denouncing the human rights violations of the Pinochet regime. See history through the eyes of the many needles plied throughout the last several hundred years in Hunter's collected stories.



Re-reading the ABC's. I admit to liking an escape, so am re-reading the adventures of Sue Grafton's clever, resourceful, and honest private eye Kinsey Milhone. Twentyfive volumes from *A is for Alibi* to *Y is for Yesterday*, I am presently waiting to open *O is for Outlaw*. At this point I can see that Kinsey's poor diet (quarterpounders with cheese and diet cokes), combined with the odd hours and the physical abuse of her profession may have led to her demise before Z even though that was due to the unfortunate death of Grafton. You will enjoy keeping up with Kinsey and trying to solve her puzzling assignments, meeting the many colorful, well-painted characters and visiting locations that put you back in 1990's Santa Teresa (Santa Barbara) and other places Kinsey's VW and her passion for the truth take her.

—Margaret Lew

Calendar

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

April 5 Monday — OWL Board Meeting, 4:00-5:00pm (via Zoom)

April 24 Saturday — OWL General Meeting 11-Noon *Lithe and Limber* (via Zoom)(details on cover & p.3)

May 3 Monday — OWL Board Meeting, 4:00-5:00pm (via Zoom)

May 22 Saturday— OWL General Meeting 11:00-Noon *Climate and Social Justice* (via Zoom)

May 24-31 — 10th Annual Legacy Film Festival on Aging (online) (see details p.4)

June 7 Monday — OWL Board Meeting, 4:00-5:00pm (via Zoom)

June 26 Saturday— OWL General Meeting 11-Noon topic to be announced (via Zoom)

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 –\$10.) 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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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