



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

July - September 2014

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

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.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

## **Annual OWL SF Ballot Initiatives Meeting**

**September 27, 2014**

Be ready to vote in November on issues affecting the future of San Francisco and of special interest to mid-life and older women. Come to a forum on ballot measures sponsored by OWL SF. Topics will include:

**Overview by Betty Packard, Chair of the Ballot Simplification Committee, on issues appearing on the San Francisco November Ballot of Special Interest to Older Women**

**Pro and Con arguments by proponents on selected ballot measures of interest to OWL Members**

When: September 27<sup>th</sup> 10am to Noon

Where: San Francisco Main Library

Civic Center, Hispanic Room (lower level enter on Grove Street)

Handicap Accessible

*Not a Library Sponsored Program*

**OWL SF \* 870 Market Street, #905, San Francisco, Ca. 94102**

**Phone 415-989-4422 \* Web site: [www.owlsf.org](http://www.owlsf.org)**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Changes in the Board Presidency

What a wonderful gift it has been being your president -- As OWL SF moves to our next President, to be announced soon, there are many projects in the works.

1. Melanie Grossman will be guiding an Intern dedicated to the needs of mid-life and older women through OWL SF for the 2014/15 school year – she will be a part of our team and initiating programming – let Melanie know about ideas you might have to support this person's learning.
2. You will hear about major action with the OWL SF Jobs project.
3. The Political Action Committee will host their annual Issues Event on Saturday September 27<sup>th</sup> at the Main Library.
4. Our monthly meetings will continue with their great line-up of speakers – so far this year we have done: pedestrian safety, memory, area authors, computer awareness, and so much more. We hope you are stimulated and join us each 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month.
5. OWL SF is at the table with the Vision Zero task force, a city-wide effort of cross agency and government services dedicated to San Francisco's elimination of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities.
6. As a sponsor of wonderful programs like the Legacy Film Festival on Aging which will be happening September 5-7<sup>th</sup>.



### What Owl SF Still Needs:

- Office help! Can you spare an hour or two to help in the office? We have monthly mailings and project support opportunities.
- We have a couple of Board slots open.
- Fresh membership – there is a natural, diminishing aspect about being an organization of ‘older’ women - so new members are encouraged and sincerely welcomed – the city, state and nation need your voices.

*Please send this newsletter to someone you think would enjoy a wonderful bunch of envolved women.*

Again – thank you for two wonderful years of being your president and all of the great work you have done – I look forward to seeing you as a participant at the continued programs and events.

—*Gwynne Seidell, President*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

**Louise Di Mattio**  
**Gail B. Goldman**  
**Vivian Imperiale**  
**Ursula McGuire**  
**Joyce Steier**

**Gwynne Seidell, President**  
**Maxine Anderson**  
**Robin Brasso**  
**Joan Downey**  
**Glenda Hope**  
**Margaret Lew**  
**Sheila Malkind**  
**Nan McGuire**  
**Ruth Strassner**  
**Betty Traynor**

**Newsletter**  
Margaret Lew, Editor

**Going My Way**  
Diana Merlo  
GPDiana1@sbcglobal.net

**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) 989-4422  
**Email:** owlsf@owlsf.org  
**Web:** [www.owlsf.org](http://www.owlsf.org)  
**Mail:** 870 Market St., Room 905, San Francisco, CA 94102

## Always Active OWLs

In October 2013, OWL held a membership meeting at 30<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Services. Valorie Villela, the director gave an interesting and informative talk about nutrition. Irene Solis, a trainer for the Always Active program, led us in a short series of exercises for improving strength, coordination and balance. Two OWL members present, Vivi Wyatt and Glenda Hope, were captivated by the Always Active idea and have now brought it into their neighborhood for classes on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 2557 Alemany Blvd. Photos by Irene Solis.

—*Glenda Hope*



**Save the Date!**

### **OWL Annual Pot Luck Party**

**When: Saturday July 26<sup>th</sup> 2014  
Noon to 2:30**

**Where: Home of Liz Cormier  
250 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue, San Francisco  
Between California and Lake Streets**

Bring your favorite dish for 6 people with a serving utensil. Owl will provide coffee. This is a great opportunity to connect with old friends and to meet new ones enjoying delicious food and enjoyable conversation. We always have a lovely time!

**Space is limited so RSVP is necessary!** Call the OWL office 415-989-4422 before July 18<sup>th</sup>.

Muni lines nearby are #38 Geary and #1 California. Parking available on street.

### **Fourth Annual Legacy Film Festival on Aging Opens September 12th**

OWL member Sheila Malkind, is the director of the 4th annual Legacy Film Festival on Aging, which will once again present a series of films portraying the richness of later life. The mission: to educate, entertain and inspire inter-generational audiences about how to live well and enjoy life, despite life's challenges. Both American and foreign films, both documentaries and fictional features will highlight subjects such as caregiving, adventure, love, physicality, memory, and end of life. The Films will be shown September 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> at the New People Cinema, 1746 Post Street, in Japan town. For details see: [www.legacyfilmfestivalonaging.org](http://www.legacyfilmfestivalonaging.org); or send e-mail to: [info@legacyfilmfestivalonaging.org](mailto:info@legacyfilmfestivalonaging.org)



*Fabulous Fashionistas*, Sue Bourne, UK.



*Stepping into the Stream*, about women flyfishers. Local filmmaker is Barbara Klutinis.

Owl SF is proud to be one of the sponsors of the festival, save the dates to enjoy these films!

All Women's Issues Were Not Resolved In 1920

All Women Activists Are Not Wild-Eyed Radicals

Women's Health Care Is Not Adequately Covered

Women's Economic Security Is Not Based On The Charity Of Men

Everything You Need To Know About "The System" Was Not Taught In School

# Political Advocacy Committee Update •••

## Political Advocacy Committee Sponsors Ballot Initiatives Meeting

The Annual OWL Ballot Initiative Meeting will be held this year on September 27<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 12 in the Main Library's Hispanic Room at the Civic Center. This meeting will be held in plenty of time for OWL members to learn about and make decisions regarding the 2014 ballot. Although it is still too early to definitively say what will be on the ballot (the last day to submit a charter amendment, ordinance, or declaration of policy is July 7<sup>th</sup>), it does appear that there will be lots of interesting initiatives to talk about. Local measures should include housing measures, a minimum wage act, regulations for tourist housing such as Airbnb, with other measures still to come. State-wide ballot measures will affect safe drinking water, healthcare insurance, criminal sentencing and more.

This year the meeting will also feature guest speaker Betty Packard, who is Chair of the SF Ballot Simplification Committee. This committee writes unbiased summaries of each local ballot measure for the Voter Information Pamphlet. The committee meets 105 days before the elections and determines the language for the Voter Information Pamphlet after hearing testimony regarding the specific measures. They follow the format of addressing "The way It is Now," followed by "The Proposal," and concluding with "If You Vote Yes" and "If You Vote No." Betty will briefly summarize what our Yes or No vote will mean on all local measures.

Public testimony before the Ballot Simplification Committee begins July 28<sup>th</sup> and goes through August 8<sup>th</sup>. Sessions are held in one of the hearing rooms at City Hall. The Sunshine Law mandates that the public receive 72 hours notice as to what will be discussed. Anyone interested in participating or even testifying as a member of the public should consult the SF Department of Elections website.

In July the Political Advocacy Committee will choose issues of particular interest to OWL members. Proponents both for and against these measures will also be invited to present their arguments. Anyone with suggestions for what issues should be chosen for special attention should call the OWL office to let the committee know of your interest. The September meeting is usually OWL's largest and most exciting meeting, so put it on your calendar now.

—*Melanie Grossman and Glenda Hope*

## Owl Writes Letter Supporting New Reverse Mortgage Bill

There have been fewer stories in the news about reverse mortgages recently because some of the worse abuses of unscrupulous lenders have been corrected. Reverse mortgages allow homeowners, aged 62 and up, to convert their home equity into tax-free cash while retaining the title to their homes. Older people who want to remain in their home indefinitely, have few assets other than their home equity, and need extra money to live on may find a reverse mortgage an appropriate option, but still they should proceed with caution.

Reverse mortgages can be expensive, involving higher fees than other mortgages, and often have certain stipulations, such as requiring the homeowner to live in the home continuously, that could cause a homeowner to forfeit their property. Beware of high pressure offers that emphasize positives and evade discussion of costs, fees, and other details.

Existing law requires a reverse mortgage lender to refer a prospective borrower to a HUD-sponsored reverse mortgage and housing counselor before a reverse mortgage is approved. OWL has written a letter of support for SB1700 which mandates further safeguards. This new bill includes the above-mentioned counseling, but also prohibits the lender from finalizing the application until 7 days after the date of the loan counseling.

Besides requiring this "cooling off period," this new bill also replaces a mandated mortgage suitability checklist with a more detailed worksheet guide in which the borrower is informed that failure to keep up property taxes, insurance coverage, or home maintenance will cause the loan to go into default and could lead to foreclosure. Do not commit to a reverse mortgage until you have made sure that it is right for you. Ask about repayment total, interest rate, and fees. Explore other options. You can also contact the CA Department of Corporations at 1-866-275-2677 or visit [www.corp.ca.gov](http://www.corp.ca.gov) to verify that you are borrowing from a bank that is in good standing and properly licensed.

—*Melanie Grossman*

## June OWL Meeting: 10 Things to Love (and 5 Things to Hate) About Technology

Marie Jobling and LaNay Eastman of the Community Living Campaign gave us a very enjoyable and thorough description of computer technology, its tools and software geared to seniors and persons with disabilities at our June 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

You may be wondering what the 10 Things to Love are, well here is the list, Marie elaborated on each one:

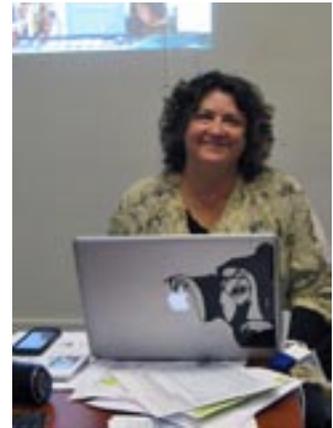
1. **Connects Us** (e-mail, Facebook, Skype Twitter,..);
2. **Facilitates Lifelong Learning** (everything from university classes to eMusic and 18 minute TED talks);
3. **Levels the Playing Field** (especially with all the assistive devices available, many of which were demonstrated by Marie and LaNay);
4. **Is the Library for a New Age** (eBooks plus at SF Public Library, Wikipedia);
5. **Pathway to Jobs and Volunteering;**
6. **Convenient Shopping;**
7. **Helps us to Control our Health and Well-Being** (can do health research online, fitness apps, e-mail our doctors);
8. **Make and Promote our own stuff** (with blogs, Twitter, photo and video-sharing, Google Alerts);
9. **Keeps Mind and Memory Sharp** (online games, learn your genealogy);
10. **It's FUN!** You can probably come up with your own list of 5 things to hate about technology but the ones Marie discussed included discouraging in-person communication, unequal availability (in many ways), and privacy issues.

The OWL audience was particularly interested in learning more about Skype, which is a low cost way to call people, even conference calling, and see them too with a small camera attached to your device. Skype can be downloaded to your computer, tablet or smart phone by going to [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com).

If you want to learn more about computer technology, you can take some classes through the Community Living Campaign at various sites city-wide. Check out their website [www.sfcommunityliving.org](http://www.sfcommunityliving.org) or call (415) 821-1003. Classes and computer access is also provided by the SF Connected Program with locations at senior centers throughout the City, see [www.sfconnected.org](http://www.sfconnected.org) or call (415) 355-3555. Also, there will be a Senior Tech Expo at the Main Library, Grove and Larkin Sts., Friday, July 25, Noon to 5 pm to learn even more.

Marie and LaNay gave us a wonderful presentation with many resource hand-outs for beginners to more experienced technology users. Feel free to contact me to receive the hand-outs. [btraynor@att.net](mailto:btraynor@att.net) or (415) 93101126

—*Betty Traynor*



Marie Jobling of Community Living Campaign.  
Photo by Sheila Malkind.



Maxine Anderson and Margaret Lew compare tablets.  
Photo by Sheila Malkind.

## Celebrate Social Security's Birthday: August 14th

Social Security's birthday will be August 14. Save the date for celebration—more news coming! At least for now, this great program, started in 1935, has fended off the worst cuts. There is, however, a move to drastically cut offices and staff for administering the program and making it accessible to recipients. It is time to expand Social Security and to keep it accessible.

## Happy 49th Birthday, Medicare Preserve It! Improve It! Expand It!

July 30 is Medicare's birthday. Join the party with cake, songs, and balloons, outside the Social Security/Medicare office at 22nd and Valencia Streets, from 3:30 to 4:00.

This is also the kick-off for the Campaign for Healthy California's to win single payer health care (Medicare for All) in California. From 4:00 – 5:00 there will be a forum across the street at the Mission Campus of CCSF.

For more information, contact The Campaign for Healthy California, [www.healthycalifornia.org](http://www.healthycalifornia.org), 510 385-4213, or [www.californiaalliance.org](http://www.californiaalliance.org), 510-663-4086

## Are You a Grandparent? Contribute Your Insight and Experiences!

Juliet Rothman and Melanie Grossman are two social work professionals who are grandmothers of 12 children, ages 4 through 21. You may have already met them at Aquatic Park Center events and activities.

Juliet and Melanie are writing a book for grandparents, with ideas and thoughts to consider in building a meaningful and positive relationship with grandchildren—and they would love to hear your insights and experiences. For example, what is important to communicate? What has worked well—or not so well—for you in relating to your grandchildren? And, most of all, what does your relationship to your grandchild mean to you?

If you're interested in having your thoughts included in Juliet and Melanie's project please email them: Juliet Rothman: [rothman@berkeley.edu](mailto:rothman@berkeley.edu); Melanie Grossman: [melaniegrossman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:melaniegrossman@sbcglobal.net). Your privacy will be respected and all personal information will be kept completely confidential.

## In Memoriam Sarelle Toback Weisberg, FAIA

It is with a heavy heart that I let you know that my good friend and OWL member, Sarelle Weisberg, passed away on March 25, 2014 at the age of 84. Sarelle decided in midlife to become an architect and studied – as one of only three women in her class – at Columbia University, graduating in 1972 with a M. Arch. I met Sarelle first on a trip to Bulgaria which was organized by our friend Milka Bliznakov, founder of the International Archive of Women in Architecture at Virginia Tech. At that time Sarelle was still living in New York, the city she dearly loved and served as an exemplary architect. In addition to working for the Port Authority of New York and the New York State Facilities Development Corporation, Sarelle was active in many organizations and especially dedicated to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in New York and San Francisco. In recognition of her merits to the architectural profession and to the AIA, she was honored with the AIA Fellowship.

In her retirement, Sarelle moved to San Francisco to be closer to her son Andrew. Here she continued to pursue her interest in Design for Aging, mentor young architects and study for the California State Architect Registration Examination (ARE) to complement her New York license. Sarelle enjoyed attending OWL events, where she was able to meet new people because most of her friends and professional acquaintances were in New York, and learning about issues concerning older women. She also greatly cherished performances of the opera and concerts of the Philharmonia Baroque. She will be greatly missed.

—*Inge S. Horton*

## Free Tickets for OWLs: Merola Opera Performances

This year again, the Merola Opera has offered OWL SF free tickets to a community performance of two operas. While the list of requests for tickets has already been sent in to Merola, they have said that we can add to the list of attendees, if needed. So if you want tickets and have not requested them already, let me know ASAP: [kpiccagli@gmail.com](mailto:kpiccagli@gmail.com)

Here are the particulars:

Both performances take place at the Everett Auditorium, located at 450 Church Street, between 16<sup>th</sup> Street and 17<sup>th</sup> Street, in San Francisco. Paid parking is available at the auditorium.

*A Streetcar Named Desire* - Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm. Performance is approximately 3 hours and 25 minutes. By André Previn, Libretto by Philip Littell. New orchestral reduction by Peter Grunberg. Based on the play by Tennessee Williams. In English with projected English texts. *\*themes may not be suitable for younger audiences*

*Don Giovanni* – Tuesday, July 29<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm. Performance is approximately 3 hours and fifteen minutes. By W.A. Mozart, Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte. In Italian with English supertitles.

—*Kathie Piccagli*



## Friends Remember Muriel Brotsky

Muriel was a true friend of OWL SF. In her will she designated only two organizations for her friends to make donations in her memory. We are proud to announce that OWL SF was one of those two. In the words of her long-time friend and OWL member, Lorraine Honig, “Muriel thought very highly of the work that OWL undertakes and the dedicated people who comprise our membership.” OWL is very grateful to those listed below:

Lucia Blakeslee  
Robert and Janet Calhoun  
Jobuna Dellar  
Mildred Druss  
Shirley Farrell  
Joyce Friedman  
Jan Masaoka  
Brian Mc Williams  
Barbara Worth

## OWL SF Board Member Job Description

The functions and responsibilities of OWL SF Board membership were approved at the Board meeting on May 5, 2014. All those interested in a more active participation in the leadership of OWL are encouraged to attend Board Meetings and apply for membership on the OWL SF Board.

### Essential functions:

1. To assist in the overall leadership of the Older Women's League of San Francisco.
2. To lead one program per year.
3. To participate on at least one committee.
4. To advance OWL SF membership.
5. To support the fiscal viability of the association through: donation solicitation, membership solicitation, sourcing resource/revenue opportunities.
6. To assist the association by staying abreast of current community, state and federal issues concerning mid-life and older women.
7. To actively assist in Board development and expansion.
8. To attend monthly Board meetings and program meetings

### Responsibilities:

Committee membership: OWL SF has 4 standing committees each Board member must select one to actively participate in.

Facilitating the presentation of one program per year; at the annual meeting each Board member elects the program they wish to facilitate or co-facilitate.

It is a primary responsibility of the Board to "spread the word" about OWL SF and our activities in order to build name familiarity, encourage new members, expand the community awareness of OWL SF.

Each Board Member must be willing to represent those issues agreed upon by the Board and endorse the OWL SF position on these issues.

Each Board member must play an active role in building OWL SF's fiscal security through: new member solicitation; sourcing possible donations (through all venues).

Working in concert with co-members to actively grow the Board's skills, talents and resources in the community.

### Remembering OWL SF In Your Estate Plans

Your bequest supports the on-going work of our programs and advocacy. For information or questions, contact: Nan McGuire, OWL SF Treasurer, 415-989-4422

Your thoughtfulness will go far in supporting the continued work of this all volunteer organization. ...And we sincerely thank you.

### Cleaning Out Closets Or Emptying a House?

Take your items to the  
Community Thrift store  
623 Valencia Street  
(on the corner of Valencia and  
Sycamore, near 17<sup>th</sup> street.)  
San Francisco CA 94110  
415.861.4910

Tell them: *These are for the Older Women's League of San Francisco.*



OWL SF receives 40% of anything that sells! *You* receive credits for a tax-deductible donation!

## Calendar

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

**July 7 Monday** — OWL Board Meeting, 870 Market, room 1185, 4:00-6:00pm

**July 26 Saturday** — OWL Annual Potluck Party Noon-2:30 (See page 3 for details)

**August 4 Monday** — OWL Board Meeting, 870 Market, room 1185, 4:00-6:00pm

**September 1 Monday** — OWL Board Meeting, 870 Market, room 1185, 4:00-6:00pm

**September 12 - 14** — Legacy Film Festival on Aging (See page 3 for details)

**September 27 Saturday** — OWL General Meeting, Main Library, 10:00-Noon (November Ballot Issues. See cover and article page 4 for details)

YES! I WANT TO JOIN OWL!

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

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

CITY STATE ZIP

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

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

Annual dues of \$50 are recommended: When you pay dues to the OWL SF, you automatically become a member at National and San Francisco levels. (If you are unable to pay the recommended amount, OWL has established a sliding fee scale from \$50 –\$5.) Members receive both the OWL SF quarterly and National OWL Observer newsletters.

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

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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.

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