



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

October - December 2013

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  
Presents:**

**An Update on  
Medicare & Social Security  
and  
The Affordable Care Act's Impact on Women**

**OWL SF and its co-sponsors** are proud to present a conversation with two experts on health care: **Carroll L. Estes, Ph.D.**, Founder and Former Director of the UCSF Institute for Health & Aging, Professor Emerita, UCSF School of Nursing, Board Chair of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare Foundation, and **Jodi Reid**, Director of the California Alliance for Retired Americans.

Dr. Estes will also discuss her report "Breaking the Social Security Glass Ceiling" which reveals ways in which current Social Security regulations short-change women beneficiaries.

**When: Saturday, October 26, 10:00 AM — 12 NOON**

**Where: University of California San Francisco  
Medical Sciences Building, Room S-214,**

**513 Parnassus Avenue, second floor**

**Muni Lines: #6 Parnassus, #43 Masonic, & N Judah**

**Co-sponsors: California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA), UCSF  
Institute for Health & Aging, and Grey Panthers of San Francisco**

**All Welcome**

**Older Women's League \* 870 Market Street, #905, San Francisco, Ca. 94102  
Phone 415-989-4422 \* Web site: [www.owlsf.org](http://www.owlsf.org)**

## Presidential thoughts...

### Dues: Where does your money go?

Over the last couple of years, we have gone back and forth about sending dues to OWL National, which has been re-organizing and has basically cut the chapters loose. We did not know what the final outcome would be like.

Further – there was a bit of a muck-up when OWL National changed their 501c3 relationship with the chapters and stopped including chapters in their IRS filing. The transition process left the chapters without 501c3 non-profit status for several months and we all scrambled to get this coverage independently – resulting in hurt feelings and frustrations.



Well the dust is finally settling and we have all found our place in the process. OWL SF has 501c3 status of its own as a non-profit corporation. OWL SF will still send \$5.00 from each annual dues payment we receive to the OWL National organization. This sum will put you on the national mailing list and you will receive email blasts about actions and efforts happening in Washington DC that support our issues. The majority of your dues will stay in San Francisco and be used to support local efforts and issues.

Our suggested annual dues payment is still \$50 and we continue to offer a sliding scale based on your personal ability to pay – the bottom line is still there for us – we keep a simple office and phone line, produce this newsletter and mail postcards by the 100's.

Your annual dues do not cover all of our local expenses and we will undoubtedly rely on your generosity and support in the form of mid-year and annual appeal donations. You are also likely to receive donation requests from OWL National.

Please understand that your dues or donations go only to the organization requesting them. If you make a donation to OWL SF the funds come to us. Dues or a donation paid to OWL National will be retained by that separate organization and not shared with this chapter. Deeper support of national organization will be your individual decision.

OWL SF is still an all volunteer organization. Many folks give willingly of their time to give OWL a presence at City Hall and in Sacramento; to write; to call; and to support our educational programs that address issues of older and midlife women.

We wanted to make sure that you understand these changes with OWL National. We appreciate your continued support deeply and welcome your thoughts on our efforts and programs.

—*Gwynne Seidell*

**Gwynne Seidell, President**  
**Maxine Anderson**  
**Robin Brasso**  
**Melanie Grossman**  
**Glenda Hope**  
**Margaret Lew**  
**Nan McGuire**  
**Kathie Piccagli**  
**Inda Shirley**  
**Ruth Strassner**

**Newsletter**  
Margaret Lew, Editor

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

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

**SF OWL Board meetings:** first Monday of the month, 4:00-6:00 pm, 870 Market St.  
**Phone:** (415) 989-4422  
**Email:** owlsanfran@juno.com  
**Web:** [www.owlsf.org](http://www.owlsf.org)  
**Mail:** 870 Market St., Room 905, San Francisco, CA 94102

## What's CARA Been Up To?

Many of CARA's big events seem to take place immediately after our newsletter publication, so we end up publishing "old news". Certainly one of CARA's most important annual events was the July 2<sup>nd</sup> human chain – a demonstration against the "chained CPI" held at the plaza of the Federal Building in San Francisco. CARA had the original idea which grew to human chain demonstrations in many cities across the country.

There is a continuing need for all of us to call (every day) our legislators asking them to oppose any cuts to Social Security and Medicare. The chained CPI and other cuts remain real threats.

Senator Barbara Boxer: (510) 286-8537  
Senator Dianne Feinstein: (415) 393-0707  
Representative Nancy Pelosi: (415) 556-4862  
Representative Jackie Speier: (202) 225-3531



OWLs Robin Brasso, Nan McGuire, Gwynne Seidell, Cheryl Bingham, Kathie Piccagli, Marie Jobling, Alison Washburn, Glenda Hope at the Federal Building Human Chain demonstration

CARA both initiates legislation and supports other bills in the California legislature. They actively educate and support important legislation for seniors. We are fortunate that the voice of OWL SF is heard through CARA. Right now, at least four bills of major interest have passed in the legislature and are on the Governor's desk awaiting signature.

My personal favorite of the four bills waiting for signature is the Domestic Workers' Protection, AB 241, sponsored by Assemblymember Tom Ammiano. This bill passed the legislature last year and was vetoed by the Governor. This year it has passed the legislature again and your calls to Governor Brown are needed to urge him to sign it now.

Governor Brown's office: (916) 445-2841)

In our next OWL newsletter, we will be able to tell you about CARA's 10th Annual Convention and Celebration, to be held on October 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Sacramento. In the meantime, consider this an invitation to join the monthly San Francisco CARA CAT (Community Action Team) meeting, held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 1:00 pm, ILWU Building, 1188 Franklin Street, 4th Floor. Call Michael Lyon 415-215- 7575 or David Grant 415-563-6349 for further information.

—*Kathie Piccagli*

## Protecting California Reproductive Health Services AB154 & AB980

In addition to AB241 mentioned above, two other important bills on Governor Brown's desk are waiting for a signature: On Saturday, women's health care came under heavy attack yet again during Congressional budget debates and now the federal government shutdown over health care funding. Despite all of this, California is poised to be one of the only states to pass legislation to protect and expand access to reproductive health services.

AB 154 will expand the types of health professionals who can provide early abortions, ensuring that women obtain the care they need in their own communities from healthcare providers they know and trust.

AB 980 would require all health centers to be treated equally when it comes to building standards. Right now, unnecessary and biased regulations imposed on abortion providers are limiting access to quality care. It's simple — health centers that provide abortions should not be singled out for different treatment.

If you are concerned show Governor Brown that the shutdown won't keep us quiet. Let him know that AB 154 and AB 980 are critical to keeping California a leader in access to reproductive health services. Tell him to sign AB 154 and AB 980 into law today before October 13.

—*Margaret Lew*

# Political Advocacy Committee Update •••

## Political Advocacy for All

Educating and informing OWL members is an important part of the Political Advocacy Committee's job and this fall we are sponsoring two informational meetings: the September Ballot Measures meeting and the October 26<sup>th</sup> meeting which will feature Carroll Estes discussing the ever important topic of Social Security and Medicare. The committee has also devoted part of its monthly meetings brainstorming about how we can create an opportunity for all OWL members to become activists, helping to keep the voice of older women strong!

As part of every political advocacy newsletter update we will include at least one "Here's what you can do" opportunity to speak out for older women. For this issue we have chosen a national issue, the Chained CPI, and a local one, supporting City College.

The Chained CPI, as most of you know, is an alternative method of estimating cost of living increases for Social Security, so that over time, adopting the Chained CPI would result in a significant loss of income for older people.

Here's what you can do on the national level:  
Call your representative and say: "No Chained CPI for Social Security"

Nancy Pelosi: (202) 225-0100

Jackie Speier: (202) 225-3531

Locally, City College has offered hundreds of free classes in computer literacy, health, wellness, language and more to older people. City College is now under threat of loss of accreditation. City Attorney Dennis Herrera has sued to block accreditors from shuttering City College.

Here's what you can do:

Call Dennis Herrera and say: Keep up the pressure in support of City College

Dennis Herrera: (415) 554-4700

Chose one phone call or do both and become an OWL activist!

—*Melanie Grossman*

### Save the Date December OWL SF Holiday Party and Election of Board Members

Bring a potluck dish for six and Good Cheer!  
Optional: a wrapped gift for the grab bag to share with an OWL sister.

**Date and location to be announced by mail to all members and on the OWL website calendar.**



## Write a Post Card to Support City College of San Francisco

At the OWL SF meeting on September 28<sup>th</sup> postcards to Mayor Ed Lee were completed with the following words. Please take time to send a message yourself, if you have not already done so.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a SF resident / student at / alumni of City College of San Francisco. CCSF is one of the largest community colleges in the country, serving 85,000 students and providing courses in academic disciplines, career and technical education, English as Second Language, and much more. CCSF is a vital institution for San Francisco the provides irreplaceable and affordable pathways for many including:

Low-income and immigrant communities

Displaced workers

Veterans

Students in need of 2<sup>nd</sup> – and 3<sup>rd</sup> – chances

Students transferring to four-year institutions

Add your own comments and include your name and address. Mail your card to: Mayor Ed Lee, c/o Office of Education, San Francisco City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Pl. , San Francisco, CA 94102.

## OWL' s July Potluck Dishing with Friends

OWLs gathered to enjoy conversation, delicious dishes and good cheer at Mattie Alperon's lovely home again this July. Thanks Sheila for snapping these photos to remind us of the occasion!



Above: Esther Wong offers a toast. Below: Eunice Rosenberg, Ruth Strassner, Margaret Lew and Amy Hittner. Photos by Sheila Malkind.

## Always Active: Strong and Vital Throughout Life

**Save the Date**  
**November 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**10 AM to Noon**  
**Flood Building, Room 1185**

At November's OWL Members Meeting Valorie Villela, Executive Director of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Services, will bring us a wealth of information about maintaining our optimal health and vigor as we age. Valorie has won international awards for her leadership in working with senior citizens.

She will share with us little-known information about how our nutrition needs change with age, as well as some hidden traps awaiting us and how to avoid them with awareness and healthful eating. She teaches a class in this at City College of San Francisco.

Valorie will also inform us about the Always Active program, which is free, and is offered in a number of locations throughout the City. Always Active works with each senior in each group to maintain health, strength, balance and flexibility. Valorie will be accompanied by an instructor from this program who will lead those of us who wish to participate in a few minutes of these gentle movements. After surgery for a rotator cuff injury, plus both hip and knee replacements Valorie finds the Always Active program a vital part of her ability to enjoy life and work to the fullest. Plan to be there with us!

—*Glenda Hope*

## Celebrating the Life And Work of Glenda Hope A Legacy of Hope

On the evening of September 26<sup>th</sup> I and quite a few OWLs attended the celebration of our own Glenda Hope's considerable accomplishments and retirement: a Legacy of Hope. It was also a benefit for the San Francisco SafeHouse, a program devoted to helping women escaping prostitution, which Glenda and others have nurtured for 15 years.

I might add that Glenda is not just "our own" to us, OWLs but also to about 400 other attendees, who have known and worked with Glenda over the last forty years. I got a kick out of seeing friends, as well as meeting old friends I did not even know were connected to Glenda – such as the OWL member I had not seen for 10 years, and a teacher for whom I substitute taught 25 years ago.

It was fascinating to hear the speakers and see slide shows to learn about Glenda's forty years of accomplishments, often facing what might have been obstacles to others. What a feisty and determined woman – I'm glad she's on my side! There was a warmth, acceptance and peaceful energy in the gathering, which was truly a Legacy of Hope. It was a privilege to be there, and having Glenda in OWL's future is something to look forward to!

—*Kathie Piccagli*

## Frailty Screening Advised for Adults

According to an article in June issue of The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), Doctors should screen every patient older than 70 for frailty, which is "extraordinarily common, affecting 5 and 10 percent of those who are older than 70," said John Morley, MD, director of the division of geriatric medicine at St. Louis University, and lead author of the article.

Symptoms of frailty (not categorized as disabled) are patients who experience reduced strength and endurance, may have difficulty carrying out daily tasks and can be living with multiple medical problems.

Frailty can lead to increased death rates, poor function, and increased hospitalizations. Yet the article recommends doctors use a five-question screening tool that takes 15 seconds to administer, and includes questions focusing on fatigue, walking difficulty, weight loss, and health status. Once frailty is identified it can often be treated with exercise, nutritional supplements, and reducing inappropriate medication usage.

**From: The Nation's Health, August 2013.**

—*Sheila Malkind*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

**Nancy Ingwersen**  
**Nina Youkelson**



Left to right, barely seen are MaryAlice Reinmuller, Jane Martin, Trilla Jentzsch, Glenda Hope, Gail Kennedy, Carola Shepard.  
Photo by Marie Jobling.

## ***Perilous Times*, Fran Johns and a Discussion of Reproductive Choice**

We have had a number of emails and articles about the work of OWL SF member, Fran Moreland Johns, author, blogger, thinker, faith leader, and all around role model. She has been particularly involved with Compassion and Choices, advocates for improved end-of-life care and end-of-life choices, and now the abortion issue – in other words supporting choice throughout life. OWL SF also supports reproductive choice through our involvement with the Trust Women campaign.



Fran's latest book is *Perilous Times: An Inside Look at Abortion Before – and After – Roe v. Wade*. A principal concern now is that our country is back-pedaling to the dangerous time of fewer choices for women. One of Fran's objectives is that this book will stimulate discussion and thought around this issue. To that end, there will be a panel discussion on Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at the Commonwealth Club: *Women at Risk: What's Ahead for Reproductive Rights?*

Joining Fran Johns will be Lisa Lindefel, Board Member, NARAL Pro-Choice America Foundation; Scotty McLennan, Author, Dean for Religious Life, Stanford, Shanelle Matthews, Communications Strategist, ACLU, Northern California Office - Moderator.

Forty years after the Supreme Court guaranteed a woman's right to choose an abortion with *Roe v. Wade*, that right is facing challenges. Fran Moreland Johns' new book, *Perilous Times*, tells stories of a difficult struggle to maintain a woman's right to choose. How did we get here; where are we headed? Johns believes a reasonable dialogue is possible – and imperative. Come join the conversation with experts who bring unique, critical perspectives to one of the most divisive issues of our time.

Commonwealth Club, MLF: Health & Medicine, Location: SF Club Office, Time: 11:30 a.m. Check-in, Noon program, 1 p.m. book signing. Cost: \$20 non-members, \$8 members, \$7 students (with valid ID)

I hope others will join me at this event. I can take one other person at the member price, so let me know if you are interested.

—**Kathie Piccagli**

## **November 2013 Election Ballot Measures September OWL Meeting**

The annual Fall election and ballot initiative meeting held in the chapel at the Unitarian Universalist Church drew a small audience, perhaps mirroring the prediction of a small turnout for this November's election. Those who attended will be familiar with the ballot issues they vote on thanks to the presentations of the speakers.

Jill Fox, Outreach Manager, Department of Elections for the City and County of San Francisco, opened the program with an explanation of the ballot measures, defining Initiatives, Charter Amendments, Referendum and Declaration of Policy. After which, the following speakers presented arguments for and against the four San Francisco ballot measures:

### **Proposition A: Retiree's Health Care Trust Fund (Charter Amendment).**

For—Jess Montejano, Legislative Aid for Supervisor Mark Farrell  
Against—Marcy Berry, Vice Chair, Libertarian Party of San Francisco and San Francisco Business Owner.

### **Proposition B: San Franciscans for Parks, Jobs and Housing (Initiative).**

For—8 Washington St. Initiative, Bryan La Dow, Campaign Field Director for San Franciscans for Parks, Jobs and Housing

### **Proposition C: No Wall on the Waterfront (Referendum)**

Against—Jon Golinger, Campaign Director for No Wall on the Waterfront

### **Proposition D: Prescription Drug Purchasing (Declaration of Policy)**

For—John Baldo, Campaign Manager, Yes on Prop. D, Fair Drug Pricing Campaign  
Against—Terence Faulkner, Delegate to Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods.

Questions from the floor were taken and answered throughout the program.

—**Margaret Lew**

## **Mercy Killers**

*Mercy Killers*, sponsored by Healthy California and affiliates is a "raw, emotional, and devastatingly honest" one act play written and acted by Broadway actor Michael Milligan. Born of his personal experience, it points out the grave inadequacy of our health care system. There will likely be three San Francisco performances and one is scheduled on Thursday, November 14th, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin Street at 10:00 am. Tickets are \$10 and are available at SDA (415-546-1333) or CARA 415-550-0828.

## Going My Way

“Going My Way” is a special OWL program for members who want to meet new people, explore new places in San Francisco, and share new experiences with other OWL members.

Through ‘Going My Way’, any OWL member can plan an event of interest to them and invite other members to come along. Simply call or send an email to Coordinator Diana Merlot (650-756-0755, or [GPDianal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:GPDianal@sbcglobal.net)) with your activity, choose a date and Diana will send out the information to the OWL membership.

So far, groups have been to the Mission to view murals; strolled among the outdoor sculptures of Mark de Savero at Crissy Field; and hosted a book signing with OWL member Helen Fama, who wrote “While I Still Have My Marbles.” In September, a small group of OWLS toured the recently re-opened Cayuga Park.

—*Melanie Grossman*

### September Outing: Cayuga Park

Several OWL members, including Glenda Hope, Melanie Grossman, Eunice Rosenberg, Amy Hittner, and I enjoyed an eye-opening tour of the remodeled Cayuga Park in the Outer Mission, close by the Excelsior neighborhood.

I first visited the park in 2006 and saw a huge open grassy space, with Interstate 280 and the BART tracks noisily looming overhead. An artist friend, knowing my interest in folk art, wanted me to see the many hand-carved wooden sculptures that had been created there by its gardener Demetrio Braceros, known as Demi, beginning in 1986. Before that, the park was considered by neighborhood people a depressing and scary place that attracted gang activity. Demi began creating the sculptures when storms felled park trees, and felt it was his duty to make the park a special place, with delightful trails, unusual plantings, and figurines he carved into people and animals. In the process, the park opened up to neighborhood folks, and even beyond. I returned to the park in 2008 to show it to an OWL friend, Amy Hittner, and we resolved to bring our sister members to enjoy it, and with the help of Diana Merlo, it happened. Now, after a \$9 million renovation, it is an open, enchanting place, beginning with the whimsical metal gate by Eric Powell, there are a beautiful clubhouse with classes for all ages, a children’s playground, and basketball and tennis courts. I met people who live nearby who regularly bring their children, grandchildren, and their pets. But it’s really the genius of one man, now retired, whose love for nature and humanity that makes Cayuga Park such a special experience.

—*Sheila Malkind*



Demi Braceros’s sculpture welcomes all to Cayuga Park. Photo by Sheila Malkind.



Amy Hittner poses with Cayuga park sculptures. Photo by Sheila Malkind.

## Calendar

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

October 1-2 Monday-Tuesday — **CARA Convention**, Hilton Hotel, Arden Way, Sacramento

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

October Monday — **Going My Way** (see above, this page)

October 26 Saturday — **OWL General Meeting**, 10:00-Noon (see cover page for details)

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

November 23 Saturday — **OWL General Meeting**, 10:00-Noon (see page 5 for details)

December 2 Monday — **OWL Board Meeting**, 870 Market, room 1185, 4:00-6:00pm

December Saturday — **OWL Holiday Party & General Meeting**, 870 Market, room 1185, 11:00-2:00pm  
(date to be announced)

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 San Francisco Chapter, 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 SF OWL 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.

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