

The SAGE

The Newsletter of SAGE of South Florida

December 2020

SEASON'S GREETINGS

What's the holiday season without holiday music? This time of the year we're bound to hear Perry Como croon, "There's no place like home for the holidays." After being sequestered in our homes for the past nine months, we've come to realize it's been no holiday. Mask-wearing and social distancing have both been an imposition on us all, but we must selflessly do our part to ensure that the only thing we're spreading this year is holiday cheer.

When we hear Judy Garland sing her plangent prognostication, "Someday soon, we all will be together, if the fates allow," it resonates with particular meaning for our current predicament. With vaccine approvals and other medical breakthroughs on the horizon, we hopefully will see a return to normalcy in the coming year. So, for now, remember to keep a song in your heart, stay well, and have a safe holiday season.

SAGE ON THE BORDER (SOBA) – LIVE, IN-PERSON!

On November 2nd, facilitators Frank Piasecki and Jean Arthurton hosted an in-person SOBA meeting at the re-opened Volen Center. This was the first "live" meeting held since March when the Center closed and SOBA meetings were moved on-line to the Zoom platform. Participants wore masks, practiced social-distancing, and followed other required COVID precautions. If you feel comfortable going out, in-person SOBA meetings are scheduled for **Monday, Dec 14th and 28th, 11am, at The Volen Center, 1515 West Palmetto Park Boulevard, Boca Raton 33486.** SOBA meetings on Zoom are scheduled for Monday, December 7th and 21st, at 11am. Please consult your SAGE eblasts for the most accurate schedule of the weekly SOBA format.



NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Jefy Gaines and Paul McNamara

have joined the

SAGE of South Florida Board of Directors.

Welcome to the Board, Gentlemen!



SAGE BIRTHDAYS FOR THIS MONTH

The SAGE Board would like to acknowledge the following members whose birthdays are this month as well as any other member whose birthday that we don't have.
If, when you renewed your membership or became a new member you did not give us your birthday, you may call the office and leave the information at 954.634.7219 or e-mail us @ sagesofl@gmail.com.

First Name	Last Name	Birthday	First Name	Last Name	Birthday
DAVID P	DURHAM	Dec-03	BENJAMIN H	CONKLIN	Dec-19
ALLEN	SANDLER	Dec-03	DAN	FOUNTAIN	Dec-19
ROBERT	RICHARDS	Dec-07	MICHAEL	MARTIN	Dec-20
TOM	SLUBERSKI	Dec-07	PETER	THYNE	Dec-22
BARBARA	VARGA	Dec-08	JOHN	HASANDRAS	Dec-24
GARY	RESNICK	Dec-11	JERRY	MURPHY	Dec-24
NATALIE	LAWRENCE	Dec-13	PATRICK S	VIDA	Dec-26
JERRY	GANZ	Dec-14	HUGH	RANCE	Dec-30
ED	SCHELL	Dec-16	CAROLINE	LETO	Dec-31
JERRY	WARD	Dec-18			

5 Year Anniversaries

RICHARD MAGGIORE

10 Year Anniversaries

CHARLES CHRISTOPHER

If you have had an anniversary with SAGE for either 5, 10, 15 or 20 years and you have not received your pin, please call the SAGE office (954.634.7219) to pick it up.

SAGE OF SOUTH FLORIDA

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Secretary: Ken Goodman
Assistant Secretary: Michael Vita
Treasurer: Allen Churchman

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

John Chandler
 Jefy Gaines
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 Marilyn Lamkay
 Kathy Macchio
 Paul McNamara
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Jean Arthurton Gene Majka
 Hank Brooks Sonny Miller
 Frank Cavanaugh Ken Moore
 Philip Collier Frank Piasecki
 Marc Flanagan Norma Wingo
 Jean Johnson

Lifetime Members

**BOB ADAMS – ROBERT J BOZEK – GEORGE CASTRATARO – DONALD CURIALE - MATT FARBER - PAUL FASANA – JODI A FISCHER
 MARC FLANAGAN – MICHAEL GAGNE -JEFY GAINES - JOHN GAMBINO - RICHARD GILMER - KENNETH GOODMAN
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 BRETT PEELER - HUGH RANCE - CLAYTON RANEY - GARY RESNICK - WAYNE SCHREBE – RICHARD SCHWARZ
 ANN SMITH - ALLEN SPIESS - ALAN R SUTHERLAND - STEVE THAYER - TONY TSAGRIS - RAQUEL C WHITE**

SAGE MISSION STATEMENT: SAGE of South Florida (Senior Action in a Gay Environment) is a non-profit organization which seeks to enrich the lives of the GLBT senior community through membership inclusive of age, gender, race, nationality, and religion. We believe this can be accomplished by sponsoring social alternatives, by providing personal interaction, by offering educational opportunities to deal with the special needs of aging, and by promoting contact with the isolated and home-bound persons of our community. SAGE was founded in 1994 as a Florida “not for profit” corporation (Federal Tax-Exempt Status of 501 (c) 3, allowing tax-deductible donations.

SAGE EDITORIAL POLICY SAGE welcomes contributors to the newsletter. An author may request their entry be “anonymous”. However, the submission, as received by SAGE, must be accompanied by the full name and address of the author. Items will be published at our discretion, and such publication does not constitute endorsement by SAGE of South Florida. If we feel that we cannot publish a submission anonymously, we will contact the author. We reserve the right to edit articles for length, clarity, or standards of decency. We do not accept paid ads in the newsletter.

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REGULARLY SCHEDULED SAGE-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING SAGE ACTIVITIES

Due to the COVID-19 virus restrictions, SAGE of South Florida has canceled special events and suspended most regularly scheduled activities for December. SAGE members will be notified when **when SAGE Women's Lunch; SAGE Men's Night Out; SAGE Computer Class; SAGE Lunch & Learn; See You at the Movies and Social Lites** monthly social activities resume. Until then, Be Safe and Stay Healthy!

THE ROUND TABLE

This CoEd group, sponsored jointly with The Fort Lauderdale Prime Gentlemen, is meeting remotely using the Zoom platform to discuss contemporary topics and ideas from **2:30-3:30pm** on the **second and fourth Monday of each month**. Sessions have a moderator who presents a brief background on the discussion topic chosen for the session. The topic scheduled for December 14 is **Round Table Year in Review**, presented by **Gene Majka**. **PLEASE NOTE: DUE TO THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY, THERE WILL BE NO MEETING ON DECEMBER 28.** Please email Ed Slough at **WILDHYBRID@aol.com** if you would like to be on the mailing list to receive notice of upcoming topics and background material for the sessions.

SAGE CO-ED DROP-IN

Michael Gagne & Kathy Macchio



The Co-Ed Drop-In meets every **Thursday at 3:00pm** on the Zoom video-conferencing platform. If you don't have access to video-conferencing devices, you can participate by calling in to the meeting on your cell phone. Check your emails from SAGE for the weekly announcement and link to the meeting. Discover SAGE of South Florida's newest discussion group. Everyone is welcome!



SAGE ON THE BORDER/ ALTERNATIVES

Frank Piasecki & Jean Arthurton



This Co-Ed discussion group meets every Monday at 11:00am at the Volen Center in Boca Raton. Now, because of the COVID-19 virus, the group will be meeting remotely via Zoom video conferencing. If you don't have access to video-conferencing devices, you can participate by calling in to the meeting on your cell phone. **If you would like to be invited to the SAGE SOBA Zoom meeting, send your request to: virtual_soba_group@aol.com.** Everyone is welcome.

PLEASE NOTE: SOBA NOW MEETS IN-PERSON ON ALTERNATE MONDAYS. CONSULT THE SAGE WEEKLY EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE DATES.



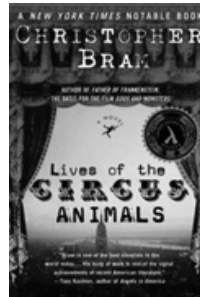
NOTES FROM THE MEN'S DROP-IN

Carl Barton

SAGE Men's Drop-In meets every **Wednesday at 1:00pm**, right now temporarily via Zoom online or by phone. Each week before the meeting we send an eblast with the meeting ID and the Password. Join our Zoom meetings to hear what's going on with some of our members and special guests. They introduce many interesting topics. So far, the Zoom meetings have been very well attended. Everyone is always welcome to participate in the meetings and join in on the discussion. Thank you all for your continued support of our Zoom meetings. Hopefully, we will be getting back together again in our normal setting early next year. Thanks to **Jefy Gaines** for a great job co-hosting. Enjoy the holidays and stay safe!

SAGE BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Philip Collier



Straight and gay lives share the stage in **Christopher Bram's** good-natured Broadway valentine – **Lives of the Circus Animals: A Novel**. Skillfully weaving together a cast that includes actors, writers, personal assistants, and a drama critic for The New York Times, **Bram** expertly blends the themes of AIDS, sexual addiction, and requited love into a mix of slick humor and satire steeped in the authentic details of theater life. With the smooth machinations of a Feydeau farce, the progresses, regressions, and couplings over the course of ten days and nights lead steadily to a big birthday penthouse bash where the secrets and heartaches of these many unfulfilled romances, unions, and associations unfold and where the Irish Catholic, pistol-packing mother of the birthday boy causes even more mayhem. A winner of the Lambda Literary Award for Gay Fiction, **Lives of the Circus Animals** will be discussed via Zoom by the SAGE Book Group on **Saturday, December 12, from 11am to Noon.**

IN MEMORIAM

SAGE of South Florida mourns the loss of long-time member Emma L. Hinman, who died on October 21st at the age of 99. For many years Emma was a one-person sunshine committee, faithfully sending Birthday and Get Well cards to the women of SAGE. Emma received the SAGE 'Volunteer of the Year' award to acknowledge her dedication. SAGE extends its condolences to Emma's family and friends. She will be missed by all who knew her.





SAGE Health Tips

Gene Majka, APRN

Welcome. If you have a topic, comment or questions, please send an email to sagesofl@gmail.com.

Loss or Found?

Researchers have shown in many studies that loss of independence is one of the top senior fears. Loss of independence includes memory loss. As we grow older, we become concerned about our mental abilities. We want to carry out our daily routines, be self-sufficient and not worry about our memory and, in particular, dementia. Almost 40% of us will experience some form of memory loss after we turn 65 years old. The chances are **still unlikely** that we have dementia. For the most part, our memory loss is mild enough that we can still live our day-to-day lives without interruption. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that after we turn 60 years old, **5 to 8%** of us will live with dementia at some point. So, let's look at memory loss and just forgetfulness. The following are changes in three categories of memory functions.

Normal Aging Cognitive Changes

- Trouble remembering names and finding words in conversations are very common as is verbal fluency, so it takes longer to "get the words out."
- Language comprehension is preserved (understanding the rules) as are vocabulary (semantic memory) and syntax (the way in which words are put together).
- Problem-solving skills slow.
- Abstract thinking remains normal but becomes slowed with new tasks or divided attention ("multi-tasking").
- A slowing of the speed of cognitive processing and reaction time ("hitting the buzzer") occurs with aging.

MCI (Mild Cognitive Impairment)

- Forgets recent events, repeats the same questions and stories, forgets the names of close friends and family members, forgets appointments or planned events, forgets conversations, and misplaces items often.
- Problems with saying desired words. Difficulty understanding written or verbal (spoken to) information.
- Easily distracted. Needs to write reminders to do things or else will forget.
- May struggle, but can complete complex tasks such as paying bills, taking medications, shopping, cooking, household cleaning, driving.
- Has many important memory impairments **but can still function independently**.

Dementia

Same symptoms of MCI plus as dementia progresses the following will occur:

- **Unable to perform complex daily tasks (paying bills, taking medications, shopping, and driving).**
- **Loses insight or awareness of memory loss.**
- **Displays poor judgment.**
- **Declines in rational thinking and ability to problem-solve.**
- **Memory, language, and cognition become so impaired that self-care tasks can no longer be performed without assistance from another person.**

According to the American Academy of Neurology, the best thing you can do to maintain your brain health is to exercise (particularly aerobic exercise) twice a week.

Although there is no clear-cut proven link that doing any of the following will help slow memory and thinking skill decline, these are general recommendations for maintaining good health:

- Maintain good blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and blood glucose levels.
- Stop smoking and avoid excess drinking.
- Eat a healthy diet -- one high in antioxidants and olive oil -- which lowers the risk of dementia.
- Maintain appropriate weight.
- Stay positive, find happiness, and be grateful.
- Reduce stress.
- Get an adequate amount of sleep.
- Exercise your body (and include aerobic exercises which increase your heart rate such as swimming, biking, or walking), by strength training, stretching exercises, and balance training.
- Exercise your brain (do puzzles, quizzes, card games, read, learn a new language or play a new instrument, learn a new skill or hobby, take a class).
- Stay socially active (share hobbies with like-minded people, join clubs (SAGE), volunteer).

I know it is difficult to do the above activities during our pandemic. Recently, we had our first in-person SAGE SOBA meeting. I will be truthful. I really struggled to get cleaned up, and get out of the house and drive to Boca. Once there and for the rest of the day I felt alive for the first time in months and felt that way for days. Zoom is great but it does not replace getting out and feeling the presence of and communicating with others. Stay safe and enjoy life today.

References and Resources:

The differences between normal aging and dementia

<https://alzheimer.ca/en/about-dementia/do-i-have-dementia/differences-between-normal-aging-dementia>

Memory Problems: What is Normal Aging and what is not?

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/11826-memory-problems-what-is-normal-aging-and-what-is-not>

Do Memory Problems Always Mean Alzheimer's disease?

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/do-memory-problems-always-mean-alzheimers-disease>

Is it Alzheimer's or just signs of aging?

https://www.alz.org/national/documents/aa_brochure_10warnsigns.pdf

SAGE cares because YOU care about your health.

Please always seek advice from your physician/nurse practitioner (HP's).

Thank you to my editors Ann Smith GNP (who suggested this topic), and Martin Horowitz, MD.