



# Alameda County Leather Corps Newsletter

February 2017: Vol 25, Issue 2

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## Thoughts from our Titleholders

**Aisia Fletcher**  
**Ms. Alameda County Leather 2016**

We have seen me travel to D.C. for MAL and Vegas for DNA. With all that traveling it feels as if I haven't been home long enough. I had my leather and lace event at the White Horse that was throwback to elementary school Valentine's Day Parties and all you had were sweets. The charity I chose was Lincoln Families specifically the section that deals with literacy in West Oakland with black children. As an avid reader, a little-known fact is I am a trained literacy tutor and I have always wanted to work with encouraging literacy among black youth.



Staying home for my event doesn't really count since it is my event, so the on the 18th of February I had my chance to go out and show some love to the ISE's Empress 38 Tarzanna. I met Tarzanna before she had won, when she came to the Mr and Ms ACL 25th contest. Shortly after I had won, she won and I have been trying to catch up to her events ever since.

They hosted a Country Hoedown Showdown and you could win the title of Mr. Ho Down and Miz Cuntry. I went to this event and participated and had a blast. I performed Fast Cars and Freedom by Rascal Flatts. Why is that important because I saw Rascal Flatts for the first time in concert with our very own Denise (my leather buddy when I was pledging ACLC).

So far, the only things I have planned are the Mr. SF Leather Contest and then I am traveling down to San Diego and Los Angeles for their respective leather events. If something else should pop up on the calendar I plan to remain local until after IMsL.

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**Ray Middling**  
**Mr. Alameda County Leather 2016**

In conjunction with the American Leather Family, ACLC hosted a Beer Bust at the Lone Star in San Francisco.

My “Family to Family” fundraiser for the Alameda County Food Bank went well even with unpredictable weather.

I'd like to thank not only the staff of the Lone Star but also ACLC members Jim, Pony, Steve, Randy, and Trey for helping me with the beer bust!



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## **Meet the Beneficiaries!**

### **Lincoln Family Services**



In 1883, Rebecca McWade, our founder, opened her home for what would become the first racially integrated orphanage in Northern California and began Lincoln's legacy of responding to the needs of children, youth and families. Today, they reach more than 4,600 kids and families annually and our track record is proven: kids attend school, learn to read and stay with their families. With Lincoln, they beat the odds, realizing their potential, and build successful academic, work and life skills.

Since their founding, Lincoln has impacted the lives of children and families through evolving programs. While their programs and services have grown and changed, their mission and values remain rooted in the belief that ending cycles of poverty and trauma depends upon addressing the unique needs of children and families to build on their strengths and propel them to success.

Find out more at <http://lincolnfamilies.org>

## Alameda County Community Food Bank

Alameda County Community Food Bank has been in business since 1985 ... with a vision toward a day when they can go out of business. ACCFB is the hub of a vast collection and distribution network that provides food for 240 nonprofit agencies in Alameda County.



**ALAMEDA COUNTY  
COMMUNITY  
FOOD BANK**

In 2015, the Food Bank distributed 25 million meals -- more than half of the food was fresh fruits and vegetables. Their goal is to ensure every food insecure child, adult and senior in Alameda County knows where their next meal is coming from, by 2018.

Through the network of 240 strategically placed member agencies (food pantries, soup kitchens, child-care centers, senior centers, after-school programs and other community-based organizations) as well as their own direct-distribution programs, the Food Bank distributes enough food to provide 540,000 meals weekly.

Their systematic approach to alleviating hunger includes:

One of California's busiest – and most efficient – emergency food helplines

A multilingual outreach effort which serves as the blueprint for programs across the nation

Dynamic hunger and nutrition education programs

An innovative advocacy program that promotes policies to benefit low-income residents.

Find out more at <http://www.accfb.org>

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## A Culture of Service

**Mr. Allan**

**Sergeant at Arms 2007-2008**

**Sergeant at Arms 2008-2009**

**Webmaster 2008-2010**

**Webmaster 2014-Present**

**Secretary 2014-2015**

**Secretary 2015-2016**

**Secretary 2016-2017**



There are many types of service--sexual, domestic, and commercial—to name a few. But for me, ACLC is built around community service.

What *is* “community service”, anyway?

To me, community service means contributing one's resources (time, money, effort) to one's community for many reasons.

I choose to perform my service with ACLC to contribute back to Alameda County, because that's where my paycheck has come from for the last 15 years. The company I work for is headquartered in Fremont, and many of my clients are in Alameda County.

In gratitude for providing me with the means to pay for a roof over my head and food on the table, I donate time, money, and effort towards ACLC, so that I'm not just sucking money out of the community without giving something back.

For the last three years, my community service has been to serve on ACLC's Board of Directors. This is my preferred method of disseminating a Culture of Service: leading by example.

## What is the Culture of Service?

The Culture (some might say cult) of Service, however, is very much an Old Guard concept, yet it still applies today to the leather community in general, and ACLC in specific.

In the Culture of Service, one contributes to try and repay the debt of having a community to belong to.

Sometimes, this means paying a personal debt forward, performing a service for others because at some point in the past, someone has performed a service for or assisted you.

In the Old Guard (before my time, despite some people's thinking I must be more than old enough to have been around then), one "earned one's leathers" by performing service to another individual or group until one had performed sufficient service for a sufficient amount of time that the community deemed that person worthy of being recognized as a full member of the group.

While this concept started off as sexual service, it evolved to mean general domestic service, personal service, and eventually community service.

## Why participate in the Culture of Service?

In the Culture of Service, one performs service for the benefit of others. In Judaism, there is a similar concept called "making a mitzvah", in which one performs a service for others without expectation of recompense or even recognition.

*Why perform a mitzvah, then? I hear you cry, What's in it for me?*

Because in Jewish Ethics, *making a mitzvah improves the condition of the entire world just a little bit*, in one specific place. If you're a science fiction fan, think of making a mitzvah as doing one's part to reduce entropy in your little corner of the universe.

If just one person makes a mitzvah/performs a service, the world's condition is improved a tiny amount...but what happens when *two* people make a mitzvah?

How about *six* people?

How about *60* people?

The more people who join in, the more the beneficial effect begins to ripple outwards to the community, the region, the nation, the world.

## ACLC and the Culture of Service

ACLC provides many service opportunities throughout the year (in fact, multiple opportunities per month). We talk about these opportunities at General Assemblies, at events, at parties, in every Committee or Board meeting, in email, on Facebook, and on our Website.

I am saddened to observe that many of the newer members in our community (and a few of the older members) don't seem to be, well, *getting the hint* that their services are needed.

Oh, they may attend an *occasional* General Assembly or go to an *occasional* ACLC fundraising event, but they're not helping to run the club, work on committees, or stage events.

In short: they're not *contributing*. (And I don't mean financially; I mean in terms of *service*.)

And here's where I believe the mental disconnect comes in

- ACLC is *not* a “belonging to” club whose logo one wears on one's vest to brag of the affiliation.
- ACLC *is* a “hands-on” club whose members are expected to pitch in for every event they possibly can, to assist in raising money to help those most in need in Alameda County.

Look around you at the next ACLC meeting or event, and ask yourself, *What has each of these folks done for ACLC over the past six months? What have I done for ACLC over the past six months?*

## Consequences of Failure

Right now, the Board of Directors is trying to gauge if we have enough members who will volunteer to help with SF Pride, Folsom, and Dore Alley beverage booths this year. The income from those booth operations pays for the club's overhead expenses.

If we drop the booths, that will mean as much as 30% of our annual income (perhaps more) will need to go to pay for the costs of running ACLC rather than being donated to our beneficiaries.

Over the last five years, booth participation has declined rapidly, resulting in a smaller number of people trying to do all the work that 25 to 30 people used to do every year. Folks, 6 or 7 people can't sustain these booths. We need the entire club—*all 60+ of us!*—to pitch in for every single booth, every single year.

It's that, or watch the Corps shut down for lack of service participation, because we won't be able to sustain our own overhead costs.

Similarly, over the last decade, there's been a shift from the Board guiding the Club in service opportunities to the Board working themselves to exhaustion for the Club because members aren't pitching in to work on committees, run events, or work in beverage booths.

## Rebuilding the Culture of Service

So how do we go about rebuilding our Culture of Service? If you have any ideas, please approach me or any other Board member; we'll be happy to listen.

***Editor's Note: An online volunteer sign-up sheet is ready to accept your commitment to work at least one shift for our SF Pride beverage booth. Go to <https://www.volunteersignup.org/EHEFY>***



## Santa's Service Auction

On December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Santa auctioned off some of the hottest buys of the season: services and items from members and friends of ACLC!

This year the theme of service prompted a trial change in the name. Not all were comfortable with the change, feel free to reply to the editor if you have thoughts or feelings about this.

The party was wonderful; a true "Winter Onesie Land"!



*Thank you to Larry, owner of the Turf, for hosting us!*



## White Elephant Gift Exchange

Once again, The World Famous Turf Club hosted us for ACLC's annual gift exchange; this year on Thursday, January 12, 2017.

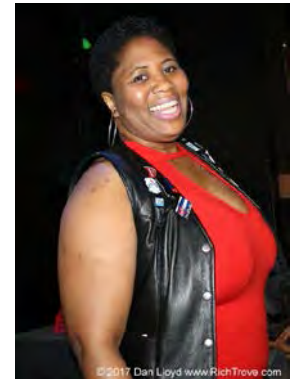
The gifts were awesome and a great time was had by all!

Many gifts were traded back and forth to the maximum numbers of swipes. Everyone went home with something...maybe not so much what they wanted, but something remarkable.

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## Leather and Lace

An elegant affair was produced on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017 by our own Ms. Alameda County Leather, Aisia! This Valentine-themed event at the White Horse bar in Oakland featured good food, entertainment, a silent auction and a raffle. Additionally, there were wandering vendors with treats for your special Valentine.





# Family to Family Beer Bust

On the same day in cities and towns across the country the Leather Community organized via the American Leather Family to benefit local food banks. From our family at ACLA to Alameda County families in need.

Ours was produced by Mr. Alameda County Leather 2016, Ray Middling, as a beer bust at the Lone Star in San Francisco.



*Our special thanks to Charlie, one of the owners and bartenders, for hosting us!*



## Upcoming Events

### Thursday, March 9, 2017: General Assembly Meeting

Come join us for our monthly meeting, to find out how much we raised at our previous two events, details on the St. Patrick Pups event, signups for the SF Pride Booth, and more!

**Time:** 7:30 PM

**Location:** BAYC/Our Place, 22245 Main Street, Suite 200, Hayward, CA 94541

### Sunday, March 12, 2017: Storage Unit Inventory

Please come help us inventory the storage unit...now with *less extraneous stuff* because we've tossed out all the old items we're no longer using! The more people who show up, the faster we can get the job done!

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

**Location:** All Safe Storage (Unit 699), 15 Cannery Court, Hayward, CA

### Monday, March 13, 2017: Events Committee Meeting

Members and their guests are welcome to attend our monthly Events Committee meeting to help plan and execute our fundraising events! This month, we're meeting at Buffalo Bill's Brewery. Show up at 7:00 PM to order food, and the meeting will start at 7:30 PM.

**Time:** Order at 7:00 PM, Meeting at 7:30 PM

**Location:** Buffalo Bill's Brewery, 1082 B St, Hayward, CA 94541

### Sunday, March 19, 2017: St. Patrick's Pups!

Calling all pups, dogs, handlers and dog catchers for a playful afternoon of fun, food, entertainment, raffles and fisting the leprechaun!

**Time:** 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

**Location:** The World Famous Turf Club, 22519 Main St, Hayward, CA 94541

### Thursday, March 23, 2017: ACLC Education Night

Our quarterly education program. Check the website for details!

**Time:** 7:30 PM

**Location:** BAYC/Our Place, 22245 Main Street, Suite 200, Hayward, CA 94541

### Sunday, March 26, 2017: Contest Committee Meeting

Members and their guests are welcome to attend our monthly Contest Committee meeting to help plan and execute this year's Alameda County Leather Contest!

**Time:** 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

**Location:** BAYC/Our Place, 22245 Main Street, Suite 200, Hayward, CA 94541

## Club Committees

As the saying goes, “Many hands make light work.” We’re still searching for members to join our committees! Please consider joining a committee today; just contact the chair (first person listed under each committee below) and we’ll get you started!

- **Newsletter and Public Relations:** Lady Cynthia, Mr. Allan
- **Events:** Denise McLeod, Asia Fletcher, Ray Middling
- **Contest:** Kim Croteau, Ray Middling, Asia Fletcher, Jay Williams, Uncle Drew
- **Education:** Ray Middling
- **Bylaws and Policies:** Mr. Allan, Lady Cynthia, Jay Williams, Randy Hensley
- **Membership & Logo:** Uncle Drew

Thank you for reading this issue!

The newsletter can be found on the website.

Remember, all members are welcome to submit articles and photos!

Your Editrix,

Lady Cynthia

[newsletter@acleather.org](mailto:newsletter@acleather.org)

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## Alameda County Leather Corps – 2016-2017 Board of Directors

Mr. ACL 2016 .....	Ray Middling .....	<a href="mailto:mracl@acleather.org">mracl@acleather.org</a>
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Members at Large .....	Trey Fletcher, Uncle Drew.....	<a href="mailto:membersatlarge@acleather.org">membersatlarge@acleather.org</a>

To email entire board ..... [board@acleather.org](mailto:board@acleather.org)