



Alameda County Leather Corps Newsletter

July 2018: Vol 26, Issue 4

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From the Editor

Mr. Allan

I am devastated to report that our club's Lady Cynthia passed away suddenly in June.

With a broken heart--because I miss her terribly--I have resumed editorship of the newsletter.

Also, I have agreed to step back into the role of Sergeant at Arms for the remainder of this board year, to assist the Corps during this time of loss.

Mr. Allan



President's Moment: Lady Cynthia

Nyna Kaiser

There are some phone calls that we instinctively know are Not Good.

I received such a call on a sunny Saturday morning from Mr. Allan, with the news of Lady Cynthia's passing, which he had just seen on Facebook that morning.

The initial response I blurted out to him is not printable here, but was heartfelt and honest, and it took quite a while for the terrible news to sink in and become real for both of us.

It is with a heavy heart that I announce the Corps' untimely loss of Lady Cynthia, who died of an apparent heart attack on 6/28/18.

Lady Cynthia was a valued member of ACLC and the board, serving as our Sergeant at Arms for the last couple of years.

She recently gave a kickass demonstration of basic and advanced rope technique at one of our Education Nights, which attendees are still talking about (in a good way).

There was a lovely memorial celebration of her life on Sunday 7/14/18 at her home in Hayward, hosted by her husband Yoyo and their boy Nikki.

A number of ACLC members and friends, including myself, Alex McGowen, Joan Norry, Denise McLeod, Mr. Allan, Randy Hensley, and Trey Fletcher were in attendance.

We were all blown away by the many stories and anecdotes of Cynthia's life as not just a leather dominatrix, but also as a personal and community mentor, ombudsman, and friend to all.

When we discussed what photo to run of Lady Cynthia, Mr. Allan was quite firm that this photo, of Lady Cynthia and Yoyo doing what they loved for ACLC, providing service with a smile during one of our beer busts at the SF Eagle, was the most appropriate...and I agree.

Lady Cynthia also edited our newsletter, seeking out and creating content which she then passed to Mr. Allan for final placement and formatting. As Sergeant at Arms, she served on our Bylaws Committee, and was part of the group that helped create the latest Bylaws changes currently under discussion by the membership.

Our hearts and thoughts go out to Yoyo and Nikki at this dark time, and we hope they know that their ACLC family will continue to be here for them, as they always have been for us.

Mistress Nyna
President, ACLC



From Mr. Alameda County Leather 2017

Steve "Ox" Geist

Whee! It's been a busy couple of months since the last newsletter with major events hitting every other week. Since we last met in print, I've been to Smokeout in Las Vegas, the Golden Dildeaux Awards, International Ms Leather / International Ms Bootblack, the Northwest Leather Celebration, International Mr. Leather, and the San Francisco Pride Parade. I've won an award, bottomed to the IRS, gone to Chicago to compete at IML, and carried the leather pride flag in the parade.

It may not be a Major Award from Fra-Gee-Lay, (Go watch A Christmas Story if that didn't make sense.) but I won a Golden Dildeaux Award for being Seabiscuit, aka, the "Horse-Hung Stud." In total, ACLC members took six of the gilded plywood peckers, but mine's the biggest! Congratulations all around in helping the Golden Gate Guards raise about \$3,400 for the Positive Resource Center, formerly known as the AIDS Emergency Fund.

The wild week for #thatthingwedoinmay is over. I joined a brotherhood of only 1900 or so men that have ever had the honor to stand on the stage at IML in the past 40 years. It's an energizing and daunting experience, to say the least. This year's was the largest "class" ever with 71 titleholders and 4 bootblacks in a separate competition from around the world competing, so we all knew the odds were not in our favor. At the very beginning of Sunday's portion of the contest, 51 of us were to be knocked out, leaving just the top 20 to continue.

After the twentieth name was called, my first feeling was "Damn, didn't make it" followed immediately by "Whew!" As much as I'd liked the idea of being selected as IML 2018, I didn't actually want it, as it's a huge imposition upon one's life. Last year's IML racked up 118,000 flight miles traveling the world. Technically, the only requirement is to return to Chicago next year, but it doesn't look good to take the title then do nothing for the year, so spending much of your life on the road for the year is a given.

Now back to regular life as an inconspicuous titleholder for a couple more months. I'm saddened that I won't be able to pass the title to someone else later this year, but that's a rant for another day. In purely selfish terms, I've done pretty much everything I was hoping to do in my title year. I helped raise a few thousand dollars which will make a difference in peoples' lives, I won a Golden Dildeaux Award, and I made all of the leather that I wore at my IML judging interview. Even though I may not be an "active" titleholder for much longer, I've got a project in mind that addresses new and changing issues related to consent in BDSM situations, so I'm not planning to just stop trying to make a difference.

This is probably the last time we'll meet in print, so a few parting thoughts:

- Life is a participation event – show up.
- Be your genuine and authentic self – be the best you that you can.
- If you don't like the news, go out and make some of your own.

Yours in leather,

Steve "Ox" Geist

Mr. Alameda County Leather 2017



State of the Club

Nyna Kaiser

If you have much, give of your wealth. If you have little, give of your heart.

-- Arab proverb.

President Obama's plea to remake America through service in 2009, motivated HarperCollins to publish a book entitled *Spirit of Service: Your Daily Stimulus for Making A Difference*. Check it out for 365 ways to perform service!

If you worked at Pride in the booth, Thank You!

Also, a reminder that you can designate ACLC as your beneficiary whenever you shop on Amazon by going to <http://smile.amazon.com> A small portion of each purchase that you make will be donated to ACLC

Donate stuff you no longer need such as book, clothes to the BAYC or others.

As for me, I have been back doing this service thing we do in Alameda County for about 6 months on the board. Yes, time does fly when you are having fun and enjoying others. I am enjoying working with the board, membership and community.

However, times are changing, and our ability to do it all is also changing. In March, I convened a meeting of multiple past presidents of ACLC to help decide the future of the club. Some hard decisions were made.

Among the tough decisions: our titleholders have completed their title year as of July, since we are not having a contest this year.

Not having a contest is both sad and regrettable, since to date, Ms. Alameda County Leather has been the longest continuous running female leather title in Northern California.



*ACLC Past Presidents at the March gathering:
[Top Row] Den Calkins, Joan Norry, Fawn Luck, Kate Danae, Wyatt Gale
[Bottom Row] Jason Williams, Sean O'Banion, Nyna Kaiser, JJ Ferrra.*

We have performed a Member survey of interest for future activities at the General Assembly meetings, but please keep letting us know what you'd like to do (thanks to Alex for doing the survey).

We've already planned out the period of July through September, with socials, education, restructuring of ACLC in the coming year, and our 25th Club Anniversary. Our August meeting will have voting on bylaws changes to enable the club to restructure itself, as well as voting (a month early) on a new board.

The Anniversary Party will be by invitation only, and more details are coming soon. I think you'll be pleased with what the committee has planned!

We've had some great education already this year, including a Saturday at the World Famous Turf Club with multiple presenters (many thanks to Joan Norry!), Rope Bondage by Lady Cynthia, and recently Kink on a Dime or a Dollar, by Ray, Nyna and Lady Cynthia.

About that last session...it turns out you can teach an old dog new tricks! We learned new things to do with Hula Hoops, balloons, and used clothes pins to make zippers (not for the clothes line).

Please plan to join us in August for education and the General Meeting, where we're going to discuss bylaws changes to allow the club to go on hiatus for a year for the purpose of restructuring to meet the changing needs of our members and community.

I look forward to seeing each of you in the upcoming months.

In leather love,

Mistress Nyna



Ray Middling gets a shine at Bottom to the IRS.
Photo courtesy of Dan Lloyd at www.richtrove.com



Beth Elliot and pony at Bottom to the IRS.
Photo courtesy of Dan Lloyd at www.richtrove.com



The Leather Quilt on display at the Tarheel Leather Run in Greensboro, NC over the weekend of July 6th-9th, 2018. ACLC's patch can be found in column 6, row 3.

The Leather Vest: History and Traditions

by Alex McGowen

There's more to that worn leather club vest hanging in your closet than you may think. The leather vest in the Leather community is worn by many as a testimony of their Leather lifestyle and journey. The vest may symbolize one's belonging to a group, exhibit part of the journey where a Leather person has been, be used as a display of rebellion from traditional norms and traditional relationship styles and/or proclaim an association with radical erotic practices.

In *Biker Bar*¹, Leatherman Thom Magister wrote that when some of the GI's returned home from overseas after World War II ended, their attire consisted of denim jeans and jackets and they rode motorcycles from the war-surplus yards with their military buddies. The camaraderie that they experienced overseas with their buddies in war returned with them, as they and other bikers who they joined up with formed some of the country's first motorcycle clubs.²

Some of these men wore the old brown Air Force bomber jackets that they'd earned and were issued while in the military, while others were able to purchase the classic black leather motorcycle jackets, much like the ones that we see many Leatherpeople wear today. Some (though not necessarily all) of the men who participated in these groups were gay.

Similarly, the motorcycle vest can also be traced to the return of GI's from World War II. Since the military units were the first place that many of the GI's had been away from home, according to Mr. Magister, they would often cling to what had come to feel familiar to them. They expressed their sense of identity in this now strange to them home environment by painting airplane noses and other icons of American pop culture on the back of their leathers. The symbols and images used on their vests and jackets in effect spoke a language of its own and gave the former GI's a shared sense of belonging, comfort, power, protection, and courage.

As these small, insular biker groups enjoyed socializing together, by the 1950s they began to form motorcycle clubs across the United States. At the time, the radical image, values, and culture of these motorcycle clubs were a sharp contrast to the prevailing traditional and conformist heteronormative society.

A pivotal point in the history of motorcycle clubs particularly occurred after Hollister Riot of 1947³ where bikers began cutting off the sleeves of their jackets for purposes of functionality. Their club identification was shown by a patch on the back of the vest displaying the club name, logo, and the city that the club represented or was active in. By knowing others and proving to be with the group as a valued member that other members could trust, the vest became something that was earned.

Just as motorcycle clubs had specific names and logos to identify themselves, formal Leather clubs and associations adopted patches and pins for that purpose.

A large patch is reserved for full, voting members of a club and is placed on the back of the vest, whereas smaller patches are given to non-voting associate members of a club. Additionally, a special titleholder patch is given to select individuals who have been formally chosen and appointed to represent a specific club to the larger community, such as in the history of ACLC.

¹ <http://perfectboundpress.com/B-BAR/index.html>

² <https://motorwolfusa.com/blogs/news/121646275-the-history-of-the-motorcycle-vest>

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollister_riot

Although there are some differing guidelines that have been offered and published by a few people in the community about the traditions of various pin placements, which I will later discuss, there is a general agreement that the pin of one's primary club affiliation is always placed on the top left flap of the vest above the chest line. Accordingly, we wear our ACLC membership pins there to show the connection of our club to our hearts. This pin should be the topmost pin on that half of the vest, to show allegiance to our home club above all others.

Other pins that are reproductions of other clubs' colors are known as "friendship pins", and those clubs may present those pins to the Leatherpeople who they feel are close to them personally. Then, there are also the "event pins" and the "run pins" which are given to attendees of specific club events. Event and run pins are placed on one's vest to show one's support of the event and where one has been in their Leather journey.

Brother Jerry, who is cited to have authored original protocol guidelines per a journal entry in *Leatherati*⁴, states that the left side of a Leather vest in the community is always reserved for pins that show affiliation with specific organizations, runs, and events. By placing these pins on the left side of the vest, it, like one's primary club pin, also shows connection to the Leatherperson's heart as well as one's support for other clubs of like-minded interests.

On the opposing flap, pins that represent who you are in the community are placed above the chest line. These types of pins may be a specific Title pin earned, such as a name tag, a club office pin, or a club nickname. Below these pins, one would place any friendship pins given.

Although these pins might traditionally be placed on the right side of the vest given the guidelines that Brother Jerry has offered, Vincent L. Andrews, author of *the Complete Leatherboy Handbook*, offers another possibility, that Dominants may place any title and/or friendship pins on the left flap of their vest, while submissives may place any Title and friendship pins on the right flap of their vest accordingly.

However one may decide to place their pins, it is important to note that a pin should not be worn unless it is personally given to you. It is a breach of ethics to wear the colors or pin of a club that either one is not a member of, or that one has not received the pin directly from. While some clubs may go as far as to set rules on pin placement, other clubs will not.

Wherever you are in your Leather journey, always remember your history, and I hope that you will continue to carry these traditions with you close to your Leather heart as you wear your Leather vest.

⁴ <https://leatherati.com/leather-protocols-2f733407d1b8>

Meet the Beneficiaries: QueerNet

A long-running service for the LGBTQ+/kink communities, QueerNet (<http://www.queernet.org/>), founded in 1991, provides free online services for the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, queer, questioning and allies, HIV/AIDS, sexual and gender rights, and leather/S&M communities, including mailing lists, web sites, and email hosting.



QueerNet is a project of the Online Policy Group, which is a non-profit organization dedicated to online policy research, outreach, and action on issues such as access, privacy, defamation, and the digital divide. OPG supplies online services to individuals, projects, and non-profit organizations. QueerNet is OPG's longest-running project.

Who uses QueerNet? ACLC, for one. QueerNet provides ACLC's email list services to enable communication between board members and to the ACLC membership.

You might be surprised who else uses QueerNet. Some examples:

- EGALE Canada (mailing lists)
- The Exiles (web site and mailing list)
- Gay Asian and Pacific Islander Men of New York (web site and mailing list)
- Intl Assn of Gay/Lesbian Country Western Dance Clubs (mailing lists)
- National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (mailing lists)
- Othersiders Country Western Dance Club (mailing lists)
- Pansy Division (web site)
- Seattle Men in Leather (mailing list)
- SF Queer Longhairs (web site)
- Texas Twisters Gay/Lesbian Country Western Dance Club (mailing lists)
- Woodhull Freedom Foundation (mailing lists)

These groups and others come to QueerNet/OPG for the same reasons as ever: hosting services from a provider that will stand up for their speech and access rights and won't cave to discriminatory or inappropriate censorship requests.

QueerNet/OPG offers the same protection as they did to the Swarthmore students who went public with the vulnerabilities of Diebold electronic voting machines in 2003 - going to court and winning. (See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_Policy_Group_v._Diebold,_Inc.)

To make a one-time or recurring donation to QueerNet, visit <http://www.onlinepolicy.org/donate>

Recent ACLC Events

Church of the Poisoned Mind

Approximately 36 people attended the Church of the Poisoned Mind event at the World Famous Turf Club on March 25th, 2018. Guest Sweetie Bootblack from Santa Clara County Leather Association (SCCLA) provided bootblacking services. Our own ACLC Members Mr. & Ms. Alameda County Leather 2012 Jay and Christy provided BDSM demos. The fun didn't end there! A singletail face-off on the patio wrapped up the day.

Bottom to the IRS

Mr. & Ms. ACLC 2017 Steve and Jeni held their joint fundraising event, Bottom to the IRS, on April 15th, 2018 at the White Horse in Oakland and our Ducals provided entertainment and several prizes were raffled. Mir Bilodeau (or was that Uncle Sam?!) of Wicked Grounds Coffee Shop provided kinky fun as our guest House Top. Fun was had by all!



Randy Hensley cashiering at the White Horse Bar during the "Bottom to the IRS" event.

Boots & Cigar Party at IMsL

ACLC jointly hosted a Boots and Cigar Party with our friends in SCCLA at this year's IMsLBB event to provide entertainment and promote our club (besides some great cigars). This year, we packed the patio with many new faces & familiar faces alike, smoking up lots of fun and camaraderie with our community. The event was very well-attended- too many to count!

NWLC & How-Weird! Street Fair

ACLC had a busy weekend May 5th and 6th! Some of our ACLC members served at our hospitality party at Northwest Leather Conference in Sacramento on May 5th while other ACLC members served beverages in our booth at the How Weird Street Fair on May 6th.

Kim, Josh, Ray, Steve, Jeni, Lady Cynthia, Yoyo, and Alex worked the hospitality suite at NWLC, while Joan, Nyna, Beth, Randy, Mr. Allan, Uncle Drew, Ed, Denise, Fawn, Dirk, Den, Sean, and Alex worked the booth at the How-Weird Street Faire.

Road Trip!

On May 13th, 2018, ACLC celebrated Mr. & Ms. ACLC 2017, Steve Ox and Jeni Finch, on their title year at the Port Bar in Oakland, raising money for the Title Holder Travel Fund.

Ms. ACLC 1993 Beth Elliot provided entertainment, food was provided, and a raffle was held. What a long, adventurous trip this title year has been!

International Mr. Leather

Our 2017 Mr. Alameda County Leather, Steve "Ox" Geist competed at International Mr. Leather this year in Chicago, IL, this past May for the title of IML. We celebrate his efforts and encourage him to continue having fun in his Leather life!

Beer Bust at the SF Eagle

Memories were filled with food, service, and fun over Memorial Day weekend at the SF Eagle on Sunday, May 27th from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Club members schmoozed (and more?) with hot leather folks while helping fund ACLC's charitable operations.

ACLC Day at the Races

On June 10th, ACLC members Jason Williams, Mr. Allan, Uncle Drew, Matt, Denise, and Randy H. enjoyed socializing and wearing their club colors at Day of the Races! Known as "the sport of the Kings," this was the last live horse race of the season and it was DOLLAR DAY! The sun was shining, the Jr. De Ville Blues Band played some good ole sounds on the deck after the first race, and fun was had!

LGBTQ & Leather Cultural District Party

On June 12th, ACLC showed their support for the LGBTQ & Leather Cultural District in SOMA, San Francisco, which kicked off with a reception at Mr. S. Leather. Alex joined David Hyman, Independent Director with SF Leather Cultural District, Ms. Santa Clara County Leather 2018 Leigh Ann Hildebrand, and Ms. San Francisco Leather 2018 Haley Alice on a walking tour of SOMA's historic gay & leather bars including the Stud, the Powerhouse, the Lone Star Saloon, the Hole In the Wall, the Oasis, and finally to the Eagle to pay tribute to our Leather Elders for starting and maintaining our some of our original community spaces in the San Francisco Bay Area.

ACLC Members Alex and Pony also attended the Champagne Toast while at the SF Eagle that night in company with many other members of our community.

General Assembly & "Kink on a Dime" Education Night

We held our June GA and Education night on June 14th at BAYC. After enjoying snacks and discussing club news Nyna, Lady Cynthia, and Ray presented some great ideas on how kink can remain fun, as well as affordable, and accessible. Those who attended enjoyed learning new things with balloons, clothespins & twine, hula hoops, and rope!

Beverage Booth at San Francisco Pride

On June 24th, members of ACLC and SCCLA joined together in serving beverages at our booth at this year's Pride Festival in San Francisco. It was a busy day for ACLC!

Thank you to Beth, Nyna, Uncle Drew, Mr. Allan, Randy, Joan, Josh, Kim, Laurie Girl, Lady Cynthia, Nikki, Raymond, Lance, Frank, Sweetie Bootblack, Thib, David, Dan H., Denise, Kate, pony, Ray, Steve, Jeni, Bob K., and Alex for all of your help!

Taco Thursday!

ACLC members Mistress Nyna, Jason Williams, Beth Elliott, Den Calkins, Matt Dayley, Mr. Allan, Randy Hensley, Ray Middling, Alex McGowen, and Steve Geist gathered before the July 12th General Assembly for a delicious dinner at Hayward's well-known and much-beloved El Taquito restaurant. A good time was had by all, and thank you to Alex for organizing the get-together!

Upcoming Events

Up Your Alley/Dore Alley Fair

Sunday, July 29th, 2018

Wear your club colors, bring yourselves and your kinky minds and enjoy socializing at San Francisco's annual Up Your Alley street fair from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM!

<https://www.folsomstreetevents.org/up-your-alley/>

Womens' International Leather Legacy (WILL)/Dallas, TX

Friday, August 3rd to Sunday August 5th, 2018

Don't miss this opportunity to learn about, ask questions, and converse with some of the amazing women who have made great contributions to the Leather community

<http://internationalleatherlegacy.com/>

ACLCL GA Meeting (Bylaws & Elections!) & Education Night

Thursday, August 9th, 2018

Come join us at Our Space/BAYC, 22245 Main Street (Suite 103) in Hayward, for a short General Assembly meeting from 7:30 PM to 8:30 PM to socialize, vote on bylaws, vote on elections (a month early due to the September date for the Anniversary Party!), and discuss our upcoming 25th Anniversary Party before we have an educational presentation!

International Leather Sir/boy and Community Bootblack/Dallas, TX

Thursday, August 30th to Sunday, September 2nd, 2018

This year, the International Leather Sir/boy event and contest and the International Community Bootblack Contest will be held in Dallas, TX. ACLC members are encouraged to attend this event to represent our club and show support for others in our community.

<http://www.ilsb-icbb.com/>

ACLCL 25th Anniversary Party: Save the Date!

Saturday, September 8th, 2018

Join ACLC for our 25th Anniversary Party at a very special location on September 8th, 2018 starting at 7:00 PM! Catch up with old and new friends, and let's celebrate 25 years of fun and service to our community and Alameda County! *Stay tuned for more information!*

Alden Spafford Progressive Dinner

Saturday, September 15th, 2018

The San Francisco Bay Area Leather Alliance will be holding its annual Progressive Dinner in memoriam of Alden Spafford, a dedicated organizer of this event. Come out and socialize with other ACLC members and members of our community to support the Alliance's efforts. Stay tuned for more information on Facebook!

<http://leatheralliance.org/about-us/alden-spafford-progressive-dinner/>

Leather Walk

Sunday, September 16th, 2018

This year is the 27th annual Leather Walk, beginning at 10am at 440 Castro in San Francisco! Entertainment will begin at 11:30am at the Jane Warner Plaza featuring MC BeBe Sweetbriar; the walk plans to start moving by noon from the front of the Castro Street Theater (Castro Street, between 18th Street & Market Street). Walk with our community and show our continued support at Oasis, the Powerhouse, Mr. S Leather, the Lone Star, and finally the Eagle where there will be a beer bust- this event is the official kick-off for Leather Week! Stay tuned for more info on Leather Week events.

<http://www.leatherwalk.org/>

Folsom Street Fair

Sunday, September 30th, 2018

Only in San Francisco, the Folsom Street Fair has over 400,000 fetish enthusiasts spread out over 13 city blocks! This event is held all day long, 11:00am to 6:00pm. Stay tuned for more information on how ACLC plans to have fun at Folsom this year!

<https://www.folsomstreetevents.org/folsom-street-fair/>

Thank you!

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 Editor,

Mr. Allan

newsletter@acleather.org

Club Information

Alameda County Leather Corps – 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Mr. ACL 2016 Steve Geist mracl@acleather.org
Ms. ACL 2016 Jeni Finch msacl@acleather.org
President Nyna Kaiser president@acleather.org
Vice President Jason Williams vicepresident@acleather.org
Secretary Beth Elliott secretary@acleather.org
Treasurer Randy Hensley treasurer@acleather.org
Sergeant-at-Arms Mr. Allan sergeantatarms@acleather.org
Member at Large Uncle Drew, Ray Middling membersatlarge@acleather.org
To email entire board info@acleather.org

Alameda County Leather Corps

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