



# the bridge

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## A Letter from Executive Director, Cathy Michalec

Medical research has proven what we knew all along - that aging in isolation has a negative impact on physical and mental wellness. But you are making a difference. Your support allows us to continue our efforts to relieve isolation and loneliness among the elderly. We are helping relieve the effect of loneliness on our elder friends in the community. We applaud you for choosing to support our programs, so that over 500 elders can experience the joy of friendship. How do we do it? We rely on the many individuals, volunteers, foundations and corporate donors to support our program. In that light, we say THANK YOU!



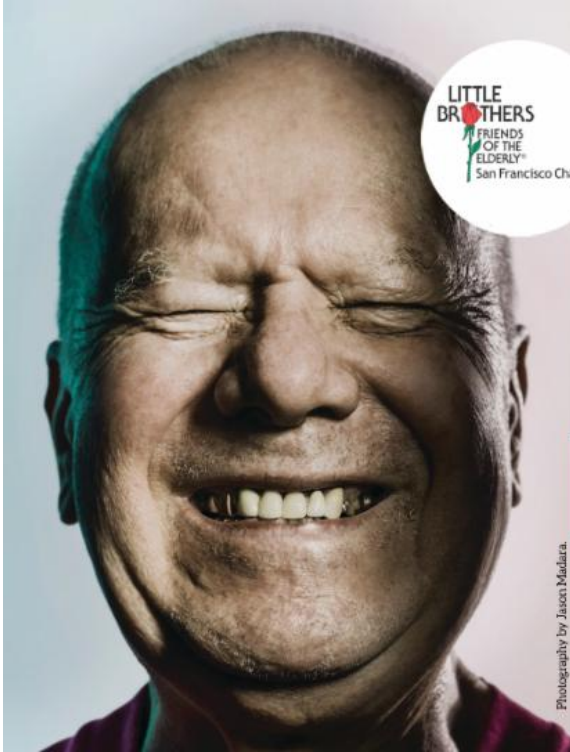
We also could not do this without the 700 volunteers who are the key to the 25 years of success of our organization. They will continue to do home visits, drive to medical appointments, do birthday visits, create beautiful birthday cards, and participate in special excursions. Thank you to all of you who have done all of this work in the community. You, the volunteer, provide life-changing experiences and hope to our elders. We often get feedback from our volunteers, and thought this quote summed it up!

*"I just want to say that my family and I had a great first time experience visiting with Carmen. She was such a delightful person. The experience was great for all of us! My son, who originally thought it was going to be weird - didn't want to leave in the end. Thanks so much for giving us a wonderful way to spend our holiday morning giving back to someone else." JESSICA*

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Visit Our Website to Review Calendar of  
Events!

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LITTLE  
BROTHERS  
FRIENDS  
OF THE  
ELDERLY  
San Francisco Chapter

## Fundraising Cocktail Party

25 Years of  
Building Friendships  
with our Elderly

Under the High Patronage of The Honorable Senator  
Dianne Feinstein and Emmanuel Lebrun-Damiens,  
Consul General of France

THURSDAY JUNE 23, 2016

6pm - 9pm

Cocktails · Food · Elders' Stories & Portraits

Sir Francis Drake Hotel - Starlight Room  
450 Powell St. San Francisco

Ticket Cost: \$75.00 per person

To help sponsor the event,  
please call Cathy Michalec at 415-771-7957  
Questions: [cmichalec@littlebrotherssf.org](mailto:cmichalec@littlebrotherssf.org)

Photography by Jason Madara

## Come celebrate 25 years of providing life-changing friendship and hope!

Yes, we are celebrating! Twenty-five years ago this past Christmas, we began providing services to isolated elders in the City. For twenty-five years, we have worked with thousands of volunteers who have offered friendship to the seniors in our community.

To buy tickets to the event, go to Eventbrite at this link: [25th Anniversary Cocktail Party](#)

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about sponsoring our 25th Anniversary Celebration, please call Cathy at (415)771-7957 or send an email at [cmichalec@littlebrotherssf.org](mailto:cmichalec@littlebrotherssf.org)

## Elder Day Dreams

*Have a day of free time you'd like to share with LBFE that isn't within our regularly scheduled programs? You may be a candidate for an elder day dream.*

Adapted from an LBFE Minneapolis program of the same name, Elder Day Dreams is our way to give volunteers one-on-one time with an elder to fulfill a dream within the city. A night at the opera or a city stroll, Elder Day Dreams are another opportunity to give back without a long term commitment.



**If interested, contact LBFE at (415)771-7957 or email.**



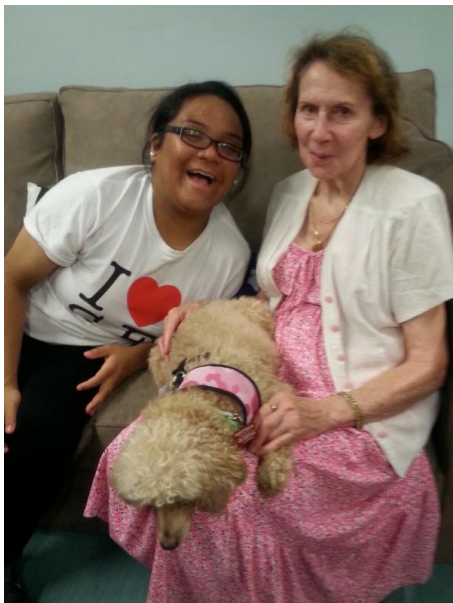
## Muttville's Cuddle Club

**Where do all the old dogs go?** For some, it's Muttville at the SPCA. Muttville is the senior dog rescue in San Francisco.

Muttville's mission is to change the way the world thinks about and treats older dogs and to create better lives for them through rescue, foster, adoption and hospice. Through associations with shelters and other animal organizations, Muttville finds senior dogs that have been given up and are not likely to find adopted homes. Through outreach and networking, Muttville finds suitable new homes for these dogs. Muttville has its own cage-free facility, housing newly rescued senior dogs while they await to be matched with foster homes.

As part of our Special Excursions, LBFE elders are able to visit Muttville's Cuddle Club where elders are given the chance to cavort and cuddle up with some elderly Muttville pooches. Join us for our next Special Excursion!

Our next Cuddle Club visit will be Friday, May 27th. If you'd like to join us by driving one or more elders to the event, email Andrew at [abutler@littlebrotherssf.org](mailto:abutler@littlebrotherssf.org) or call the LBFE office at (415)771-7957.



## Meet a Volunteer

I was drawn towards Little Brothers because I wanted to talk to and learn more about older adults who chose to live independently (especially in San Francisco), and I was curious about the effects of loneliness on well-being. More importantly, I wanted to find people I could become friends and have a good time with! Someone to share stories with! or laugh over a cake catalogue for an hour! or to watch musicals with!

My favorite part would have to be the friendships I've made with elders and the LBFE staff., I have met so many elders that left in me in awe - because of their stories, wisdom, and our ability to bond over shared human experiences (despite the age gap). Since the beginning of my internship, my appreciation for storytelling and insights on purpose, how to live life, and friendship have developed tremendously.

The concept I am learning most about is the importance of having a social support system, especially when aging. On numerous visits I made to our elders, most talked truthfully about their experiences of being "socially isolated". It isn't easy and the side effects can be detrimental, which makes the mission of LBFE so important.

**What does Christine like?** I LOVE dancing and singing classic love songs, often involving Nat King Cole, Ella Fitzgerald, or Journey. I also enjoy crafting, walking long distances, and listening to podcasts.

## Meet an Elder

Fannie is a woman of adventure. She's taken the Napa Wine Train for an afternoon ride. She went up in a hot air balloon without batting an eye. She was all set for a European cruise sailing from Spain. All of that within the last six months!

Fannie was a volunteer herself for many years in San Francisco. She helped out at a rehab center, a senior center, a children's hospital, UCSF, the national park service, KQED, among others.

Fannie does her best to stay active and get out in the city whenever she can. She's not shy about her "bucket list"-what she's done and what she still has to check off.

Fannie has been an LBFE elder since 2007. Since then, she's been the life of our parties and has brightened countless volunteers' days with her sunny disposition. As she says herself, "I'm rich in friends. I'm rich in life. My life has been so blessed."

Fannie humorously refers to herself as the poster child of LBFE SF. Find Fannie at our next social function - she'll be the one dressed to the nines, smiling big.



## A Letter to Grandpa Ed

Mr. Edly Williams watched me grow up as I watched him grow old. He entered my life on a chilly Thanksgiving afternoon ten years ago. Delivering meals to elderly residents of San Francisco during the holidays has been a longstanding tradition in my family. However, at the innocent age of seven, I had yet to discover value in these visits. Forced interactions with unfamiliar faces made me feel uncomfortable. I spent the greater part of each encounter glued mutely to my mother's side, my eyes fixed on my feet.

Edly Williams spent the final forty years of his life living alone above a 24-hour donut shop in a tiny but tidy one bedroom apartment. He was a stout man with a greying beard and dark chocolate eyes that were framed behind silver spectacles. His booming Jamaican voice, powerful yet soothing, was unlike anything I had heard before.

That visit to Edly Williams was my first of many, as our family's holiday delivery grew into a more regular occurrence. During our visits, Mr. Williams played the role of a storyteller extraordinaire. He connected with people through the sharing of his life stories, recounting his youth in Jamaica, his remarkable opera career in Vienna and New York, and his beloved mother. Edly Williams was the proud narrator of his own life; we were his attentive audience. Over time, formalities fell away and we grew to be like family. Mr. Williams became my very own Grandpa Ed; I became his "Neena."

Through my relationship with Edly Williams, I learned that there are many ways to live life. My own life has largely been a linear progression shaped by the setting and pursuit of goals.

Grandpa Ed challenged this way of living. He lived simply and without a predetermined direction. While he may have lacked in worldly riches, Grandpa Ed possessed an abundance of gratitude and a profusion of joy that trumped material wealth. He impacted my life, not with what he owned, but with what he shared: a contagious love of life that gushed from the tales he told. I believe any person who had the good fortune of meeting Edly Williams could not have been anything less than deeply touched.

My Grandpa Ed passed away last year, at peace and with grace. One of his final wishes was a taste of chestnut stuffing, reminiscent of his distant but unforgotten childhood. Thus ensued our family's determined efforts to grant this exceptional man his simple yet profound wish. After a failed attempt in our own kitchen, we proceeded to search the entirety of San Francisco for a single serving of chestnut stuffing. Lesson learned: good chestnut stuffing is hard to make, and even harder to find! Yet, after countless phone calls to restaurants and delis, we finally struck gold. Our family raced downtown to retrieve the chestnut treasure from the basement kitchen of the Ritz Carlton Hotel. Later that day, we delivered the stuffing to Grandpa Ed. "My family," he exclaimed in his undiminished baritone voice. He was in tears before even taking a bite.

Mr. Edly Williams was a storyteller who lived with an immense appreciation for small details. While these details may have gone overlooked by most, he gave them great significance. Mr. Williams taught me to live in gratitude for the little things that make life richer. I will always miss my Grandpa Ed. Yet my sadness is tempered by the feeling that he remains as alive as ever through these life lessons that I carry with me.

-Nina Lampert



## Grandpa Ed's Memorial Fund

With the generous support of a donation made from Susan Byrd Lampert and the Mark Lampert Family, we are proud to announce the Grandpa Ed Memorial Fund. Money raised from for this fund will help Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly to continue to serve isolated elders in their homes. On behalf of the Board and Staff, we would like to thank Nina, Ethan, Susan and Mark for the initial funding to remember their Grandpa Ed. For questions about the fund or to make a contribution, please contact Cathy at [cmichalec@littlebrotherssf.org](mailto:cmichalec@littlebrotherssf.org).

## Remembering our Elders

Each of our elders are special in their own way and

have made an impact on the world and the people around them. **Here are the elders that we lost in 2015.**

- Donna Attoun
- Willie Evans
- Ardath Lathrop
- Zane Shironitta
- Beatriz Ballais
- Morris Eskenazi
- Howard Ewing
- Wilma Sanchez
- Ka Phi Tija
- Ted Berlin
- Ivy Chu
- Maria Korusiewicz
- Anatoly Bershteyn



## The November Ballot Initiative will make a difference in the lives of San Francisco elders!

The Dignity Fund seeks to ensure San Francisco seniors and adults with disabilities are able to live with dignity, independence, and choice in their homes and communities through policy change and sustained funding of services and support. The purpose of the fund is to provide help to all San Franciscan seniors 60 years or older or who are living with a disability, without regard to the ability to pay to secure and use services and support necessary to age in their own homes and communities.

In November 2016, there will be legislation on the ballot for dedicated funds to expand services and support to all San Franciscans who are 60 & older and adults with disabilities. This dedicated funding will not be a tax increase. That is right, NO NEW TAXES. It will use unallocated money from funds that are collected from property tax.

Little Brothers - Friends of the Elderly is a proud sponsor of the Dignity Fund and we are working with a broad base of other non-profits who serve the elderly and people with disabilities. San Francisco can become a role model for other cities in the United States where all individuals age in communities as an important part of the city's diverse populations and civic cultures.

For more information, to volunteer or donate, please check out: [www.sfdignityfund.org](http://www.sfdignityfund.org)

Little Brothers - Friends of the Elderly is a national network of non-profit volunteer-based organizations committed to relieving isolation and loneliness among the elderly. We offer to people of goodwill the opportunity to join the elderly in friendship and the celebration of life.

Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly San Francisco Chapter | (415)771-7957  
info@littlebrotherssf.org | <http://www.littlebrotherssf.org>

