

Barbara Carpenter

Born in The Bronx, New York. She is the mother of three, grandmother of four and is married to Renae D. Carpenter – a former prosecutor and retired defense attorney. Barbara earned a BA Degree in Organizational Studies with a concentration in Black Studies from Pitzer College of The Claremont Colleges.

Barbara and 5 other Lesbians founded the grassroots organization The L-Fund in 2012 to provide financial grants to Lesbians in financial need. She became President in December 2016 and progressed to CEO/ Executive Director. Under her leadership, the L-Fund developed from a small grassroots organization to a federally recognized 501(C)(3). During her tenure, 3 additional programs were added, LEAP, The L-Fund Education Assistance program, The Deborah I Moore Fund for the Arts and the L-Fund Health and Wellness Fund. Her tenure as CEO/Executive Director of THE L-Fund was from 2012 to 2020.

Her honors and recognition include: SAGE & Friends Palm Springs – Pioneer Award, Palm Springs Pride Stonewall Advocate of the Year Award, The Marsha P. Johnson Award, The Human Rights Commission Equality Award, The Desert Business Association Outstanding Leader Award, Humanitarian award from the United Nations, State Assembly, Senate and Congressional recognition.

Barbara served as Co-Chair for the National Center For Lesbian Rights 2017 Garden Party with Kate Kendell, former Executive Director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights; served on the Harvey Milk Diversity Breakfast Committee, Co-Chaired the 2018 Opera Arts along with Arlene Rosenthal Executive Director of Well in the Desert; served as Vice Chair for Pride's Outstanding Voices Award Celebration and was voted one of Coachella Valley's Most Influential Women. In 2021, she was honored with the Brothers of the Desert's Legacy Award

Gail Christian (1940–2023) & Lucy DeBardelaben

Lucy DeBardelaben and Gail Christian will forever be known simply as Lucy and Gail, a Lesbian couple whose forty-year partnership transformed the social and cultural landscape of Palm Springs. Lucy began her career working for Big Four accounting firms, and for ten years was the Controller for the Palm Springs Art Museum. Gail was a trailblazing, award-winning journalist who was an NBC correspondent and Director of News at PBS. Arriving in 2003, they saw a community that lacked a visible space for lesbians of color and launched Dinah in Color. What began as a backyard party during Dinah Shore Weekend evolved into a massive mission. They worked diligently and effectively to bridge racial and generational gaps; fostering a thriving, community of African American LGBT individuals who remain even today, an energetic and essential part of the Coachella Valley's identity. Most importantly, Lucy and Gail provided platforms for LGBT women of color to development and thrive in the Coachella Valley.

In 2013 they founded the Palm Springs Women's Jazz Festival, a nonprofit, dedicated to combatting the historical gender and racial inequities in the music industry. Under their leadership, the festival became a world-class destination, providing a stage for over 450 female artists, including icons such as 2025 Grammy Winner Ruthie Foster, Melissa Aldana, Lalah Hathaway, Ledisi, Jessie J, Martha Redbone, Dee Bridgewater, Terri Lyne Carrington, Diane Schuur, and Jazz in Pink. The Jazz Festival served as a beacon of "sisterhood and vibe," celebrating the immense talent of women ranging from local "Divas of the Desert" to multi-Grammy winners. The Jazz Festival continues to bring the best female jazz and blues artists in the world to Palm Springs. Their vision expanded further in 2019 with the introduction of Palm Springs Women's Week; a seven-day celebration of Lesbian Culture featuring art exhibits, health conferences, and empowerment workshops that drew women domestically and internationally. They continued their expansion with an annual International Jazz Day held in April, specifically featuring women jazz artists representing various cultures. With the help of former Palm Springs Mayor, Geoff Kors, Lucy and Gail produced a series of sessions for Lesbians called A Conversation on Race. Now there are Black History Month celebrations with the focus on members of the African American LGBT community.

Lucy and Gail helped lay the groundwork for LGBT people of color living in the Valley to come to expect their cultural experiences to be acknowledged and respected.

The impact of their lifelong LGBT activism earned them some of the highest honors in the region: 2013 – Palm Springs Pride – Spirit of Pride Award, 2013 – Brothers of the Desert – Award for Activism and Community Building, 2016 – L-Fund – Community Service Award, 2018 – Dyke March – Award for Community Service, 2018 – City of Palm Springs – Humanitarian Award, 2019 – Palm Springs Pride – Harvey Milk Leadership Award.

Following Gail's passing in 2023, Lucy continues their mission of activism, with the Palm Springs Women's Jazz Festival, and being the recipient of the 2025 Pride Month Spirit of Palm Springs Award. Their joint legacy remains a testament to the power of intention. The intention of successfully continuing to create a community where art, music and social equity intersect, ensuring Lesbian visibility. Lucy and Gail believe the focus is now on helping to shape a LBGTQ community where social justice and issues of equality are discussed and share the same importance as issues of gender and sexuality.

Ruth Debra

Ruth Debra is a longtime organizer and activist, from high school days working on legalization of abortion in NY until the present day, as an 81-year-old Lesbian feminist, campaigning against the Prison Industrial Complex. She is a passionate defender of human rights, civil rights, women's rights and LGBTQ rights. Her activism was primary and career building secondary, but she also was a nurse and Nursing Home Administrator, entrepreneur business owner and worked in Travel and Conflict Resolution for Northwest Airlines. As a young activist, she joined SNCC and has been active and often playing a leadership role in so many organizations. She was a co-founder of a Shelter for Battered Women in Tyler, TX and spent years working a hotline for victims of rape, domestic violence and suicide. She served for years on TC Pride, Palm Springs Pride, and Interpride. Moving to California in 2003, she was a co-founder of Desert Women for Equality and the L-Fund. She joined Desert Stonewall Democrats almost immediately and has served on the Steering Committee for many years, as Chair for 8 years and is currently vice-chair. She served on the National Steering Committee of OLOC (Old Lesbians Organizing for Change) for 15 years and is a committed supporter of CCWP (California Coalition for Women Prisoners.). Close them down! Ruth has held many board seats throughout the years, The LGBTQ Community Center of the Desert, PALS, and facilitates a monthly Death Café.

She's been married to her wife Sherry Fulton since 2008 after a 17-year engagement fighting for marriage equality. She has one daughter of whom she is very proud, loving and supportive siblings and nieces, nephews, grandchildren and great niece and great nephews.

Joanni Hannon (1929-2012)

Georgia Joan Waldor Hannan, 83, passed away peacefully at home on April 13, 2012, in the arms of her partner. She was born Georgia Joan Waldor in Minneapolis, Minnesota January 19, 1929, to Gwenith and Nils T. Waldor. Georgia began playing the drums when she was eight years old, which ultimately unfolded into a lifetime career in the entertainment industry. In 1947 she toured around the world during peace time with the USO entertaining the troops after WWII.

Upon her return to the states, she formed several all-girl bands that played in hotels and nightclubs throughout the country. In 1959 she made her screen debut as the drummer in the movie "Some Like It Hot." Georgia went on to becoming a very successful nightclub & restaurant owner during the 60's spanning four decades; The most famous of her establishments being "Joani Presents" in North Hollywood which catered to the lesbian community through the 60s & 70s. Georgia is survived by her domestic partner of 24 years Marion Cain; her brother Peter Waldor and sister-in-law Carol; Brother Matthew Waldor and sister-in-law Sally; Sister Laura Jones and brother-in-law Robert Jones and numerous nieces and nephews. She is preceded in death by her parents, her brothers David and Daniel Waldor.

Marjorie Main (1890-1975)

Marjorie Main was born in Mary Tomlinson on February 24, 1890, in Acton, Indiana. When she was three her family moved to Indianapolis where her father was a minister at Hillside Christian Church. Marjorie attended Hamilton School of Dramatic Expression in Lexington, Kentucky. After graduating she got a job as a dramatics instructor at Bourbon College in Paris, Kentucky.

She started her acting career touring with a Shakespearean repertory company. Then she performed in Vaudeville and starred in several plays. In 1916, she made her Broadway debut in *Cheating or Cheaters*. Marjorie also appeared in the Broadway shows *The Wicked Age*, *Salvation*, and *Burlesque* with Barbara Stanwyck. She married Dr. Stanley Krebs, a fifty-seven-year-old psychologist in 1921. The couple had an unconventional marriage and spent a lot of time apart. At the age of thirty-nine she made her film debut in the musical short *Harry Fox and His Six American Beauties*. During the 1930s she had supporting roles in *Dead End*, *The Women*, and *Stella Dallas*.

After her husband died of lung cancer in 1935 Marjorie began a serious romance with actress Spring Byington.

MGM offered her a seven-year contract in 1940. She was teamed with Wallace Berry in numerous films including *Wyoming*, *Bad Bascomb*, and *Barnacle Bill*. Because of her age and her raspy voice Marjorie was usually cast as a domineering, abrasive woman. In 1947 she played a hillbilly farmer named Ma Kettle in the hit comedy *The Egg and I*. Her performance earned her an Academy Award nomination for Best Supporting Actress. Audiences loved her as Ma Kettle, and she would reprise the role in nine more films between 1949 and 1957. She said "Ma Kettle is a once in a lifetime role. I hope it makes a lot of people happy. Marjorie co-started with Judy Garland in *Summer Stock* and with Lucille Ball in *The Long Trailer*. Her final acting role was in a 1958 episode of *Wagon Train*.

Main maintained a desert residence in Palm Springs during the height of her Hollywood career, helping anchor the city's emerging identity as a year-round community for working actors. By the early 1950s she was living at 1280 South Calle Rolph in the Deepwell Estates neighborhood, a relatively modest and private home that typified the

bungalow-era residential character of that area. Contemporary reporting in the The Desert Sun confirms that she was residing there as early as 1953. Her choice of a regular desert home, rather than simply a seasonal retreat, reflected the way many mid-tier contract players helped normalize Palm Springs as a livable Hollywood satellite town in the postwar years.

Later, Main also owned a two-story residence on 276 Palo Verde Avenue in the Tahquitz River Estates neighborhood (now known as 'Villa Vecchio'). Together, these residences illustrate how Main helped the city's transformation from a winter resort into a stable residential community shaped by the everyday domestic lives of actors, writers, and studio personnel who chose to live in the desert for extended periods of time.

She and Spring Byington remained devoted to each other until 1971 when Byington passed away. On April 10, 1975, Marjorie died from lung cancer at the age of eighty-five in Los Angeles. She was buried at Forest Law Memorial Park in Los Angeles, California.

Melinda Tremaglio (1942-2025)

She was born on March 23, 1942, in Wallingford, Connecticut. Sent to Catholic school—a place she disliked for its rules and dresses—Melinda left home immediately after graduation and joined the Army, determined to serve her country, however she was discharged in 1961 for being a lesbian.

Eventually moving to West Hollywood, Melinda became an activist for women and gay rights. She worked for the incorporation for the City of West Hollywood in 1984 and was named 'Woman of the Year' in West Hollywood in 1985.

A tireless advocate for LGBTQ+ rights and civic causes she hosted and produced a weekly television show called "Lifestyle Updates" a gay entertainment show which aired on public access TV from rom 1986 to 1990, highlighting social activities and HIV/AIDS benefits in Los Angeles.

Moving to the desert in 2001, she was part of Triangle Productions, one of the first nationwide LGBT radio networks, with offices and studios here in Palm Springs.

Among the other things she helped establish here in the Coachella Valley were the Palm Springs Chapter of the National Organization of Women and created the Palm Springs' "Halloween on Arenas" an event that still thrives today. She loved to spark new ideas, set them in motion, and then step aside for others to carry on. In addition, she was the first Vice Commander of AMVETS Post 66 and spearheaded the inclusion of gay veterans to march in the Palm Springs Veterans Day Parade. She was also the Vice-President of Well in the Desert and held leadership roles in Pride and other civic organizations. Her awards for activism, human rights, and community engagement were countless.

Her extensive work, including materials related to her television production, were donated in 2023 from Peter Kelly to the Archives and are part of the Melinda Tremaglio Collection which contains more than 150 TV broadcast tapes, VHS tapes, movie reels, cassettes and hundreds of photos, awards, and personal items.

Melinda passed away on October 18, 2025, here in Palm Springs.