

# QUILTING SISTAH NEWS



## *African American Quilt Guild of Oakland*

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For the 20th anniversary of our foundation as the African American Quilt Guild of Oakland, this has been a momentous year in so many ways! We are going into our 6th month of sheltering in place and wearing of masks and social distancing to prevent from getting COVID-19. We have seen the deaths of too many Black men and women by the hands of police as shown on television. We have seen the rise of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement embraced by young people, old people, athletes, politicians, actors, musicians, artists and many more people around the world. There have been numerous attempts at voter suppression. And, we have seen the loss of our heroes: John Lewis, C.T. Vivian, Kobe Bryant and Chadwick Boseman to name a few.

My question for you is: How have these events influenced your quilting and sewing? At our last Zoom meeting, members shared how events in this year have influenced their sewing and quilting. Members have made hundreds of masks and have incorporated masks into their story quilts. While other members are designing quilts to include all of the names of Black men and women killed by police violence. For others, a paralysis in creativity has occurred. The events have become too overwhelming for them to comprehend. Wherever your mind and heart find you, I encourage you to use your quilting and sewing skills to express your frustrations and hopes for a better world.

During these challenging times, the AAQGO is meeting, but in a different way! Since June, we have had Zoom meetings on our regular meeting days, the fourth Saturday of the month. If you have not attended, I invited you to our next Zoom meeting in September which will be the first meeting of our new membership year. Our Zoom meetings have been extremely informative. Ernestine Tril, our

Education chair, has shared new quilt blocks for us to use, easy tricks to make our quilting experience more efficient and updated us on potential speakers. Our time for “show and tell” has provided members a chance to display their “shelter in place” completed projects. As well as sharing the latest in mask designs.

I encourage you to renew your membership to the African American Quilt Guild of Oakland (AAQGO) today! The membership application can be found on our website. I appreciate your continued support and commitment to the mission of AAQGO. I want to thank you in advance for your new or renewed membership. Special shout-out to our newly elected officers of the board for agreeing to another two-year commitment to serve: Marie de Porres Taylor - President; Teresa Weyand - Vice President; Rosita Thomas - Secretary; Dolores Vitero Presley - Treasurer; and Donald Foreman - Historian.

I want to welcome to the board Ora Clay, who will co-chair with Dolores Vitero Presley the Exhibit committee and Deborah Butler who will chair the Worthy Cause committee. Last, but not least, are the committee chairs who renewed their commitment to serve for another two years: Ernestine Tril - Education chair; Catherine Mukai and Loretta Henry - Membership chairs; Ann Robinson - Black History Month chair and Webmaster; Teresa Weyand - Newsletter chair; and Evelyn Johnson - Sunshine chair. Thank you for your continued commitment to AAQGO. Abundant gratitude for a job well done!

A special thank you goes out to two of our committee chairs who will be retiring: LaQuita Tummings as our Exhibit chair and Felecia Germany our Worthy Cause chair. LaQuita did a fantastic job in difficult times securing venues for our quilts to be exhibited. She also made sure the exhibit was put up and taken down, and the quilts returned to their owners. Abundant gratitude for a job well done! As our Worthy Cause chair, Felecia was persistent in reminding us of our commitment to provide quilts and other sewn gifts to the agencies we committed to support. Many times, Felecia would make quilts when we did not have enough to donate to an agency. Both CALICO and Highland Hospital newborns are grateful to Felecia for encouraging us to make quilts, pillowcases, bags and pouches for both agencies. Abundant gratitude for a job well done!

Finally, I leave you with a few words and phrases to sum up my message:

**Sewing Mends the Soul!**

**Wakanda Forever!**

**VOTE!**

Blessings,  
Marie dePorres Taylor

### **IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

We have an exciting speaker for the September Virtual Meeting—Lisa Shepherd Stewart from Cultured Expressions will be discussing African textiles and how she uses them to create crafts, accessories, home décor and crafts. This will be a live show and tell, slide show of African artisans, a brief tour of her studio and even a door prize drawing!!!!

### **WE TRAVEL FAR**

Congratulations to Ora Clay and Dianne-Gates who have quilts entered in "We are the Story" exhibit in Minneapolis. For more information, please view

[https://video214.com/play/QIU181miq0aVLLv61JOvmg/s/dark?fbclid=IwAR0-j\\_NXKbH0S1JCwCFTwF-0LEZKxwwbJH1QsywXJwGd1wESMJTeyW0XYX0](https://video214.com/play/QIU181miq0aVLLv61JOvmg/s/dark?fbclid=IwAR0-j_NXKbH0S1JCwCFTwF-0LEZKxwwbJH1QsywXJwGd1wESMJTeyW0XYX0)

### **THE MANY BENEFITS OF GUILD MEMBERSHIP**

- ♥ Fun, friendship and fellowship
- ♥ Workshops eliminate the need to take a lot of quilting classes
- ♥ Someone always has an answer to any quilting related problem
- ♥ The opportunity to show your work in a supportive and encouraging environment
- ♥ Interesting speakers both from the Guild and from outside
- ♥ Encouragement from other quilters to enter quilt shows, submit your work for publication
- ♥ Great snacks and a fun Holiday party
- ♥ All this, for a membership fee for a year, equivalent to a night at the movies with popcorn and a drink!

## SANKOFA

In keeping with the theme of Looking to the Future while remembering the past, we have a lovely article from our 2020 History Committee Chair, Loretta Henry about our Guild Presidents.

### Our History—Salute to AAQGO Leadership

The African American Quilt Guild of Oakland began with seven members and over the years has grown to over 70. That growth would not have been possible without leadership provided by six amazing women. Following is a salute to their inspiring legacies.

#### ***Esther Pancho 2000-2002***



It is possible that without Esther Pancho, there would be no AAQGO as she is the group's founder and its first President. While teaching quilting classes at a senior center, she attended many quilt shows and was disappointed to discover a lack of Black representation. It became her goal to let others know that Blacks could quilt. Ms. Pancho continued teaching others to sew and began encouraging her students to form a quilting group at the Oakland Senior Center. With seven ladies, she was able to secure the quilt guild's home at the West Oakland Library in June 2000. An honorarium of \$300 from the Oakland Museum for a quilt display provided the seed money to open the guild's bank account. Under her guidance, the By-Laws and Rules were established. One of her goals was for the guild was that it be non-competitive. There were to be no shows with ribbons or prizes. It was her goal that members be supportive of each other, encourage the cooperative spirit and to learn from one another.

#### ***Joy E. Johnson 2002-2004***



The torch was passed to our second President, Joy E. Johnson. Under her leadership, the guild was able to obtain its Non-Profit Status. Ms. Johnson believed in community outreach. She encouraged members to teach quilting skills to school students, civic groups and organizations that served children. Through her tireless efforts, the guild was able to network with Black Fire Fighters, Black Police Officers, and University of California at Berkeley personal by donating quilts to their fundraisers. She became the second guild member to be granted an honorary membership.

### **Marion Coleman 2004-2006**



Under Ms. Coleman's direction more guild members were encouraged to show their work at local and state exhibits. Her involvement with the Richmond Arts Center provided her with skills to obtain grants and stipends for supplies and travel so that members would be able to work with other organizations, especially with community outreach in schools and children's organizations. The guild co-sponsored First Friday Night Demonstrations at the San Francisco Museum. She also organized the first AAQGO retreat. Following her presidential term, with a little nudging and encouragement she was able to expand members' skills by creating art and narrative quilts based on the idea of Oakland as a community. More than 60 quilts were exhibited in the *Neighborhoods Coming Together: Quilts Around Oakland* shows which toured the Bay Area in 2016. The show was so well received that it was featured in the Arts Section of the *New York Times* and had a showing in the National Quilt Museum in Paducah, Kentucky. The National Endowment of the Arts awarded Ms. Coleman for her work in advancing quilts as an art form.

### **Anne Robinson 2006-2010**



Under Ms. Robinson's leadership the guild increased in membership. Retreats became a much-anticipated yearly event for guild members. Not only did she make all of the housing arrangements but she provided many fun projects for its participants. Through demonstrations and lectures, she was instrumental in improving the skill levels of guild members. The guild's Tenth Anniversary Celebration produced a video of its history. Following her term, members look forward to the Christmas Workshop held during November Meeting. She always delighted the group with several projects for the season.

### **Marilyn Handis 2010-2012**



President Handis was also the chairperson for our first Quilt Show in 2011. Under her capable guidance, a committee was formed and we prepared for our very first public show at Preservation Park. The event was very well attended and enjoyed. Nearly every quilter in the Guild submitted at least one piece, with many submitting more than one quilt. A special exhibit of vintage and antique quilts made by our foremothers emphasized the show's theme of Sankofa.

### **Marie dePorres Taylor 2012-2020**



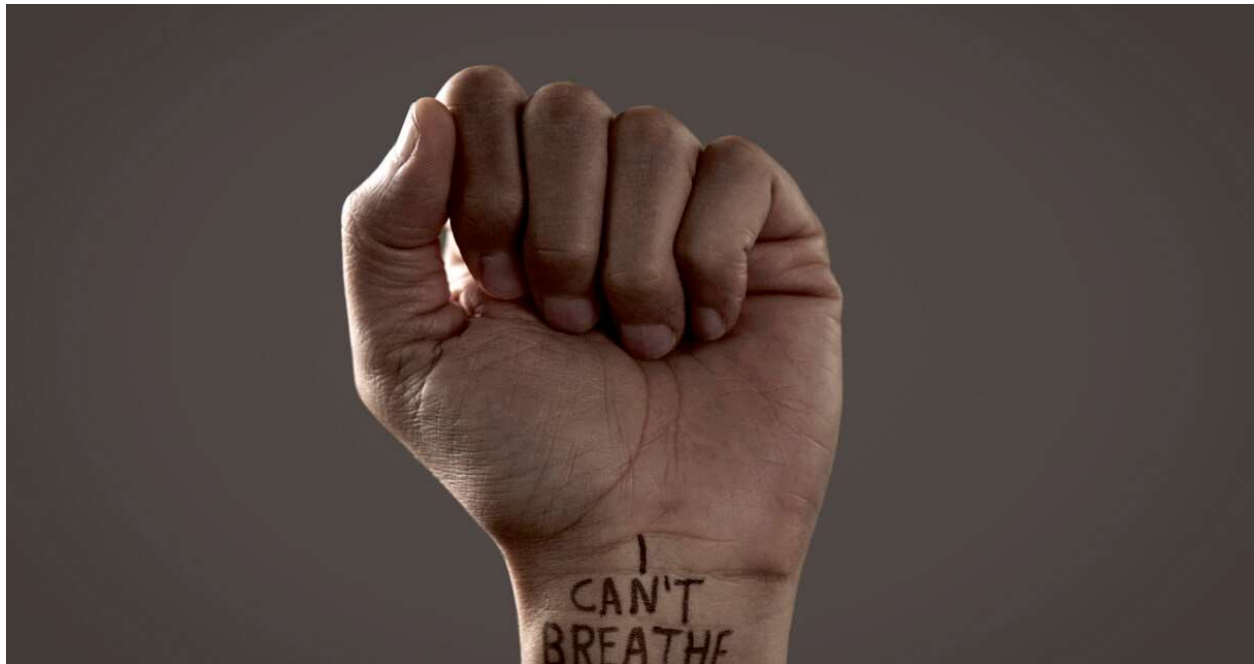
Ms. Taylor is our longest-serving president. Under her, our By-laws were revised. Guild membership has increased and become more diverse and inclusive. She was also the chairperson for the guild's Second Quilt Show held in 2013 at the San Leandro Public Library. When the librarian at Laney College in Oakland saw the exhibit, she realized that the college had a similar display area and invited the guild to hang the same show there in February of 2014. This has become an annual event at the college during Black History Month. Ms. Taylor selects the show's themes. The year 2020 was to be a yearlong celebration of the Guild's 20th Anniversary. However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the guild has had to become more flexible and change its procedures. As the membership is unable to meet in person, working with others, she has help members to adapt to meeting in a virtual format.

Esther Pancho would be proud to know that the guild has prospered under the leadership of her successors and it still holds dear the concepts of community building, support for others, creativity, and continuation of the proud heritage of Black quilt making.

### **INTERVIEW WITH MARIE DePORRES TAYLOR**

## **Affecting And Sustaining Change**

[August 17, 2020 Engage Magazine](#)



**INTERVIEW WITH SISTER MARIE TAYLOR, BOARD PRESIDENT, EAST BAY HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS (EBHO) AND RESIDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT, CHRISTIAN CHURCH HOMES (CCH)**

**HOW HAVE THIS YEAR'S EVENTS CHANGED YOUR PERSPECTIVE AND APPROACH AS A LEADER?**



At Westlake Christian Terrace we had a very active resident council. We met every month through March and then we were shut down. The Council was where you'd hear resident concerns. Now that the dynamic has changed, it's more about touching base through phone calls or other vehicles to find out how residents are doing, what their needs are, and what we can provide to them from a Resident Council perspective. We're doing things in a different way and still trying to provide care and concern to residents.

**AS THE NUMBERS OF COVID-19 CASES INCREASE IN CALIFORNIA, WHAT DO YOU THINK NEEDS TO HAPPEN TO ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OLDER ADULTS?**

I think the whole testing system is woefully inadequate. There is no movement to do large-scale testing of seniors. The other part is that many residents can't get to the sites to be tested—then they've got to wait in lines. When they talk about 'everybody needs to be tested'—there are a lot of impediments out there. It's like a double-edged sword that nobody is attending to.

**HAVE YOU SEEN SOME RESIDENTS BECOME MORE POLITICALLY ACTIVE OR ENGAGED?**

Yes—Westlake is right at Broadway and 28th in Oakland. To have damage done to the drug stores and grocery stores really put a cramp in the life of our residents in terms of getting food and medicine. For a moment we were kind of back in a food and medicine desert. Residents weren't happy—although they understood what was going on and why, that was difficult for them. We had residents who marched and attended rallies down at City Hall and they've also been showing activism by phoning or other things they can do from their apartments.

**SOME NEWS ARTICLES HAVE COMPARED THE PROTESTS IN RESPONSE TO THE DEATH OF GEORGE FLOYD TO THE CIVIL UNREST OF THE 1960s. WHAT DO YOU THINK NEEDS TO HAPPEN TO SUSTAIN LASTING CHANGE?**

At different meetings I've been at, the question is often asked, 'what do you feel about this?' On one hand, I am weary, because I've seen it too often. It lasts for a minute, and then people go back to their same behaviors. The one hopeful is that the young people are very vocal. With the sit-ins of the 50s and 60s, it was the young people who began with enthusiasm to affect change. So, I'm hoping this will be sustained.

If we can continue these discussions around the source of racism within the United States, that's hopeful, especially if there is political and policy change. Changes have to happen or else we're back in the same boat.



## NO IDLE HANDS

Continued isolation continues to be challenging, yet, our members have been putting their heart and souls into quilts that reflect the world around them and what brings them joy. Here are some of the recent projects that members have made.

### DEBORAH BUTLER

I have been keeping busy. Most importantly, I keep up with friends and family 🧑, which means a lot to me. Phone calls, zoom, and cards. Now that I realize that the pandemic is going to be around for a while. I am now in the process of making masks. I have been coloring and knitting masks, as well.



# DEBORAH BUTLER



History repeats itself. Came across this poem written in 1869, reprinted during 1919 Pandemic.

This is Timeless....

And people stayed at home  
And read books  
And listened  
And they rested  
And did exercises  
And made art and played  
And learned new ways of being  
And stopped and listened  
More deeply  
Someone meditated, someone prayed  
Someone met their shadow  
And people began to think differently  
And people healed.  
And in the absence of people who  
Lived in ignorant ways  
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,  
The earth also began to heal  
And when the danger ended and  
People found themselves  
They grieved for the dead  
And made new choices  
And dreamed of new visions  
And created new ways of living  
And completely healed the earth  
Just as they were healed.



## ZONDRA MARTIN

Here's my 30"x30" unfinished quilt. This is my first selvage quilt (after Katie Wishom's trunk show I started a selvage stash). I'm still figuring out the next steps.

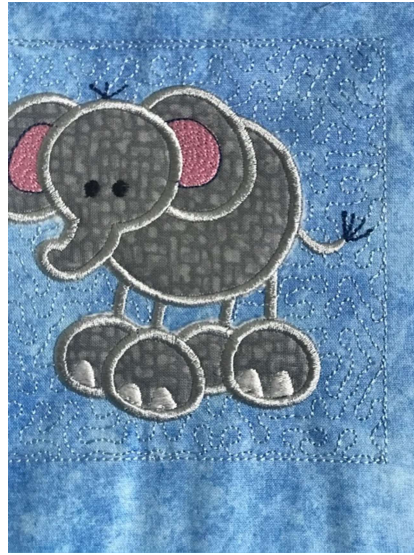
My shelter at home survival techniques includes (different from my last share):

- 1-Walk on the beach.
- 2-Give inspirational words to family and friends (who've lost loved ones).
- 3-Backyard distance stitching and visits with friends.
- 4-Cooking new recipes.



TERI GREEN

Machine Embroidery



# TERI GREEN

## “The Church Lady Quilt”

This will be a gift for my Auntie’s 95<sup>th</sup> birthday.



# TERI GREEN

20 X 20 QUILT



# TERI GREEN

## DOUBLE WEDDING RING BALI QUILT

Paper Pieced





## CATHERINE MUKAI

20 X 20 Quilt – Machine Applique, waiting for more inspiration to strike



Baby Quilt for Calico made with Nell Mays



## NELL MAYS

Attached is my latest (20 x 21) – there's a long story about how COVID stole my creative zeal but saw a beautiful but easy one posted on Facebook. Thought okay simple enough for me to try but ultimately couldn't find similar pieces in my stash and just dumped a bunch of scraps on the table including one from our former member's give-away. After discarding all the dark pieces just kept adding pieces as the lengths would fit. Camera doesn't capture truest colors but here it is. Kind of love it.



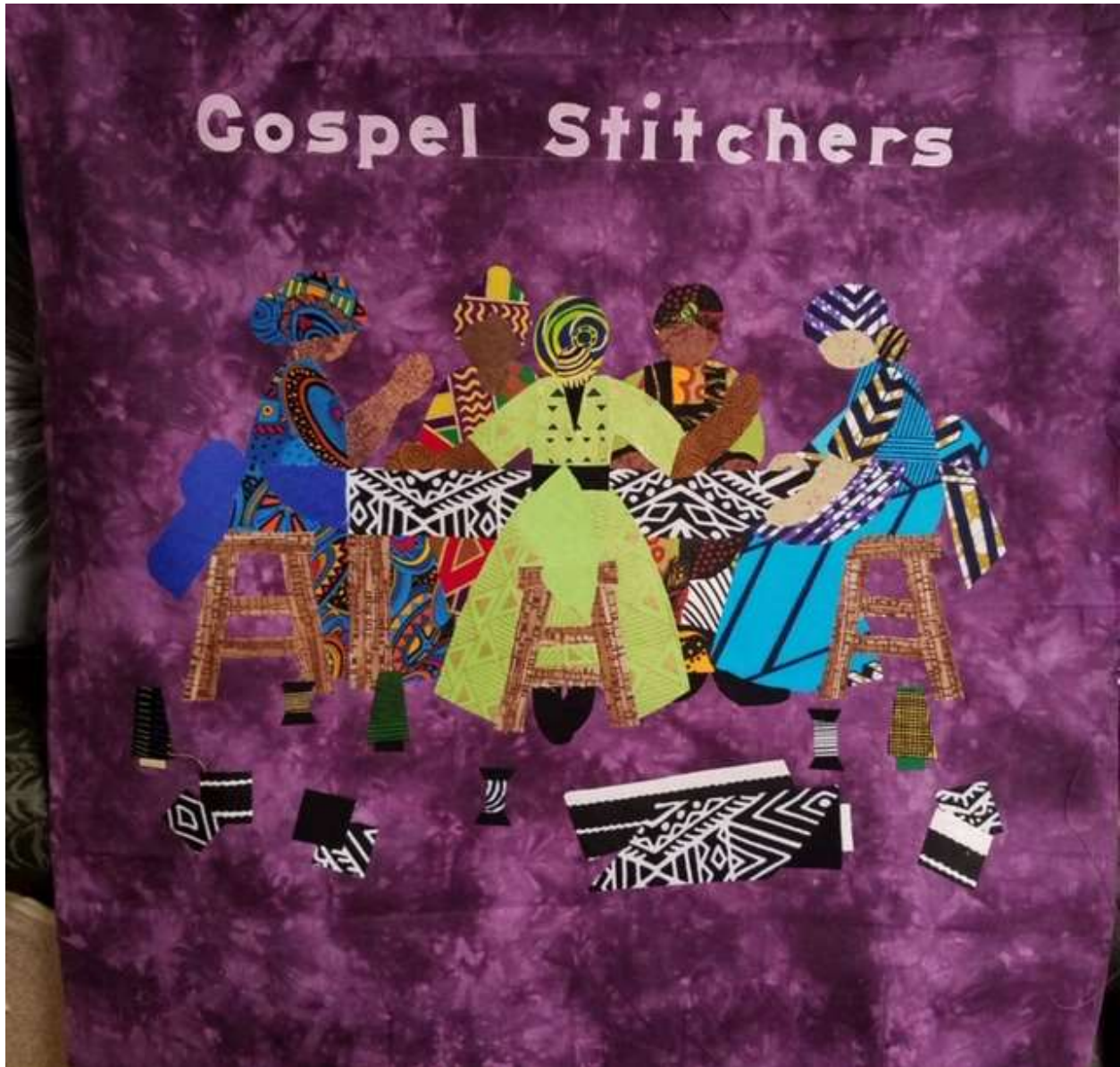
## CYNTHIA COATS

Hope all is well. This is the picture of my show and tell for the month of July 2020. Nothing much has changed, just staying home, quilting a few days, doing lots of snacking, eating and sleeping. Miss being able to interact and talk with each of you. Stay safe!



## CYNTHIA COATS

20x20 Quilt of an Applique Simulation of Cynthia's Church Quilting Group



## EVELYN JOHNSON

I completed a postage block wall hanging 21x21 and will gift the wall hanging back to my girl friend in memory her mother Clara Jackson – May 5, 1916 -June 5, 2020.



## MARCELL JOHNSON

I am sending a picture of a quilt I am working on. When it is finished, I will have all the names of African Americans that have died or beaten at the hands of policeman across our nation. Stay tuned for the finished product.



*NEW MEMBERS AND RETURNING MEMBERS*

*Dianne Marangio*

*Mary Ann Norman*

*Rochelle A. Fortier Nwadibia*

*Lulu Winslow*

*Ryan Young*

WELCOME!!!!!!

*BIRTHDAYS!*

*August*

*Cheryl Buckley - 8/6*

*Veronica Lofton - 8/9*

*Pat Bailey - 8/16*

*Nell Mays - 8/19*

*ReEllis Dotson-Newman 8/24*

*Evelyn Johnson - 8/28*

*Marisa Brown - 8/29*

*Karla Moss - 8/29*

*SEPTEMBER*

*Donald Foreman - 9/4*

*Ernestine Tril - 9/7*

*Zondra Kilpatrick Martin - 9/9*

*LaQuita Tummings - 9/24*

## *OCTOBER*

*Rita Ford - 10/1*

*Ora Clay - 10/6*

*Blanche Brown - 10/10*

*Louise Jackson - 10/10*

*Heidi Patrick - 10/12*

*Marilyn Handis - 10/19*

*Deborah Butler - 10/24*

*Janice Zoerheide - 10/25*

## *UPCOMING EVENTS*

*October 14-17 - Virtual Pacific International Quilt Show*



# OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

September 1, 2020-August 31, 2022

Officers and committee chairpersons can be reached at [aaqgoakland@gmail.com](mailto:aaqgoakland@gmail.com) or

PO Box 31834, Oakland, CA 94604

OFFICERS	
President	Marie dePorres Taylor
Vice President	Teresa Weyand
Secretary	Rosita Thomas
Treasurer	Dolores Vitero Presley
Historian	Donald Foreman
COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS	
Black History Month Family Workshop	Ann Robinson
Education	Ernestine Tril
Exhibits	Ora Clay and Dolores Presley
Membership	Loretta Henry, Catherine Mukai
Newsletter	Teresa Weyand
Sunshine	Evelyn Johnson
Website	Ann Robinson
Worthy Causes	Deborah Butler

**MEMBERSHIP:** Membership shall be open to anyone interested in the purpose and objectives of this Guild, and payment of annual dues. No discrimination shall be made with regard to race, color, creed, or national origin.

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