

Local

---

# Jonee Levy, co-founder of SF nonprofit to help keep seniors at home, dies

By **Steve Rubenstein** |

February 23, 2018 | Updated: February 24, 2018 1:29pm

---

If an old person wants to keep living at home, Jonee Levy believed, that's where an old person ought to live.

Levy, a San Francisco activist, made it the focus of her later life. She co-founded NEXT Village SF a

...  
nonprofit agency that has helped hundreds of North Beach and Russian Hill seniors do just that. Through home visits, cultural outings, adult classes, book clubs, nature walks and simply knocking on doors, NEXT Village SF has enabled older San Franciscans to fulfill their dream of simply staying put.

Levy died of cancer last Sunday in her North Beach home. She was 72.

She was born in Brownsville, Tenn., and grew up on a Tennessee farm. She graduated with an art history degree from Memphis State College and worked as a catalog specialist at the Museum of Modern Art in New York before coming to the Bay Area in the late

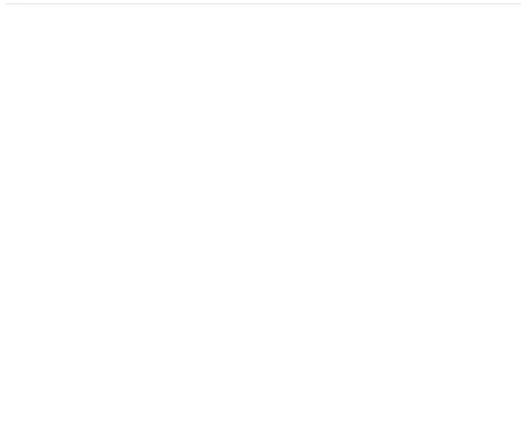
1970s. She founded a ceramics studio in San Jose and a company that designed socks with cartoon characters embroidered on them.

In the late 1990s, she became involved in San Francisco politics, working on the campaigns of San Francisco Supervisors Tom Ammann and Aaron Peskin.

In 2006, after reading a newspaper story about a similar program in Boston, Levy and her friend Janet Crane co-founded NEXT Village SF. NEXT stands for “Northeast Exchange Team,” and its efforts are focused on the northeast corner of San Francisco. Its success enabled Levy to help establish other NEXT programs in the Bay Area.

“She loved San Francisco, she knew everything that was going on and she would go to Sacramento at a moment’s notice to fight for what she believed in,” said her friend, writer Lisa Amand.

She was a passionate boogie-woogie pianist, a gardener, and a member for 30 years of a monthly San Francisco book club.



“They were the loudest bunch of women you ever met,” Levy’s husband, San Francisco architect Harvey Hacker, said with a smile. “It’s amazing they weren’t raided by the police for noise. They didn’t allow men in the group, but the men that they did associate with at other times were tolerated.”

---

## RELATED

---



**1900s preserved Victorian, hidden in a secret garden, for sale on Russian Hill**

**Defendant charged in Tennessee gang**

**racketeering plot killed****Lady Vols seniors Nared, Russell enjoy leading young roster**

---

She and Hacker, who met at a San Francisco art show in 1983, maintained a two-piano household and frequently played duets. He fondly referred to his wife as an “all-around, in-your-face gadfly.”

Surviving, along with her husband of 31 years, are two brothers, David Levy of Brownsville, Tenn., and Leon Levy of Nashville.

Plans for a memorial service are pending. Memorial donations to NEXT Village SF are preferred.

Steve Rubenstein is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. Email: [srubenstein@sfchronicle.com](mailto:srubenstein@sfchronicle.com) Twitter: [@SteveRubeSF](https://twitter.com/SteveRubeSF)

**Steve****Rubenstein**

Reporter

ARTICLES REMAINING

Get Unlimited  
Digital Access for  
**99¢ for the  
first month**

**TRY IT NOW**  
Subscriber Login

8:39 AM

Bodies of  
man,  
woman  
pulled from

Lake  
Merritt  
after  
reported...

San Pablo,  
crashes into  
fire...

slows North  
Bay  
commute