

WEST OF 50

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August 2022 newsletter

A letter from Bryant!

Hello all, I am really looking forward to the upcoming months as we have some really exciting projects and programs to look forward to. At this moment I want to look back over the last few months and share how proud I am of the success we have had through Pride and the Tea Dance, the exhibit at the Denver Art Museum, and all the programming that continues even through challenging times. I want to thank you all for your flexibility and understanding as we navigate the ever evolving Pandemic, where the safety and health of you all and ourselves remains our highest priority. I want to end on the note that I feel so enriched and honored to be a part of this program and look forward to many more amazing experiences!

With love, Bryant Mehay, CTRS

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Lunch and Learn - Preventing Hate and Bias-based Violence

Date: Wednesday, August 17th 12:00pm – 1:00pm. Lunch provided. RSVP to Jason or Bryant

- During this discussion, we'll focus on building awareness of issues related to the prevalence and trends of targeted violence in Colorado. We'll talk about the similarities and differences between hate crimes, targeted violence, and other relevant terminology, and focus the time on dialogue on the barriers, resources, and tools available for individuals and communities to support those who are targeted. We'll also spend some time discussing different strategies in place for preventing and interrupting the process of radicalization to violence, and how that process can be recognized."



AARP This course is aimed Driver Safety at drivers who are 50+ and will provide you with a review of defensive driving skills and current rules of the road. Check with your insurance to see if this course entitles you to a discounted insurance premium. The cost for AARP members is \$20 and Non-members is \$25. **Date: Wednesday, August 10th. 10:30 am—2:30 pm. To RSVP contact Jason or Bryant.**

Pride at The West of 50 Booth

We had amazingly successful Pride as we had over 400 people interact with Homosexual Bingo, hosted by Steve-Anne and Cowpoke Avi, and Storytelling featuring Ken Felts, Phil Hoyle, and David Smith. For Bingo we gave away fantastic prizes from Lucid, Kyu Ramen, Meow Wolf, The Center, and more! Many attendees stayed for extended periods of time and some returned for the second day. We want to extend our gratitude to everyone who participated in the planning and execution of this event and look forward to expanding on these ideas for next year's Pride.

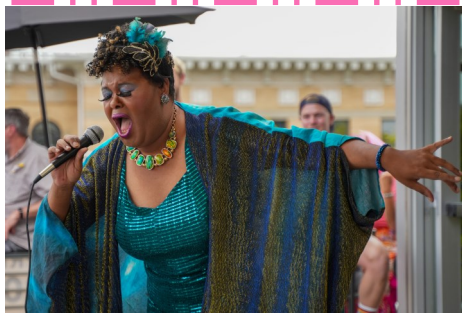
-Bryant Mehay & Jason Eaton-Lynch



Pride Parade with West of 50

Marching proudly behind the contingent of Dykes on Bikes we had individuals from all corners of our community turn out to represent The Center and lead a parade of over 12,000 people down Colfax with just around 125,000 people cheering from the sidewalk! Thank you to everyone who came out and showed their pride!





The annual **Tea Dance** was back with a vengeance this year, hosted by August Celestial with amazing performances from Ty Woo, Ximena Latinx-Couture, King Vaughnz Spanic, and StarChild! Everyone danced to tunes dropped by DJ Blaque Gurl and had their tarot cards read by Stevie Darling! Audience members faced off against each other in a lip sync to win fabulous prizes like swag from The Center and VIP tickets to the Denver PrideFest. If you took any photos or videos from the event please reach out to Bryant Mehay at bmehay@lgbtqcolorado.org! **More photos from the event are available at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lgbtqcolorado/albums/72177720300627357/with/52225804846/>**



Queer Creativity Through the Ages: Group Peace

By Avis Blakenship

On or about May 19, 2022, Bryant Mehay announced to those present in the Open Art Studio of the Center on Colfax, "We need a name for the group piece." Michael King looked up, replied, "GROUP PEACE" and returned to mixing paint. I had been wondering the last few weeks if the museum people, even if the "Dads" for that matter (Jason Eaton and Bryant Mehay) were cognizant that these artists, (ok, me too) are not just stubborn old folks. There were - are some real rebels among us, with some long histories of pushing back



Pictured (from left to right) Michael King, Avis Blakenship, Tom Schasane, David Burrows, Phil Hoyle, & Larry Wheeler

against the "establishment."

It was so exciting for me when I first came to The Center on Colfax's Open Art Studio on 02.10.22. First, I was happy to learn that my leatherwork would be acceptable in the studio. Second, as I had hoped, there were other programs at the Center in which I could get involved. Jason also informed us that the DAM folks were encouraging us to do a group project. I got to thinking of a leather piece I made at least 20 years ago. I considered it a "failed" project because I couldn't get a stick "frame" of sorts to work. I laid it aside and forgot about it - almost.

From this piece, I had an idea of an adaptation. Allow me to explain my belief on ideas. They are floating all around in the Universe. Once in a while, one of those ideas will drop out of the surrounding Universe into my conscious mind, at which point I shout, "EURIKA!" or more likely, "oo, oo, oo!!" As delighted as I become, I will not take credit for the idea. I will, however, take credit for grabbing the idea and running with it! Jason told me to go ahead and get started on the group project even if everyone wasn't all in just yet... I knew I wanted to make the rainbow rays out of a light plywood. On March 24, 2022, we met at the DAM to view the space for our upcoming exhibit. Let me make note that it was Jason Eaton who brought up the idea of "a kind of a mobile." A few of us began to wander around our exhibit space. Then Michael was beside me. Tom too. Maybe Steve. We were all looking around talking, speculating, when Michael began speaking authoritatively. I assert that he was giving me orders; Michael insists that he does not give orders. He gives suggestions. Alright, Michael King gives suggestions that have Steve Calcagno and me steppin' and fetchin' like they are orders. (and loving every minute of our free art lessons).

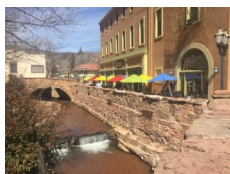
In the process of getting the frame built just right and painting the rainbow rays just right, 13 different artists were sent home with their own figure to decorate. Michael was good enough to complete his quickly to give the rest of us a nice example to follow.

I don't know about anyone else, but I'm looking forward to getting back to the usual rhythm of the Open Art Studio. I can see it now: Each of the artists straggling in whenever they please, finding their place at the table, then gravitating towards the coffee and donuts, "We need Splenda!" one of the Elders announces. And another week will have begun...

We are open to all. Please join us.

Road Trip to Manitou Springs: Nestled between Garden of the Gods and Pikes Peak, historic Manitou Springs is centrally-located to the unique attractions of the Pikes Peak Region. Nonrefundable 15 cash to RSVP to this event. Lunch is on your own. **RSVP by emailing Jason at jeatonlynch@lgbtqcolorado.org. Trip date is August 22nd at 10am.**

10 leave the Center
11:30 Arrive & explore Garden of the Gods
12:30 Arrive & explore Manitou Springs
4:30 projected to return to the Center



Vermicomposting with the Denver Urban Gardens

Vermicomposting: Composting with red wiggler worms, is an easy, low - cost way to reuse non-meat food scraps, extend the composting season, and also use simple bedding materials for your worms. The process can be done indoors, year - round, utilizing a simple storage container. The product, vermicompost, can be utilized as a rich soil amendment in your outdoor garden and extra worms shared with friends to continue the cycle. When? **Wednesday, Sept. 14, 5:30 - 7:00 pm at The Center. RSVP by emailing Bryant at bmehay@lgbtqcolorado.org by 08/31**



Trip to Denver Art Museum:



On the last day of June we took a trip to the Denver Art Museum to see **Queer Creativity Through the Ages: Artwork from the Center on Colfax's Open Art Studio**. Despite disruption from an unexpected change to the parade planned for the Avalanche's victory, several of the artists and community members made it out to the museum and got to peruse the art and the rest of the museum. Attendees talked to the different artists and got to learn more about their art. Avis Blakenship put together a comprehensive description of the collaborative sculpture "Group Peace" that included a description for each of the figures that were made by members of the Open Art Studio that meets each Thursday at 10am. Queer Creativity Through the Ages: Artwork from The Center on Colfax Open Art Studio will be featured in the Martin Building, Level 1—Creative Hub until the fall. If you are interested in free tickets to the Denver Art Museum to see this exhibit and more stop by Jason & Bryant's office!

Douglas County PrideFest

Presented by Castle Rock Pride a non-profit 501(c)(3)



This annual festival is an opportunity for all members of the LGBTQ+ community and our allies to gather for a day of food, music, games, and just plain fun. Families and children are welcome! Vendors will be on-site to provide goods and services catering to our community. Join us for a day of camaraderie and a chance to interact with our local community. New this year: an adults-only night party! More details about the entire day can be found at <https://castlerockpride.org/>

This event will be **August 27th from 11am to 6pm** located at **Douglas County Fairgrounds at 500 Fairgrounds Rd, Castle Rock, CO, 80104**



Bingo at Spectrum Retirement Community: High Pointe Assisted Living and Memory Care

Our own Cowpoke Avi and Steve-Anne will be headlining at the High Pointe Assisted Living's Bingo hall. Community members are welcome to sign up to volunteer or to just participate.

This event will be **August 24th from 2:00pm –3:30pm at 6383 E. Girard PL. Denver, CO 80222**

Phone Photography class coming Monday, September 12th 10-11 and running for 6 weeks!!



LGBTQ Care Partner Support Group

Presented by:
Alzheimer's Association
Colorado

Every Third Tuesday of the month

11:00 a.m. - Noon
VIRTUAL on ZOOM

To register, please visit https://bit.ly/ALZ_LGBTQ

For more information, please call 800.272.3900, or visit alz.org/co



alzheimer's association

Build a support system with people who understand.

Alzheimer's Association® support groups, conducted by trained facilitators, are a safe place for people living with dementia and their care partners to:

- Develop a support system.
- Exchange practical information on challenges and possible solutions.
- Talk through issues and ways of coping.
- Share feelings, needs and concerns.
- Learn about community resources.

This Care Partner Support Group is focused on the needs of older LGBTQ adults.

800.272.3900 | alz.org

At-Home Abortion Care Package Drive

The West of 50's Community Group is hosting an at home abortion care package drive for our friends who are traveling to Colorado to seek our state's healthcare services.

We are looking to collect the following items:

- Individually wrapped peppermint or ginger tea
- Pads—NOT tampons
- Pregnancy test
- Any gendered travel sized shampoo
- Any gendered travel sized conditioner
- Any gendered travel sized body soap
- Travel sized tooth brush
- Travel sized toothpaste
- Any gendered travel sized deodorant
- Travel tissues
- Razers
- Any gendered travel shave cream
- Laundry pods
- Large gallon Ziplock bags
- New washcloths—Nongendered

**Thank you for your support!
The Community Group**

August 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 10:30 Meditation 1:30 Story	2 10 men's coffee 1:30 Trans Support	3 10:30 Yoga 1:30 Community Group	4 10 Open Art	5 Movement Cancelled	6
7	8 10:30 Meditation 1:30 Story	9 10 men's coffee 1:30 Trans Support	10 10:30-2:30 AARP Driver Safety 10:30 Yoga 1:30 Community	11 10 Open Art	12 10:30 Movement	13 Left Handers Day
14 Gay Uncle Day	15 10:30 Meditation 1:30 Story	16 10 men's coffee 1:30 Trans Support	17 10:30 Yoga 12-1 Lunch & Learn 1:30 Community	18 10 Open Art	19 10:30 Movement	20
21 World Senior Citizen Day	22 10 Trip to Manitou 10:30 Med. 1:30 Story	23 10 men's coffee 1:30 Trans Support	24 10:30 Yoga 2-3:30 Community Group Spectrum Event	25 10 Open Art	26 10:30 Movement	27 11-6 Douglas County Pride
28	29 10:30 Meditation 1:30 Story	30 10 men's coffee 1:30 Trans Support	31 10:30 Yoga 1:30 Community Group			
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