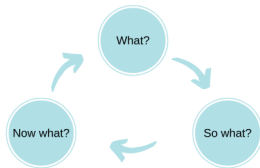


**Reflecting on the past year**— As 2022 drew to a close and the team started to work on the programming for 2023, we found ourselves shook by what was accomplished over the past year. This intentional reflection helps us acknowledge the areas we need to work on, excelled at, and really want to focus on for the coming year. Reflection is an important skill to develop and implement in our daily lives. So much so, that there are many models that one could choose from help them with this process. The Driscoll's *What Model* was redeveloped in the mid-1990's. Terry Borton first developed this concept in the 1970's. It consists of asking yourself three simple questions:

- ⇒ What?
- ⇒ So what?
- ⇒ Now what?

To implement this model, first describe what the situation or experience was to set the context. This will provide us with a clear idea of what we are dealing with, this is our *'what'*.



Second ask yourself *'so*

*what?'* to reflect on the experience and understand what you learned because of this reflection. Lastly, comes the *'now what'*. Will you change, try something new, or carry on as you are? Keep in mind... Not everything requires changes as you may feel like you are doing everything as you should be.

Borton, T. (1970) *Reach, Touch and Teach*. London: Hutchinson. Driscoll, J. (ed.) (2007) *Practicing Clinical Supervision: A Reflective Approach for Healthcare Professionals*. Edinburgh: Elsevier.

**West of 50's 2022 participation report card-**

- ⇒ This past year we hosted 89 events
  - ⇒ What is an event? An event is a program offered outside of our typical weekly group.
- ⇒ 697 Nonmembers attended those events
- ⇒ 609 Members attended those events.
- ⇒ Total: 1,306 individuals participated in our events. In 2022 we had 50 New Members register for the program.

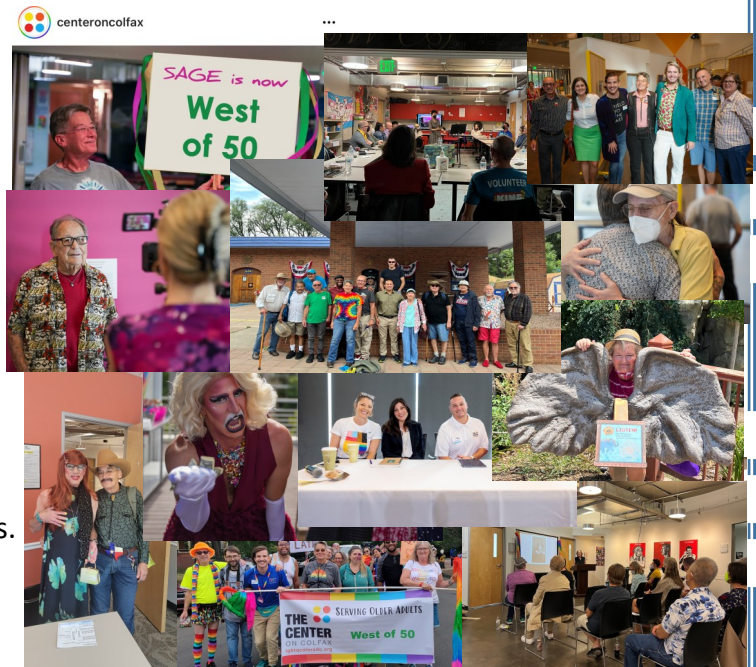
Group participation numbers:

- ⇒ Open Art Studio: 256
- ⇒ AARP Community Group: 133
- ⇒ Qigong: 116
- ⇒ Men's Coffee: 653
- ⇒ Older, Wiser, Sexually Smarter: 126
- ⇒ Silver Sneakers Yoga: 444
- ⇒ Telling Our Story: 354
- ⇒ Trans & Non-Binary Support Group: 175
- ⇒ Other/not listed: 846

Guest participant numbers:

- ⇒ Open Art Studio: 8
- ⇒ AARP Community Group: 6
- ⇒ Qigong: 9
- ⇒ Men's Coffee: 11
- ⇒ Older, Wiser, Sexually Smarter: 11
- ⇒ Silver Sneakers Yoga: 6
- ⇒ Telling Our Story: 5
- ⇒ Trans & Non-Binary Support Group: 2
- ⇒ Other/not listed: 41

In total we had 4,406 check ins to our West of 50 programming in 2022. Bryant and I are extremely thankful for the support, ideas, and community. As we reflected on what was accomplished in 2022 and we asked ourselves *what?, so what?, now what?* We are confident that you will be shook by what we have planned for 2023! Thank you—Jason



## In this Months issue...

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- Speed Dating pg. 6
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- An Interview with Viet from The Center's newest program—Saga pg. 5

### Past Events

- Holiday Party pg. 4.

#### Tip -

*Strive for progress, not perfection.*

### GOT Taxes? Tax-Aide Returns to The Center! Tax-

**AARP Foundation** Tax-Aide's return preparation and electronic filing service operates every Thursday from February 2nd through April 13th. **Appointments are required.**

Every Thursday, taxpayers with the proper documentation will be provided with an appointment. The building will not be open for individuals waiting for their appointment. Clients will have to leave and return at their set appointment time. There will also be a limited number of Property Tax Credits (PTC) for those needing monetary assistance with their rent and heat expenses provided. This too will require an appointment to obtain. To learn more visit [aarp.org/findtaxhelp](http://aarp.org/findtaxhelp) **Dates: Starting Thursday, February 2nd - Thursday, April 13th Hours: 10:00 am to 3:00 pm**

# TAX-AIDE

Free tax assistance for those who need it most

# New

### West of 50's Community &

**Coffee Group**— Winter have you feeling cold and lonely? Join West of 50 for community, friends, coffee, and donuts! Every Monday morning, we will provide coffee and pastries to help you start the week off right. Feel free to bring your favorite game to share, or feel free to pass around your family photos or the newspaper. This Community & Coffee group is open to all and is designed for you to foster healthy friendships where all individuals feel welcome and safe. This group is open to all and is here for community building and meeting new friends.

**When: Starting Monday, February 6th from 10:00am—12:00pm.**

**SilverSneakers Yoga- Fall Prevention-** If a fear of falling keeps you from enjoying life, The Center's SilverSneakers Seated Yoga Class is here to help you! Our trusted SilverSneakers instructor Patty has created a 12-week class that is designed specifically for seniors and to assist with balance, foster strength, and develop techniques that may safeguard you from falling. **This free SilverSneakers class can be accessed in person or online every Wednesday from 10:30am – 11:30am. The fear of falling sessions will start on February 1<sup>st</sup>. To join the online class please contact Jason or Bryant.**



Here are some other tips to help keep you prevent falls:

**Talk with your doctor-** If you have fallen before or are concerned about falls or risk factors that affect your mobility, talk with your doctor. Your physician can help identify things that may increase your risk of falls like health conditions, medication, vitamin deficiencies, lifestyle factors, or injuries.

**Safeguard your home-** check your home for hazards. Clear walkways of clutter and add night lights so that you can see hazard clearly. Install grab bars in the shower and beside the toilet. Pro Tip- The DC has a great check list on how to make your home safe and reduce your risk.

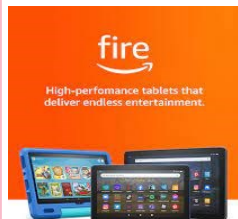
**Stay active-** The Center has LOTS of groups and activities. Try something new! Join SilverSneakers yoga, go to an art class, give our PartnerUp PowerUp program a go! You never know what you will enjoy. *Source: silversneakers help prevent falls flyer.*



**Partner Up Power Up with Special Olympics Colorado— Lunch & Learn—** Special Olympics Colorado is part



of a worldwide organization that is the worlds largest sport and public health organization for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). We are also the leading voice in raising awareness about the abilities of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It is extremely important for those in the IDD community to participate in fitness due to the daily striking health disparities that those with IDD face. In partnership with The Center, we will provide our Partner Up Power Up Fitness Program. Partner Up Power Up is a 10-week fitness program centered around getting 5 days of physical activity a week and other healthy topics, including sleeping, nutrition, and mental health. In this Lunch and Learn you will have the opportunity to meet with Special Olympics staff as they discuss the Partner Up Power Up program, learn about how the program will work, decide if it is something you are interested in participating in. Although this program is being brought in through the Disability Program all who are seeking to improve their well-ness are invited to learn more and participate in the program.



Date: **Wednesday, February 1st 11:45a—1:30pm Lunch provided. RSVP with the WOF team.**

**Individuals who register with the WEST of 50 team and complete the full 10 week program will have their participation tracked and be entered in to a drawing to win a Kindle Fire, a fitness tracker, or a coffee date with Jason.**



As we continue to roll into 2023 we wanted to take some time and remind you of all the wonderful programming the West of 50 team brings to you every week. Our goal is to create a welcoming space that allows for one to engaging in creative ageing. Thus we create and implement programming that allows for one build social connection, improve health and wellbeing, challenge stereotypical perceptions of what it means to age, provide space that allows for individuals to be creative, try a new things, have fun, learn, explore and develop a better sense of self. Below is a list of our weekly activities:

**Mondays:**

**Community & Coffee**, Starting February 6th 10:00 AM—12:00PM— hybrid  
*A weekly group that welcomes all focusing on conversation and friendship.*

**Telling Your Story**, 1:30 PM—3:00 PM—hybrid

*Participants are provided a weekly topic that sparks memories, connections, and friendships. We welcome all and are open to people who choose to compose their stores or tell others about their experiences.*

**Disability Peer Support Group**, 5:00 PM —6:00 PM- hybrid

*A peer support group for individual who have a disability and identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. This is a drop in space that provides conversation, social support and resource sharing.*

**Stich & Bitch**, 6:15 PM—7:45 PM

*A weekly group that welcomes all and provides space for sewing, crafting and conversation.*

**Tuesdays**

**Men's Coffee**, 10:00 AM—12:00 PM

*A weekly group for men focusing on conversation and friendship.*

*groups could change due to participation level or implementation of new projects-Jason*

**Continued on next page...**

**Continued... West of 50 weekly groups.**

**Trans & Non-Binary Support Group (for 40+), 1:30 PM—3:00 PM—Online**

*A weekly peer-led group welcoming all transgender and non-binary adults to an online space where they can come together for conversation and connections.*

**Older, Wiser, Sexual Smarter, 2:00 PM—3:30 PM**

*A weekly discussion group facilitated by a West of 50 staff member focusing on dismantling sexual misconceptions and introducing evidence based topics to help older adults engage in their best sex-positive-selves.*

**Veterans Support Group, 6:00 PM—7:00 PM—hybrid**

*A weekly group for veterans to come together for conversation and connections.*

**Wednesday**

**Silver Sneakers Seated Yoga, 10:30 AM—11:30 AM—hybrid**

*A certified Silver Sneakers® instructor leads participants through a complete series of chair-assisted yoga poses designed to increase flexibility, balance, and range of movement. Silver Sneakers® membership is not required.*

**AARP Community Group, 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM**

*A group that's focused on their own interest such as community engagement, volunteering, advocacy, event planning and so much more.*

**Thursday**

**Open Art Studio, 10:00 AM—12:00 PM**

*Let your creativity fly while connecting with others who share a passion for the arts.*

**Friday**

**Seniors in Motion, 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM**

*Instructed by Cristina Michaels, participants are introduced to techniques such as Qigong, Tai Chi, modern and contemporary dance movements, along with some classical ballet techniques.*

**Women's Salon Friday, 1st Friday of the month, 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM - online**

*A monthly group for women to come together for conversation and friendship.*

**Meditation & Visualization, 11:45 AM—12:45 AM—hybrid**

*Instructed by Bryant Mehay, participants are introduced to techniques based on Progressive Muscular Relaxation, guided visualization, and basic meditation for individuals who are new to the practice.*

**Disability Peer Support Group, 1:30 PM—3:00 PM—hybrid**

*A peer support group for individual who have a disability and identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. This is a drop in space that provides conversation, social support and resource sharing.*

**Acceptance, Mindfulness, and Healthy Coping Support Group, 1:30 PM—2:30 PM**

*This support group provides a safe space to share your personal struggles and accomplishments while providing the learn from others. Together we will talk about life's ups and downs while learning acceptance, mindfulness meditation, and healthy coping skills.*

## SEASHORE MEDITATION

Kenneth W. Felts (December 16, 2022)

I walked the beach in the misty midnight.  
With only the moon my steps to light.  
The sound of the ocean roared ashore.  
In my mind I heard, “never-more, never-more.”

The memory of my love and I, now gone  
Once visited these shores in the early dawn.  
We found a treasure buried in the sand  
A very old bottle, washed up on the strand.

The note inside was brief, and read: “Do it now,  
life is short.”  
“Love is all that lasts when we finally make port.”  
Following our steps in the misty moonlight  
We again walked the shore holding our hands  
tight.

## A QUEER'S CHRISTMAS

Kenneth W. Felts (December 2022)

I have found a home for this old queer  
Where everyone is gay and full of good cheer.  
It makes me feel safe whenever I am here  
With friends and staff always so near.

Christmas to us all is a really special time  
Activities galore, food on which to dine  
An art show to hang pictures of mine  
A beautiful wall-hanging at the end of the line.

Our creations were hung on the walls with great  
care.

Work we had done that we were eager to share.  
Our visions come to life in a loving atmosphere,  
Created and shared by we who are queer.

Christmas marks the beginning of another great  
year.

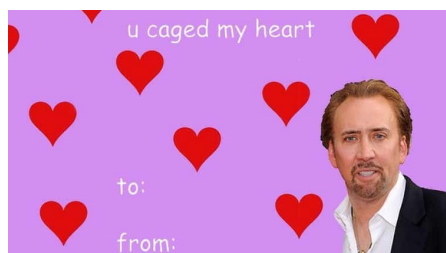
Hopefully all with smiles, and never a tear.  
Jason and Bryant have new programs to premi-  
ere.

We are super-excited for them to appear.

As we walk in the door our fears we surrender  
Our expression of self they do not hinder.  
I give a big “Thanks” to the staff of the Center  
Hardworking Gays of every gender.

### LGBTQ Valentines day ideas—

- Write Valentine's Day cards to all your LGBT friends.
- Help a trans loved one reach their goals. Many trans individuals have crowdfunding pages to help with expensive gender affirming treatments. This is a great way to help.
- Attend **Queer Valentines Movie Night** with all your friends.
- Practice some self-care and support a queer owned business. Denver is home to over 150 queer owned businesses. Treat yourself some a little something. Need ideas:  
Bubby Goober's Hand Pies—Baked Goods, Five Points  
Needz— Men's clothing, Baker  
Queer America Clothing-Online clothing store  
Queer Dance Project— Dance classes anyone? Lakewood.  
Ivy+OAK Salon— Get a haircut, Berkeley.  
Out Spokin- Cycling Club  
Plant Garage— Garden Center, Civic Center  
Daddy's Bar & Grill— Bar & Grill, Speer  
Under the Umbrella— Café and bistro, Congress Park.  
Mozart's Denver— Karaoke bar, Montclair



### Queer Valentines Movie Night- Spend this



Valentine's Day at The Center to watch a showing of Rafiki! This movie follows two women in Kenya as they navigate their family's political rivalry, their blooming romance, and a

country that does not accept them. Snacks, beverages, and comfortable seating will be provided. Space will be available for those wishing to bring pillows and blankets to watch the movie! **Join us on Tuesday February 14th, doors open at 5:30 with the movie starting at 6pm! Popcorn and soda provided**

**WEST of 50's Speed Dating**– Are you saying to yourself...



"I'm not dead yet! I want to meet someone!" This speedy 7-minute 'date' will allow for you to meet with as many individuals as possible! **Join Jason and**

**Scarlet as they guide you through an evening of fun and love sparks**– This event is designed for individuals who are 50 years and better. All attendees must show an ID to enter– Free snacks and drinks will be provided.

**How the night will work.** You will be provided with a card to make notes on. Should you find a person that hits your mark. We will pass along their contact information to you the following week.

**When: Friday, February 17th from Doors open at 5:00p and matchmaking runs from 5:30p—7:00pm. This event is for individuals who identify as male and are interested in other males.** RSVP recommended. Walk-ins welcome until we hit our compacity.

**The Center on Colfax Holiday Party and Art Show**

This past December West of 50 hosted its annual holiday party and art show. For this year's event the West of 50 team revamped the event. While still upholding the core point of the event, the team focused on expanding the event and pushing to bring more individuals into the building. Resulting in a multiroom art show with live entertainment, art in every room, open bar, and herders. The event welcomed 33 non community members and 32 community members. This was a 100% increase from last year's party and attendees loved every minute of the bash.



**Dunk & Munch with a side of theory**- While working with



groups Bryant introduced the theory of Role and Role Theory in the field of Drama Therapy. The theory was so popular that additional discussion has been requested! Join Bryant as he brings you more evidence based practice with this Dunk and Munch! Role and Role Theory is defined as a unit of behavior, a set of socially, culturally, and physically established qualities, behaviors, actions, & motivations. The theory asserts that our personality and sense of self is derived from our interactive system of roles. This is an opportunity to dive into the roles you take and play in your life and learn how they interact within yourself and with others. When: **Wednesday, February 22nd from 11:45a— 1p**

**Queer Woke Speaker Series**– We are excited to announce the return of Queer Woke.



The goal of this series is to expand the communities understanding of the queer experience and to learn about someone's life experience that could be different than your own. For 2023 speaker we will be our guest speaker will be Phillip Nash. Phil is a longtime gay rights activist and was the first director of the Gay Community Center of Colorado (The Center on Colfax). Join the West of 50 team and Phil as he talks about The Center's history, why our founders created the organization, what they hoped to achieve by the creation the organization, and if The Center has become what in his eye's they thought it would. When: **Pizza served at 5:30pm and the conversation starts at 6:00pm —7:30pm. Date February 28th. RSVP strongly recommend as space is limited.**



August 21, 1977, Grand Opening of the Gay Community Center of Colorado, 1436 Lafayette St., Denver.  
Front, left to right: Michael Graczyk, Michael Rosener (a/k/a Michael Jefferson), Gerald Gerash, Cara Heller (a/k/a Noriko Nakano) Back, left to right: Jeffrey Mullican, Stephen Springer, Timothy Offutt

**Older, Wiser, Sexually Smarter- The many dimensions of sexual problems**— Sexual problems are defined as dissatisfaction with emotional, physical or relationship aspect or sexual experience. They may have several different causes. Below gives you just a few ideas of problems one may experience. Should you or a loved one experience sexual problems its recommended to talk with your medical provider.

...**Physiological factors** (pain or lack of physical sensation or response during sexual activity arising from):

- ⇒ Medical conditions
- ⇒ Sexually transmitted infections
- ⇒ Side effects of drugs, medications, or medical treatments
- ⇒ Overuse or dependent on prescription drugs, alcohol or other recreational drugs.

...**psychological factors** (negative beliefs about one's self-worth or desirability. Inability to accept changes or limitations due to aging. Perceived lack of choice in one's sexual behaviors or attitudes from):

- ⇒ Past negative sexual, physical, or emotional experiences.
- ⇒ Guilt or shame about one's sexual desires or fantasies.
- ⇒ Depression or anxiety.

...**partner and relationship factors** (abuse, betrayal, dislike, fear, or resentment of partner. Differences in partner preferences for frequency or types of sexual activities. Poor communication. Partners health status or sexual problems).

...**social factors** (inadequate sex education or lack of access to health services resulting in):

- ⇒ Lack of information about human sexual biology and changes as one grow older.
- ⇒ Lack of vocabulary to describe experiences and needs.
- ⇒ Lack of information about how to protect oneself from STI and seek support for sexual trauma and domestic violence.
- ⇒ Anxiety or shame about one's body.
- ⇒ Confusion about ones sexual orientation or gender identity or about sexual fantasies, desires or preferences.
- ⇒ Fear of judgement or punishment by community or religious institutions.

**Older, Wiser, Sexually Smarter has becomes West of 50's second most attended group since its implementation. The group meets every Tuesday from 2—3:30pm.**

### **An interview with The Center's Viet -**



**Where did you work before The Center?** *"Texas Tech University- Office of International affairs. I was basically an event planner... people would come to me and be like "yo... I want I want to do this". And I would make it so".*

**Why The Center?** *"LGBTQ work has always been a passion of mine. So when this opportunity came around I took it".*

**What is your favorite color?** *"Black".*

**What is your title here at the Center?** *"Manager of Young Adult Program".*

**What is your education in?** *"I have a bachelor's in Human Development and Family Studies. I am currently finishing up my Masters in Higher Education".*

**What is the name of the program you run?** *"Saga- this is not an acronym. We look at this current name as something that could evolve, should the program need it to".*

**What did you have for dinner last night?** *"I made myself a hotpot".*

**What is that?** *"A hotpot is an Asian dish... where you take boiling broth and dip veggies or meats into it. it's my favorite".*

**What is the purpose of Saga?** *"We recognized that our queer youth needed more from The Center after Rainbow Alley. So, we went after grant money and created Saga. This program offers support to assist our youth with resources with developing professional soft skill, carrier services, life skills, and cultural awareness and assist one with developing a better sense of self".*

**Wow this is a lot? Do you teach all this?** *"No. I create community partnerships with individuals who have those skills, they will come in and teach our youth".*

**What ages do you serve?** *"18-24".*

**How many participants are you shooting for?** *"20 max. But if we hit that number then we will have to reevaluate our approach".*

**Have you ever been in a fist fight?** *"Yes. I kick their ass".*

**What type of biscuit would you be if you were a biscuit?** *"A honey butter biscuit, with a honey packet".*

# February 2023

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			<b>1</b> 10:30SS Yoga  <b>11:45</b> Lunch &Learn  1:30 AARP	<b>2</b> 10 Tax Aid  10 Open Art  <i>Groundhog day</i>	<b>3</b> 10:30 Qigong 10:30Res Nav 11:45 Med 1:30 DD Sup- port 1:30 AMH Support	<b>4</b> Rosa Parks day
5	<b>6</b> 10C- Coffee 10:30Res Nav 1:30 Story 5 DPSG 6:15 Stich &	<b>7</b> 10 Men's Coffee 1:30Trans 2 Sex 6p Vet	<b>8</b> 10:30SS Yoga  1:30 AARP	<b>9</b> 10 Tax Aid  10 Open Art	<b>10</b> 10:30 Qigong 10:30Res Nav 11:45 Med 1:30 DPSG 1:30 AMH Support	<b>11</b>
12	<b>13</b> 10C- Coffee 10 Res Nav 1:30 Story 5 DPSG 6:15 Stich & Bitch	<b>14</b> <i>Valentine's</i> <i>Day</i> 10 Men's Coffee 1:30Trans 2:00 Sex <b>5:30</b> <i>Movie</i> <i>Night</i> 6 Vet	<b>15</b> 10:30SS Yoga  1:30 AARP	<b>16</b> 10 Tax Aid  10 Open Art	<b>17</b> 10:30 Qigong 10:30Res Nav 11:45 Med 1:30 DPSG 1:30 AMH Support <b>5p S-Date</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> Aro- mantic Spec- trum week- 20th-26th	<b>20</b> <u>Center</u> <u>Closed for</u> <u>Presidents</u> <u>Day</u>	<b>21</b> 10 Men's Coffee  1:30Trans 2 Sex 6 Vet	<b>22</b> 10:30SS Yoga  <b>12p</b> <i>Dunk &amp;</i> <i>Munch</i>  1:30 AARP	<b>23</b> 10 Tax Aid  10 Open Art	<b>24</b> 10:30 Qigong 10:30Res Nav 11:45 Med 1:30 DPSG 1:30 AMH Support	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 10C- Coffee 10 Res Nav 1:30 Story 5 DPSG 6:15 Stich & Bitch	<b>28</b> 10 Men's Coffee 1:30Trans 2 Sex <b>5:30</b> <i>Queer</i> <i>Woke</i> 6 Vet	Key: <b>C-Coffee</b> —Community & Coffee <b>Story</b> — Telling our Story <b>DPSG</b> — Disability Peer Support Group <b>Trans</b> — Trans Support Group <b>Sex</b> — Older, Wiser, Sexually Smarter <b>Vet</b> — Veterans Support Group <b>SS Yoga</b> — Silver Sneakers Yoga <b>AMH Support</b> — Acceptance, Mindfulness and Healthy Coping Support Group <b>Res Nav</b> — Resource Navigation			