



In this issue

- Saying Goodbye pg. 2
- About West of 50 pg. 2
- WEST of 50 Main Events pg.2
- Sexuality & Disability pg. 3
- Denver Fair Housing pg. 3
- Theater of the Oppressed pg. 3
- Coming in June- Creative Meditation pg. 3
- Dining & Developing with Jason pg. 4

- WEST of 50 takes over DEVERPRIDE pg. 4
- An Interview with Erin pg. 4
- Needs Assessment pg. 5
- Rainbow Road Trip pg. 5
- Weekly Groups pg. 6
- Your Feedback pg. 7 & 8
- West of 50 & DPL Join Forces pg. 8
- Word Search pg. 9
- May Events Calendar pg. 10

Saying good bye— Accepting social work interns is one of the highlights of my job. Beyond being able to practice social work with a focus on program development, leadership, and group



work—all were in my area of study. I choose to bring on social work interns because I believe it's important to give back to the profession. My goal is to provide a field placement that is creative, innovative, and fun. The hardest part of the field experience is when we go through what is called *Termination*. The goal of Termination is for the consumer to not feel abandoned, as well as the clinician knowing we have been able to do our job effectively and assisted in aiding the client in achieving and/or developing the skills they need to move forward in life.

Like all internships they must conclude and that time has come for Zac and Scarlet. The pair's last week will be in early May and over the next several weeks they will start to talk about termination, and, should you need them to, they will process with you. For some of you it will not be a big deal and for others this will have an impact. —That is okay. For me, I am sad and don't want them to go. To say thank you and celebrate their hard work the pair will be hosting a **Lunch & Learn on Tuesday, May 2nd Start time 11:45 am—1p** RSVP with Jason or Bryant.



Additionally monthly program such as Lunch & Learns, Road Trips, Field Trips, Dunk & Munches, or other special engagements to spark peoples curiosity. The program also host four large events a year. The newest event launched in a April *The Center's Got Talent*, The popular *Tea Dance* is a



About West of 50—Over the years this program has had many iterations. Once known as Gay and Gray then SAGE of the Rockies to its current name West of 50. Over the past year the program has experienced a renaissance, running between 11 to 12 weekly groups and with an addi-

tionally monthly program such as Lunch & Learns, Road Trips, Field Trips, Dunk & Munches, or other special engagements to spark peoples curiosity. The program also host four large events a year. The newest event launched in a April *The Center's Got Talent*, The popular *Tea Dance* is a pride event and will be on June 22nd, The *Thanksgiving Social* is in early November, and *Center's Holiday Party and West of 50 Art Show* is in December. These engagements have become staples for the community. We at West of 50 are proud of what we have created and are inspired by the community we serve!

West of 50— Next Big Event! West of 50's—Tea Dance! Wednesday, June 21st!



August Celestial returns to The Center's Roof Top to host a one of a kind show full of STUNTS, KICKS, COUTURE, COMEDY, DANCE, SCANDAL, TWIST, AND WHO KNOWS WHAT ELSE. This one of a kind show includes free drinks, prizes, snacks and more. Keep an eye out for more information- We hope to see you there!

Artist in photographs Left to right—August Celestial, Ty Woo, King Vaughnz Spanic, and Ximena Latinx.



Sexuality & Disability

Mondays beginning May 8
4:30 - 6:00 PM
at The Center on Colfax

for
adults 21+

THE
CENTER
ON COLFAX
lgbtcolorado.org

Topics of sex and sexuality for the disability community have long been taboo and ignored by the culture at large. Each week we will dive into a specific topic; ranging from representation of disabled sex and sexuality in the media, consent, to healthy sex practices. This program will be based in the most current research & guided by the community and its interests. This program is for adults 21+.

Dates: Every Monday beginning May 8

Time: 4:30 - 6:00 PM

Questions? Contact Bryant Mehay

Theatre of the Oppressed Dunk & Munch!



of the Oppressed is a system of physical exercises, aesthetic games, image techniques, and special improvisations whose goal is to safeguard, develop and re-shape this human vocation, by turning the practice

of theatre into an effective tool for the comprehension of social and personal problems and the search for their solutions. Created by Augusto Boal in the 1960's, this revolutionary form of theatre has been used since its inception to provide oppressed people with opportunities to explore their relationship with power and with each other. In this Dunk and Munch, we will learn about the history and different forms of Theatre of the Oppressed as well as how it exists today! RSVP with Bryant or Jason to secure a spot. **When: Wednesday, May 10th from 11:45a-1:00p**

Did you know that the disability community is the number 1 community who is discriminated against when it comes to housing?

Join the Denver Metro Fair Housing Center as they demystify your housing rights. John Paul will be able to answer your questions and provide you with resources on how to navigate instances of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, family status, sex, disability, or national origin.

John will also go over what happens when you are falsely denied housing based on availability and other forms of discrimination that our community often times experience.

When: Friday, May 5th at 1:30pm Free Pizza provided.
RSVP with Bryant or Jason.



Denver Metro Fair Housing Center

COMING JUNE— CREATIVE MEDITATION WORKSHOP WITH QUÁNA MADISON-



Join artist & inner peace gardener, Quána Madison, for a monthly 60-minute creative meditation workshop. This workshop will use a variety of mindfulness exercises and expressive arts-based activities to promote relaxation, self compassion, emotional self-awareness and mental well-being. In

this workshop you will:

- Cultivate kindness and compassion for yourself
 - Explore mindfulness practices to promote well-being
 - Express your inner experiences and feelings through art-making
- *This workshop is sponsored by Colorado Artists in Recovery (CAiR). CAiR promotes an inclusive and creative recovery community for folks affected by substance use and mental health. Learn more about CAiR's free in-person and virtual workshops by visiting www.coloradoartistsinrecovery.org.

Quána Madison Bio: Quána Madison is an artist, inner peace gardener, healing arts workshop facilitator and coach. Expressive arts revived her soul after enduring cancer previvor treatments and developing disruptive life-changing chronic illnesses. Quána believes art nourishes well-being. She combines inner wellness practices with expressive arts to promote creativity, connectedness and holistic well-being. A graduate of New York University and Colorado College, Quána holds a MA in Education and a BA in Philosophy. More information is available at www.quanamadison.com and www.linktr.ee/quanamadison.

Dining & Developing with Jason—

Reinventing Yourself: There comes a time in our lives when we need to make changes and intentionally undergo personal reinvention. In this conversation we will unpack what it means to reinvent yourself later in life, strategies for reinvention, and address the following questions:

- What is sense-of-self and why is it important.
- What has contributed to defining your self-image?
- How have you let go of old versions of yourself before?
- How have you gone about reinventing yourself before?
- How do you perceive yourself now? How much of that perception comes from others?

Date: Wednesday May, 17th 5:30p—7:30p. Will be at The Center. Must be 50 or older to attend and RSVP is required. Dinner is provided. This event is funded by AARP Colorado. RSVP with Jason or Bryant. *If you have a food allergy please let us know in advance!*



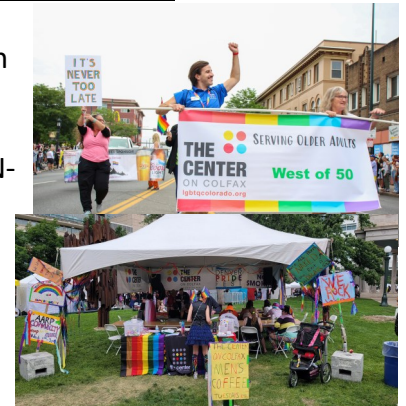
SPONSOR

Speaking of reinventing yourself—West of 50 is taking over DENVER PRIDEFEST! The AARP

Community Group loved how much fun we had at pride last year! Our tent welcomed over 350 BINGO players. For this years activation we will be rolling out not one, but 2 tents! The larger BINGO hall will also

serve as a information tent and provide pride goers with other activities. Lastly we have a top secret activation that will sure to draw in the crowds! We are so excited about this years space that, for once, Jason is looking forward to PRIDE.

We are also looking forward to this years parade. Though we had one of the largest contingencies of walkers... We would like to increase our presences in the parade. Keep your eye out for June's Newsletter to learn how to sign up.



An interview with Erin— The Master Mind behind DenverPride.

Jason—What do you do for The Center? Erin— *"I'm the Associate Director of Events and Strategic Partnerships. Essentially I am in charge of all things Pride."*

Jason- I heard that there is going to be a contingency of dancing panda bears at this year's pride. For this record is this true? Erin— *"Um, yes. we are very excited about it."* She giggles.

Jason— For the record, we heard that people must pay a fee to go number 2 at pride. What do you have to say about the continued build up of poo at pride? She giggles. Erin— *"This has always been an issues. There are too many people that have to bake a loaf at pride. So we thought we would fundraise off of their need to bust a grumpy. This will become the norm as it will be a great money maker."*

Jason- Who are this year's performers at Pride? Erin— *"Me! giggling. Our head liner is going be Big Freedia, Salina Es Titties, and Marcia Marcia Marcia from this session of Drag Race."*

Jason- Do mermaids have live babies or lay eggs? Erin- *"My gut say eggs".*

Jason- For the record, we heard that people who attend pride tend to drink large amounts of Cool Aid. Can you speak to why pride won't be hosting Disney on Ice? Erin— *"Um, this is news to me... I thought we were hosting Disney on ice."*

Jason- Are there any major changes to pride this year? Erin— *"Other than me. No. Not many."*

Jason- Who is your favorite staff person? Erin— *"Um. Am I allowed to say me? Um. I guess I will say you. I will give you the clout for your readers."*

Jason- What are you looking forward to the most at this year's festivities? Erin- *"Um... I have never been able to experience a pride as big as this. I don't think I know how moving this will be. I think I will cry seeing so many people. Its just something I am not used to."*

Jason- What do you think the first person to milk a cow was actually trying to do? Erin— *"I don't think I am allowed to say that... I think we both know".*

West of 50's Community Needs Assessment Survey! Since the start of the year you likely have heard Jason and Bryant talking about the strategic plan. Part of our goal is to understand how we can best support our community by implementing a needs assessment survey. So, Jason and Zac have been hard at work creating one. After 5 iterations Zac was finally able to create a version that met the needs of the program. By completing this assessment survey, you will ensure our future programming and event planning accurately reflects the needs and wants of our wonderful and diverse community members. The results of this survey will help our future programming , staff education, community partnership, as well as create a more comprehensive and robust resource list over the coming years.



How to take the assessment– Must be 46 and older and be a member of the queer community- Please follow the QR Code to take the assessment or go to the West of 50 website and follow the link or head to the Center and fill out a paper form. Or you can follow this link here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XPXVVLY>

Please let Jason or Bryant know if you would like to participate in a focus group pertaining to the same topics. This will most likely be in the summer.

Rainbow Road Trips– With warmer weather brings back our Rainbow Road



Trips! In 2022 we explored Breckenridge, Manitou Springs, and Georgetown. For our 2023 series we kick off the years trip with trip to Black Hawk. This small town occupies less than two square miles and have fewer than 100 residents. Yet this old mining and mill town welcomes countless visitors who want to experience the area's history, scenery, and entertainment.



Black Hawk hosts a unique mix of authentic gold-mining history and modern – day casinos, all set against the unmatched scenic backdrop of the Rocky Mountains. Home to Colorado's largest number of casinos with easy access from Denver, the city is one the states most popular gaming sites. With more than a dozen casinos, many of which also offer world-class dining. A Free shuttle runs up and down Main street so you have the ability to move around the town as you please. There are several shops to meander through if you are not a gambler.

The days Itinerary:

- 9:45am Pickup at The Center
- 11:00am Drop off at Ameristar Casino
- 3:45pm Pickup at Ameristar Casino
- 5:00pm Drop off at The Center

Upon arrive at Ameristar Casino all passengers will receive a Casino Bonus Ticket to Ameristar Casino. **Expectations:** Questions regarding bonus cash please contact Ameristar. To RSVP must be 40+ or 21+ and have a disability. At the time of RSVP, **\$15.00 NON-REFUNDABLE cash is due.** If you choose not to attend you will not get your money back. Hints NON-REFUNDABLE. **Money is due at time of RSVP.** Should you need a seating accommodation on the bus please let us know at the time of RSVP as this will affect the number of people who can attend the trip. Should you need a seating accommodation and choose to wait to RSVP you may not be able to attend.

Trips are first come first served and we may not be able to reasonable accommodate your need due to how full the bus is. Travelers are responsible for their own expenses including lunch, gambling, and any other items they wish to purchase. The Center will not cover your meals should you forget your wallet. **Please RSVP with Jason or Bryant. DATE: Wednesday, May 24th**

Please RSVP with Jason or Bryant. DATE: Wednesday, May 24th



Weekly Groups

Mondays

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 stories or tell others about their experiences.

Sexuality & Disability 4:30 PM —6:00 PM
A weekly discussion group facilitated by a staff member focusing on sex and sexuality. Each week the group will dive into topics that have been chosen by the group and reached by the staff. Topics could include; sexuality in media, canescent, healthy sex practice.

Stitch & 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—Hybrid
A weekly group for men focusing on conversation and friendship.

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

Wednesdays

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.

Thursdays

Open Art Studio, 10:00 AM—12:00 PM
Let your creativity fly while connecting with others who share a passion for the arts.

Fridays

Movement Therapy: Qigong, 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.

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.

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

Your Feedback- Last month several of you participated in our quarterly group survey. I would like to thank the individuals who took the survey. These surveys are very important! Just this past week I used this data in a presentation and the information was used in a grant submission. Here is what we learned from this batch— Jason

Participant Age

50-60	60-70	70-80	80-90	90+
1	14	16	14	1

How long have you been attending Center activities?

1-5 years	6-10 years	10+ years
17	10	7

How do you rate Jason’s performance: 60% of you noted my performance was excellent, 32% noted it was great, and 2% noted it was fair.

Comments: Overall participants defined me as engaging, well-informed, accessible for questions, and appreciated. That I provide accurate information to the community, have energized the program, and keep the program moving forward.

How do you rate Bryant’s performance: 56% of you noted his performance was excellent, 40% of you noted it was great, and 2% noted it was fair.

Comments: Overall, participants defined Bryant as energetic, passionate, accessible, and creative. Participants appreciate Bryant utilizing their knowledge in programming, their work ethic, and their communication skills.

How do you feel about your over all experience at the Center?

- 51% of you noted Excellent
- 46% of you noted Great
- 1% of you noted Fair

Key words from your feedback:

Diversity of Activities	Feeling Included	Safe	Sense of Fulfillment
Growth	Personal Development	Increased Socialization	Skill Building

Continued on page 8.

Responding to some of your Feedback:

“Get a chance to hear others’ opinions on various topics, its interesting”.

Jason- Thank you for being honest and that is what I like to see. Divers content and conversation. We all have something to share, its important to be respectful, responsible and safe with peoples feelings and what is shared.

“Meeting the criticism for 50+ participants.”

Jason- constructive feedback is always welcome! As I hope you have noticed The Center has changed over the past year. We encourage hearing constructive feedback that pushing the community center forward. We know that we won’t always get it right and when we don’t we know we will get a call out. But, the most effective call outs are the ones that encourage dialog and learning.

“good chance to open up in safety.”

Jason- We have had a lot of GREAT conversations! I love the honesty within the group and I am so thankful that we have been able to create a space that allows for that to happen. Thank you all for being so considerate of each other.

“I am not sure of what the intended purpose is of the group. It provides me with a social outlet and a way to feel I’m a part of the community.”

Jason- Sounds like it may of hit the spot to me.

“informative, inspiring at times, funny, creates comradery and openness, honest.”

Jason- That is what we stive for and I hope that we continue to create this for you.

“Let us keep larger projects at The Center, exp if we bring in dress making dummies or also store our own machines.”

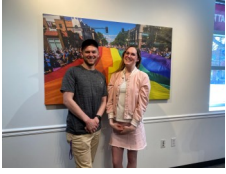
Jason- Sadly, this past winter one of our arts had their art supplies stolen (a value of several hundred). We cannot ensure that your items would be safely stored. Additionally, over the winter break we spent a week cleaning out the building. The Center housed YEARS of junk, it took the program team four days to clean out the basement and we filled one and half junk trucks... people forget their stuff and then its left here. To be real- we don’t want your stuff. We do have a little space for you to leave little items of no value but we will not be held responsible if they become lost or stolen. Sorry.

Thank you to all who participated in the survey! - Jason & Bryant



West of 50 & Denver Public Library join forces: Be Proud, Out Loud: A Pride Party for Older Adults— Join Steve-Ann and Cowpoke Avi for a very special pride celebration in honor of LGBTQ+ Older Adults at Town Hall Collaborative. This collaboration from West of 50 and Denver Public Library will be a fun afternoon of BINGO, Karaoke, and connection. Prize’s include VIP tickets to DenverPRIDE Fest, gift cards, tickets to local museums, and more. Check in with the WOF team to learn more! **When: June 8th from 3:00pm to 5:00pm! RSVP info coming in May. Location Town Hall Collaborative.**

West of 50's - May Word Search



N Y M Z G P R I D E F E S T T
 E Y O U R S E L F J A S O N E
 E O O P P R E S S E D S V Q A
 D F S D R E I N V E N T I N G
 S I A E E F O T S F E M Q J T
 F B S A X V C H Z X I A D T H
 H E C A S U E E U Y G D A H A
 V F E E B S A L Q G O I N E N
 T S R D N I E L O D T S C A K
 I A C L B T L S I P E O E T Y
 Q K L A H A E I S T I N H R O
 U Z K E R Z C R T M Y N V E U
 A A V F N L N K S Y E P G E O
 N C O J Q T E D I N I N G E R
 A X G L A H C T Y G M Y T M T



Reinventing
 Developing
 Yourself
 Oppressed
 Thank you
 Centers
 dance

disability
 Pridefest
 Madison
 Scarlet
 talent
 Theatre
 Jason

Assessment
 sexuality
 Feedback
 Dining
 Denver
 Quana
 Needs

Zac
 the
 got
 tea
 of

May 2023

Key:

Story– Telling our Story

Sex&D– Sexuality & Disabilities

DPSG– Disability Peer Support Group

Trans– Trans Support Group

Sex– Older, Wiser, Sexually Smarter

Vet– Veterans Support Group

SS Yoga– Silver Sneakers Yoga

Stitch– Stitch & Bitch

Move– Movement

Art– Open Art Studio

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAI
	1 1:30 Story 5 DPSG 6:15 Stich	2 10 MCoffee 11:45 L&L 2 Sex 1:30 Trans	3 10:30 Yoga 1:30 AARP	4 10 Open art	5 10:30 Move 11:45 Med 1:30 DPSG: Fair Housing.	6
7	8 1:30 Story 4:30 Sex&D 6:15 Stich	9 10 MCoffee 2 Sex 1:30 Trans	10 10:30 Yoga 11:45 Dunk & Munch 1:30 AARP	11 10 Open art	12 10:30 Move 11:45 Med 1:30 DPSG	13
14	15 1:30 Story 4:30 Sex&D 6:15 Stich	16 10 MCoffee 2 Sex 1:30 Trans	17 10:30 Yoga 1:30 AARP 5 D&D Jason	18 10 Open art World AIDS Vaccine	19 10:30 Move 11:45 Med 1:30 DPSG	20
21	22 1:30 Story 4:30 Sex&D 6:15 Stich Harvey Milk Day	23 10 MCoffee 2 Sex 1:30 Trans	24 NO YO-GA or AARP Rainbow Road Trip 9:45 am	25 10 Open art	26 10:30 Move 11:45 Med 1:30 DPSG	27
28	29 Memorial Day Center Closed	30 10 MCoffee 2 Sex 1:30 Trans	31 NO PROGRAMMING			