

# West of 50

July Newsletter — “*You never completely have your rights, one person, until you all have your rights.*” - Marsha P. Johnson

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**Jason Gets Active**— Last summer my husband and I attended Douglas County Pride (Castle Rock Pride). The small event boasted drag, some vendors, food trucks, and lots of events for kids. That night we attended their moonlight dance party. We paid the fee to attend and donated some extra money to the organization. We enjoyed dancing outside and being around

the community that we do not typically get to see. My husband and I live in Castle Rock. When we moved there in 2020, we did not realize how conservative the area was, nor did we know that it was home to many individuals who held such extreme political views.

While attending the 2022 Douglas County Pride we missed the drag show that has plagued the 2023 Pride planning and event since it happened. At the 2022 Pride drag show a queen was performing and aerial stunt and while spinning her blouse moved and exposed her breast plate. A Douglas County Commissioner used the wardrobe malfunction to score cheap political points by trying to ban the event. Since the nip slip, Castle Rock Pride has been on the defense navigating a commissioner and a county that has become increasingly hostile towards the community and the event.

This past winter my husband and I decided to engage the organization and assist with planning the 2023 pride. We have taken a role in planning the evening adult events. I have also used this to foster a stronger relationship between the two organizations. The Center hosted other state queer-focused organizations and provided them a free safety training day.

Recently, I attended a Douglas County library’s meeting that focused on the removal of LGBTQ+ book. During the event over 60 individuals engaged the board. A majority, almost 2-to-1, of the individuals present spoke on protecting LGBTQ+ books and other diverse readings from being removed from the shelves. I spoke on how a small group of people used photos of drag queens and cartoon porn to scare people into believing that there is an issue by villainizing the queer community.

This is the second time in two months that this group has tried to do this. This county continues its struggle with digesting diverse perspectives. I hope that as more people move into the area, we will start to see a shift.

- Jason

**Douglas County Pride is set for August 26th.**



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### Arts & Culture:

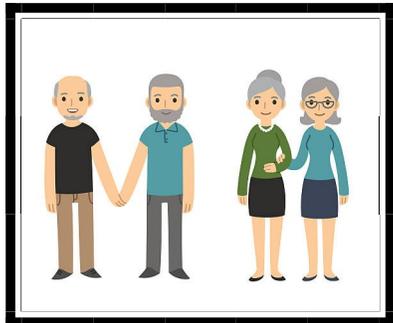
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## Dunk & Munch— Developing & Maintaining Foundations of Lasting Relationships:



Based on her social work background, Emma will explore therapeutic methodology based around the keys to building a strong relational foundation. We will cover concepts such as trust, respect, intimacy, communication, and emotional vulnerability. She is excited to discuss practical tools to help maintain these components of your relationship, as well as re-developing elements you seek to strengthen.

**Date: Wednesday, July 5th**

**Time: 11:45am –1:00pm**

**RSVP with Jason or Bryant**

## As a reminder—The Center will be closed July 3rd & 4th!

**Poached Chicken, Escarole, & Pear salad**— Whisk together 2 teaspoons **red-wine vinegar** and 1 teaspoon **extra-virgin olive oil**; season with salt and pepper. Arrange 1 or 2 torn escarole leaves, 1/4 sliced **pear**, and 1/4 thinly sliced **shallot** on a plate; top with 1 sliced poached **chicken breast** half. Drizzle with a little **vinaigrette** and garnish with shaved **pecorino cheese** and chopped toasted **walnuts**.



## Dining & Developing with Jason— Love Languages:



West of 50's second most popular group is *Older, Wiser, Sexually Smarter*. I have come to understand that our community needs to process their trauma, learn about healthy sex, and develop the skills to be better partners.

ers.

We have all been hearing about the Love Languages. In this conversation we will unpack what they are, how they influence our relationships, and how they can be used universally. We will answer the following questions:

- What are your love languages?
- What makes you feel loved?
- What influences this?
- How do you like to give love?
- What influences this?
- What would be your 6<sup>th</sup> love language?

**Date: Tuesday July, 18th 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!*

**AARP**  
Colorado

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## The Lesbian Lounge



Join Emma for a four part series focused on supporting queer-identifying women, this group will be both in-person and virtual. These sessions will focus on anything from relationships, to health, to current events.

The group will cover topics that **YOU** seek to discuss. Though the sessions will have a focus. Emma has crafted a spaced that allows for conversation, creativity, and learning. Below are the topics:

- July 10th: Fostering Intimacy Later In Life
- July 17th: Cultivating an Optimistic Outlook on Aging
- July 24th: Maintaining Community Involvement Through The Years
- July 31st: Preventative and Responsive Health: A conversation with Carey Candrian, PhD

**Date: Starting July, 10th 10am –11:30am.** This is a hybrid group. To attend online please contact Emma or Jason. Emma's email: [egrindle@lgbtqcolorado.org](mailto:egrindle@lgbtqcolorado.org)



**The Pink Elephant**  
**By Cristina Michaels**

Here I stand in the middle  
of the room  
The pink elephant  
In all my glory, for all to  
see

Hiding from society  
A gender construct impaled upon your con-  
science by King Patriarch himself

Yet *Here!* I stand exposed  
In hiding  
Feeling as large as a flea  
On show at the circus

*I cannot fix this issues*

How many times have I thrown out my clothes?  
How many times have I thrown out the ribbons  
and bows?  
How many times is countless!

*I cannot fix this issue!*

*I have a problem!*

No, society has a problem  
Throw them out  
Society will not love you.  
Society will

*Only Kill You!*

But I am supposed to wear those ribbon and  
bows  
You don't understand

No!  
Throw them out  
You are not welcome!  
To this binary religion you shall succumb.

Here I stand in the middle of the room  
The pink skinned elephant  
In all my glory, for all to see  
Hiding from society

Gender is a caste system!  
This shackled  
Gender'd  
Identity is a bastille to me  
It is here  
To keeps their sexual Con-Scious-Ness

Safely under lock and key

This visual perspective of a male  
Is a mirage  
Water in the desert  
LOOK... There Ships on the horizon  
**There you see a large body of water**

Caste systems of gender

Like a forced fed goose readied for Foie Gras  
Or the kept baby calf waiting to be plated for din-  
ner

I am not your incarcerated force fed appetizer  
Or your veal parma for your sexual karma

SO here I stand in the middle of this room  
The pink skinned elephant  
No longer hiding from society  
An engrained social algorithm  
A binary seed planned so deep - few will find  
Monsanto's pesticides sprayed upon your very  
breathe  
While you inhale this gender genocidal Methe

The guillotine to your sexuality  
Imposed out of fear  
Searing in the favor of  
Blind-ness

Has become quite  
Mind-less

Throw out those clothes  
They are not for your gender!  
But I am supposed to wear those ribbons and  
bows!  
You don't understand  
Gender constructs are a fickle trick.  
POOF  
I am female  
There is no gender  
Erase the whiteboard  
Throw it out with my clothes

Caste systems for sexuality  
Caste system for identities  
Caste system of genders  
Few see  
Or  
Can perceive.  
You are welcome from  
King Patriarch Themselves

**Lunch & Learn—Aging Safely Seminar.** The Aging



Safely Seminar is a comprehensive event designed to empower seniors with the knowledge and practical strategies necessary to lead safe, healthy, and independent lives as they age. The seminar is led by Senior Real Estate Specialists with a specialized background of working with older adults in their home as Physical Therapists. Participants will have the opportunity to learn, engage, and gain valuable insights into various aspects of senior well-being.

**Key Topics Covered:**

- Home Modification: strategies to create safe living environment
- Senior Services: information about senior services to promote aging safely
- Downsizing: advantages and strategies of downsizing
- Differences between the communities/ facilities: information about 55+/62 communities, independent living facility, assisted living
- Skilled nursing facilities.

By attending the Aging Safely Seminar, seniors will acquire practical tools and knowledge to navigate the aging process confidently, make informed decisions, and prioritize their overall well-being. The seminar aims to inspire seniors to embrace their golden years with vitality, independence, and a proactive approach to aging safely.

**Date: Wednesday, July 19th**  
**Time: 11:45am –1:00pm**  
**RSVP with Jason or Bryant**



**Rainbow Road trips: United States Olympic & Paralympic Museum-** Join West of 50 as we head up



United States Olympic & Paralympic Museum™

to Colorado Springs to visit the United States Olympic & Paralympic Museum. The U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum is noted as one of the best attractions in the Springs. The Museum is dedicated to capturing and sharing the history of Team USA in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as the hopes and dreams of future generations. At the museum you'll be able to explore the following exhibits: The Hall of Fame, Intro to the Games, Athlete Training, Medal Collection, Medal Ceremony, and more.

- 9:45a Leave The Center at 9:45a
- 11:00a Arrive in downtown Colorado Springs. You will be free to explore downtown and find a place to eat lunch. Lunch is on your own.
- 1:30p Enter the Museum
- 5:00p leave downtown Colorado Springs
- 6:15p return to The Center.



This trip includes transportation and entry into the museum. To RSVP you must RSVP with Jason or Bryant with \$15.00 cash at time of RSVP. Your deposit is nonrefundable and due at time of RSVP.  
**Date: Thursday, July, 20th 9:45am-6:15pm**  
**Cost: \$15.00 nonrefundable**  
**RSVP required to attend.**



**Happy Disability Pride Month!**



July marks the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. As we celebrate this ground-breaking legislation and the strides made towards true accessibility, we also recognize the achievements, challenges, capabilities, and pride of this diverse group of people. This past fall West of 50 introduced new programming for the LGBTQ+ community with disabilities that focuses on holistic wellness, fostering healthy relationships, and building community. In continuation of this effort, we will be hosting a Disability Pride Month Celebration on Saturday, July 29th from 11-3pm. This event will feature information tables from organizations that serve people with disabilities, a speed-friending activity for creating new connections, and a performance/conversation with local Drag/Burlesque Artists Marionette Clown Toy (it/its) and Allie Soreass (zie/zir). Please visit our website to register for this event!

**DATE: Saturday, July 29th 11am-3pm** **WHERE: The Center on Colfax**

# July's Search

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

Relationships

Disability

Seminar

Olympic

LGBTQ

Safely

Developing

Month

Foundations

Elephant

Maintaining

Dining

Pride

Love

Lasting

books

Developing

Languages

Rainbow

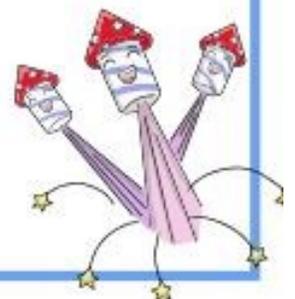
Poached

Paralympic

Road

Aging

Trip



# JULY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>Key:</b> <b>Lesbian</b> – Lesbian Lounge <b>Story</b> – Telling our Story <b>DPSG</b> – Disability Peer Support Group <b>Sex</b> – Older, Wiser, Sexually Smarter		<b>Vet</b> – Veterans Support Group <b>SS Yoga</b> – Silver Sneakers Yoga <b>Stitch</b> – Stitch & Bitch <b>Move</b> – Movement <b>Art</b> – Open Art Studio				1
2	3 <b>Center Closed</b>	4 <b>Center Closed</b> Happy 4th	5 10:30 SS Yoga 11:45 Dunk & Munch 1:30 AARP	6 10 Open Art	7 10:30 <b>NO MOVEMENT</b> 11:45 Meditation 1:30 DPSG	8
9	10 10 <b>Lesbian</b> 1:30 Story 6:15 Stich	11 10 MCoffee 2 Sex 6 Vet	12 10:30 SS Yoga 1:30 AARP	13 10 Open Art	14 10:30 Movement 11:45 Meditation 1:30 DPSG	15
16	17 10 <b>Lesbian</b> 1:30 Story 6:15 Stich	18 10 MCoffee 2 Sex 5:30 <b>D&amp;D</b> 6 Vet	19 10:30 SS Yoga 11:45 L&L 1:30 AARP	20 10 Open Art <b>Rainbow Road Trip</b>	21 10:30 Movement 11:45 Meditation 1:30 DPSG	22
23	24 10 <b>Lesbian</b> 1:30 Story 6:15 Stich	25 10 MCoffee 2 Sex 6 Vet	26 10:30 SS Yoga 1:30 AARP	27 10 Open Art	28 10:30 Movement 11:45 Meditation 1:30 DPSG	29 11am-3pm <b>Disability Pride Month Celebration</b>
30	31 10 <b>Lesbian</b> 1:30 Story 6:15 Stich					