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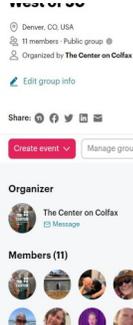
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Meetup.com—In the fall of last year we started exploring how we could increase participation across West of 50’s wide programming demographic. A concept that was thought up was Meetup.com.



About Events Members Photos Discussions More

What we're about
The West of 50 program (formerly SAGE of the Rockies) is a welcoming space to take an engaging class, try a new activity, attend a fun event, or find social support. The program is designed for older adults (age 50+) in the LGBTQ community and their allies.
25% of The Center's visitors participate in one of our programs for older adults—come join our warm, supportive community. Stop to attend one of the many social, educational and support programs that we offer at The Center.
If you don't fit the 50+ year old demographic for the West of 50 program.



increase participation across West of 50’s wide programming demographic. A concept that was thought up was Meetup.com.

Meetup is a social

media platform for hosting and organizing in-person and virtual activities, gathering, and events for people and communities of similar interests, hobbies, and professions.

After much review the program decided to invest in a membership and is attempting to bring new individuals to the program. In June the group went live and we added all of West of 50’s activities including its disability programming to the page. Within three weeks we already had a new participant attending weekly programming. Though membership growth has been slow on the page we have are starting to see individuals use the page and attend programming.

An added benefit to our group’s page is that it is an easy way to find all of our activities in one spot. I check it regularly and engage members who have questions and post photos from our activities. Meetup is free to join. Should you have questions or need help accessing the site, please reach out to Bryant or myself.

check out our Meetup page at <https://www.meetup.com/west-of-50/> or us your phone to scan the QR code.
- Jason



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WOF An interview with Jaylin the mastermind behind The Center's newest program: The Lawler Mental Health Program.

What is the name of your position? *"I am the Director of Mental Health Services."*

What is your biggest goal for the program over the next 6 months? *"I would say to see about 15 to 20 community members per intern and see more participation in our support groups. Along with that, positive feedback from that engagement."*

Did you say interns.... How many? *"Two. We will be onboarding two interns this September."*

I heard your interns can't have toenails is that true? *"No... they can't have toenails nor can they have a pinky toe. You don't need those to be a therapist."*

What is deal your deal against toenails? *"I am not a feet person."*

I heard you will be hosting a group focused on foot and mouth play. Is this true? *"Not yet... not now... good idea..."*

Since this is a new program to The Center...what is the overall concept behind it? *"It is to get more access and awareness to mental health services and to create more LGBTQ affirming mental health services."*

What is your favorite part about working at the Center? *"I love how... I don't know how to say it... But everyone is so free and open. People are so passionate about the work that they do. We have our play time and we have our work time and I really enjoy that."*



The Return of Steve Anne's BINGO EXTRAVAGANZA!

The lovely Steve-Anne will be twinkling and twerking as she grabs those balls and calls out those numbers so that YOU can win F A B U L O U S prizes. Space is limited so your ass better show up early!

Date: September 27th
Time: 1:30—3:30p
Snacks and drinks provided.

When is your launch event and what does it entail? *"September 7th from 6 to 8. I will host a tour of our new webpage, we will have drag performers, food, community resources, and community members will be able to check out our new therapy rooms." Is this open to the whole community?* *"Yes. It is."*



What would you call a male ladybug? *"A bug... you just call it a bug. Male-bug does not sound right. She turns to Bryant... What is the opposite of lady?" Bryant: "Gentlemen". Jaylin: "Gentlemen-bug... that's to much work".*

What is your population you are hoping to engage? *"18 and older... and we open to individuals and couples or throuple or that gangbang that you took on and had and emotional outburst with over size."*

If Donkey Kong is a monkey, not a donkey, why was he given that name? *"Because he acts an ass. That's good."*

About the event: **Let's grow together.** You're invited to the launch party of our Lawler Mental Health Program! Come learn about the program and the services we'll be offering, engage with mental health professionals, connect with fellow community members, and celebrate this new beginning! The party will feature a performance from a local drag artist, photo backdrop, food and more.

Date: Thursday, September 7. **Time:** 6:00 - 8:00 PM



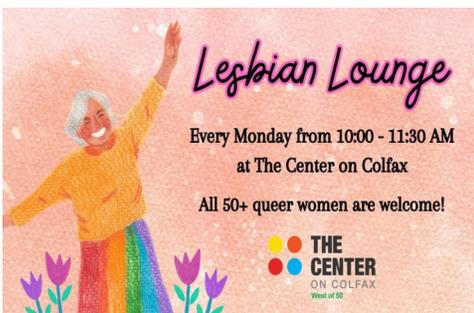
#HIVandAging: National HIV/AIDS and Aging Awareness Day is observed each year on September 18th. This important day highlights the unique health and social needs, as well as challenges of HIV prevention, testing, treatment, and care in older adults. Thanks to improvements to the accessibility of care and treatment, people who are diagnosed early, and who get and stay on antiretroviral therapy, can keep the virus suppressed to live long and healthy lives.

Did you know that more than half of the people diagnosed with HIV in 2018 were aged 50 or older?

Older people with HIV face different psychosocial and health issues. They require a more strategic treatment plan. This is due to non-AIDS related conditions, and other barriers that older people face such as social isolation and depression. According to the Colorado HIV Surveillance Quarterly Report. Between January 1, 2023 and March 31, 2023 there were 17 newly reported cases of HIV; 15 among men and 2 among women. Of those new cases 2 of them were over the age of 50. In the 4th quarter of 2022 there were 87 new reported cases. Of those individuals, 11 of them were 50 years and older. To learn more about HIV prevention and supports contact the Colorado Health Network at 303.837.0166 or contact Jason or Bryant - Jason

Source: Colorado Department of Health and HIV.gov.

Lesbian Lounge Continues! Due to popular demand the lounge continues with weekly conversations and the occasional workshop. Over the four week trial run of the series the group had 20 participants participate in topics ranging from relationship



health, social skills, and even a doctor facilitated session. One attendee noted *"It's great having a space for us gals. I learn a lot and enjoy the conversation. Emma has done a wonderful job."*

In need of a little conversation, fun, learning, and community? This weekly group is focused on supporting queer-identifying women through conversation, creativity, and learning. These peer lead conversations will focus on anything from relationships, to health, to current events with the occasional workshop.

Mondays from 10 - 11:30a

Car-ey Candrian, PhD, who facilitated a health conversation with the group during its first month.

Sadly Emma's internship came to a close on August 9th. But, once again interns have left their mark on the program. This program will be peer-led and facilitated by Car-

Mingle Masters

Friday, September 8
3:00 - 7:00 PM
Rooftop of The Center



Master the Mingle— Join the AARP Community Group as we launch our newest idea! The **Mingle Masters** is a casual social/community development event taking place on rooftop of The Center! Participants will be provided with a MINGLE card. Your goal will be to find as many "mingles" as possible. The person with the most mingles will win a prize.

Snacks and alcoholic & nonalcoholic beverages will be served at this relaxing yet enjoyable social gathering. Please RSVP with Jason or Bryant to attend.

When: Friday September 8th, 3-

7pmWhere: Rooftop of The Center

Creative Aging + Well-being Convening & West of 50— One of my goals for 2023 was to do more education



I also spoke at last year's Creative Aging convening on the importance of community & collaboration.

surrounding the devaluing of older queer adults and what I have perceived as an unwillingness to provide any type of grace for a population that has been through so much and continue to have barriers presented to them. A study of gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals over the age of sixty reported almost two-thirds (63%) of participants were the victim of verbal abuse on their sexual orientation and more than a quarter (29%) received threats of physical violence. Additionally, throughout this population's life they have experienced the loss of friends and loved ones due to the AIDS crises, loss of employment for being queer, and could not be out in the world for fear of discrimination or loss of housing. They now

face issues of discrimination in long-term care facilities and struggle with navigating a changing world that does not pose any latitude for the aging community.

When pitching the concept of intergenerational work to others, it was brought to my attention that we needed to protect youth from older adults due to their lack of understanding. In my eyes we need to protect our older adults from youth and their accusations and lack of resiliency. Thus, I conjured up the idea of working with the two largest programs I knew of; The Denver Public Library and the Denver Art Museum. I pitched the idea of educating practitioners on experiences of older LGBTQ+ individuals. My goal was to put forth a seminar that educated practitioners on the lived experiences of older queer adults and their struggles both past and present.

The result, West of 50 and our two largest partners will be educating fellow practitioners who work with older adults. The practitioners will consist of individuals who work in the area of aging services and could include arts centers, museums, healthcare services, senior residences, and beyond. As these individuals arrive from across the country, this will be one of the key trainings that they all go to. This year's two-day gathering will take place at the Denver Art Museum on September 21st and 22nd. I will be leading a roundtable conversation with local specialist as well as presenting to the group. This is my second conference presentation this year. -Jason

DENVER ART MUSEUM **Creative Aging Convening**
September 21 & 22, 2023 | 10am – 4pm



How can **creativity** support healthy aging?

Explore this topic in-depth at the second annual Creative Aging Convening hosted by the Denver Art Museum.

Learn more at adults@denverartmuseum.org

Designed for practitioners working in aging-services organizations, arts centers, museums, healthcare, senior residences and beyond to learn together through deep conversation and hands-on learning.

Through panels, case studies, creative workshops and discussion groups, attendees will gain new knowledge about the impact of creative aging while making connections with new colleagues.



Brown Rice with Black Beans and Avocado:

Cook 1/2 cup **long-grain brown rice** according to package instructions; fluff with a fork and place in bowl. Top with 1/2 cup cooked **black beans** (drained and rinsed) and 1/3 **avocado**, sliced into wedges. Serve with assorted garnishes such as **cilantro**, **sour cream**, **shredded cheddar cheese**, **chopped red onion**, and **tomato**, as desired.



WOF a FIELD TRIP to Denver Botanic Gardens- West of 50 is setting out to explore the city streets and hang out at the Denver Botanic Garden. This 23 acre public botanical garden contains a conservatory and variety of themed gardens. Created in 1986 the gardens features North America’s largest collection of plants from cold temperate climates from around the world, as well as 7 diverse gardens that mostly include plants from Colorado and our neighboring states.

The Day’s Itinerary:

10:30am: Meet at the Denver Botanic Gardens

Lunch on own: You are able to eat at the gardens or pack a lunch.

1:30pm: Horticultural Therapy Session, this engaging experience of horticulture will let you get your hands dirty and make the most of your day at the gardens. This session has been developed and will be facilitated by the garden’s trained horticultural therapy staff. After the session attendees are free to continue to explore the gardens or leave.

Date:

Thursday, September 14th

Location:

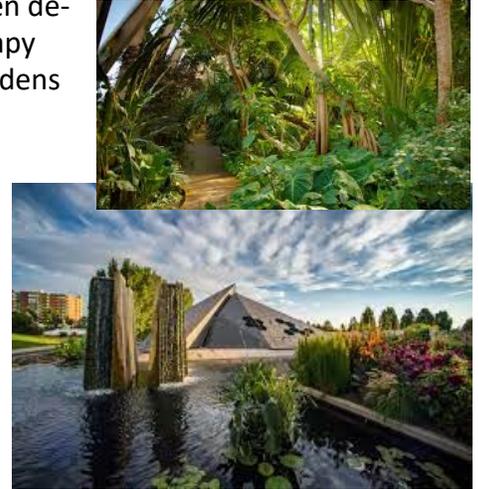
1007 York St. Denver CO 80206

Coast: Free.

Should you RSVP and not attend this will prevent you from being able to attend the next WOF FIELD TRIP. NO EXCEPTIONS.

RSVP:

with Jason or Bryant or online on The Center’s website.



Lunch & Learn: Drag as Drama Therapy—*“Over the years I*



have witnessed the healthy ways drag can help people process their emotions and the unhealthy ways that it can perpetuate trauma and conflict. I have also been lucky to experience firsthand the

power of performance in drag. My experiences as a witness to the interactions that happen in the backroom and as a performer have led me to believe their needs to be a formalized exploration into the cathartic power of drag.” (Mehay, 2021, 5)

When I graduated from Kansas State University, I did so having written my Master’s Thesis, titled: Drag as Therapy: A Defense for the use of Drag as Drama Therapy. Through research and interviews conducted with drag artists, I crafted and presented my theory on connecting the artform of drag to theoretical orientations & implementations of Drama Therapy. Join me September 20th from 11:45-1pm as I break down each several theories you may recognize if you have been attending my Drama Therapy Dunk N’ Munches and relate them to the performance and embodiment of drag.

When: Wednesday, Sept. 20th 11:45-1pm. Please RSVP with Bryant or Jason

Meet our new MSW Intern Kadie! They start on September 14th!



Hi everyone!!

My name is Kadie (they/them) and I am the new intern at The Center on Colfax, West of 50! A bit about me, I grew up and lived in Illinois for the past 21 years and just recently moved to the Denver area to pursue my Master's in Social Work at the University of Denver.

A few fun facts:

- I love to crochet - I am currently crocheting a blanket and love making mini-stuffed animals
 - I bake a lot - My favorite things to bake are cookies and brownies
 - I recently adopted a cat - His name is Sir, he is 10 years old, and he loves to cuddle
- I am really looking forward to this experience but most of all, getting to know everyone at the Center!



Dining & Development with Jason — Embracing the Next 50 -

Aging is a part of life and there is nothing we can do about it. Except- embrace it and set your intention. In this conversation

we will unpack aging and what that means to us and how we perceive that process.

We will answer the following questions:

- How to develop a positive perception about aging.
- What is resilience and how can I cultivate it later in life?
- What does it mean to accept yourself?
- What are the practical benefits of self-acceptance?
- How can we develop a greater self-acceptance?

Dinner provided.

Date: Wed, September 27th

Time: 5:30p—7:30p

RSVP: with Jason or Bryant

This event is sponsored by AARP



SPONSOR

Upcoming programming to keep an eye out for...

FIELD TRIP—
Chatfield Farms — Oct.

Queer Woke—
Colorado’s Queer History a conversation with Glenda Russell—Oct.

Halloween Movie Night—Oct.

Thankful 4U Thanksgiving Luncheon—Nov, 10th.

WOF a FIELD TRIP— Denver Museum of Nature & Science—Nov.

The Center of Colfax’s Holiday Parity & Art Show—Dec. 8th

Registration: <https://bit.ly/MMAC2023>
For More Information: 719-581-9437
AAIG.ORG@GMAIL.COM

Meet Me at the Crossroads

ADVANCE CARE PLANNING FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE ROCKIES

LEARN ABOUT ADVANCE CARE PLANNING:

- What are Advance Directives?
- Who needs Advance Directives?
- What are the financial implications?
- How to get started?

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
DR. GLORIA THOMAS ANDERSON
Advance Care Planning Expert, Thought Leader, Educator, Speaker, & Minister

SPEAKERS
Ashu Young, MA, TM | Maurice Scott, MD | Maria Madrid, MA

Lowry Conference Center
1061 Akron Way, Denver, CO 80230

OCT 11th 2023

9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Free Admission & Free Parking

Scan To Register

Volunteers Needed! The Center on Colfax is a active member of CenterLink. This organization assist queer community centers around the country communicate and celebrate. Every year they host an in-person conference. This year they selected Denver as the host city. As a result, The Center on Colfax must assist with the activation of this conference. This year’s conference focuses on Awareness to Action. This three-day experience boasts keynote speakers, By Us-for Us programming that enlightens, and social opportunities to engage the network’s diverse base of LGBTQ+ Community Centers. We are looking for volunteers to help us with the week’s festivities. The conference will be taking place at the **Embassy Suites Convention Center in Downtown Denver. Starting October 17th—October 20th. Volunteers will need to arrived an hour prior to their registered shift. To sign up please contact Jason or Bryant!**

Day	Shift Time	Number of Volunteers	Location
Tuesday, October 17th	2p—7p	4	Embassy Suites Convention Center
Wednesday, October 18th	8a—12:30p	4	Embassy Suites Convention Center
Wednesday, October 18th	12:30p - 5:30p	4	Embassy Suites Convention Center
Wednesday, October 18th	6:30p — 9p	3	The Center
Thursday, October 19th	8a — 12:15p	2	Embassy Suites Convention Center
Friday, October 20th	8a—1a	2	Embassy Suites Convention Center



NEWSABILITY

Please contact Bryant Mehay for any questions regarding disability services at The Center on Colfax

bmehay@lgbtqcolorado.org

(303)951-5228

Center Host 1st Disability Pride Celebration!

— During the final weekend in July The Center recognized Disability Pride Month by hosting its first ever Disability Pride Month Celebration. This inaugural event featured a resource fair with the organizations Beam+, PASCO, Atlantis, DIRT Coffee, and Denver's The Division of Disability Rights, a speed-friending engagement, and a presentation and performances by local drag/burlesque artists Allie Soreass and Marionette Clown Toy. Through this event, community members learned more about the services offered to LGBTQ+ people with disabilities, develop new connections, and learn about the empowering experience of performance. More pictures from the event can be found at this link <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lgbtqcolorado/albums/72177720310166779>.



Thank you to everyone who helped, attended, and donated to this event.— Bryant.

Sexuality and Disability— Topics of sex and sexuality for the disability community have long been taboo and ignored by the culture at large. Each week in this hybrid group 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 also feature special guest speakers that will come in and share on relevant topics. The content of this group will be based in the most current research & guided by the community and its interests. This program is for adults 21+. Disability and Sexuality will be held on the third Monday of each month from 5:30-7pm.

When: Third Monday of each month, starting September 18th from 5:30-7pm

Where: Hybrid, register on the website to receive Zoom link, join in-person at The Center on Colfax

Trip to Denver Museum of Nature & Science



— The Denver Museum of Nature and Science hosts a variety of interactive and educational exhibits. From crystal

formations to exploring the human body there is a lot to be learned. Join The Center's Disability Program on a **free trip** to the Denver Museum of Nature and Science on September 28th at 10am. On the day of the trip please try to arrive between 10 and 10:30am, Bryant will be waiting out front to give you your tickets! Food will not be provided during this trip, please bring your own or bring money for the food court.

When: Thursday September 28th 10am— Museum closes at 5pm

Please RSVP with Bryant Mehay to reserve a space in advance. This trip is only open to member participants of the program and their friends.

September 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Key: Sex: Older Wiser, Sexually Smarter, Vet: Veteran Support Group Move: Qigong/Movement, Med: Meditation DPSG: Disability Peer Support Group, Stitch: Stitch & Bitch Story: Telling Our Story, Lesbian: Lesbian Lounge Song: Community Song Circle					1	2
					10:30 Move 11:45 Med. 1:30 DPSG	
3	4	5	6	7	10 Art	8
	10 Lesbian 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch	10 Men's Coffee 2 SEX 5 VET	10:30 SS yoga 1:30 AARP	1p Song 	10:30 Move 11:45 Med. 1:30 DPSG 3p Mingle Master	9 
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	10 Lesbian 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch	10 Men's Coffee 2 SEX 5 VET	10:30 SS yoga 1:30 AARP	1p Song 10:30 Trip to the Botanic Gardens	10:30 Move 11:45 Med. 1:30 DPSG	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	10 Lesbian 1:30 Story 5:30 Sexuality and Disability 6:15 Stitch	10 Men's Coffee 2 SEX 5 VET	10:30 SS yoga 11:45 L&L 1:30 AARP	10 Art 1p Song	10:30 Move 11:45 Med. 1:30 DPSG	1st day of Fall! 
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	10 Lesbian 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch	10 Men's Coffee 2 SEX 5 VET	10:30 SS yoga 1:30p BINGO 5:30 D&D	10 Art 1p Song 10am Disability DMNS DAY	10:30 Move 11:45 Med. 1:30 DPSG	