

July 2024

THE
CENTER
ON COLFAX
lgbtqcolorado.org

WEST OF 50

An inclusive LGBTQ+ older adults space focused on creative aging, healthy living, and social connection.



New Hobbies and the benefits—As we age, we tend to gain more leisure time. How we use that time has a major mental and physical impact on how we age.

A recent study of 700,000 U.S. Veterans found that implementing

these 8 lifestyle changes could add 24 years to your life, even if they are adopted in your 40s, 50s, and 60s. I know you're thinking DUH Jason – I need to exercise, eat well, stop binge drinking, sleep more, stop smoking, and drop the opioids.

But what if there were some simpler things you could do besides dropping your bad habits?

Walking – We have been told for years that getting our fitness on is the key to a healthy life (if you are doing this- Keep at it!). A simple walk could be enough to increase brain volume and enhance neuroplasticity. Neuroplasticity helps one with adapting and navigating change. One study found that men and women with an average age of 70 who were more active had a lower risk of dying compared to those who were sedentary. The goal should be 4,000 steps. As I check my watch, I have already taken 10,800 steps. -But I also went to the gym this morning. LOL

New-to-you Sports—Olga Koteko, a teacher in Saskatchewan, Canada took up track and field events in her 70s. She went on to break world records up into her death at age 95. If track and field aren't your thing try Pickleball. This game has become a huge hit in Denver! And you get to piss off the residents that live by the courts. If you watch Channel 9 there have been plenty of people bitching about the sound the sport makes.



Learning New Languages- My close friend Magi loves to travel. Over the past few years, she and her husband, John have traveled all over the world. They enjoy learning the language of the country they are going to visit. The pair are well into their 70's. A study found that adults aged 59 to 79 who tried to learn a new language saw gains in cognition.

Continued on page 2.

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No Programming Dates

No WOF Programming: June 24th, 25th & July 26th

Center Closed: July 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th

Quilting or photography—Going back to my close friends John and Magi. They love doing both of these things. John enjoys taking photos of their trips around the world; and Magi has made us beautiful quilts, placemats, and runners. These skills use working memory, episodic memory, and reasoning.

Pursuing Education- We enjoy teaching new skills and helping the community master new ones. But there are lots of programs that provide this opportunity. Community College of Denver or MSU Denver has some great continuing education programs.

Teaching – I know you are asking what? You all have awesome skills and others would love to learn about them. Teaching others could help with memory and all the work you put into the project can help stretch your mind.



Juggling- Juggling can enhance neuroplasticity and help preserve the brain and body. Nothing like a little hand-eye coordination.

Dancing- This physical activity can slow down aging. It engages the hippocampus (this is the area of the brain that is associated with aging). This activity improves endurance and balance.

Video games– That’s right... time to dust off the old ATARI. Research in this area shows that video games aid memory.

Mindfulness- I struggle with this. I am not a big fan of this... I have tried. It's just not my thing. Throughout my life, I have been encouraged to multitask. This is not a healthy thing to do... its bad for you. Mindfulness reduces the stress hormone cortisol and could improve memory and energy.

The most important thing—Eat well, exercise, get cognitive stimulation, socialize, and keep an eye on the heart. This could help slow preexisting dementia and improve longevity.

This month has a ton of great programs for you to enjoy. I hope to see you at a Lunch & Learn, Queer Woke, and NextStop.

-Jason



Movie Night: Paris is Burning

“Shade is, I don't tell you you're ugly but I don't have to tell you because you know you're ugly...and that's shade.” Dorian Corey

Join West of 50 & Saga as we host a very special viewing of Paris is Burning. This classic 1990 documentary follows the New York Ballroom culture in the mid to late 80’s, featuring many icons of the Queer Community: Willie Ninja, Dorian Corey, Pepper LaBeija, Angie Xtravaganza and MORE! This intimate look at the lives, feelings, perceptions, and actions of these extraordinary people provides wisdom, hard truths, life lessons, and GLAMOUR. Join us for this unique chance to look back at the trailblazers that fought to make a place for themselves in a world that was dominated by fear and hatred for them. Popcorn, sodas, snacks, and comfy seating will be provided!

Please RSVP in advance to secure your spot.

When: Tuesday, July 9th; Doors open at 6, movie starts at 6:30p @ The Center



Queer Woke Speaker Series

The Intricacies of Authenticity with Carlisle Quinn
A night of storytelling, live music, and inspiration



Queer Woke: The Intricacies of Authenticity

Meet Carlisle Quinn from TransRomantics (they/them). Carlisle is a transgender musician, dancer, land steward, hiker, storyteller, and hopeful romantic. They're here to share their journey of self-discovery after years of struggling with

substance use, deteriorating mental health, and experiencing trauma. Carlisle's story focuses on the transformative power of community healing, resistance from oppressive systems, and finding empowerment through some of the most unexpected challenges.

Carlisle works with LGBTQ+ folks and others in recovery, doing prevention and harm reduction work as a peer support specialist. They have been in recovery from alcohol and drug misuse for more than 5 years. They'll be sharing major parts of their life experiences starting from childhood through to today, looking closely at some of their most impactful interpersonal relationships. This includes their family's exposure to alcoholism, dealing with chronic anxiety and depression, breaking free from the confines of codependency, navigating their gender identity through their sexuality, and much more.

Carlisle will present their story in this capacity for the first time, interlacing public speaking with original songs and music. Songwriting has been a crucial part of Carlisle's recovery; unpacking former romantic relationships, and reinvigorating their relationship with themselves. Through introspective lyrics and melodic instrumentation, they not only express their truth but provide a voice for others who may feel marginalized and unheard.

Carlisle understands the depths of joy and living in the moment through their closeness to despair, familiarity with suicidality, and romanticization of sadness. They'll openly discuss their inner demons, losing oneself to drugs and alcohol, and finding the courage to meet life in sobriety, and what it means to become your own beacon. Carlisle knows the intricacies of self-doubt, loneliness, and feelings of unworthiness, but they also know and want to offer the tools that have been most successful for them in this process of overcoming obstacles and embracing their authentic self.

Their message is one of resiliency, hope, and to turn your own kindness into collective action, even in this dystopian time of mass apathy. To them, the bravest thing we can do *is* to feel and show up for one another.

When: July 12th. Pizza served at 5:30p. Presentation starts at 6pm and goes until 8pm.

Where: The Center on Colfax

Friday, July 12
5:30 - 8:00 PM
Rooftop of The Center





RTD Trip to Denver International Airport

West of 50 is continuing its NextStop RTD Travel Training Program with a trip to Denver International Airport. Using the public transit system, we will travel from The Center to DIA. Once there we will enjoy lunch in the terminal & a tour around the TSA, check in, & baggage

claim. Transit fares are covered for this program but you will be responsible for your own meal. There will be no pre-travel training for this trip, the travel route & information will be sent via email. Please register in advance on the website.

When: Wednesday, July 17th **Time:** 12-5:30p **Where:** DIA & The Center



Lunch Bunch – King Buffet July 18th

Need to get out of the house and spend time with a few of your closest friends? Join Jason for lunch at King Buffet. Attendees do have to cover the cost of their meals and are responsible for getting to and from the venue.

About King Buffet: This Asian buffet has over 200 items, starting with traditional Chinese appetizers like Crab Rangoon, spring egg roll, and steamed & fried dumplings. They also have a variety of soups and salads. They also make favorite dishes such as chicken, beef, shrimp, and pork.

When: Thursday, July 18th; 12:30p—1:30p

Where: 5220 Wadsworth Bypass Unit S. Arvada, CO 80002



ReCreative Denver at the Stitch & Bitch

Yarn the House Down: Let's Make a Gay Garland! During this ReCreative Denver Stitch & Bitch, we'll make a colorful yarn heart garland! No knitting or crochet skills necessary, just a love for color and a willingness to play!

Your Instructor: Knitasha Hooker

She knits and purls in six inch heels! Denver's crafty fiber queen brings the joy of drag and her love of yarn to fun, lighthearted classes. When she's not on stage singing classic soul tunes, she's probably knitting at the bar and cheering on her fellow queer artists across the city.

When: Monday, July 15th 6:15-7:45; **Where:** The Center on Colfax



Photo: Jay Cupcake

- MEMORIES OF AN OLD MAN – IV

KEN FELTS

RETURN TO DODGE CITY



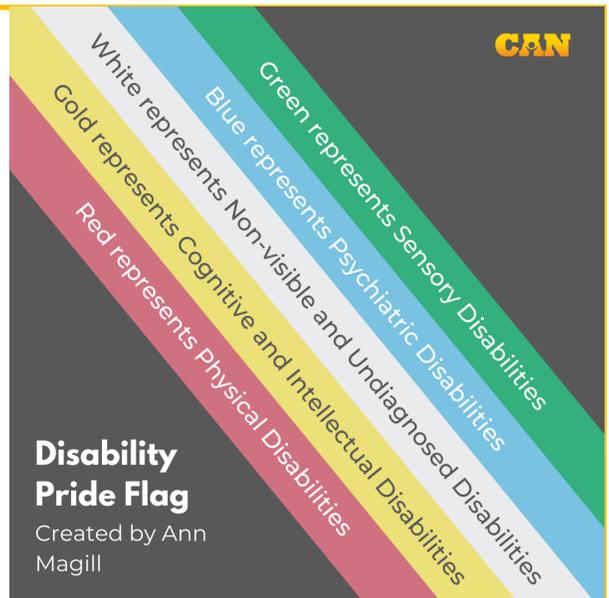
My father's final transfer by the railroad took us back to our old home, Dodge City. Little had changed in the seven years we had been gone. Boot Hill was still drawing in the sight-seers and the Arkansas River still flowed when it rained as most of the river water was used upstream by farmers to irrigate their crops. I was now in high school, and many of the youth from my first and second grade classes were still in the system, so getting reacquainted with old friends was not difficult. It was 1946; WWII had ended the previous year. Returning gay veterans did not wish to go back to the homes they left, and many filtered into East and West Coast cities which had become known to be gay centers.

Dodge City did not attract those gays. During Junior Year of high school. I was soon in a small group of students I had known in grade school, but with whom I had not kept in contact. My group of friends usually got together at lunchtime. I was assigned to one class, physical education, that I had always detested, and in Dodge City, it followed the long familiar pattern, the instructor had his favorite jocks and the rest of the class was only tolerated. It was always embarrassing to be picked last when teams were chosen. Other classes were good, and I began to make new friends. In debate class, I met Mary Jane who pursued me for years. She asked me to attend the senior prom, which I did. I drove her home and let her out and did not kiss her. Many years after the senior prom, at a class reunion, she approached me and told me she wanted that kiss. I obliged her. Needing spending money, I worked at a small café across from the high school. I did all of the stations except cook. When the owner sold the business, the new owners had their own staff and could not continue with me. A small grocery store next door became my next place of employment. It was operated by a middle-aged couple and my job was to drive the delivery van and carry groceries into homes. This took a couple of hours every afternoon. My brother operated an auto repair and service station and at the end of the semester, he asked me to help during the summer. However, at the first of July wheat harvest began and I went to work for a farm couple.

Harvest only takes a few days, but the hours are long, and the pay is good. I returned to my brother's service station for the rest of the summer. Now a senior in high school, I had found three other friends who were also gay. One was Freddie, originally from Mexico. He invited me to his place where he lived in the basement of his parent's house. Naive us, nothing happened. Many years later I met him again at a reunion. There was also Jimmy, and we did hang out together. He worked at the local drugstore. When graduation was over, he moved in with his boss. Then there was Wayne who manifested many traits that I identified as gay. We went to the same church, he took his religion seriously, and married a classmate according to the church's teachings. I was in the same situation, only I did not want to get married. After high school graduation, I attended Dodge City's new Junior College, and for the next two years, life did not offer many memorable events. I worked in a small neighborhood floral shop and learned about floral design, helped my brother at his shop, and got my first car. At the end of 1950, in order not to be drafted, I joined the Navy.

Disability Pride Month Flag

This flag was originally created in 2019 by Ann Magill. The original design featured a zig-zag, bolder colors, and a different color design. After receiving feedback from the community, Ann decided to lighten the colors, remove the zig-zag, and rearrange the colors to accommodate people with red/green colorblindness. This new design was released in 2021. Ann did an interview where she discusses how the faded black background represents “the anger and mourning over the eugenics and the neglect that disabled people have to fight against.”



Lunch& Learn: Creativity in Response to Adversity– Death of a loved one, illness, loss of autonomy, or any undesirable change can induce adversity. Severe circumstance can provoke despair, anxiety, depression, or develop a sense of helplessness. Creativity is a natural mechanism that can be used to displace these feelings and emotions.

In this conversation we will explore how creativity presents us with a way to heal. We will answer the following questions:

- What is adversity and how does our body respond to it?
- What is creativity and why is it important to our health and wellbeing?
- What can one do to be more creative in their daily life?

Participants will be making a creativity game that will encourage them to engage the community and be more creative in their daily lives.

When: July 24th; 11:30—1:00pm

RSVP Required

Thank you for supporting WOF at Denver Pride Fest! This year's West of 50 activations at Denver PrideFest was a success. As always Steve Anne and CowPoke Avi were a hit, and our erotic yard games were once again the talk of the festival! Our educational programs were well attended, and Pup Mosh was a smash! We have yet to receive our calculations from how much the program raised from our yard games, but we do know how many people attended our engagement.

Pup Mosh: 282

BINGO: 1,005

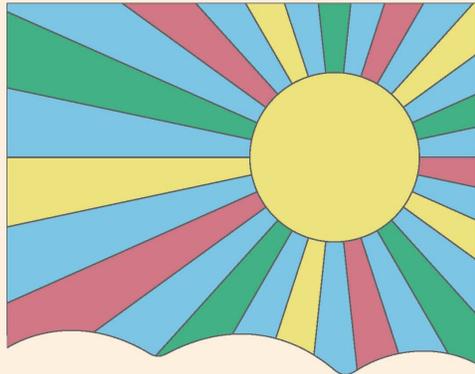
Educational Sessions: 113

Information about the program: 185

Erotic yard games: 991

Thank you to everyone who spent the weekend with us.





Disability Pride Celebration

Saturday, July 27 | 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Celebrate Disability Pride Month with speed-friending, a community art installment, interactive presentations, and a resource fair featuring a variety of arts engagement organizations and service providers.



Disability Pride Month at The Center on Colfax

July is Disability Pride Month, to celebrate the lives, identities & cultures of people with disabilities. 2024 marks 34 years since the Americans with Disabilities Act passed in July 1990. In that time an untold amount of dedicated work has gone to the improvement of accessibility in public spaces, employment, and more. While there is still so much to be done, we want to take this opportunity to recognize the evolving and diverse needs of the community.

Last year, we had 34 community members attend, 5 organizations in our resource fair, speed-friending, & a presentation/performance by Allie Soreass and Marionette Clown Toy. This year's Disability Pride Celebration will host an expanded resource fair that features organizations ranging from arts engagement to service providers, speed-friending, a community art installment, & multiple interactive presentations. A full list of resource organizations & presentation topics will be updated on The Center's Website as the event draws closer. There will be two dedicated quiet spaces. Food & drinks, with as many dietary considerations as possible, will be provided along with iced coffee from DIRT Coffee. **Register on the website in advance** to note any specific accommodations you may need. We cannot guarantee everything, but we cannot plan for what we do not know. Please contact bmehay@lgbtqcolorado.org with any questions!

When: Saturday, July 27th; 11am-3pm; **Where:** The Center on Colfax



JULY 2024

Key

Lesbian: Lesbian Lounge

Story: Telling Your Story

Stitch: Stitch & Bitch

Sex: Older

Wiser Sex-
ually Smart-
er

AARP: Com-
munity
Group

Art: Open
Art

Move:
Movement
DPSG: Disa-
bility Peer
Support
Group

	WED	THU	FRI	SAT		
	<p>1 10:30 Lesbian 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch</p>	<p>2 10 Men's Coffee 2p Sex</p>	<p>3 Center Closed</p>	<p>4 Center Closed Happy 4th of July</p>	<p>5 Center closed</p>	<p>6</p>
7	<p>8 10:30 Lesbi- an 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch</p>	<p>9 10 Men's Coffee 2p Sex 6 Movie</p>	<p>10 10:30 SS Yo- ga 1:30 AARP</p>	<p>11 10 Art</p>	<p>12 10:30 Move 1:30 DPSG 5:30 Queer Woke</p>	<p>13</p>
14	<p>15 10:30 Lesbi- an 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch</p>	<p>16 10 Men's Coffee 2p Sex</p>	<p>17 10:30 SS Yo- ga 12 NextStop</p>	<p>18 10 Art 12:30 Lunch Bunch</p>	<p>19 10:30 Move 1:30 DPSG</p>	<p>20</p>
21	<p>22 10:30 Lesbi- an 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch</p>	<p>23 10 Men's Coffee 2p Sex</p>	<p>24 10:30 SS Yo- ga 1 1:30 Lunch & Learn 1:30 AARP</p>	<p>25 10 Art</p>	<p>26 <u>NO WOF</u> Programming</p>	<p>27 Disability PRIDE Celebration 11-3pm</p>
28	<p>29 10:30 Lesbi- an 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch</p>	<p>30 10 Men's Coffee 2p Sex</p>	<p>31 10:30 SS Yo- ga 1:30 AARP</p>			