THE CENTER ON COLFAX
lgbtqcolorado.org

WEST OF 50
An inclusive LGBTQ+ older adults space focused on creative aging, healthy living, and social connection.

MARCH 2025

The Center's Got Talent Returns

It seems like yesterday, Steve, Avis, Bryant, and I were trying to decide what our 4th major event should be. After long conversations and talking with the community, The Center's Got Talent was born. Our goal was to provide a space for the community to show off their skills in a supportive space. The first show was held at a local church where over 80 people came to watch the show. Returning for year two, we decided to look for a bigger venue. After months of exploration, we settled on St. Cajetan's in Auraria.

Last year's event welcomed 114 guests, and we had over 33 people participate in the show. The show was once again a hit and we could not be more excited for this year's activation. Steve Anne, CowPoke Avi, and August Celestial will be returning to host the program. We moved the show to Saturday, March 29th at 5:30 PM make the show more accessible for performers and the audience.

Larry performing "*Camp Granada*"

There will be no charge for entry this year and we will be experimenting with new ways to raise money for the program. This includes encouraging tipping your favorite performances in support of West of 50 and a silent auction of community artwork. We will continue to provide snacks and beverages. We look forward to hosting this event again! Thank you!

Jason

IN THIS ISSUE

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Events

Community

Ultra-processed foods are a revolution in food science but are they worth risking our health?

As you all know, the grocery retail industry has changed over the past 60 years. One of the biggest breakthroughs was the birth of ultra-processed foods (UPFs). UPFs are where we alter food from its natural state, such as drying, canning, or adding salt, sugar, fat, or other additives for flavor or preservation. To further break this down, it is foods that contain edible substances not used in home kitchens such as protein isolates and cosmetic additives to improve flavor, color, or emulsification. Think packaged snacks, cookies, instant soups/ noodles, ready-to-eat just-need-to-heat meals, candy, and soft drinks.

In the USA 59% of our diet is UPFs thus elevating our health risks and increasing our risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, depression, cardiovascular disease, and death. Individuals who have a diet high in UPFs have an 11% greater risk of becoming overweight and a 9% greater risk of obesity. Additionally, a diet high in UPFs increases the risk of cardiovascular disease and/or mortality by 34%. This type of diet also increases the risk of depression by 33%.

How to reduce your UPFs intake. Consume more fruits, vegetables, grains, and nuts. Avoid fake meats such as burgers, sausage, bacon, and plant-based milks containing emulsifiers, stabilizers, or flavorings. Cooking your own food using fresh seasonal foods is the best way to avoid UPFs. Additionally, find a grocer that is working to protect you. Natural Grocers actively fights against over-processed foods striving to provide foods free of chemicals with a focus on organic food.You can also go to their website and see what chemicals they don't allow in their foods. This is a good thing that we should be celebrating and supporting. UPFs are everywhere and we should be asking for better food. A CNN article from this spring reported that there was a notable increase in people younger than 50 being diagnosed with cancer. One hypothesis that has been introduced as to why this is happening is how we eat ultra-processed foods and have a sedentary lifestyle. Friends, think before you eat and get some exercise. It's just what the doctor ordered.

Jason

Wed. March 5th 1:30 p

- Agenda:
- Talent Show updates.
- Pride Concepts and changes
- Program updates

Lunch Bunch

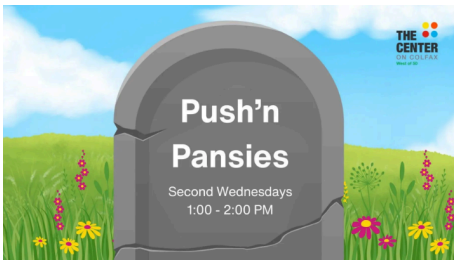
Thurs. March 27tth 12:30 1228 E Colfax AVE

Lets munch at D.P. Dough! The home of the original calzone! The menu includes calzones, wings, and tots.

LUNCH & LEARN

Thur. March 20th 12p
RSVP required

<u>Truth Matters</u>
In today's age, there is a lot of information circulating, both good and bad- and at rates faster than ever thanks to technology. But how do we know what we are reading online is true, reputable and worth our time? Join The Center to explore misinformation, disinformation and malinformation in the media. We will discuss how headlines can be misleading, how to find reputable sources, how to critically think about the news you are taking in and more. Being an informed, critically engaged consumer of media is more important now than ever, so don't miss out on this learning opportunity!



Wed. March 12th 1p

Writing an obituary is difficult at the best of times. In this session, we will be talking about obituaries and how to compose an effective one. By the end of the session, you will be well on your way to composing your own to alleviate this stress on your loved ones.
We will address:

- What to include
- Length
- How to compose something that truly represents yourself.

QUEER WOKE:

CRUNK INTERSECTIONALITIES

FEATURED IN ROY G. WOODS COMMONS:
CRUNK INTERSECTIONALITIES IS AN EXHIBIT PAYING HOMAGE TO LEADERS AND ICONS OF QUEER BLACK HISTORY.

JOIN US MARCH 21ST AT 5:30 PM FOR AN EVENING OF CRITICAL THINKING AND LEARNING AS WE WATCH BEYOND THE AGGRESSIVES: 25 YEARS LATER FOLLOWED BY A DISCUSSION FOCUSING ON THE THEMES EXPLORED IN FILM.

GALLERY OPENS FEBRUARY!

PRESENTATION: MARCH 21ST AT 5:30P - 8:00 P

PARADE ROUTE UPDATE

The Coors Light Denver Pride Parade, historically held on Colfax Avenue, will be moving its route in 2025 due to current construction for the East Colfax Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.

We will continue to use a similar staging plan as years past, but the new step off of the parade will be at 17th Avenue and Franklin Street, and the parade will conclude at Lincoln Street. The Center has been working with many different stakeholders, including the BRT project team, over the last ten months who collectively agreed that a move would be best suited for safety reasons, as well as providing the best possible event experience for both the large number of parade participants and spectators. Attending the parade is FREE! We encourage you to find your place along the route early, as 100,000+ people are expected to line the streets of this year parade as they take in the sights and sounds, as we come together to celebrate the Rocky Mountain queer community.

X-Memories of an Old Man

by Ken Felts

I was shaken to the core and tried to keep things as they had been, but guilt was eating away at me. About a month later, I resigned my job, packed my things, and leaving Phillip at the curb, I returned to the safety of my old hometown, Dodge City. I went into business with my brother, and we operated Midtown Conoco Service. He was an excellent mechanic, and I handled the front-end business. Phillip wrote several letters, all of which I ignored. In his last note he said if I did not reply, he would bother me no longer. I did not reply and thought that chapter of my life had ended. But I longed for him. I was doing some photography and frequented a local photo supply store, Southwest Photo Supply. The owner was somewhat older than me and we became friends. He had been wanting to expand his business to a nearby town; I borrowed money and bought a partnership and before long was manager of our new store in Liberal, Kansas, about 85 miles from Dodge City. Having little funds, I used some of the storeroom space for living quarters. New town, new life, still straight. My store was next door to a small family restaurant and that became my source of meals. I regularly attended the Protestant church and later converted to another, but I always straight. A waitress in the café next door and I started dating and one night she took me to her home

After a few weeks, I was now 31 or 32, she got me in bed with her, where I had my first sexual experience with a woman. Two or three times later, during one of our encounters, she saw me looking at my watch – it was such a ho-hum experience. She told me she had never been so humiliated in her life and asked me to leave. Work at the camera shop occupied much of my time, but six days in the store with customers and then spending the rest of the time in my "living quarters" soon became disheartening and church attendance no longer held joy. Finally, I decided to return to college for my master's degree. Proper arrangements were made, a new manager was hired for our store, and I was soon enrolled at Fort Hays, Kansas, State College, in Hays, Kansas. I moved into an apartment near campus and enrolled in a course of liberal arts. I received my master's degree on August 10, 1963. While there, I dated the daughter of the farmer I had worked for the previous summer but was never attracted to her. Upon graduation, one of my classmate friends had been accepted to the University of Connecticut for the coming fall and having no other plans I decided to follow him there. We got a small apartment near the campus of the University and settled in. I was accepted into a course of

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anthropology and was able to get a teaching assistant position to help pay my tuition, which supplemented the G.I. Bill provided after my military service. We were strictly roommates and had no romantic interest in each other. Weekends in New England were filled with short trips to nearby historic sites including Olde Mistic Village and Old Saybrook. Particularly enjoyable was spending the fall in New England as the leaves turned color. At the end of the school year, Spring 1964, I was faced with the reality of having to go to work to support myself, and further courses in anthropology did not offer much in career choices. Thus ended my endeavors to achieve a PhD. Again, I packed my possessions and returned to Dodge City.

Leaving home for Ft Hays (KS) College

Univ of Connecticut w/Gai Luron

WISDOM
A Recipe

½ cup fresh information
1 T time
1 T sage
3 quarts experience
1 lb. knowledge
pinch of spice

Mull information until clear. Add time and sage. In a large pot simmer the 3 quarts of experience for several minutes, then add the knowledge. When the knowledge is well blended with the experience, stir in the fresh, mulled, clarified information. Continue simmering for a long, long time, stirring constantly to keep the mixture from curdling.

Allow ingredients to blend for a few years before serving. Then, when the time is right, serve with a flair by adding spice and a variety of colorful accoutrements to your presentation.

Enjoy!
Betsy McConnell

My Friend Died

By Phillip Hoyle

While death is sometimes a friend, it often thrusts itself upon us as an enemy. Death takes away loved ones, Brings on grief, deepens depression, and leaves us feeling bereft and asking questions. Death did all these things to me when Ted died.

Ted was my first adult friend. All my other friends I met as a child or teenager. He came into my 22-year-old life as a teacher. We were the same age and shared a love of music, of church, of humor, of beauty.

From early on I was acutely aware that we were going to be lifelong friends. We visited each other, sang together, and cheered one another's work. We shared depressions and accomplishments. to our relationship. Ted's life was difficult for all its joy. He suffered emotional illness. He dealt with the failing health of his parents.

He was gay, working in a religious environment. He lived with his own alcoholism. He had me as a friend. I remember the first time I ever felt depressed. I call Ted. I figured that he would have good advice for me since he had been low so often. Instead, he got angry with me for turning the tables on him and needing from him what he usually got from me. We laughed about that for years.

Ted coped with his pian and difficulties with a keen sense of humor. Probably it was the humor that cemented our relationship – that plus an open acceptance for one another.

Ted coped with his pian and difficulties with a keen sense of humor. Probably it was the humor that cemented our relationship – that plus an open acceptance for one another.

It was not always easy. He moved to San Francisco in the early '80s. There eh explored a world that was deeply threatening to me. I didn't know how to relate to his experience. He had to be patient with me, I'm sure. I felt I was patient with him. With fewer visits and fewer phone calls and fewer letters. We finally – I finally- came to a new understanding and acceptance.

In learning to accept him and love him as he was. I learned things about myself I really didn't know before. I grew emotionally as we worked through what our friendship would be. I was reminded then of a poem I wrote about him years before at a retreat. It expressed something about my friend who shocked me with his difference. The poem, and the process that produced it, concluded that I was as different from him as he was compared with me.

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Ted contracted HIV. He lived with it for years, subjecting himself to a multitude of studies, lobbied for public assistance for all AIDS sufferers, and left his estate to AIDS research.

We saw each other several times during the last two years of his life. We enjoyed meals, concerts, conversations, art, nature, each other.

Although I volunteered to nurse him toward the end, I didn't get the invitation to do so. I was not present at his death. I went to his memorial service but was unable to speak.

I have had thoughts of Ted almost every day since his death. I still find myself angry at so much of the world and church that often added misery to his life. I ask why the experience of disease and variation in sexuality creates so much anxiety among people in our society.

I am accepting of my loss of Ted, but I am not easily accepting of the suffering that I brought him even in my love.

Why do we make life difficult so often, so consistently? Why can't we love? Why can't we grow? His death brought me questions.

Death was a friend to an emaciated and pian-filled Ted, but it was my enemy. He is gone. I am not alone, but I resent that I do not have him in my life In his memory, I am trying to use my anger to make a few things better for at least a few other people who suffer like he did.

And I'd like to assist those who want to love, to help them find ways to do so fully, creatively.

My friend died; I live on to some purpose related to his life.

Hoyle '99

Help Club50 support our friends at Senior Support Services!

This is Denver's only day shelter exclusively for people **60** years of age and older. This wonderful organization strives to make each day better and safer for their members by providing a welcoming environment and a variety of critical services, including case management, food, and clothing. Please help out Club50 by **donating socks, men's and women's underwear, or snacks.** All items donated should be new and not expired. The donation box can be found in the entrance of the Center.

A variety show for LGBTQ+ older adults and friends, hosted by Steve-Anne, CowPoke Avi, and August Celestial.

Comedy - Live Music - Dance - Food

March

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1 Audition 12 - 3p
2	3 10 Lesbian 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch	4 10:30 Men's Coffee 2 Sex	5 10:30 Yoga **1:30 Club50**	6 10 Art	7 10:30 Move 11:45 Meditation 1:30 DPSG	8 10:30 -12:30 Pride Playwrights
9	10 10 Lesbian 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch	11 10:30 Men's Coffee 2 Sex	12 10:30 Yoga **1 Push'n Pansies**	13 10 Art	14 10:30 Move 1:30 DPSG	15
16	17 10 Lesbian 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch	18 10:30 Men's Coffee 2 Sex	19 10:30 Yoga	20 10 Art **12 Lunch & Learn**	21 10:30 Move 1:30 DPSG **5:30 Q Woke**	22 10:30 - 12:30 Pride Playwrights
23	24 10 Lesbian 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch	25 10:30 Men's Coffee 2 Sex	26 10:30 Yoga	27 10 Art **12:30 Lunch Bunch**	28 **No Programming**	29 **5:30 Center's Got Talent**
30	31 10 Lesbian 1:30 Story 6:15 Stitch					

Key:

Lesbian: Lesbian Lounge
Move: Movement
Story: Telling Your Story
Stitch: Stitch & Bitch
Sex: Older Wiser Sexually Smarter
DSPG: Disability Peer Support Group