



SOUTHERN ARIZONA SENIOR PRIDE

SENIOR FORUM

LGBTQI+ Elder Voice

PRIDE IS AGELESS. CELEBRATE!
EL ORGULLO NO TIENE EDAD. ¡CELEBRA!

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2024
Volume 20 • Issue Five

Celebrating, Supporting, and Uniting LGBTQI+ Older Adults

Senior Pride at 20 BY JOYCE BOLINGER

In 2004, Senior Pride began as a project under Wingspan, Tucson’s LGBTQ Community Center. In 2014, when Wingspan closed their doors, Senior Pride was carried forward by dedicated, committed volunteers. Most recently, longstanding and new members of Senior Pride gathered to reflect on the 20th anniversary of a thriving organization. Here are a few snippets of the memories exchanged.



Tom Buchanan:

Tom Buchanan: “I feel a lot of gratitude because Senior Pride gives me a place where I can be a volunteer and I can be a recipient, it’s a chance to both give support and be supported. There’s a fluidity to it and it means a lot to me.”



Rick Jorgenson:

Rick Jorgenson: “My main memory is being tasked by Miss Poppy over here (Penelope) into being editor of the newsletter, which I was for 12 years. So, my fondest memory is doing that.”



Fred Rodriguez:

Fred Rodriguez: “My fondest memory is hosting the holiday party, and I put on a reindeer costume. I had a great time but the reindeer costume said on the back ‘Bah humbug’ and I didn’t know it.”



Mary O’Donoghue and participants of Roundtable Conversations

Mary O’Donoghue: “Senior Pride was created out of necessity and is a place to call home—a place to be cared for and to care for each other. Incredible memories have been shared—and resiliency is the theme that runs through the years. It’s a privilege to start now, at this point in the Senior Pride journey.”

Photos by: Deborah Dobson

If you’re new to Tucson or Senior Pride, we’d love to meet you!
Feel free to join us at an event, say hello.

Give us a call at (520) 312-8923 or email: info@soazseniorpride

We’re excited to welcome you to Senior Pride!



**Celebrating, Supporting, and
Uniting LGBTQI+ Older Adults**

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Tucson, AZ 85716

(520) 312-8923

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Preventing Falls through Mind and Body Interventions

Presented by Lisa Walters, Fall Prevention Program Supervisor at Pima Council on Aging (PCOA)

at the Habitat for Humanity office – 3501 N Mountain Ave

This free, 8-hour session will be held over 2 weeks on Tuesday and Thursday, September 24 and 26 and October 1 and 3, 2024,

and consists of mind and body strategies for managing concerns about falls. Simple, adaptable exercises are included as part of the lecture and group discussion format. Don't miss this engaging and informative workshop! Watch our website www.soazseniorpride.org for more details.



Queer for Good

October 3rd at Hotel Congress

“In honor of the 25th anniversary of the LGBTQ+ Alliance Fund, Community Foundation for Southern Arizona is proud to share this year's theme: *Speaking Out: Love in Action*. To learn more click here.

<https://cfsaz.org/event/queer-for-good-2024/>

Tucson Pride Parade

Join us as Senior Pride walks the Pride Parade on

September 27, 2024
from 4:00-9:00 pm at
Armory Park.

Stay tuned for details
and registration at

www.soazseniorpride.org



Welcome, Linda Hollis!

New Board Member of Senior Pride's Board of Directors.

Linda is an ally who has admired the work of Senior Pride for many years and is honored to be a part of the Board and working in support of the Executive Director. Get to know Linda by reading her bio at:

<https://soazseniorpride.org/who-we-are/board-of-directors/#lhollis>



COMMUNITY PROFILE: FERNANDO OCHOA

This article was written by one of Fernando's Community Cares Program volunteers. It is an honor to spend time with him and get to share his story. If you're interested in learning more about this program, as a recipient or volunteer, please connect reach out: 520-351-2724 or community@soazseniorpride.org

Almost all of Fernando's life has been spent in Tucson. As large of an imprint the city has had on his life, he has made an equally impressive impact on the city.

Fernando has countless stories about gay life in Tucson throughout the decades. He remembers the gay bars that used to be on almost every major street. He was here when RuPaul performed at a gay bar, 2520, on Oracle and Grant. He worked at the Food Conspiracy Co-op on 4th Ave before it was a household name.

In his early 20's, he lived with a man, Bob Ellis. Bob was instrumental in starting what was at first a casual gay newsletter but then became *The Observer*, a regular gay newspaper distributed throughout the city's gay bars. Fernando and Bob's home became the hub for the publication - where they were joined by local club owners and writers to dream up their next issue.

The group had heard news of other cities creating Gay Courts, a concept similar to Prom Kings and Queens but for folks that were oftentimes overlooked for those positions. The other writers for *The Observer* suggested that Fernando put his name in the running. And on an exciting night, after patrons at different Tucson gay bars had cast their votes, *Fernando was crowned as Tucson's Gay Emperor!* His duties included attending coronations across the Southwest. He says the position "was significant in my life because I wanted to make a difference in the community." He engaged in community work around making spaces for disowned and isolated LGBTQ+ youth as well as promoting STD awareness and treatment. All of this at only 23.

Fernando being crowned as Tucson's Gay Emperor

In addition to committing to his community in his youth, he committed himself to his parents as he got older. He became extremely close to his mother as he was her full-time caretaker through her chemotherapy until the end of her life. Then he took care of his father through an intense battle with dementia until he passed away a year ago. Caretaking had fully consumed his life for 20 years. But he says, "I don't call it a sacrifice. They were my parents, I loved them... It healed me."

After his mother passed away he realized he had become quite disconnected from his community and "needed to be a homosexual again." He reached out to Senior Pride and was connected to the Community Cares Program. Before long, he was matched with a volunteer and they began texting and calling - finding commonalities over grief, politics, and nostalgic jokes. Within a few years, a second volunteer was connected with him to help continue combatting the isolation of full-time caretaking. He's an unusual Community Cares recipient, since he was practically homebound for decades, but that no longer is true. He found people to support this sometimes quite difficult transition.

Fernando lives a vibrant life, loving on his new puppies, Emma and Berlin, cooking delicious meals, and maintaining a beautiful yard.





In Memory
Roger Osgood (1944-2024)
*Long time Senior Pride volunteer
and friend*

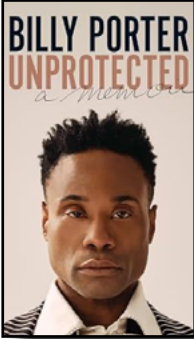
Roger was an integral part of Southern Arizona Senior Pride as a valued volunteer in countless ways. Roger and his husband, Steven Ginter were always ready to lend a helping hand whenever needed. Read Roger's Community Profile here: Roger Osgood – Southern Arizona Senior Pride (<https://soazseniorpride.org/community-profile-roger-osgood/>)

SENIOR PRIDE BOOK CLUB – www.soazseniorpride.org for more information and registration. Or email: info@soazseniorpride.org

Unprotected: A Memoir

By Billy Porter

September 18, 2024 • 2:00-3:30 p.m.



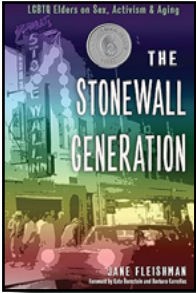
Porter, a flamboyant and respected entertainer now, grew up with the painful message that simply being himself, black and gay, was not only unacceptable, but also dangerous. He shares the struggles of his younger life before he reached international fame as a singer/dancer, particularly when he won a Tony Award for his role in Kinky Boots. Amazon calls this book “a resonant story” told with Porter’s “stunning wit.”

It's a book that not only entertains, but also inspires.

The Stonewall Generation: LGBTQ Elders on Sex, Activism, and Aging

By Jane Fleishman

October 16, 2024 • 2 pm - 3:30 p.m.



Author Fleishman is a researcher in human sexuality, with a focus on older adults. “I have been an activist and organizer from my teenage years onwards,” and here she shares candid stories of those who came of age in the time of the Stonewall Riots in 1969 and the cultural and political revolution raging in the 1960's onward. It includes voices of those often overlooked in

LGBTQ history, including people of color, bisexuals and sex workers.

Our success is made possible by supporters like you!!



Senior Pride serves as a central source of support, services, and information for older LGBTQI+ adults in Southern Arizona.

Please help us make a difference and donate today!

By Check: Make checks payable to **So. AZ Senior Pride**
1632 N Country Club Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85716

Online: Go to our website www.soazseniorpride.org
Click on “DONATE”

All donations to Senior Pride, a 501(c)(3) organization, are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.