



Empowering Black Gay Men and Allies in the Coachella Valley

THE BROTHERS' DRUMBEAT



April 2024 | Issue Thirty Seven: Helping Black Gay Community Blossom all Over of the Coachella Valley
Lorenzo Taylor, Editor

Welcome to the Brothers' Drumbeat, a monthly e-newsmagazine to keep you informed about what's happening and coming soon with Brothers of the Desert. If you have questions, please contact info@brothersofthedesert.org. Follow us on Facebook and visit our website brothersofthedesert.org

Please share our newsletter with someone who will benefit from the information!

APRIL 2024 DRUMBEAT

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Leadership Message: New Website and Dating Apps Outreach

As we move into spring, we hope by now you have seen our new website. We are excited about the new fresh look, and look forward to adding new benefits soon, so keep us in your

favorites! In the coming months, we will be creating a more detailed membership section which will engage and upgrade our communication to all of you. We have had huge success in promoting connection and building community through our monthly in-person Barbershop discussion groups and want to continue to offer other opportunities for engagement.



We are making a strategic move by expanding our presence on gay dating sites like Jack' d and Grindr. Brothers of the Desert has hired a host/promoter and outreach coordinator to engage with individuals in various social platforms. We are committed to broadening our support and touch points for those who have previously found in-person events to be inaccessible. By establishing a presence on these platforms, We, and our host Anye Elite (Icon City), aim to initiate dialogues with individuals who may have been outside of our traditional reach. This presents an opportunity to gather valuable insights into what barriers exist for individuals who may not have participated in the past. Additionally, for those visiting or considering living in the valley, this serves as an opportunity to act as a welcoming ambassador for other Black gay men in the Coachella Valley.

At our core, Brothers of the Desert remains steadfast in our dedication to empowering Black gay men and our allies throughout the Coachella Valley. This innovative approach underscores our unwavering commitment to reaching individuals wherever they may reside. It epitomizes our forward-thinking ethos, ensuring that every Black gay man feels embraced and valued, irrespective of their circumstances or geographical location.

Eric Davis
Vice President

APRIL BOD ACTIVITIES



Wildflowers Excursion Rescheduled April 7

BOD members **David Maurice Jones** and **Thomas Sarkis** are organizing a half-day trip to Diamond Valley Lake near Hemet to see the 2024 wildflower Superbloom. It was canceled due to weather conditions in March. Our reward for the wet winter is a spring of abundant and spectacular wildflowers and Diamond Lake is one of the best places to see them. Meet at 9:00 am at 4Paws Coffee Co. at 2500 N Palm Canyon Dr Suite A5 in Palm Springs, in Racquet Club Center. After coffee the group will ride as a caravan (or not if you're independent) to Diamond Valley (45ish minutes), spend a couple hours walking, hiking, and for some of us skipping, among the wildflowers and then have lunch at a Black-owned Creole restaurant before returning around 2:00pm. The area entrance fee is around \$11. Contact **David Maurice Jones** with questions or to RSVP at davidmaurice.jones@gmail.com

Barbershop Discussion Group April 9

Please attend the next meeting of Barbershop: A Black Men's Space for Honest Talk about Wellness, designed to encourage open and honest conversation. The free monthly meetings are inclusive, welcoming the full spectrum of Black men each month: gay, bisexual, transgender, nonbinary, and straight allies. The discussion topics are determined by the group facilitated by **Stuart Huggins** and **Will**



Dean. In March, the ten men in attendance discussed what it means to have a healthy sex life and whether you are having one, as well as dealing with prostate cancer, Meetings begin with a meet and greet with dinner that begins at 5:30 pm and the discussion group starts at 6:00 pm. To register to attend the meetings and get the location email Info_Barbershop@LKAPS.org For questions contact **Tim Vincent** at president@brothersofthedesert.org or **Jax Kelly** at jaxkelly@lkaps.org



Membership Meeting and Social Lunch April 13

The monthly membership meeting will be held at the LGBT Community Center of the Desert (1301 N Palm Canyon Drive) on Saturday, April 13th at 11:00 am. There is often a guest speaker. Last month Fred Lewis Mason presented the group with a \$1500 donation from Knights of the Round Table/Excalibur Foundation. Thank you Fred. If you need the meeting agenda or want to connect virtually to the meeting contact **Tim Vincent** at president@brothersofthedesert.org

The monthly lunch social will take place immediately following the meeting at El Taco Asado in downtown Palm Springs. You do not have to attend the meeting to attend the luncheon, just RSVP and be there by 12:30pm. It's always a lot of fun. Please RSVP by email to **Eric Davis** by Friday, April 12th. vicepresident@brothersofthedesert.org



El Taco Asado
440 El Cielo Road
Palm Springs 92262
Eltacoasadorestaurant.com



MARCH BOD ACTIVITIES RECAP



Screening and discussion of the movie "Rustin" on March 21st



Sisters' Takeover drag fundraiser organized by Ray Ellington at Impala Bar on March 20th.



Monthly lunch social at Sonny's on March 9th



BOD was a donor at the Safe Schools Fundraiser on March 24th.



BOD members turnout for brunch as SAGE honors Tim Vincent with award on March 24th.

FEATURE ARTICLES

WHY DOES EVERYTHING HAVE TO BE ABOUT RACE?



Best-selling black gay author and activist **Keith Boykin** asks this provocative question in the title of his new book. In addition to being the founder of the National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum, he was a frequent CNN and MSNBC political commentator and is author of four books.

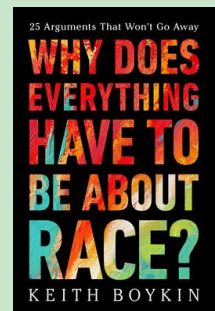
Keith's book tells the reader WHY American life continues to be centered on race and corrects some of the frequent phallacies that we hear on right wing media. Most of us get these questions all the time from White friends or colleagues. The easy-to-read book provides factual information and powerful responses to counter twenty-five deceptions about race like:

- Doesn't Critical Race Theory teach children to be ashamed of being white?
- Why do we have a Black History Month, we don't have a white history month?
- Didn't Dr. King say that we should be color-blind?
- Why do you need affirmative action, isn't that reverse racism?

As Keith reminds readers "The most toxic racial arguments share one of five traits. They try to erase Black history, prioritize white victimhood, deny Black oppression, promote myths of Black inferiority, or rebrand racism as something else entirely." The book helps readers understand these arguments and rebut them. In this Youtube video, Keith describes the book and why he wrote it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBX5O3LAp9U>

Here is a link to purchase a copy of the book.



THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS NEEDS BLACK GAY REPRESENTATION!

There are several Black candidates running to join the city councils of cities throughout the Valley. There is also an openly gay candidate for U.S. House of Representatives.



Perhaps less glamorous, but still essential is representation on city boards and commissions that set important policies that improve the quality of life in our community. Several BOD members, including **Wes Rankin** and **Ron Oden** have served on local voluntary boards. The Palm Springs City Council is seeking applications from citizens interested serving on one of several City Boards and Commissions. The recruitment

period is open now through [April 30, 2024](#).

Some of the Boards and Commissions that are currently recruiting include:

- Architectural Review Committee
- Palm Springs Airport Commission
- Human Rights Commission
- Library Board of Trustees
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Planning Commission
- Public Arts Commission

Applicants must live, work, or go to school within the City of Palm Springs. An appointment to a Board or Commission is for a term of three years. All appointees are subject to financial disclosure. To learn more about these advisory groups, term lengths, and requirements for participation or to submit an application, visit [EngagePalmSprings.com](#) -- or call the Office of the City Clerk at (760) 323-8204. Representation matters, so be a voice for Black and Black LGBT interests in our community!

BROTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY



Each month *Brother's Drumbeat* profiles one of our outstanding members. This month we introduce one of our founding board members, the legendary **Andre Carthen**.

1. How long have you been in Palm Springs and where did you come from or have you lived previously?

I was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut. From there we moved to Cincinnati, then Chicago, then at the age of 11 we moved to Compton and the West Coast became my home. Temporary move to Orlando, then back Southern California, because there's truly no place like home. I also lived in Japan twice, and traveled and entertained throughout Europe. Oh and I briefly lived in New York, while performing on Broadway, in *Kiss of the Spider Woman* with Vanessa Williams. All that before settling down what was then my second home in Cathedral City. Now I've been in Palm Springs for 6 years.



2. What kind of work do you do and/or how have you been involved in the community?

It's true what they say about if you love what you do and I have been fortunate enough to make a living as an actor, singer, dancer, model, and chef. While most people become chefs because they love to eat, for me it was because I love to see others eat!

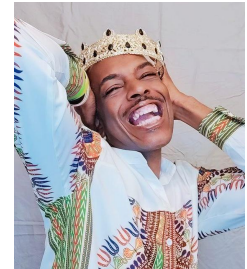
3. What are your hobbies and why is BOD important to you? To me cooking and food is part of our culture, how we relate to one another, our connection to who we are as a people. As special connection that only we have as black people, as black men, as brothers. There's a familiarity we have as black men, the knowledge and recognition of a struggle all too real in our lives. The fact that we can see each other and value each other as strong black beautiful intelligent men. I love our camaraderie, our support, and genuine concern for one another. When it comes to my down time, which is not that often, I enjoy being alone, quiet time.

5. What is your lifelong dream?

Because I have been extremely blessed in my life and with my career. My bucket list is quite small. I would love to return to Broadway in a show, pilot a plane, write a cookbook and one day travel to Europe again and experience it with someone that's never been. When all is said and done, I wish that all have lived life deliciously, as I have!

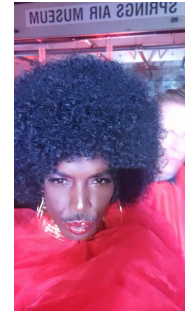
Brothers Got Talent Returns in May

Calling all singers, actors, poets, performers and musicians! BOD is hosting another spectacular talent night on Friday, May 24th at the Camelot theater upstairs bar. We're looking for 4-6 talented brothers who would be willing to share brief snippets of their talent. Each performance should be no more than ten minutes. Please contact host **Wes Rankin** by Monday, April 29th if you would like to participate. Wesmess@hotmail.com.



Brothers Dress Up and Turn Out for Red Dress Party

Several BOD members were spotted in all kinds of red attire for the annual Red Dress Dress Red fundraising party at the Palm Springs Air Museum on March 17th in support of the LGBT Community Center of the Desert. Pictured are Eric Davis, Will Dean, Jase Nagaia, and Miss Diana Ross Rankin.



Brothers Calendar

- April 7 Wildflowers Excursion
- April 9 Barbershop Discussion Group
- April 13 BOD Monthly Membership Meeting and Lunch
- May 2-5 Blatino Oasis Retreat
- May 9 Harvey Milk Breakfast
- May 24 Brothers Got Talent - Cocktails and Kiki

Birthday Brothers

- April 3 Clifton Tatum
- April 4 Glenn Alexander
- April 6 Keith Holmes

- April 9 Christian Cooper
- April 18 Tony Lanier

Honoring Our Ancestors



Richard Bruce Nugent (1906-1987) was a multifaceted figure known as an artist, writer, actor, dancer, and bohemian of 1920s Harlem. Initially based in Washington, D.C., he joined poet Georgia Douglas Johnson's salons, where he encountered luminaries like Langston Hughes. Nugent eventually moved to Harlem and became part of Hughes's literary circle.

He boldly explored issues of sexuality and Black identity in his poems, short stories, and erotic drawings. In 1926, Nugent published "Smoke Lilies and Jade" in his magazine *Fire!!!* It was a groundbreaking short story centered on homosexuality. The young protagonist, Alex, openly embraces his gay identity, declaring his pride without shame. Unlike his contemporaries such as Hughes and Claude McKay, Nugent was unapologetically open about his same-sex orientation, which may have hindered his mainstream publishing success. Despite this, Nugent's work appeared in publications like *Crisis* and *Opportunity*, as well as Alain Locke's influential *New Negro* anthology. He also had roles in productions like Du Bose Heyward's *Porgy* on Broadway and in London. Additionally, he served as Co-Chair of the Harlem Cultural Council during the 1960s.

Gay filmmaking duo Quincy LeNear Gossfield and Deondray Gossfield produced a beautiful 1921 film based on the short story "Smoke Lilies and Jade." Watch the trailer at this link to get a sense of how fabulous and visionary our ancestor was.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75CAqialMbs&t=90s>

Brothers of the Desert is a non-profit 501-c3 organization whose mission is to build to nurture, support and connect Black gay men in the Coachella Valley through philanthropy, volunteerism, mentorship, education, advocacy and social networking.
Follow us on Facebook & Instagram Brothersofthedesert

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