



Empowering Black Gay Men and Allies in the Coachella Valley

# THE BROTHERS' DRUMBEAT



September 2023 | Issue Thirty: Hot Topics and Cool News for the Coachella Valley Black Gay Community  
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](mailto:info@brothersofthedesert.org). Follow us on Facebook and visit our website [brothersofthedesert.org](http://brothersofthedesert.org)

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

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## SEPTEMBER ACTIVITIES

### Membership Meeting Sept 9

Our monthly membership meeting will be held at the LGBT Community Center of the Desert. We will return to our regular second Saturday morning at 11:00 am schedule. If you need the agenda or want to connect virtually to the meeting contact **Tim Vincent** at [president@brothersofthedesert.org](mailto:president@brothersofthedesert.org)





## Monthly Lunch Social at Trio Sept 9

Join BOD members, friends and allies for lunch at Trio Restaurant (707 N.Palm Canyon Drive) on Saturday, September 9 at 12:30pm. Trio is a long time favorite of the gay community and tourists as well with an eclectic menu and friendly service. Plenty of parking in the rear.

RSVP to **Eric Davis** [Vicepresident@brothersofthedesert.org](mailto:Vicepresident@brothersofthedesert.org) **The firm deadline is Thursday, September 7 by 6pm.** The restaurant is very busy so they can't accommodate last-minute changes or walk-ins on Saturday. Check out the menu below.

<https://nomi.menu/trio-palm-springs>

## The "Dating Game" Sept 9

BOD member **Patrick Pierre** will be serving up an evening of game show realness at the Palm Springs Cultural Center (2300 E. Baristo Road) on Saturday September 9 at 6:00 pm at the second annual BOD game show night with your host Patty Cakes. Just like the beloved television show, a bachelor will interview contestants to choose who to take on a date. And the audience gets to help ask questions! In addition to the "dating game" there will be surprise guests and much more. This event will raise funds for the BOD

Emergency Fund that helps members experiencing an unexpected or critical expenses. Tickets are \$35 at the door and \$25 in advance. Get tickets at the link below:

[Brothersofthedesert.org](http://Brothersofthedesert.org)



## Meet the Black and Blue Sept. 26

Brothers of the Desert and Palm Springs Police Department would like you to join them at Blackbook Bar and Kitchen (315 E. Arenas Road) on Tuesday, September 26 (10:30am-12noon). Complementary breakfast provided for attendees, sponsored and hosted by Blackbook this will be an opportunity to

meet our officers in "BLUE" and have conversation, ask question and address concerns in a friendly manner. We are asking our "Black" community, friends, family and allies of "Brothers of the Desert" to come together and meet our PSPD. We have limited seating of 40 people, so please reserve your space NOW at [Brothersofthedesert.org](http://Brothersofthedesert.org)!

# JULY/AUGUST ACTIVITIES RECAP

BOD was on hiatus for the month of August, but we still had a lot of fun with Equality Wine Fest and a member's meeting/brunch in July. Committees were busy planning the launch of the Barbershop discussion group, the Wellness Summit and New Years Eve gala. And BOD showed our support for a new member, local artist **Aaron Allen**.



GED presents a check to BOD from the proceeds of the Equality Wine Fest on July 8.



BOD Board members Andre Carthen and Eric Davis showed their support for Aaron Allen at the opening reception at his art studio on August 2.



Community Advisory Board for the Barbershop Project held their first meeting on July 5th

Mark Your Calendar

**5th Annual Wellness Summit**  
Honoring Our **PAST**,  
Envisioning Our **FUTURE**

MARGARITAVILLE Resort  
PALM SPRINGS, CA

**Saturday, November 11, 2023**

We are excited to announce our fifth annual Brothers of the Desert Wellness Summit. Get your tickets now, we have a great line-up of presenters and workshops planned for this year! [Summit tickets and information](#)

## FEATURE ARTICLES

### Kemar Jewel: Uplifting Black LGBT Voices through Dance



Jamaican-born choreographer **Kemar Jewel** (pictured on the left) was kicked out of his family home for being gay when he was sixteen years old. Fortunately, he found a chosen family in the underground Philadelphia dance scene. There he honed his talents as a way for Black queer men to help each other heal from trauma. He is Creative Director of the international dance group, Xcel Dance Crew. Through a blend of art and activism he

spreads hope, love, and healing. In the spirit of Alvin Ailey, his videos celebrate the beauty and fluidity of Black men's bodies while telling important stories about their lives and struggles. Learn about two of the victims of anti-gay violence who were centers of dances he created. His internet videos include: Voguing Train, Vogue4BlackLivesMatter, and G.A.Y. (God Accepts You). See all of his videos on his Youtube channel at this link.

[Kemar Jewell YouTube](#)

28-year old **O'Shae Sibley** was stabbed to death outside a Brooklyn New York gas station on July 29, 2023. He and his friends were vogue dancing when they were confronted by a group of individuals with anti-gar slurs. He danced on public streets in Philadelphia since he was a teenager as a means of self-expression and protest. He can also be seen performing on one of Kemar Jewell's video Vogue4#Black Lives Matter.



O'Shae Sibley

**Giovanni Melton** would have celebrated his nineteenth birthday this month. On November 2, 2017 the Henderson Nevada was brutally murdered by his father, Wendell Melton, According to media reports, Giovanni was fatally shot by his father over Giovanni's sexuality and the fact that Giovanni had a boyfriend. His father had physically and emotionally abused his son for many years. **Sonja Jones**, Giovanni's former foster mother said "He hated the fact that his son was gay. I'm sure that inside of his mind, he would rather have a dead son than a gay son." Giovanni's story is told in dance in Kemar Jewell's s video "Soft."



Giovanni Melton

## WHAT ABOUT BLACK KEN?



Did you watch the Barbie movie like half the country did this summer? Then you must be asking yourself - who were those gorgeous Black Kens and when will we see his/their story told? Of course there will be sequels to a movie that made over a BILLION dollars worldwide. Never fear, you will see handsome and versatile actors **Kingsley Ben-Adair** and **Ncuti Gatwa** on the big and small screens soon. Ben-Adair played

Barack Obama in the Showtime series "The Comey Rule" and he is the primary villain in Marvel's conspiracy thriller series "Secret Invasion." Gatwa is best known for the role of Eric in Netflix's high school comedy-drama series "Sex Education" and will be the first Black actor to play the title role in the British series "Doctor Who." Perhaps one of these hunks will be the lead in a spin-off in the Barbie universe. Let's hope so! *Publicity photo courtesy of Warner Brothers Pictures.*

## Local Theaters and Chorus Auditions in September

Our friend **Adriana Reyes**, Company Manager at Desert Theaterworks, let us know that they are looking for a few actors to perform in a variety of roles in their upcoming productions this season Including: The Christmas Story, Gilligan's Island (the musical), Beautiful (the Carol King Musical), and To Kill A Mockingbird. Auditions will be held September 21 and 24. For more information, submit an audition form at this link:

<https://fs12.formsite.com/ronpdp1/jx0ucs3w4v/idx>

**Modern Men** CELEBRATING 10 YEARS  
COACHELLA VALLEY MEN'S CHORUS

Dr. Stan Hill, Artistic Director | Kurt Jordan, Principal Accompanist

**OPEN REHEARSAL/AUDITIONS**  
Monday, September 11 | 6:30 to 8:30 pm  
8:30 pm - New member auditions  
United Methodist Church of Palm Springs, 1555 E. Alejo Rd.

**AUDITIONS**  
Saturday, September 16 | 11 am  
United Methodist Church of Palm Springs, 1555 E. Alejo Rd.  
Visit [modernmen.org](http://modernmen.org) for more information.

The two men's choruses in the Valley are also looking for male singers to join them. Palm Springs Gay Men's Chorus

Also, Coachella Valley Rep is doing a production of Collective Rage about five lesbians named Betty, but open to having Black gay man play one of the Betty;s see the listing below and if interested contact director **Kudra Wagoner** before Sept. 2 at [kwagner@cvrep.org](mailto:kwagner@cvrep.org)

already had their auditions in August. Modern Men will have an open rehearsal on September 11 and auditions on September 16 at Palm Springs United Methodist Church on September 21 and 22. More info on their website:

<https://www.modernmen.org/>

**AUDITION CALL**  
Seeking queer BIPOC actor in the Coachella Valley for the following role in lesbian comedy:  
**BETTY 5** - genderqueer, masculine-of-center, great tattoos (fake tattoos can be provided), owns a hole in the wall boxing gym, recently got out of rehab

**NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY**

**SATURDAY**  
SEPT 2nd, 4-7pm  
CVRep Black Box  
8850 E Palm Canyon Dr  
Cathedral City, CA 92234

You can prepare a short monologue or simply read from the script!

Rehearsals M-Th starting October 2

Questions? Can't make it but still interested? Wanna help me plot world domination?  
kwagner@gmail.com

THE UNUSUAL HIT PLAY BY JEN SILVERMAN  
**Collective RAGE:**  
A PLAY IN 5 BETTIES  
NOVEMBER 10-12 & 17-19  
DE  
DESERT ENSEMBLE THEATRE

## BROTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY



Each month *Brother's Drumbeat* profiles one of our outstanding members. This month we introduce the amazing **Vince Price**.

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

My partner and I have lived in the Coachella Valley (currently in Rancho Mirage) for over 17 years. I grew up in Worcester, Massachusetts and joined the Air Force in 1984, and served for 10 years. I served in Japan, South Dakota, the Philippines and finally Southern California in 1991 and I've been here ever since.



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

I have worked for the City of Riverside for over 16 years, as an internal auditor (6 years), a finance budget analyst (6 years) and currently as an IT software compliance analyst (4 years). I previously was a member of and had volunteered for the Riverside branch of the NAACP. I currently serve as the Vice President of the HOA board for the Riverside townhome complex that I live in.

### 3. Why is BOD important to you?

I hope to retire in about 5 years, so I really want to grow and expand my social network here in the Valley. When I found out about the BOD I thought it would be great to meet and befriend other African American gay men here. I've been out here for awhile and often have gone places where I was "the only one", so it's great to know that I can network and meet with other Black men socially here.

### 4. What are your hobbies or non-work activities that bring you pleasure?

My partner is currently in Arizona, so I spend most of my time with my two dogs Jack and

Charlie whom I've had since they were 8 months old. They are 4 years old now and are brothers from the same litter so they've been together all their lives. I also enjoy listening to music, and often go to the Roost Lounge in Cathedral City to hear the live entertainment there.

**5. What is your lifelong dream?** I still haven't been to Hawaii (though I've passed through there twice) so my partner has promised to take me when he's back from Arizona, lol.



### **BOD Begins Discussion Groups Oct. 10**

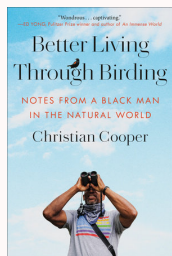
BOD is collaborating with Let's Kick Ass Palm Springs to develop discussion groups with Black men. Building upon the tradition of barbershops in Black communities, the discussion group is designed to encourage open and honest conversation. The meetings will be inclusive, welcoming the full spectrum of Black men each month: gay, bisexual, transgender, nonbinary,,and straight allies. The sexual wellness topics will be equally diverse, ranging from dating and intimacy to aging with HIV. Palm Springs was one of three communities that were awarded \$10,000 grants from Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective (BEAM) and Healthline to conduct these discussion groups. Learn more about the purpose of the groups here: <https://www.healthline.com/>

Beyond HIV,"The Barbershop" will be a Black space for honest talk about health and wellness. The group will meet monthly on the second Tuesday from 5:30-7:00 pm. The first discussion group session will be held on October 10 at the Mizell Center. Send inquiries or register at this email address: [info\\_barbershop@lkaps.org](mailto:info_barbershop@lkaps.org).



### **Christian Cooper Discusses New Book Oct. 14**

Avid birdwatcher and BOD member **Christian Cooper** will discuss his new biography "Better Living Through Birding" and more as the keynote speaker for the second Pride on The Page LGBT Author Festival at the Camelot Theater on Saturday, October 14. Christian gained international notoriety in 2020 when he was confronted by a white woman while birdwatching in Central Park. In addition to his book, he also hosts a National Geographic Network series on birding. He will be interviewed at 10:00 am to open the festival, in conversation with Pride on the Page committee member and BOD member **Lorenzo Taylor**, followed by a book signing. The event is free, but tickets are required for a reading/conversation with author **Armistead Maupin** on Friday October 13th. More information here: [www.prideonthepage.org](http://www.prideonthepage.org)



### **Gil Gerald Video Launch Party Oct 15**

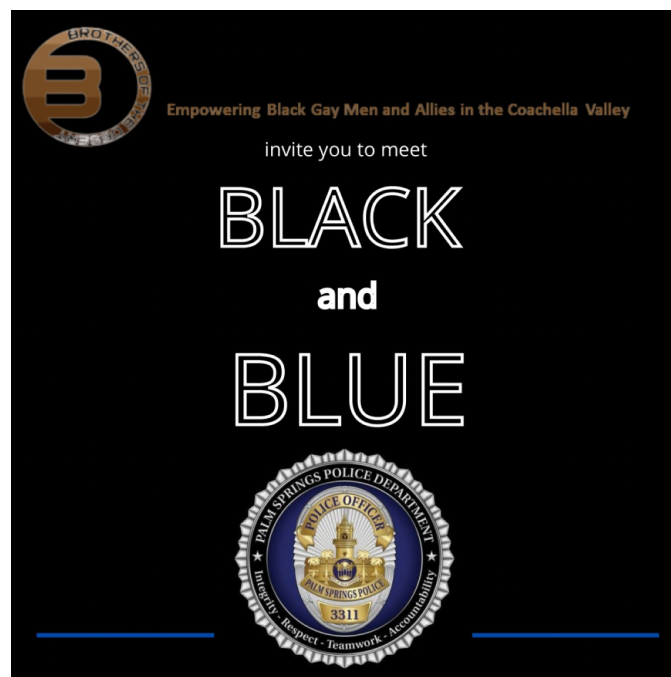
His willingness to be arrested for what he believes in is one of the many reasons that BOD member **Gil Gerald** is a legendary figure. The LGBT Civil Rights leader will be celebrated with a Legacy Award and a video launch party hosted by the online history archive *Outwards*. The free event will be at the south Palm Springs home of Joseph Cianese from 4-6 pm. BOD President **Tim Vincent** and Palm Springs Council Member **Lisa Middleton** will be on the short program. The video interview of Gil's distinguished

## Will Dean's Pre-Halloween Shindig Oct 17

"Dance, drink, eat, play and test-drive your halloween costume." BOD member Will Dean is cohosting a Halloween-themed mixer on Tuesday October 17 from 7:00-9:00 pm at the Impala Bar (333 S. Palm Canyon). It's part of something they call "The Mix Palm Springs", which is all about encouraging and fostering diverse, inclusive, social spaces. Free admission, but he asks that you RSVP to him at [Willdean66@gmail.com](mailto:Willdean66@gmail.com).



Mark Your  
Calendar  
Tuesday,  
Sept. 26th



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Brothers Calendar

- Sept 9 BOD Monthly Membership meeting 11:00 am
- Sept 9 Monthly social brunch at Trio Restaurant 12:30pm
- Sept 9 The Dating Game at the Palm Springs Cultural Center at 6:00 pm
- Sept 26 "Black and Blue" Breakfast at Blackbook Bar 10:30 am
- Oct 10 "Barbershop" Discussion Group for Black Gay Men 5:30-7:00 pm
- Oct 14 BOD Monthly Membership meeting LGBT Center 11:00 am
- Oct 14 BOD Monthly Lunch Social 12:30 pm
- Oct 14 Pride on the Page with Christian Cooper Camelot Theater 10:00 am
- Oct 15 Gil Gerald *Outwords* Legacy Award Party 4:00 pm
- Oct 17 Will Dean's Pre-Halloween Shindig 5:00 pm
- Nov 11 BOD Wellness Summit at Margaritaville Hotel.

### Birthday Brothers

- Sept 10 Eugene Coates
- Sept 14 Larry Reese Kidd

- Sept 15 Eric Harris
- Sept 23 David Maurice Jones

## Honoring Our Ancestors



**Glenn Lawrence Burke** (1952-1995) was a Major League Baseball player for the Los Angeles Dodgers and Oakland Athletics from 1976 to 1979. He was the first MLB player to come out as gay. He only played four seasons for the Dodgers and the A's because he couldn't take the constant taunting by his teammates and manager Tommy Lasorda. He refused a \$75,000 offer from the Dodgers front office to marry a woman. He was admired as for his physique and charisma on and off the field. He is also credited with creating the ubiquitous "high five" when in 1977 he slapped one hand in the air with a fellow ballplayer. He later played softball with a Bay Area gay softball league and competed in track and basketball in the Gay "Olympics." Tragically, he became addicted to cocaine and lived on the streets where he was arrested and jailed for drugs multiple times. He died of AIDS in 1994, but his legacy will always be that he opened a door of opportunity and visibility for LGBT people. Learn more about Burke's amazing life and times in **Andrew Maraniss'** 2021 biography "Singled Out." <https://www.amazon.com/Singled-Out-Story-Glenn-Burke> or the view video documentary "Out: The Glenn Burke Story" <https://vimeo.com/171518513>

***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.***  
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