



First Friday News & Views

December, 2015

Volume 20

Issue 12

*The Monthly Newsletter
of the First Friday
Breakfast Club, Inc.*

*COVER: A Practical
Solution to the Whole
Illegal Immigration
Problem*

by Jonathan Wilson

Inside This Month

*November's Speaker,
Jeremy Rosen* by Bruce Carr

Briefs and Shorts

Reflections

by Jeffrey L. Campbell

The McCoy Report by

Sen. Matt McCoy

Opinion

The Corrupting Power of Faith
by John Schmacker

My M.O.

by Steve Person

Calendar

▼ The next FFBC Meeting is 7:00am,
Friday, February 6, 2015, at Hoyt
Sherman Place, 15th & Woodland,
Des Moines, IA

▼ RSVP by February 4 to
JonathanWilson@davisbrownlaw.com,
or phone 515-288-2500

A Practical Solution to the Whole Illegal Immigration Problem

By Jonathan Wilson

Our immigration problem is complicated. Trump has trumpeted his solution for the problem: make the Mexican government build an impenetrable wall and deport the whole lot of them. Then, in time, let the “good ones” return. Hooey. That didn’t work with the Great Wall of China that was prompted by similar objectives and was a remarkably impressive undertaking and an unprecedented and unreplicated engineering feat. Moreover, it would only speak to about half of the problem, since about half of our undocumented US residents entered the country **legally** and simply overstayed their “welcome.” They didn’t sneak across the border, tunnel under the existing fence, or swim the Rio Grande. It is an unflattering commentary on what Trump thinks of his audience that he would try to sell a half solution to a complex problem when a whole solution is needed. Trump’s solution is half-baked at best.

I’ve got a better idea. Make one simple change in the law, making the “crime” the act of illegally entering the country or the act of overstaying one’s lawful status -- a “crime” committed at the moment it happens. Eliminate the continuing “crime” of **being** in the country illegally. Currently, it’s a new crime every day that a person is in this country without proper documentation.

Next, put some reasonable statute of limitations on that singular “crime” and, if a person hasn’t been caught and charged within the applicable statute of limitations, they can go to any immigration office in broad daylight, provide proof of the residency for the requisite period of limitations, and become citizens.

This is nothing new or revolutionary. Currently, other than the crime of murder that has no statute of limitations for prosecution, with most other crimes the perpetrator must be caught and prosecuted within the applicable statute of limitations or they get away scot-free. That fact has saved a bunch of priests from prosecution for damn sure. Not to mention burglars, robbers, rapists, embezzlers, and folks who have committed assaults or even attempted murder.

The beauty of this approach is that the “bad” undocumented residents -- the ones Trump supposedly wants to export along with their citizen children -- can reasonably be expected to cross paths with the law during the applicable statute of limitations. At that point their illegal entry would come to light and we’d have the choice of prosecuting them for the crime just committed or deporting them because of their illegal entry. *Continued on p. 2*

I'll say what everybody knows but isn't saying. If the recipients of amnesty or a pathway to citizenship were expected to register to vote as Republicans, Republicans would be uniformly pushing for both. That's the truth of the matter. We routinely move on in the face of other crimes after a suitable period of time has elapsed without prosecution. Entering the US illegally should be no different and it would more nearly represent a whole solution to a complex problem that our complacency has made even more complex.

The "crime" should be illegal entry and not the act of *being* in the country without proper documentation. We should adopt a corresponding statute of limitations that would give law enforcement authorities plenty of time to catch the "bad" ones and either prosecute them for some other crime or deport them because of their illegal entry.

This would represent a more complete solution to the "problem" than anything I've heard proposed by Donald Trump or any other presidential candidate. It also carries with it greater pragmatism and compassion.

The Corrupting Power of Fundamentalist Faith

An Opinion by John Schmacker

"Faith is knowledge that something which I cannot perceive with any of my senses is nevertheless real and true." Lutherans will recognize this definition from Martin Luther's Catechism. Faith allows us to "know" something without a shred of evidence, as opposed to science, which knows only that which can be supported by evidence. Superstition, by the way, is the phenomenon of believing something *despite* the evidence.

Fundamentalist faith began to infiltrate our politics back in 1968. Richard Nixon's "Southern Strategy" cobbled together a Republican majority by convincing southern white Democrats to join the Republican Party. These were, by and large, racist, homophobic, misogynist and xenophobic Americans who mostly clung to fundamentalist Christian beliefs and were still angry about the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Hey, they were votes, what does it matter? Abetted by Jerry Falwell and other prophets of the Christian fundamentalist right-wing, the Republicans opened their arms to this new base of faith-driven voters. As I said, votes.

Thus began the transformation of the Republican Party into the nasty piece of business we see in America today. This addition to the

married Henrietta Maria, a Catholic. Parliamentary concerns over the religion of Charles's children resulted in one son becoming a Protestant (later Charles II who converted to Catholicism on his deathbed), and one a Catholic (later James II, ultimately forced to abdicate because of his religion). The abdication of James II brought to the throne William of Orange and his wife, Mary, the daughter of James II, both staunch Protestants. To this day, the British monarch is forbidden to marry any person who is not a Protestant. Fascinating stuff.

Briefs & Shorts

Be sure to RSVP for the December 4 meeting no later than December 2. Contact Jonathan at 288-2500 or email him at JonathanWilson@DavisBrownLaw.com. Our scheduled speaker will be John Clayton, a representative of the Al Gore Foundation: The Climate Reality Project. He will be speaking about climate change.

Thanks to Ryan Crane for his introduction of our November speaker, Jeremy Rosen, Executive Director of ACLU of Iowa.

Volunteers Needed!!!! Our traditional Red Party fundraiser that means everything to our fundraising efforts to generate resources for our scholarship program is being re-formatted in 2016. It will, again, be on the first Friday of February 2016, but it will be held as an Open House Reception at the home of Jonathan Wilson and Scott Kuknyo. Volunteers are needed for set-up, clean-up, and logistics in between. Volunteers attend at no charge.

Be sure to peruse the front table for a book you might like to read. Book donations are always welcome. Thanks to Scott Kuknyo for helping coordinate the book exchange.



Consider a tax deductible contribution to the FFBC scholarship fund, or a tax exempt testamentary gift, or both. Contact Jonathan Wilson for details.

Reflections on Africa

by Jeffrey L. Campbell

During my first trip to Africa in 2013, my friend Jonathan Wilson suggested that I write an article for the FFBC newsletter about my Africa experience. My initial reaction was, "Sure, why not." It was not until my recent, second trip to Africa that I resolved to write the article.

As the first trip progressed I was processing so many first impressions of Africa. It felt as though I'd come home and yet not **really** home. The sights, sounds, the very smell of Africa were intoxicating to me.

Africa's landscape is breathtaking enough on it's own, but I also had to reconcile that I was seeing exotic animals: lions, leopards, hippos, and elephants in their naturally wild habitat. Some up close and personal which, admittedly, raised my anxiety level a few times to the amusement of my fellow Iowans.

As an African-American I suspected my perceptions of Africa might be somewhat different from my fellow Caucasian Americans traveling with me on safari. However, what I was unprepared for was how I, as an African-American, would be perceived by native Africans.

On my previous trip to the Okavango Delta in Botswana in November of 2013 my partner Friedhelm had noticed that I was getting some rather curious looks from the native staff in our mobile tented camp.

On that trip to Botswana, our guide's name was Nick, an African of Greek descent from Zimbabwe. Our driver was named Petros, a native of Botswana. Both were impressively experienced safari experts.

During our jeep drive to a hippo watering hole, I had the opportunity to compare my music tastes with our Petros. We also discussed our perceptions of life in our two countries in rather fascinating detail.

So, fast forward to November 5th 2015. Upon my arrival in Tanzania our first driver this time was Apollo, a native from a small village close to our stop at the Selous game reserve.

After collecting us at a small airstrip near the Rufiji River Camp, Apollo took us by covered, open-air jeep on our drive to see giraffes, impalas and, eventually, to the Rufiji River where we saw hippos. At camp I was greeted by an over 1000- year-old Baobab tree and our hostess, Angela.

Once again, Friedhelm and even my other travel companions, Jonathan, and his partner Scott Kuknyo, briefly noticed more rather curious stares that I was receiving from the locals. After awhile even I couldn't ignore that I was clearly perceived as something "other," even exotic if you will.

After several days on safari in the Ruaha game reserve, we returned to Dar es Salaam where we decided to do some shopping in the village. Once again, on our walk through the city center the curious stares were noticeably more pronounced, some locals even stopping to for a double take or, from the more adventurously

friendly, giving me a "shout-out" with "HEY RASTA!!!" (probably because of my long dreadlocks and the gray beard I was sporting for this trip).

Then I had an epiphany. I'd left the exotic sights of the African Jungle (Savannah actually) only to return from Ruaha to the "concrete jungle" of the city of Dar es Salaam, and I realized that I was now the exotic creature who was being looked at with as much wonder as I had at the majestic African elephant. I had a silent laugh with myself at the sheer irony of it.

Reflecting on the collective reactions of native Africans to my presence as clearly "different," it dawned on me that I'm not African but an American of part African decent. My ancestors who survived the crossing were introducing a unique tribe to a new world. A tribe that would also be seen as different in both America and Africa.

Sure, we could return to Africa as I did and experience an overwhelming sense of home, yet somehow to feel very much like a stranger visiting an exotic land full of very old history, culture, and amazing beauty. A history, culture, and beauty that are reflected in my own African-American community in America today.

Upon reflection, I'm conflicted as to whether that makes me a bit sad or somehow proud. I mean, I am a product of two different continents and cultures. One adopted and the other lost more than 200 years ago. Could my ancestors who survived the passage ever even have imagined the future they were creating for their progeny? So I guess I'm somewhat proud, but it's bittersweet because I'm also a living testament to the power of perseverance.

In writing this article I find myself wondering what is it about Africa that makes it my number one vacation destination. Maybe its Africa's incredible wildlife that keeps drawing me back. I'd like to think it's because I know that it is the birthplace of mankind and at least half of my own personal heritage. Finally, perhaps it's the mere vastness of the continent that I rationally know I'd never be able to see in my lifetime. I'm not really sure if I know exactly what Africa's pull on me is, but I know that it holds a very special place in my heart and that I will keep returning to her time and time again.

Ponderables

Nothing is over until you stop trying.

Roe v. Wade was not the beginning of women getting abortions; it was the end of women dying from abortions. I know personally a wonderful person who, before Roe v. Wade, nearly died from a botched abortion and had to have a hysterectomy in order to avoid dying from an infection.

After my prostate exam, the doctor left. Then the nurse came in. As she shut the door, she whispered the three words no man wants to hear: "Who was that?"



3 WAYS IOWA IS ENSURING SAFETY & JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS

Iowa is taking positive steps to help survivors of domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, human trafficking and violent crimes. Here are three recent pieces of good news:

1. A new [\\$2 million federal grant](#) will help the state test a backlog of sexual assault kits and investigate and prosecute rape cases. The Crime Victim Assistance Division at the Attorney General's Office will head up this effort to bring long-overdue justice to victims.

2. As of October 1, the [Iowa Domestic Violence HelpLine](#) is in operation at 1-800-770-1650. The 24/7 statewide crisis and counseling line is staffed with trained experts providing free and confidential assistance to those seeking to escape an abusive situation. The effort is paid for with \$420,000 from the Attorney General's Crime Victim Assistance Division. For more information, visit www.survivorshelpline.org.

3. On January 1, Iowa will join 33 other states with an address confidentiality program that helps ensure victims are safe from their abusers. Through "[Safe at Home](#)," a victim's mail arrives at a substitute address managed by the Iowa Secretary of State's Office and is forwarded to a confidential address. This prevents their physical address from appearing on public records. Applications for the program will be accepted starting in mid-December. For more information, go to <http://safeathome.iowa.gov/>.

These are good steps, but there is more we can do. During the 2016 session, I hope the House will seriously consider taking another look at bills the Senate passed with unanimous support this year. These include:

- Adding dating violence in the definition of criminal domestic abuse, which would require mandatory periods of confinement and batterer's education upon conviction ([SF 300](#)).
- Allowing victims of sexual abuse to get a civil protective order to keep their abuser away from their home, school and work ([SF 336](#)).
- Cracking down on stalking by expanding its definition to include the use of surveillance technology and allowing a victim to report being stalked if they feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated or threatened by another person ([SF 395](#)).
- Prohibiting the use of GPS to track a person without legitimate purpose or authorization ([SF 416](#)).

Additional information

This is a legislative update from Senator Matt McCoy, representing west part of Des Moines, portions of West Des Moines and Cumming in northwest Warren County. For newsletters, photos and further information, go to www.senate.iowa.gov/senator/mccoy.

To contact Senator McCoy during the week, call the Senate Switchboard at 515-281-3371. Otherwise he can be reached at home at 515-274-0561. E-mail him at matt.mccoy@legis.iowa.gov.



ACLU for You and All Americans

By Bruce Carr

(picture credit: Gary Moore)

Our guest speaker on Friday morning, November 6, 2015, was Jeremy Rosen, who was named executive director of ACLU of Iowa at the beginning of this year. When he began his new post on February 2, Rosen wrote

“I am honored to lead the fifth oldest American Civil Liberties Union affiliate in the country [founded in 1935], and to continue the organization’s vigorous defense of the civil liberties protected by the U.S. and Iowa Constitutions.” Ed Broders, president of the ACLU of Iowa Board of Directors, said, “We are pleased that Mr. Rosen has chosen to bring his considerable talents and passion for civil liberties to the ACLU of Iowa. Under Mr. Rosen’s leadership, we expect that the affiliate will continue to grow in its role as the preeminent defender of civil liberties in Iowa.”

Rosen brought his quiet manner of speaking and a wickedly ironic sense of humor to his account for us of some recent ACLU accomplishments and celebrations in our state: stopping Secretary of State Schultz’s politically inspired purge of voting rolls, reversing the Medical Board’s attempt to prohibit telemed abortion services over the internet, and getting over a quarter of Iowa’s counties to agree to stop ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) detentions of suspected illegal immigrants. He listed several ongoing ACLU-Iowa projects, including advocacy

for real equal treatment of LGBT persons, especially those transgendered, and continued opposition to so-called “religious freedom restoration” legislation.

Jeremy Rosen’s extensive background includes litigation with the ACLU at the state and national level on voting rights, First Amendment issues, and anti-eviction programs for victims of domestic violence. He also has experience in key elements of the ACLU’s work, including policy work at the state legislative and state agency levels, public education, communications, and fundraising. He is an expert on federal, state, and local affordable housing policy, with a focus on homelessness, veterans housing, and housing for children, youth, and families. Mr. Rosen’s work also focuses on access to government benefits for low income people, prisoner reentry, and the intersection of affordable housing policy and the child welfare system. He is a frequent speaker on these topics, and has published numerous journal articles and papers.

A native of Boston, Jeremy Rosen received his undergraduate degree with honors at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1994 and his J.D. at The George Washington University Law School in Washington DC in 1998. Before he moved to Iowa, he had been the Executive Director of the National Policy and Advocacy Council on Homelessness (NPACH) in Washington, with responsibility for managing all aspects of the organization. Rosen previously worked in the National Office of Volunteers of America (VOA), in Alexandria, where he served as Director for Homelessness and Mental Health. He has also been employed at the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty and Legal Services of Greater Miami. Jeremy Rosen can be contacted at ACLU of Iowa, 901 Insurance Exchange Building in Des Moines, (515) 243-3576; email iclu@iowaclu.org

The Corrupting Power of Fundamentalist Faith, Cont’d

Republican base has behaved like a slow-acting poison. The Republican Party, in need of a fix to satisfy its addiction to power, drank the poison freely and eagerly, and has become very sick as a result. The damage is self-inflicted. They were unable to refuse a bad drug when it was offered them.

Co-opting religion for partisan political purposes, despite warnings as old as our Constitution, has caused harm to both religion and politics. The Republicans should have known better. The biggest harm is this: among today’s Republicans, faith-based arguments seem to carry more weight than evidence-based arguments. If a virgin birth is possible, then trickle-down economics could make sense. If there is snow on the ground, how could global warming be true? If Armageddon is near, why bother about the environment, or education, or tomorrow? Facts just don’t carry much weight anymore. Who needs information when you have faith?

The poison has corrupted our politics. Honest political dialog serves to compare and contrast opposing interpretations of the facts. But when one side brings faith into the debate, argument becomes impossible. How can one defend evolution against one who “knows” that our planet is only 6,000 years old? How can so many conservatives believe that the current busload of Republican presidential candidates includes even one that would make a good president? It’s a matter of blind faith, not facts. How else to explain Ben Carson?

It gets worse. In its drugged stupor, the Republican Party is easily exploited by the pushers and pimps with agendas of their own. The Koch brothers know that it is easier to frisk a drunk than a sober person.

Where will all this end? The answer may hang on the current election. We watch the Democrats for politics and we watch the Republicans for entertainment, albeit a Stephen King sort of entertainment that could leave all of us horrified. I see the Republican Party as an addict. Its drug of choice is power. It will do anything to feed its addiction: vote tampering and suppression, gerrymandering, Benghazi hearings, demonizing progressives, ignoring election results, dumbing down our children’s education. As with any addict, it will stay on this course until it hits rock bottom. When that time comes, it will be up to the rest of us to commit them to treatment at the Ted Cruz Rehabilitation Center and hope for the best.

This is a helluva way to run a democracy.



FFBC

*First Friday
News & Views*

Des Moines, Iowa

February, 2015

*First Friday
Breakfast Club*

In Service

Board of Directors

CHRIS CORREY
RYAN CRANE
KEN HANSON
BRAD HOLLAND
BYRON HUFF
SCOTT KUKNYO
RICK MILLER
GARY MOORE
TIM SCHRECK
MIKE SMITH
PHIL WILLIAMS
JONATHAN WILSON

Officers

KENT DONALDSON, TREASURER
BYRON HUFF, VICE PRESIDENT
JONATHAN WILSON, SECRETARY & PRESIDENT

Newsletter

BRUCE SANDERS LEHNERTZ,
PRODUCTION EDITOR
ARTHUR BRUER, WEBMASTER

WEBSITE: WWW.FFBCIOWA.ORG

PUBLISHER, FFBC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
©2013 FIRST FRIDAY BREAKFAST CLUB, INC

MADE ON A  MAC

MY M.O. (MONTHLY OBSERVATIONS)

A MILESTONE AND A CONFIRMATION

By Steve Person

June 15, 2015, marked an important anniversary in the annals of English, and later American, history. That was the 800th anniversary of King John's agreement with twenty-five powerful English barons to the contents of what later came to be known as **Magna Carta**. David Starkey's fascinating study of that and subsequent documents claiming that title are the basis of his 2015 book, **Magna Carta: The Medieval Roots of Modern Politics**. Even though in the following year King John repudiated much of the contents of the original document, and when his son and heir, Henry III, removed much of the language of the original two versions in 1225, the fact remains that **Magna Carta** began a long struggle between two philosophies: The Divine Right of Kings and the Power of Parliamentary Government.

The first half of Starkey's analysis is an in-depth look at the personalities and principles involved in the creation of a document that influenced not only England's unwritten Constitution but also the Declaration of Independence of 1776 in the United States and then the 1787 Constitution and subsequent Bill of Rights. The second half of the book chronicles the changes in language of the three documents in a side-by-side comparison. Other later versions of **Magna Carta** emerged with the reign of new monarchs, but this book concentrates only on the first three versions. Interestingly, I do not recall any newsworthy accounts of the 800th anniversary celebration in this country. History, it seems, becomes more and more unimportant in our age of instant communication and gratification.

The essential split that **Magna Carta** presented in the 13th Century between the king and his barons came to vivid life in Peter Ackroyd's latest work, **Rebellion: The History of England From James I to the Glorious Revolution**. As noted in earlier articles I've written extolling the virtues of Ackroyd as an excellent writer of fiction and history, this book is no exception. When Elizabeth I expired in 1603, the thrones of England and Scotland united with the crowning of James VI of Scotland as James I of England. The homosexual son of the legendary and ultimately tragic Mary, Queen of Scots, James quarreled with Parliament numerous times, but his popularity as a Protestant king kept him on the throne. Religion, it seems, rears its ugly head throughout history, and even in modern-day United States, the power of the religious versus the secular is omnipresent.

Ackroyd traces the events of the reign of James's son, Charles I and his ultimate execution in 1649. The beheading of Charles I cemented Parliament's power over the monarch of Great Britain. Charles's reign heightened the tension between Protestants and Catholics when he

My MO, by Steve Person, Cont'd on p. 2