



# First Friday News & Views

March 2016

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Issue 3

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

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"Christian?"  
by Jonathan Wilson*

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## *Calendar*

▼ The next FFBC Meeting is 7:00am,  
Friday, March 4, 2016, at Hoyt  
Sherman Place, 15th & Woodland,  
Des Moines, IA

▼ RSVP by March 2 to  
[JonathanWilson@davisbrownlaw.com](mailto:JonathanWilson@davisbrownlaw.com),  
or phone 515-288-2500

### **Who Exactly is a "Christian?"**

By Jonathan Wilson

When I read recently about the Pope saying Trump's build-a-wall rhetoric is not "Christian," it reminded me of an exchange I had a few years ago. I had this contractor acquaintance who belonged to an evangelical church; the one on the east side of the road where I-235 divides into I-35 and I-80. He still does as far as I know. He informed me that he'd just returned from a church-sponsored mission trip to South America.

Skeptical, but feigning innocent ignorance, I asked him what was the mission of this mission. He said that the mission was to build a new church in a city of around 46,000 population. He then volunteered that in that entire city of 46,000, there were only about a dozen "Christians." He went on, "All the rest were Roman Catholics." That, I thought, should come as startling news to the Pope.

The only response I could muster, however, was, "Oh, really?" "How about that?"

"Now, about that work I'm needing done . . ."

Touting their unmatched, uber-Christianity, we've heard religious rhetoric from virtually all of the current crop of Republican presidential candidates. It's ruining the "Christian" brand for me -- me, the son and brother of United Methodist clergy. I find myself cringing every time I see that fish symbol stuck on the back of a passing car or truck. Rather like a rainbow flag likely causes some rekindled angst about the nefariously so-called gay agenda.

I find myself wondering how this evangelical stuff works when brought into the public political arena and, as is legitimate there, gets subjected to some level of rational scrutiny.

Let's just say, for the sake of argument, that you genuinely believe in the End Times, that we are in them, and that Armageddon and the Second Coming are imminent. Then let's further suppose that you are asked in the political arena about the burgeoning national debt, the bankrupting of social security, the degradation of the planet, pollution, erosion, clear-cutting forests, global warming, infrastructure repair, or fracking-caused earth quakes. Why, pray tell, isn't the rational response a cavalier, "So what? No problem. Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die. There's no need to do anything about those phenomena. See ya' in Heaven (if you happen to be my brand of Christian), and to hell with the rest -- especially you unconverted Muslims, Christ-killing Jews, . . . and Roman Catholics.

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I can somewhat forgive my theologically ignorant and irrational contractor. But the Pope? The Pope is something of an authority on Christian theology I would suppose. Trump, predictably, pooh-poohed the Pope's input on what is and isn't Christian. Republican members of Congress did much the same in response to the Pope's remarks to a joint session of the Congress.

It seems to me not just a touch hypocritical to denounce the input of such a recognized authority when all of the Republican field of candidates, including Trump, has unabashedly embraced their Christian bona fides in the quest to become President of the United States. I say, "A pox on all of your houses."

But the attitude of my uber-Christian, evangelical contractor acquaintance, who doesn't recognize Roman Catholics as "Christian," presumably including the Pope, tells me that supposed adherents to Christianity define that term very differently and Trump's popularity among evangelicals -- the base of the current Republican Party -- may actually be enhanced by the Pope's condemnation.

## Briefs & Shorts

Be sure to RSVP for the March 4, 2016, meeting by calling 515-288-2500, or on line at: [JonathanWilson@DavisBrownLaw.com](mailto:JonathanWilson@DavisBrownLaw.com). Our scheduled speaker will be Dr. Andy McGuire, head of the Iowa Democratic Party. She will give us a post-mortem on the Iowa Caucuses.

Thanks to Ryan Crane for the introduction of Suzanna de Baca, President of Planned Parenthood of the Heartland, at our meeting in February.

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.



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

## David Hurd Remembered

By Gary Moore

*David Hurd has long been a friend to the gay community and to the First Friday Breakfast Club, being one the largest donors to our Scholarship Program. David Hurd will be sorely missed. The Hurds donated \$3000 dollars to the 2016 Scholarship Fund.*

*The Board of Directors would like to honor David Hurd's memory with another Scholarship in 2017, in his honor. Several have already pledged \$100 to that challenge. If 30 members contribute \$100 we can, again next year award another Scholarship in his name. That would be only fitting for a man that contributed so much to our community.*

*Jeff McCollum remembered David Hurd with this post on Facebook. We reprint that post here. It provides further context to why the Board of Directors of the First Friday Breakfast Club wishes to honor a Des Moines treasure.*

**Facebook Post of Jeffery McCollum, February 7th:**

I was shocked and sad to hear of David Hurd's death. I didn't know him personally but there was one degree of separation.

First, it's important to provide the backstory. US West was the first fortune 500 company in Iowa and one of the first in the country to have an employee resource group for LGBT employees. It was called EAGLE (Employee Association for Gays and Lesbians). We had state organizations that worked in conjunction with the regional organization that represented the entire corporation. One of the big issues of the day was "Domestic Partnership" benefits. We could not get the company to provide benefits to partners of LGBT employees. At one point we were even told the company had too much on its plate to address the negative response it would create. In response, the EAGLE Regional Board of Directors came up with our "Out of the closet and onto the plate" campaign. It took several more years for the company to agree to provide Domestic Partner benefits.

*Continued on p. 5*



## Planned Has Got to be Better than Unplanned

By Bruce Carr

Our guest speaker on Friday morning, February 6, 2016, was Suzanna de Baca, new (since the fall of 2014) President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of the Heartland. Planned Parenthood of the Heartland, she told us, has served women and men of all ages since the mid-1930s; today PPH offers a full range of quality reproductive health care services to residents in Iowa, Nebraska, Arkansas, and eastern Oklahoma – totaling over 60,000 patients last year alone.

De Baca began by noting the natural alliance between FFBC and her agency, stemming from Planned Parenthood's stated vision: communities where sexual and reproductive rights are basic human rights, and where every person has the opportunity to lead a healthy and meaningful life. To this end, the Heartland organization manages 18 health centers in its four-state area, all staffed by dedicated and professional employees. Contraceptive services constitute its widest sphere of activity, but education and advocacy are de Baca's most urgent current concerns, given the enormous and widespread amount of misinformation clogging all media channels these days. At least the radical right's phony-video caper has begun to backfire, she remarked, and the Planned Parenthood "brand" is stronger than ever.

Of particular interest to our members were her announcements that PPH's health centers will begin providing HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to patients next month, and that hormone therapy is already available to transgender patients in Lincoln, Nebraska, and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Thirty percent of PPH's funds, de Baca said, come from private donations; and (of course!) she urged us all to join that cadre of supporters.

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Suzanna de Baca grew up in Huxley, Iowa, one of the daughters of a liberal-leaning Roman Catholic family. She earned her bachelor's degree from Iowa State University and her M.B.A. from the Harvard Business School. She has more than 20 years of executive leadership at public, privately held, and not-for-profit organizations, most recently as vice president of wealth strategies at Ameriprise Financial, Inc., where she was responsible for overseeing the firm's retirement and wealth management strategies including initiatives to serve the affluent, women, small business owners, and the LGBT community.

Recognized in national media as an industry expert in finance with expertise in the intersection of health and money, she is a frequent contributor to national publications such as *Time* and *The Huffington Post*, and is quoted frequently in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and *MSNBC*. A long-time volunteer with Planned Parenthood, Suzanna is a former member of the PPHeartland board of directors, and she also serves on the boards of the Minnesota Women's Foundation and the Hennepin County Medical Center.

## P o m d e r      T h i s

*To the frivolous, Christianity is certainly not glad tidings because it wishes first of all to make them serious.* S.A. Kierkegaard

*In response to being asked about his four bankruptcies, Donald Trump, essentially, ducked the question and said he'd legally through the bankruptcy process, made the best of a bad situation. No accountability for how the bad situation arose on his watch. There are no "do overs" with our national economy.*

*He who is publicly full of himself, is likely very empty and almost certainly fearful that is the case.*

*Whatever is worthwhile knowing is hard to learn.* Greek Proverb

*It is no longer possible to appeal to the Republican base without appealing to humankind's baser instincts.*

*If water boarding isn't torture, what is? If it is torture, it's a war crime. The easy test to figure out what is and isn't torture is to ask yourself, "If this were done to my son or daughter, would I consider it torture."*





## **BETTER TRAINING & EDUCATION WILL HELP EXPAND IOWA'S MIDDLE CLASS**

We should do all that we can to help more workers and their families join Iowa's middle class.

As Iowa continues its recovery from the national economic recession, we are making steady progress, but many Iowans are still out of work or unable to find the jobs they want.

According to the Iowa Policy Project, the state is [short about 35,000 jobs](#) needed to keep up with the population growth we've seen in recent years. And when it comes to the jobs that are available, many Iowans don't have the skills needed to fill them.

CNBC once again has put Iowa in the [top 10 states for doing business](#) this year for our low costs and quality of life, but they say our workforce development is lacking.

That's why Senate Democrats continue to fight for education and training that prepares Iowans to fill skilled jobs—those that are currently available and the ones we want to attract. We support investments in job training, apprenticeships, high school completion, skills certification and credentials that will put more Iowans on the path to good jobs. To strengthen Iowa's economy, these opportunities must be accessible to all who want to improve their prospects.

[Skilled Workforce Shortage Tuition Grants](#) are making a better future a reality for thousands of Iowans. Iowa residents preparing for in-demand jobs at our community colleges may be eligible for this need-based financial aid, which covers up to half of the average tuition and fees for two years.

A [new report](#) tells us how the Legislature's \$5 million investment in this grant program helped students during the 2014-15 school year. Among the highlights:

- 4,926 recipients were awarded all available funds.
- 52 percent of recipients were 25 years old or older, training for better-paying work.
- About 49 percent of the funds assisted students studying nursing and allied health, an area of particular need with Iowa's aging population.

In other job training news, Iowa has been hailed as a national leader in creating more job opportunities for people with disabilities, the largest pool of untapped, work-ready individuals in the state, according to Iowa Workforce Development. Iowa has been awarded nearly \$2.5 million in federal [Disability Employment Initiative](#) funds to further improve opportunities to compete for high-demand jobs and help close the skills gap.

### **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](http://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](mailto:matt.mccoy@legis.iowa.gov).*

## Carol

Review by Gary Kaufman

**Carol** is a film that begins during the 1951 Holiday Season. Carol (Cate Blanchett) is a wealthy lady going through an ugly divorce and who had, prior to her marriage, a relationship with a woman who had been her childhood girl friend since they were both 10 years old. But it is also the story of the sexual awakening of Therese (Rooney Mara). Carol meets Therese, who is waiting on Carol in a large department store while she is getting a Christmas present for Carol's daughter. For Therese it is a period of discovering the sexual world around her, and she ultimately is drawn to Carol and discovers the

possibility of having a relationship with a woman rather than a man. Carol is, of course, already aware of these feelings, but her husband decides that if he cannot have Carol then Carol was not going to be allowed to see their daughter. He files a motion in Court seeking exclusive custody of the daughter based on moral grounds -- that Carol was not a fit mother due to her lesbianism. Ultimately, Carol makes the decision that all of us have to make, that there is nothing wrong with being homosexual and, if you can't accept that, things are going to get ugly! **Carol** is a strong movie about fighting inequality and for the right to love who you wish. I highly recommend seeing it.

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### Hurd, Remembered *from Page 2*

Now, with that said, there was a group of metro corporate HR Presidents/Vice Presidents that met monthly to discuss what their companies were doing and issues in the metro. In the early 90s Max Phillips led US West's Iowa HR department. For one of these HR Presidents/Vice Presidents meetings Max asked Revelyn Coleman (BEA - Black Employee Association) and myself (EAGLE and the chair of the Iowa Pluralism Council) to give a presentation regarding our diversity/pluralism efforts. When it was over Revelyn and I left our business cards.

A couple weeks later I received a call from a man whose name I think was Max Johnson, who was the President of HR at Principal Financial. He told me he and David Hurd were talking about the presentation Revelyn and I gave at the HR meeting. According to Mr. Johnson, Mr. Hurd, who was the CEO of Principal Financial at the time, asked him what they were doing for LGBT employees. They weren't doing anything, and Mr. Hurd was not happy about that fact. Mr. Johnson asked for my help in getting them on the right path.

I set up a meeting with Claire Hueholt, Director of the Gay and Lesbian Resource Center, Mr. Johnson and myself. We discussed what we felt they needed to do to meet Mr. Hurd's expectation of making sure Principal Financial's LGBT employees knew they were valued.

In a very short time, Principal had an LGBT employee resource group. The group quickly became a large and very active group. Before I knew it, Principal Financial started providing Domestic Partner benefits to its employees; while we at US West were still in our "Out of the closet and onto the plate" campaign.

Mr. Hurd proved what was possible when upper management cares about ALL employees. Understanding that appreciated and respected employees are loyal and productive employees wasn't/isn't a leadership trait of all corporate CEOs. But Mr. Hurd not only talked about it being important, he put it into action.

Though I never met Mr. Hurd, I always respected him. Thank you for your leadership. RIP, sir.

*Please contact Jonathan Wilson at [jonathanwilson@davisbrownlaw.com](mailto:jonathanwilson@davisbrownlaw.com) with your pledge of at least \$100. If just 30 of us answer that invitation we can collectively replicate next year the support our scholarship program received this year from David and Trudy Hurd.*

*We can and should do this.*

Editor's Note: I remember Dave well. I started at The Bankers Life in 1977, and, for some while, sat within 20' of his office door. He was a brilliant, mild-mannered, engaging, kind, generous, and thoughtful man. I can't think of anyone that did "Human Being" better than Dave. He'll be missed.



# FFBC

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*March, 2016*

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MADE ON A  MAC

## MY M.O. (MONTHLY OBSERVATIONS)

### I Should Have Known Better

By Steve Person

“Dishing with abandon, the authors spare no one—especially not the dead.” **The New York Post**

“If you love smutty celebrity dirt as much as I do (and if you don’t, what’s wrong with you?) then have I got a book for you!” **The Hollywood Offender**

With kudos like that—and even more from other so-called critical sources—I should have known better than to have purchased **Peter O’Toole: Hellraiser, Sexual Outlaw, Irish Rebel** by Darwin Porter and Danforth Prince. Still, it was in the Biography Section at Barnes and Noble, but I should have known better. The 600-plus-page book about one of the cinema’s most vibrant actors did not even have an index. I should have known better!

As nearly as I can tell, the book never saw an editor, let alone a fact checker. I should have known better. I counted more than sixty glaring errors in the book. For example, The authors cite O’Toole’s 1975’s abdominal surgery, along with a direct quotation from the star, “Friends arrived with fruit and flowers, even a surprise visit from Noel Coward, who was always enchanted with me.” Surprise visit, indeed! Noel Coward died in 1973! I should have known better.

They go on to say that English Producer, Lew Grade, was “leaking to the press that he was going to offer to O’Toole the role of the World War II German ace, “The Red Baron.” Baron von Richthofen was the World War I flying ace. Mistakes such as that are rampant throughout the book. I should have known better.

Porter and Prince go into lengthy descriptions of O’Toole’s seductions of his various leading ladies in the Theatre and in the Cinema, as well as his supposed liaison with Princess Margaret. They even have a two-page quoted conversation between O’Toole and Audrey Hepburn in 1965 during the making of **How to Steal a Million** in Paris, and how she was not sure if he or her wayward husband was the father of the child that she ultimately lost early in her pregnancy. Neither of the authors was present at the time, and they had no way of knowing that such a conversation ever took place. I should have known better.

For most of the sexual allegations the authors make, the principals are dead, so the writers cannot be held to account in libel cases. Perhaps most outrageous of all was the story that Director David Lean, during the filming of **Lawrence of Arabia**, hired an Egyptian prostitute dominatrix to give O’Toole a humiliating anal penetration session so his scene in the film where an Ottoman army officer (played by Jose Ferrer) sexually assaults him will portray his facial expressions accurately. I should have known better.

In 1984, I saw Peter O’Toole on stage at the Shaftesbury Theatre in London, starring in George Bernard Shaw’s **Pygmalion**. It was a matinee performance, and O’Toole, if not drunk, was not at his best, and the young actress who played Eliza, got him through the performance. Still, listening to that mesmerizing voice of his let me know that I did know better.