



# First Friday News & Views

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



**March 2021**

**Volume 26**

**Issue 3**

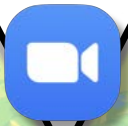
**Next Meeting:**

**Friday,  
March 5  
7:00 a.m.**



**March Meeting  
Location:**

**zoom**



**March Speaker:**

**Dr. Ginger  
Campbell**



**FFBC Website:**

**[ffbciaowa.org](http://ffbciaowa.org)**



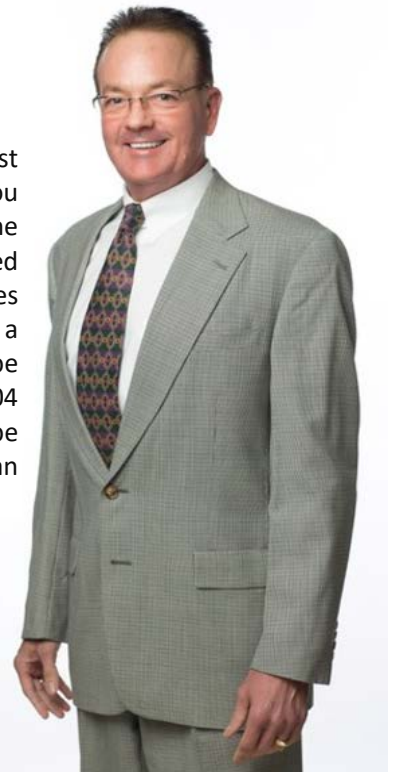
## A New Era Begins: Byron Huff Becomes New FFBC President

If you missed the February 5th FFBC virtual breakfast meeting with Brian Bond, Executive Director of PFLAG, then you may not be aware that Jonathan Wilson has retired and become former board member emeritus and that I was appointed president. Jonathan formed FFBC in 1996 and deserves recognition for his work and dedication that leaves us with a well-run organization and its mission that continues to be important to Iowa. I have served on the FFBC board since 2004 and as Vice President for the past six years. Ryan Crane will be our new Vice President. I am truly honored that Jonathan believes in my ability to lead the organization he founded.

I grew up on a farm outside of Winterset, Iowa, where my parents continue to live today. I graduated from AIB, Simpson College, The Graduate School of Banking Madison, and Lake Forest Graduate School in Chicago. I met my husband, Jim, in 1995 at the Blazing Saddle where we made plans for our first date on Memorial Day weekend. Career opportunities took us to New Orleans in 1997 for a short time, then on to Chicago where we spent five years. I accepted a job with the Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines in March 2003, bringing us back to Iowa. Iowa had changed so much for the better since 1997 as gay people seemed more welcome and Des Moines had prospered. Jim and I were married here in 2010.

Jim, Presha (our six-year-old Morkie), and I lived in the Druid Hill neighborhood from 2003 until 2019 when we moved to a loft downtown as part of our desire to simplify and downsize. We enjoy many of the amenities downtown living offers as we love to join friends for drinks and dinner. We enjoy biking (Presha rides along) around the city and attending the downtown farmer's market and the other festivals throughout the summer. We recently purchased a motorhome and are looking forward to new adventures with it.

FFBC is a wonderful organization with a hard-working board and an amazing membership that I am proud to be a part of and now lead into the future. There is still so much work to be done even as we had made huge progress during the Obama years, only to see some of it taken away and even threatened during the last four years. Biden brings us new hope that could bring the Equality Act as rule of law, but even with these strides, we find there are always pockets of resistance that make our mission continue to be relevant and so important. With your help, we will continue to award scholarships to students whose stories bring tears to my eyes as their courage shines above adversity.



-- Sincerely, Byron Huff; FFBC President

# Pardons Revisited

by Jonathan Wilson

The time has probably come to revisit the power of a president to pardon federal crimes committed or allegedly committed by those pardoned. The U.S. Constitution grants the presidential pardon power, so that can't be changed without a constitutional amendment. Such an amendment is unlikely to happen, so that is what it is.

The power has been used, and arguably abused, by almost every president. There is a process that has required that a candidate for a pardon admit commission of the pardoned crime(s) and demonstrate remorse. That requirement can be ignored by a president, has been ignored, and was ignored with myriad pardons issued by #45.

That does not mean that the power is plenary – that is, without limitation or consequence. It's time for Congress to address the issue, and there are some things that the Congress can, and should, do that would not require a constitutional amendment.

Consider this: the U.S. Supreme Court has previously held that the acceptance of a pardon implicitly acknowledges guilt of the pardoned crime(s). Fair enough. The Congress has the power, however, without the Constitution being amended, to legislate that any pardon must identify the specific crime(s) being pardoned. The power to pardon *generally* does not preclude the Congress from requiring that the crime committed or alleged to have been committed, must be identified with particularity. The power to pardon can be there, per the Constitution, but we the people have a right to know WHAT is being pardoned.

In all cases, the pardon should relate to *past* conduct or alleged conduct. A pardon is not like God's forgiveness across the board, which is omnipotent and supposedly eternal. But, as I understand it, even God doesn't forgive *future* misconduct. A presidential pardon is temporal and has real life consequences in the real world – tomorrow and the next day, and the day after that. God needn't answer to anyone – and mostly doesn't. Presidents, on the other hand, may have some "splainin'" to do, by specifically naming the wrongful, *past* conduct or alleged *past* conduct that is being pardoned. Pardons need to relate solely to *past* conduct. Congress, with legislation, can require it.

There's more that can be done by Congress. Legislation can be adopted providing that anyone who accepts the benefits of a pardon shall, by law, be deemed guilty of the pardoned offense(s) or alleged offense(s). That, of course, has no consequences in terms of criminal accountability or punishment; the recipient of the pardon would not be punishable *criminally*. It could, however, have HUGE consequences for any victims of the pardoned crime(s). Think O.J. Simpson; he was found not guilty *criminally* and avoided criminal punishment. But, he was civilly ordered to pay \$34,000,000 to the families of his victims. The exposure to *civil* liability can, obviously, be very consequential, and it can operate as some level of deterrence for accepting a proffered pardon. [\[continued on page three\]](#)



Thanks to **Jonathan Wilson** for introducing **Brian Bond**, our February speaker. Thanks to **David Cotton** as our technology guru and to **Nicholas Williams** for managing our website. Thanks to **Wade Petersen** for his work as our newsletter editor. *Thanks to all our contributors to the newsletter!*

The next copy deadline for the FFBC newsletter will be **March 22, 2021**. If you have something on your mind, put it on paper and get it to me by the copy deadline. It'll be interesting, good therapy, or both.

A special thank-you to those FFBC members and friends who have chosen to designate FFBC through the **Donor Direct** program of **United Way**. The contributions through United Way are tax deductible. Those who have chosen this means of supporting FFBC have gone to the trouble of completing their United Way campaign worksheet by designating FFBC as the beneficiary of their generosity. FFBC is an eligible recipient of such funding designations. **United Way**



Our fundraising efforts are ongoing to fund our scholarship program. To date we have raised over **\$400,000** for scholarships that are awarded to Iowa high school seniors who have done remarkable, courageous things to reduce homophobia and teach about LGBTQ issues in their schools and communities. Please consider a tax-deductible [contribution on-line](#) or by sending a check.

**Also consider a tax-exempt testamentary gift.** Our first legacy gift to the FFBC scholarship program came from **Cliff Paulsen** who passed away last year, to the tune of over **\$67,000!** Contact Jonathan Wilson for details or with any questions.





["Pardons Revisited" continued from page two]

There's still more. Depending on the nature and magnitude of the pardoned crime(s), the Congress could adopt legislation that directs the FBI to investigate the pardoned crimes in search of others who might have been complicit in the commission. Think about that. The pardoned party can be required to testify, under oath, about the crime and anyone else who may have been involved in its commission or covering it up. The pardoned person cannot claim the protection of the Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination. And, if they lie under oath, that constitutes the felony of perjury, and that will not have been pardoned.

There is still more. It has been suggested that the president can issue "secret pardons," that is, pardons undisclosed unless or until federal prosecutors initiate criminal charges against the pardoned person. At that point, the pardoned person can pull out the pardon rather like a get-out-of-jail-free card, and escape criminal liability. That should not happen, and Congress can, without a constitutional amendment, adopt legislation that requires any and all pardons to be made a matter of public record contemporaneously with issuance of a pardon. The power to pardon can be there, per the Constitution, but we the people have a right to know WHO is being pardoned.

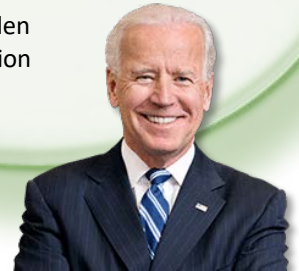


Bottom line, without amending the Constitution, some of the potential for abuse in the exercise of the pardon power can be circumscribed. It simply requires the Congress to take action, and the president, regardless of party, to sign it into law.



**"There will be no moral ambiguity... this administration prioritizes LGBTQ rights as human rights."**

-- Senior Biden Administration Official



## FFBC Membership Dues

**UPDATE**

**At this time we're not collecting dues for 2021. You're welcome to attend FFBC Zoom meetings for free!**

With the April 2020 shift from in-person meetings to Zoom meetings, we suspended the collection of meeting dues. Given that FFBC is not incurring Hoyt Sherman space rental or catering costs, and we are not providing you a hot breakfast, the FFBC Board of Directors decided last summer that dues collection should be placed on hold until in-person meetings resume. Members with pre-paid dues were notified of this decision in September 2020, with their dues now being held as a credit.

When the pandemic has waned and in-person meetings are again safe, the Board of Directors will announce the resumption of breakfast meetings at Hoyt Sherman. Dues payments will then resume and members with a dues credit will be notified by the FFBC Treasurer how their individual credit will be applied.

We look forward to seeing your smiling face in-person soon. In the meantime, we encourage you to join us for our next Zoom meeting on **March 5th** at 7:00 a.m. **Bring a friend or two!**

# PFLAG: Change the Pews!

by Wade Petersen

Our guest speaker on Friday morning, February 5, 2021, was **Brian Bond**, Executive Director of PFLAG National, who spoke to us via ZOOM from his home in Washington, D.C. PFLAG is the first and largest organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) people, their parents and families, and allies. PFLAG is no longer an acronym, but just the name of the organization. Prior to 2014, the acronym stood for **Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays** (later broadened to **Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays**).

Mr. Bond grew up in Joplin, Missouri. He recounted how, when he was 16 years old, he came out to his priest in a face-to-face confession. Like so many boys of that generation, Bond told his priest, "Father, I'm going to hell and going to lose my family." His priest, Father Fergus, looked at him and said, "You're not going to hell, but you'll want to move because you won't be happy here." His exodus from Missouri would lead him to a life of service in the LGBTQ community. The Midwest held some power over him as he confided to the group that his first boyfriend was from Ames, and that he is regularly here when caucus time rolls around. As a sidenote, Brian said that his old Catholic priest has kept in touch and told him that he was proud of his work in the Obama administration!

After leaving the Obama administration, Brian swore he would never do LGBTQ politics again, but said, when the opportunity arose, "Who doesn't love PFLAG?" He admits that the parades are great, but the real reward is in one-on-one connections; he says that the time that PFLAG volunteers give to advocate, educate, and support is simply amazing.

Brian impressed us with some PFLAG statistics: over 400 chapters of PFLAG are around the country (including seven in Iowa). As of this point, PFLAG has no groups outside the United States. COVID has definitely changed the dynamic of the organization; PFLAG is now paying for over 200 chapters to do Zoom meetings. Brian emphasizes that when you ask a parent to lift a voice for their child, it does make a difference; that is the heart of their mission. With many young people coming out earlier and earlier, the organization is as important as ever. Providing more support for parents of trans students and students of color has become a top priority. As Brian also says, "We refuse to give up on rural, conservative America." He spends much of his time traveling to "fly over" state chapters to remind them how important they are and will continue to be.

Bond called on the FFBC to be **advocates**, especially with many bad legislative bills coming up that focus on conversion therapy and anti-trans policies. Nationally, PFLAG is working to garner the 60 Senate votes needed to pass the Equality Act ([hrc.org/resources/the-equality-act](https://hrc.org/resources/the-equality-act)) during this session of Congress (it will pass in the House). To battle conversion therapy, laws are needed, but churches may continue to use faith to push for this destructive therapy. "The only way you are going to change the pulpit is to change the pews. We may have to win the pews first."

You can listen to a complete audio recording of Brian Bond's remarks, and the following Q&A, by clicking on this link:

<https://ffbciowa.org/speakers/>

Check out some great PFLAG resources by clicking on this link:

[pflag.org/resource/advocacy-one-pagers](https://pflag.org/resource/advocacy-one-pagers)



February Speaker



February Speaker:  
**Brian Bond**

Jonathan  
Wilson  
Introduces  
our  
February  
Speaker



Brian Bond is a former Obama Administration official and LGBTQ advocate with an extensive background in constituency outreach and coalition bridge-building. Brian most recently served as the *Coalitions Director for the Climate Action Campaign* in Washington D.C., working to protect clean air and promote action to limit climate change. Prior to that, he was Deputy CEO for the 2016 Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.

During the Obama Administration, he served as Deputy Director for the White House Office of Public Engagement and primary liaison for the LGBTQ community, the first to serve in that role. After the successful re-election of President Obama in 2012, he moved to the Environmental Protection Agency to work on the Administration's climate initiatives as Associate Administrator for Public Engagement and Environmental Education. Prior to these roles, he served as the Executive Director of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund and is credited with expanding the success of the organization and support for LGBTQ candidates during his six-year tenure, which began in 1997.

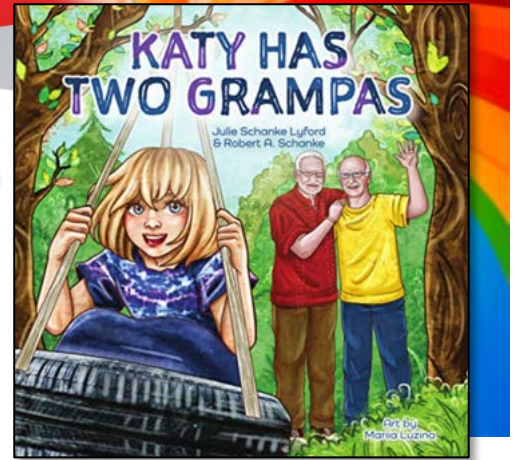
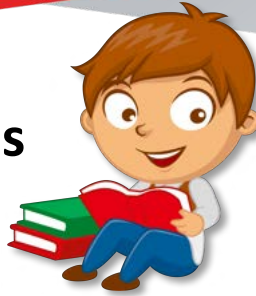
Brian is a Missouri native and has a degree in Public Administration from Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri.



# Feature Article

## Where are the Gay Grandpas in Children's Picture Books?

by Robert A. Schanke



Anyone searching for a children's picture book that clearly features two gay, married grandpas will come up empty-handed, or at least confused. Award-winning blogger Dana Rudolph has praised two recent children's picture books that she describes "feature queer grandparents." In the first book, David Hyde Costello's *Little Pig Saves the Ship*, Grandpa and Poppy visit Little Pig, who is sad because he is too young to accompany his older siblings on a weeklong sailing camp. To cheer him up, the two men show him how to make a toy ship. Eventually, Poppy takes Little Pig to a stream where they test out the new toy. When a gust of wind blows the ship into a fast current and over a waterfall, they try desperately to catch it. It is a fun story with charming illustrations. The relationship of Grandpa and Poppy, however, is unclear. Are they a gay couple? Or are they simply two grandfathers from both sides of the family? None of the text or dialogue provides an answer. In fact, after the first appearance of both Grandpa and Poppy, Grandpa is not seen again until the very end of the story, and then the two-page illustration has the two men seated in the background. In spite of that, a reviewer of the book on Amazon.com warns parents that if they do not want "to introduce their child to LGBTQ stuff," they should not pick this book and noted the "very subtle inclusion of two gay grandpas." The subtlety was intended, and the author certainly achieved his goal. The book is a charmer with the characters showing love and concern for each other. They enjoy being together and sharing their days. It is a loving, modern family, but not clearly gay.

In the second book, *A Plan for Pops* by Heather Smith and Brooke Kerrigan, Grandad and Pops are characters described by Rudolph simply as "a couple." The text clearly identifies the two men as grandparents who live together. When their grandson Lou visits on Saturdays, the three of them always have meals together and walk to the library. The rest of their day is usually spent playing with tools in the workshop, listening to music, or retelling family stories. One Saturday, Pops falls on the way to the library and is rushed to the hospital. When Pops returns home and learns he is confined to a wheelchair, he is "too sad to leave his room" and spends a lot of time "in his bed." It is not identified as "their room," nor as "their" bed, which would be standard terminology for a gay couple. Also, Pop has a single bed, meant for only one person. So, again, there is no sign of their being a gay couple. Pops does wear a T-shirt with the colorful rainbow on the front of it, but that does not necessarily define his sexuality as gay. One reviewer referred to Pops as a great-grandfather and Grandad as Lou's grandfather. Once again, there is no mention of anything suggesting any gay subject matter. Even Rudolph admits, "Nowhere is there any indication there are queer characters."

So why is there such lack of clarity, why such subtlety in featuring gay grandfathers? Perhaps the vagueness is a remnant of the 1990s policy of "don't ask, don't tell" when it advised LGBTQ military members not to disclose their sexuality for fear of being discharged. That policy lasted until 2011, and though it was intended specifically for the military, it has influenced the greater society. Even openly gay men tended to keep their personal lives private; they would not tell. So perhaps some authors of children's books create their grandparents so they appear the way the grandparents of an earlier generation would have lived, trying to pass for straight.

The choice for an author who wants to create a children's picture book with queer grandparents does not have to be limited to an either/or choice about the issues and challenges of being LGBTQ, or a story that ignores its existence. The new book *Katy Has Two Grampas*, written by my daughter Julie Schanke Lyford and myself, reveals the experience of a first-grade girl with a lisp who is misunderstood by her classmates and teacher. When she talks about her two gay grandpas, (or "grampas," as Katy says) she is frustrated when her teacher thinks she means "grandpa and grandma" and when other students tease her. Because she has such love for her gay grampas, she unexpectedly shines when introducing them as a married couple at a classroom celebration of Grandparents Day. The story does not conceal their sexuality, neither does it focus on it. Bob's book is available for purchase on Amazon!

Keeping the gay identity of characters so disguised, so camouflaged, as they presently are in children's picture books seems to limit the potential of the stories. Library media specialist Dan Liljedahl has emphasized that "in reading fiction we begin to see others, and that builds empathy. It is important for children to see themselves in the books they are reading." We need some children's picture books wherein the gay characters are more open about their sexuality, especially now that same-sex marriage is legal, same-sex couples can adopt, and discrimination in the workplace is prohibited. Since today's gay grandfathers are experiencing these changes, the stories being written need to reflect them more openly. The sexual identity of these grandfathers and the lives they are leading should not be ignored. The children who are read these books could benefit by seeing more full representation—families like theirs, or families of friends, and perhaps even people like themselves. To quote Rudolph again, "We need more books that show LGBTQ characters and their families but aren't 'about' being LGBTQ per se.... We need more books...which show LGBTQ families simply as a part of a wider world."

## March Speaker

# Dr. Ginger Campbell



**Graying Rainbows** is a podcast community devoted to those who are coming out LGBT+ later in life. It was launched in November 2018 by Dr. Ginger Campbell. Dr. Campbell is an experienced physician with a long-standing interest in mind-body medicine, the brain, and consciousness. She began podcasting in 2006 and has discovered that it is a great way to share ideas with people from around the world.

Coming Out is not a one-time event, it is a life-long process, but coming out later in life presents its own unique challenges. Unfortunately there are few books and other resources devoted to this topic. One goal of **Graying Rainbows** is to fill this gap by providing useful information and a place where people from diverse backgrounds can share their stories.



**Graying Rainbows**  
Coming Out LGBT+ Later in Life

*You won't want to miss, and since the meeting is virtual, there's no reason why you should not be able to participate. You are also encouraged to invite some of your friends to attend virtually – simply share the Zoom participation instructions!*

## oneiowa LGBTQ Older Adults Social

By Madeline Rocha Smith

Join us for a virtual social event on **Wednesday, March 3, at 4:30 p.m.** The social will be hosted by the One Iowa LGBTQ Older Adults Committee! This is a great opportunity to connect with other LGBTQ older adults, learn more about how to get involved with One Iowa and the LGBTQ community in Iowa.

***Everyone is welcome!***

Register Online at:

<https://oneiowa.org/event/lgbtq-older-adults-social-march/>

### LGBTQ OLDER ADULTS SOCIAL



Our bi-monthly LGBTQ older adults socials are a space where folks can join together in community with one another, make new connections, share stories and spend time with other older adults in the community.

**Wednesday, March 3rd  
4:30 p.m.**

oneiowa

**“I’m homosexual. How and why are idle questions. It’s a little like wanting to know why my eyes are green.”**

-- Jean Genet

### March Virtual Meeting

There will be a virtual meeting using ZOOM in **March**. The announcement with the Zoom login information will be circulated on-line. Make sure we have your current email address so you don't miss out on future announcements. You can contact David Cotton ([Davidcotton@me.com](mailto:Davidcotton@me.com)) for help figuring out how to participate if you need any personal assistance.



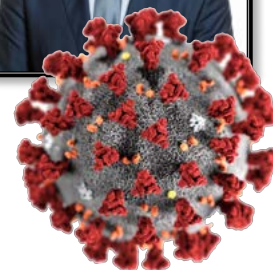
zoom



# Reynolds' Mismanagement & Hate Continue

by Supervisor Matt McCoy

Polk County, 5<sup>th</sup> District



The week that Iowa identified the new U.K. variant in three separate unacquainted individuals in the state of Iowa and the week that the CDC warned that this new mutation variant could become the dominant strain of the virus across the country by the end of March, Governor Reynolds eased restrictions on mask wearing and large gatherings. At the time of this writing, the CDC has condemned her actions and urged Americans to double down on mitigation measures to prevent the spread. Experts have warned that this variant, while not technically a stronger strain of the virus, has the capacity to spread anywhere between 50-70% more effectively.

Iowa has the notorious honor of being 49<sup>th</sup> or 50<sup>th</sup> in the nation for vaccine administration. Reynolds' mismanagement has resulted in only administering roughly 65% of vaccine we receive. While Polk County has administered all vaccine it receives on a weekly basis, it's undetermined where the roughly 35% is sitting in the state. Clearly, there are more vaccines sitting on shelves than are being administered in the arms in some counties.

While Iowa's population is relatively low and we're fortunate to not be as closely co-located as major cities like New York and Los Angeles, Iowa is consistently in the top five for most positive cases on a per capita basis. Now more than 12% of Iowans have contracted COVID-19. While I know social Darwinism runs deep in the Republican Party, I didn't know that the GOP plan was to try to reach herd immunity by ignoring mitigation efforts recommended by the CDC. The ironic part about Governor Reynolds is her insistence on being considered the most pro-life governor in America. I think she has demonstrated through her leadership which lives she favors and which lives she doesn't care about.



The seniors that Governor Reynolds threw overboard were those aged 75 and older who should have been first in line for the vaccine in Phase 1B. Her announcement in opening up eligibility to those 65 and older, regardless of health condition, put

a lot of vulnerable, older seniors at greater risk for death. Many of them are still waiting in line to get a vaccine. Those are also the population who may have more technological challenges in getting a vaccine appointment. I worry that Governor Reynolds will continue to open eligibility when there are still thousands of Polk County residents who desperately need the vaccine.

It's interesting watching the Iowa legislature refuse to put a mask mandate in place to protect employees who have to work every day under the golden dome. OSHA recently examined the workplace hazards and failure to mitigate against transmission of the virus and called it a hazardous workplace. It seems that, despite multiple outbreaks of COVID-19, the Iowa GOP-controlled legislature has not allowed COVID-19 to disrupt their desire to inflict more hateful bills on LGBTQ Iowans. To date, there are thirteen pieces of legislation introduced that would limit or deny civil rights for those in the LGBTQ community. At a time when our state and nation are facing one of the largest economic and political calamities since the Great Depression, legislators seem fixated on the sexual identity and expression of arguably some of the most marginalized individuals in our society.

Many of these hateful bills are merely introduced every year and don't survive the legislative process. However, Republicans have greater majorities in both chambers in more than 25 years, and so it's increasingly important you all reach out to Republican legislators so none of these extremely hateful bills actually become law.

Our glimmer of hope is redistricting in 2021. This presents an opportunity to draw districts that resemble Iowa's population shifts to cities and allow for more progressive representation in the legislation. Until then, we have a real and present danger lurking in the GOP-controlled legislature, and we've got a governor whose mission is to be so extreme that she gets a slot on Sean Hannity's talk show on Fox News. The here and now is for you to fire up your keyboards, phones, and letters and let legislators know that you're watching.

# What Next?

By Dr. Larry Schlatter

Like most of us, I have been fascinated by the impeachment going on in D.C. From the beginning, I wondered how Trump and his legal team were going to handle his responsibility regarding his seditious behavior. My current understanding is that he is having trouble finding lawyers to represent him. The thought of him needing to rely on a court-appointed public defender tells me there might be justice in the world. He gleefully encouraged the mob on. I think a good parallel might be a cook wanting to be certain their cake was fully cooked, so, said cook turned the oven up to 800 degrees - "There, that should do it!!!" And then being totally surprised at the charcoal it produced.

Trump has spent his whole life being totally self-engrossed, not thinking anyone else mattered. I am certain critical books will be written about how he was parented and the obvious outcome. Not like the "I want to make money off of this" book his sister wrote, but actual studies about his parent's lack of parenting skills and what that produced. The election where he took office made me more than a bit distrustful of our system. He ran solely on the lies he and his campaign spewed about Hillary Clinton. The fact that so many Americans would buy into that propaganda and not do some minimal research into what was false and what was true is a condemnation on our education system not teaching critical thinking. I would hope that now, after Trump, when people hear something from a politician and think "huh?" they will check to find the reality.

Lies, like the ones we saw during the last election, are particularly dangerous because they tend to be so close to reality that they are readily believable. We need more people fact-checking as they do during the debates. There are some sites on the internet which do check the veracity of what candidates say. I highly recommend familiarizing yourselves with those available sites. Printed news tends to cover the campaign statements the best, since the writers and editors have more time to check the veracity of what transpired. In all cases the source must be considered. Some newspapers lean right and some lean left, so know what you are reading. Other sources of interest are the international papers, since they do not have any party affiliation. I recommend *The London Times* and the English language version of the French paper *Le Monde*. Both are readily available on the internet and give one a look at how the world sees the U.S., with no political bias - mind you, sometimes with a cultural bias (gotta love those French). Their political reporting covers the whole world and is rather straightforward. My hope is that after this last presidential debacle, the voting public will get more critical and stop treating elections like an Iowa-Iowa State game. Who we elect as president is a big deal, **SO DO YOUR HOMEWORK!**



## Pete Buttigieg Sworn In as U.S. Secretary of Transportation: First Out LGBTQ Cabinet Secretary



February 3, 2021:  
Pete Buttigieg getting sworn in with husband, Chasten Buttigieg, by his side.

**Almost  
everything in life  
is easier to get  
into than out of.**





# Tribalism

By David Richard Ross

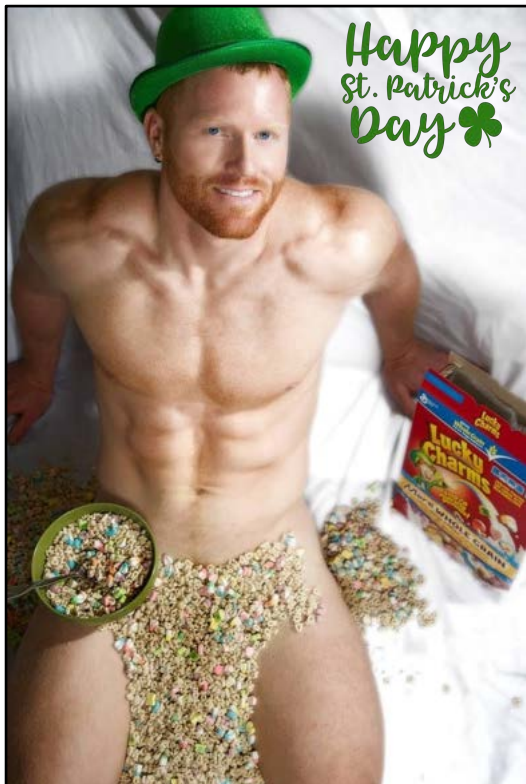
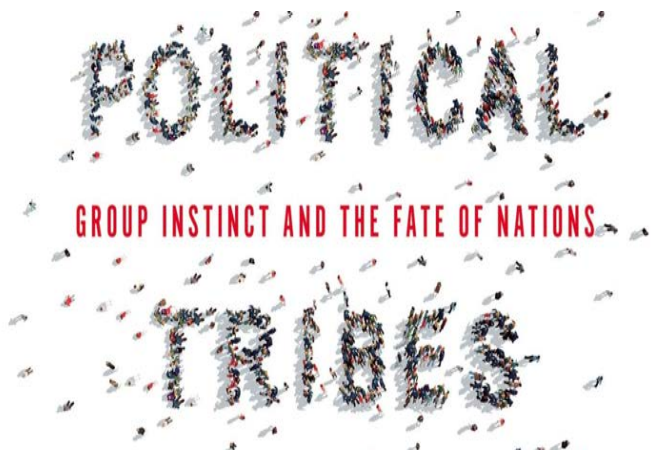
There was a man on MSNBC yesterday who seemed to have the answer to how we got to here. He was commenting on the belief systems that prevail in our society. Our species is **tribal**. We have flourished on this planet because of the safety and cooperation of being a member of a tribe. The population is such that in today's global world, we don't have clear definitions of tribal parameters. There are too many of us, and the races are now intermixed.

So now we make our own tribes. People of our own race, friends, family, co-workers, political groups, clubs, nations, and church groups can be our new tribes. We even make ourselves think that each person in our tribe thinks like us and are like us. Then when we find out that is not true, we will separate ourselves from that tribe by choosing or making up a new tribe. We then try to get members that only think like us to join; making a new tribe is our new normal. This is why there are so many belief systems.

The result is, when someone new comes into or tries to become part of the new tribe, we reject the people that don't fit the tribe's beliefs. Throughout history, the varied religions, races, and nations of the world have all rejected people who didn't "fit in." This is normal behavior for our species. In the United States, we even had a civil war over differences in belief. The written beliefs of the country were not treasured by everyone. We are still there. The question we should ask ourselves is what nation tribe has the best beliefs?

We must remind ourselves that belief and truth are not the same thing. Truth doesn't change, belief does. I happen to believe that our Constitution should be read and taught in school. Our beliefs should be known to everyone in our tribe. How our government works should be taught to everyone in the tribe. New people to our tribe must study, take a test, and even swear an oath of loyalty to our country. They know more about us than most people that were native born.

After 245 years, the United States is still here. We should strive to welcome the diversity that has made us great. The tribe that needs everyone is my tribe. My tribe is the United States of America.



## The "New" Newsletter

### FFBC Newsletter Goes Digital!

**Change is scary! Change is exciting!** Starting with this issue, the FFBC newsletter will no longer be printed and mailed to members. All issues will now be digital and will be emailed to members each month. If you have a printer, you may certainly still print a copy from the pdf file.

What does this mean? It means you will get to see all newsletters in **FULL COLOR!** It also means that there will be no delay in posting current newsletters to our website, and there will be **no charge** for receiving a newsletter to keep you up-to-date on all FFBC events!

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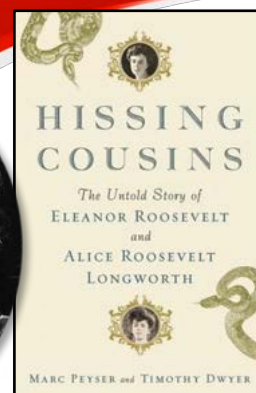
**FFBC Board  
of Directors**

First Friday Breakfast Club  
P.O. Box 41611  
Des Moines, IA 50311

## *Hissing Cousins: The Untold Story of Eleanor Roosevelt and Alice Roosevelt Longworth*

by Marc Peyser and Timothy Dwyer

A Book Review by  
Steve Person



Eleanor Roosevelt and Alice Roosevelt were born eight months apart in 1884 with Alice arriving first in February. Unfortunately for baby Alice, both her mother (Theodore Roosevelt's wife), and her grandmother (TR's mother) died on the same day and in the same house but of different causes. After their funerals, T.R. placed Alice with his sister, intending for her to raise the little girl. While Eleanor was not orphaned in the sense of death, she endured the absence of an alcoholic father and a less-than-caring mother. Her mother sent five-year-old Eleanor to a convent school with these parting words, "You have no looks, so see to it you have manners."

Even though they shared the same last name, Eleanor and Alice represented two distinct branches of the name Roosevelt. "By the end of the nineteenth century, the big difference between the branches was their politics: the Democrats in Hyde Park and the Republicans in Oyster Bay." New Yorkers in those days knew well which Roosevelt represented which political party. Still, the two sides of the family did fraternize frequently. As a girl, Eleanor spent many happy days at her uncle Theodore's house, Sagamore Hill, in Oyster Bay. He adored little Eleanor, and she returned the affection. T.R. remarried; his second wife was Edith Carow, thus making Alice a stepchild. Alice and Eleanor were the best of friends as children, but their parallel lives took vastly different paths as they grew into adulthood.

Both girls shared many similar events in life. They both married powerful and unfaithful husbands: Eleanor to her distant cousin Franklin Roosevelt, and Alice to playboy and Congressman Nicholas Longworth. While Franklin tried to hide his love affairs, the most enduring with Lucy Mercer, Nick Longworth was the sort who carried on publicly. Alice eventually divorced Nick and had many love affairs of her own, especially with Idaho Senator William Borah. He fathered her child, but since Alice was still married to Nick at that time, Nick gave the resulting daughter his last name.

Alice spent virtually her entire life in Washington, D.C., where she was feted as "Princess Alice" when her father inhabited the White House. As a matter of fact, Alice spent more time as a White House visitor over her ninety-one years than any other person. She met, conversed, and dined with sixteen presidents. Eleanor, on the other hand, took to championing her favorite causes from the creation of The League of Women Voters to educating young women of poverty to becoming her husband's "legs" after his crippling bout with polio. Alice made sport of Eleanor's shrill voice and mocked her on many occasions at any of her famous dinner parties, doing so one time in front of Eleanor herself who took it in good stride. Yet, in the end, the two women, while disparaging each other in adulthood, would stand together at family occasions and maintain civility.

If you are someone who enjoys politics and those who may not be elected to office but had the power to persuade in other ways, this book would keep your interest.