



# First Friday News & Views



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

May 2022

Volume 27

Issue 5

Next Meeting

May 6

7:00 a.m.



Meeting Location

Hoyt Sherman Place  
15<sup>th</sup> & Woodland  
Des Moines



May Speaker

Eric  
Shepard



FFBC Website

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



## Supporting the Mission

by Byron Huff, Board President

First Friday Breakfast Club (FFBC) was formed in 1996 with a mission to educate on LGBTQ+ issues and award scholarships to deserving high school seniors who have raised awareness in their schools and communities. Our meetings and newsletters serve our means of education, but the meetings also allow for a safe space, for people who may not be publicly out, to meet others who can provide support.

We seek a wide variety of speakers for our meetings, many of whom are straight and may not have experienced a large gathering of gay people anxious to hear them speak. This gives us a unique opportunity to educate and show them that gay people are diverse and respected members of our community.

It is hard to believe the first lock-downs started just after our March 2020 meeting; we quickly made plans to go virtual for what we thought would be a short-term solution. We resumed in-person meetings in August 2021 after 16 months!

The Board has been discussing live meeting attendance and how we can boost that number which has been running 30-40 people (excluding Zoom) since we restarted in-person meetings; attendance prior to April 2020 was running 40-50, leaving us with an attendance shortfall.

The cost of in-person meetings is supported by money we charge at the door and covers our catering by Gateway Market as well as rent for the use of Hoyt Sherman. Food costs are variable but have a fixed (minimum) component that covers the cost to prepare and transport the food as well as pay the staff (who does such an amazing job serving us each month). Hoyt Sherman has been extremely generous and flexible by not raising our rental fees and allowing us to defer rental payments when we did not hold in-person meetings, but that cost is fixed. Based on the current fixed costs, we need to have attendance exceed 40 each month to break even.

The real issue for FFBC's long-term viability is our membership and our ability to attract and retain members who will attend our meetings and events. We decided at the last Board meeting that I would write an article and provide a link to an online survey that could give us insight and help us understand what might work to improve our in-person attendance. Please help FFBC thrive and complete the following **short survey**. **Thank you!**



Survey: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/NJMX8XP](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NJMX8XP)

# An Invitation to Make a Difference

by Ryan Crane, FFBC Vice President

Are you wondering what you can do to help make a positive impact on the environment? Maybe you're also looking to be a little healthier, or are already watching your calories?

The solution may be easier than you think. **Eat less meat!** Studies show that eating less meat can take inches off your waistline and (sometimes dramatically) reduce your carbon footprint.

Going vegan is scary for anyone. Try small steps, like cutting back on red meat, and maybe even going "meatless" for a meal or two each week. Reducing beef consumption matters because cows contribute heavily to greenhouse gases. Pork is problematic because it pollutes water and air here in Iowa.

The less meat and dairy I eat, the better I feel. If you have wanted to be a little greener (and leaner!), join me and give it a try.



“It matters not who you love, where you love, why you love, when you love, or how you love. It matters only that you love.”

-- John Lennon



## Briefs & Shorts



Thanks to **Brad Holland** for introducing **David Miglin**, our April speaker. Thanks to **David Cotton** for managing our website and to **Nicholas Williams** for managing all of our Microsoft IT infrastructure. Thanks to **Wade Petersen** for his work as our newsletter editor. *Thank you to all our contributors to the newsletter!*

The **deadline** for the **June newsletter** will be **May 23**. If you have something on your mind to share, type it up and email it to Wade ([wadepetersen@gmail.com](mailto:wadepetersen@gmail.com)) by the copy deadline.

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**

Thanks also to all those **Amazon shoppers** who designate FFBC as the beneficiary when shopping **smile.amazon.com**. Your shopping with



smile.amazon.com means that a small contribution to FFBC will be made with every purchase. Proverbial, found money.

Our fundraising efforts are ongoing to fund our scholarship program. To date we have raised over **\$475,000** 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 online** or by sending a check.

Please consider a **tax-exempt testamentary gift**. Our first legacy gift to the FFBC scholarship program came from **Cliff Paulsen** to the tune of over **\$67,000!** Contact **Byron Huff** for details or with questions.







## There Oughta Be a Law

by Jonathan Wilson

Many of us have dutifully filed our tax returns. We've done so timely, incentivized by the prospect of penalties and interest accrual if we don't file timely and actually owe taxes above the taxes already withheld or paid in quarterly installments.

Of those of us who have filed timely, many have also been incentivized by the fact that we have, through withholding or installments, paid more than our tax liability, and we're due a refund. Therein lies the rub.

The refunds that taxpayers are undeniably entitled to receive are being inordinately delayed. The official reason being given by the IRS is that the agency is understaffed because of underfunding. IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig said in a statement, "IRS employees want to do more, and we will continue in 2022 to do everything possible with the resources available to us."

Time is money, as they say. If the truth were being told, the delayed refunds line the pockets of the government with the time value of the use of the money represented by those delayed refunds. We're talking about big money even at currently low market-place interest rates. Essentially, the delayed refunds represent a backdoor tax increase.



It's bad enough, although probably good policy, that our anticipated tax liability is withheld as the year goes along. Without the withholding, many of us would not have the available resources to pay the tax bill when it comes due, leaving those taxpayers in a financial bind and forcing the IRS to incur additional tax collection costs. The withholding also assures that the government gets some or all of the taxes owed by folks who die during the year. So be it.

But bad enough should be enough. When our taxes are due and we've paid more than was owed, refunds should be made promptly.

And that's where there ought to be a law. Assuming that taxpayers are incentivized to file and pay taxes timely in order to avoid penalties and interest, it stands to reason that the government would be similarly incentivized to make timely refunds if, past some reasonable period of time, the government would have to pay those receiving delayed refunds some amount of penalty and interest. Turn-about is fair play after-all.

We can debate the appropriate amount of leeway the government should have after a refund tax return is filed, the amount of penalty beyond that point, and the rate of interest. Given modern technology, I think two weeks is enough time to wait for a refund; I think a ten percent penalty would be incentivizing; and I think an interest rate that is slightly above-market would seem fair to taxpayers.

That little bit of reciprocity might go a long way toward empowering citizens and improving our perception of government.

**May Day** is celebrated on the first of May around the world. While it is a Northern Hemisphere spring holiday, it also coincides with International Workers' Day. Whether the beauty of spring season in May or the importance of labor, May Day is a fine time for celebration and good thoughts.





One Iowa hosted the first **GALA celebration** in 2010 to commemorate the momentous Iowa Supreme Court decision (*Varnum v. Brien*) legalizing same-sex marriage. Since that celebration of Iowa's legacy of equality, we have continued to celebrate our successes as we preserve and advance equality for LGBTQ people. We are excited to kick off Pride Month and celebrate in-person together for the first time in two years on **Saturday, June 4**, at the **13th Annual One Iowa Gala!**

The event will feature an awards ceremony honoring the LGBTQ advocates fighting for equality in our state, an amazing silent auction, interactive vendors, and a chance to come together and raise money for the LGBTQ community in Iowa.

You can join us for the entire night by purchasing a General Admission ticket or skip the program and come straight to the party by buying a celebration ticket! Limited pay-what-you-can tickets are set aside for those in our community who need financial assistance to attend the event.

## 13th Annual One Iowa Gala Saturday, June 4, 2022

The Des Moines Heritage Center  
120 E 5th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50309

6:30 Program & Award Ceremony  
8-10 Celebration

# oneiowa



## Future Speakers

June 3

### Becky Smith

Executive Director Iowa Safe Schools

July 16

### FFBC PARTY

Home of FFBC Member, John Schmacker

August 5

### Jerry Hatfield

Climate Change

September 2

### Cindy Axne

U.S. House Representative

October 7

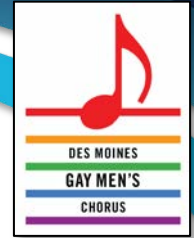
### Dana Cardin

Retired KCCI Reporter and Asst. News Director





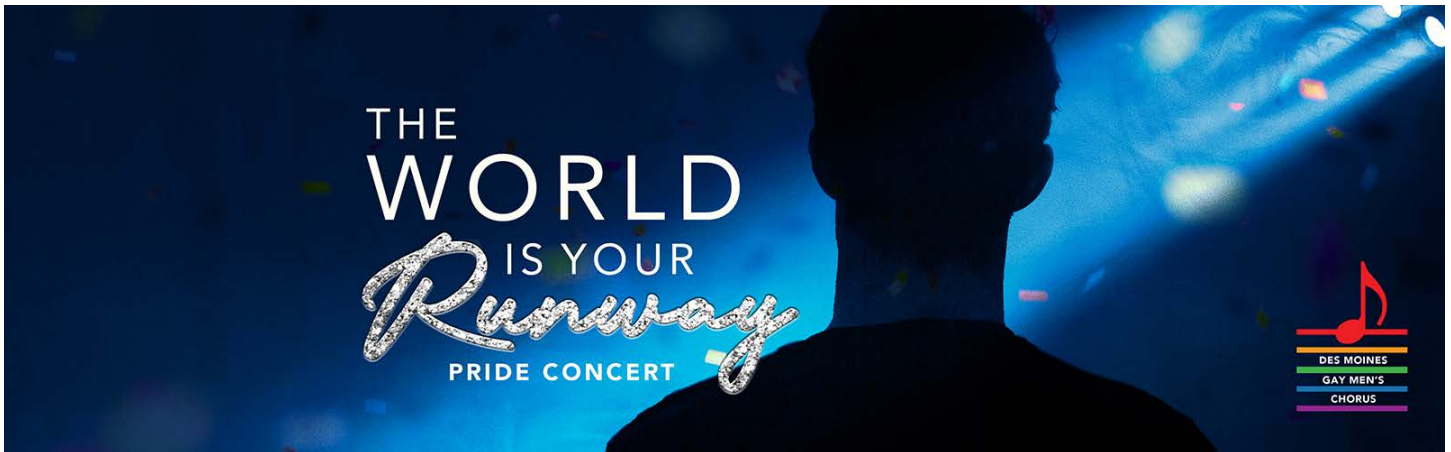
## May Speaker



# Eric Shepard

Eric Shepard is the new Artistic Director and Conductor of the Des Moines Gay Men's Chorus. He brings over 15 years of experience and leadership to the DMGMC organization. Eric currently raises voices as a Change and Inclusion Practitioner, working to ensure every voice is heard, respected, and valued.

A Des Moines native, Eric received his Bachelors of Music degree in Education with an emphasis in musical theater and conducting from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Eric also earned a certificate in Diversity and Inclusion from Cornell University, as well as two different certificates from the University of South Florida: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace and Inclusive and Ethical Leadership.



Thursday, June 9 (7:30) | Friday, June 10 (7:30) | Saturday, June 11 (5:30)

Cabaret Tickets are Available at [dmgmc.org](http://dmgmc.org)



**“Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one’s definition of your life; define yourself.”**

-- Harvey Fierstein



# Planning a Future for Broadlawns and More

by Gary Moore

This chilly April 1<sup>st</sup>, members of the First Friday Breakfast Club gathered in person and via Zoom to listen to **David Miglin**. Miglin is Vice President of Media & Digital Services at Strategic America Advertising. Strategic America is an integrated marketing firm specializing in field marketing, brand building, and customer engagement. David has over 30 years of marketing, communications, and management experience working with over 200 national and local brands.

His volunteer activities include Friends of Iowa CASA Board Member (2019 – present) which is concerned with vulnerable foster children across the state; Iowa Stage Theatre Company Executive Board Member (2016 – present); Polk County Democrats Communication Chair (2017 – present); New Leaders Council Advisor (2019 – 2020); and United Way of Central Iowa volunteer/donor. He is also a member of the Broadlawns Medical Center Board of Trustees.

David started out with a brief history noting he had spent 18 years raising his young family in Atlanta before being recruited to join Strategic America in 2013 here in Des Moines. Wanting to know their new state after moving to Iowa in 2014, Dave and Karen Miglin and their two children went to the *Field of Dreams* movie site outside of Dyersville in northeast Iowa. Next came visits to every incorporated town and city in Iowa over five years. Iowa had 955 incorporated towns when he started his quest. At the end of 2020, it had 945, a concern for Miglin and others interested in small-town survival in Iowa. He noted the political divide became quite apparent during his travels but also noted there was plenty of room for talk and areas of mutual concern, small-town survival and health care being two. His travels have given him a better appreciation for issues facing towns struggling to keep locally accessible health care. He sees Broadlawns as an incubator for training health care workers for rural towns.

David spent most of his time with FFBC speaking about the strategic goals of Broadlawns Hospital and his role as a member of the Board of Directors. Those goals included a sobering center, increased mental health services, being an incubator for training critical health care providers, as well as for other health deserts in the state such as OBGYN facilities.

David particularly discussed the aging population of Iowa. The life expectancy is 78+ years, with that of men being 76 and women slightly more. A major concern is an increase in Alzheimer's. He talked about Broadlawns Medical Center's interest in developing a center for care, respite, and caregiver training that would be of world stature, having the best practices in education, care, and caregiving training being addressed by world-class experts. The land has already been purchased to start to build this center and turn it into reality. He noted that such a major effort is a collaborative effort with city, county, and other major stakeholders.

David concluded his remarks with a couple of meaningful questions:

- **How are you going to spend your remaining time?**
- **What Issues are most concerning to you?**
- **Who shares your concerns and how can you collaborate with them?**

David closed his remarks with a quotation from the Mayor of Hyattsville, Maryland, Kevin Ward, a well-loved gay family man that had become mayor and to everyone's surprise died by suicide. "We must not look outside for the answers because I know where the answers are," he said. "What we need to do is bring ourselves together. What we need to do is remember that we are repairers of the breach." If you want to read more of Mayor Kevin Ward's story: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/.../hyattsville-mayor.../>



**April Speaker David Miglin**





# April Meeting Photo Gallery



David, David, & David



Photos by Gary Moore  
& Wade Petersen



# April Meeting Photo Gallery





# Affordable Housing

by Supervisor Matt McCoy, Polk County, 5<sup>th</sup> District



I'm pleased to announce that the Polk County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to invest \$15.15 million in affordable housing through the federal American Rescue Plan Act funds out of which Polk County will receive a total of roughly **\$95 million**. The specific projects are to create up to 600 affordable housing units through a process involving adaptive reuse of existing housing stock in Polk County. Ideally, no person should pay more than 30% of their gross income for housing. Unfortunately, this gold standard is not maintained in many lower economic groups in Polk County who sometimes are rent constrained, paying up to 40-50% of their gross income for housing. While this \$15 million will create up to 600 units, studies show that Polk County needs 10,000 units right now. It's a good step but not enough. The other \$150,000 is going to a two-year pilot project, in coordination with the City of Des Moines, to fund two community housing advocates who act as navigators for individuals seeking affordable housing in Polk County.

Additionally, Polk County funded one million to the non-profit **Anawim Housing** last year. They are converting a Days Inn on Merle Hay Road into one room studio apartments for immediate housing to support individuals experiencing homelessness. This program is in addition to the 24 affordable housing units that were built next to Central Iowa Shelter & Services which received funding from the county. We are able to do this as a result of collaboration through Polk County Housing Trust Fund as well as IMPACT and Anawim Housing. We are doing all that we can to address critical housing shortages but understand the need far exceeds the government's ability to adequately meet the unfilled gap in our society.

## POLK COUNTY OVERVIEW AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) passed by Congress and signed into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021, is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus package. In this law, state and local governments receive a total of \$350 billion in assistance. *ARPA funds cannot be used to reduce property taxes.*

### BY THE NUMBERS

**Polk County's allocation: \$95.2 MILLION**

**\*Received to date: \$47.6 MILLION**

**\*To be received May 2022: \$47.6 MILLION**

**Obligated to date: \$51.3 MILLION**

*\*Funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and spent by December 31, 2026.*

### Obligated to date: \$51.3 MILLION

**\$24,804,929**  
Polk County's lost revenue in calendar year 2020 eligible for reimbursement

**\$15,150,000**  
\$15 million will go to Polk County Housing Trust Fund for initiatives to help create more affordable housing units. \$150,000 will fund a pilot program to hire two community advocates who would support individuals to keep them stably housed or to find permanent housing

**\$8,000,000**  
The Hilton Hotel and Iowa Events Center managed facilities experienced negative economic impacts due to the pandemic. This amount is earmarked to support the operations on an as-needed basis until the industry stabilizes

**\$1,000,000**  
Assist Anawim Housing with converting an under-utilized hotel into a 40 unit affordable and supportive services housing complex

**\$579,781**  
Polk County Emergency Management Emergency Operations technology upgrades

**\$607,147**  
COVID-19 vaccination incentives

**\$600,000**  
Polk County Financial Empowerment Center to provide individuals and small business owners financial coaching

**\$250,000**  
Urban Ag Seeding Partnership to improve water quality & reduce flooding

**\$195,000**  
The Polk County Health Department received a federal grant for it's Healthy Homes program and requires a one-time funding commitment to complete the budget

**\$120,133**  
Polk County Health Services is partnering with City of Des Moines, Broadlawns and the Polk County Sheriff to enhance the Mobile Crisis team to include a mental health clinician in 911 dispatch

**\$14,900**  
Iowa State University to conduct a qualitative and quantitative research study on the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 to small businesses and non-profits in the Central Iowa region

**\$645**  
Expenses related to ARPA public input survey

**What are your ideas?  
Send me your thoughts**

Polk County Supervisor Matt McCoy  
111 Court Ave STE 300  
Des Moines, IA 50309  
Phone: 515-330-5952  
Email: [matt.mccoy@polkcountyia.gov](mailto:matt.mccoy@polkcountyia.gov)



Transparency | Communication | Accountability

### Focusing on 4 Key Areas

The Board of Supervisors will focus on four key areas for long-term strategic investments.

- AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- ECONOMIC WELL-BEING
- WATER QUALITY
- MENTAL HEALTH



# \$15.15 million for Affordable Housing

**Polk County announces \$15.15 million investment in Affordable Housing using Federal ARPA dollars**

PSA BROUGHT TO YOU BY  
SUPERVISOR MATT MCCOY





# The Power of the Dog

## A Movie Review by Mark Turnage

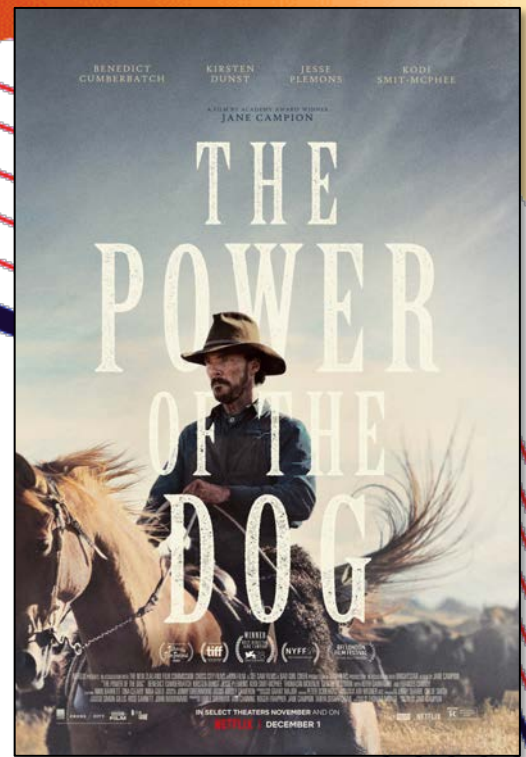
Classic Westerns encapsulate both the beauty and brutality of life on the frontier as well as the grit and self-reliance of their central characters, yet their stories are often saddled with hypermasculinity as a determinant of survival. Director Jane Campion's *The Power of the Dog*, streaming on Netflix and based on the Thomas Savage novel, deconstructs the masculinity of the Western through both feminist and queer lenses. Through a compelling ensemble cast, cinematography that foreshadows more than its script, and an entrancing lead performance, *The Power of the Dog* is a psychological tour-de-force that demands focused viewership yet captivates through its suspenseful relationship dynamics.

Rural Montana, 1925: on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their first cattle drive, brothers Phil Burbank (Benedict Cumberbatch) and George Burbank (Jesse Plemons) meet timid but compassionate widow and innkeeper Rose Gordon (Kirsten Dunst). The leader of a group of rowdy cowpokes, Phil is a charismatic but cruel “man’s man” who excels at both cattle wrangling and exploiting others’ insecurities—he immediately mocks Rose’s teenage son Peter (Kodi Smit-McPhee) as weak and effeminate, and derisively refers to his own brother as “Fatso” more than “George.” The only person Phil holds in high esteem is his late mentor, Bronco Henry, whose saddle he polishes with reverence and whose homoerotic mementos he keeps hidden away from prying eyes. Phil’s harsh demeanor pushes the more considerate and urbane George towards Rose over time, but after George tells his brother he’s married Rose discreetly, Phil is furious, and begins a campaign of psychological warfare against Rose. Meanwhile, Peter begins to adapt some of Phil’s skills, and after some initial resentment, Phil warms to Peter, eventually taking him on as a protégé. This accelerates Rose’s spiral, testing both her marriage and the bonds between the two brothers.

Much of the film’s foreshadowing exists outside its own script: subtle visual cues from the sweeping cinematography, an uneasy folk soundtrack of violins and piano, characters’ expressions after tough conversations, even everyday objects that go missing or are found out of place. It’s a smart and subtle way to punch up the thrills and the mystery when the tense conversations do arrive, but it also means you have to pay attention to what’s onscreen more than what’s being said.

Cumberbatch is simultaneously intimidating and electric as the sharp-tongued Phil, whose rage belies a softness he lost with the death of his own mentor. On the surface, he is the Western leading man—good looks, sharp wit, and extremely capable on the open frontier—yet his cruelty is cover for his own repressed desires. He is idolized, kowtowed to, or obeyed by most of the male characters in the story while Rose (the only major female cast member) suffers for it. George is also not completely blameless: his efforts to stand up for his wife are pleading and bargaining for Phil to stop, and his plan to gain social capital by talking up Rose’s musical talent backfires enormously. It’s important to note that Rose *teaches* George to dance when he says he doesn’t know how, as opposed to George’s pressure for her to perform in response to her own inexperience. Peter has creativity that is constantly belittled and underestimated as “effeminate” until he code-switches to both more masculine clothing and hobbies.

Campion says a lot about the costs of undermining feminine expression while glorifying toxic masculinity in *The Power of the Dog*, and it’s what makes this Western fresh, modern, and suspenseful. See it and enjoy the work of this year’s Oscar winner for Best Director.





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**FFBC Board  
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# A Gambling Man by David Baldacci

## A Book Review by Steve Person

This is the second book to feature Baldacci's newest character, Aloysius Archer. In order to keep from having to explain his given name, he simply goes by Archer making it easy for everyone he meets.

Upon his exit from Poca City where the previous book was set, Archer sets out for California in search of a new life. It's mid-twentieth century America, and along the way west, he makes a stop in Reno where predictably he meets a voluptuous female named Liberty Callahan. Liberty's great aim in life is to get into the movies, but besides her obvious physical allure, she has other talents that surprise Archer. Among those talents is her ability to choose the winning number in roulette in one of Reno's numerous gambling dens. Archer takes her advice and ends up winning a bundle of cash. Another unexpected talent Archer discovers in her is her expert use of a handgun.

While defending a stranger who is being mauled by goons trying to collect a gambling debt, Archer ends up acquiring the man's extremely rare and valuable automobile—a 1939 red Delahaye convertible, one of only five in existence that were made just as World War II began in Europe. Archer and Callahan agree to travel together en route to California. The car is both a boon and a curse for Archer since it makes it difficult for him to be unobtrusive when needed but also recognized for having one of the world's sought-after automobiles.

The pair reaches Bay Town, California, a city that like most cities has its affluent side and its struggling majority. Finding themselves in need of cash, both Archer and Callahan find employment in diverse jobs. Archer is in search of a private investigator, Willie Dash, who had been recommended for him to ask for work. The investigator is a rather down-on-his-luck individual who has trouble scraping two nickels together and trying to keep his office going through tough times. A former FBI agent, Dash is approached by one of Bay City's leading businessmen who is running for mayor. He employs Dash to find out who is trying to blacken his name before the election. Eventually, he takes Archer on as a temporary PI who has to work under the auspices of Dash's certified California private investigator's license.

Meanwhile, Callahan is hired as an entertainer in an establishment called Midnight Moods. The place caters to those who like women in skimpy outfits and also to those who like to gamble in private card playing rooms. As Archer is there to interview one of the suspected people trying to smirch his client's name, he discovers the girl's murdered body. This of course, is just the first of a series of killings connected to this nightclub.

With his natural bent for spying (a talent he learned while serving in Italy during World War II), Archer discovers a secret island owned by another of Bay City's big shots. The U.S. Navy created this island from a shallow spot off the coast of Bay City for use in protecting the California coast. With the war over, the island is no longer used by the government, but its new owner has other plans. Needless to say, other murders ensue and both Archer and Callahan have harrowing experiences to get through until the final act is committed—by a most unsuspecting ending, indeed.

I think you would like this book.

