



First Friday News & Views



Iowa's LGBTQ+ Newsletter of the First Friday Breakfast Club

January 2025 | Volume 30 | Issue 1

Next Meeting

Friday,
January 3
7:00 a.m.



Location

Hoyt Sherman
15th & Woodland
Des Moines



Speaker

Jason
Clayworth
Axios



Website

ffbc Iowa.org



Rewriting Journalism

by Byron Huff, Board President

In recent years, the decline of local news has emerged as a critical issue, with far-reaching implications for informed citizenship, democracy, and the fight against misinformation. This troubling trend—fueled by financial challenges, shifting media consumption habits, and the rise of digital platforms—has left many communities without reliable, local reporting. In the absence of strong local journalism, misinformation has proliferated, creating a vacuum that national news outlets and social media have struggled to fill effectively.



Amid this void, **Axios** has stepped in with an innovative model aimed at reviving community-centered journalism in a digital-first world. By combining concise reporting, accessible newsletters, and a commitment to factual accuracy, Axios is helping to counter misinformation while reconnecting readers to the issues that matter most in their communities.

Since 2005, over 2,500 newspapers in the United States have shuttered, leaving “news deserts” in their wake—communities with little to no local journalism. The loss is particularly devastating in rural and smaller urban areas, where local papers once served as watchdogs, storytellers, and hubs of civic engagement. Without these essential outlets, misinformation and disinformation can spread unchecked, often filling the void with misleading narratives shared on social media platforms or partisan networks.

Studies have shown that communities lacking robust local news coverage experience lower voter turnout, increased political polarization, and a weakened sense of community identity. Local issues, from school board decisions to environmental concerns, often go unnoticed or are misrepresented leaving residents uninformed about matters directly affecting their lives.

Founded in 2016, Axios quickly gained recognition for its “Smart Brevity” approach, distilling complex issues into digestible, factual summaries. Originally focused on national and international topics, Axios has pivoted in recent years to address the local news crisis with the launch of Axios Local.

Axios Local provides free daily newsletters tailored to specific cities and regions, including Des Moines, Denver, Charlotte, and more. These newsletters cover topics like local government, education, business, and cultural events, delivered in a concise format designed for busy readers. This model not only prioritizes accessibility but also enables Axios to engage younger, digitally savvy audiences often overlooked by traditional news outlets.



[continued on page 2]



["Rewriting Journalism" continued from page 1]

One of Axios' key contributions is its commitment to fact-based reporting. In an era when misinformation thrives on sensationalism and partisanship, Axios has embraced transparency and accuracy. Its local reporters rely on established sources, avoid clickbait, and focus on actionable insights, ensuring that readers are informed rather than overwhelmed or misled.

Axios' newsletters also serve as a counterweight to the fragmented and often unreliable information found on social media. By offering curated, trustworthy updates, they help audiences make sense of the complex information ecosystem.

While Axios' efforts represent a significant step forward, challenges remain. The sustainability of digital journalism models, the need for hyper-local reporting in underserved areas, and the task of rebuilding trust in journalism are daunting. Axios Local's reliance on advertising and sponsorships raises questions about long-term scalability, particularly in smaller markets with limited economic resources.

AXIOS



As Axios expands its footprint, it provides a replicable model for how modern media companies can address the local news crisis. By leveraging technology, focusing on concise storytelling, and prioritizing local relevance, Axios is helping to reimagine journalism for a digital age while bridging the gap between communities and the information they need.

The decline of local news is not just a media issue; it's a democratic one. As misinformation continues to sow division and confusion, the need for trusted, community-focused journalism has never been greater. While no single organization can solve the crisis, Axios' innovative approach offers a promising path forward. By filling the void left by disappearing local newspapers, Axios is helping to ensure that communities stay informed, engaged, and resilient in the face of a rapidly-changing media landscape.



Briefs & Shorts



Thanks to FFBC member, **Rev. Greg Neal**, for introducing our December speaker: **Methodist Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai**. Thanks to **David Cotton** for managing our website, to **Nicholas Williams** for managing our Microsoft IT infrastructure, and to **David Wilfahrt** for managing FFBC's finances. Thanks to **Wade Petersen** for his work as our newsletter editor.

Thank you to all the contributors to our newsletter!



The **deadline** for the **February newsletter** will be **January 27**.

If you have something that you would like to share, type it up and email it to Wade (wadecpetersen@gmail.com) by the deadline.

Fundraising efforts are ongoing to fund our scholarship program. To date we have awarded over **\$495,000** for **203** scholarships 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.



A special **thank-you** to those FFBC members and friends who have chosen to designate FFBC through the **Donor Direct** program of **United Way**. 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.





First Friday Breakfast Club
Founder **Jonathan Wilson**

Trickle Down Doesn't

by Jonathan Wilson

In the news about extending tax cuts, we are going to hear that employers deserve tax breaks to incentivize them to create jobs. It is claimed that such tax breaks will “trickle down” in the form of more employment. Nothing could be further from the truth.

So-called “trickle down” is a fraud, pure and simple. Employers do not create jobs, and tax breaks won't change that. Demand creates jobs. Employers will not hire anyone more than they already employ until demand demands it.

In a small company, the self-interest of the owner will drive the phenomenon. In a large company with shareholders, the law itself drives the phenomenon — such an employer has a *fiduciary duty* to avoid adding jobs (despite tax breaks or other incentives) unless the demand for the company's goods or services cannot be fulfilled without more staff. Only when the employer can't meet the demand by squeezing existing staff to the max will another job be created. Only unmet demand will result in a job being “created.”

The fraud works because most of us were first employed by some employer hiring us. This created the impression — the false impression -- that the person or company that hired us “created” the job for which we were hired. This emphasizes a lack of understanding in that the *only* reason that the job was there was because of demand for the products or services. This would also include the employer's inability to meet the demand by squeezing more productivity from existing employees.



That's the way capitalism works. It's true of every business model in a capitalistic, market-driven economy. Capitalism is not philanthropic when it comes to jobs or wages. With capitalism, when it's working as designed and as required by law, employers will try to get more productivity from existing employees, minimizing or avoiding wage increases, and postponing new hires until there's confidence that the demand is not abating.

Tax incentives for employers go to the employers' profits, to buying back stock, or to pursuing other profitable enterprises. **They do not trickle down.** Those who claim otherwise are either ignorant or lying — more likely the latter. Those who buy into the fraud are walking, talking examples of the failure of our public education system.

Presidential candidate George H. W. Bush labeled it right when he said that trickle down was voodoo economics. The preferable economics would be getting more money into the pockets of consumers, thus generating demand. Call it “Percolate Up” economics. Better for everyone, employees and employers.



*FFBC Members
Ken Hanson and
Wade Petersen are
currently participating
in this study.*

A team of researchers led by Jennifer Margrett at Iowa State and Cindy Reese-Melancon at Oklahoma State are **recruiting couples** to participate in a **research study on couples' collaboration in everyday tasks**. They are seeking couples ages 40+, who have **been married or in a long-term relationship for at least 5 years, and are living together**. If you're interested in participating or would like more information, please email their team at propel@iastate.edu, call 515-294-2025, or visit propel.iastate.edu!



“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”

-- C.S. Lewis

FFBC Scholarship Fundraising Campaign



FFBC's annual "ask letter" has been mailed out.

Your donations are a main source of funding for our educational scholarships each season, and **100%** of all donations will go directly toward scholarships for Iowa high school LGBTQ+ seniors and allies.

Due to your incredible generosity, this past year we were able to present **16** scholarships for \$3,000!

We hope that you will consider donating to FFBC so that we can continue to support outstanding, courageous Iowa students who stand up and stand out as role models in their schools and communities.



FFBC Membership

FFBC membership is open to all members of the LGBTQ+ community and their allies.

We welcome **EVERYONE**, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

Meetings are held the first Friday of every month at Hoyt Sherman Place in Des Moines.

Membership Rates

The following rates help us to cover food and facility costs:

Annual Rate: \$180
(12 consecutive meetings)

Quarterly Rate: \$48
(3 consecutive meetings)

Month-by-Month: \$18

First-Time or One-Time Attendee: \$15

Full-Time Student: \$8

No charge to attend via Zoom

Payment Options

We accept cash, checks, or **credit cards** at the meeting.



Meeting Schedule

6:30 a.m. - Doors open

6:45 a.m. - Breakfast service begins

7:00 a.m. - Meeting begins



IOWA WILD



PRIDE NIGHT



Join us for an exhilarating evening of hockey and pride at the **Iowa Wild Pride Night** on **January 17th!** Celebrate diversity and community with **First Friday Breakfast Club**, while enjoying an action-packed game. A portion of the proceeds from this offer will benefit First Friday Breakfast Club, supporting their ongoing efforts. For any inquiries, contact Mike Bladzick at 515-564-8702 or via email at mike.bladzick@iowawild.com. Get your tickets today [[Click this link](#)] and be part of an unforgettable night!





The Des Moines Pride Center houses a library containing Queer-only literature, as well as a rotating collection of local historical archives of LGBTQIA+ history for the state of Iowa. It is increasingly important to preserve and understand our history as we strive to move into a brighter and more inclusive future.



Located in the
Mickle Center
1620 Pleasant Street

Library Hours:

Wednesdays
6:00 – 8:00 PM

Sundays
2:00 – 4:00 PM



Daring to Dream

by Kathi Wolfe



As the ball drops in Times Square to bring the New Year in, another teen trembles, shakes from bullying, is enraged when no one calls them by their name. Haters hiss at drag storytellers, toast the holidays with dictators. How can anyone sing *Auld lang syne*? Clarence, the angel in “It’s a Wonderful Life,” nearly stops caring about getting his wings. Can even an Old Hollywood angel help this world amuck in hate and war? You almost want to write the obit for dreams. To toss them in the dust bin with dead batteries, texts from vexed exes, take-out containers. Yet hope persists. Like a dog that lives to be 20, though it eats chocolate daily and is never walked. A dad embraces his queer son. A trans rabbi conducts a Passover seder, a queer imam holds lesbian lovers in prayer. A gay elder marries his high school sweetheart. Not much to go on in this time, a frayed security blanket that barely covers us. But enough to keep our dreams flying with pride. **Happy New Year!**



INDOOR VOLLEYBALL

Sunday Evenings 4:30pm – 9:30pm
IMPORTANT - swipe to see changes to registration.

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READY, SET, DODGE

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FRIDAYS from 5:30PM - 8PM
\$30 PER PERSON | JAN 10 - FEB 28

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WWW.PRIDESPORTSLEAGUE.ORG

SWIPE TO SEE **IMPORTANT CHANGES** TO REGISTRATION



Travels with Ken & Wade

by Wade Petersen

Ken Hanson and Wade Petersen spent 2 ½ weeks in Europe, making stops in several countries, to celebrate their 15th wedding anniversary (22 years together) and Wade's 60th birthday. Articles in the coming months will feature their experiences.

Third Stop: Munich, Germany



After a couple days in Lucerne, Switzerland, we boarded our train to **Munich** (*München* in German). This was our 15th wedding anniversary but also one of our most stressful travel days.

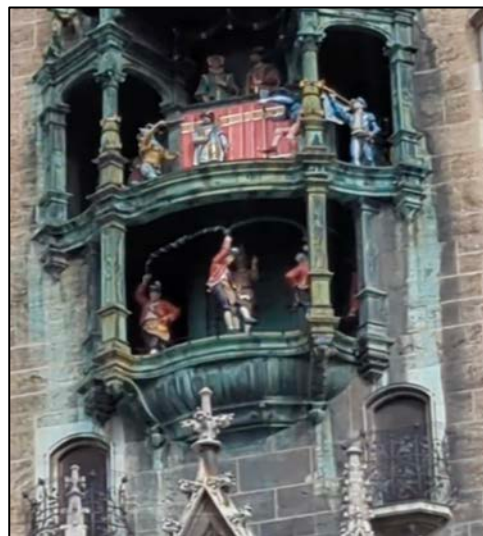
One of my bucket list dreams was to visit the iconic **Neuschwanstein Castle** (from “mad” King Ludwig II) that you see in almost every poster and postcard of Germany. The castle is located near Füssen, right on our travel path between Lucerne and Munich. There were multiple train stations and quick transfers to pull this off, but we made it. We were able to tour the castle and take our photos. Even though there is a bus to take tourists almost to the top of the mountain for the castle, we found that you still have to do quite a bit of climbing a sloped walkway to get there. On the way up, we took photos of the castle from a suspended bridge (below) because this provided the best view (Ken is not a fan of heights, and standing on this bridge did not last long for him).



After a few more train rides with very short transfers, we arrived in Munich about 8:30 at night. This was just enough time to check into our hotel and then find a restaurant to celebrate our anniversary.

The next morning began with a guided bus tour. When arriving in a new city, a bus tour is a great way to see a lot without stopping at every famous site.

A highlight in Munich is to visit the **Marienplatz** (city square) that is the heart of Munich. We were in awe of the **Neues Rathaus**, the historical town hall on the square with its beautiful *Glockenspiel*. We were lucky enough to be in the square to see the animated figures and hear the chimes. Later, Ken and I even debated whether to purchase a pair of *Lederhosen!*



Originally, we were going to go to Oktoberfest on this night, but because it's held mostly outdoors and it was raining, we switched our schedule to have dinner indoors at the famous **Hofbräuhaus**. This is the amazing Bavarian food hall where strangers sit with each other, drink huge steins of beer, eat pretzels and sausages, and chant to portions of Beatles songs. It was so crowded but awesome! After 10 minutes of searching, a nice Canadian couple waved to us that we could join them at their table. The Canadians were

delightful and we had an amazing meal (more sausages & *schnitzel*). Did you know in Munich, they serve cranberry chutney with their breaded pork cutlets? Delicious!



The next day was a somber, rainy morning when we visited **Dachau**, the concentration camp located just outside of Munich. I had been there 40 years prior, but I wanted Ken to have the experience of walking these sacred grounds to view the museum, barracks, and “furnaces.”

Upon our return to Munich, we visited the **Munich Residenz**, a former castle/palace. Ken and I were amazed at the lavish interior with all its gilded glory.

We finally ended our time in Munich by attending the world-famous **Oktoberfest**. It reminded me a lot of the Iowa State Fair. The park in which it is held is massive and includes rides, food stands, and of course, the beer halls (which were very crowded on a Saturday night).



Our travel stories and photos will continue in the coming months with visits to: Salzburg, Austria; and Venice, Florence, and Rome Italy.





Speaker Series

January 9 / 6:00 P.M. / Temple Theater



V Spehar

Join Capital City Pride for the 2024-2025 Capital City Pride Speaker Series.

Just in time for the inauguration, we welcome V Spehar as our January Speaker Series guest!

V Spehar (they/them) is a Rochester-based LGBTQIA+ podcaster, online personality, and citizen journalist. Spehar launched *Under the Desk News* on TikTok in April 2020 with the aim to make news media less intimidating and easier to understand and rapidly amassed 2.9 million followers.

Their one-minute segments (literally delivered from under a desk) have attracted a bipartisan audience. In 2022, Spehar launched *V Interesting*, a GLAAD-nominated long-form podcast with original reporting that tackles various topics from Gen Z voter engagement to gender-affirming surgery. Their reporting has taken them to the press room of the 2023 State of the Union to hosting the NBC's livestream of the Thanksgiving Day Parade to speaking at UNESCO summits. This year, V received a special achievement Webby for their concise and compassionate reporting.

[Tickets are free, but you must register online.]

Future Speakers



February 7:

Mike & Sally Merritt

Fraud Fighters: Avoiding Scams

March 7:

Susan Woody

Director, Des Moines Public Library

May 2:

Ryan Crane

Executive Direction of NAMI/Iowa
National Alliance On Mental Illness

June 6:

Ian Roberts

Superintendent
Des Moines Public Schools

24/25 SEASON: CAPITAL CITY PRIDE

PRIDE BOOK CLUB

READING IN PUBLIC
BRANDSTORE + CAFE
315 N 5TH STREET, WEST DES MOINES

JANUARY:
ISABEL MILLER
Patience & Sarah
WEDNESDAY, JAN. 22, 6-7 P.M.

oneiowa oneiowa ACTION

Legislative Kickoff 2025

JAN 13th 2025 | 6-8PM
Virtual Event

January Speaker

Jason Clayworth



Jason Clayworth is a reporter for the **Axios** Des Moines office. Axios is a digital newsletter that focuses on local communities and hires local reporters. Clayworth credits the publication's rapid growth due to his team's efforts focusing on local content and local stories. Axios just hit one million subscribers. The Axios Iowa-based hosts cover news, politics, manufacturing, tech, and small business without the bias or hidden agenda.

Jason was hired away from *The Des Moines Register* in December of 2020. Prior to his time at *The Register*, he was with *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*. Clayworth is a lifelong Iowan, and received his degree in journalism and mass communications from Drake University.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

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Rainbow Bowling

WINTER LEAGUE



Open to teams of 2* or 3

*Teams of 2 may be assigned a 3rd player.

Gameday Lanes Merle Hay Mall (lower level)

Rainbow Bowling League is for members of the LGBTQ+ community and allies. You can sign up on the first night of play, January 8th @ 7:00 P.M. Reserve your spot or get more information by contacting Kevin Babcock @ kbbracer@icloud.com.

**THE WINTER LEAGUE RUNS
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2025
THROUGH APRIL 9, 2025.**

(Any postponements due to weather may extend the end date)
Play begins at 7:00 with optional practice starting at 6:50.

\$12 per bowler, per week, plus a 1-time admin fee of \$4.
(\$172 for entire season)

Check out our Facebook group for more informations
- Rainbow League of Central Iowa
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RainbowLeagueDSM>



**"I like the
dreams of the
future better
than the
history of
the past."**



**Thomas
Jefferson**

Methodist Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai Speaks to FFBC

by Gary Moore

On Friday, December 6, 2024, at 7:00 a.m., the guest speaker was **Kennetha Bigham-Tsai**, Bishop for the Iowa Conference of The United Methodist Church as of January of 2023. Bishop Kennetha was introduced to FFBC by The Reverend Dr. Gregory S. Neal, FFBC member and senior pastor at Grace Methodist Church in Des Moines. Rev. Neal is married to FFBC member Kade Rogers. Rev. Neal noted that Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai holds a special place in his admiration for bringing him and his husband to Grace Methodist Church.

Leading vital ministries and initiatives at every level, Kennetha Bigham-Tsai has a proven record of having the courage to tell hard truths with compassion. Her passion for peace and justice ministries and for the health and vitality of the local church was nurtured from an early age. Kennetha grew up in the Baptist church in Austin, Texas. She credits her mother with helping her learn to preach by teaching her a love for words.

After earning a degree in sociology from Harvard University, she served in lay ministry with urban youth in the A.M.E. church and pursued a career in public relations and writing before responding to God's call to professional ministry. She was ordained in The United Methodist Church in 2009.

A sought-after speaker and preacher, Kennetha has led numerous workshops on leadership, church vitality, and cross-racial, cross-cultural ministry and has served at every level of the church. She and her husband, Kee Tsai, have been married since 1994 and have two children, Keeton and Kamden, and a German Shepherd named Kylo. They are committed to a ministry of inclusion that begins at home.

Bishop Kennetha shared with FFBC members her work with the Methodist Church to lead the church to a more welcoming and inclusive LGBTQ+ presence. She reviewed her work on the Correctional Table from 2012 to 2022 as well as her work on the Executive Committee, Chair of Leadership Discernment and Community Life (LDCL), Vice-Chair Missional Administration Group on the General Conference, Human Sexuality Task Force, Legislative Writing Team. This is when she dealt with the issue of reproductive rights, brought people from highly conflicting viewpoints together to listen deeply to one another, and developed legislation via consensus.

“As an African American woman who grew up in the Baptist church, I know what it is to be marginalized. I know what it is to be told that you are not enough, and I know what it is to read the biblical text through the eyes of the marginalized and to know that it is not the Bible that marginalizes us.”

She noted that the Bible is always interpreted and needs to be so realistically, with a progressive activism that seeks to do no harm. The church's struggle with LGBTQ+ issues has been disappointing until recently, but as of May 2024, tears of joy flowed when the General Conference of the Methodist Church adopted rules that allowed gays and lesbians into the clergy and to perform same-sex marriages. About 20% of churches decided to leave the Conference and adopt a traditional stance toward the LGBTQ+ community. In Iowa that is about 15%.

When fighting to further justice and the love one's faith demands, you need to dig deep to find internal resilience to carry on the fight, a resilience that can be found in the core of your beliefs, upbringing, and internal sense of justice.



Kennetha Bigham-Tsai



December Meeting Photo Gallery



Rev. Greg Neal introduces the December speaker, Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai.



FFBC Treasurer, David Wilfahrt, updates members on donations for the 2024-25 scholarship program.



Kade Rogers, Rev. Greg Neal, and speaker Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai

December Meeting Photo Gallery





Queer

A Movie Review by Mark Turnage



Inspired from the novel of the same name by queer author William S. Burroughs, director Luca Guadagnino's "Queer" employs both modern and golden-age film techniques such as film noir cinematography, miniature sets, and a time-displaced soundtrack to paint an impressionist and surrealist spiral of a tenuous, drug-fueled 50s-era gay romance. But are its depictions of period LGBT characters authentic, despite cinema's problematic history of portraying them?

Daniel Craig plays William Lee, a gay American writer and expatriate who lives loudly in both flamboyance and tequila-soaked false confidence in (queer-tolerant?) 1950s Mexico City—often, too loudly and messily for the younger, more discrete men he pursues. The veracity of his emotional pursuits also make him alien and bold for his time and place: public affection, a consistent partner, and emotional intimacy, to name a few. Though not explicitly stated, encountering rejection and experiencing acute loneliness in these areas trigger Lee's drunken and heroin-fueled spirals, despite his own miserable social awkwardness to start with. But when he spies Eugene Allerton, a trim, twunky American GI, he quickly becomes enamored to the point of fixation, following Allerton around the city like a shadow. But Allerton coyly tolerates Lee's advances, returning Lee's lust with long, smoldering smirks and occasional interest—when he isn't being ambiguously close with his lady companion, that is. Lee can't stand ambiguity, but Allerton thrives in it—and

it makes great drama for the bar regulars. Between boozy nights and bar-light conversations, Allerton's interest in Lee deepens and the time they spend together grows — but are either of them good for the other? More deeply, does it matter to either one if they aren't?

For those expecting any trace of Craig's time as Bond in this role, think again—Lee is the anti-Bond: gay, unkempt, depressed, more cringe than suave, and a sloppy drunk with a penchant for making a scene when his idea of romance doesn't pan out (somehow, both "daddy" and "brat"). Despite these foibles, Lee keeps a few friends (such as a bearish Jason Schwartzman) and a few catty frenemies as part of his gay social network, and though brief, it fills out the life Lee has, barren as it is. "Queer" portrays the feeling of being the object of social disgust *exceptionally* well, but for his sake, Lee earns it with Craig's go-for-broke portrayal of his lack of self-preservation. The pistol his character openly displays is more dramatic irony for his machismo than anything Chekov.

Lee's often brazen pursuit of intimacy does feel like an unbelievable high-risk luxury in a time-period notorious for its violent homophobia—but Guadagnino's exploration of this subject is never as a physically-manifested threat to the gay men onscreen. Instead, it's the internalized phobia of intimacy within its gay characters that's a far greater obstacle—it's passionate, addictive beauty, yet also its messiness and destructive tendencies. To his credit, the gay sex scenes are filmed more

passionately than explicitly, and allow the viewer's imagination to fill in most of the erotic blanks. Daniel Craig's backside also helps.

"Queer's" portrayal of 1950s Mexico City is also one of duality: at night, the city is gorgeously cloaked in shadows, negative space, and dreamlike neon, yet in the day, becomes sun-bleached, sprawling, and visually surreal. The film's third act branches off into what seems like a tangential quest element that feels disassociated from the main narrative—yet the motif of feeling "disembodied" echoes memorably throughout the narrative, emblematic of the time's necessity of hidden romance, but also unsaid desire. In retrospect, though the pacing of the first and third acts could be streamlined, the slow pacing could also be deliberate emotional structure for the audience to match Lee's own on-screen frustrations and inebriated benders.

At a time when much of Western culture veers to the conservative social mores of the 50s, it's bold to see a film with a frank, messy and explicit depiction of gay romance in theaters. See "Queer" with your Good Judys in theaters.



LGBTQ+ Philanthropy



Which organizations will you financially support in 2025?

<p>First Friday Breakfast Club</p> <p>ffbciowa.org</p>	<p>Pride Sports League</p> <p>pridesportsleague.org</p>	<p>Human Rights Campaign</p> <p>hrc.org</p>	<p>Lavender Legal Center</p> <p>lavenderlegalcenter.org</p>	<p>Capital Bears</p> <p>CAPITAL BEARS DES • MOINES • IOWA capitalbears.org</p>
<p>ACLU of Iowa</p> <p>aclu-ia.org</p>	<p>Imperial Court of Iowa</p> <p>imperialcourtofiowa.org</p>	<p>Rainbow Railroad</p> <p>rainbowrailroad.org</p>	<p>One Iowa</p> <p>oneiowa.org</p>	<p>Q Exchange</p> <p>Exchange connecting families creating community facebook.com/theqexchangedsm</p>
<p>The Project</p> <p>phctheproject.org</p>	<p>The Trevor Project</p> <p>thetrevorproject.org</p>		<p>GLSEN</p> <p>glsen.org</p>	<p>Des Moines Gay Men's Chorus</p> <p>DES MOINES GAY MEN'S CHORUS dmgmc.org</p>
<p>Clock, Inc.</p> <p>clockinc.org</p>	<p>Iowa Safe Schools</p> <p>iowasafeschools.org</p>	<p>Iowa Trans Mutual Aid Fund</p> <p>iowatransmutualaidfund.org</p>	<p>Prime Timers of Central Iowa</p> <p>Private Facebook Group</p>	<p>It Gets Better Project</p> <p>itgetsbetter.org</p>
<p>Des Moines Pride Center</p> <p>desmoinespridecenter.org</p>	<p>Des Moines Diversity Chorus</p> <p>desmoinesdiversitychorus.org</p>	<p>Transformations Iowa</p> <p>www.facebook.com/transformationsiowa</p>	<p>Common Love</p> <p>www.facebook.com/monlovedsm</p>	<p>Capital City Pride</p> <p>capitalcitypride.org</p>



Global Neighbors



by Supervisor **Matt McCoy**
Polk County, 1st District

Polk County's immigrant and refugee population are a rich and vital aspect which help us make up our diverse community. At a time when we are hearing negative comments about new Americans and refugees, Polk County has decided to support and welcome refugees and new immigrants to our county.

A central piece of this initiative is the establishment of a **Global Neighbors** resource center. This center will be open to all new immigrants and refugees to Polk County and will become a one-stop shop to assist new residents with employment, childcare, social services, medical and vaccinations, and other mundane tasks like driver's licenses and taxes. Our workforce in Polk County, already diverse and attracting new talent, is vital to our economic success.

This global initiative investment will require about a \$3.7 million investment in an existing Polk County-owned building for the design and buildout. Polk County has partnered with BBS Architects & Engineering who have donated their services to design a state-of-the-art facility that will house navigators from the immigrant and refugee communities as well as community partners who are already doing work in this space but will now be all under one roof. Polk County has hired a full-time director who will manage the services offered in this building to ensure that new residents get the services that they need to be successful. This building will include two classrooms, a computer lab, and three medical exam rooms as well as breakout space and offices for case managers and navigators. The vision is that Polk County will play a vital role in getting people started in our community on the right foot with the resources they need and the information to help them with everyday challenges in moving to a new country and understanding cultural differences that can be overwhelming to someone new who may or may not have English as their first language.

The buildout for this facility will occur this coming spring with a targeted opening in summer 2025. Some of the funds for this buildout will be coming from the American Rescue Plan Act; thanks to the Biden Administration for their efforts for the vital work we do in local government.

Board of Directors

David Cotton	Gene Larson
Jim Flansburg	Deb Madison-Levi
Ken Hanson	Wade Petersen
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Byron Huff	David Wilfahrt
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Jonathan Wilson (Emeritus)

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Publication



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Masterplan Floor Plan



- ENTRY
- LOBBY / LIVING ROOM
- EDUCATION
- BROADLAWNS SERVICES
- SHARED SPACES
- ECBO SERVICES
- POLK COUNTY ADMINISTRATION
- DMPS SERVICES

