



# First Friday



# News & Views

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

April 2025 | Volume 30 | Issue 4

## Next Meeting

**Friday,**  
**April 4**  
**7:00 a.m.**



## Location

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



## Speaker

**Greg Edwards**  
**CEO of**  
**Catch**  
**Des Moines**



## Website

**ffbc Iowa**  
**.org**



## Investing in Arts and Culture

by Byron Huff, Board President

I hope that all of you can join us for our speaker, Greg Edwards, who has been CEO of Catch Des Moines since 2000. The organization represents 15 communities and over 17,000 tourism-related jobs. Last year, the region hosted three million visitors, with an economic impact of two billion dollars just in Dallas and Polk counties. Mr. Edwards has announced that he will be retiring later this year.

Arts and culture are integral to societal well-being; they offer a multitude of benefits that enhance both individual lives and community dynamics. They serve as conduits for expression, foster social cohesion, bolster economies, and contribute to overall health. However, the extent of these benefits often correlates with the level of support and funding provided by state and local governments. In examining Iowa's commitment to the arts, it becomes evident that while the state acknowledges the value of arts and culture, its financial support lags behind that of its neighboring states, potentially limiting the full spectrum of benefits that robust arts funding can deliver.



## Societal Benefits of Arts & Culture



**Economic Prosperity:** Investment in the arts stimulates local economies by supporting job growth, attracting tourism, and revitalizing communities. For instance, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that the arts and culture sector contributes \$4.2 billion to Iowa's economy, representing 2.1% of the state's GDP.

**Health and Well-being:** Engagement with the arts has been linked to improved mental and physical health. Recent research indicates that participating in cultural activities can reduce stress, alleviate symptoms of mental illness, and enhance overall quality of life.

**Social Cohesion:** Arts and cultural events bring people together, fostering a sense of community and belonging. They provide platforms for shared experiences and dialogues, strengthening communal bonds.

**Educational Development:** Exposure to the arts enhances creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. These competencies are essential for personal development and are highly valued in the modern workforce.

[continued on page 2]



## ["Investing in Arts and Culture" continued from page 1]

Despite the recognized benefits, Iowa's investment in the arts is relatively modest. The state allocates approximately \$0.32 per capita to arts funding, ranking 46th nationally. This level of investment is below the national average of around \$1 per person and is less than that of many Midwestern and peer states.

In contrast, neighboring states like Minnesota exemplify robust support for the arts. Minnesota leads the nation in per capita spending on state arts agencies, a position bolstered by the Legacy Amendment—a 25-year commitment to investing in clean water, land, and cultural heritage, including the arts. This substantial funding has facilitated a thriving arts scene, contributing to the state's economic vitality and community well-being.

Wisconsin, however, allocates even less than Iowa, ranking 49th in per capita arts funding. This underinvestment may limit the potential economic and social benefits that a vibrant arts sector can provide.



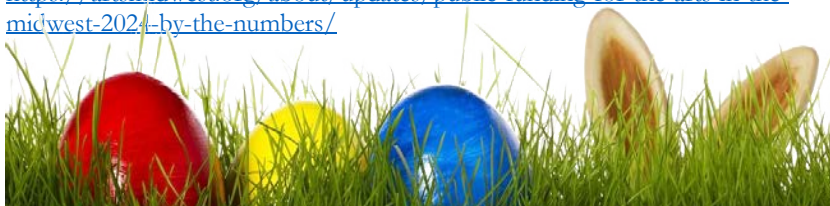
### Iowa's relatively low investment in the arts may have several implications:

- **Economic Limitations:** Insufficient funding can hinder the growth of the creative economy, limiting job creation and economic diversification.
- **Health and Social Services:** Reduced support for arts programs can diminish opportunities for community engagement and the associated health benefits, potentially increasing reliance on other social services.
- **Educational Constraints:** Underfunding the arts in education may result in fewer opportunities for students to develop critical skills, affecting their preparedness for future careers.

Arts and culture are vital components of a thriving society, offering economic, health, social, and educational benefits. While Iowa recognizes these advantages, its current level of financial support is comparatively low, especially when juxtaposed with neighboring states like Minnesota. Enhancing investment in the arts could unlock significant benefits for Iowa's communities, fostering a more vibrant, healthy, and economically robust state.

### Sources:

<https://penntoday.upenn.edu/2011-10-13/features/measuring-social-economic-benefits-art-and-culture>  
[https://www.artsactionfund.org/sites/artsactionfund.org/files/2019-07/Why%20the%20Arts%20Matter%20in%20Iowa\\_1.pdf](https://www.artsactionfund.org/sites/artsactionfund.org/files/2019-07/Why%20the%20Arts%20Matter%20in%20Iowa_1.pdf)  
<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/lifestyle/health-benefits-of-arts-and-culture/news-story/29cecba7a46efb51521cabea4d90198b>  
<https://www.iowaculturalcoalition.com/resources/>  
<https://artsmidwest.org/about/updates/public-funding-for-the-arts-in-the-midwest-2024-by-the-numbers/>



Thanks to FFBC Board member **David Wilfahrt** for introducing our March meeting speaker, **Susan Woody**, from the Des Moines Public Library. 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 of the great contributors to our newsletter!*

The **deadline** for the **May newsletter** will be **April 21**.

If you have something that you would like to share, type it up and email it to Wade ([wadecpetersen@gmail.com](mailto: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.





# CATCH DES MOINES

April Speaker

## Greg Edwards



Greg Edwards has been CEO of **Catch Des Moines** since 2000, having moved here after similar stints in Overland Park, Kansas, and Peoria, Illinois.

Des Moines' bureau was formed in 1908. Its mission, Edwards says, is simple, "Increase visitors." One of the strengths of Catch Des Moines is its regional emphasis representing 15 communities and over 17,000 tourism-related jobs. Catch Des Moines' major funding comes from 2/7 of the hotel/motel tax. The tax dollars are augmented by contributions of more than 635 corporate and marketing partners that provide an additional \$1 million.

The major work of Catch Des Moines is to develop leads and recruit groups to come to Des Moines. That includes large and small conventions as well as events and meetings. No matter what size the meeting, it provides an opportunity that will lead to more visits in the future. Last year, Catch Des Moines developed 480 leads – 293 turned into booked business with an additional 101 still in progress. Describing those numbers as excellent, he noted that Catch Des Moines' efforts return \$19 for every dollar of tax money it receives.

*20th Annual*  
**Governor's  
Conference  
Reception**

**iowa  
safe  
schools**

HELP US FUND  
STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS!

**Thursday, April 10  
5 PM | Big Grove DSM**

This reception is for adults and community members to come together and raise money towards scholarships for students to attend. No student has ever been turned away for their inability to pay for the conference. This is only made possible because of sponsorships and community members at this reception!



**PRIDE  
SPORTS LEAGUE  
OF CENTRAL IOWA**

**SKATE  
SOCIAL [RETRO PARTY]**  
70s/80s/90s

**SATURDAY  
APRIL  
26<sup>TH</sup>**

**8:30<sup>PM</sup> - 10:30<sup>PM</sup>  
@ SKATE SOUTH  
10494 COUNTY LINE RD, DES MOINES**

**\$5** FOR ALL  
PRE-REGISTERED GUESTS  
(LIMIT 100 GUESTS)

AT DOOR PRICES ARE  
\$10 FOR SKATERS  
\$5 FOR NON-SKATERS

**OPEN TO ALL  
BRING YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY!**



## How We Got Where We Are Part 1: Dumbing-Down America

by Jonathan Wilson

To say that our country is polarized politically would be an understatement. How we got here may be worth exploring in two parts. First the dumbing-down.

Jesus told a story about a good shepherd who had 100 sheep, and one got lost. In the story, the shepherd left the 99 (presumably in the care of an assistant) and went in search of the lost sheep. That sets the standard for good shepherds. But, there's another, underlying lesson. The lost sheep didn't just run off and get lost; it nibbled its way and, eventually, lifted its head and, voilà, it was lost. So it is with where we are in this polarized country and how we got here.

I could probably start with the founding of the country and the stain of human slavery, but that would require a book, or two. Instead, I start with the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in (aptly named) *Brown v. Board of Education*. That decision was well intentioned in its conclusion that racially separate public schools are inevitably unequal. The court was right; the ruling held that racially identifiable schools were illegal, but it added, "within a school district." That qualifier locked, literally in concrete, the boundaries between public school districts. That, in turn, led to resegregation in metro areas and their "lily white" suburbs, and savage inequalities. You'd do well by reading the book by that name, *Savage Inequalities*, by Jonathan Kozol. Nibble, nibble.

Then, making inequality more egregious, Republicans have managed consistently to underfund public schools that accept all students, whatever their special needs. More recently, they have managed to siphon off tax dollars to get funding for private schools that can be more selective about incoming students. Quality education depends less on class size than it does on the spectrum of



First Friday Breakfast Club  
Founder **Jonathan Wilson**

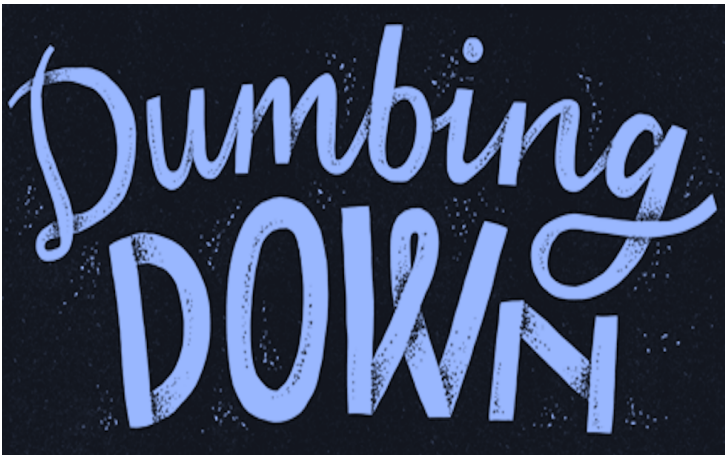
student needs in the classrooms. If the math teacher says, "Turn to the next page for today's lesson," and every student turns to the same page (regardless of class size), more teaching and learning can take place. Nibble, nibble.

Public schools lost a hidden "subsidy" helping "fund" quality education in our public schools. A few decades ago, if a bright, capable woman wanted to be employed outside the home, she could be a nurse, secretary, or teacher. If she chose teaching, she would routinely be paid less than her male colleagues. When opportunities in other, more lucrative, occupations became more accessible to women, many women were understandably attracted to those alternatives. The result? We lost capable, underpaid female teachers who taught due to dedication. We still have capable, dedicated female teachers, but not as many as otherwise would have been the case. Their similarly dedicated predecessors were subsidizing quality education, and that subsidy was never replaced. To the contrary; re-read the last paragraph. Nibble, nibble.

Those teachers, in turn, have to deal with dumbed-down parents who went through school as students, clueless that there was such a thing as a well-considered lesson plan. Nibble, nibble.

I am partially a product of that dumbing down; I recently reviewed a 1925 *Iowa State Eighth Grade Examination Question Book* to be answered by eighth graders before moving on to high school. I doubt that I'd be able to pass it despite four years of high school, four years of college, and three years of law school, where I performed well compared to my classmates. For many years, Iowa schools ranked **FIRST** on national standardized tests. Today Iowa schools aren't even close to that, outranked by neighboring states like Nebraska, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Nibble, nibble.

The dumbing-down, over time, makes our population and voters more vulnerable to political manipulation. That will be the subject of **Part 2**.








2024-25  
**CAPITAL CITY PRIDE**  
**SPEAKER SERIES**  
**Mercury Stardust**  
 Join Mercury Stardust, the "Trans Handy Ma'am," for an inspiring evening of advocacy, trans joy, and empowerment. Hear her share stories, advice, and insights on building a more inclusive world!  
 THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 6-7 P.M.  
 TEMPLE THEATRE  
 PREREGISTRATION REQUIRED  
 PRESENTED BY **FG** ANNUITIES & LIFE



**20TH ANNUAL**  
**GOV CON**  
 iowa safe schools  
**APRIL 11TH, 2025**  
 PRAIRIE MEADOWS EVENTS CENTER  
 REGISTER NOW  
 IAGOVCON.ORG



**"Governor Reynolds has chosen to put Iowa on the wrong side of history. By signing this bill into law, she has made it legal to discriminate against transgender Iowans in nearly every aspect of life — where they live, where they work, and where they go to school. This law sends a devastating message: that transgender Iowans are not worthy of the same rights, dignity, and protections as their neighbors."**

**- Max Mowitz, Executive Director One Iowa**

# 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





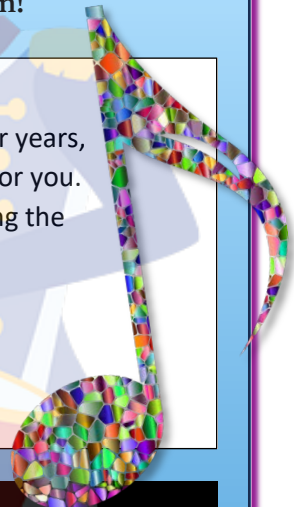
# Strike up the Band!

Are you ready to make some noise and celebrate the beautiful spectrum of our LGBTIQ+ community through music? Inspired by the vibrant [Pride Bands Alliance](#), we're starting a new journey here in Greater Des Moines (and beyond) to create ensembles that reflect the talent, dynamics, and energy of our community.

Whether you're a seasoned musician, an enthusiastic beginner, or someone who loves being part of a team, there's a place for you! We're kicking things off with plans to form a marching & pep band to premiere at Capital City Pridefest. Not into marching? No worries – hop on the literal OR figurative bandwagon!

## We've got room for everyone:

- **Musicians & Noise Makers:** From first-chair players to those dusting off their instruments after years, or have never played, we'd love to have you. From cowbells to kazoos, there's an instrument for you.
- **Vibes Crew:** Color guard, baton twirlers, rifle tossers, flag corps, and all things radical joy—bring the flair, energy, and movement that make every performance unforgettable!
- **Behind-the-scenes Supporters:** Logistics, music licensing, design, costumes, board members, community organizers, and everything else that keeps the show on the road.
- **Band Together - Sponsorships & Donations:** Want to donate? Your financial support enables access to music, instruments, space rental, and more. Let us know how you'd like to pitch in.



## Who's Welcome?

Anyone who identifies within or supports the LGBTIQ+ community – because building this ensemble is about more than music. It's about creating spaces to connect, express, and uplift one another.

Band members must be 16+, but younger marchers are welcome to join us for the parade!

We're building a space for everyone – whether you're just learning, can march, toss, or play, **there's always a part for you.**

Let's create something extraordinary together.

**Help us spread the word by sharing this form with others who might want to join or support.**

**Let's start this journey together! Tell us a bit about yourself below, your interests, and how you'd like to contribute.**

[Link to Google Doc Form](#)

IOWA PRIDE ENSEMBLES	
4.6	1:00 - 2:30 PM FIRST REHEARSAL!
4.27	1:00 - 2:30 PM SECTIONALS AND REHEARSAL
5.10	1:00 - 2:30 pm *Saturday SECTIONALS AND REHEARSAL
5.25	1:00 - 2:30 PM SECTIONALS AND REHEARSAL
6.1	1:00 - 2:30 PM REHEARSAL + MARCHING
6.8	TIME TBD CAPITOL CITY PRIDE PARADE

Rehearsals are at Indian Hills Jr. High | 9401 Indian Hills Dr, Clive





## Travels with Ken & Wade

by Wade Petersen

Ken Hanson and Wade Petersen spent 2 ½ weeks in Europe last fall, making stops in several countries, to celebrate their 15<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary (23 years together) and Wade's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. Articles in the newsletter feature their experiences.

A two-hour train ride took us from Venice to **Florence, Italy**. Florence is the capital of Italy's Tuscany region and has many masterpieces of Renaissance art and architecture.

Our first afternoon visit brought us to the **Uffizi Gallery**, situated in a edifice built between 1560 and 1580. The Uffizi is the most visited art gallery in Italy and is known for its collection of ancient sculptures and paintings from the Middle Ages. The most famous, priceless painting in the Uffizi is Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* (1485).



Since our hotel was right in the heart of the city, we took advantage of wandering around the streets and squares before enjoying a wonderful dinner.

Florence contains another essential gem for art lovers: the **Accademia Gallery** (*Galleria dell'Accademia*). It's hard to believe that any gay man would pass up the opportunity to see the marble statue of Michelangelo's *David* (created 1501-1504). The enormous statue provokes awe, not only as one approaches, but also in the gallery where one can walk around the entirety of the statue, to appreciate all its "assets." "Nor has there ever been seen a pose so fluent, or a gracefulness equal to this" (Vasari). Michelangelo sculpted the statue from a single block of stone; he believed the artist's task was to sculpt the block to reveal the ideal form within. He believed that he was "liberating" figures that already existed in the stone.



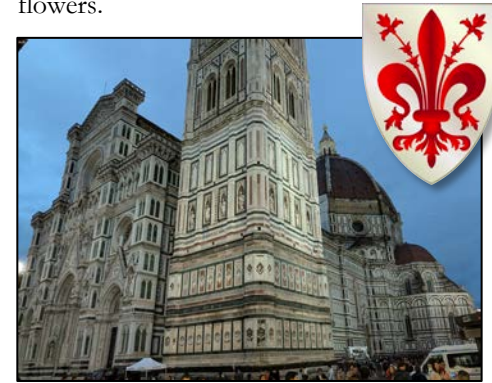
Our lunchtime was spent at the **Mercato Centrale**. This indoor market is a food-lover's delight (imagine various butchers and curing sausages). Outside this market is the famous **San Lorenzo leather market**. The vendors are anxious to sell you leather belts, purses, and jackets in a variety of styles and colors. Beware...this is also an area where the pickpockets are at their worst! At one of the booths, I bought a cap from a vendor who had been to Iowa and had visited Ames and Des Moines...what a small world!



Our travel stories and photos will continue next month with our visit to Rome.



The most prominent architecture in Florence rises to pierce the skyline with its dome. The Florence Cathedral, known as the **Duomo**, was started in 1296 and completed in 1436. Its magnificent dome was engineered by Filippo Brunelleschi. The cathedral is a masterpiece of Gothic and Renaissance architecture and is still one of the largest churches in the world. The external walls are covered in white, red, and green marble with geometric figures and flowers.



Visitor guides suggested that we climb to **Piazzale Michelangelo**, a square that overlooks the entire city, for the best views (see photo below). Even though the climb and stairs were hard on our legs, we took advantage of this to soak in the stunning beauty that is Florence (or *Firenze* in Italian). This birthplace of the Renaissance did not disappoint!



# Common Love: Queer & Clothed



Join us on the **2nd Saturday of each month** from 1-3 PM at **Park Fair Mall Suite 107** for a joyful community space offering free clothing and gender-affirming care. The clothing available is donated by the community – come grab what you need/want to express who you are. If you don't find the gender-affirming product you're looking for, we can purchase something for you! We often have community members offering supportive care – such as binder fittings, makeup consults, clothing alternations, and more. *Please note we cannot accept clothing donations on pop-up days.*

There will be a few changing stations to try items on and two gender-neutral bathrooms. Park by the main entrance of Park Fair Mall near Ace Hardware. Come in the main entrance and head down the elevator, stairs, or escalator to Suite 107 (home of Central Iowa Center for Independent Living).

## Get involved with the project!

- Follow on Instagram or Facebook @commonlovedsm
- Email us at [hello@commonlovedsm.com](mailto:hello@commonlovedsm.com)
- Shop our next pop-up on **April 12, 2025**, from 1-3 p.m. at **Park Fair Mall, Suite #107**
- **Donate:** [www.pledge.to/queer-clothed](http://www.pledge.to/queer-clothed)



DON'T MISS THIS POWERFUL CONVERSATION ON RESILIENCE, PROGRESS, AND INCLUSION!

## CAPITAL CITY PRIDE

# SERVING WITH PRIDE

### INTERGENERATIONAL PANEL DISCUSSION

Hear firsthand stories from LGBTQ+ veterans and service members on navigating military life through changing policies—from past bans to today's challenges.

THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 6 P.M. | TEMPLE THEATER

## IOWA LGBTQ CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Iowa LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce is working together to advance the common business interests, economic growth, and equality in the workplace for Iowa's LGBTQ+ business community and its allies.

# [iowalgbtqchamber.org](http://iowalgbtqchamber.org)

# Future Speakers

**May 2:**

**Ryan Crane**

Executive Director NAMI/Iowa  
National Alliance On Mental Illness

**June 6:**

**Dr. Ian Roberts**

Superintendent  
Des Moines Public Schools

**July 12:**

**Member/Donor  
Summer Party**

**August 1:**

**Brent Johnson**

President, Iowa Farm Bureau

**September 5:**

**Carl Voss**

DSM City Council Member

**November 7:**

**Matt Blake**

Iowa State Senator



# Checking It Out

by Gary Moore



First Friday Breakfast Club's March speaker was **Susan Woody**, the Des Moines Public Library Director. This writer has had the opportunity to listen to Ms. Woody on several occasions, and in each, she has shared her enthusiasm, expertise, and joy in support of the Des Moines library system. She has been with the library for 20 years and has been the director for the last six years. She earned a Master's degree in library and information science from the University of North Texas.

Most are amazed at the wide variety of services available through the Des Moines Public Libraries. Libraries are here to strengthen our community by connecting people to ideas and tools. They need to enrich their lives. Libraries started out as a depository for information. Today, we know that only scratches the surface of what libraries provide. There is so much information and misinformation. Libraries are places for everyone. We need to exercise our brains. We need to be lifelong learners, and a library provides whatever information you're looking for for free so that you can learn what you want to learn.

"Libraries help preserve our history, and a library is a place to experience new things. We have added a new library called the Library of Things, and there are amazing things for you to check out. There's camping equipment. There's a radon detector, there's kitchen equipment, there's games and puzzles. And even more, I won't go through these, but use our meeting rooms. Use our study rooms. We even have notaries at the library," Woody shared.

But probably more important than all of the services that can be explored at your public library in Des Moines is the fundamental **Bill of Rights for Libraries** and their protection during these difficult times. Libraries should provide materials that present all points of view. A person's right should not be denied because of age, origin, or background views. The libraries don't want to say what your child can or cannot read. States should not legislate that, churches should not legislate. It should be a parent's decision with their family what they read. "Libraries should advocate for and protect people's privacy. We don't tell what people check out. That's their own business." The Articles of the **Library Bill of Rights** are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries.

## Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

*\* Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019. Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.*

So what are today's concerns? There are current bills before our legislature that would limit funds going to libraries that have staff joining professional organizations. There are other bills to broaden the definition of obscenity, and there are bills to politicize the control of libraries.

The city of Des Moines provides the lion's share of funding for the library (with help from the library's generous foundation). When the city is squeezed by mandates and legislation from federal and state sources, the library is squeezed as well.



Susan Woody





# March Meeting Photo Gallery

# March



**Damian Thompson**  
Iowa Safe Schools



**Rachel Gulick**  
Iowa Pride Ensembles



**Ryan Rohlf**  
Iowa LGBTQ  
Chamber of Commerce



**David Wilfahrt**  
Introduction of Speaker





# Conclave

A Movie Review by Mark Turnage



It would be easy to assume director Edward Berger's "Conclave" is a religious drama due to its hushed seriousness, Vatican City setting, and ensemble star power, but it's actually more of a smartly written political thriller in cardinal's robes. While its pacing and dialogue demand rapt attention, "Conclave" contrasts meticulous architecture and ornate tradition with human vanities and doubts to reframe its complex subject matter engagingly, with surprising thematic connections to the state and country's current political moment.

Based on the 2016 book by Robert Harris, "Conclave" opens much the way a political thriller would: in pursuit of a shadowy, faceless figure at an urgent pace, holding a briefcase. Yet this protagonist is far from the morally ambiguous hero of the political thriller. He may be suffering from a personal crisis of faith, but Thomas Lawrence (a compelling Ralph Fiennes), Dean of

the College of Cardinals, has strong convictions regarding his job and its significance, and what kind of man should succeed the papacy following the Pope's death from a heart attack: a noble-spirited one. Yet Lawrence is also steadfastly determined to adhere to tradition and fairness, to a fault. Four Cardinals emerge as frontrunners: Aldo Bellini (Stanley Tucci), a progressive from the U.S.; Joseph Tremblay (John Lithgow), a moderate from Canada; Joshua Adeyemi (Lucian Msamati), a social conservative from Nigeria; and Goffredo Tedesco, (Sergio Castellitto), a right-wing conservative from Italy. Yet as Conclave commences and the election process unfolds, suspicious circumstances arise, and Lawrence becomes embroiled in a mystery of papal intrigue.

"Conclave" avoids getting into the weeds of dry election process, instead favoring stunning cinematography, its own character

struggles and escalating action of its central mystery. As complications of increasing severity affect the chances of the papal candidates, the stakes rise, but into believable and urgent proportions. Yet its parallels to the modern political sphere are impeccably timely—election rigging, muck-racking, scandal, and the global response to social and political conservatism, to name a few—that if you switched the costumes and setting, it would translate all too well to an American election. It could be argued that Lawrence is too idealistic and hopeful to be a realistic character, but as the film's spiritual barometer, it's a refreshing cinematic take to have an institutional religious figure champion ideas like compassion, pacifism, and multiculturalism. What a concept! The urgency of its mystery also fuels its pacing despite being heavily dialogue/monologue driven, with its character beats not unlike Biblical morality tales. Yet fortunately, it never gets too preachy with its message. See "Conclave" streaming on the Peacock app.

CONCLAVE





# National LGBTQ+ Calendar



- April 6: International Asexuality Day
- April 10: National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
- Third Friday of April: Day of Silence
- April 18: National Transgender HIV Testing Day
- April 18: Nonbinary Parents Day
- April 26: Lesbian Visibility Day



## Jesus at the Gay Bar

by Jay Hulme



He's here in the midst of it – right at the centre of the dance floor, robes hitched up to His knees to make it easy to spin.

At some point in the evening a boy will touch the hem of His robe and beg to be healed, beg to be anything other than this;

and He will reach His arms out, sweat-damp, and weary from dance. He'll cup the boy's face in His hand and say,

*my beautiful child there is nothing in this heart of yours that ever needs to be healed.*

UPCOMING EVENTS

**MAR 24 - APR 28** **SPRING PICKLEBALL**  
MONDAYS @ MIDAMERICAN ENERGY CO. RECREX

**APR 26** **SPRING SKATE SOCIAL**  
RETRO SKATE PARTY OPEN TO ALL @ SKATE SOUTH // LINK IN BIO TO REGISTER

OPEN PRACTICE APRIL 23

**APR 30 - JUN 4** **SPRING SOFTBALL**  
WEDNESDAYS @ CAMPBELL RECREATION AREA  
REGISTRATION OPENS 03-28-25

[NO MEMORIAL DAY]

**MAY 5 - JUN 30** **SPRING SAND VOLLEYBALL**  
MONDAYS @ CAMPBELL RECREATION AREA  
REGISTRATION OPENS 03-21-25

OPEN CLINIC TBA

**JULY 9 - AUG 20** **KICKBALL**  
WEDNESDAYS @ CAMPBELL RECREATION AREA  
REGISTRATION OPENS 06-01-25

[NO LABOR DAY]

**JULY 28 - SEP 30** **SUMMER SAND VOLLEYBALL**  
MONDAYS @ CAMPBELL RECREATION AREA  
REGISTRATION OPENS 06-01-25

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

BIG GAY TRIVIA

BRING YOUR FRIENDS AND YOUR BRAIN POWER FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT OF TRIVIA.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5TH  
7-9 PM; DOORS OPEN AT 6:30

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
517 SW Des Moines St



**David Cotton**

# Thank You!

FFBC Vice President, David Cotton, is moving to Palm Springs. We are so thankful for all of his time, dedication, and technical skills in such a variety of roles. You have made First Friday Breakfast Club a better organization.



## Board of Directors

Jim Flansburg      Deb Madison-Levi  
Ken Hanson        Wade Petersen  
Brad Holland        Joe Raetz  
Byron Huff         Beverly Smith  
Scott Kuknyo       David Wilfahrt  
Gene Larson         Phil Williams

Jonathan Wilson (Emeritus)

Contact Us: [info@ffbc Iowa.org](mailto:info@ffbc Iowa.org)

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**David Wilfahrt**  
Treasurer



## Newsletter and Website Editor

**Wade Petersen**

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## Publication



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FFBC Board  
of Directors

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# Deadline Approaches for FFBC Scholarship Donations

Last June, the FFBC awarded a record **16** scholarships of **\$3,000** each, due to the generosity of our donors. **We cannot do this without your support!** We are nearing the end of our fiscal year for scholarship donations on **April 30**. If you have not yet donated, we hope you will give it serious consideration.

We have received **34** **applications** from Iowa high school seniors for the FFBC scholarships this year, showing not only the need for financial assistance, but for the continued work of these students to advocate for inclusion, to fight homophobia, and to educate their schools and communities about LGBTQ+ issues. FFBC contacts every high school in the state of Iowa with a letter and brochure about the scholarship. The committee also compiles an email list of every counselor in the state. This allows us to send a follow-up email with a digital version of application materials.



These young people have served as an inspiration for their LGBTQ+ peers – standing up to bullies, fighting through adversity, brushing off judgment, and leading by example. Strong student leaders can often make the difference for LGBTQ+ students who might struggle at home, in their churches, and in their schools. Our scholars really do show them a better path.

Scholarship requests go through a rigorous scoring process to select the recipients, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity to award those who have distinguished themselves through courageous efforts. The Board of Directors and Scholarship Committee members put in many hours of work without compensation because we believe in the mission of FFBC. This means that **100%** of your donation goes **directly** to these brave students; not many nonprofits can make that statement.



We look forward to the in-person presentation of the scholarships this year on **June 6, 2025**, in the beautiful art gallery of Hoyt Sherman Place. Please consider making a donation (small or large) and join us for this heartwarming event. **We sincerely thank you for your financial consideration!**

