



First Friday **PRIDE** Edition News & Views

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

June 2025 | Volume 30 | Issue 6

Next Meeting

**Friday,
June 6
7:00 a.m.**



Location

**Hoyt Sherman
15th & Woodland
Des Moines**



Speaker

Dr. Ian Roberts

**Superintendent
Des Moines
Public Schools**



Website

ffbc Iowa.org



Higher (Priced) Education

by Byron Huff, Board President

I hope you can join us the first Friday in June for our scholarship awards and to hear Dr. Ian Roberts, Superintendent of Des Moines Public Schools, speak. During our ceremony, FFBC will award **a record 20 scholarships** of **\$3,000 each!**

FFBC scholarships have continued to show their importance as we receive numerous applications and award a record number of scholarships. At the recent Iowa Safe Schools Governor's Conference, five students were told they had been awarded FFBC scholarships, bringing them and those nearby to tears. This is the reason we are here and do what we do; we are here to support students who have shown bravery and stood up for the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals.

The escalating cost of post-secondary education in Iowa is becoming an increasingly pressing issue, affecting students and families across the state. From community colleges to public universities and private institutions, tuition rates are climbing, leading to higher student debt burdens and raising concerns about the affordability of higher education.

In the 2024 fiscal year, Iowa's community colleges experienced a 3.6% increase in average in-state tuition, bringing the cost to \$198.15 per credit hour. Mandatory fees also rose by 1.6%, averaging \$15.13 per credit hour. Notably, Des Moines Area Community College offers the lowest tuition and fees at \$185 per credit hour, while Northwest Iowa Community College charges the highest at \$230 per credit hour (*Iowa Capital Dispatch* 10.5.2023).

At the University of Iowa, the estimated total cost of attendance for in-state graduate students living on or off-campus for the 2025–2026 academic year is \$37,787. This includes tuition and fees of \$13,425, housing and food at \$18,886, and additional expenses (University of Iowa Office of Financial Aid file, 2025-2026 FAFSA).

The introduction of Iowa's Education Savings Account (ESA) program, which provides over \$7,600 annually per pupil for private school education, has coincided with a 25% increase in private school tuition rates. This surge raises concerns about the program's effectiveness in making private education more accessible (*Axios* 5.22.2024).

[continued on page 2]



Don't Miss the Record-Breaking

20 Scholarship Awards

To Be Given Out This Month at the FFBC Ceremony!



["Higher (Priced) Education" continued from page 1]

As tuition costs rise, so does student debt. In the first half of 2024, the average student loan balance in Iowa increased by \$1,636, reaching \$31,829. While this is below the national average of \$38,883, it still represents a significant financial burden for many (*Iowa Stacker News Connect* 9.23.2024).

Data indicates that 13.2% of Iowa residents carry student loan debt, totaling \$13.1 billion. Among these borrowers, 52.7% are under the age of 35, highlighting the impact on younger populations (*Education Data Initiative* 10.15.2024).

Student debt in Iowa is not confined to recent graduates. Borrowers aged 35 to 49 owe an average of \$39,199, totaling \$5.19 billion, while those aged 50 to 61 carry an average debt of \$39,689, amounting to \$2.04 billion. Even individuals aged 62 and older owe an average of \$38,830 (*Education Data Initiative* 3.7.2025).

Several factors contribute to the increasing cost of post-secondary education in Iowa (*Axios* 5.22.2024):

- **Inflation and Operational Costs:** Community colleges cite rising insurance rates and the cost of goods and services as reasons for tuition increases.
- **Limited Local Funding:** Iowa's community colleges receive less than 10% of their revenue from local property taxes, compared to about a third in neighboring states like Nebraska. This disparity forces institutions to rely more heavily on tuition and fees.
- **Policy Changes:** Programs like the ESA, while intended to make education more affordable, may inadvertently lead to tuition hikes, as seen in the private school sector.

To combat the rising costs, initiatives like the ISL Education Lending Scholarship offer financial assistance and education on college financing. In 2024, 45 winners received \$1,000 each to be used for college expenses, aiming to alleviate some of the financial burdens on students and their families (*Iowa Student Loan* 2.27.2024). **This makes a \$3,000 FFBC scholarship look pretty appealing!**

The escalating cost of post-high school education in Iowa underscores the need for comprehensive strategies to ensure affordability and accessibility. As tuition rates and student debt continue to rise, stakeholders must collaborate to develop solutions that support students and families in achieving their educational goals without undue financial strain.

Happy
PRIDE
Month



Briefs & Shorts



Thanks to **Brad Holland** for introducing our May speaker, **Ryan Crane**, Executive Director of NAMI Iowa. Thanks to **David Wilfahrt** for managing all of FFBC's finances, to **Nicholas Williams** for managing our Microsoft IT infrastructure, and to **Wade Petersen** for his work as our newsletter and website editor. *Thank you to all of the great contributors to our newsletter!*

The **deadline** for the **July newsletter** will be **June 23**.

DEADLINE

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. As of 2025, we will have awarded over **\$555,000** for **223** 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.

THANK YOU



to the **2025 Scholarship Committee** for the excellent work to choose our **20** scholars!

Ken Hanson (chair)

Kevin Mullins

Jim Flansburg

Jonathan Pogge-Weaver

Aria Huizenga

Paul Richardson

Max Keller

Rich Rumsey

Chelsea Lepley

Chris Russell



Our June Speaker Dr. Ian Roberts



Dr. Ian Roberts was named the fifteenth Superintendent of the Des Moines Public School District with over two decades of experience as a classroom teacher, school administrator, and executive leader. An accomplished author and speaker, Dr. Roberts has written numerous books and publications about educational topics including leadership, empathy, and cultural responsiveness. He is passionate about instructional excellence, diversity, equity, inclusion, and innovation in education.

Dr. Roberts proudly shares that he was born to immigrant parents from Guyana, and spent most of his formative years in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated with a B.S. degree from Coppin State University, earned Masters degrees from St. John's University and Georgetown University, and received his doctorate in Urban Educational Leadership from Trident University. He also has received several education-related certificates, including the Harvard University *Improving Schools: The Art of Leadership* certificate.

Prior to becoming a special education teacher, principal, district leader, and leadership trainer, Ian was a world class and Olympic athlete, competing in track and field at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia, and World Championships in Maebashi, Japan, and Seville, Spain. Dr. Roberts is married, and enjoys hunting, reading, and spending time with family and friends.

NEW!

RAINBOW 
FAITH COALITION
OF GREATER DES MOINES



It is integral to our faith community that LGBTQ+ identities are God given, honored, and celebrated. Fully living into these identities in name, pronoun, relationship, and gender expression is not a barrier to participation, leadership, and staffing in any areas of the faith community, including as applicable:

**Membership | Marriage | Communion |
Adult and Children's Programing and Education |
Worship Leadership | Baptism | Ordination**

Find a Welcoming Community of Faith:

rainbowfaithdsm.org

Our Mission

The Rainbow Faith Coalition of Greater Des Moines fosters relationships between LGBTQ+ affirming faith communities and collaborates alongside the LGBTQ+ community as partners for justice and equality.

Hiding in Plain Sight

by Jonathan Wilson

We have heard lots about “illegal aliens”; the president would have us believe that there has been an “invasion” across the southern border. In tRump 1.0, it was all about building a Mexican-paid-for, impenetrable wall, that never happened. In tRump 2.0, with no mention of building a wall, it’s asserted that the flow of illegal aliens across the border has been mostly stopped, and the focus has changed to the deportation of people who are in the U.S. “illegally.”

The issue has to do with literally millions of people who are in the U.S. undocumented, hard-working on jobs that few U.S.-born residents want to do, paying taxes, and otherwise being law abiding. I’m acquainted with several of them. It’s a problem in search of a solution, and the solution is hiding in plain sight. I start with defining the problem more accurately. It is far more nuanced than has been discussed so far, but the solution remains available, tested, and relatively simple.

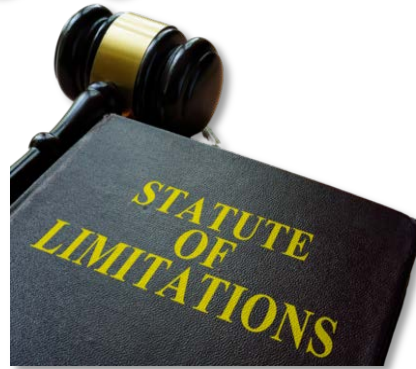
About half of all people in the U.S. without proper documentation did NOT enter the U.S. illegally across the southern border or anywhere else. They entered legally with a student visa, work visa, visitor visa, whatever -- and they then overstayed the time/circumstances granted by their visas. They *entered* the U.S. legally. Building a wall – one even to rival the Great Wall of China (which didn’t work) won’t address visa-overstays (i.e., half of the “problem”).

Moreover, under U.S. and international law, it is *legal* for people to escape oppression and threat of imminent harm by seeking asylum in another country. That’s why we see images of people crossing the U.S. border and immediately turning themselves in to authorities. They know that they are legally entitled to a judicial review of their right/entitlement to refuge (such refuge-seeking is not only legal, but also seems Christ-inspired).

The solution: one minor change in the law and adoption of a statute of limitations for prosecution. We should make it a crime to enter or remain in the U.S. illegally *and we should establish a statute of limitations for prosecuting that crime.* The change would merely change the crime to the act of ENTERING or REMAINING illegally in the U.S. It would not be a *continuing* crime for merely BEING in the U.S. undocumented. If the perpetrator of that crime has not been caught within whatever number of years is chosen as the applicable statute of limitations, there would be no prosecution.

Statutes of limitations have been a part of our legal system for like – forever – in both the civil and criminal contexts. In the civil context, for example, a medical malpractice claim statute of limitations varies by state perhaps, but often it’s two years. In Iowa it’s two years. If an Iowa doctor screws up, the patient has two years to bring suit; otherwise, forget it.

In the criminal context, with a few notable exceptions (murder, for example) there are statutes of limitations for bringing a prosecution for most crimes. Those vary from state to state. But, for example, robbing a bank is a crime in virtually



First Friday Breakfast Club
Founder **Jonathan Wilson**

every state, and that crime must be prosecuted within an applicable statute of limitations, or it can’t be brought. It wouldn’t matter that the perpetrator still has the money stashed away somewhere. The crime of robbing the bank is a one-time event, and the applicable statute of limitations runs, starting with that event. After the statute of limitations runs, the bank robber could walk into the local prosecuting attorney’s office, confess to the crime, and go from there to his favorite bank and deposit the ill-gotten gains. No criminal prosecution. The crime was robbing the bank; the crime was not *having* the robbery proceeds in your possession.

That simple, straightforward, time-tested solution is there, in plain sight. With it, someone guilty of entering or remaining illegally in the U.S., whatever the statute of limitations, could, after that, walk into any immigration office with evidence of when they illegally entered the U.S. by crossing the border or a visa-overstay, and request “legal status” or even citizenship. Either one. But, there would be no criminal prosecution and no deportation of themselves or their U.S. citizen offspring. Yes, they would have committed a crime, but like the bank robber, that “crime” was an event that would trigger a statute of limitations to start running. Once the limitation statute has run, the crime would not be subject to prosecution. Lest you think that such a simple legislative change can’t be done, consider the Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966. Basically, it legalized the presence in the U.S. of those escaping Cuba for the United States. So, the suggested legislative solution is not a pipe dream.

Crossing the U.S. border, other than for the purpose of seeking protected asylum, should continue to be a crime. Overstaying an entry visa should continue to be a crime. Both should trigger a statute of limitations running. There should be no continuing crime of *being* in the U.S. after entering illegally. It should be treated like robbing a bank. A crime, yes, and it should be prosecuted, yes, but there should be a statute of limitations for prosecuting that crime. After an established statute of limitations, there should be no prosecution.

If someone enters the U.S. illegally and, on that same day, robs a bank, the statutes of limitations for both crimes, which may be different, should nonetheless begin to run simultaneously. The illegal immigration “problem” can be made to go away, legislatively. Keep illegal entry a crime; establish a statute of limitations for prosecuting that crime, and the “problem” will go away, and we can turn our attention to more important issues.



4th Annual Ankeny Pride... INSIDE!

June 21, 4-9pm

Southview Middle School
1020 SW Cherry Street



National LGBTQ+ Calendar

- **June:** LGBTQ Pride Month
- **June 1:** LGBTQ Families Day
- **June 12:** Pulse Remembrance
- **June 15:** Anniversary of U.S. Supreme Court Bostock decision expanding protections to LGBTQ+ employees
- **June 26:** Anniversary of U.S. Supreme Court legalizing marriage equality
- **June 27:** National HIV Testing Day
- **June 28:** Stonewall Day
- **June 30:** Queer Youth of Faith Day



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 gender 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





For Pride Month updates, go to:

capitalcitypride.org/pridefest/

Events and dates have been updated at the time of the newsletter publication. Please check Capital City Pride's website for further updates.

2025 Event Calendar

- **Saturday, May 31: Mr./Ms./Mx. Pride Pageant**
(5:00 – 8:00 PM | The Garden)
- **Sunday, June 1: PrideFest Kickoff Drag Brunch (21+)**
(10:00 & 1:00 PM Seatings | Tonic Bar on Court Avenue)
- **Sunday, June 1: Let Love Serve Volleyball Tournament**
(12:00 – 5:30 PM | Sands Volleyball Club)
- **Sunday, June 1: Pride Walk**
(6:00 PM | Sculpture Garden to State Capital)

PrideFest Weekend

- **Friday, June 6: Festival Opens** (5:00 PM – 12:00 AM)
- **Saturday, June 7: Festival** (10:00 AM – 11:00 PM)
 - **Capital City Pride Stride 5K (run/walk/strut)**
(8:00 – 9:30 AM | Brenton Skating Plaza Start)
 - **Capital City Pride Pet Pageant**
(9:30 – 11:00 AM | Community Stage)
 - **Capital City Pride Drag Queen Storytime**
(10:30 / 11:00 / 11:30 AM)
 - **Teen Zone Active** (11:00 – 5:00 PM)
- **Sunday, June 8: Festival** (10:00 AM – 5:00 PM)
 - **Pride Yoga** (9:00 AM | Family & Youth Zone)
 - **Cardio Dance Party** (10:00 AM | Community Stage)
 - **Ecumenical Worship Service** (10:00 AM | Main Stage)
 - **Pride Parade** (12:00 – 1:30 PM | East Grand Avenue)



- **Saturday, June 21: Pride Drag Brunch** (10:00 AM)
- **Sunday, June 22: Pups with Pride** (2:00 PM – 5:00 PM)
Paws & Pints (6218 Willowmere Drive)
- **Friday, June 27: I-Cubs Pride Night 7:00 & Tailgate 5:00**
(5:00 – 9:30 PM | Principal Park, DSM)
- **Sunday, June 29: Inaugural Pride (Bike) Ride**
(10:00 AM – 2:00 PM | Registration Required***)



THE LGBTQ+ BAR NEW RESOURCE

Trump Anti-LGBTQ+
EO Litigation Tracker



<https://lgbtqbar.org/programs/trump-executive-order-tracker/>



WE'RE HIRING!

Artistic Director
& Conductor



**“No pride for
some of us
without
liberation
for all
of us.”**



**- Marsha P.
Johnson**



Iowa Pride

celebrating pride across the state



PrideFest: Capital City Pride
East Village | Des Moines
Friday - Sunday, June 6-8
Other Events Throughout June
www.capitalcitypride.org



Iowa City Pride
Saturday, June 21: 12:00 - 10:00
Downtown Iowa City
www.iowacitypride.org



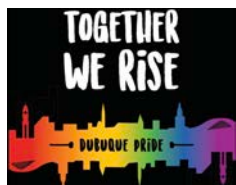
Cedar Valley Pridefest (Cedar Falls & Waterloo)
Friday, August 22: 5:30 - 12:00
Saturday, August 23: 12:00 - 12:00
West 4th Street | Downtown Waterloo
www.cedarvalleypride.com



Quad Cities Pride
Unity Pride Month
Saturday, June 6: Unity Parade 11:00
Sunday, June 7:
Schwiebert Riverfront Park
qcunitypride.org



CR Pride (Cedar Rapids)
Saturday, July 12: 11:00 - 6:00
Parade and Festival
@ NewBo City Market
crprideia.com



Dubuque Pride Festival
Saturday, June 7: 12:00 - 5:00
Town Clock Plaza
[Facebook Page](#)



Sioux City Pride Festival
Thursday, June 5 (Parade)
Saturday, June 7 (Festival)
11:00 - 5:00 at S.C. Convention Ctr.
Sunday, June 8 Pride Brunch
[Facebook: Sioux City Pride](#)



Ankeny Pride...Inside!
Saturday, June 21; 4:00 - 9:00
Southview Middle School
[Facebook Page](#)



Ames Pride Fest
Saturday, October 11
5th & Douglas
www.amespride.org



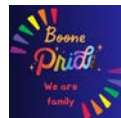
Mason City Pride
Saturday, July 19
Central Park / All Day
[Facebook Page](#)



Ottumwa Pride Block Party
Saturday, June 7
5:00 - 10:00
The Beach Ottumwa
[Facebook Page](#)



Pride in the Junction | WDM
Sunday, June 29
Valley Junction / 10:00 - 4:00
[Facebook Page](#)



Boone Pride
April 12: 11:00 - 5:00
[Facebook Page](#)



Heartland Pride Festival
Council Bluffs/Omaha
July 12: 12:30 - 10:00 (Festival)
July 12: 9:30 a.m. to 12:00
<https://heartlandpride.org>

- Decorah: [Pride Festival](#) (October 11)
- Davenport: [Bi-State Unity Pride Parade](#) (June 14; 11:00)
- North Liberty: [Let Love Fly](#) (June 14; 11:00 - 3:00)
- Vinton: [Benton County Pride](#) (June 14; 11:00)
- Fort Madison: [Lee County Pride Festival](#) (June 13; 6:00)
- Fort Dodge: [Pride Festival](#) (June 28; 10:00 - 5:00)
- Burlington: [Pride in the Park](#) (June 21; 10:00 - 4:00)
- Marshalltown: [Pride in the Park](#) (July 26; 12:00 - 4:00)



Travels with Ken & Wade

by Wade Petersen

Ken Hanson and Wade Petersen love to travel and explore. Articles in the FFBC newsletter feature their various experiences.



Memphis, Tennessee

Ken is the National Chair of the Certifying Board for Dietary Managers. With that distinction comes opportunities to travel around the United States for various state, regional, and national meetings. If he travels to a place I have never been, I tag along (and yes, while he is in his meetings, I'm usually sitting by a pool or shopping). In April, we traveled to Memphis which is considered to be the "Home of the Blues."

After Ken's board meeting, we added on several days to explore the city. We booked a hotel in the downtown area of the city; this made it easy to explore all of the music and restaurants on the renowned **Beale Street**. This historic district spans about three blocks. Originally a thriving area for Black commerce that began after the Civil War, Beale Street played a crucial role in shaping Memphis as a musically rich city, serving as the birthplace to blues and rock and roll. Beale Street has a similar vibe to Bourbon Street in New Orleans in its focus on capitalizing on tourism. I found the whole area to be "well worn" much like the melancholic blues music that wafts from various restaurants (as well as the enticing smell of BBQ). The area is not fancy but it hits all the right notes for a relaxing evening of fun.



I have to admit, the biggest lure of Memphis for me had to be the opportunity to visit and tour **Graceland**. I'm old enough to remember seeing Elvis Presley on TV and listening to his albums on the "stereo" (my mom was a huge fan). The fact that Elvis was such a "pretty boy" might have interested me as well (hmm...did Elvis turn me gay?).



The first impression of the Graceland "mansion" is how small it actually is. The size of the original house is no bigger than an average house today in Des Moines (I'm sure it was considered large by 1950s standards). We had the opportunity to visit the lower level rooms (Elvis' granddaughter owns the house now and still lives in the upper level). If you were alive in the 50s, 60s, or 70s, you would be very comfortable (or probably horrified) with all the shag carpeting, paneling, and use of fabric to cover walls and ceilings. The Graceland tour covers not only Elvis' home, but includes various museums and displays of his life, family, and career. If you love cars, you will be amazed at the collection. For those of you who remember Elvis' concert outfits, you will be entertained by the variety of his sequined jumpsuits and capes (not quite as flamboyant as Liberace but close). You will also have the opportunity to

go inside Elvis' private plane, the *Lisa Marie*. For many, the most moving part of the visit is the solemn Meditation Garden where Elvis and various family members are buried. Although informational signs were posted everywhere, I would recommend the audio tour (an iPad and headphones are supplied).

The other main highlight of our visit to Memphis was the opportunity to tour the **National Civil Rights Museum**. Any visitor (of a certain age) will immediately recognize the Lorraine Motel (to which the museum is now connected). This is the infamous site of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I remember images of Dr. King standing outside this second-story motel room just before he was shot in 1968.



The original museum was built in 1991 and contains interactive exhibits and historic collections. In 2013, the museum underwent a 27.5 million dollar renovation which allowed them to add more than 40 films, oral histories, and interactive media.

Ken and I took advantage of various restaurants to sample as much Memphis BBQ as we could, such as Central BBQ (best brisket sandwich I've ever eaten), Charlie Vergos' Rendezvous, BB King's Blues Club, and even a fantastic dive restaurant called Gus's World Famous Fried Chicken (it really was amazing).

Memphis is a fun city to visit; I would recommend three days to explore the city, eat some BBQ, listen to some blues in a club on Beale Street, and enjoy a history lesson of the South. And as Elvis would say, "Thank you. Thank you very much!"





Join us for the One Iowa Gala on Friday, June 20th, where we celebrate 16 years of fighting for LGBTQ+ equality across Iowa! This year, we're throwing it all the way back with an 80s prom night extravaganza with glitter, glam, and a lot of queer joy!

Get ready for a fierce drag show and a live show-stopping performance from TRANScendent, the trans & nonbinary ensemble of the Des Moines Gay Men's Chorus, and one of our 2025 Gala honorees!

So call up your prom date (or your entire chosen family), throw on something fabulous, and join us to dance, donate, and celebrate the fight for LGBTQ+ equality in Iowa.

Get your tickets NOW at
<https://onecau.se/oneiowa16>

Future Speakers



MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!

July 19:

**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



"Do not allow people to dim your shine because they are blinded. Tell them to put on some sunglasses, because we were born this way."

- Lady Gaga



What Is the Third Space?

by Gary Moore



Ryan Crane came back to FFBC for our May meeting as Executive Director of **NAMI**, Iowa (National Alliance on Mental Illness, Iowa Chapter). Many members know Ryan through his years of service to FFBC, first as Chairperson of the Scholarship Committee and then as a Board member. For this writer, I recall Ryan and his early days working with the All Iowa AIDS Benefit. He has matured considerably since then and gave an impressive presentation this May morning on how to maintain mental health during a time full of anxiety and angst, especially for LGBTQ+ community.

Hope is essential to maintaining mental health, a belief that the future holds positive outcomes. Hope is something that can be nourished and achieved by practicing some evidence-based strategies, such as designing a pathway with small achievable goals by using your “**third space**.” Third spaces are informal public gathering spots outside of home and work where people can connect and socialize, according to sociologist Ray Oldenburg. They are characterized by being neutral ground, unstructured, not expensive, and a place for conversation and socializing. Examples include cafés, libraries, parks, and community centers. These spaces, which foster community and socialization, are being replaced by online interactions and a culture that prioritizes productivity and individual pursuits leading to Henry David Thoreau’s “quiet lives of desperation.”

That third space is one of community where you can meet strangers. Meet strangers who help you see yourself in them, help you learn to handle individual differences, and discover your own peculiarities on your wellness journey. For Americans, third spaces are where we can both affirm our own identities and build empathy for identities different from our own. The United States is a multicultural and multilingual country. When we connect with members of our community at third spaces, we can find people who share racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, sexual, and gender identities with us. It can be incredibly affirming to find people who have identities similar to our own in our own community, so that we can share experiences and support each other. At the same time, third spaces allow for a space to meet people entirely different from us. We can meet people from different cultures, backgrounds, and life experiences, which encourages us to empathize with people of different identities. We can learn about the experiences of those different from us and use our resources to support our community, standing in solidarity no matter if we share an identity or not. Third spaces make us feel as if we belong to a society bigger than ourselves.

The most effective ones for building real community seem to be physical spaces where people can easily and routinely connect with each other, but many brick-and-mortar third spaces are being lost as more Americans go digital for social connections. Ryan noted that FFBC, Prime Timers of Central Iowa, the Des Moines Gay Men’s Chorus, and yes, your local drinking hole can be a third space that can contribute to your well being.

NAMI has a staff of nine that serves 13 or so local chapters. NAMI Iowa catalyzes advocacy, education, support, and public awareness so that all Iowans affected by mental illness can lead better lives. What can each of us do? Educate the public about mental illness. Advocate for a comprehensive mental health system that provides effective and timely services for those struggling with mental health. Support those with mental illness, their loved ones, and providers.



May Speaker

Ryan Crane
Executive Director
NAMI / Iowa



FFBC
Board
Member
**Brad
Holland**
introduces
Ryan
Crane, the
speaker
for our
May
meeting.



May Meeting Photo Gallery



THE
THIRD
SPACE





Friday, June 6
7:00 a.m.

Hoyt Sherman
Place

Des
Moines

This year we will award
\$3,000 scholarships
to 20 Iowa high school seniors,
underwritten by you, our
members, and allies!

Doors Open Early!

We encourage you to arrive early to Hoyt
Sherman Place, with breakfast available
beginning at 6:45 a.m. Come acquaint yourself
with these **20** accomplished young adults!

Scholarship Awards Breakfast Schedule

6:30 a.m. - Doors open

6:45 a.m. - Hot breakfast service begins

7:00 a.m. - Speaker & Awards Program

8:15 a.m. - Program concludes - This meeting
may run longer than our normal
breakfast gathering.



Proud 'N Pink is not your average cabaret. It's part concert, part catharsis, and a full-throated celebration of love and the strength we find in one another when times get tough.

You'll hear the power-pop anthems of Pink, the poetic brilliance of Maya Angelou, and the unapologetic songs from artists like Chappell Roan, Pentatonix, Janelle Monáe, Doechii, and Bad Bunny. This is a setlist with purpose.

Our ensemble TRANScendent will also premiere a powerful new commission titled "They Cannot Erase Us," created for this moment.

If you've been searching for a space to laugh, to feel, to fight back with music and meaning, you've found it.

Friday/Saturday, June 13 & 14
2:00 PM (Saturday only) &
7:30 PM (both dates)
Temple Theater





First Friday Breakfast Club

THANK YOU!



2025 Scholarship Donors

Underwriter (\$3000+)

- Phil Brawner & Ted Johnson
- Dr. John Carstensen & Scott Valbert
- John Charles & David Nelson
- Dave & Trudy Holman Hurd
- Dave & Trudy Holman Hurd, in honor of Tracy Lewis & Rick Gubbels
- Gary Moore
- Community Betterment Grant through Polk County Board of Supervisors
- Jim Sterba
- Dr. Randy M. Swarts

Host (\$1000 - \$2999)

- Jim Anderson & Byron Huff
- Bruce Carr & Robert Thelen
- Tom Coppess & Mike Koch
- Scott Dean
- Ken Hanson & Wade Petersen
- Matt Hiatt & Paul Pettinger
- Gene Larson & David Phelps
- Christopher Russell
- Misty Sold Team at Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate Innovations
- Curt Stamp

Advocate (\$500 - \$999)

- Anonymous
- Don & Margo Blumenthal
- Mark Bienhoff & Troy Zwart
- Kevin Chorniak
- Nathan Coombes & Keith Wirtz
- Paul E. Dark, Jr.
- Jim Flansburg
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- Richard Latch
- Chelsea Lepley
- Fred Lewis
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- Matt McCoy

Honors (\$100 - \$249)

(Continued)

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- David Remund
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**Fundraising
Period:**

May 2024 to April 2025



Visibility Counts!

As we prepare for this month's **Scholarship Awards Breakfast**, it is important to remember that the Scholarship Committee members also make efforts to attend and/or present at the **senior awards ceremonies** at the Iowa high schools of our scholars. Imagine, delivering a brief message of hope and appreciation in front of community members and other students about these young adults who have made efforts to reduce homophobia and to educate others about LGBTQ+ issues in their schools and communities!



Scholarship Committee Member, Chris Russell, presents an FFBC scholarship to **Baylyn Herring** at Panorama High School.



Scholarship Committee Chair, Ken Hanson, presents an FFBC scholarship to **Eidann Squires** at Graettinger-Terril High School.



FFBC Board Member, Wade Petersen, presents an FFBC scholarship to **Liam Madison** at North Polk High School.



Scholarship Committee Chair, Ken Hanson, presents a scholarship to **Katerina Laubengayer** at Springville High School.

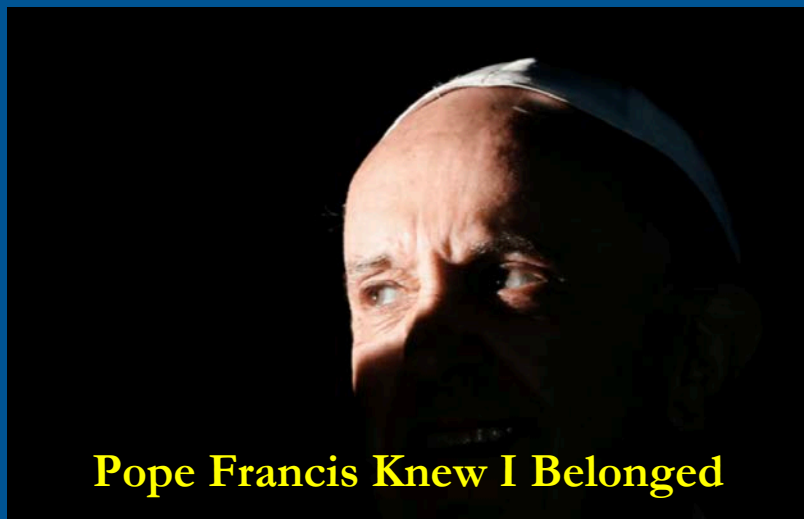


Scholarship Committee Member, Chris Russell, presents an FFBC scholarship to **Cassie Schebel** at Valley High School in West Des Moines.



Scholarship Committee Chair, Ken Hanson, presents a scholarship to **Tobi Pinegar** at Lynnville-Sully High School.





Pope Francis Knew I Belonged

FFBC members Bruce Carr and Larry Schlatter submitted this article to share with other members.

In SojoMail, Jim McDermott writes that he spent his life feeling like the Catholic Church was an awkward fit for LGBTQ+ folks like him. Then came Pope Francis:

When Pope Francis' condition first began to worsen in February, I found myself suddenly feeling the kind of vertiginous paradigm shift usually reserved for the loss of close family or friends, that sense of a curtain being torn aside and a truth being revealed. The detail that really broke me was the news that as he had gotten sicker, Francis continued to text and call the people of Holy Family Parish in Gaza.

It was so far beyond what anyone would expect of a critically ill 88-year-old man. And yet it crystallized for me what has been so personally important about Pope Francis: his dedication to welcoming those on the margins. Francis was the pope who spent his first Holy Thursday washing the feet of prisoners, including women and non-Christians, and continued his visits throughout his papacy. He is the pope who turned a Vatican palazzo into a homeless shelter, the pope who shared meals with sex workers, and did so as a matter of course. That's what a pope — what a pastor — should do.

When Pope Francis was elected in 2013, I had been a Jesuit for almost 21 years, a priest for nearly 10. And for about 19 of those years, I had been learning how to accept and appreciate my sexual identity as a chaste gay man. Ten years in the priesthood had brought with it the ongoing challenge of working in an environment where you were expected never to reveal or share about your experiences of God as a gay or bisexual man, a challenge made enormously difficult at times by the horrendous mistreatment of queer people — including gay and bisexual priests — by some Catholic clergy and prelates.

Still, I thought I was managing it pretty well. I had learned to appreciate my identity as a blessing that God had given me, something that helped me see and relate to the world in a different way, rather than something deviant or sinful, so I saw myself as someone who could be there for LGBTQ+ Catholics. I could offer care and understanding, as many other priests, sisters, and brothers do.

Then Francis held his first on-plane press conference and said, with regard to queer people, "Who am I to judge?"

Pride Month At the Movies



Varsity Pride

varsitydesmoines.com/film-series/varsity-pride/



Paris is Burning

Thursday, May 29 | 7:00 PM
1991 | 78 minutes

Join us at Varsity Cinema on Thursday, May 29 at 7 PM for a special Pride Month kickoff screening of PARIS IS BURNING! Meet local community organizations and serve looks inspired by iconic movie characters as we celebrate each other and self-expression.



The Birdcage

Tuesday, June 10 | 7:00 PM
1996 | 119 minutes

A gay nightclub owner and his drag queen companion pretend to be a straight couple to impress the parents of their son's fiancée. The film follows their attempts with the deception while managing their nightclub and dealing with the conservative family they are trying to impress.



But I'm a Cheerleader

Opens June 19
2000 | 85 minutes

This is a romantic comedy-drama about a high school cheerleader, Megan, who is sent to a "rehabilitation" camp after her parents suspect she may be a lesbian. The film satirizes the concept of gay conversion therapy while exploring themes of identity, sexuality, and self-discovery.



Brokeback Mountain

Opens June 22
2005 | 134 minutes

This film is about Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist, two cowboys who develop a secret, enduring love affair during summer jobs shepherding on Brokeback Mountain in Wyoming in 1963. The film explores the struggle to reconcile feelings with societal expectations and constraints of the era.





Deaf President Now!

A Movie Review by Mark Turnage

Great documentaries not only present their subjects intriguingly and thoroughly—they find relatability in their subject matter and make connections between history and the present day. Co-produced by Davis Guggenheim, director of “An Inconvenient Truth,” and Nyle DiMarco (the first Deaf winner of “America’s Next Top Model” and “Dancing with the Stars”), “Deaf President Now” is not only a technical triumph for its sound design and storytelling structure, but also for how it thoughtfully and respectfully connects a mostly hearing audience to the lives of its Deaf advocate subjects.

The narrative is framed by former Gallaudet students Greg, who is pragmatic and compelling; Jerry, fiery and outspoken; Tim, the soft-spoken and practical leader; and Bridgetta, a determined and proud feminist advocate. The documentary takes place over one week in spring 1988 at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., a federally chartered private university for the Deaf and hard of hearing. Founded by an executive order from President Lincoln in 1864, in the 125 years since, Gallaudet University never had a Deaf president. In 1988, two Deaf candidates and one hearing candidate were being considered for leadership of the campus by Gallaudet University’s Board of Trustees. When the hearing candidate is selected over the two qualified Deaf candidates, the student body revolts. When they march that same evening to where the Board of Trustees are having dinner to demand a Deaf president be instated, they are met by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Jane Bassett-Spillman, who refuses to meet their demands and radiates (documented) condescension and smugness in her interactions with student protestors. The student body responds by consistently speaking truth to power and seizing control of the university—their struggle to be recognized as equals and overcome prejudice from the all-hearing members of the Board of Trustees will have viewers drawing parallels to the current political moment — including resistance, reluctance, and fear of reprisal. Notably, their

mass-organizing efforts had a united front, fast mobilization, and held frequent improvisational public demonstrations.

Queer viewers of this documentary will relate to the intergenerational social stigma for Deaf people to pass as hearing or “reduce” one’s deaf presence in a mostly hearing world. One interviewee recounts a story about his grandfather, who in response to the Gallaudet protests, cautioned his grandson to “respect his elders,” emphasizing taking up a smaller “box” of space when communicating ASL in public. The interviewee challenged his grandfather: “Why? I shouldn’t have to fit into the hearing world. I have my own world.” And much of the heroic citizenship displayed in “Deaf President Now” is the Deaf student body boldly taking space in their demands to counter prejudice. Jane Bassett-Spillman is cut from the same cloth as Anita Bryant and Kim Reynolds—the faux-matronly authority figure who barely hides their own superiority complex behind a thin-lipped smile and a veneer of traditionalism, morality, and contempt of those too different from her. Her appearances in archival documentary footage speak plainly to her character references.

“Deaf President Now” uses a “cold open” technique—by opening immediately with no exposition, more viewer focus is pulled toward listening and gathering scene information. While scenes of Washington, D.C., are shown, complete with outdoor and city noises, during a slow tracking shot moving towards the gates of Gallaudet University, these noises fade, disappear, then cut to low-end sonic vibrations of the same outdoor and city noise as we step inside the University, becoming a temporary sensory adaptation of Deafness for hearing viewers. Then the opening remarks from its Deaf advocates begin in ASL: first with no subtitles, then with them added, then with translator voiceovers that notably reflect the interviewees’ emphasis and emotion matching their ASL signing and facial language. It is genius sound design that immediately draws viewers into the sensory experience of the documentary’s Deaf subjects,



but Guggenheim and DiMarco wisely reserve this effect for emphasizing a crucial point or marking an emotional turning point in the documentary’s narrative. There’s also no interviewee introductions until the storytelling reaches a character-defining moment for each subject. The resulting effect is that when you finally know these character’s names and significance, you are now in the middle of their own political movement, and are along for the ride.

But what this documentary does best is its centering of Deaf experience. Some excellent moments with the interviewees underscore the humor exclusive to living Deaf among hearing people, the nonverbal cues hearing people do that frustrate Deaf persons, and the humor of communicating in private from across the room. These moments bring their subjects to life, depth to their struggles, and windows towards our own social progress.

See “Deaf President Now” streaming on the AppleTV app.



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The McCoy Report

Polk County Announces Multi-Year Funding To World Food Prize

by Supervisor Matt McCoy
Polk County, 1st District

With Taylor Van De Krol



The Polk County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a multi-year grant of \$75,000 annually to the World Food Prize Foundation over the next three fiscal years, starting in July 2025. The foundation's mission is to elevate innovations and inspire actions that sustainably increase the quality, quantity, and availability of food worldwide. As part of this mission, the foundation hosts key events such as the Iowa Hunger Summit and the Norman E. Borlaug International Dialogue, attracting global leaders and experts in development, agriculture, economic policy, resource management, and nutrition.

"Food insecurity—global and locally—affects us all," said Matt McCoy, Polk County Board Chair. "Polk County is proud to have the World Food Prize in our community that brings global leaders and the brightest minds and experts in the field of food insecurity and innovation."

These funds come from Polk County's allotment of the hotel/motel tax, not taxpayer revenue. The funding will empower the World Food Prize Foundation to continue delivering world-class programming.

"This commitment from Polk County is more than a financial investment—it's a vote of confidence in the power of the World Food Prize to bring global solutions to local challenges," said **Governor Tom Vilsack, CEO of the World Food Prize Foundation**. "By using hotel/motel tax revenue, Polk County is wisely investing in programs that not only address food insecurity and agricultural innovation but also bring international visitors, economic activity, and global recognition to Central Iowa."



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