



# First Friday News & Views

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

August 2025 | Volume 30 | Issue 8

## Next Meeting

**Friday,  
August 1  
7:00 a.m.**



## Location

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



## Speaker

**Brent Johnson**

**President,  
Iowa Farm  
Bureau**



## Website

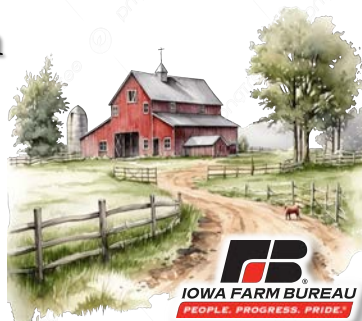
**ffbc Iowa.org**



## Betting on the Farm

by Byron Huff, Board President

I hope you can join us for our August 7, 2025, breakfast for some great conversation, delicious food catered by Gateway Market, and hear our featured speaker **Brent Johnson**, President Iowa Farm Bureau.



The Iowa Farm Bureau Federation (IFBF) stands as one of the most influential agricultural organizations in the United States, serving as both an advocate and a vital resource for farmers and rural communities across the state of Iowa. Established in 1918, the Farm Bureau has played a central role in shaping Iowa's agricultural landscape, promoting policies that support farmers, and driving economic growth in one of the most agriculturally productive states in the nation.

Iowa is synonymous with agriculture. With over 85% of the state's land devoted to farming, and as the nation's top producer of corn, pork, and eggs, the state's economy and culture are deeply intertwined with the land. The Iowa Farm Bureau was created to give farmers a stronger collective voice, helping them navigate the challenges of rural life while advocating for policies that protect and enhance their livelihoods.

Over the past century, the organization has grown to more than 150,000 member families, representing farmers, agribusinesses, and rural residents from all 99 counties in Iowa. Through its grassroots structure, IFBF remains closely connected to the needs and concerns of its members, ensuring their perspectives are heard at the local, state, and national levels.

One of the Farm Bureau's most critical functions is its work in public policy. The IFBF actively engages with legislators to influence agricultural policy, environmental regulation, rural infrastructure development, and tax reform. Whether supporting renewable fuel standards, fighting for fair trade policies, or advocating for sensible environmental regulations, the Farm Bureau ensures that Iowa's farmers have a seat at the table.

The organization's efforts have helped maintain Iowa's leadership in agricultural innovation and sustainability, while also protecting farm profitability and landowner rights. Its policy positions are developed democratically, with members providing direct input through local meetings and statewide voting processes.

The Iowa Farm Bureau invests heavily in the future of farming through education and leadership development. Its programs, such as the Iowa Farm Bureau Young Farmer Program and the Ag Leaders Institute, help train the next generation of agricultural leaders. Additionally, the Farm Bureau offers scholarships to high school and college students pursuing careers in agriculture, reinforcing its commitment to youth and rural development.

The organization is also a staunch supporter of Iowa's public schools and agricultural education initiatives, including the promotion of FFA and 4-H programs.



[continued on page 2]





## ["Betting on the Farm" continued from page 1]

Beyond policy and education, the Farm Bureau plays a significant role in strengthening rural communities. Through partnerships with local businesses, support for rural healthcare access, and efforts to expand broadband internet across underserved areas, the IFBF addresses the broader needs of Iowa's rural residents.

It also invests in innovation through its Iowa Farm Bureau Renew Rural Iowa program, which supports rural entrepreneurs and businesses with training, mentoring, and networking opportunities. This program underscores the organization's recognition that a thriving rural economy is essential to sustaining agriculture in the long term.

In recent decades, the Iowa Farm Bureau has championed voluntary, science-based conservation practices. It works closely with farmers to promote sustainable agriculture, including the adoption of cover crops, nutrient management plans, and water quality initiatives. By supporting innovation and stewardship, the organization balances productivity with responsibility, ensuring the health of Iowa's natural resources for future generations.

In a world increasingly disconnected from food production, the Iowa Farm Bureau also serves as a vital bridge between farmers and consumers. Through public outreach campaigns, media engagement, and partnerships with organizations like the Iowa Food & Family Project, it promotes transparency, builds trust, and fosters a greater understanding of modern farming practices.

The Iowa Farm Bureau is far more than a trade organization; it is a cornerstone of Iowa's agricultural and rural communities. Its work touches nearly every aspect of rural life, from advocating for farmer-friendly legislation to nurturing young leaders and protecting the environment. As Iowa continues to evolve, the Farm Bureau remains a steadfast advocate for the values, people, and traditions that define the state's agricultural heritage and ensure its future prosperity.

In essence, the Iowa Farm Bureau embodies the spirit of Iowa: hardworking, community-focused, and deeply rooted in the land.



SATURDAY, AUGUST 23  
THE GARDEN NIGHTCLUB  
SHOW AT 11AM

# HOTCAKES 'N Sausage

CABARET BRUNCH



**\$35**

HOTCAKES  
MEATY SAUSAGE  
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

## Briefs & Shorts



Thanks to **Brad Holland** for coordinating the new **Westfield** location in West Des Moines for our July Donor Appreciation & Member Party. As always, thanks to **David Wilfahrt** for doing an incredible job in managing FFBC's finances. We are also grateful to **Nicholas Williams** for managing our Microsoft IT infrastructure. Finally, thanks to **Wade Petersen** for his work as our newsletter and website editor. *Thank you to all our newsletter contributors!*

The **deadline** for the **September newsletter** will be **August 25**.

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 2026 scholarship program. Since 1997, we have awarded **\$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.



A special **thank-you** to those FFBC members and donors who have chosen to designate First Friday Breakfast Club through the **Donor Direct** program of **United Way**. Contributions made through United Way are tax deductible. Those who have chosen this means of supporting FFBC have taken time to complete their United Way campaign worksheet by designating FFBC as the beneficiary of their generosity. FFBC is an eligible recipient of such funding designations. **United Way**





## August Speaker



# Brent Johnson

Brent Johnson was elected president of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation in 2021. Johnson's long-time service to agriculture and Farm Bureau started at the county level, where he held several positions with the Calhoun County Farm Bureau.

As president, Brent serves as chairman of the board of FBL Financial Group, Inc., and Farm Bureau Life Companies. During his tenure on the IFBF board, he has been involved in several advisory committees and as a director of the Farm Bureau Life board. He is the 2020 recipient of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Environmental Leader Award.

Johnson earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy from Iowa State University and has specialized in precision agriculture, previously working as an agronomist and certified crop advisor. In 2006, Johnson founded an independent crop consulting business, utilizing cutting edge technology to advance soil health and data management. Johnson farms with his wife, LuAnn; son, Matt; and daughter-in-law, Rebekah. He grows corn and soybeans on their Calhoun County farm. He and LuAnn also have a daughter, Kaeli, and two grandchildren.

## STONER THEATER

Presents

### Paper Bag Confessions

Starring

Doyle Smiens

CO-WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

Ann Wellman

Saturday, Aug 9th

Tickets: \$25

Ticket Information

[www.dmpa.org](http://www.dmpa.org)

In person

Ticket Office

or call

515-246-2300

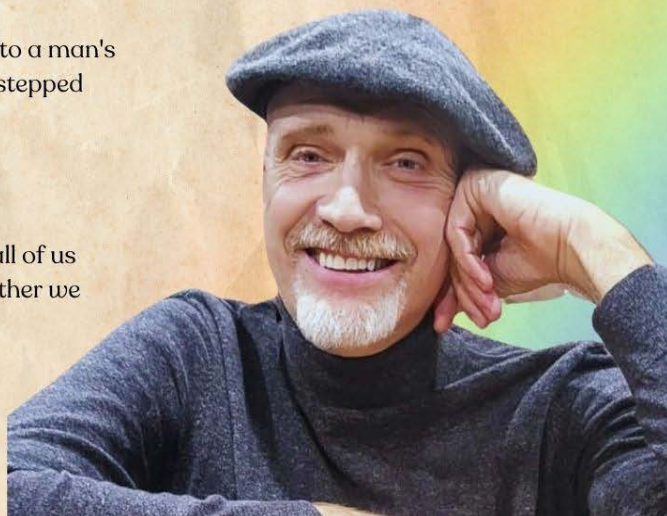
## A Coming Out Story...

Doyle's story is important and will resonate all too closely with our LGBTQ+ friends.

For others, it is an intimate look into a man's life who beat the odds and finally stepped out of the shadows to let himself be seen.

Listening to Doyle's story makes all of us grow a little more connected, whether we had similar experiences or not.

DES MOINES  
PERFORMING ARTS



*From Ryan Kolder: "Paper Bag Confessions, a one-man show by Doyle, who grew up in small-town Iowa (Aplington) and is now sharing his deeply personal journey of coming out later in life. A friend from the same area of my hometown of Aplington-Parkersburg had the chance to see this show a couple of years ago, and he says, 'Let me tell you—it stays with you.' Doyle's story is raw, real, darkly humorous, and so incredibly moving. He opens up about the weight of rejection, fear, and the long road to finding his true, authentic self. For anyone who has ever struggled with identity, felt alone, or feared being fully seen—this show offers a beacon of hope and healing. Paper Bag Confessions is coming to The Civic Center Stoner Theater in Des Moines, and I encourage you to go. Bring someone. Share this post with everyone! You never know who might need to hear this story right now. Let's help spread the word—and maybe we'll see you there."*





## Character vs. Character

by Jonathan Wilson

I have two grandsons; one is 21 years old, and the other is eight. Recently, my son and the older grandson were at my farm working on a project out in the hot sun. They were both working up a sweat, for good reason. My younger grandson was there with them, mostly observing, and definitely not working up a sweat. I'd generously describe his role as "supervising." At one point, my older grandson peeled off his sweat-soaked t-shirt and hung it on the handle of a lawnmower sitting nearby. In less than five seconds, my younger grandson peeled off his perfectly dry t-shirt and likewise hung it on the lawnmower handle.

This story is intended to make the point that every day kids are learning – something. It could be in a classroom; otherwise, it's mostly from observation. Daily, kids spend more time learning from observation than they do in a classroom. Even in a classroom, they learn not only arithmetic, but also by observing the teacher – the authority figure in the room. In the long run, a good example, through observation, teaches a more important lesson than solving the math problem of the day. The good example is more important because it influences what a student actually does with improved math skills.

That brings me to **character**. The word has more than one meaning, and the meaning is determined by the alternative predicates: "having" or "being a." It's the difference between *having* character and *being a* character. And that is what presents each of us with the personal challenge, by example, to teach "having" character versus teaching "being a" character. It also challenges us to distinguish between authority figures who, by example, teach *having* character (or the lack thereof) as opposed to *being a* character.

And that brings me to the current president of the United States. Think about personal traits that you would want to instill in one of your children, grandchildren, or the kid next door. Don't lie. Don't cheat. Don't steal. Don't commit crimes. Don't assault other people. Don't call other people names. Don't be a bully. Don't violate an oath you have taken. Don't be rude. Don't be vengeful. Be consistent. Be as loyal to your friends as you expect them to be to you. Be respectful of others, even people who disagree with you. And, when you make a mistake (and you will), own it, apologize for it, and do what you can to make things right. Always do your best. Those are not always easy, but that's what *having* character is all about. I could prolong this by reciting numerous, specific examples of how the current president has not demonstrated in word and conduct each of these measures of *having* character. If you can't think of examples, I'd humbly suggest that you should increase your familiarity with current affairs. Examples are legion, and to have such an authority figure demonstrate such



behaviors tends to "normalize" the behaviors and give otherwise decent people tacit "permission" to indulge in some of their baser instincts...things they would not tolerate their children doing.

Instead, the current president is more into *being a* character. His schtick is characterized by pumping his fists, dancing around on stage, and saying whatever comes into his head no matter how hurtful or inaccurate. He has a number of "tells." He doesn't read particularly well, but when he departs from the teleprompter, his remarks turn into a disjointed word-salad. When he folds his arms together and assumes his straight-jacket pose, you can know he's lying or doesn't understand the subject matter, or both. When he's asked an uncomfortable question, he'll refer to it as "nasty" and attack the questioner for being incompetent. If you want to know what bad things he has done, is doing, or is about to do, keep close track of what he is accusing others of doing. His schtick is so predictable that he has gone beyond *being a* character, and has actually become a caricature of himself. He makes two critical mistakes. He thinks that, because he is president, whatever he says is insightful and wise. Not. He thinks that people who show respect for the office of the presidency, respect him. Not.

And that takes me back to my eight-year-old grandson who is, for his age, quite athletic. Recently he advanced to a baseball league that requires tryouts, and the coaches conduct a draft to select members of their respective teams. I don't know exactly how the draft works, but his current coach knows and asked my son-in-law to encourage my grandson to do a little less than his best in the tryouts. That would supposedly enable the coach to get on his team my grandson and another player he wanted on the team. When my grandson learned about this, his response was unequivocal; he would not have anything to do with it. He said that he would always do his best, no matter what. And, he did. And he was the first pick in the draft. Character counts, and having character was rewarded, as it should be.



First Friday Breakfast Club  
Founder **Jonathan Wilson**





CAPITAL CITY PRIDE

# RAINBOW SAFARI

AT THE BLANK PARK ZOO

THURSDAY, JULY 31, 5:30 PM

PRESENTING SPONSOR  
**FAREWAY**  
MEAT & GROCERY

SUPPORTING SPONSORS  
Architects Principal



## EVERY YOUNG TRANS PERSON DESERVES

- ☒ DIGNITY
- ☒ RESPECT
- ☒ HEALTHCARE

**NO MATTER WHERE THEY LIVE.**

The Trans Youth Emergency Project helps families navigate interruptions to medically necessary care – including cruel state and federal attacks.

[www.TransYouthEmergencyProject.org](http://www.TransYouthEmergencyProject.org)



# National LGBTQ+ Calendar

**glaad** 

- August 14: Gay Uncles Day
- August 20: Southern HIV/AIDS Awareness

## 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





## Notes on Life, Love, Loss, Friendship, & Legacy

by Ron Lambert

Hello longtime Des Moines friends and also friends who I have not met yet! My name is Ron Lambert, and I am a nearly lifelong resident of Des Moines and was active in the gay community, before it blossomed (LGBTQIA+) and now encompasses so much more – which is wonderful! I have transitioned to an official “retired” status. *Woo hoo!* It is a nice time for reflection, and I have ample time to do that.

It would be fun and festive to talk about the good ol’ days of disco dancing, remembrances of my DJ gigs at the old bars – P.S. Lounge, 12 Grand, City Disco Park, even the Park Street Station in San José, California. The clothes, the shoes, the pooka shell necklaces, various accoutrements, the cruising, the high school era epic crushes we had, the after bar parties – okay, enough of the stroll down memory lane. *Yikes!* The focus of this article is growing older as a gay man, memories, loss, and rainbows in the future. This stuff, I believe, needs to be addressed and talked about on occasion. Maybe it helps to know there are others like us going through some challenges and experiences. Yes, most of us transition to our senior years. Those of us who were lucky enough to have survived the fury of the HIV/AIDS years and other natural causes created too many “celebration of life” events to attend.

2025 has not been kind to many of my friends and family who are no longer with us. I recently lost a dear lifelong friend; we started kindergarten together at Windsor Elementary School and remained friends all of these years. There were other losses this year: my cousin, who I thought of as an older brother, remembering our family get-togethers and holidays together. A theatre friend and co-founder of StageWest Theatre Company in Des Moines that I shared so many, many wonderful, invigorating moments with for about 35 years. The couple from Osceola who I met through my work with StageWest that I shared so many magical, invigorating theatrical moments and private times with over 10-15 years ... all gone.

I don’t mean this as a pity party, “poor old Ron has suffered” moment, but it is a reflection on the similar moments that we have all shared with friends and family. We all go through it, if we live long enough. Fortunately.

Specifically, I am asking how do we deal with changing times, losses, and victories along the way? I am



not a trained professional in these topics, just an observer – maybe talking about it will make us realize we are pretty much in the same love boat and can learn from conversation. To begin with – did each friend you encountered on the journey impact your life and each other’s lives? Looking back, do the memories make you smile – are you better for the relationship – was the time well spent for both people? Did I help them? Was I there for them and reach out to the best of my ability? Was each journey conducted on a two-way street? Does their memory bring joy?

So, at the end of the journey, whether suddenly or slowly, is your time of sadness cut short by smiles, laughter, and a sense of victory, of grace, of happy memories? Can you take comfort in knowing you were there for them, you always cared for them, you told them how much they meant to you ... that each minute of your relationship had value, an honest bond?

Much of this I learned during the AIDS/HIV epidemic and painfully losing so many gay friends. The comfort and peace I felt when that period nearly ended is what helped me through my current time, and I am grateful for the beautiful friends I had who taught me along the way. 2025 is another period of grief for me, but ultimately of love and friendship. The year was a time of impact; of smiles and laughter; of rich, joyful memories; a time of learning; of silly jokes and goofy adventures; and of gloriously beautiful and rainbow-filled moments.

It is life...now. Embrace it!

To the friends and family I referenced earlier in this message, thank you for sharing your life and joining me hand in hand, heart to heart, and mind to mind on this journey. You brought me joy, love, peace, and friendship... and I smile. Like the AIDS quilt that reminds us of our journey and the people who crossed our paths, may the sum of these parts bring each of us radiant smiles and confidence that we will see rainbows. Thank you for your attention and for being there.

Okay, can I bring this article full circle? I am thinking of favorite old disco tunes ... “Turn the Beat Around” and “I Will Survive.” Yes. We will ... *let’s dance!*







# GALA 2025 Award Winners

oneiowa  
HEALTHCARE • WORKPLACE • LEADERSHIP

## Donna Redwing Advocate of the Year

### Eligh Cade

"If we give up, they win." Time and again, Eligh Cade has stepped up for LGBTQ+ Iowans, whether by testifying at the Capitol, providing security for One Iowa and The Legendary Blazing Saddle, or putting himself in harm's way. He is relentless in his advocacy for Trans Iowans despite being a member of the community under attack.



## Community Partnership Award

### The Slow Down Coffee Company

"We don't want to be quiet about the people we care about." That powerful belief drives the incredible team at The Slow Down, and it's just one reason they're our 2025 Community Partner Award recipient! Every year, we honor organizations that are creating real change, and this year, we're beyond proud to celebrate Drew and Kara Kelso at The Slow Down.



## Courageous Six Change Maker Award

### TRANScendent

"To have this sacred space for just Trans and Non-binary voices is rare." Formed in direct response to anti-trans legislation in Iowa, TRANScendent is one of only a dozen ensembles of its kind in the country. As part of the Des Moines Gay Men's Chorus, they're breaking down barriers through the power of music to create safe, affirming spaces for Trans and nonbinary folks right here in our community.



## Sharon Malheiro Award

### Cedar Valley LGBTQ+ Coalition

The Sharon Malheiro Award, named in memory of One Iowa's founder, honors organizations that use their platform and influence to champion LGBTQ+ rights across our state. This year, we are proud to recognize the Cedar Valley LGBTQ+ Coalition! In a rural and often underserved area, they are creating vital spaces for queer Iowans by offering meaningful mentorship and hosting community events like their Community Craft Night, AFFIRM Youth Group, and Queersgiving!







## Climate Solutions: Unexpected Results

We've not made progress in climate solutions by expanding wind and solar energy and promoting ethanol and methane. Tom Vilsack, CEO of the World Food Prize, noted that manure can be converted into a source of energy. However, manure methane gas leaks during processing, which renders this gas ineffective in reducing emissions. Methane is 120 times more potent as a warming agent than carbon dioxide.

The main issue is that "climate solutions" only work if we reduce our reliance on coal and oil and halt methane leaks. Despite the rise in wind and solar power, global warming hasn't slowed because energy use has expanded, leading to increased fossil fuel consumption that offsets the benefits of clean energy.

A two-degree rise in global temperatures is considered a critical threshold, above which the dangerous and cascading effects of human-generated climate change are expected to occur. Realistically, preventing a two-degree rise is no longer a feasible goal. Climate scientists point out that burning fossil fuels releases sulfur and other particulates into the atmosphere, which reflect sunlight energy back out into space. As a result, reducing fossil fuel use enables more solar energy to hit the Earth's surface, which, combined with the trillions of tons of carbon humans have already emitted to the atmosphere, will push global temperatures higher. Additionally, rising temperatures trigger tipping points, such as the melting of the Greenland ice sheet and the collapse of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), a large ocean current system, which would lead to a temperature rise of more than two degrees Celsius. At this stage, avoiding that outcome becomes impossible.

We hope that extreme weather events prompt political leaders to become rational and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. While scientists rely on logical analysis, politics often appears today to be driven by emotion based on fallacies rather than reason. An example is the Epstein Files controversy, which is causing significant upset among MAGA supporters—a political base that influences the President, the Supreme Court, and both chambers of Congress. The concern here is not about climate change or other logical issues; instead, it's rooted in conspiracy theories. This irrational monomania political behavior is causing the dangerous consequences of a climate crisis.

In conclusion, dwelling on doom and gloom won't solve anything. Rational thought can guide us toward hope. We may not prevent vast suffering or the deaths of billions, but we can lessen the catastrophe and find ways to improve.

John  
Clayton



**"How can people  
change their minds  
about us if they don't  
know who we are?"**

**- Harvey Milk**



# TENNIS CLUB



### remaining dates

[MARK YOUR CALENDAR!]  
Facilitated play  
1<sup>ST</sup> TUESDAYS  
MAY 6  
JUNE 3  
JULY 1  
AUG 5  
SEPT 2  
& times  
6-8 PM

Open courts with  
encouraged ladder play  
3<sup>RD</sup> TUESDAYS  
MAY 20  
JUNE 17\*  
JULY 15\*  
AUG 19  
SEPT 16  
\* asterisk dates run  
7-9 PM

### GAME, SET, AND MATCH

for good weather!

# FREE

TO JOIN

CROSSROADS  
PARK  
TENNIS  
COURTS  
5205 ASHWORTH RD.  
WEST DES MOINES, IA

[all skill levels welcome!]

REGISTER AT LINK IN BIO OR  
WWW.PRIDESPORTSLEAGUE.ORG/EVENTS



## BOOK CLUB

Wednesday,  
Aug. 13, 6 p.m.  
The Little Book  
ORLANDO  
by Virginia Woolf

### CAPITAL CITY PRIDE



## VIRGINIA WOOLF ORLANDO

FALL 2025 SERIES  
WEDNESDAYS | 6-7 P.M.



SUPPORTING SPONSORS:









The Iowa Trans Mutual Aid Fund financially supports Trans, Nonbinary, and Gender Diverse Iowans as they access gender-affirming care.



August Dates:

August 3 – 10: Applications Open  
August 10 – 17: Phone Calls  
August 17 – 24: Application Review  
August 24 – 31: Dispersal

Help make a bigger difference! Donate at:

[www.iowatransmutualaidfund.org](http://www.iowatransmutualaidfund.org)

# Future Speakers



**September 5:**

**Carl Voss**

DSM City Council Member

**October 3:**

**Ryan Smith**

Iowa Wildlife Federation

**November 7:**

**Matt Blake**

Iowa State Senator

**December 5:**

**Sarah Trone Garriott**

Iowa State Senator

## WELCOME

**Zach Rus (he/him)**  
Executive Director

Zach brings over a decade of experience in nonprofit administration and philanthropy as we continue to grow our statewide reach.

Connect with Zach and say hello!

[zach@iowasafeschools.org](mailto:zach@iowasafeschools.org)



# Lavender Legal Center

Seeking  
**Staff Attorney**  
(can reside anywhere in Iowa)

[www.lavenderlegalcenter.org/join-our-team2](http://www.lavenderlegalcenter.org/join-our-team2)



**Awfully Folkin' Queer...**

Concert with the Awful Purdies, benefiting



September 7, 2025 - 2:00PM  
Indian Creek Nature Center, Cedar Rapids, IA





# Donor/Member Party

## Photo Gallery

Photos by  
Wade Petersen

### FFBC Celebrates Scholarship Donors

On Saturday night, July 19, First Friday Breakfast Club enjoyed the **Westfield Building** in West Des Moines to thank members and donors to the FFBC Scholarship Fund. Wonderful drinks and food added to the celebration. It was good to celebrate a record-breaking year that allowed FFBC to recognize **20 scholars** from across the state of Iowa with **\$3,000 each** (that's **\$60,000!**).



thank  
you





# SUMMER PARTY

## Donor/Member Party Photo Gallery



THANK  
YOU

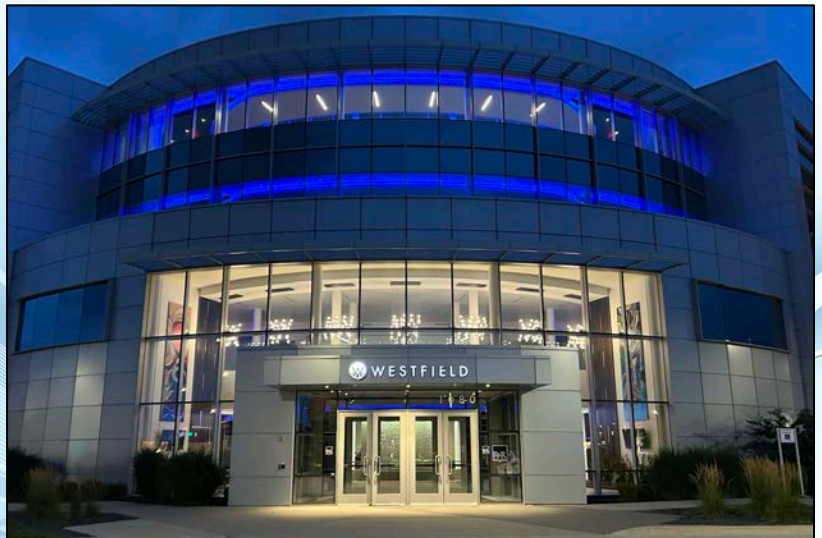




# Donor/Member Party

## Photo Gallery

# Summer Party







# Spotlight on National LGBTQ+ Organizations

## Human Rights Campaign



Mission: The Human Rights Campaign and Human Rights Campaign Foundation fight to make equality, equity and liberation a reality for all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people. As the nation's largest LGBTQ+ civil rights organization, we drive impact by inspiring, engaging and mobilizing millions of pro-equality voters and supporters to elect pro-equality leaders and to demand equity-based policies and legislation; changing hearts and minds through programming that increases understanding, visibility and support for the diverse LGBTQ+ community in all aspects of our identities; and transforming the institutions and systems that shape our everyday lives by advancing LGBTQ+ inclusive policies and practices in schools, workplaces, hospitals, communities and beyond.

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

### TRANSGENDER IN IOWA: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Update

**ACLU**  
Iowa

With the removal of gender identity from the Iowa Civil Rights Act as of July 1, ACLU Iowa has updated its "Know Your Rights" for transgender people in Iowa.

<https://www.aclu-ia.org/en/know-your-rights/transgender-iowa-know-your-rights>



"Your sole responsibility while you're here on earth is to leave footprints behind that others will follow. And that's a big responsibility."

- Charlotte Nolin

### LGBTQ+ Library Cataloging Day

Sunday, August 10

- Help preserve queer history
- Connect with community
- Enjoy snacks with friends



All are welcome.  
Come as you are.



Find our event on Facebook or email us at [desmoinespridecenter.board@gmail.com](mailto:desmoinespridecenter.board@gmail.com) to join the fun!

### LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

Sponsored by:



[calendar.capitalcitypride.org](http://calendar.capitalcitypride.org)







# The Amateur

A Movie Review by Mark Turnage

Though the James Bond movies left an indelible impression on me as a teen, the charm of the spy thriller is in its diversity. From the suave action-tech fantasy of 007 and “Mission: Impossible,” to Hitchcock’s classic political intrigue “The 39 Steps,” to gritty modern realism and fraught choices between country and family in “The Americans” TV series, to the ridiculously campy girl-powered fun of “Totally Spies,” “Charlie’s Angels” and “Kim Possible”—much like its source material, spy fiction can reinvent itself to suit the times and comment on political anxieties. Director James Hawes’ “The Amateur,” starring Rami Malek and Laurence Fishburne, has a promising setup—a bereaved geek uses the power of revenge to become an

intimidating superspy—with solid star power and great potential for character development. But with a self-destructing plot, character development that’s top secret, and twists that are missing in action, this spy thriller does come off a bit, well, amateur.

Charlie Heller (Rami Malek) is an introverted, high-level cryptographer and codebreaker for the CIA; he lives a quiet life restoring airplanes with his globetrotting wife Sarah (Rachel Brosnahan), shares something of a one-way work friendship with field agent Jackson O’Brien (Jon Bernthal), and tolerates backhanded compliments from his boss, Deputy Director Alex Moore (Holt McCallany, of “Mindhunter” fame). When Heller’s anonymous contact drops intelligence that implicates Deputy Director Moore in a shady black ops campaign, Heller prepares to blow the whistle, until the CIA Director (Julianne Nicholson) informs Heller that his wife has been killed in a terrorist incident abroad. Wasting no time and with confidence in his tech skills, Heller amasses surveillance evidence identifying each member of the team responsible for his wife’s death—then uses the intelligence drop to blackmail Moore into giving him training at “The Farm” to avenge his wife. Incredulous and maybe just humoring himself at this point, Moore agrees, and sends Heller to train under Robert “Hendo” Henderson (a bizarrely underutilized Laurence Fishburne). Despite his ineptitude with



firearms, Henderson, like Moore, quickly learns that underestimating Heller’s technical skill is a (often repeated) mistake.

“The Amateur” doesn’t have time in its mission for character development, and it’s the fatal flaw that exposes the ridiculous choices in its revenge plot. Everyone starts and ends as a steely professional, with no emotional stakes, growth, or complications that could make the story (or its players) more intriguing. But it doesn’t craft a compelling atmosphere. There aren’t twists because character motivations are plainly stated and predictably responded to. As a result, every scene is in service of the plot more than its characters, and because of this, their choices come across as predictable—or worse, bizarre and over-the-top—especially how Heller goes full “Temu Bond Villain” in executing his revenge scheme (more sullen stares than revealing monologuing here).

Spare “The Amateur” and get “The Professional” for the job instead.





## 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@ffbcia.org](mailto:info@ffbcia.org)

## Officers

**Byron Huff**  
President

**Ken Hanson**  
Vice President

**Joe Raetz**  
Secretary

**David Wilfahrt**  
Treasurer



## Newsletter & Website Editor Wade Petersen

[wadepetersen@gmail.com](mailto:wadepetersen@gmail.com)



## Publication



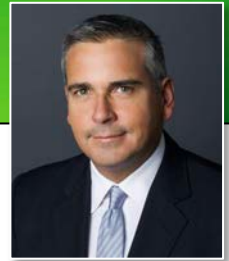
©2025  
FFBC Board  
of Directors

First Friday Breakfast Club  
P.O. Box 41611  
Des Moines, IA 50311  
(515) 954-2996

# The McCoy Report

## Polk County Leads On Water Quality

by Supervisor Matt McCoy  
Polk County, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
With Taylor Van De Krol



Polk County commissioned a study in 2023 which is a comprehensive analysis of water quality in the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers. These rivers are vital and supply drinking water to over 600,000 residents, as well as supporting agriculture, industry, recreation, and wildlife. However, pollution and high demand threaten their quality and quantity. In 2023, Des Moines Water Works set a record by treating and supplying over **20 billion gallons** of water.

## Polk County Leads on Water Quality

*"For many years, Polk County has prioritized water quality as a key focus area. Our rivers and streams are invaluable assets to this region, deserving of protection and care. Through partnerships with federal, state and local governments and organizations, these initiatives enacted over the past few years are becoming models for other counties and regions across Iowa."*

~Polk County Board Chair Matt McCoy



\$1.7 million funded

Polk County developed the **Batch & Build Program** in 2020, as a new model to work with farmers to install saturated buffers and bioreactors. To date, this program has installed 185 practices to treat 6,000 acres of tile drainage. The program is now being utilized in 13 counties across Iowa and 4 states across the Midwest.

Polk County led the development of the **Ag-Urban Cover Crop Seeder Program** that launched in 2021. This program brought together key ag-urban partners to purchase state of the art equipment to enhance the successful use of cover crops. To date the program has seeded over 27,000 acres on roughly 100 distinct farming operations in 13 counties. This initiative has contribution from both state and local governments.

\$600K funded



\$16 million funded

Polk County launched the **Wetland Wave** in 2023, as a targeted effort to construct wetlands in Central Iowa. To date, this program has constructed 14 wetlands and has an additional 28 under design. Combined, these wetlands will treat over 25,000 acres of agricultural land.

In 2024, Polk County kicked off the **Eastern Polk Stream Restoration Project**. This effort is the single largest stream restoration project in the state and is aimed to restore over 10 miles of stream across urban and rural areas by the end of 2026. The project has also engaged a full research team, seeking to quantify the water quality benefits of the project.

\$21 million funded



\$200K funded

Polk County has also recognized the importance of addressing our urban issues and educating residents. Since 2019, the County's **Rain Campaign** has empowered urban residents to be a part of the solution, resulting in the installation of over 2,000 conservation practices.

