



First Friday News & Views

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

September 2025 | Volume 30 | Issue 9

Next Meeting

**Friday,
September 5
7:00 a.m.**



Location

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



Speaker

Carl Voss

**Des Moines
City Council
Member**



Website

ffbc Iowa.org



Guiding the City of Des Moines

by Byron Huff, Board President

I hope that you can join First Friday Breakfast Club on Friday, September 5, to hear from **Carl Voss**, a long-time Des Moines City Council member and founding member of the Historic East Village Council, along with other board positions impacting our community.

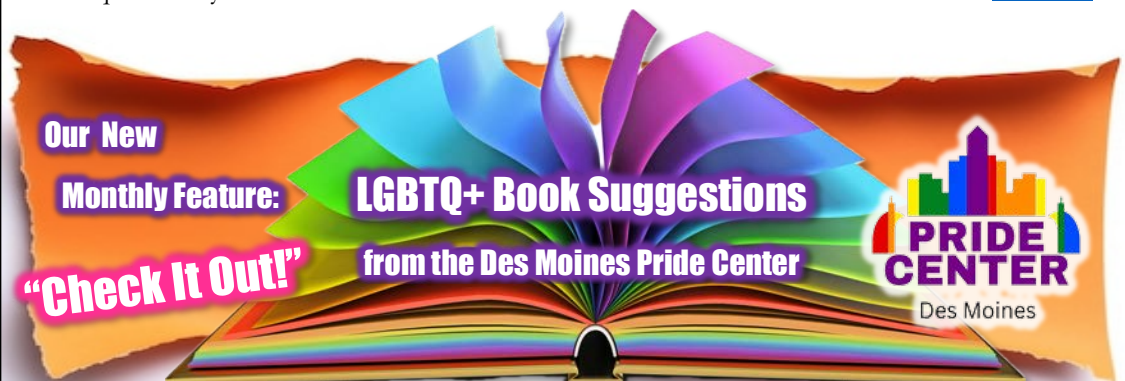
The Des Moines City Council, comprised of seven members including the mayor, acts as the city's legislative branch. They are responsible for making laws, approving the city budget, enacting ordinances, and setting policies that guide city operations. Their purpose is to ensure the city is financially strong, to provide exceptional municipal services, and to foster an involved community. The council is also focused on revitalizing neighborhoods, improving public safety, and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents.



Recent Notable Accomplishments:

- **Citywide Housing Strategy:** The council recently approved a comprehensive strategy to address housing affordability, neighborhood stability, and housing quality, including increased funding for home repairs and down payment assistance.
- **Parks and Recreation Improvements:** The city has seen improvements in its ParkScore rating, particularly in areas of access, investment, amenities, and equity, due to ongoing efforts in park development and programming.
- **Energize Des Moines:** This voluntary program encouraged energy conservation in large buildings (over 25,000 square feet) through awards and public recognition.
- **Housing Initiatives:** The council is investing in programs like Invest DSM and Improving Our Neighborhoods (ION), and providing support for home repairs and down payment assistance.
- **Sustainability Initiatives:** The council has implemented initiatives like the Energy and Water Benchmarking Ordinance, which requires large buildings to track their energy and water usage, and "Think Green This Spring" to connect residents with sustainability resources.

I hope this article gives you some insight into the Des Moines City Council and perhaps spurs some questions you would like to ask Carl. Find more information about Carl on his [website](https://www.carlvoss.com).



Ankeny PRIDE
Saturday, Sept. 6th
Wagner Park Bandshell

PRIDE in the PARK

5:30pm Ankeny Pride Pet Parade
6:00pm Food Trucks & Social Hour
7:30pm How to Train Your Dragon

PRESENTED BY:

Pet Parade! 5:30pm + **MOVIE NIGHT** 7:30pm

Register at ankenypride.org Bring chairs/blankets!

**"ALL THE MONTHS ARE
CRUDE EXPERIMENTS, OUT
OF WHICH THE PERFECT
SEPTEMBER IS MADE."**

Virginia Woolf

 **INTERFAITH ALLIANCE OF IOWA**

**Challenging
extremism and
threats to our
democracy**



Guthrie Graves-Fitzimmons
Vice President of Programs & Strategy
Interfaith Alliance

Thursday, September 4
6:30 PM

First Unitarian Church
Des Moines

Briefs & Shorts



Thanks to **Brad Holland** for introducing our August speaker, **Brent Johnson**, President of Iowa Farm Bureau Federation. 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 FFBC's 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 **October newsletter** will be **September 22**. 

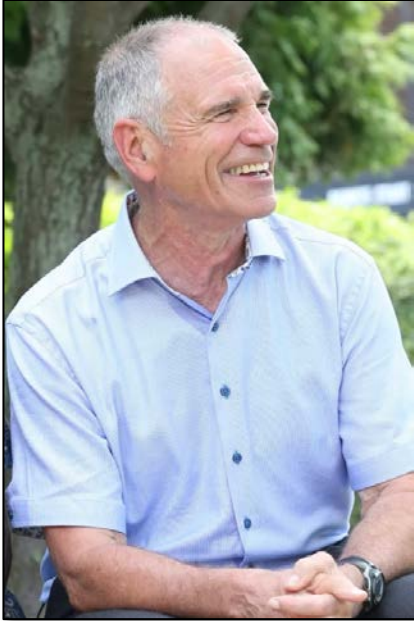
If you have something that you would like to share, type it up and email it to Wade (wadecpetersen@gmail.com) by the deadline.

Fundraising efforts are ongoing to fund our 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 local 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. 

Carl Voss



A fifth-generation Iowan, father of two, and grandfather of six, Carl Voss has lived in Des Moines since 1971. While beginning his journalism career in the city as a photographer and editor for *The Des Moines Register*, he got to know the issues that Des Moines residents face and became increasingly involved in civic activities. In addition to currently serving as an at-large council member, Carl served as an interim City Council member (2013-14).

Before joining the council, he served on fundraising cabinets for community-betterment projects and chaired the City's Transportation Safety Committee. That committee works to make streets accessible to all, including pedestrians, mobility-challenged, bike riders, and transit users. He represents the City of Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Committee, the Des Moines Arts Festival Board, the Blank Park Zoo Foundation, Invest DSM, Neighborhood Investment Corporation, and the Joppa Village Coalition Board. Carl chairs the MPO's Bike-Ped Roundtable.

Carl and his wife, Susan, are two of the first East Village residents, where they have promoted Shop Local and community-building initiatives. As a founding board member of the Historic East Village, Carl has worked since 2000 to create a safe, walkable neighborhood for residents, small businesses, and visitors. Carl brings his diverse experience to each opportunity and works collaboratively to reach the best solutions for Des Moines.

September Speaker



Check out the newly updated
website design for the
Iowa LGBTQ
Chamber of Commerce:

iowalgbtqchamber.org

Autumn shows us
how beautiful it is to let
things go.



HERE TO
PEE

TRANS COMEDIANS
RAISING FUNDS TO
FIGHT ANTI-TRANS
BATHROOM BILLS
IN ALL 50 STATES

NORTHERN STATE DATES

8/1/2025 SIOUX FALLS, SD @ TRANSFORMATION PROJECT
8/4/2025 FARGO, ND @ THE AQUARIUM
8/7/2025 MINNEAPOLIS, MN @ THE SALOON MN
8/11/2025 MADISON, WI @ THE CRUCIBLE
8/14/2025 INDIANAPOLIS, IN @ THE WHITE RABBIT CABARET
8/15/2025 DETROIT, MI @ GREENWICH TIME PUB
8/23/2025 BRIDGEWATER, VT @ WOOLEN MILL COMEDY CLUB
8/26/2025 FAIRFIELD, CT @ TREVI LOUNGE
8/27/2025 PORTLAND, ME @ THE EAST ENDER
8/28/2025 MANCHESTER, NH @ THE STONED WALL BAR + GRILL
8/29/2025 PROVIDENCE, RI @ FETE MUSIC HALL
8/31/2025 COLUMBUS, OH @ THE NEST THEATRE
9/2/2025 GAMBIER, OH @ KENYON COLLEGE
9/4/2025 DES MOINES, IA @ THE GARDEN
9/6/2025 OMAHA, NE @ SECRET LOCATION

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!



Nohle Cooley
Waterloo West H.S.

"Thank you so much for your generosity. It was an honor to be chosen alongside so many other recipients. The scholarship award from FFBC and what it represents will always be a cherished memory. Thank you for the tremendous work you do to support the LGBTQ community."





First Friday Breakfast Club
Founder **Jonathan Wilson**

Part of My Coming Out Story

by Jonathan Wilson

My college-aged son came to me and asked whether or not I planned to come out publicly at a special Des Moines School Board meeting in January 1995, solely to discuss the subject "Homosexuality and the Public Schools." He had known that I am gay for five years, even before his mother and I dissolved our marriage. He thought it needed to be done, it was the right time, and I was the right person to do it. He said that if I just couldn't do it, I could say I'd heard the rumors, they weren't true, and the reason I cared so much about the issue was because I was the proud father of a gay son. I told him I hadn't yet decided.

I'd known I was somehow different since I was five years old. I had no name for the attractions I felt toward some men. I defined myself outside the gay label – defining gay men as effeminate, wanting to cross-dress, and basically wanting to be women.

I was 27 years old, married to a woman, and already with one child before the American psychiatric community concluded that being gay isn't a mental illness and that homophobia is. Same gender intimacy was a crime in every state. I was raised in a church (where my father was a pastor) that taught that homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.

Thanks to lots of reading and counseling, I finally got it figured out. I had the good fortune of coming out in the best possible sequence; first to myself, then to my wife, then to my siblings, then to my parents, then to my children, and then to a small circle of close friends.

By the time of that scheduled school board meeting, I was an attorney in a lucrative private practice and also almost a 12-year veteran of the Des Moines School Board. The Monday before that Tuesday evening meeting, my son asked me the question again. I said I wasn't positive, but by Wednesday morning, one of was going to be gay.

Tensions in the community had mounted before that meeting; for months, radical, self-described Christians had attended every board meeting, speaking against the nondiscrimination policy that had been in place for five years. Rumors about me had circulated, other board members and school administrators had heard them, and all were nervous for me and for the school district if one of the wingnuts might make a public accusation.

There was standing room only, overflow was in a nearby auditorium, and the whole meeting was on TV and broadcast statewide. Near the end of the meeting I asked for a point of personal privilege, and made a public declaration saying, among other things:

"Many labels apply to me. I am a man. I am a father; both of my beautiful children are here this evening. I love them more than life, just like other parents love their children. I am also a son, and my father is here. My mother, who is deceased, is here in spirit as well. I am a brother, and my sister is here. I am an uncle, a lawyer, and a public servant. I am a citizen with concerns about diverse issues affecting public education. I try to be a good friend to my friends, and a good neighbor to my neighbors. **And I am gay.** That does not change any of the other labels. They are all true. The negative things that have been said in recent weeks about gay people – the awful stereotypes – are lies. I know because I am a gay person. Now this community can know that they are lies, too, because this community knows me and has known me for almost a quarter of a century."

The time was 10:24 p.m., the time that I assumed I'd have to start winding down my law practice. But for the next three days, two secretaries and I were consumed by positive phone calls from all over the state. My offices were filled with flowers. It was heartwarming.



I decided to run for re-election to a fifth term on the school board. I'd been on the board for 12 years and saw both of my kids through high school graduation. I'd served multiple times as board president; was on the national School Boards Association Board of Directors, and chaired the Council of Urban Boards of Education, a consortium of the largest school districts in the country. I was endorsed for re-election by every organization that interviewed all candidates.

But there were death threats; I had to wear a bulletproof vest every time I was outside. I was assigned a police officer to provide security advice, who identified several safehouses where I could flee, if necessary. The drapes of my home had to be drawn at all times. I turned out the master bedroom light at bedtime, but slept in another room because of the potential for a fire bomb. There were tracks in the snow all around my house.

Normally you win with 6 - 7000 votes. I got over 12,000 votes and lost in a landslide. Over 30,000 people voted in that election, turned out with the help of several Republican president campaigns that were using the school board election as a wedge to increase turn out in the 1996 Iowa Caucuses.

One of those supportive calls I got after I came out on television was a woman from out of state who said, "Mr. Wilson, you don't know me, but my husband and I have a gay son. Last night the three of us watched the school board meeting on TV. Because of what you said and did last night, my husband and I don't think our son is going to kill himself, and I had to call and thank you for keeping my precious boy alive."

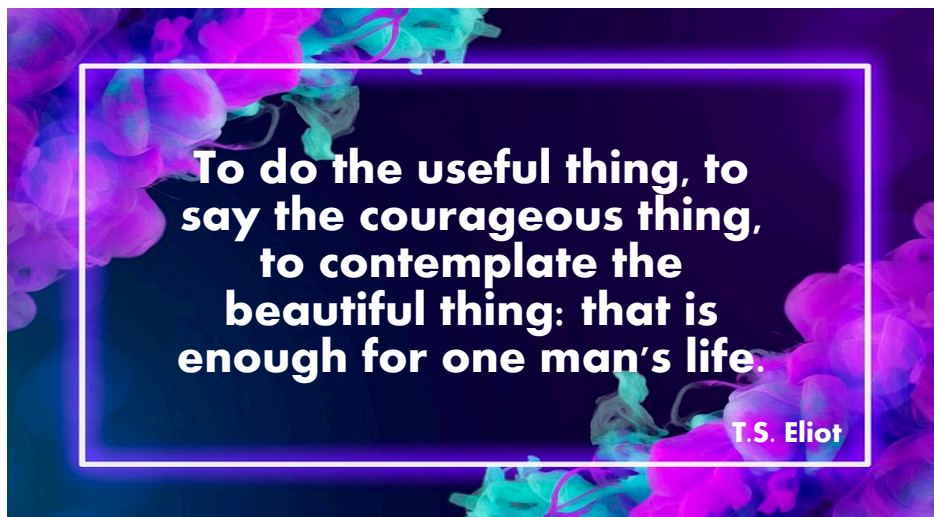
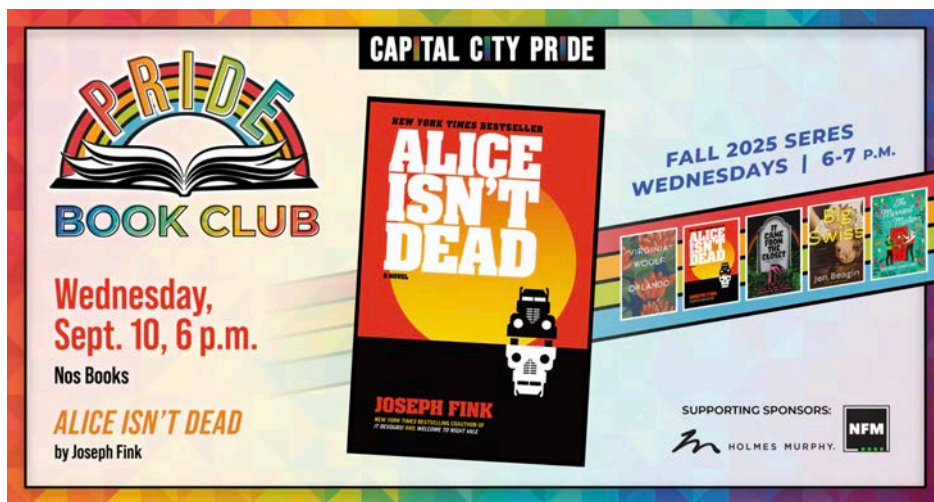
So what I did was really important for those parents, that kid, and for kids like him in the Des Moines Public Schools and beyond. After my defeat, I helped found the FFBC, an association of gay men and the largest private breakfast club in the state of Iowa. We've given over \$550,000 in scholarships to Iowa high school kids who have done courageous things in support of LGBTQ+ civil equality.

Tremendous progress has been made since, in my adult lifetime, gay was labeled a mental illness and a crime. In Iowa, there's legal protection from discrimination for LGB and straight citizens. The same is true in some other states. But not all. In Florida, the state that hosted the worst ever massacre in U.S. history at a gay club in Orlando, any patron seen or interviewed on TV after that slaughter could be legally fired when they got to work the following Monday morning. The church in which I grew up has finally decided that homosexuality is no longer incompatible with Christian teaching.

But there's hope. Remember that woman who called and was glad just to keep her precious boy alive? What does she do the next day when her precious boy experiences discrimination because he's a fag? What does his grandmother do? His siblings? His aunts and uncles? His cousins? His co-workers?

One out of every four families in the U.S. has an out gay family member. You do the math. My coming out publicly was just a brief teaching and learning moment. It helped in a small way to break down ignorant stereotypes and biases – stereotypes and biases I was immersed in growing up, without any positive gay role models.





National LGBTQ+ Calendar

- **September 18:** National HIV/AIDS & Aging Awareness Day
- **Week of September 23:** Bisexual+ Awareness Week, culminates in Celebrate Bisexuality Day on September 23
- **September 27:** National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness 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



Becoming a “Senior”

by Wade Petersen



AARP®



**Social
Security**



What happens when you no longer fit into the category of “middle-aged” but you are not ready to accept the label of “old age”? About the best our society has come up with are terms like “late adulthood” or “late middle age.” As my husband Ken and I turned 60 this past year, it seems we have crossed into that murky status of being labeled “seniors.”

We all have unforgettable milestones at different ages. The first major marker comes when we reach 18. Graduation from high school finally ends most of those turbulent teen years with all the drama and trauma that go with them. Of course, young Iowans have always tested their age boundaries, especially when it comes to drinking beer and alcohol. How many keggers did you go to at a classmate’s house when their parents were away? Even Iowa gravel roads and cornfields made for a quick escape if the police found out about your party. In 1972, Iowa’s drinking age dropped from 21 to 19. A year later in 1973, it dropped yet again to 18. In 1978, the drinking age in Iowa went up yet again to 19. From July 1, 1986, until present, the drinking age changed back to 21, thanks to the National Minimum Drinking Age Act.

Eighteen is also the first time Americans can vote. Because my birthday falls in early October, I remember when our social studies teacher brought my entire class to a local voting precinct; I felt pretty special that I was the only one who had bothered to register. When I pulled that big lever to close the curtain on the old voting booth, I truly felt like an adult.

Your 20s are usually filled with college years, time in the military, first jobs, and/or starting families. Back in the 1980s, the AIDS crisis scared most of us into hiding in the closet, terrified that a gay “lifestyle” would mean not having a family or children. Most terrifying of all, contracting AIDS became a death sentence. So what did we do? Many of us hid our true identities, got married, had kids, or buried ourselves into our work.

The 30s and 40s seem a blur. I got engaged to a woman in my 30s (who turned out to be a lesbian...but that’s a story for another time). By the mid 90s, being gay was still difficult, but there seemed to be hope as more and more people went public with their homosexuality. The revolution of the internet in the 90s changed our lives. Contact with others that had only been possible in the DBS (Dirty Book Store), now had a new outlet. I remember the first time that I logged into gay.com to check things out. It wasn’t long before I had invented a new identity and uploaded a few photos (in heavy shadow and with dark sunglasses). I also spent time worrying about the “battle of the bulge.” I joined the gym in pursuit of six-pack abs that never materialized. Dropping 60 pounds was my way of making myself marketable in the gay world. According to the CDC, the average life expectancy for an American male is 75.8 years. If we truly went by the definition of “middle” age, that would set a person’s halfway point at about 38 years old! I met the love of my life, Ken, when I was 37.

I think a truly significant age for most people is the day that they turn 50 (which would only be middle age if you live to 100). Do you remember how old your parents and grandparents looked at 50? Many worked hard lives and it showed in their appearance; their faces had “character.” I credit the workout videos by Jane Fonda and getting “Physical” with Olivia Newton-John in the 1980s as to giving people more youthful appearances.

Of course, at the age of 50, we are also slowly indoctrinated into the mindset of maturity. The day that your first mailing comes addressed to you from AARP can be unnerving. Healthwise, it’s time to start thinking about scheduling colonoscopies, battling high blood pressure, and waking up multiple times during the night to go to the bathroom. Some changes are subtle; some are more noticeable. Women go through menopause, but did you know that “andropause” is the male equivalent as our testosterone levels gradually decline?

Many opportunities come as we move into our 60s. Most of us are retiring (although I was able to retire early from teaching at 55). We are making sure that our retirement saving plans are enough to help us live out a comfortable life. We also justifiably worry about healthcare and insurance. We look for strategies to help us make it to Medicare. We wonder at what age do we start collecting Social Security. It also tends to be an era of increased medications and the purchase of pill boxes to keep everything sorted. We have become educated in trying different ways to maintain our physical and mental health. My father had Parkinson’s Disease and my mother died from cancer (so I continue to exercise by walking my laps at the Trail Point facility at DMACC). Ken does his daily Sudoku puzzles and crosswords to strengthen his memory. His mother is battling dementia.

Despite some struggles of entering this “senior” stage of life, there are benefits. We have discovered “senior discounts” at movie theaters and restaurants! Ken and I enjoy our grown children and three grandchildren. If you had ever told me as a young gay man that I would have the immense gift of a grandchild telling me, “I love you,” I wouldn’t have believed you. The 60s are a time of travel. Not only do we spend time camping, but we are finally taking those trips that seem to be a reward for all those years of work. After our trip to Europe last fall, Ken and I continue to update our bucket list of future vacations.

For those of you who are also in your 60s (or in your 70s or 80s), I hope that your “senior years” will be the crowning achievement of a life well lived. As Henry David Thoreau taught me: “I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.” So my “senior” advice to you...live, love, and attend First Friday Breakfast Club whenever you can!





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

September Dates:

August 31 – Sept. 7: Applications Open
September 7 – 14: Phone Calls
September 14 – 21: Application Review
September 21 – 28: Dispersal



Help make a bigger difference! Donate at:

www.iowatransmutualaidfund.org

oneiowa

LGBTQ HEALTH AND WELLNESS CONFERENCE



SEPTEMBER 29TH 2025 • IOWA CITY

The **One Iowa Midwest LGBTQ Health and Wellness Conference** is dedicated to the holistic health of LGBTQ+ individuals in the Midwest. This conference provides a welcoming space for those involved in LGBTQ+ health, including healthcare providers, mental health professionals, and support staff. We invite physicians, therapists, social workers, dentists, physical therapists, community health workers, medical students, and others to participate.

<https://oneiowa.org/event/lgbtq-health-and-wellness-conference/>

PRIDE
SPORTS LEAGUE
OF CENTRAL IOWA

JOIN US FOR OUR FALL **PANCAKE BRUNCH**



[SUNDAY, SEPT 7TH @ 11^{AM}]



EASTER LAKE SHELTER #4
2830 EASTER LAKE DR
DES MOINES, IA 50320
WALKING CLUB WILL MEET AT 10^{AM}
STARTING AND ENDING AT SHELTER 4.

Come eat good food and be in community as we get ready to wrap up summer shenanigans!



LGBTQ+ Library Cataloging Socials

Sunday, September 14 &
Sunday, September 28

Help preserve
queer history

Connect with
community



Enjoy snacks
with friends



*laptops encouraged
for cataloging



**All are welcome.
Come as you are.**

RSVP on our website desmoinespridecenter.org or email us at
desmoinespridecenter.board@gmail.com to join the fun!



Iowa Farm Bureau @ FFBC

by Gary Moore



August
Speaker

Brent Johnson was introduced to the First Friday Breakfast Club by his cousin, FFBC Board Member Brad Holland. Brent was elected president of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation in 2021. Brent noted he would much prefer to have a conversation rather than to give a talk. He began by asking a few questions to gauge members' understanding of who and what the Farm Bureau is. He provided a brief history of the Iowa Farm Bureau's founding and development over the years, distinguishing its Farm Bureau Insurance side and Federation side. The Iowa Farm Bureau started in 1918 with its mission of creating a vibrant future for agriculture, farm families, and their communities.

Iowa Farm Bureau helps keep that agricultural engine running by working for family farmers in areas critical to their farm businesses. From representing their public policy interests at the local, state, and national levels to enhancing market opportunities and providing critical information, Iowa Farm Bureau strives to ensure farm families thrive for generations to come. "Our Young Farmer Program provides networking opportunities and cutting edge information to Iowa's young farm families, and they work to provide growth opportunities for future farmers through their Take Root farm succession program."

In 1939, the insurance company side of the organization was formed as the organization faced many changes with the industrial age ushering in the mechanization of new farming equipment and technical advancements. The organization is interested in encouraging new farmers, best farming practices, and the creation of new leaders.

The organization is well known for its advocacy (lobbying) with state and federal legislative bodies on the policy positions adopted by the state and the American Farm Bureau Federation. Those policies are brought up through an organization of County Bureaus to the 11-member state board consisting of nine farmers representing nine regions in Iowa, as well as an Executive Director and General Counsel hired by the Bureau. The staff implements the policies set by the board and provides support to the county Farm Bureaus and members.

Although the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation has a reputation as being more conservative and favoring larger corporate farming interests, Brent felt that reputation was not accurate, noting the policies and advocacy of the organization accurately represent the opinions of the majority of Iowa's 60,000 farmers, with the average farm being 460 acres.

In discussing issues with FFBC members, Mr. Johnson noted that IFBF is a general farm organization and supports a wide spectrum of agriculture. Members are diverse, ranging from small to large farms, organic to traditional. These farms may be independent or they may be part of a family corporation. Farm Bureau's policies represent its members and the issues important to them. Membership is a diverse group of people with differing viewpoints. Members share their viewpoints and set the policies that determine Farm Bureau's lobbying positions through a year-long, grassroots process.

Questions about the use of immigration labor and its importance to various farming communities had Mr. Johnson discussing how the labor intensity is different for different types of farming. Some farming, such as dairy farms, calls for high labor intensity and the difficulty in finding sufficient labor. He avoided any political stands other than needing to respect workers.

The question of world warming and how policy is affecting future climate as well as energy sourcing led to a discussion of the advancements in farming to control nitrate use and water policy. The major policy position of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation is that government regulation is not the route to take to ensure a better outcome for the future.

The family-oriented Mr. Johnson noted he feared we would continue to see a future consolidation of farming as market and financial pressures increase. For this writer, there are still major state and national policies that are not being addressed beyond the production of selected crops, the market, and its profitability. Questions still remain about how policy impacts future weather, the health of the human race, and the health of the planet's ecosystems.



Brent Johnson
President
Iowa Farm Bureau Federation



August Meeting Photo Gallery



Ken Hanson,

FFBC Vice President, substitutes for President Byron Huff in running the August FFBC meeting.



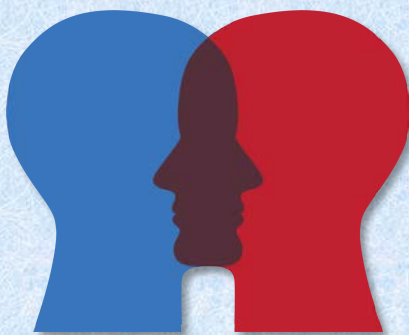
Brad Holland,

FFBC Board Member, introduces Brent Johnson, President of Iowa Farm Bureau Federation (who also happens to be Brad's nephew).



Differing Opinions: Giving Voice to the Opposition

by Ken Hanson, FFBC Vice President



Our August speaker, Brent Johnson, President of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, was not without controversy. Some FFBC members were concerned that we were giving voice to “Corporate/Big Ag” at the expense of family farms, suggesting that we should have had someone speak from the Iowa Farmer’s Union to give voice to family farms instead. We are always happy to take speaker suggestions; in fact, we already have someone from the Iowa Farmer’s Union on our list of potential speakers.

Part of our mission as an organization is to be an educational forum. Judging from the array of questions posed to Brent at the end of his presentation, there was definitely interest in having him speak. Does that mean the board and our members support Farm Bureau? As a 501(c)(3) we cannot take political positions. Should we have controversial speakers? Only our members can make that decision through speaking with FFBC board members. Giving voice to a Catholic bishop of Iowa and a Republican congressman who voted for anti-gay legislation during his term of office, were perhaps controversial speakers at the time as well.

In my opinion, education can take place in both directions during presentations by our speakers. Not only are FFBC members being educated by the speaker, but often the speaker is also being educated by us via our questions and responses to their presentations. Did I learn that I should probably look deeper into statistics on the percentage of “corporate” farms in Iowa after Brent’s presentation? Of course, I should. His family farm is incorporated as a C corporation, so perhaps many family farms are now categorized by this definition of corporate farming.

Was I convinced that Big Ag is not a problem in Iowa? No, I wasn’t, since I know that there are only four large packing plants that control the beef market in Iowa. Similar consolidation impacts the poultry industry. Growing up, I remember the animal auction houses throughout rural Iowa where a multitude of packing houses competed for farmers’ animals. Now the livestock are often owned from birth by the packing plant; the family farmers are then under contract to feed and raise those animals. This limits competitive pricing to those family farmers who have often invested thousands of dollars into large CAFO facilities to raise these animals. If the “Big Ag” company decides to terminate a contract, that farmer can be left with building debt that can’t be paid. Lack of competition is usually a problem.

Listening to and engaging with an opposing viewpoint can do many things. It can hone our arguments against that viewpoint. It can open our eyes to something we haven’t yet considered. It can also alter the opinion of the person with that opposing viewpoint. Did Brent change any opinions of FFBC listeners during his presentation? I have no idea, but perhaps. Will Brent, in his role as president of Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, think of the effect of corporate farming on climate change, water quality, and immigration policy after hearing questions and opinions from his audience? I like to think so.

I found it very telling that Brent is aware that the cost for young people to enter farming is prohibitive compared to a few decades ago. Will his C corporation succumb to “Big Ag” and be swallowed up? Or will policies change enough that a young farmer could afford to buy him out when he and his wife are ready to retire? Perhaps Brent will affect Farm Bureau’s lobbying and bring about policies that will benefit young people who want to farm. Only time, and an engaged public, will tell.

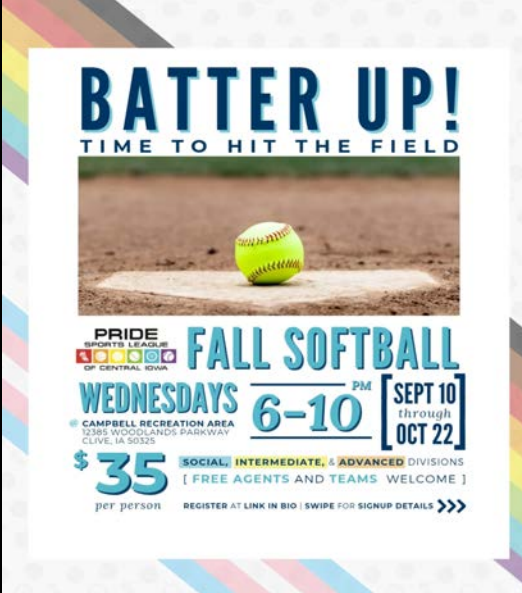
Information from those with differing opinions can be some of the best education of all. Do you know someone who can educate us? Let one of the FFBC board members know. We appreciate when FFBC members bring suggestions for speakers who have the potential to educate us, whether we agree with them or not.



DES MOINES GAY MEN'S CHORUS
MUSIC THAT MATTERS
DMGMC.ORG

@dmgaymenschorus

**Want to join the
DMGMC for SEASON 25?
Rehearsals start in less
than TWO weeks!** 🍷



BATTER UP!
TIME TO HIT THE FIELD

PRIDE SPORTS LEAGUE OF CENTRAL IOWA
FALL SOFTBALL
WEDNESDAYS 6-10 PM [SEPT 10 through OCT 22]
CAMPBELL RECREATION AREA
6285 WOODLAND PARKWAY
CLIVE, IA 50325
\$35 per person [SOCIAL, INTERMEDIATE, & ADVANCED DIVISIONS]
[FREE AGENTS AND TEAMS WELCOME]
REGISTER AT LINK IN BIO | SWIPE FOR SIGNUP DETAILS >>>



PHC
primary health care
the project

**Help Us
End The Epidemic.**

phctheproject.org/donate

Get ready for some big news from FFBC coming in 2026!



COLLECT BUTTERFLIES IN NATURE AND WIN A PRIZE!

CAP TAL C TY PR DE

RAINBOW

Scavenger Hunt

PRESENTING SPONSOR **NFM**

SATURDAY, SEPT. 13, 10:30 AM

CLARE AND MILES MILLS
ROSE GARDEN, DES MOINES

SUPPORTING SPONSORS
BankersTrust. Principal®

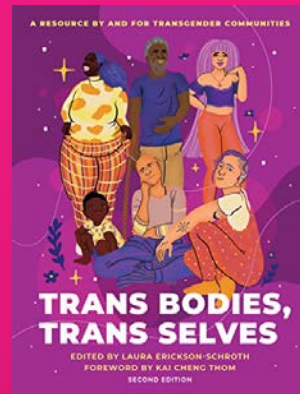


Check It Out



The Des Moines Pride Center houses the largest Queer-only library in the state. The Pride Center is fighting to maintain a vibrant Queer future by connecting people to LGBTQIA+ literature, information, and creativity.

Book of the Month



There is no one way to be transgender. Transgender and gender non-conforming people have many different ways of understanding their gender identities.

Trans Bodies, Trans Selves is a revolutionary resource - a comprehensive, reader-friendly guide for transgender people, with each chapter written by transgender or genderqueer authors.

**1620 Pleasant Street, Des Moines
(515) 518-0530
www.desmoinespridecenter.org**

**Full Searchable Catalog:
www.librarycat.org/lib/DSMPC**

Shop with Pride!

20% of profits go to Ankeny Pride

Tuesday, Sept. 9
5 pm - 9 pm

the OUTSIDE SCOOP
SMALL BATCH FUDGE SCRATCH

Ankeny PRIDE

LOVE IS LOVE

PRESENTED BY CAPITAL CITY PRIDE AND DOWNTOWN DISCIPLES

BUY TICKETS NOW!

LGBTQ+ AND ALLY ADULT PROM

SATURDAY, NOV. 8, 7-10 PM

BASH DSM | 1312 LOCUST ST #101 | DES MOINES

SUPPORTING SPONSORS: **IBEV** **BASH**




Capital Bears

Capital Bears is an inclusive group which focuses on providing the LGBTQIA+ community a safe and accepting social network. They strive to offer a good space to share ideas and meet individuals. Their purpose is to create an atmosphere of social acceptance among individuals who identify as bear, otter, cub, admirer, or supporter.

CAPITAL BEARS
DES • MOINES • IOWA

www.capitalbears.org



The Pride Center Library Collection is constantly changing, if you would like to donate material or provide support, they are always looking for community connections and support.



Spotlight on National LGBTQ+ Organizations

Lambdalegal.org



LAMBDA LEGAL

Our story begins with a band of volunteer lawyers who believed they could break new ground for LGBTQ+ people through the American justice system. They had \$25 in the bank and a new name—Lambda Legal—that co-founder Bill Thom taped to his apartment mailbox using a Band-Aid.

OUR MISSION

The Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. ("Lambda Legal") is a national organization working to achieve full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and everyone living with HIV, through impact litigation, education and public policy work.



LGBTQ+ Bowling League bowls on Wednesdays at 7 PM, Gameday Lanes, in the lower level of Merle Hay Mall.

First night of league play is **Wednesday, September 3**, for 28 weeks. New bowlers are welcome! Check us out on Facebook.

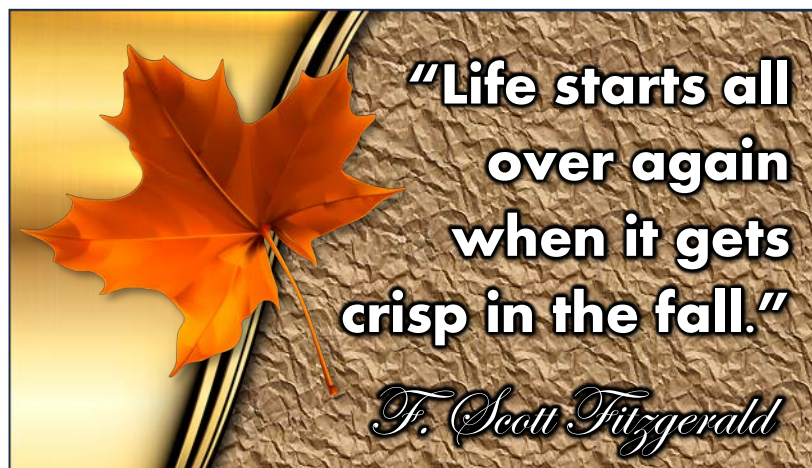
Details:

3-player teams
\$14 per person/week
\$12 lineage
\$2 prize fund

We have room for 20 teams! We had 14 teams last spring.



Lia Thomas (she/her) is a transgender woman, an athlete, and an advocate. She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 2022 where she competed as an openly transgender swimmer and became the first trans athlete to win an NCAA D1 Championship. She received significant media attention for her competition on the women's team and has spoken about her experiences and of the importance of inclusion in athletics. In addition to her NCAA awards, her story has become a flashpoint in US politics. In June, Thomas lost a court case fighting for the inclusion of trans athletes in the highest levels of swimming, and in July, Penn revoked Thomas' awards and titles achieved during her collegiate swimming career. This is your chance to get behind the headlines, peel back the layers of political spin, and hear Lia's powerful personal story. **Tickets for this event (\$5) will go on sale on August 20th and are limited to the first 200 guests.**



dsm Magazine 2025 LGBTQ+ **Legacy Leader Awards**



Photo from *dsm Magazine*

Now more than ever, it is important to honor central Iowa's LGBTQ+ community. Representing a wide range of vocations, they lead with vigor and compassion, solving problems and helping build a community that we can be proud to call home. To honor Iowa's LGBTQ leaders, *dsm magazine* has collaborated with Capital City Pride for their seventh annual LGBTQ Legacy Leader Awards. They also will recognize an emerging LGBTQ leader, as well as an ally of the LGBTQ community.

Honorees will be recognized **September 9**
from 4:30 – 7:00 at The River Center
(340 SW 3rd Street | Des Moines).

2025 Honorees



Kayla Bell-Consolver (she/her) is the director and a practicing therapist at Broadlawns Drake Student Counseling Center, and adjunct professor of counseling at Drake University. She also founded her own mental health education brand, Question Kayla, where she produces lectures, consultations and trainings on topics like LGBTQ mental health, trauma recovery, workplace mental health and racial/generational bias.

Shannon Samuelson (she/her) is a senior credit underwriter with Wells Fargo and treasurer of the Iowa LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce Board, supporting LGBTQ-owned businesses across the state. She was also former Board Treasurer for Capital City Pride, leveraging her expertise in finance to help grow the organization's events and advocacy work.

Jenny Smith (she/her) is a financial adviser and owner of Smith + Co. Financial, and the former board chair of One Iowa, where she advocated for equity and financial empowerment within the LGBTQ community.

Jeremy Weiss (he/him) is the director and U.S. head of front office consulting for Alpha FMC, a global consulting company, and serves as the current board chair for nonprofits One Iowa and Community Youth Concepts. He also volunteers with the Iowa Homeless Youth Center, Des Moines Arts Festival, and World Food & Music Festival, and mentors LGBTQ youth.

Tristan Miedema (he/they), **Emerging Leader Award**, is the founding director of TRANScendent, Iowa's first and only choral ensemble composed of trans and nonbinary singers, and an associate professor with Drake University's musical theater department. He also serves as section leader and social media coordinator for the Des Moines Gay Men's Chorus, and was named a 2025 One Iowa Changemaker award winner.

Connie Ryan (she/her), **Ally Award**, has been the executive director of the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa since 2002, and is the founder and chair of Justice Not Politics, the state's leading organization fighting to maintain a fair and impartial judiciary. She has held several board positions for nonprofits in the legal sector supporting legal aid, education and the protection of Iowa LGBTQ and immigrant communities including Friends of Iowa Legal Aid, Iowa Immigration Education Coalition, Iowa Safe Schools and One Iowa.

Register: dsmmagazine.com/lgbtq-legacyawards-2025/





Weapons

A Movie Review by Mark Turnage

Director Zach Cregger is a horror auteur making a name for himself alongside Jordan Peele, Osgood Perkins, and Ari Aster – when his 2022 directorial and screenwriting debut “Barbarian” premiered, audiences praised its shocking twists, smart writing, and effective scares as a fresh new entry in the horror genre. Recently tapped as the director for the umpteenth upcoming remake of “Resident Evil,” Cregger notably sees himself as a writer first and a director second – in interviews, his approach to writing is to “consistently surprise [him]self – if I’m doing that, I’m surprising my audience.” But does his sophomore horror film “Weapons” carry on the spirit of his previous work, or overcomplicate it?

In residential middle-class Maybrook, Pennsylvania, newly hired teacher Justine Gandy (Julia Garner) arrives at school to find most of her class of 17 third grade students missing, with one student, Alex Lilly (Cary Christopher) alone in her classroom. Home surveillance from doorbell cameras and motion detectors reveal the same footage: each child leaving their homes at 2:17 AM the previous morning, arms spread, sprinting into the night. Placed on leave and blamed by the town’s parents, Justine falls upon bad habits, including alcoholism and an affair with a local cop (Alden Ehrenreich) who has his own personal demons. With little left to lose, Justine starts her own messy investigation of

Alex, bringing her into increasingly bizarre and disturbing confrontations with Arthur, her principal Marcus (Benedict Wong), and the unconventional but thematically sensible horror at the heart of the disappearance plot.

In an interview, Cregger stated he began writing the script for “Weapons” without an endpoint or goal in mind other than the feel of a childhood urban legend until it began to gel once the film’s antagonist was conceived; the film stands on elements from classic children’s stories; however, its theme of misplaced blame for community tragedy is one of the strongest and most mature in its narrative. “Weapons” takes its time with its central mystery, forces the audience to question its characters, and is cautious not to answer its riddles too quickly. The answers, however, do carry Cregger’s signature zaniness, and if your attention span is poor, the payoffs from perspective shifts won’t land as well.

Cregger enjoys crafting characters who challenge initial assumptions. The narrative structure of the film subtly reinforces audience suspicion of each character’s role in the disappearance plot by altering minor details when the perspective shifts to another character witnessing the same events – casting doubt on if the previous “chapter” followed was a completely reliable narrative, and raising more questions on who should



be believed. The effect drives the film’s suspense and pulls focus on the plot, punctuated by eerie, creeping residential cinematography, especially unnerving physical performances by its cast, and Cregger’s favorite trick: a mindfuck jumpscare. Combined with its nonlinear narrative, “Weapons” does demand audience investment in its moving parts, but rewards audience attentiveness with more unsettling questions.

This reviewer has read recent discourse about “Weapons” raising questions about its treatment of its gay characters, both of whom end up with grisly fates. But in a horror film, anyone and *everyone* could meet a messy and unfortunate end, including our favorite gays. It’d become problematic if queer characters were the *only* victims of ghastly misfortune (the gauche “bury your gays” trope) – but “Weapons” carries on what “Barbarian” started in terms of cleverness and catharsis as poetic justice. Cregger’s brand of visceral horror is one where no one is safe. See “Weapons” in theaters and on streaming services soon.



IOWA ARTISTS 2025 BEN MILLETT

JULY 26 - NOVEMBER 2, 2025



PHOTO: BRITTANY BROOKE CROW

SEPT 14 | 1 PM | FREE

**BEN MILLETT HAND QUILTING
IN ART CENTER GALLERIES**

OCT 16 | 6 PM | FREE (RESERVATIONS REQUIRED)

ARTIST LECTURE: BEN MILLETT

NOV 1 | 1 PM | FREE

DROP-IN GUIDED EXHIBITION TOUR



4700 Grand Ave, Des Moines IA 50312

desmoinesartcenter.org

Based in Des Moines, Ben Millett's approach to textiles is literally multi-layered, employing traditional quilting techniques to create works that combine original patterns, a bright palette, and visual nods to queer iconography and activism. "Iowa Artists 2025: Ben Millett" is a timely and groundbreaking entry into the Art Center's decades-long series presenting the best of Iowa-made art, and the first solo show by a quilt maker in the museum's history.



Hosted by the Central Iowa LGBTQ+ Nonprofit Roundtable, this FREE, family-friendly picnic brings together LGBTQ+ folks and allies for an afternoon of connection, games, art-making, and food on the grounds of the Mickle Center (1620 Pleasant Street). Whether you've been out forever or are just starting your journey, you belong here.



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Publication



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of Directors**

First Friday Breakfast Club
P.O. Box 41611
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(515) 954-2996

The McCoy Report

Polk County Election Office is Moving

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

With Taylor Van De Krol



The Polk County Election Office is leaving its downtown location for a different headquarters on the north side at **River Place** (2309 Euclid Avenue) from the multi-story building on Second Avenue. Board officials think that the River Place location will offer more parking and space for voters. The new office is also located along a bus stop and near the trail system. More and more voters had been casting their ballots downtown in person, often causing people to line up outside, subject to all types of Iowa weather. Polk County Auditor Jamie Fitzgerald said, "Parking and voter convenience is the key. When you're asking people to come participate in democracy, you don't want to sit outside an extended period of time."

WE'VE MOVED



**THE POLK COUNTY ELECTION OFFICE
HAS RELOCATED**

COME TOUR
THE NEW LOCATION!

OPEN HOUSE

**SEPTEMBER 3, 2025
5:00 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.**

**POLK COUNTY RIVER PLACE
2309 EUCLID AVE
DES MOINES, IA 50310**



FOR ELECTION INFORMATION: WWW.POLKCOUNTYIOWA.GOV/COUNTY-AUDITOR/

