



# First Friday News & Views



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

May 2026 | Volume 31 | Issue 5

## Next Meeting

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



## Location

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



## Speaker

**Dave Busiek**

**Retired KCCI**  
**News Director**



## Website

**ffbc Iowa.org**



## That's News to Me

by Byron Huff, Board President

I hope you can join us on Friday, May 1, to hear from a veteran newsman, **Dave Busiek**. Dave spent 43 years in journalism, including decades at KCCI, Channel 8. Dave has a Substack account ("**Dave Busiek on Media**") where he shares insights about topics and helps us interpret and understand how to navigate the constant stream of news coming at us from multiple sources with conflicting themes. His Substack articles are less about breaking news and more about how news works: how to interpret it and how media affects public understanding.



Busiek shares more about how to be a smarter news consumer. He says that people don't need more news--they need better habits around it. To help readers navigate today's overwhelming media environment, he encourages people to stay informed without burnout, acknowledging that many are tuning out due to stress or overload. Busiek also offers practical advice on filtering news, choosing reliable sources, and pacing consumption. He emphasizes that understanding context matters more than constant updates.

In explaining how journalism actually works, Busiek frequently pulls back the curtain on newsroom decisions. News isn't just facts--it is shaped by systems, incentives, and constraints. This includes why reporters do certain things (e.g., live shots in bad weather, editorial choices); how ownership, consolidation, and economics shape coverage; and the decline of traditional local journalism and its consequences.

The media needs scrutiny just like any other institution. Busiek critiques both national and local media practices by calling out misleading coverage, poor editorial judgment, or missed stories (e.g., criticism of coverage around major Iowa figures like Caitlin Clark). He examines how outlets handle political messaging, misinformation, and bias. He also highlights the impact of corporate decisions (like cutting services such as Associated Press coverage).



Rather than pure political commentary, Busiek focuses on how politics is covered. Understanding political coverage is key to understanding politics itself. This includes analysis of elections, debates, and campaign narratives (often via Iowa-focused panels or podcasts). It also involves discussion of messaging, polling, and voter perception, as well as exploration of how media framing influences public opinion.

[continued on page 2]



["That's News to Me" continued from page 1]

Journalism must actively counter misinformation, not just report it. A recurring theme is how journalists can respond to falsehoods. Busiek promotes techniques like the "truth sandwich" which presents facts before and after quoting misinformation. He argues for clearer, more responsible reporting in an era of political lies.

As far as the future of journalism (especially local news), Busiek often highlights experiments and challenges in the industry. Local journalism is in crisis—but not without possible solutions. He points to nonprofit models (like statehouse newsrooms) as promising alternatives. He warns about shrinking newsrooms and reduced coverage. Busiek also advocates for sustaining local accountability reporting.

Overall, Dave Busiek's Substack isn't about chasing headlines—it's about teaching readers how to interpret the news ecosystem. Across his articles, he consistently argues that media literacy is essential, journalism is under strain but still vital, and consumers share responsibility in how they engage with news.



## ADULT LGBTQIA+ ART GATHERINGS

2ND THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH

APRIL 9, MAY 14, JUNE 11, JULY 9

6:00 – 8:00 PM

DES MOINES ART CENTER | MAIN LOBBY

Explore artwork by queer artists and create your own in a welcoming, affirming space. Led by a queer teaching artist or ally.

All experience levels welcome.

Free, registration not required.

Questions? Contact Community Access Program Manager, Kelsey Burr at [kburr@desmoinesartcenter.org](mailto:kburr@desmoinesartcenter.org)

4700 GRAND AVENUE | DES MOINES, IOWA | [DESMOINESARTCENTER.ORG](http://DESMOINESARTCENTER.ORG)



# Briefs & Shorts



We are grateful to First Friday Breakfast Club Vice President and Scholarship Chair, **Ken Hanson**, for introducing our April speaker, **Kimberly Graham**. Graham is the Polk County Attorney.

Thanks to **John Schmacker** for assisting with FFBC's finances during our time of transition. We are also grateful to **Nicholas Williams** for overseeing 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 **June newsletter** will be **May 25**.



If you have something of interest that you would like to share, just 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 local communities. Please consider a tax-deductible **contribution** online or by sending a check.

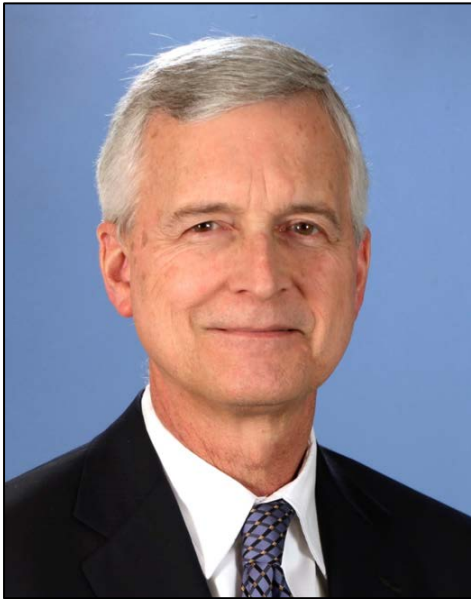
A **special thank-you** to FFBC members and donors who have generously chosen to designate First Friday Breakfast Club as a beneficiary through the **Donor Direct** program of **United Way**. Contributions made through the United Way are tax deductible since FFBC is an eligible 501(c)(3) nonprofit recipient of such funding designations.



**United Way**

# May Speaker

DAVE BUSIEK  
ON MEDIA



## Dave Busiek

Dave Busiek spent 43 years working in Iowa radio and television newsrooms as a reporter, anchor and the last 30 years as news director of KCCI-TV, the CBS affiliate in Des Moines. In that role, he planned coverage of the Iowa caucuses, the floods of 1993 during which 250,000 central Iowans lost drinking water for 12 days, and organized the first national debate between Democratic candidates for president in 2015. He served as national board chair of the Radio-Television News Directors Association. In 2014, he was Broadcasting and Cable Magazine's News Director of the Year. He was inducted into the Iowa Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 2018 and is a recipient of the Iowa Broadcast News Association's Jack Shelley award. He is a graduate of the University of Missouri School of Journalism. He retired at the end of 2018. He is a member of the **Iowa Writers' Collaborative** and his column, "**Dave Busiek on Media**" appears on Substack.



**dsM INCLUSION**

### Celebrate Diversity EMBRACE COMMUNITY

Tuesday, May 19, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.  
Krause Gateway Center

Dontreale Anderson SEEDS	Yesenia Delgado UnityPoint Health	Adeline Hellman Iowa State	Paul Mengesteg DM Gay Men's Chorus	Johanna Ortiz-Cooper DM Public Schools	Jennifer Rhoads EMC	Emily Schultz BrokeTech Ventures	Mani Smitri Iowa State

LGBTQIA+ HIGH SCHOOLERS  
AGES 14 TO 18  
ARE INVITED TO THE 4TH ANNUAL

QUEER YOUTH RESOURCE CENTER • DES MOINES ART CENTER

SAFE SPACE PROM

SATURDAY, MAY 9 / 7 PM  
DES MOINES ART CENTER

DJ / PHOTO BOOTH / PIZZA / BEVERAGES

REGISTER FOR "GET READY FOR SAFE SPACE PROM" FOR  
FREE MAKEUP HAIR STYLING AND CORSAGE/BOUTONNIERE MAKING  
BEFORE THE EVENT. SESSIONS ARE LIMITED. REGISTER EARLY.

FREE / Registration and a signed waiver  
are required. REGISTER HERE.

**He who blames others has a  
long way to go on his journey.  
He who blames himself is  
halfway there. He who blames  
no one has arrived.**

Chinese Proverb

**FFBC Members, Gene Larson and David Phelps, represent FFBC to promote our LGBTQ+ scholarships at the Iowa Safe Schools Governor's Conference on LGBTQ Youth on April 3, 2026.**



# The Annual Governor's Conference

ON LGBTQ YOUTH



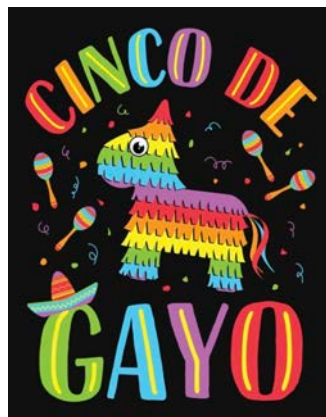
**Date:** May 17  
**Time:** 5:00 - 10:00 pm  
**Cost:** \$5

**CAPITAL CITY PRIDE**

**PRISM TABLETOP CLUB**  
**LGBTQ+ GAME NIGHT**

**ROOK ROOM**

Play with Pride & Celebrate Diversity in Gaming



**DID YOU KNOW?**

**LGBTQ COMMUNITY DINNER**

**FEED DES MOINES**

4<sup>TH</sup> THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH 5-8PM

**POTLUCK COMMUNITY GAMES**

St Johns Lutheran Church | For more information contact:  
 600 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, Des Moines, IA, 50309 | Email: feeddesmoines@gmail.com

**Thank You**

to FFBC Treasurer, David Wilfahrt, who is stepping down from the board. We are so thankful for all of his time and dedication in a myriad of responsibilities that have made First Friday Breakfast Club a better organization.

**David Wilfahrt**



# 30 Years of Newsletters & Editors



The first issue of the “First Friday News & Views” newsletter was published in **April 1996**, four months after FFBC was formed. Various people have taken charge of the newsletter over the years, and we appreciate their time and talent in producing a quality resource for our members. Additionally, **Jonathan Wilson** has guided the newsletter editing behind the scenes until 2022. As you can see from the sample covers below, various styles emerged over the years. All the editors (and teams) listed to the right have produced various issues. *Thank you!*

For most of its production, the newsletter was considered a “perk” of being a member of FFBC. Only people who stayed current with paying their dues received a newsletter by mail. In fact, people could purchase a subscription to the newsletter even if they did not attend meetings. All newsletters were printed in black and white, assembled, and then mailed out to members. This involved much time and expense (and bookkeeping).

This changed in March 2021 when the newsletter went digital. The decision was made to no longer print the newsletter, but to email it, at no cost, to everyone who gave us their email address. All 30 years of FFBC newsletters are available on the website. *We hope you have enjoyed reading all these years!*



1996-2026 FFBC's 30th Anniversary

- April 1996 – July 1996**  
Steve Person, Randy Jedele, Martin St. John-Blecha
- August 1996 – August 1997**  
Steve Person, Randy Jedele, Darrell Mertz
- September 1997**  
Steve Person, Randy Jedele, Darrell Mertz, Ed Weiss
- October 1997 – May 1998**  
Steve Person, Randy Jedele, Darrell Mertz, Ed Weiss, Brian Looker
- June 1998 – August 1998**  
Steve Person, Darrell Mertz, Ed Weiss, Brian Looker
- September 1998 – May 2001**  
Steve Person, Darrell Mertz, Ed Weiss, Paul Sadler, Allen Vander Linden (March 2000)
- June 2001 – January 2003**  
Steve Person, Darrell Mertz, Ed Weiss, Paul Sadler, Paul Dyer
- February 2003 – February 2004**  
Steve Person, Darrell Mertz, Ed Weiss, Paul Dyer, (Randy Happel June – November 2003)
- March 2004**  
Jonathan Wilson, Darrell Mertz
- April 2004 – September 2004**  
Jonathan Wilson, Steve Bishop
- October 2004 – November 2004**  
Bruce McCabe, Steve Bishop
- December 2004 – September 2005**  
Bruce McCabe
- October 2005 – March 2009**  
Steve Person, David Teachout
- April 2009 – December 2009**  
Steve Person, Tony Hansen
- December 2009 – December 2011**  
Tony Hansen
- January 2011**  
Steve Person, Tony Hansen
- February 2011 – November 2011**  
Tony Hansen
- January 2012 – July 2013**  
Steve Person, Tony Dillon-Hansen
- August 2013 – December 2014**  
Steve Person, Bruce Lehnertz
- January 2015**  
Bruce Lehnertz
- February 2015**  
Steve Person, Bruce Lehnertz
- March 2015 – December 2016**  
Bruce Lehnertz
- January 2017 – April 2017**  
Jonathan Wilson
- May 2017 – June 2017**  
Jonathan Wilson, Bruce Sanders Lehnertz
- July 2017**  
Jonathan Wilson
- August 2017**  
Bruce Sanders Lehnertz
- September 2017 - present**  
Wade Petersen





## Following the Money

by Jonathan Wilson

Thomas Douglas Homan, purporting to be a law enforcement officer, was designated by President Trump as his “border czar,” and took over the oversight of ICE operations from Kristi Noem.

You only get one chance to make a first impression. My first impression of Homan was negative and only grew more so the more I have learned about him. Two undercover FBI agents were posing as businessmen who wanted Homan to guide government contracts their way. There had to have been more to the story; FBI sting operations aren’t set up randomly. People are targeted by the FBI for a reason. Questionable things are observed or witnesses file reports of suspicious activity. That gets the attention of the FBI, and if circumstances are sufficiently consequential, a sting operation is initiated. They are initiated with considerable care in order to avoid a defense of entrapment – the government should not be in the business of creating criminals. The sting is to target people predisposed to commit crime, or more crimes.

There is no dispute that a sting operation was conducted targeting Homan. It was all caught on video. In it the FBI agents handed over fifty thousand dollars in cash in a sack that Homan willingly accepted -- *\$50,000 in cash*. When asked about it, Homan claimed that the money was for professional services rendered or to be rendered. His non-answer when asked about it was that he’d been cleared of any wrongdoing.



First Friday Breakfast Club  
Founder **Jonathan Wilson**

More questions should have followed. Was there an invoice describing the “professional services?” Were the purported businessmen offered a receipt for the payment so that they could take advantage of the payment as a deductible, ordinary and necessary business expense? And, presumably, Homan kept the money since he insists that the transaction was legitimate. If he did, that \$50,000 should show up on his tax return. Did it? If not, Homan still has some ‘splaining to do.

I’ve rendered professional services for over 50 years. There have probably been occasions when a client paid in cash, but NEVER to the tune of \$50,000 in cash delivered in a sack, and NEVER without an invoice, a receipt, or both. And NEVER without the payment showing up as income on a tax return.

Until those additional questions are appropriately answered, in my professional opinion, a crime was committed. The Trump administration is, essentially, a criminal enterprise, and while inquiry to get those answers is possible, that is highly improbable.



# Lavender Legal Center

Mark your  
Calendar



LAVENDER LEGAL CENTER

## MASQUERADE BALL

FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2026

6-9PM, CEDAR RAPIDS MUSEUM OF ART

DETAILS: [LAVENDERLEGALCENTER.ORG/NEWS-PROM2026](http://LAVENDERLEGALCENTER.ORG/NEWS-PROM2026)



# oneiowa

# GALA

June 26 / French Way Building - DSM





**CAPITAL CITY PRIDE**

**SPRING 2026 SERIES**  
WEDNESDAYS | 6-7 P.M.




**Wednesday, May 13, 6 p.m.**  
Reading in Public

**WE SET THE DARK ON FIRE**  
by Tehlor Kay Mejia





**ALEXANDRA BILLINGS**  
**SPEAKER SERIES**

SUPPORTED BY TERRY AND KRISTIN MERFELD

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 6:30 PM | TEMPLE THEATER | \$5 TICKETS

PREREGISTRATION REQUIRED

# National LGBTQ+ Calendar



- **First Sunday in May:**  
International Family Equality Day
- **May 17:**  
International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia
- **May 19:**  
National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
- **May 22:** Harvey Milk Day
- **May 24:** Pansexual & Panromantic Awareness and Visibility 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



## Glossary of Terms

### How Well Do You Know LGBTQ+ Vocabulary?

source: [thesafezoneproject.com/resources/vocabulary/](https://thesafezoneproject.com/resources/vocabulary/)



## PART 4 (final)

**sexual preference** – noun: the types of sexual intercourse, stimulation, and gratification one likes to receive and participate in. Generally when this term is used, it is being mistakenly interchanged with “sexual orientation,” creating an illusion that one has a choice (or “preference”) in who they are attracted to.

**sex reassignment surgery (SRS)** – noun: used by some medical professionals to refer to a group of surgical options that alter a person’s biological sex. “Gender confirmation surgery” is considered by many to be a more affirming term. In most cases, one or multiple surgeries are required to achieve legal recognition of gender variance. Some refer to different surgical procedures as “top” surgery and “bottom” surgery to discuss what type of surgery they are having without having to be more explicit.

**skoliosexual** – adj.: being primarily sexually, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to some genderqueer, transgender, transsexual, and/or non-binary people.

**spiritual attraction** – noun: a capacity that evokes the want to engage in intimate behavior based on one’s experience with, interpretation of, or belief in the supernatural (e.g., religious teachings, messages from a deity), experienced in varying degrees (from little-to-none, to intense). Often conflated with sexual attraction, romantic attraction, and/or emotional attraction.

**stealth** – adj.: a trans person who is not “out” as trans, and is perceived/known by others as cisgender.

**straight** – adj.: a person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to some people who are not their same sex/gender. A more colloquial term for the word heterosexual.

**stud** – noun: most commonly used to indicate a Black/African-American and/or Latina masculine lesbian/queer woman. Also known as ‘butch’ or ‘aggressive’.

**third gender** – noun: for a person who does not identify with either man or woman, but identifies with another gender. This gender category is used by societies that recognize three or more genders, both contemporary and historic, and is also a conceptual term meaning different things to different people who use it, as a way to move beyond the gender binary.

**top surgery** – noun: this term refers to surgery for the construction of a male-type chest or breast augmentation for a female-type chest.

**trans\*** – adj.: an umbrella term covering a range of identities that transgress socially-defined gender norms. Trans with an asterisk is often used in written forms (not spoken) to indicate that you are referring to the larger group nature of the term, and specifically including non-binary identities, as well as transgender men (transmen) and transgender women (transwomen).

**transgender** – 1 adj.: a gender description for someone who has transitioned (or is transitioning) from living as one gender to another. 2 adj. : an umbrella term for anyone whose sex assigned at birth and gender identity do not correspond in the expected way (e.g., someone who was assigned male at birth, but does not identify as a man).

**transition / transitioning** – noun, verb: referring to the process of a transgender person changing aspects of themselves (e.g., their appearance, name, pronouns, or making physical changes to their body) to be more congruent with the gender they know themselves to be (as opposed to the gender they lived as pre-transitioning).

**transman; transwoman** – noun: identity label sometimes adopted by female-to-male transgender people or transsexuals to signify that they are men while still affirming their history as assigned female sex at birth. (sometimes referred to as transguy) 2 Identity label sometimes adopted by male-to-female transsexuals or transgender people to signify that they are women while still affirming their history as assigned male sex at birth.

**transphobia** – noun: the fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of trans\* people, the trans\* community, or gender ambiguity. Transphobia can be seen within the queer community, as well as in general society. Transphobic – adj. : a word used to describe an individual who harbors some elements of this range of negative attitudes, thoughts, intents, towards trans\* people.

**transsexual** – noun and adj.: a person who identifies psychologically as a gender/sex other than the one to which they were assigned at birth. Transsexuals often wish to transform their bodies hormonally and surgically to match their inner sense of gender/sex.

**transvestite** – noun: a person who dresses as the binary opposite gender expression (“cross-dresses”) for any one of many reasons, including relaxation, fun, and sexual gratification (often called a “cross-dresser”; should not be confused with transsexual).

**two-spirit** – noun: umbrella term traditionally within Native American communities to recognize individuals who possess qualities of both genders.

**ze / zir / “zee”, “zerr” or “zeer” /** – alternate pronouns that are gender neutral and preferred by some trans\* people. They replace “he” and “she” and “his” and “hers” respectively. Alternatively some people who are not comfortable/do not embrace he/she use the plural pronoun “they/their” as a gender neutral singular pronoun.





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

May Dates:

May 3 – 10: Applications Open

May 11 – 17: Phone Calls

May 18 – 24: Application Review

May 25 – 31: Dispersal



Help make a bigger difference! Donate at:

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

# Future Speakers



**June 5:**

**Scholarship Ceremony**

**Zach Rus**

Exec. Dir. Iowa Safe Schools

**July 11:**

**Member/Donor**

**Summer Party**

**August 7:**

**Julia Franklin**

Mainframe Studios

**October 1:**

**Mazie Stillwell**

Exec. Director Progress Iowa



## Exchange

connecting families creating community



### YOUTH GROUP

**2nd & 4th Tuesday**

**6:00 -7:00pm**

**100 E Euclid  
Suite #107**

A center for the LGBTQ+ community and supportive allies

**Looking to start a trans group in the greater metro area for the 50+**

As an older trans man, I often find that many groups are support groups or geared to younger people, both of which are fantastic.

The idea of a group for older queer and trans people appeals to me, so I am taking some first steps in this exploration.

I envision a group for social gatherings, maybe some activities, without emphasizing support. We have a lot of shared experiences that we have lived through the decades, some humorous some not. There would be common ground.

**If you are interested, please contact me:  
Jude Cigrand (515) 205-5030  
[jrcigrand@gmail.com](mailto:jrcigrand@gmail.com)**

**"To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment."**

Ralph Waldo Emerson



# We Are More Than the Worst Thing We Have Done

by Gary Moore

April's speaker for the First Friday Breakfast Club was **Kimberly Graham**, Polk County Attorney. She was elected by a wide margin in 2022 after 23 years in private practice and public service roles in juvenile justice, public defense, and mediation.

Graham shared with FFBC members that **"crime"** is a violation of people and relationships; it creates obligations to make things right. **"Justice"** involves the victim, offender, and the community in a search for solutions that promote repair, reconciliation, and reassurance. Contrary to merely having a punitive angle to the justice system, an approach called **restorative justice** adds the component of seeking to heal, to restore relationships, and to repair damage when possible. Graham noted that it is certainly not possible to completely repair some of the damage that she deals with, but she says that a lot of progress can be made to start people on a better path toward healing when the restorative justice approach is used.

To that end, the County Attorney's Office has expanded some programs and created new ones, including **Community Restorative Dialogues**. In this case, a community volunteer gets special training and then represents the community. They do not sit in the place of the victim, because nobody can sit in the place of the victim, but they represent the greater community, and the volunteer is able to talk about the harm, whatever the offense was, that it does to the greater community, and most importantly, the victim.

Polk County also has developed a **License Reinstatement Program** in which people can make extremely small monthly payments to start paying their fines and fees to get a valid license. One of the top three offenses for which people are in the Polk County Jail is driving while barred. Many of these people are poor and do not have money to pay for even a \$100 deposit. Graham also talked about having the county's first **warrant resolution clinic**. This offers residents with low-level, non-violent misdemeanor warrants a chance to take care of these warrants.

Graham discussed the problem of young adults who could be sentenced to life without any possibility for parole for crimes they committed as young people. Brain development and science show that young peoples' brains are not even fully developed in regard to impulse control and a lot of really important things. **"We want to give them an opportunity to avoid having these charges on their record."** Many of these young people are poor and will require housing. If a person has some of these charges on their record, even if it is a low-level, non-violent offense, he or she cannot get into Section 8 housing; this can also prevent them from getting additional services in some cases. Polk County wants to prevent creating that obstacle for these folks. The same approach applies to marijuana convictions which, among other things, can keep a young person from military service. Offering a program that offers another approach rather than conviction can keep the future open for a young person.

Attorney Graham shared some goals for Polk County's future. Currently, there are only two domestic violence prosecutors with more cases than they can handle. "It is my hope to get an increased budget to hire two more prosecutors, and hopefully, even a social worker." She would like to explore the **LEAD Law Enforcement Program**. LEAD enhances safety, health, and equity by building a community-based alternative to jail and prosecution for people whose unlawful behavior stems from unmet needs related to substance use, mental health challenges, or extreme poverty. For Polk County, Graham said they would probably need a program with five social workers. Ultimately, this could reduce crime and the number of people in jail, which is already very expensive. She said, "My budget comes from your taxes through the Board of Supervisors, and I very much appreciate the support they have given."

Ken Hansen, Vice President of FFBC, ended the meeting with a personal note: the Polk County jail, where he has managed the food service for over 19 years, was built 17 years ago with a projected capacity of 1500. He noted that the jail is well below that due to the good governance by the Polk County Attorney's Office, the courts, the Board of Supervisors, and their collaboration for good governance.



April Speaker

Polk County Attorney  
Kimberly Graham



# April Meeting Photo Gallery



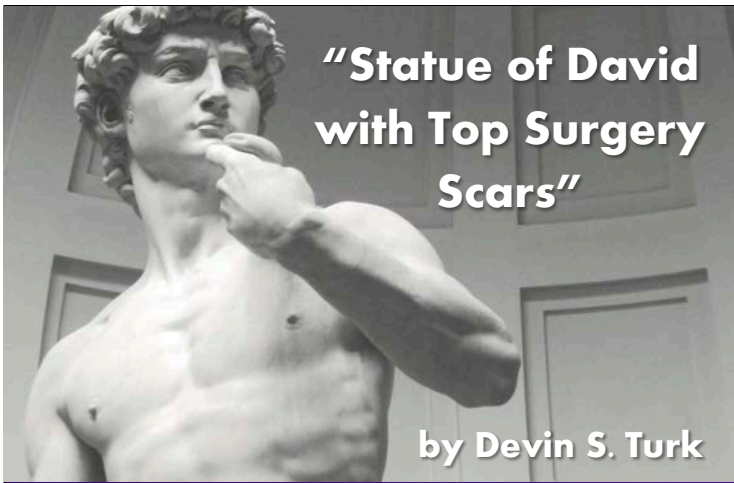
**47 Super Supporters!**



**Ken Hanson,**  
FFBC Vice  
President and  
Scholarship  
Committee  
Chair,  
conducts the  
April meeting  
and  
introduces  
Kimberly  
Graham, Polk  
County  
Attorney, as  
the speaker.



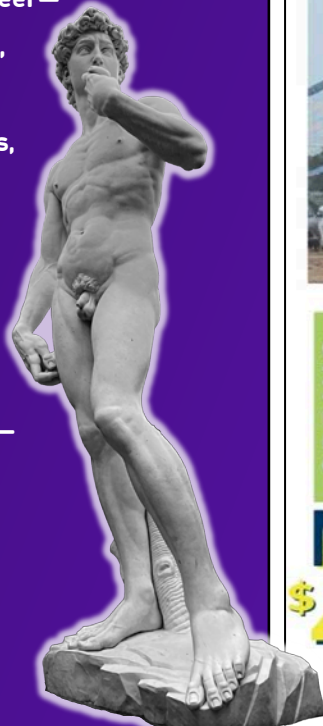
**Rick Miller**  
invites FFBC members to  
the Pride Center's GLOW  
event on May 3.



## “Statue of David with Top Surgery Scars”

by Devin S. Turk

I see the smooth dip in surface  
 where pectorals meet a ribcage  
 and I envision into existence two scars  
 perhaps still fresh with stitch marks.  
 his stone sling slung over one shoulder,  
 a colossal right hand curled around a mystery,  
 David is the essence of an enviable masculinity:  
 delicate gesture and curve,  
 polish and poise in contrapposto.  
 a sculptor pitched bits of rock  
 by mallet and chisel  
 to free a man and myth from marble  
 so that he might stand self-assured as stone.  
 there is something queer about this intention—  
 something intentional about this queer—  
 and while I have never been to Italy,  
 in a daydream I break free  
 from a mob of gawking tourist types,  
 rush past gallery guards  
 and duck under velvet ropes  
 to David’s feet.  
 armed with a bottle of polish  
 I paint his toenails.  
 but he does not glance down at me—  
 a mere mortal of pinkish flesh,  
 my own sutures long dissolved—  
 he stands still and cool,  
 eyes forever cast  
 toward Rome.



# Central Iowa Trans Lives Festival CALL FOR PARTICIPANT SUBMISSIONS

**Who can participate?** ALL TRANSGENDER, GENDERQUEER, & NON-BINARY  
 \*Artists \*Writers \*Performers And Other Creators  
 \*Craftpersons \*Musicians \*Singers  
 \*Poets \*Dancers \*Food Vendors

**How can you participate?** Online applications may be submitted beginning March 1.  
 Links to online applications are available at:  
[www.ucdsm.org/trans-lives-festival/](http://www.ucdsm.org/trans-lives-festival/)  
 Spaces filled as applications come in, until full.

*No registration fee required. Participants may offer their work for sale, and all sale proceeds remain with the participants.*

**When and Where?** **Saturday, June 6, 2026, 10am - 5pm**  
 (set up 8am-10am)  
**First Unitarian Church, 1800 Bell Avenue, Des Moines, IA**  
 ADA Accessible  
*Security provided so everyone can enjoy a safe & fun event*

**What is the Trans Lives Fest?** In honor of the International Transgender Day of Visibility, the Central Iowa Trans Lives Festival will provide a safe space for trans adults and youth to celebrate & present their creative work to the LGBTQIA community and other allied members of the public. Sponsored by the Queer and Transgender Action Group of First Unitarian Church of Des Moines, an LGBTQIA Welcoming Congregation & member of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

More info at: [www.ucdsm.org/trans-lives-festival/](http://www.ucdsm.org/trans-lives-festival/) Questions? Email: [translivesfestival@ucdsm.org](mailto:translivesfestival@ucdsm.org)

# 30 YEARS.

Challenging extremism. Defending democracy.

INTERFAITH ALLIANCE OF IOWA AWARD CELEBRATION

May 18, 2026

5:45 PM reception | 6:45 PM dinner & program  
 THE MEADOWS EVENT CENTER



**SPRING SAND VOLLEYBALL**  
**MONDAYS 6-10 PM MAY 4 - JUN 29**  
 no game on Memorial Day  
 @ CAMPBELL RECREATION AREA  
 12385 WOODLANDS PARKWAY  
 CLIVE, IA 50325

**\$40 per person**

PRIDE SPORTS LEAGUE OF CENTRAL IOWA

SOCIAL, INTERMEDIATE, & ADVANCED DIVISIONS  
 [ FREE AGENTS AND TEAMS WELCOME ]

REGISTER AT LINK IN BIO | SWIPE FOR SIGNUP DETAILS >>>

# GLOW

A Drag Brunch Fundraiser  
For Des Moines Pride Center



HOSTED BY AMELIA BEARDHARDT  
BLAQ HEART COMPLEX . DOMITA SANCHEZ . TYONA DIAMOND . SHARAYA DIAMOND

**PLATFORM**  
SUNDAY 05/03  
DOORS 10:30AM . SHOW 11AM

**Bigger. Brighter. Bolder.**

400 WALNUT ST DES MOINES, IA

Check It Out



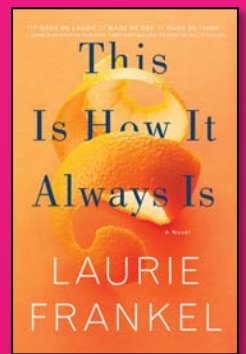
PRIDE CENTER  
Des Moines



The Des Moines Pride Center houses the Rick Miller LGBTQ Library. The Pride Center is fighting to maintain a vibrant Queer future by connecting people to LGBTQ+ literature, information, and creativity.

## Book of the Month

Laurie Frankel's *This Is How It Always Is* is a novel about revelations, transformations, fairy tales, and family. And it's about the ways this is how it always is: Change is always hard and miraculous and hard again, parenting is always a leap into the unknown with crossed fingers and full hearts, children grow but not always according to plan. And families with secrets don't get to keep them forever.



Claude is five years old, the youngest of five brothers, and loves peanut butter sandwiches. He also loves wearing a dress, and dreams of being a princess. When he grows up, Claude says, he wants to be a girl. Rosie and Penn want Claude to be whoever Claude wants to be. They're just not sure they're ready to share that with the world. Soon the entire family is keeping Claude's secret. Until one day it explodes.

1620 Pleasant Street, Des Moines  
(515) 518-0530

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

Full Searchable Catalog:  
[www.librarycat.org/lib/DSMPC](http://www.librarycat.org/lib/DSMPC)



PRIDE CENTER  
Des Moines


Did you know we are  
**OPEN every Sunday?**

Check out books, view archival materials of our community's history, and enjoy a welcoming, inclusive space for the LGBTQIA+ community

Every Sunday  
from 2:00-5:00PM!

find us at 1620 Pleasant ST  
Des Moines, IA 50314

**"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow."**



\* Audrey Hepburn



The Rick Miller LGBTQ Library 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



## Advocates for Trans Equality



Advocates for Trans Equality fights for the legal and political rights of transgender people in America. Leveraging decades of experience on the frontlines of power, we shift government and society towards a future where we are no less than equal.

A4TE was founded in 2024 as the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) and Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund (TLDEF), two long-time champions for the trans community, merged together as one organization. A4TE builds on their successes to boldly imagine a world where trans people live our lives joyfully and without barriers.

In a time of increased extremism against trans people and our allies, protecting and expanding our freedom to be who we are has never been more important.



## God is not in the business of turning gay people straight.

by Kade Rogers  
*Reprinted by permission*

I see this come up a lot in Christian spaces when it comes to homosexuality. "God can change you." "Pray harder." "You need to repent."

But honestly... I think we're asking the wrong question. The issue isn't whether God could change someone's orientation. The issue is that God doesn't. Because if this was something God was trying to fix, we would see it. There would be story after story of people who prayed, fasted, begged God to change them...and experienced lasting change. But that's not what we see.

What we actually see are a lot of faithful people who did all of that...and nothing changed. And then what happens? The church question their faith. We tell them they didn't try hard enough. We move the goalposts.



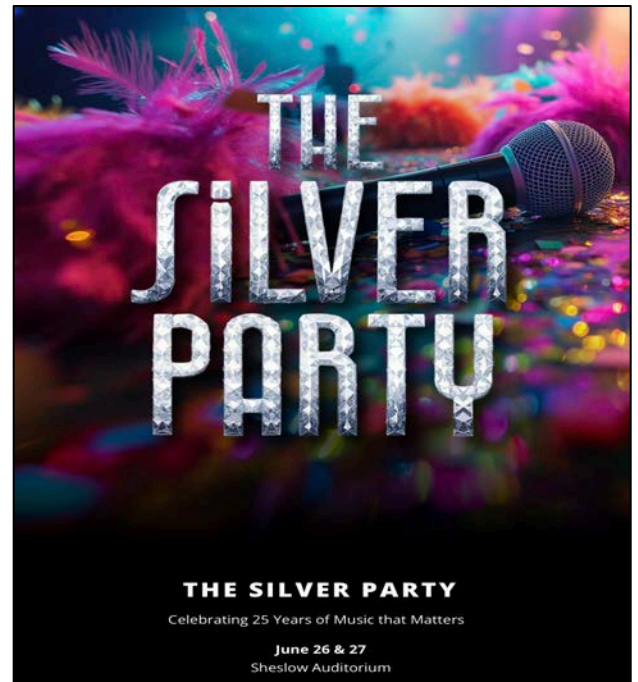
I've watched this up close. I've seen what it does to people. I've had my own moments in it. It doesn't produce holiness. It produces shame. It produces self-hatred. It pushes people away from God instead of drawing them closer.

And honestly, maybe this is part of the reason so many LGBTQ people are hesitant around me. Even as a gay man, there's often this assumption that I'm going to condemn or judge them, because that's what the Church has done to so many for so long.

At some point, we have to be honest about what's actually happening. God is not in the business of turning gay people straight. And just as true...you're not going to pray, preach, or pressure a straight person into being gay either. That's just not how any of this works.

So maybe the better question isn't: "Why won't God change them?" Maybe it's: "What if God isn't trying to?"

***And what if all this time, we've been asking people to become someone God never asked them to be?***



**Applications LIVE!**

**LGBTQ LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE**

Applications due June 30th

oneiowa Apply at [oneiowa.org/our-work/leadership](https://oneiowa.org/our-work/leadership)



# Planning for Pride

Make plans now for Capital City Pride!

DES MOINES, IOWA

**BROOKE EDEN**

**DAVID ARCHULETA**

**LYDIA B KOLLINS** **KORI KING** **SUZIE TOOT**

**TY SUNDERLAND**

**CAPITAL CITY PRIDE PRIDEFEST**

**JUNE 12-14, 2026**

[CAPITALCITYPRIDE.ORG/PRIDEFEST](http://CAPITALCITYPRIDE.ORG/PRIDEFEST)

JOIN US



Get Updates on  
Capital City Pride



Events at:

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

**CAPITAL CITY PRIDE**

**Pride IDOL**

**SING FOR THE CROWN**

PRELIMINARY ROUNDS - MAY 7, 14, 21  
GRAND FINALE - MAY 28  
THE GARDEN, THURSDAYS, 7-9 P.M.

**CAPITAL CITY PRIDE**

**PRIDE RIDE**

**CAPITAL CITY PRIDE**

**PRIDE STRIDE**

PRESENTED BY **dL**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 2026**

8-9:30 AM, THE HISTORIC EAST VILLAGE, DES MOINES

**CAPITAL CITY PRIDE**

**PRIDEFEST PARADE**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 2026**

NOON - 2PM, THE HISTORIC EAST VILLAGE, DES MOINES



**CAPITAL CITY PRIDE**

**PET PAGEANT**

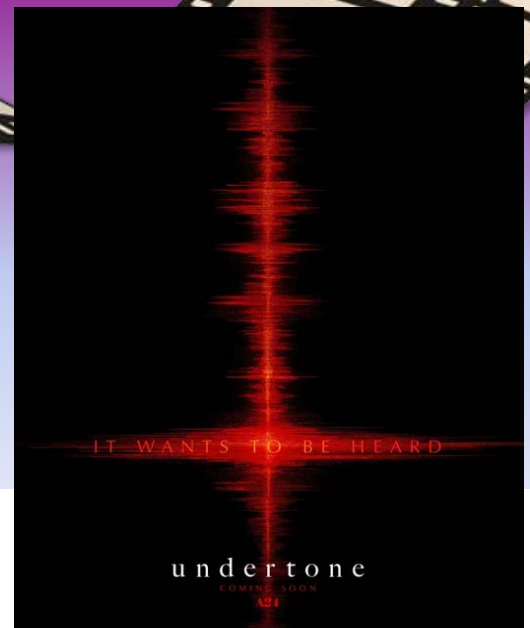
**SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 2026**

9:30-11 AM, THE HISTORIC EAST VILLAGE, DES MOINES



## Undertone

### A Movie Review by Mark Turnage



Minimalism can be an effective complement to horror for what it *doesn't* show: by leaving parts of the story unexplained to be filled in by the audience's imagination, a simple plot can have multiple complex takeaways. Director Ian Tuason's debut feature **"Undertone"** carries a clever premise vested in spooky sound design that aims for big scares on a small budget—while its camera work and audio deliver effective frights and suspense, its underdeveloped story and characters make it a horror film that just *sounds* scary.

Horror protagonists often begin their tales in the middle of precarious and relatable pre-existing circumstances that thematically echo the true horror the film is centered upon. Paranormal podcaster and skeptic Evy (Nina Kiri) leads an insular life providing palliative care for her comatose mother at home; with her depression and drinking on the rise, and her relationships with her boyfriend and in-person friends on the rocks, Evy throws herself into hermiting and recording work with the telephone support of her friend and "believer" co-host Justin (voiced by Adam DiMarco). It's implied that their podcast is financially lucrative and has a substantial enough following to be Evy and Justin's primary line of work, but not enough of a boon to afford better healthcare for Evy's mother. When Justin receives an unexplained email for their podcast with 10 audio attach-

ments, he convinces Evy to structure their newest episode around a blind listen of all ten files, which document a couple named Mike and Jessa struggling with the latter's sleepwalking. As more files are opened and Evy researches the increasingly disturbing details they reveal, a menacing presence takes residence in her home.

"Undertone" accomplishes an impressive amount of tricks for its slim \$500K filmmaking budget: a mostly two-room setup to minimize sets, a small five-person cast with one main character, and reliance on practical over digital effects. It avoids feeling "stagy" through its smart sound design, surreal lighting, and creepy camera work to emphasize suspense and misdirection. These mechanics elevate "Undertone," but its story refuses to mine its rich thematic potential and relies on superficial horror cliches more than its interesting concept (voices hidden in seemingly benign audio messages). It's less of a sin that "Undertone" is reliant upon familiar tropes to elicit scares; it's more to blame for its shallow emotional depth and lack of character development.

Ironically, the film centered on two professional podcasters struggles with storytelling in the digital age: scenes where Evy needs to research a topic online don't end up nearly as interesting to the audience. Instead, a voiceover infodump from Justin summarizes the research Evy needs to advance the plot. Justin's lines and

Evy's reactions in these "lookup" scenes sound like AI-generated search results instead of two characters' dialogue in a horror film. Yikes. But this isn't the only narrative shortcut taken here: the movie's final act escalates so suddenly without narrative build that the result is more "how did we get here" than surprise.

Technically, "Undertone" would fall under "found footage" as a specific horror genre, and though it does require more plot legwork, worldbuilding, and character development, its results can be effectively memorable and spooky ("Blair Witch Project," "Paranormal Activity," "Lake Mungo," to name some good examples). For pacing purposes, the 10 audio files should mirror both the character's and the audience's unease as they're revealed. With "Undertone," it's like watching someone else listen to another scary movie.

"Undertone" is available for streaming on Amazon Prime and Youtube, but its scares are best enjoyed in surround sound.



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## Publication



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of Directors

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(515) 954-2996

# The McCoy Report

by Supervisor Matt McCoy  
Polk County, 1<sup>st</sup> District

With Taylor Van De Krol



## WETLAND WAVE



**Polk County Wetlands: Nature's Built-In Defense  
Against Flooding and Pollution**

Polk County's wetlands are doing more than just sitting quietly on the landscape—they're actively protecting communities and improving water quality.



Studies show that wetlands can absorb up to 1.5 million gallons of floodwater per acre, helping reduce peak flooding after heavy rains.



At the same time, they act as natural filters, removing up to 70% of pollutants like nitrogen and phosphorus before water reaches rivers and lakes.

"By slowing runoff, reducing erosion, and supporting biodiversity, Polk County's wetlands provide a cost-effective, nature-based solution that strengthens both environmental health and community resilience."

— Matt McCoy

Chair, Polk County Board of Supervisors

# \$12.6 M INVESTMENT

Polk County has invested significantly in wetland development, with 16 completed or currently under construction totaling \$4.7 million, and 29 additional wetlands planned at an estimated \$7.9 million. This brings the total anticipated investment to \$12.6 million. Notably, the County contributes about \$1 million, while the majority of funding comes from state, federal, and private partners, highlighting a strong collaborative effort to support flood control and water quality improvements.



SCAN FOR MORE INFO OR GO TO: [POLKCOUNTYIOWA.GOV/PUBLIC-WORKS/](http://POLKCOUNTYIOWA.GOV/PUBLIC-WORKS/)

CAPITAL  
CITY  
PRIDE



# BOARD DRAG BENEFIT

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 5-7 PM

THE GARDEN | 525 E GRAND AVE, DES MOINES

