Celebrating 30 Years as an Educational Forum for Iowa's LGBTQ+ Community and Allies

First Friday Breakfast Club 1996 - 2026 30th Anniversary

First Friday News & Views

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

November 2026 | Volume 31 | Issue 11

Next Meeting
Friday, November 6
7:00 AM

Location
Hoyt Sherman
15th & Woodland
Des Moines

Speaker
Deidre DeJear
President/CEO
Oakridge Neighborhood

Website
ffbciowa.org

Welcome to the Neighborhood

by Byron Huff, Board President



I hope all of you can join us at Hoyt Sherman or via Zoom to hear about an amazing organization, **Oakridge Neighborhood**. The President and CEO, Deidre DeJear, promises to captivate your morning along with food and conversation in the beautiful art gallery of Hoyt Sherman Place; see our website to RSVP.

The mission of Oakridge Neighborhood has been dedicated to empowering individuals and families in the Des Moines community by providing affordable housing, educational programs, and comprehensive support services. They create a thriving, self-sufficient community where residents have the resources they need to improve their quality of life.

Some of the initiatives include:

- Developing and maintaining safe, affordable housing for hundreds of families.
- Establishing successful youth and adult educational programs, including after-school enrichment and workforce development.
- Providing wraparound services such as health and wellness programs, job training, and cultural initiatives.
- Partnering with local organizations and businesses to expand opportunities for residents.

Benefits to Des Moines:

- Strengthens the local economy by preparing residents for careers and supporting employment growth.
- Reduces homelessness and housing insecurity through stable, affordable housing solutions.
- Enhances community engagement and safety by fostering a supportive, inclusive environment.
- Promotes educational success and long-term self-sufficiency for families, contributing to the overall well-being of the city.



Oakridge Neighborhood continues to be a vital resource in Des Moines, creating opportunities that enrich the lives of residents and that strengthen the city as a whole.

LGBTQ+ Connection Recovery Support Group



NAMI Iowa LGBTQ+ Connection Recovery Support Group is a free, peer-led support group for any LGBTQ+ adult (18+) who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition.

Benefit from other's experiences, discover your inner strength and empower yourself by sharing your own experiences in a non-judgmental space.

Groups 2nd and 4th Wednesday, 6-7:30pm at
Mickle Center, 1620 Pleasant Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50314
For more information on the next group, visit
https://namiiowa.org/calendar/.

NAMI
National Alliance on Mental Illness
Iowa

QUESTIONS? CALL/TEXT 515-254-0417

"I am grateful for what I am and what I have. My thanksgiving is perpetual."

Henry David Thoreau



Briefs & Shorts

We are grateful to FFBC member **Scott Stilwell** for introducing our October speaker, **Mazie Stilwell**, the Executive Director of Progress Iowa. As always, we appreciate **Robert Warren** and his helpful staff at Hoyt Sherman Place, along with our excellent caterer, **Gateway Market**.

For FFBC's normal business, we thank **John Schmacker** for managing all of our finances, **Nicholas Williams** for managing our Microsoft IT infrastructure, and **Wade Petersen** for his work as our newsletter and website editor. ***Thank you to all our newsletter contributors!***

DEADLINE

The **deadline** for the **December newsletter** will be **November 23**. If you have something that you would like to share, type it up and email to Wade (wadecpetersen@gmail.com) by the deadline.

Fundraising efforts are ongoing to fund our 2027 scholarship program. Since 1997, we have awarded **$618,000** for **244** 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

November Speaker



Deidre DeJear

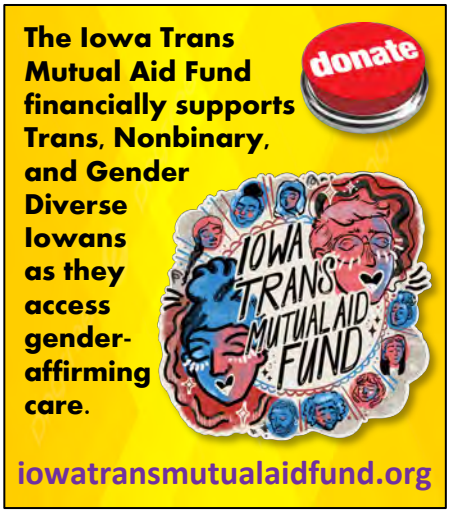
Deidre DeJear is a small business owner and voting rights advocate who is driven by her passion to create equitable, inclusive, and accessible opportunities for all. She started her business in 2008 during her senior year at Drake, with a mission of helping other businesses grow and thrive. For over 15 years, she has helped over 1,000 small businesses and nonprofits thrive in Iowa.

In 2018, Deidre ran as the Democratic Nominee for Iowa Secretary of State, making her the first African American in Iowa to be nominated by a major political party. In 2022, as the Democratic Nominee for Iowa Governor, Deidre traversed the state, advocating for high quality public education, access to mental healthcare, and a countless number of issues that matter to voters across Iowa. Deidre founded Vision Leads and co-founded Back 2 School Iowa and LadyLike, is a member of the Des Moines Chapter of the Links, Inc., and sits on multiple boards across central Iowa. In October 2024, she began serving as President & CEO of Oakridge Neighborhood.



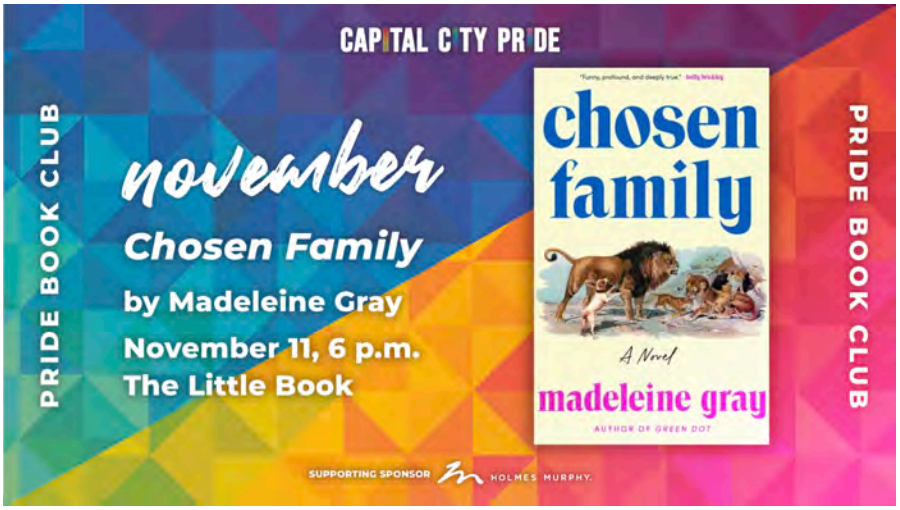














Future Speakers

December 4:

Nate Nims

Pastor, Walnut Hills
United Methodist Church

January 8:
(* not Friday, January 1)**

Michael McTaggart

DSM Chief of Police

February 5:

Teresa Greenfield

Executive Director
Invest DSM

March 5:

Michael Egel

General & Artistic Director
Des Moines Metro Opera

1996-2026 FFBC's 30th ANNIVERSARY

30 Years of Venues



First Meeting:

Restaurant on 6th Avenue just north of Court Avenue (?)

January 1996

First Friday Breakfast Club

1996 - 2026

30th Anniversary



Marriott Hotel

700 Grand Avenue

February 1996 - November 1998



Hoyt Sherman Place

1501 Woodland Avenue

December 1998 - Present

No Good Deed Goes Unpunished

by Jonathan Wilson





First Friday Breakfast Club Founder **Jonathan Wilson**

That title has been around for a long time; I'm cynical enough to believe it. In fact, I've discovered a perfect example if we can agree that, in a democracy, it's a good thing to support candidates for elective office, a political party, or both. Which candidate(s) or party doesn't really matter to the point of this article.

So, let's say that you donated to a political party ONCE, or contributed to the campaign of one candidate for elective office; this is what happens: your name and contact information go onto a list. The list is for sale. The list may be broken down based on the number of times that you've contributed, or the amount that you contributed. Both will influence the sales price. If you raise money for a campaign, one of the first things you'll do is to purchase "the list," and then start soliciting money from potential contributors.

I know because I've been on the receiving end of those solicitations. They are daily and occasionally multiple times per day. Seemingly unending. I've become adept at deleting them mostly. But then I did the math. There are 435 members of the U.S. House of Representatives. All of them are up for election on November 3. On top of that, one third of the U.S. Senate will be on many ballots. Whether they're on your ballot doesn't matter; I've received solicitations from House and Senate campaigns all over the country. And, add to that the state-level campaigns – they have access to "the list" too. It's utterly endless. Just the foregoing numbers amount to over 500 campaigns, and they are all looking for money. I'm looking forward to November 4 with the hope that it will at least slow down. Slow down for a while, but the election doesn't take you off of "the list," and there will be another 435 U.S. House races and 1/3 of the Senate campaigning in two years, along with state-level races. It truly is unending.

Make no mistake, a contribution is not the only way to get put on "the list." You can expect to receive lots of so-called surveys seeking to determine your opinion on a variety of issues. Your responses will identify you as someone who actually reads such communications, and you go on "the list." Don't be fooled; the sender couldn't care less about what your opinion is on whatever subject.

No good deed goes unpunished.

Iowa Safe Schools Spirit Awards

iowa safe schools

Over $100.000 raised!



FFBC Board Members attended the Iowa Safe Schools Spirit Awards on Friday, October 9.







National LGBTQ+ Calendar

- 1st Sunday in November:
  Transgender Parent Day
- November 13-19:
  Transgender Awareness Week
- November 20:
  Transgender Day of Remembrance

glaad

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)

Individual Meeting: $18

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







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DES MOINES GAY MEN'S CHORUS

SEASON PRESENTING SPONSOR The Legendary BLAZING SADDLE

The Des Moines Art Center Presents

A Day With(out) Art



DES MOINES ART CENTER

Sunday, November 29

1:30 - 3:30 PM | Free

Levitt Auditorium

In recognition of World AIDS Day, join us at the Des Moines Art Center for A Day With(out) Art — an afternoon of art, film, and music offering space for healing, remembrance, and hope. The program will begin with a 20-minute performance by the Des Moines Gay Men's Chorus, followed by a screening of "Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt" (1989). This Academy Award-winning documentary shares the lives and relationships behind panels of the AIDS Memorial Quilt, revealing the human impact of the epidemic and the power of remembrance to challenge stigma. (Film runtime: 79 minutes)

Three Iowa-connected sections of the AIDS Memorial Quilt will be on view in the Art Center's Macomber Lobby from November 17 through 29. The handmade memorials preserve stories of individuals and communities across Iowa, inviting reflection on lives lost and the people who responded with care, education, and advocacy. First organized by Visual AIDS in 1989, A Day With(out) Art brings cultural institutions together to remember those lost to AIDS and recognize the ongoing experiences of people living with HIV.

Progress Iowa's Approach

by Gary Moore



Executive Director
Progress Iowa
Mazie Stilwell

As Executive Director of Progress Iowa, **Mazie Stilwell** explained to members at First Friday Breakfast Club's October meeting that the organization develops research-based messages, trains and supports local storytellers, pitches their stories to media, creates digital and written content, and promotes civic engagement. She argued that personal experiences persuade more effectively than facts alone because messages from neighbors feel credible and relatable.

Her core messaging framework is:

- **Start with a shared value to establish common ground.**
- **Identify what stands in the way of that value.**
- **End with a clear call to action.**

Stilwell said that Progress Iowa had generated more than 1,600 press mentions from January through August, conducted 13 message tests, and built a storyteller network of more than 200 people.

Iowa's Political Moment

Mazie said Iowa was receiving national attention because policy choices have tangible consequences for residents. With 32 days until the election, she highlighted unusually high-stakes races for governor and U.S. Senate, plus competitive U.S. House contests. She also emphasized lower-profile offices, including attorney general, secretary of agriculture, secretary of state, auditor, treasurer, and state legislative seats, because of their effects on issues such as elections, water quality, public oversight, and state policy.

Amendment 1 and Voting

Stilwell devoted significant attention to Amendment 1, a proposed constitutional requirement for a two-thirds legislative majority to raise income or corporate taxes. Stilwell opposed it, arguing that it would protect wealthy individuals and corporations from contributing more, shift pressure toward regressive taxes such as sales taxes, and constrain funding for public schools and other public services. She encouraged people to review the entire ballot, make a voting plan, and vote early when possible. She noted that mail voting is safe but should be completed well before deadlines.

Creative Engagement

In the discussion, Stilwell highlighted Progress Iowa's **Art Jam**, held every other Friday, as a way for people to enter advocacy through creative expression. She said issue-based art has helped attract new participants and create compelling visuals around topics such as education, labor, and water quality.

Overall, her central message was that Iowans can influence public debate by sharing their experiences, amplifying values-based messages, paying attention to every race and ballot measure, and voting.



Scott Stilwell introduced Mazie Stilwell, his daughter-in-law, at the October meeting. Mazie is the Executive Director of Progress Iowa.

October Meeting Photo Gallery



48 Lovely People Attended in October

MAINFRAME STUDIOS



FIRST FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 6 · 5-8PM
900 KEO WAY DSM IA

WE ANSWER TO EACH OTHER
ON VIEW: NOV 6-28
JURIED BY: ABENA SANKOFA IMHOTEP & DR. NEGUS RUDISON-IMHOTEP

MAINFRAME'S MONTHLY FIRST FRIDAY
5 FLOORS OF OPEN STUDIOS & SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS
FOOD, DRINKS & ENTERTAINMENT
ALWAYS FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

IOWA PRIDE ENSEMBLES

Poinsettia Fundraiser

Classic 6.5" — $28
Grand 8" — $40

Order by November 8

Pickup event + optional local delivery in late November/Early December



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Fundraisers
MALLOW FLORAL CO.

"If the only prayer you said in your whole life was 'thank you,' that would suffice."

Meister Eckhart

FEATURE SERIES

Travels with Ken & Wade

by Wade Petersen



New York City

"Start spreading the news… we're leaving today. I want to be a part of it, New York, New York." Well…we actually left on September 29 for nine days in the Big Apple. This was Ken's first time ever in New York City; I had visited 28 years ago when the company that published my books flew me out to do a book signing. We had actually planned this trip for a year ago, but sadly, Ken's mom, Nancy, passed away a couple weeks beforehand so we postponed our trip until this year (we really wanted to visit in the autumn).

Ken and I planned a "tourist" agenda; we love to see and do as many things as we can when we book a vacation. One essential component (for almost any LGBTQ+ person) is obviously attending as many Broadway shows as possible! We had planned for three shows, but got cheap tickets for a fourth show by visiting the discount hub in Times Square.









"The Lost Boys" was our first show, based on the movie; all you have to know is: vampires, flying actors, and 1987. We were dazzled and sure it will make its way to Des Moines. "Oh, Mary!" was the delight of the group. I have never laughed so hard and so much at a show. A series of high-profile talents have headlined the show, and Bowen Yang (of *Saturday Night Live*) was incredible. You must see this show! "Operation Mincemeat" was billed as the "Best Broadway Show of 2025." Having seen the movie (more of a drama), I had no idea how they would convert this to a musical/comedy. Five actors played at least 10 roles each, and it was amazing to see the blocking and skill this show required. Finally, we saw "The Rocky Horror Show." Although the movie's cult following is quite impressive, I have never been a huge fan



(I know…sacrilege!). Our timing was right; we got to see Rosie O'Donnell begin her two-week run in the show. The show was very good and campy…still not my favorite.

Our first day "set the stage" for the week by touring the Museum of Broadway; we loved seeing costumes and props from tons of classic and current shows. We also took an evening bus tour of Manhattan (a great way to get an overview of the area). Day two began with a trip to the "Top of the Rock" at Rockefeller Center; the 80th floor made for great views of the whole city. We also stopped at nearby Radio City Music Hall and St. Patrick's cathedral.

The next day was a highlight for both of us in visiting the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Our tour guide gave us great history and stories from each. My grandfather came through Ellis Island in 1924 from Germany; in fact, it's estimated that 25% of Americans can trace their family trees through Ellis Island! After the tour, as long as we were in lower Manhattan, we went to see the New York Stock Exchange and its famous bull.

The next few days included tours of the Met Museum of Art, walks in Central Park, Grand Central Station, going up the Empire State Building, Bryant Park, Chelsea Market, and a "harbor lights" evening cruise.



Ken and I made the pilgrimage to the Stonewall Inn. The interior is not that impressive…seems like a small LGBTQ bar you could find anywhere. Its significance in our history is inestimable. Of course, we also hit some fun piano bars like Don't Tell Mama and Marie's Crisis.

The most impactful visit was to the 9/11 Memorial and Museum. Seeing all the pictures, videos, relics from Ground Zero brought back so many memories from that horrific day 25 years ago. I remember being a teacher and watching this unfold on TV with a classroom of terrified students.



The last couple of days, we did a seven-hour tour of the various boroughs; we wanted a flavor of New York City other than just Manhattan. Our final morning included a three-hour walking food tour of the Lower East Side; our favorite sample was the pastrami at Katz's Deli. Other food highlights included the bagels, hot dogs, awesome restaurants (my favorite was the French brasserie *La Marseille*), and having "a slice" of New York pizza (there's a pizza place or deli on almost every block!).

Ken and I had beautiful fall weather during our trip, and I loved the energy of being in a big city! (It reminded me a lot of when I studied in Paris in college). When we return to the Big Apple in the future, we will definitely have a more relaxed pace but will still enjoy as many Broadway shows as we can!

I ♥ NY

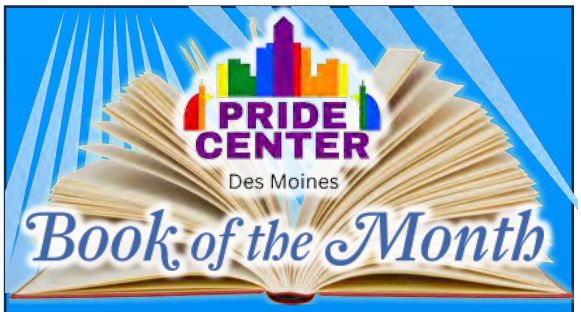












The Des Moines Pride Center houses the Rick Miller LGBTQ Library. The Pride Center is fighting to maintain a vibrant Queer future by connecting people to LGBTQ+ literature, information, and creativity.

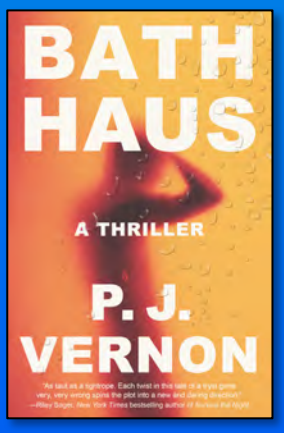
Bath Haus

by P.J. Vernon

CHECK IT OUT

Nominated for a Lambda Literary Award - A scintillating thriller with an emotional punch!

"The tension builds to unbearably claustrophobic levels. To say more would rob readers of the 'no, he didn't' suspense that makes Bath Haus *an unexpectedly twisted, heart-pounding cat-versus-mouse thriller"* (Los Angeles Times).



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

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



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.



Digger

A Movie Review by Mark Turnage



Hear me out: sometimes, a film can *challenge* you. Director Alejandro González Iñárritu's filmography is no stranger to posing difficult questions about human nature to his audiences (*Birdman, Babel, 21 Grams).* "Digger," his latest film starring Tom Cruise, has been divisive with theatergoers expecting a lighter, zany climate change comedy from its trailers and getting something more cutting and heady instead. Beneath its Wes Anderson-esque window dressing, dark absurdist humor, and buffoonish American caricatures, "Digger" is a bitter black comedy, a satire with snaggled teeth about humanity's relationship with Nature.

While "Digger"'s narrative complexity, deeply cynical humor, and surprisingly immediate real-world relevance can be uncomfortable for audiences looking for an escape from the world at large, its go-for-broke lead performances, intentional and consistent themes, and meticulous storytelling through set design make this movie a satire in the truest sense: it roasts and points out absurdity to motivate real-world change.

"Digger" is about **two** generations escalating a global climate crisis: one whose concentrated wealth, isolation, and insufferable hubris causes global disaster; and another generation whose comfort in privilege, complacency, and stubbornness to change might make a very bad problem even worse.

Digger Rockwell (Cruise) is a billionaire oilman past his prime, caring only for solitude in his mansion, outsourcing his business, and keeping his impossibly decrepit cat Maggie alive. When disaster strikes on one of his Arctic drilling platforms–fueled by ignoring employee warnings and irresponsible business practices – greater catastrophe results, summoning Digger's neurotic Environmental Safety Chief Dr. Ganesh (an outstandingly rabbity and snarky Riz Ahmed) for damage control. As disasters pile up as a direct result of Digger's actions, and global courts clamor for accountability, other characters who have no choice but to bear the consequences of Digger's blunders carry on with their lives as best they can, hopeful to unite each other through creativity and commiseration in spite of their circumstances.

The film takes some adjustment to balance its dual narratives; its tone is simultaneously bright yet ominous, and part of how this is translated is in its eye-poppingly detailed set design and washed-out cinematography during key moments to pull focus. But no detail is worth more consideration than how Nature is portrayed as a character throughout this film, and the more it is noticed, the more weight "Digger" throws with its satire. The movie's twee, minimalist soundtrack from Cosmo Sheldrake is also catchy and clever by design, reminiscent of a one-man-band.

Cruise's Digger Rockwell is an intentionally unflattering American caricature of everything he inhabits–cowboy capitalism, economic elitism, potbelly posturing, passing the buck, and biiiiiig talk. Digger clings to and crawls over whatever truth is most convenient, and seeing Tom Cruise at his hammiest and oiliest (pun intended) alongside Riz Ahmed's gift for comedic timing make up the film's most memorable scenes. You could call it scene-chewing, but even at Digger's most despicable, Cruise is careful to give a sliver of humanization to this character. Some metaphors come across as heavy-handed but satisfying. John Goodman's rectally-ailing, raving and sickly U.S. President, whose greatest nuclear deterrent is reading a book, might be one of them. The film's secondary narrative features more down-to-earth characters with lives more comparable to the audience, yet not without their own faults, like a well-connected character who is ostensibly helpful, but has unquestioned ties to a vast private surveillance network. The satire here is very 2026, which may date "Digger" in future viewings, yet its themes about avoiding accountability are timeless.

Its "nesting doll" narrative and accusatory tone may throw some folks because of the devastatingly accurate truth bombs in its monologues. Yet "Digger"'s most impressive achievement is how its narrative structure forces its audience to sit with its satire in the context of uncomfortable real-world relevance. In the face of buffoonish mismanagement and escalating and disastrous global climate change, perhaps the core ask of "Digger" to its audience is simply that collective *action* is what makes satire *effective.*

"Digger" will be available for streaming in mid-November 2026 on HBO MAX.

Across the Board

News & Views from FFBC Board Members



Leading a Double Life

by Beverly Smith

Leading a double life is likely not unusual for many people in the LGBTQ+ community. Hiding oneself is often born of necessity. Reasons for this can be obvious and are known to many in this community. For some, the worry of being ostracized by family and friends is a significant motivating factor; for others, the loss of employment or stature are considerable driving influences. The double life can offer some harbor from these worries. My case is not so different.

Athletic stardom and the fleetingness of celebrity.

I grew up in Davenport, Iowa. My childhood was mostly uneventful - very young parents, involved grandparents, and aunts and uncles nearby. I was not a well-coordinated kid and came to accept always being chosen last for any team event (something about which my peers seemed enormously insightful). Nevertheless, my parents felt a commitment to involve me in team sports. I endured two seasons of softball when I was around nine years old. I dutifully attended every practice, and through my unique physical ineptitude and ball-handling impotence, secured an illustrious position playing right field. From there I was able to participate in team 'chatter' as we endeavored to distract the kid at bat, while simultaneously permitting me plenty of time to engage in daydreaming. So much so that on more than one occasion I was invited (by the unexpected arrival of the other team's right fielder) to join my team in the dugout as the next inning was beginning. The crowning achievement of my softball career involved the first and only time I found myself as a runner standing at second base. The memory of how I arrived at this high station has long since been lost. Nevertheless, there I was, during an actual game, on base! Heaven knows I was probably imagining that, in moments, I could be crossing boldly over home plate to the cheers and accolades of tens of thousands of softball peers and enthusiasts when, without warning, a teammate, who only seconds earlier had been standing at first base, RAN PAST ME! My imagined cheers and accolades were abruptly silenced, and imagined thoughts of lucrative softball celebrity were dashed.

Pulling the closet door closed.

It was a short few years later that I began to recognize my feelings of gender non-conformity. The dawn of my double life. Through conversation and the autobiographies of transgender women, I've learned that most of us engaged a lot in crossdressing. This was certainly part of my experience. Initially, this was through stolen moments alone in a room with a mirror. Eventually, I became slightly more emboldened. So much so that I might have walked (albeit swiftly) near a window! As time went on and my nerve strengthened, I would sometimes creep out to the mailbox and back (typically in the dark). Eventually, I recognized that dressing up was an indelible part of me. For this reason, I began moving in the direction of self-acceptance, not yet understanding the profound reality that was driving me. I was in the mainstream period of my double life.

Even a blind squirrel occasionally finds a nut.

A couple dozen years ago, I met the woman who is the mother of the three adult daughters I call my kids, and to whom I was engaged. Her name was Shawn. I shared my dressing passion with her, and as I like to say, she was the best make-up artist I've ever had. Shawn made dance costumes, and for this reason, occasionally had clients visit our house for drop-offs, fittings, or pick-ups. On one occasion, she phoned me saying that a mother-daughter pair were headed for our place to pick up a finished item. Shawn phoned in advance to ensure that I'd be able to meet them. Do you know that feeling one gets while speaking on the phone that the person on the other end is having a silent reaction to the conversation? This happened. Shawn: "I just called to let you know they're on their way so that you're home and dressed when they arrive…" (insert detectable and silent phone-reaction here). In response, she added, "Or are you *over-dressed?"* That girl really knew me; my double life and all!

The Chrysalis affect.

It was nearly ten years after her passing that I came to understand that dressing was merely an outlet, or a symptom, of a longstanding latent personal intention. I recall taking pause on one of many weekends going as Beverly to the East Village. After parking my car, I had what some might call an epiphany; others might suggest it was a realization. Maybe it was simply that my internal cauldron of courage was finally filled. While still in my car, I reached out via email to One Iowa asking for a recommendation of a local law firm with whom I could work to change my official documents. With this action, my transition formally began.

The warmth of the sun.

The legal process was not terribly difficult; however, it did occasionally challenge my fortitude in transitioning. Approaching family, friends, and co-workers with my coming out announcement was as good and bad as this activity has likely been for most people reading this. One sentiment I do hold deeply, and wish to make widely known, is gratitude. Gratitude for the many in this community who've inspired me. Gratitude to the LGB people who came before me; who bravely blazed the trail and upon whose path I now walk. This is part of what motivates my participation in the FFBC - to lift and support those who follow. I've since left the double life to the secret agents of the world. As the Bard wrote, "To thine own self be true…" even if, as in my case, doing so takes a few extra decades.

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Publication

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FFBC Board of Directors

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



Get ready to sparkle under the lights at "Diamond Disco" for the 2026 LGBTQ+ Adult Prom! This year we're turning up the glam with a dazzling night inspired by the glittering disco era—where shimmering style, bold self-expression, and nonstop dancing rule the night. Expect a dance floor full of high-energy hits, sparkling décor, and a joyful atmosphere where everyone can show up as their most fabulous selves.

Dress to shine in your Diamond Disco best: think sequins, metallics, rhinestones, jumpsuits, bell bottoms, platform shoes, glittery gowns, disco diva glam, or anything that catches the light and celebrates your unique style. Whether you channel classic Studio 54 energy or put your own queer, modern spin on disco fashion, this is your moment to sparkle.



Tickets are just $30 per person and include admission, a three-course dinner, a free welcome drink, and more. Last year over 200 people joined us for an unforgettable night of dancing, laughter, and community — and 2026 will be even brighter! This event is 18+ only, so grab your friends, dress to dazzle, and get ready to dance the night away.

YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS IT!