



WINTER/SPRING SPEAKER SERIES 2025

Meet up at the LBC on Thursday afternoons for socializing and speakers. A different topic will be discussed each week. The **Thursday Speaker Series is FREE and open to everyone**, no membership is required to attend. If you have a topic you would like to present, contact our customer service staff to fill out a Speaker Proposal Form.

City of Mt Vernon Major Accomplishments Overview, *Chris Nosbisch* Thursday, January 16 at 1:00

City Administrator, Chris Nosbisch, will be on hand to provide an update on current projects that will be finished by spring including the Davis Park outdoor pool and Davis Park ball field concessions. He will give an update on scheduled projects that are still underway. The City Administrator will detail economic development efforts with Kwik Star, including the changes that will be occurring with Rachel Street to accommodate that project. He will also brief the group on the proposed child care initiatives and how it may lead to changes at the LBC.

Citizen Diplomacy Efforts in Iowa: Foreign Relations Begin at Home, *Del Christensen* Thursday, January 23 at 1:00

This program will cover the role various Iowa organizations and individuals play in shaping the minds of Americans as well as the citizens of other countries. It will cover the concept and history of face-to-face "citizen diplomacy" with special focus on the impact it has had in Iowa. Examples will range from high school exchange programs, to welcoming and engaging with international students in our colleges and universities, to global volunteer efforts by individuals, nonprofits, and faith-based groups around the world. One Iowa based exchange organization, Iowa Resource for International Service (IRIS) will be presented in great detail as an example of multi-level citizen diplomacy efforts within the state. **Rescheduled for Thursday, May 1 at 1:00.**

Creating Local Child Care Solutions, *MVLCCS Committee Members* Thursday, February 6 at 1:00

During the spring of 2022, the League of Women Voters of MV-L conducted a survey to determine the need for child care in our community. A key finding was that less than half of the 72 families that responded were able to find "affordable, quality child care." In May 2024, an additional 34 area businesses and 352 parents/guardians responded to a short survey with over 75% indicating a new child care facility would be a worthwhile investment in the community. In this high employment market, we must be competitive to recruit and retain quality child care workers. Parents need to know that their children are receiving quality care. In this session, we will address these issues and others. We will describe the evolution of the MVLCCS committee, present data that has informed our decision making, share a case study, and conclude with thoughts on where we go from here.

Wildland Sentinel: Field Notes from an Iowa Conservation Officer, *Erika Billerbeck* Thursday, February 13 at 1:00

Erika has been an Iowa Conservation Officer for the last 26 years. In 2020, the University of Iowa Press published her book, Wildland Sentinel. In Wildland Sentinel, Erika takes readers along for the ride as she and her colleagues sift through poaching investigations, chase down sex offenders in state parks, search for fugitives in wildlife areas, haul drunk boaters to jail, perform body recoveries, and face the chaos that comes with disaster response. Using an introspective personal voice, this narrative nonfiction work weaves stories of Iowa's natural history with a cast of unforgettable characters. Wildland Sentinel touches on what it means to be a woman working in the male-dominated field of conservation law enforcement. Erika will talk about her book, tell stories, and take questions.

Physical Activity and Healthy Aging, *Kristin Meyer and Christi Johnson* Thursday, February 20 at 1:00

Wondering about incorporating more physical activity into your routine? Love a rousing game of pickleball, but can't stand the next-day aches and pains? Or, maybe the competitive vibe doesn't work for you, and you need something else? Come explore some of the joys, challenges, and benefits of physical activity through the lifespan with Cornell College Kinesiology Professors Kristi Meyer, DPT and Christi Johnson, PhD. We will cover some basics about healthy physical activity, explore motivation and self-stories about physical activity and aging, engage in some gentle movement practices, and discuss ways in which our relationship with our physical selves changes throughout the lifespan. We take an age-positive approach to understanding how to use physical activity to maximize the potential for joy and thriving into older adulthood.

Connections with the Csomay Center, <i>Jennifer Jones</i>	Thursday, February 27 at 1:00
Gain insight on how the University of Iowa's Csomay Center for Gerontological Excellence utilizes research, influences education and practices of gerontology, and partners with community organizations to advance innovations in aging, and to promote optimal aging and quality of life in all older adults and their caregivers. The Csomay Center takes pride in serving as a resource hub for Iowa communities, aging residents and their caregivers. We believe we are all better together and can support one another through connecting, contributing and creating a better world in which to age.	
The Nexus of Climate Change and Health, <i>Peter Thorne</i>	Thursday, March 6 at 1:00
Climate change represents one of the Grand Challenges of the 21st Century, and its impacts on human and environmental health are significant and far reaching. Dr. Thorne will show the sources and history of greenhouse gas emissions, the changes to our climate they induce, and the drivers of acute and cumulative health impacts. Thorne will describe how the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act of 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 have moved US policy from inaction to meaningful actions to address the climate crisis. He will encourage robust engagement with those attending.	
Iowa Civil Rights, <i>Jacqueline Hunter</i>	Thursday, March 13 at 1:00
Explore the struggles and triumphs of the fight for equal rights in Iowa. Featured individuals include Alexander Clark, Edna Griffin, George Washington Carver, and a man we know as Ralph.	
PFAS Exposures in Eastern Iowa and Health Effects, <i>Dr. Robert Blount & Dana Kolpin</i>	Thursday, March 27 at 1:00
This discussion will cover the following objectives: Community concerns and questions regarding PFAS, the overview of PFAS chemistry and its uses, the prevalence of PFAS contamination at home and in the environment, the known health effects, uncertainties and ongoing research, and what we can and should do about it.	
Financial Exploitation: Crime of the 21st Century , <i>Laura Kriegermeier</i>	Thursday, April 3 at 1:00
The rise of financial crimes is significant with no end in sight. Scammers target the most vulnerable, older adults. 1 in 10 older adults are victims of elder abuse, with 1 in 5 being financial exploitation. Learn more about these financial crimes and how they target older adults and those who are isolated. Learn ways to protect yourself and loved ones as technology changes and these crimes become harder to spot.	
Music and French Impressionism, <i>Jessica Wiskus</i>	Thursday, April 10 at 1:00
Have you ever wondered what makes the art and music of French Impressionism so compelling? Come and learn about the ideas that inspired artists like Monet, Cezanne and Debussy. View works of art, listen to beautiful music, and prepare to experience their expression in new, meaningful ways.	
Orchestra Iowa: Navigating Change, <i>Tim Hankewich</i>	Thursday, April 17 at 1:00
Whether it's a flood, a pandemic, or a derecho, Orchestra Iowa has had its fair share of challenges forcing us to be flexible and to embrace change. With the recent appointments of a new CEO, positive change is in the air. Maestro Hankewich will discuss the implications of challenging audience demands and the difficulties of preserving a core mission that can be out of step with evolving audience expectations.	
The Native American Mounds of Palisades Kepler State Park, <i>Gail Barels</i>	Thursday, April 24 at 1:00
Who built the mounds located at Palisades Kepler State Park? Discover the Woodland Indian culture that existed in Iowa during the time the mounds were built and how the mounds were used. Artifacts from this time period which highlight the unique culture that existed in Iowa and much of the Midwest during this time period will be shared.	
The State of Cancer in Iowa, <i>Dr. Sarah Nash</i>	Thursday, May 8 at 1:00
In this presentation, we will present cancer rates in Iowa, and discuss potential contributors to Iowa having the second highest cancer rate in the U.S.	
Program Content: The LBC neither approves nor disapproves the content, ideas, or subject matter presented in programs or used by individuals, non-profit groups, and organizations. The LBC does not accept responsibility for ensuring accuracy or that all points of view are represented.	