



# Nor'Wester

Rotary Club of Northwest Des Moines

[www.clubrunner.ca/northwestdesmoines](http://www.clubrunner.ca/northwestdesmoines) / Fridays @ Noon - UGCC 4000-86th St. Urbandale

## Prez Sez

Jack Bell

At the beginning of our new Rotary year back in July, President McNally wrote that one of his areas of focus for this year would be to prioritize projects focusing on mental health. Rotary is at the forefront of increasing the awareness of the focus on mental health by creating a sense of belonging and placing particular importance on acts of kindness through service. As I have noted, Rotary did exactly that for me 10 years ago when I had returned to the US after two decades away and was searching for connection and service.

The high school students I am working with through Avenue Scholars had an entire week devoted to becoming aware of mental health items. Coincidentally, I just received an email from the chair of my fraternity's Chapter Advisory Board which stresses the importance of holding discussions on the topic and provides resources to help facilitate discussions. It's refreshing to see this emphasis on young adults, in these cases ages 16 to around 22. Things have indeed progressed quite far since I was that age!

On the more extreme end of the spectrum of mental health, I just finished a book called The Best Minds that delves into the life of Michael Laudor. The author, a New York times reporter named Jonathan Rosen, does a remarkable job weaving in the history of the diseases, the entire gamut of treatments, associated stigmas while detailing his friendship with Laudor from adolescence through Yale Law school and beyond.

On a personal note, near the end of the book, Rosen delves into a potential movie based on Laudor's life (with Ron Howard the director), generated by interest in a lengthy NYT piece back in 1998. In another example of how small the world is, the screenwriter was the brother of a friend of mine from my days in Croatia. If you read the book, you'll discover why the movie wasn't made, with one of the reasons being Howard's interest in Slyia Nasar's book - A Beautiful Mind.

Thank you for the good you all do in the world. Jack

## Scribbles...

### Dylan DeClerk - Can Play



Dylan presented at our club meeting this week. Dylan is a graduate of Valley High School in west Des Moines and Drake University. Dylan is also a professional ultimate frisbee player for the Minnesota Wind Chill. While still in high school Dylan started working to remove barriers to kids playing baseball by organic no cost ways for play. He got a donation from his employer Sam Garder, owner of the Iowa Cubs and organized a summer league. He holds a guiding belief that involvement in sports when you are young teaches life lessons that make better citizens, employees, and people. Studies have shown that sports help kids avoid challenges of obesity, health issues, criminal activity and improve grades in school, self-esteem and even better economic success as a adult. What began as a service project has become his driving passion. He is the Co-Founder of Can Play and the founder of Opportunity on Deck. Both are nonprofits organizations that focus on removing the barriers to play for people of all ages in central Iowa.

His original organization Opportunity on Deck worked with low-income youth to be able to play basketball, baseball, dance and soccer. After several years of operation this organization he merged with another local nonprofit called Courage League Sports. A successful effort to remove barriers to play for children and adults with physical or cognitive issues that prevent

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February 9, 2024

**This Week's Program:**

**Elizabeth Sedrel**  
Living History Farms

Arranged By:

Bill W. Corwin

Greeter:

Bill Grask

Invocation:

Wemdi Wilson

Sergeant:

Wendy Kriegshauser

Scribe:

Jake Heston



**2022-23 Officers & Directors**

Jack Bell, President

Tim Olejniczak, President Elect

Bill W. Corwin, Treasurer

Dianne Downing, Secretary

Ed Arnold, Board Member

Bill D. Corwin, Board Member

Kelly Peterson, Past President



**Future Programs**

**2/16:** Andrew Batt  
Iowa PBS

**2/23:** Courtney Davenport  
Valerius Elementary  
Shcool Girls Program

# Other Locations

## Monday

West Polk County, Food Depot, 3000 SE Grimes Blvd, Suite 200 in Grimes (Noon)

## Tuesday

Ankeny, Ankeny Golf & Country Club, (11:45)  
 Ankeny, Magee's Irish Pub, (6:00 pm)  
 Johnston, Hyperion Golf & CC, (7:00 am)  
 Dallas Center, Memorial Hall, (Noon)  
 Norwalk, Echo Valley Golf Course, (6:30 am)  
 West Des Moines, DM Golf & CC, (Noon)

## Wednesday

East Polk County, Caring Hands, (7:00 am)  
 Adel, 1016 Main St. Raccoon Valley Comm. House (Noon)  
 The Greater Des Moines Club, check the District 6000 website for time and location

## Thursday

Waukee, Des Moines Golf & Country Club, (6:45 am)  
 Des Moines, Embassy Club - Ruan Bldg, (Noon)  
 Winterset, Pizza Ranch, (Noon)

## Friday

Des Moines, AM, Downtown Holiday Inn – Mercy, (7:00 am)

Upcoming Events

- District Foundation Socials - February 19 & 26
- Iowa Wolves Polio Night - Friday, February 23
- CFUM Supper Club (To-Go) - Monday, February 26
- District Assembly - Saturday, March 30
- Pickleball Programs - April 12 & 13

Items for the Nor'Wester should be submitted by end of the day each Monday. Please send to:

**Jack Bell**  
 jackbell@yahoo.com

# Scribe Continued

play in the traditional sense. This has been done through adaptive solutions and personal individual support to the player.

As a result of COVID, a few years ago, Opportunity on Deck and Courage League Sports merged their missions. The new mission is to bring adapted and no cost recreational programs to the community by removing barriers to play.

Can Play's Opportunity programs strive to serve our communities by providing no-cost athletic and youth development opportunities for our participants. Our goals are to teach valuable athletic skills and techniques, provide positive role models, instill life-long values, and promote diverse communities amongst youth. Our programs are typically 8-week sessions. All sessions cover the cost of the equipment to play, transportation to and from practice and games, jerseys/costumes, and meal after practice.

Can Play provides adapted recreational sports and skills programs suitable for all ages and abilities. These programs are designed to meet the unique requirements of individuals with disabilities, including physical, cognitive, emotional, developmental, and neurodiverse conditions (autism), as well as those utilizing wheelchairs or walkers. Can Play's programs modify pace, equipment, and structure to establish a secure, positive, and accessible environment. Participants will enhance their social engagement skills and improve their confidence by enjoying activities with teammates and coaches.

Their programs are scheduled all over the metro area. Some programs take place at the RecPlex in West Des Moines. They are always looking for people with a passion to help people play through providing a location to play, volunteers, or donations. These are truly two local organizations founded in Iowa doing good work in Iowa to assist Iowans live fuller lives.

To learn more about any of these details visit <https://can-play.org>

Scribe, Bill D. Corwin



# Future Information

Ed Arnold - Program Chair



Ed Arnold - Program Chair				
	Greeter	Invocation	Sergeant	Scribe
Feb 16	Tony Hunt	Kelly Peterson	Bob Moore	Mark McAndrews
Feb 23	Joe Kobes	Dan Boes	Tim Olejniczak	Wendi Wilson
Mar 1	Mark McAndrews	Bill D. Corwin	Doyle Sanders	Kelly Peterson
<i>Can't complete your assigned duty?</i> Please assist Jack Bell by finding your substitute!				