

On The Edge

History Lesson

March 9, 1959: The first Barbie doll goes on display at the American Toy Fair in New York City.

March 10, 1988: Andy Gibb, age 30, succumbed to an inflammatory heart after years of cocaine abuse.

March 11, 1989: The hit reality-based TV show COPS premieres on Fox, and audiences hear the reggae beat of its theme song, Inner Circle's "Bad Boys," for the first time.

March 12, 2003: Elizabeth Smart, age 15, is finally found in Sandy, Utah, nine months after being abducted from her family's home.

March 13, 1868: Senate hears impeachment charges against Andrew Johnson.

March 14, 1950: The FBI institutes the "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" list in an effort to publicize particularly dangerous fugitives.

March 15, 1972: Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather*—a three-hour epic, starring Marlon Brando, is released.

Let's Celebrate!

March 4: Homemade Soup Day

March 5: Chocolate Fondue Day

March 6: Wear Red Day

March 8: Go Fly a Kite Day

March 8: Chocolate Day

March 10: Umbrella Day

What's Cookin'?

Iced Mocha A Sweet Morning Pick-Me-Up

2 tsp Instant Coffee
4 oz cool water
3/4 cup ice
4 oz whole milk or any non-dairy alternative
Chocolate syrup (2-4 Tbsp according to taste)
Whipped cream and chocolate syrup or shavings (optional)

-Combine Instant Coffee and cool water in a glass, make sure to completely dissolve instant coffee.

-Fill with ice.

-Combine whole milk and chocolate syrup in a separate glass. Stir together then combine with the first glass.

-Top with whipped cream and chocolate syrup or shavings to taste, and enjoy.

Courtesy of Starbucks.com
Coffee at Home

Quote of the Week

"Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway." — Earl Nightingale

Helpful Hints

To help prevent cushions slipping off your couch, place a nonslip rug pad between couch cushions and the sofa frame.

Iowan's Have a Sense of Humor

Q: What's the best thing to come out of Iowa?
A: I-80.

It happened in Iowa

The town of Pella, Iowa is known for its annual Tulip Time Festival, during which the city's streets are lined with more than 200,000 tulips. Pella's Dutch heritage is also celebrated through traditional costumes, Dutch cuisine, and the largest working Dutch windmill in the United States.

Animal Fact

Turtles can breathe through their bottoms during winter hibernation.



Al Batt
Battin' for the Good Times

I like movies. I grew up during the Dark Ages. They were the first times before cat videos were available 24/7. Cat videos were then available 0/7. Social media consisted of papers tacked to a strategically placed bulletin board. I spent my boyhood in a home with three TV channels and zero TV remotes. There were three movie theaters within a comfortable driving distance. The Broadway and the Rivoli, which were brick-and-mortar theaters, and the Passion Pit, an outdoor drive-in movie theater.

Home had a lot going for it. Newspapers, radio, books, free food, TV trays and TV dinners. But it wasn't easy to

sneak an arm around a sweetie at home. Theaters were places to give that a shot.

A movie took this slack-jawed yokel's mind off diagramming sentences or finding the elusive value of x.

Chef Boyardee and Julia Child were the only chefs I'd heard of. I had a limited palate, one meant for overpriced health foods sold at a theater's concession stand. These included Dots, Bit-O-Honey, Chuckles, Good & Plenty, Jujubes, Jujufruits, Red Hots and popcorn. I wasn't a fan of horror movies. They made me hide my head in a popcorn bucket, which required me to buy a bushel-basket-sized one. I preferred a comedy that was a hoot and a half, or period pieces that were time machines wowing me to the 19th power.

I wasn't aware that I was trying to extract meaning from every moment presented on the big screen. I didn't need a movie with a moral, but it didn't hurt. Something simple like eat your vegetables, but I've

learned from movies.

"If you can dodge a wrench, you can dodge a ball!" is great advice from "Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story."

In "Ferris Bueller's Day Off," Bueller told me, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

"It's not the years, honey. It's the mileage."—Indiana Jones, "Raiders of the Lost Ark."

"If I'm not back in five minutes, just wait longer."—"Ace Ventura: Pet Detective."

"What you've just said is one of the most insanely idiotic things I have ever heard. At no point in your rambling, incoherent response were you even close to anything that could be considered a rational thought. Everyone in this room is now dumber for having listened to it."—Principal Max Anderson suggesting thinking before talking in "Billy Madison."

"According to the map, we've only gone 4 inches."—Jeff Daniels as Harry Dunne in "Dumb and Dumber."

"Mamma says that alliga-

tors are ornery because they've got all them teeth, but no toothbrush."—Bobby Boucher, "The Waterboy."

"You must pay for everything in this world, one way or another. There is nothing free except the grace of God."—Mattie Ross, "True Grit."

"You have to remember that a worm, with very few exceptions, is not a human being."—Young Frankenstein.

I learned a worthy excuse: "Please. Have mercy. I've been wearing the same underwear since Tuesday."—from Steve Martin playing Neal Page in "Planes, Trains & Automobiles."

Dean Wormer offered this guidance: "Fat, drunk, and stupid is no way to go through life, son," in "Animal House."

Captain Rex Kramer in "Airplane" said, "Listen, and you listen close: flying a plane is no different than riding a bicycle, just a lot harder to put baseball cards in the spokes."

"I'm not crazy; I'm just colorful."—Butch Cassidy and

the Sundance Kid."

"A gold medal is a wonderful thing. But if you're not enough without one, you'll never be enough with one."—"Cool Runnings."

"You'll have bad times, but it'll always wake you up to the good stuff you weren't paying attention to."—Good Will Hunting.

"There's no place like home"—Dorothy, "The Wizard of Oz."

"A laugh can be a very powerful thing. Why, sometimes in life, it's the only weapon we have."—"Who Framed Roger Rabbit?"

"I would rather have thirty minutes of wonderful than a lifetime of nothing special."—Steel Magnolias.

Thanks to that in-depth training, I did a TV show titled "Movies You Could Watch With Your Mother."

People don't go to movie theaters as often as they used to. A couch is tough competition.

Merrily I roll along.

©Al Batt 2026

~ Letter to the Editor ~

Dear Editor:

Zach Wahls has visited northeast Iowa a number of times — and I first met him personally when he came to Cresco, where I grew up. I've learned that Zach supports "the little guys" such as my wife and I who each started our home ownership journeys in mobile homes as we lived in what were commonly called "trailer parks." Zach has made specific, strong efforts to protect mobile home owners from being effectively banished from mobile home communities when new owners impose exponential lot rent increases to make continued occupancy unaffordable.

Another issue of personal importance is women's health and reproductive choice. Iowans deserve leaders who will stand up—clearly and consistently—for the freedom of women and their families to make their own health care decisions.

Josh Turek's record in the Iowa Legislature is concerning. In 2023, Turek voted to advance Kim Reynolds' so-called "crisis pregnancy center" bill—quadrupling taxpayer funding for fake clinics that are designed to pressure, mislead, and shame women instead of providing real medical care. Josh Turek missed multiple votes on the Republicans' near-total abortion ban and the fetal personhood bill; and he missed voting on a bill requiring public school students to watch a misleading anti-abortion video.

Before deciding to run for Senate, Turek was the only Democrat in the Iowa Legislature who had not sponsored a single bill to protect women's reproductive rights. Iowans can't afford weak leadership in the US Senate. When it matters, we need leaders willing to lead.

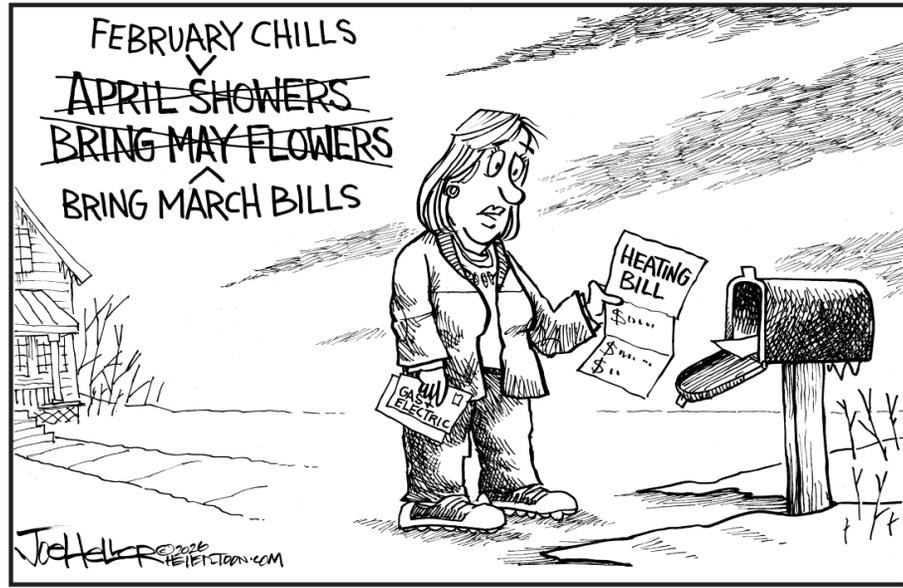
Zach Wahls is a proven leader. Zach has introduced or

co-sponsored 28 bills to defend women's health and reproductive freedom—because he understands that politicians have no business in the exam room, and that freedom means trusting women and families to make the decisions that are right for them.

This topic is deeply personal for me. Had the laws in 1991 been what they are today, my wife would likely have died while emergency room doctors discussed her condition which turned out to be a ruptured ectopic pregnancy requiring termination to save her life.

Iowans can't afford weak leadership on our health and reproductive choice. Our choice is clear. If you want a US senator who will fight to protect the rights of Iowans, vote for Zach Wahls.

Joe Skoda
Rural Decorah



The Winter Games



Patsy Bronner

Howard County Farm Wife

It was awful. I woke up a few mornings ago feeling very apprehensive, memories of a vivid dream still fresh in my mind. Somehow swept into a group of people dressed in extravagant garb, they hustled me along in my chore jeans and knee-high work boots. Conversation was excited and joyous and I knew something big was about to happen. I soon learned we were seconds from arriving at a matrimonial venue where I was expected to play the wedding march on the piano. Horrified and truly not believing I was in such a situation, without appropriate attire and no musical preparation at all, I found myself sitting on a bench, ivory keys beneath my fingers.

Part of this strange nightmare-ish dream may have

been caused by sleeping on an air mattress with a slow leak that lost all buoyancy as I slept. The sound of a twenty-pound cat walking across sheets of drawing paper on the floor near my head added nocturnal night noises to which I was not accustomed.

Perhaps the strange sensation of the family dog sniffing my hair had something to do with an unsettled aura as I awoke. A better explanation, in combination with spending the night in my granddaughter's room, was probably the disconcerting uncertainty of ongoing world conflict.

With live coverage of armed militia, smoke, and fire, coming from the TV across the room, breakfast conversation included the concerns of each of us. Worries about active warfare and how it might affect our jobs, schooling, and the economy, were just the beginning of a discussion we did not finish. The consequences of large-scale battle are not insignificant. Though we are not physically on the front lines and this destruction seems far away, sacrifices will have to be

made. No one really knows what the outcome will be.

On this day, planned activities distracted us from our worries. Attending my granddaughter's final ice-skating session of the season, I felt so proud of the skills she had mastered. Gliding, turning, forward and backward twizzles, all were graceful moves I hope she can continue into an unknown future. Out-performing many of the adults in his fitness club, my grandson, only twelve years old, tossed a ten-pound ball up to a target nine feet high repetitiously for twelve minutes, interspersed with jumping up on a box twenty inches tall (while carrying that heavy ball).

Grandmas can get carried away with pride sometimes, and fear as well. I wonder what the world will be like when they become adults. I hope they can concentrate on skill and strength for their own children and not worry about enemy missiles. At the very least, my wish for them is restful dreams in a peaceful world.

By Patsy Bronner

A Funnel Report Card

Brass Tacks from Rural Iowa

Guest Columnist

February 20 saw the passage of the first legislative funnel. This is a deadline lawmakers set to winnow down bills eligible for consideration for the remainder of the session. It doesn't apply to spending bills, but does a good job of narrowing what lawmakers will focus on around the midpoint of their time spent under the Golden Dome in Des Moines.

I didn't have high hopes for this legislative session. Considering the last handful of years, the bar had been set low. But I had a sneaking

suspicion they could always go lower. So I'm kind of surprised they didn't go even lower this year. But then again, it's not a report card to pin to the refrigerator either.

It goes without saying anything introduced by House or Senate Democrats went nowhere. Bipartisanship is a word that has been unheard of at our statehouse for at least a decade now. So that means fully funding our public education is again a pipe dream. And it means even half-hearted measures introduced by Democrats to combat our water crisis died a quiet death.

BRASS TACKS - PAGE 11

Yesterday's News . . .

25 Years Ago . . .

Times Plain Dealer of Mar. 7, 2001

CRESCO - Property taxes paid to operate Howard County will increase next fiscal year (2001-2002), especially for people living in towns. The legal publication as recently printed in the Times Plain Dealer calls for an increase of about \$1.26 per \$1000 in valuation for people living in the incorporated communities of the county. The increase will be about 30 cents less per \$1000 in valuation for people living in the rural areas. The tax levy for urban areas will be \$5.13574, compared to \$3.88029 for the current year. For rural areas, next year's levy will be \$8.633548 compared to \$7.68003 for this fiscal year. A number of reasons for the increases were explained recently by the board of supervisors, who have been working for about two months on the budget.

NEW HAMPTON - The city of New Hampton is exploring the establishment of a video conferencing facility that would be owned by the city. The facility is needed by businesses and industries in the New Hampton area but individuals could also use the facility.

WAUKON - About two dozen Waukon residents have developed a preliminary draft of a multi-usage, all-purpose community center. The proposed two-story facility would include activities for a wide range of age groups.

CRESCO - Registered voters in the Howard-Wineshiek School District overwhelmingly approved an income tax surcharge in district-wide voting held on Feb. 27. The unofficial voting results had 956 votes cast in support of the measure and 626 votes voting no, an approval rating of 60.4 percent. To pass, the measure needed only one vote over 50 percent. Six of the seven voting precincts and the absentee votes favored the passage of a state income surtax to pay for a satellite campus to be constructed on school owned property located along Highway 9 east. The strongest support was in Cresco's Second Ward (voting at First Lutheran Church) with 220 favoring the issue and only 44 voting cast against it, an approval rating of 83 percent.

CRESCO - The popular, local band 'Rearview Mirror' is spending this month in a recording studio after signing a four album contract in January with record label Gobstopper Records. The four albums are expected to take the entire month of March to produce. The studio is in Minneapolis where the four local members of Rearview Mirror will be working on the initial album seven days a week. The goal is to have the album completed by the first of April. The four albums will be produced by legendary record producer Steve Lillywhite, who is best known for a special standard of music with such bands as U2, Dave Matthews Band, Simple Minds and The Rolling Stones.

IOWA - Over one million tons of salt for Allamakee and Wineshiek Counties being held in Clayton for delivery is missing. About 500 tons of salt for Allamakee County and 579 tons of salt for Wineshiek County is unaccountable.

75 Years Ago . . .

Times Plain Dealer of March 1, 1951

CRESCO - A franchise renewal of the Northern Iowa Telephone Company will be voted on by the legal residents of the city of Cresco at a special election next Monday.

LIME SPRINGS - "International Understanding" will be the theme for the Howard County Family Night to be held on March 16 in the Lime Springs school gymnasium.

CRESCO - The Cresco Camp Fire girls will hold their annual council in the high school Little Theatre on Monday.

CRESCO - Mr. and Mrs. Ray Joerger have purchased the interest of James Deyo in the Cresco Cafe.

CRESCO - Drollinger's Hardward of Cresco was the host at a meeting of paint experts from Minneapolis. Also attending were 27 employees of 'Our Own Hardward' agency stores from seven neighboring towns.

85 Years Ago . . .

The Howard County Times of Mar. 2, 1941

CRESCO - W. W. Aitkin, state biologist, visited the Cresco public school on Friday and showed a movie of fisheries activities in the state. He also inspected the recently rebuilt dam at Vernon.

CRESCO - A new popcorn machine has been installed in the Cresco Theatre. Everyone said, 'It's a great day in the morning.'