

DIVERSITY in DUBUQUE

April 2024

A newsletter from the City of Dubuque's Office of Equity & Human Rights

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April 2 – World Autism Day

Autism is a neurological and developmental disorder that often causes individuals to have problems with communication and social interactions. [World Autism Day](#) (celebrated the whole month of April) is a time to learn, understand, and accept people with autism. Let's create a world where autistic individuals are fully supported, championed, and celebrated.

April 7 – World Health Day

Everyone has the right to health, but not everyone has access to it. The theme for [World Health Day 2024](#) is "My Health, My Right." This theme was chosen to champion the right of everyone, everywhere, to have access to quality health services, education, safe drinking water, clean air, and good nutrition.

April 10 – Eid al-Fitr

[Eid al-Fitr](#) marks the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which requires fasting between sunrise and sunset. It literally translates into the Festival of Breaking the Fast. The celebration begins with a special prayer at daybreak and is followed by visits with family and friends, feasts, and performing acts of charity. Children receive gifts, toys, and new clothes. The traditional greeting is "Eid Mubarak" or "Happy Eid" (pronounced *I-eed*).

April 22 – Earth Day

Earth Day is a time to demonstrate your support for environmental protection. Check out [Earthday.org](#) to sign the Global Plastic Treaty, as well as to educate yourself on environmental issues, and to join the movement for a better planet.

April 22-30 Passover

[Passover](#) is the celebration of the Jewish people's exodus from Egypt in 13th century BCE. The story of the exodus is retold at the traditional Passover dinner called the seder, which is filled with ritual and symbolism. For example, bitter herbs represent the bitterness Israelites endured as slaves and Matzah represents the unrisen bread they ate as they fled in the desert.



(top): ResoluteSupportMedia/Flickr; (bottom) Maryland GovPics/Flickr

April is Celebrate Diversity Awareness Month



Celebrating Diversity Awareness Month gives us the opportunity to recognize and honor the diversity of the people around us. This can include ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, and more. This month is dedicated to the pursuit of common understanding and acceptance of our similarities and our differences.



Diversity can be a scary word for some people. It is human nature to be afraid of what we don't know. While this instinct of fear of the unknown serves us well when hunting for wild mushrooms, it doesn't serve us well when exploring the cultures and differences of the people around us.



The root of many of the world's problems stem from fear, ignorance, and prejudice. One country attacks another because they are afraid of appearing weak; political fearmongering runs rampant; people fear immigrants will change "the way it's always been;" one group fights another because neither can accept the other's point of view. All this from fear, ignorance, and prejudice.



How many times have we complained about our leaders not being able to get along with each other? We can't change other people, but we can change ourselves. Instead of looking for differences in the people around you, look for ways you are alike. We may eat different foods, or listen to different types of music, but we all share the same hopes and fears. We all want security; we all want our children to grow up happy and safe; we all want to live in a good neighborhood and send our kids to good schools. But most important, we all want to be accepted for who we are!



Increasing our understanding and appreciation of the diversity of the people around us, leads to a more tolerant world filled with compassion and belonging. Isn't that a world we all want to live in?



Here are some ways to celebrate Diversity Awareness Month:

- **Talk to someone from a different culture** about their customs, traditions, values, and practices, and share yours with them.
- **Attend a cultural art exhibit, activity, or performance** and make it a family outing. See page 4 for some ideas.
- **Explore ethnic restaurants and stores.** In Dubuque, try Oolong Asian Cuisine, Gyro Hub & Mediterranean Grill, Hornbill Asian Market, or the soon-to-open Roses & Berries Café.
- **Try a new recipe from a different culture.** Ever had ramen that didn't come in a dried-up cube? Or for something a little more special, look up a good recipe for paella, a traditional Spanish dish. (Maybe stay away from wild mushrooms though.)
- **Listen to music from other parts of the world.** Have you ever heard [Mongolian Throat Singing](#)? What are you waiting for!?!? Or check out some [world music videos](#) to not only hear music from around the world, but maybe get a glimpse of different cultures (caution: some of the videos on this link might be a little explicit, but the woman singing lullabies to the elephant is a must see).
- **Financially support or [volunteer](#)** for an organization that promotes diversity in our community.
- **Expand your knowledge** through [films](#), [documentaries](#), [TED Talks](#), [books](#), or [podcasts](#).



(clockwise from top right): Christina Wocintechchat/Unsplash, Dylan Ferreira/ Unsplash, Alexander Grey/Unsplash, Daniil Slavinski/Pixabay, Centre for Ageing Better/Unsplash, Levi Meir Clancy/Unsplash, Abstrail Official/Unsplash, Levi Meir Clancy/Unsplash, Ruby Doan/Unsplash, Gabriel Silverio/Unsplash, Gursimrat Ganda/Unsplash, Juan Encalada/Unsplash

Culture Creators

Empathy

Empathy is understanding the feelings and experiences of others. It means putting yourself in their shoes and looking at the world from their eyes. Empathy allows you to connect with others on a personal and emotional level. It improves communication and understanding, and it reduces conflict. Empathy is an essential aspect of our interactions with others.

Empathy Myths

- **Empathy means agreeing with the other person.**
 - It's not about agreeing, it's about understanding where they are coming from and acknowledging their feelings.
- **You're either born with empathy or you're not.**
 - Nope! Empathy can be developed and improved with practice and awareness.
- **Empathy leads to emotional burnout.**
 - Empathy can be taxing at times, but it doesn't have to lead to burnout. Practice setting boundaries and self-care practices.

Why is Empathy important?

- Makes you feel valued.
- Reduces power and status differences between people.
- Reduces feelings of isolation.
- Enhances relationships.
- Increases a sense of belonging.
- Reduces conflict.
- Reduces prejudice and discrimination.
- Encourages personal growth.

How can I be more empathetic?

Use your eyes, ears, and gut instincts to understand the entire message they are communicating.

Give them your full attention.

Practice active listening and listen for key words or phrases.

Use your imagination – try to understand their lived experiences.

Ask them: what are they feeling or experiencing.

Validate their feelings.

Consider potential underlying factors that might have caused their emotions.

Repeat their concerns so they know you understand.

What is their tone or body language saying?

Put yourself in their shoes.

Cultivate compassion for yourself and for others.

Understand your own emotions.

Practice mindfulness exercises.

Keep an open mind. Put aside your assumptions, beliefs, judgements, and prejudices.

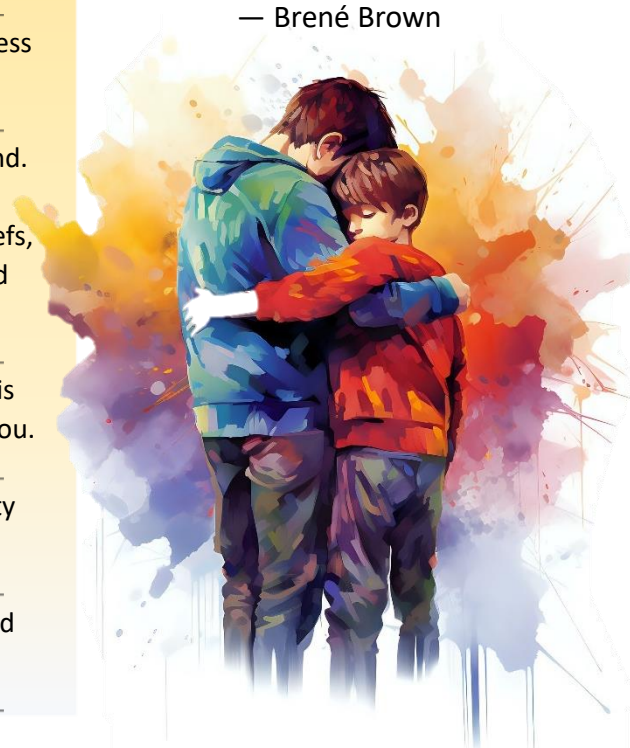
Remember, this is about them, not you.

Cultivate curiosity about others.

Show respect and compassion.

"Empathy has no script. There is no right way or wrong way to do it. It's simply listening, holding space, withholding judgment, emotionally connecting, and communicating that incredibly healing message of 'You're not alone.'"

— Brené Brown



(image); Vanessa SG/Pixabay; (divider); Gordon Johnson/Pixabay

News & Updates

[Generations Unveiled:](#)

**Black Elders Sharing
Dubuque's Untold Stories
April 4 @ 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
The Spot Nutrition**

Step into the richness of Dubuque's untold Black history as we gather for a listening session with our elders.



[University of Iowa Powwow](#)

**April 20 @ 11:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.
Johnson County Fairgrounds
Iowa City (cost \$5)**

Powwows are Native American gatherings that include dancing, food, crafts, and an opportunity to

celebrate with family and friends. Various tribes attend the University of Iowa Powwow each spring to symbolize rejuvenation and renewal. During the Grand Entry (12:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.), drums beat a welcome as an elder leads a parade of dancers into the arena.

[Josh Blue](#)

**April 5 @ 8:00 p.m.
Mississippi Moon Bar
Diamond Jo Casino
(cost varies)**



Josh Blue is a celebrated comedian who doesn't let his cerebral palsy slow him down. Josh's comedy continues to spread laughter and break down stereotypes of people with disabilities. His list of appearances includes NBC's *Last Comic Standing*, and *The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon*. Need more convincing? Check out his [website](#).



[Julien Dubuque International Film Festival](#)

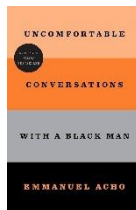
**April 24-28 @ various times
Various locations (cost varies)**

The Julien Dubuque International Film Festival acknowledges emerging filmmakers from around the world and features panels with filmmakers, workshops, film screenings, parties, and more. Come and find out why *MovieMaker Magazine* calls the Dubuque Film Festival one of the "25 Coolest Film Festivals in the World."

[Celebrate Africa and the Diaspora](#)

**April 13 @ 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Multicultural Family Center**

Diaspora is the dispersion or spread of a people from their original homeland to other countries. Performances at the event include a fashion show, poetry, Capoeira martial arts, African music, drumming, and dancing. Attendees can also visit vendor booths and sample food from Ghana. This is a free event.



[Black History and Reading Challenge Book](#)

**Discussion: "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man" by Emmanuel Acho
April 28 @ 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Carnegie-Stout Public Library**

["Dismantling Racism One on One"](#) [Book Discussion Series](#)

**April 8, 15, 22, 29 at 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Shalom Spirituality Center or via Zoom
(cost \$70 for the series – book not included)**



Dubuque County Reads

"The Personal Librarian" by Marie Benedict

Belle da Costa Greene was employed by J.P. Morgan to curate his personal library of art, and rare books. She became a fixture in the art world and in New York City society. But Belle was hiding a secret; Belle is Black.

[Reading Roundtable Book Discussion](#)

**April 8 at 6 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Carnegie-Stout Public Library**

[Film Screening and Q&A with the cast and playwright Peggy Jackson](#)

**"Hidden in Plain Sight:
The Life of Belle da Costa Greene"
April 2 @ 6:00 p.m.
Multicultural Family Center**

Books are available at the Carnegie-Stout Public Library or for purchase at River Lights Bookstore.

