Should Nebraskans wager on video segments of previously run horse races shown at Nebraska’s five licensed race tracks? The amendment is on the ballot this November and before the Supreme Court to decide the validity of the language.

On the surface, supporters say the profits will support the live racing industry and the jobs it provides while opponents call it one more attempt to open the gate to more gambling with the good life.

Pat Loontjer with Gambling with the Good Life and State Sen. Scott Lautenbaugh will debate both sides of the Nebraska Horse Racing Wagering Amendment, Thursday, Sept. 18, at the Omaha Press Club’s noon luncheon forum.

Getting Social

The Omaha Press Club and PRSA Nebraska co-sponsor a social media measurement and best practices seminar this month. “Best Practices of Social Media Measurement” on Saturday, Sept. 13, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the club launches Measurement Week in Omaha. Jared Troutman, Universal Information Services, will present a client case study of successful results. This will be followed by a panel discussion with:

- Creighton Associate Professor Carol Zuegner
- UNO Isaacson Professor Jeremy Lipschultz
- WOWT Assignment Editor LeAnne Morman
- Redstone Communications Chief Strategy Officer Randa Zalman

The focus will be on effective use of social media within journalism and public relations, which includes responding to data analyses. Other AMECorg. com Measurement Week Omaha activities include:

- 9/14 1 p.m. The Bookworm - Lipschultz presents on his new book Social Media Communication (2015).
- 9/15 TBA Google Hangout
- 9/16 TBA Push Twitter measurement
- 9/17 TBA Demo day
- 9/18 4 p.m. “The Future of Measurement” at UNO 9/19 TBA Social

The cost is $15 per person and includes entrance to the event and a continental breakfast. OPC members will be validated for 2 hours of parking. Contact the club by Sept. 11 at 402-345-8088 to RSVP.
Visiting in person isn’t the only way to see what’s new at the OPC. As of September 25, go online to omahapressclub.org and see a new look for the club’s website. And you’ll likely be able to call up the website from your phone or tablet.

“The structure has been rewritten so that it works on other devices such as most phones and tablets with bigger and more readable graphics,” said web designer Craig Coffman.

How would Coffman describe the redesigned website if it was a person? “Very savvy and refined, but also accessible. They’ll see familiar things, maybe reorganized.”

The website is less cluttered and easier to navigate. At the same time, visitors will see familiar content. Links to click on will remain basically the same. You can still make reservations, check events and see what’s going on at the OPC.

Click on the website’s “Face” section and see brand new photos of every Face on the Barroom Floor honoree since 1971. All 141 images of the Faces are being rephotographed by former OPC president Gary Willis, who volunteered his time.

President-elect Todd Murphy, who is spearheading the project, says members will enjoy the new website that makes its debut at the same time as the renewed and renovated Agnew Room.

“Along with the exciting changes to the physical club, it’s great to see an update to the club’s online presence. We hope our members will enjoy the updated Omaha Press Club website as much as they do the new Agnew Room.”

The new website will be showcased at a ribbon cutting for the newly designed Agnew room starting at 5 p.m. on September 25. Appetizers and cash bar will be available. Contact the club at 402-345-8008 to RSVP.

S. Sen. Mike Johanns and Stephanie Johanns will face a panel of funny friends on Sept. 19 during the roast that precedes the unveiling of their “Face on the Barroom Floor.”

Scheduled to appear are:
- Mary Maxwell (Face No. 109 – 2006), who will also emcee.
- Allen Beermann, Nebraska Press Association executive director (Face No. 121 – 2009)
- U.S. Sen. Deb Fischer. A Nebraska rancher, Fischer was elected to the Senate in 2012.
- Jim and Lori McClurg. Jim is president of Technical Development Resources Co. and a former member of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. Lori is director of operations and student affairs at the Jeffrey S. Raikes School of Computer Science & Management at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- Mike Johanns has been a Nebraska senator since 2009. He served on the Lincoln City Council from 1989 to 1991, became mayor of Lincoln in 1991 and was Nebraska’s governor from 1999 to 2005. From 2005 to 2008, he served as the U.S. secretary of agriculture.
- Stephanie Johanns has served as a county commissioner for Lancaster County and as a Nebraska state senator. She is presently senior vice president with Verizon.

A 5:30 p.m. reception on Sept. 19 will be followed with dinner at 6:30 p.m. The roast and the unveiling of the Face will be at 7:30 p.m. The cost to attend the event, which includes dinner, is $50 for members and $60 for nonmembers. RSVP to 402-345-8008 or to jeanie@opc.omhco Homail.com.
Cox Communications is now a full partner with the Press Club and the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha in sponsoring a congressional debate in October. Cox will videotape the debate and make it available “on demand” to their subscribers. The Lee Terry and Brad Ashford campaigns have both agreed to the debate by the candidates Oct. 16 over the noon hour at the Press Club. The debate is open to the public and reservations can be made by calling the Press Club at 402-345-8008. The program, from noon to one p.m., includes lunch and there is a $15 per person charge. The Press Club and the League are partnering with WOWT, Channel Six, for a proposed gubernatorial debate Oct. 23 between republican Pete Ricketts and democrat Chuck Hassebrook. To date, the Hassebrook campaign has accepted our proposal but the Ricketts campaign has not. Channel Six would record the noon debate and play it back that evening in its entirety during prime time.

Details are being worked out for a governor’s debate but not confirmed; check with the club or website for updates.

Let the debates begin

If you notice a little extra pep in Steve Villamonte’s step, it’s no wonder; as the Agnew Room undergoes its extensive renovations, Villamonte is realizing a dream that was years in the making.

“The Agnew Room was to be renovated in 2008 at the same time as the rest of the club, but due to financial circumstances this plan fell through,” recalls OPC President Daisy Hutzell-Rodman. Adds Villamonte, “We saved money for years. First National has been supportive, and I just felt like it was the right time. I brought it to the Board and they said yes.”

The Agnew Room is rich with history. Vice President Spiro Agnew was the fourth Face in a long line of an ever-growing collection of Faces. The board of directors at the time saw the fun in naming a room at the press club for Agnew, who had an acrimonious relationship with the press. Yet he was a good sport and showed up at the OPC to see his “Face on the Barroom Floor.”

“The OPC staff and construction crew have done a tremendous job creating a renovated room featuring elegant wood paneling, two bars – one featuring upscale wines and one featuring great scotches,” says Hutzell-Rodman. “This room has a classic, elegant feel to it and will be perfect for bridal parties wanting to get away from everything for a while, or even people who want to watch a sports event in a more refined atmosphere.”

Villamonte certainly agrees that the Agnew Room will be the premier place to watch a game. “I’m already thinking about that first football game in that room,” he says. “It has two 70-inch TVs in there and the space is just really comfortable.”

Look for new menu items for the Agnew Room accompanied by china and wine glasses that will be different from the rest of the dining areas in the OPC. “We want it to be its own little entity,” says Villamonte. “I think it’s going to be a nice atmosphere. It looks way better than I even thought it would. It will be the room that people will want to go to.”

Let the debates begin

By Tamsen Butler
Graphics Editor

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By Willie Garrett
Committee Member

Dr. Cliff Robertson, president and CEO of Alegent-Creighton, was the speaker at the OPC Noon Educational Forum on July 24.

Robertson told the audience that Alegent-Creighton has renewed focus on health care by using the more than 150 health service locations in Nebraska and Southwest Iowa to serve the community.

He talked about Alegent-Creighton’s vision to become a single Market-Based Organization and fully integrated, online healthcare system.

In the question and answer segment of the forum, Robertson was asked about the Affordable Care Act. He responded: “It’s affected every system in one way or another… but we need to find the best solution for the patient.”

Responding to a question about discussions with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Robertson said, “It’s top of mind right now. But teams are working hard to provide better outcomes at lower costs.”

When asked about Alegent-Creighton’s relationship with Immanuel, Robertson said, “We will continue to have a strong relationship and work even closer in the future.”
The reopening of the club is always one of my clues that autumn is upon us, and autumn is one of the busiest times for the OPC.

I am pleased to announce that the OPC will host a Professional Development session on Sept. 13, titled “Social Media Measurement Best Practices Seminar.” The event starts at 8:30 a.m. with a continental breakfast, then Jared Troutman, director of Media Analysis at Universal Information Services, will present a client case study of successful social measurement. This will be followed by a panel discussion focused on the effective use of social media within journalism and public relations, which includes data analysis. The professional development committee, along with PRSA, has worked hard to bring this to the club in conjunction with The International Association for Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC)’s Measurement Week.

This topic was carefully constructed. Whether you work in journalism, public relations or marketing, you work with social media on a daily basis. Even if you work in law, architecture or construction, you most likely use social media on a daily basis. This morning-long session will provide useful information for everyone.

The Sept. 19 roast of Mike and Stephanie Johanns proves to be a memorable night. The Senator and his wife have announced that this is his final public appearance. I personally look forward to being there.

Todd Murphy and Craig Coffman of Octoberland Productions have worked on renovating the website to achieve the streamlined, modern look found on other websites, particularly other press club websites. We also plan to show people the new website on Sept. 25.

The renovated Agnew room looks wonderful. Come join us on Sept. 25 to see for yourself.

Welcome back to the OPC – where we are definitely “pressing forward.”
Shatel is back!

The Shatel Lunch Series featuring Omaha World-Herald Sports Columnist Tom Shatel will return on Sept. 16 with a noon lunch at the Omaha Press Club.

“The Huskers will have three football games under their belt, including what should be a very competitive game at Fresno State,” Shatel said, “so I think there will be plenty to talk about.”

The Shatel Sports Series lunch costs $12 and is open to the public. To RSVP, call (402) 345-8008 or email opcjeanie@gmail.com. Reservations must be accompanied by an OPC member number or credit card for non-members. A 24-hour cancellation policy applies.

Parking is available at meters on the street or in the DoubleTree Hotel garage. Validated parking is available in the DoubleTree garage for Omaha Press Club members.

Event Listings

Sept. 1 Club closed
Sept. 13 OPC-PRSA Social Media Seminar (Page 1)
Sept. 18 Noon Educational Forum
Horse race gambling on November ballot (Page 1)
Sept. 19 Sen. Mike and Stephanie Johanns
Face on the Barroom Floor (Page 2)
Sept. 22 Congressional Debate (Page 3)
Oct. 16 Agnew Room ribbon cutting (Page 3)
Oct. 23 Governor’s Debate (tentative)
Nov. 20 Past presidents’ dinner

Submissions for the OCTOBER issue are due on or before Sept. 20.

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CANCELLATION POLICY:

All reservations must be cancelled 48 HOURS in advance.

WINEMAKER’S DINNER Teri Greene explains the wine pairing for the meal to a record crowd at the July 18 OPC Winemaker’s Dinner. Greene is representative for the Republic National Distributing Company Falcon Division. PHOTO BY GARY WILLIS.

Do you want to read your newsletter on the go? Read it at:
omahapressclub.org

Click on OPC Newsletter at the top of the home page.

The current minimum usage quarter ends Sept. 30.