The Omaha Press Club Education Series presents

2nd District Congressional Debate Between Republican Lee Terry and Democrat Brad Ashford

The Press Club, the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha and Cox Communications are sponsoring the Oct. 16 debate at the Press Club between Lee Terry and Brad Ashford. Cox Communications will record the debate and make it available to its subscribers on demand.

Republican Lee Terry is seeking his ninth term as a congressman from the Omaha area’s 2nd Congressional District. An attorney, he served for seven years on the Omaha City Council before being elected to U.S. House of Representatives for the first time in 1998.

Democrat Brad Ashford, also an attorney, has served twice in the Nebraska Legislature, two terms beginning in 1986 and another two terms beginning in 2006.

Join us to hear them debate the issues.

Debates important part of political process
A note from Gary Kerr
OPC Committee Chair

We told you in the last newsletter that a gubernatorial debate was tentatively scheduled. But my attempts to schedule a debate in October at the Press Club between Republican Pete Ricketts and Democrat Chuck Hassebrook appear to be unsuccessful.

Details of a proposed debate for Oct. 23 sponsored by the Press Club, the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha and WOWT Channel 6 were sent to the Hassebrook and Ricketts campaigns on July 21.

The Hassebrook campaign accepted the proposal. But Ricketts’ campaign manager, Matt Miltenberger, responded on Sept. 9 that “our schedule has not opened up to allow a date for the event.”

WOWT planned to record the hourlong noon debate and air it that night during prime time. This would have been a wonderful opportunity for Omaha-area voters to see and hear the candidates discuss the issues in a debate format as well as participate at the Press Club.
Stars filled the Press Club on Sept. 19. Not the outdoor variety that were visible through the 22nd-floor windows on a cloudless night. The indoor luminaries were Nebraska’s leading Republicans who gathered to roast and toast Mike and Stephanie Johanns.

Mike and Stephanie share the newest Face on the Barroom Floor. And they share an impressive political accomplishment — never defeated in their bids for public office.

Mike, a seven-time election winner since entering politics in the early 1980s, is a former Lancaster County commissioner, Lincoln City Council member, Lincoln mayor, Nebraska governor, U.S. secretary of agriculture and U.S. senator. He is retiring from Congress in January. Stephanie is also a former Lancaster County commissioner and later was a Nebraska state senator. She is presently a senior vice president with Verizon.

Roasters and speakers for Face No. 142 included Gov. Dave Heineman and U.S. Sen. Deb Fischer. Among the prominent Republicans in the audience were Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert, U.S. Rep. Lee Terry, governor candidate Pete Ricketts and Senate candidate Ben Sasse — plus several current and former state senators. Filling out the roaster roster were longtime Johanns friends Jim and Lori McClurg, Allen Beermann and emcee Mary Maxwell.

Heineman made a special presentation, proclaiming “Mike and Stephanie Johanns Day” in Nebraska. And the governor got one of the biggest laughs of the evening when he announced that “the next lieutenant governor of Nebraska is Mike Johanns,” a position recently in the headlines after being vacated for the second time.

Mike’s mild-mannered image and Mr. Clean reputation provided much of the fodder for the roasters.

Emcee Maxwell said Stephanie has been smiling ever since Mike announced his retirement from the Senate. “Apparently she really likes the idea of spending more time together. Go figure!”

Sen. Fischer revealed that one of Mike’s “vices” is an addiction to “The Bachelor” TV show. She said he managed to find time to watch eight episodes in a month. “Is it any wonder that we don’t get anything done in the Senate?” she joked.

Beermann, executive director of the Nebraska Press Association and a former Nebraska secretary of state, poked fun at what he said was a dull Johanns lifestyle. For example, he said, one night the State Patrol caught a peeping Tom at the governor’s mansion outside Mike and Stephanie’s bedroom window. “And the peeping Tom was asleep!”

Artist Jim Horan’s Face on the Floor depicts Mike at the end of a yellow brick road leading from Lincoln to the U.S. Capitol. In the background are the Iowa farm boy’s agricultural heritage and the Creighton Bluejay of his law school alma mater.

Stephanie is depicted at the wheel of a race car (she has competed in midget races) while getting a phone call from her Verizon employer. Purple prairie flowers in the foreground of the caricature represent the plant officially named after Stephanie.

In concluding remarks, Mike thanked all in attendance and told them: “You will never be able to imagine how much fun I have had the last 30 years campaigning across this great state with Steph.”

Stephanie added: “In all those years of campaigning together and serving in office, I would not change one single thing that we have done. And I can’t imagine having done it with anyone else but my husband. But after all these years of public service, Mike, thank you for my life back.”
Anderson led early Press Club

By Don Summerside
Copy Editor

The Omaha Press Club lost one of its pioneers with the death of Mary Lou Anderson. Mary Lou was OPC president when construction of the club facilities began in 1970 atop the First National Center, and she had held OPC membership No. 1001 ever since. She died at her Omaha home on Sept. 2 at age 88.

Son Pat Anderson said his mother was one of the signers of the Press Club’s original lease with the bank, and she took part in a topping-out ceremony in late 1970 on the 22nd floor of the new building. Pat said it was a “freezing, snowy day” when Mary Lou and the others rode a construction elevator to the top of the unfinished structure. Club members may have seen the photograph in the OPC hallway of Mary Lou, John Davis of First National, and John Savage and Robert McMorris of the Omaha World-Herald wearing hard hats and sipping champagne on the cold, drafty floor of the future restaurant.

The Press club opened a year later in November 1971, and son Pat said he was one of the restaurant’s first waiters while he attended college.

Mary Lou Keefe Anderson was a native of North Platte, graduating from St. Patrick High School there, and attended Creighton University. She began a 42-year career with Union Pacific Railroad in Salt Lake City, where she was associated with the railroad’s Sun Valley Resort and Utah Parks Co. operations.

In 1956, Anderson moved to Omaha and joined the public relations department. She also joined the Press Club, which had officially formed just a year earlier, and served on the board of directors and on various committees. Her numerous other civic activities included Parents Without Partners, and she was honored as the Omaha Single Parent of the Year in 1971. She also was a polio survivor and donated her remains to the Creighton University Medical Center.

Anderson is survived by two sons and their wives, Pat and Cynthia of Salt Lake City and Jim and Oak Non of Omaha, brother Bill Keefe of Surprise, Ariz., five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

New room with a view

The ribbon cutting for the renovated Agnew room was Sept. 25.

Now available for meetings and special events.
Next sports discussion slated for Oct. 21

First Shatel lunch draws nice turnout

By Tom O’Connor
Committee Chair

The third year of the Shatel Lunch Series is off to a great start.

Nearly 30 people turned out for the fall kickoff of the lunch series, and – as always – Omaha World-Herald Sports Columnist Tom Shatel was in good form.

Although the Nebraska Cornhuskers were off to a 3-0 start at the time of Shatel’s appearance, Tom feels the team needs to define itself on offense.

He said he’s not impressed with the “dreaded multiple offense” of Husker Offensive Coordinator Tim Beck. “He likes to pass more than run,” Shatel said. “They’re not physical enough.”

“Running the ball is a commitment.”

Shatel said. “It’s year seven and people are falling asleep.”

He said that Nebraska “shouldn’t be a starter job for a head coach.”

“This is big-boy football,” Shatel said. “The staff is not longer young. Maybe this is the year it clicks. We’ll see.”

Other nuggets from the lunch included:

• The poor performance of the Big 10 thus far led him to say, “It’s depressing what I have to watch the rest of the year.”

• The Big 10 reminds Shatel of Nebraska’s old days in the Big 8 Conference. “The Big 8 was bad and nobody complained,” he said.

• The Huskers should be 5-0 going to Michigan State on Oct. 4.

• In a season with few marquee opponents coming to Lincoln, the Rutgers game on Oct. 25 shapes up to be one of the Huskers’ most difficult tests.

• Nebraska’s 2015 recruiting class is considered to be a top 15 class. “Our skill positions are good,” he said. “We need better offensive and defensive linemen.”

• When asked about fallout from the University of Nebraska at Omaha dropping football a couple years ago, Shatel said, “Omaha has become a different city over the last 10 years. It all started with that building over there (gesturing to the CenturyLink Center). UNO football became Ross’ Steakhouse. Does anyone miss it?”

“The next Shatel Lunch Series will be held at noon on Tuesday, Oct. 21. He will work on finding a guest speaker for that day.

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 nonmembers. A 24-hour cancellation policy applies.

THE NEXT FACE:

Connie Spellman, community leader and founding director of Omaha By Design, will be roasted and toasted as the next “Face on the Barroom Floor” on Fri., Nov. 14, with a 5:30 p.m. reception, 6:30 p.m. dinner and 7:30 p.m. roast and unveiling. $50 for members and $60 for nonmembers. RSVP to 402-345-8008.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S NOTE

It’s time to schedule your holiday gatherings at your club. If you are planning a party for 15 to 35 people, our newly renovated Agnew Room is the place for you. It’s getting lots of attention, so get your reservations to Christine ASAP.

The new Omaha Press Club website is sleek, easier to navigate and gives a better impression of the club. We have a few volunteers who will be managing updates and posting to the site to better keep our members informed on club events and happenings. With all the holiday events and gatherings at the club over the next few months, the website is the best place to stay informed, make plans and RSVP.

The Face on the Barroom Floor event for Mike and Stephanie Johanns was a rousing success. As Nebraska secretary of state and executive director of the Nebraska Press Association, Allen Beermann has attended many a social event. So Christine and I wanted to share this note from our OPC board member: “What a tremendous evening. Both of you, the staff and the servers, please accept our thanks and appreciation. The club looked beautiful, the food was superb, the service cordial and timely. You all are the best.” On behalf of the club staff and all the volunteers who help produce the Face events, thank you, Allen!

Susan Eustice, OPC committee chair and former board president, is the divisional director of public relations and communications for the Salvation Army. She inquired whether OPC could host a booth for the BaconFest fundraiser for the army. The club does not participate in fundraisers because we are a nonprofit and the expense of the product and labor would not be acceptable. In this case the food was donated, and the chefs wanted the experience and challenge. OPC took second place with pretty stiff competition from the chefs and restaurants represented. Congrats to Sous Chef Barry Brewer, OPC chef representative for the event. This was the OPC entry:

**Savory:**
- Savory Bacon Tart Lyonnaise with a Chateau Greysac Gastrique
- Complemented with Maytag Bleu, Spicy Julienned Bacon Topped Thunderbird Micro Greens

**Sweet:**
- Peanut Butter Belgium Chocolate Truffle, Rolled in a Candied Bacon Crust
- Presented with a Strawberry Orange Coulis

Every year I talk about an event I think is the finest annual event we do at the club. The Ron Sailors Culinary Extravaganza is a feast hosted by the culinary students at Metro Community College. The same students receive scholarship money from this event. Ron Sailors was a long-time employee of OPC and passed away suddenly after working as the head chef for the annual Press Club show. Since then, and for the past 13 years, we have held this event and contributed more than 100K toward culinary scholarships in his name.

Thank you all and I look forward to seeing you at the club,

Steve Villamonte
Executive Director
Omaha Press Club

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Daisy Hutzell-Rodman
OPC President

October is one of my favorite months of the year, featuring my favorite holiday – Halloween. It also means another of my favorite OPC events, the Ron Sailors Culinary Extravaganza, is right around the corner on Nov. 7.

If you have never been to Ron Sailors, I encourage you to join us. It is an evening of eating chef-made hors d’oeuvres and socializing. A cash bar is available. Every year there is one dish that I come away talking about for an entire year. Last November it was a plate of crepes, stuffed with portabella mushrooms and finished with a spicy cream sauce.

November also brings us the past presidents’ dinner on the 20th. This is always an intimate evening of presidents from the first years of the club to the most recent years, and each president has brought something great to the organization. I always look forward to socializing with my peers at this event.

Continuing the club’s 2014 theme of pressing forward, the OPC hosted a joint professional development session with PRSA Nebraska on Sept. 13, titled “Social Media Best Practices.” About 35 people attended, which featured a presentation by Jared Troutman of Universal Information Services, followed by a panel of speakers, including UNO professor and OPC member Jeremy Lipschutz.

This session provided public relations and journalism professionals with information on measuring social media use and helped us understand when and when not to use it. With use and practices changing nearly at the speed of light, the committee may well decide to host another social media session next year.

The committee is also working on a spring 2015 professional development session, hopefully for April.

Meanwhile, come see us at the club during these cool fall days.
MEMBER NEWS: Social media was the topic on Sept. 14 at The Bookworm when UNO Professor Jeremy Harris Lipschultz signed copies of his newly released book, “Social Media Communication: Concepts, Practices, Data, Law and Ethics.” OPC President Elect Todd Murphy also moderated a conversation about social media with Lipschultz for those attending.

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CANCELLATION POLICY:
All reservations must be cancelled 48 HOURS in advance.

MEMBER NEWS: Paintings by OPC member Jim Horan are part of “History Takes Flight,” an exhibit of aviation art at the Strategic Air & Space Museum near Ashland. The exhibit continues through Nov. 16. Horan is the artist who creates the OPC’s “Face on the Barroom Floor.” Paintings by Mike Hagel, brother of U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, also are part of the exhibit. We knew him as U.S. Sen. Chuck Hagel when saluted by the OPC as a “Face on the Barroom Floor” in 2003.

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