Woody and Patricia Bradford’s four sons. He serves as chairman and CEO of Waitt Brands, a consumer brands company that includes such brands as Bobby Jones, Sunice, Vornado, Viking and Battle. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Arizona and his MBA from Creighton University.

From 2005 to 2012, Dana was president and managing partner of McCarthy Capital. He has held numerous board positions over the years in a variety of industries. In addition to his role at Waitt Brands, he currently sits on the board of Meritage Homes (NYSE: MTH), one of the larger homebuilders in the U.S., and Southwest Value Partners, a San Diego-based real estate investment company. Dana has been active in the Omaha community through such organizations as Metropolitan Entertainment & Convention Authority (MECA), Aksarben Future Trust (and Aksarben Village), Knights of Aksarben Foundation, the Omaha Chamber of Commerce, Omaha Community Foundation, Robert Daugherty Foundation, Children’s Hospital & Medical Center, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Ronald McDonald House, Nebraska Innovation Campus – University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and 75 North, an organization dedicated to revitalizing North Omaha. Dana is a member of the Westside High School Hall of Fame.

A reception hosted by the Bradfords will begin at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6:30 p.m., followed by the roast/toast and unveiling of the ‘Face’ portrait.

An all-star slate of roasters features six business executives, who head some of Omaha’s elite companies. They include: Terry Kroeger (emcee), president and CEO, BH Media Group; Mickey Anderson, president, Baxter Auto Group; Roger Dixon, president and CEO, MECA; Kate Dodge, president, NEI Global Relocation; Bruce Lauritzen, chairman, First National Bank of Omaha (Face No. 130, September 2011); and Jay Noddle, president and CEO, Noddle Companies.

Cost to attend is $50 for OPC members and $60 for nonmembers. To make a reservation, call 402-345-8008. You will be asked for your OPC or credit card number when you make your reservation.
2nd Congressional debate: Ashford and Bacon keep it classy

By Tamsen Butler

Although voters have grown accustomed to brash political debates fraught with interruptions and insults, the 2nd District congressional debate hosted at the Omaha Press Club on Oct. 14 reminded a packed house that, for the most part, decorum can indeed still exist within the realm of political debates.

Democratic Rep. Brad Ashford and Republican challenger Don Bacon began the event by exchanging a firm handshake. Interruptions were rare, and throughout the debate order remained intact, largely thanks to capable moderator Gary Kerr. Ashford praised the retired Air Force general for his military service and for the sacrifices his family has made for the country, and Bacon said of Ashford, “I know Brad; he’s a good guy and he’s working hard.”

It wasn’t all handshakes and compliments, though, as the nominees butted heads on issues such as term limits, Social Security, immigration and the Affordable Care Act. Though Bacon never spoke Donald Trump’s name (instead referring to him as “our nominee”), Trump was a hot topic throughout the debate. Bacon said that had he made derogatory statements toward women similar to Trump’s statements, he would have certainly been fired from his commander position. But he also said that had he mishandled classified documents as Hillary Clinton is alleged to have done, he would have “been court-martialed and gone to jail.”

Mention of Trump happened again when Bacon asserted that he would never vote for Nancy Pelosi as House speaker and Ashford retorted, “But you’re going to vote for Donald Trump!” which prompted laughter and applause among the audience. Bacon also received laughs when he said that Ashford had “flip-flopped on his flip-flopping” regarding policies on big government. A lone “boo” came from the crowd while Bacon discussed relations with Russia, yet the perplexed looks among the audience in reaction revealed that most were confused by the outburst.

Both Ashford and Bacon agreed upon the need for attention to the issue of global warming and to take some of the regulatory pressure off small businesses. Ashford pointed to his history of bipartisanship while Bacon stressed his military experience. The debate concluded to enthusiastic applause as attendees realized it’s still possible to have a political debate that does not devolve into something ugly.

By Judy Horan
Communications Committee

His Press Club friends are mourning the Oct. 1 death of former OPC executive chef Tom Malloy. The 50-year-old was diagnosed with COPD about five years ago. Tom then began working part-time at the OPC, always pitching in to help.

“During all those years, I was always teaching Tom culinary skills,” said OPC Executive Director Steve Villamonte. “What I did not realize is that Tom was teaching me the life skills of kindness and a friend’s dependability. Tom was a genuine, beautiful person with a heart of gold.”

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Ron Sailors Jr. Scholarship Fund at Metro Community College Culinary School.
Panel discusses health care changes in the marketplace

Sean McGuire, Omaha Press Club president, hosted and served as moderator for an OPC forum on changes in the health care marketplace. The panel of experts, from left: Jeffrey Bemoras, an actuary, insurance executive and CEO of the Apex Management Group; Rowen Zetterman, M.D, professor of internal medicine at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, former chief of staff for the Nebraska-Western Iowa VA Health Care System and former dean of the Creighton University School of Medicine; Lee Handke, CEO of the Nebraska Health Network, a joint venture accountable care organization formed between Nebraska Medicine and Methodist Health System, and a pharmacist by training; and McGuire, founder of E.D. Bellis, a national consulting firm based out of Omaha and host of “America’s Healthcare Challenge” on News Talk 1290 KOIL. The Oct. 20 discussion and luncheon drew nearly 60 people.

Farewell to ‘Mr. Showbiz’

Dick Walter, longtime impresario and a “Face on the Barroom Floor” in 1989, died on Oct. 15 at age 96.

Walter, a lifelong resident of Council Bluffs, became known as “Mr. Showbiz” for bringing scores of Broadway shows, travel films and lectures to the Omaha area over a span of six decades. He founded the long-running Omaha Town Hall Lecture Series in 1962 and conducted many overseas tours.
Where are they now?

Zoo’s retired director is far from ‘retired’

Over the years, a wide variety of notables have been honored by having their likenesses displayed on the floor of the Omaha Press Club. In this occasional series, we revisit some of those individuals.

By Don Summerside
Communications Committee

Where is Dr. Lee Simmons? For much of his time, right where he was when he was honored in 1988 as a “Face on the Barroom Floor” for leading the Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium to worldwide prominence. And right where he was when he retired seven years ago as zoo director. That means a five-day-a-week presence at the zoo as chairman of the Omaha Zoo Foundation, a post Simmons has held since his “retirement.” When not at the zoo and occupied with fundraising, he maintains a busy travel schedule for conservation causes. He also leads foundation “zoofaris” to Africa twice a year.

So what is different from his nearly 40 years of directing the zoo? “I’m no longer in the office at the crack of dawn,” Simmons said, “and I can go home a little earlier.”

Meanwhile, Simmons is being honored by the zoo throughout November with “50 Days of Doc.” The celebration will end Dec. 1, the day he was hired 50 years ago in 1966 as a resident veterinarian. He was promoted to director in 1970. Throughout the 50 days, the zoo will highlight Doc’s notable projects, animals and memories on its Facebook page, Twitter and Instagram using the hashtag #Doc50. The zoo will also announce Doc-themed giveaways and discounts, as well as activities taking place on zoo grounds.

In a statement released by the zoo foundation, Dennis Pate, executive director and CEO, said: “Lee has built a tremendous foundation here for the next generation of zookeepers, researchers, educators and the like to exert and share their passion for wildlife … What an honor it has been to continue his legacy and that of this storied zoo.”

Woody & Dana Bradford
‘Face on the Barroom Floor’
Wednesday, Nov. 16
5:30 p.m. bar, 6:30 p.m. dinner,
followed by roast/toast & “Face” unveiling

MENU
Hors d’oeuvres
Antipasto
Baked Brie en Croute

Salad
OPC’s Signature Thunderbird

Entrée
Porcini- Crusted Filet of Beef
Maitre d’hôtel
Asparagus Citron
Risotto Pilaf

Dessert
Chocolate Mousse Terrine

Price: Members $50 • Nonmembers $60

The Omaha Press Club
2016 Past President’s Dinner
Wednesday, Nov. 30
5:30 p.m. cocktails, 6 p.m. dinner

MENU
Appetizer
Blackened Salmon Maytag Blue Choron

Salad
OPC Thunderbird Salad with Parmesan Crisp

Sorbet
Blackberry Cream

Entrée
Whiskey Steak Sirloin
Risotto Pilaf - Asparagus

Dessert
Chocolate Soufflé

Price: $25 per person

Santa Brunch
Sunday, Dec. 11
10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
Bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate to the Salvation Army

Buffet
Steamship Round of Beef
Baked Ham with Maple Whiskey Sauce
Chicken Crepes Supreme
Baked Tilapia Citron
Garlic Whipped Potatoes & Gravy
Seasonal Vegetables
Build-Your-Own-Omelet à la Carte
Multi-Topping Belgian Waffle Bar
Salad Display, including Thunderbird Salad
Salmon Chaud Froid & Fresh Fruit
Fresh-Baked Pastries, Tortes & Cheesecakes
Chocolate Driscoll Strawberries
Deep Dish Apple Strudel with Brandy French Vanilla Ice Cream
Spiked French Vanilla Eggnog

Price: Adults $24 • Children $12
All children 10 and under receive a special holiday gift with reservation

Reservations can be made by calling the Omaha Press Club at 402-345-8008
The OPC Foundation is very grateful for all the support it has received for years from Press Club members, donors and supporters of the Omaha Press Club Show. We have long supported Nebraska’s most important scholarship program for journalism students at Creighton, UNO and UNL.

Now the OPC Foundation Board is working to maintain our program in light of changing circumstances, especially the death of Thomas Davis who, for many years, generously donated two scholarships a year to each of our schools in honor of his father, John Davis. We are looking for ways to replace those funds through more aggressive fundraising.

I wanted to alert all of our supporters to some of the decisions facing us over the coming months in hope that you will back our efforts. It is too soon to say exactly what form these will take, but the first thing we seek is your donations to this year’s upcoming annual drive. Please be as generous as you are able.

We also will likely be holding some additional fundraising activities and events that we will announce later.

We are especially grateful to Sissy Silber for the scholarships that she has funded these past two years in memory of her husband, Howard Silber of the Omaha World-Herald, and to the family of Jim Denney for the scholarship it gives us annually in memory of Jim, also of the World-Herald and a longtime foundation board member.

We would be so grateful to other generous donors who could contribute the cost of a scholarship ($2,500) in honor of a loved one, even for one year, or to build our endowment so that we can award scholarships for decades to come.

As a retired Creighton professor, I have seen the enormous impact OPC scholarships have on the lives of our most promising students. Please contact me or any other members of our board if you’d like to contribute a scholarship in honor of someone (or yourself). Or just write a generous check when your annual appeal letter arrives. You will make such a difference in the life of a future journalist. Thank you for considering a significant gift.

- Eileen Wirth, OPC Foundation

On Oct. 16, Steve Villamonte was officially inducted in the 24th annual Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame by the Institute for the Culinary Arts at Metropolitan Community College.

The Hall of Fame has had many names in previous years, evolving into a collaborative endeavor of the Omaha Restaurant Association, the Institute for the Culinary Arts, the National Association of Catering Executives (Omaha Chapter) and the American Culinary Federation. To brief you on how this all came about would take all day. But the OPC is honored to now be a part of this culinary world. Visiting the Omaha Restaurant Association website and HOF link (www.dineoutomaha.com/8805/Page.aspx) will give you an idea of the variety and diversity of the honorees that Steve has joined.

The history of Steve’s involvement with the Omaha Press Club is more extensive than people may realize. He started out his OPC career as a busboy and server in the early days of the club. He then came back to the club as the executive chef in 1990 and 1991 before going to UNMC for almost a decade. By 2000 Steve had started and was running a successful catering business when the club reached out to him. They were in need of an executive director.

After taking the job, Steve started a scholarship fund to honor a close friend and chef who had died. Steve also was a mentor to Ron Sailors Jr., who had headed the kitchen working the annual OPC show. This fundraiser became the Ron Sailors Jr. Gourmet Extravaganza Scholarship Fund. It has raised more than $100,000 in the past 14 years, with an endowment to date for second-year culinary students of $36,000 that funds scholarships annually.

- Christine Jones Villamonte, B.S. Nutrition, OPC Restaurant Manager/Events Coordinator
Thursday, Nov. 17
Noon Education Forum
Election Aftermath
Democrat Vince Powers and either
Republican Dan Welch or J.L. Spray
Lunch at 11:30 a.m., program at noon

Sunday, Nov. 20
First annual Thanksgiving Brunch
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 24 & Friday, Nov. 25
Closed for Thanksgiving

Wednesday, Nov. 30
OPC Past Presidents’ Dinner
5:30 p.m. cocktails, 6 p.m. dinner

Sunday, Dec. 11
Santa Brunch
10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

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

WE’RE ONLINE! READ YOUR OPC NEWSLETTER AT OMAHAPRESSCLUB.COM