April 14 debate to feature mayoral candidates

Omaha’s heated mayoral race is heading toward the spring finish line. Between now and the May 9 general election: a don’t-miss debate at the Omaha Press Club on April 14.

There are five candidates for mayor in the April 4 primary election: Ean Mikale, Taylor Royal, Christopher Geary, Heath Mello and Mayor Jean Stothert. The two top vote getters have been invited to take part in the debate at the Press Club. The debate is sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha and the Press Club.

Mayor Stothert and challenger Mello are strongly favored to advance in the primary and meet head to head on May 9. Stothert, elected in 2013, is completing her first four-year term. Prior to that she served on the Omaha City Council and also served three terms on the Millard Board of Education. She is a graduate of Seattle Pacific University with a degree in nursing.

Mello was elected to the Nebraska Legislature in 2008 and served two terms. He was prevented from seeking re-election in 2016 because of term limits. He graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2002 with a degree in political science and served as an aide to U.S. Sen. Ben Nelson.

The noon-hour debate will be recorded by WOYT 6 News and played back in its entirety that evening at 7 p.m. The moderator will be Channel 6 anchor/reporter Brian Mastre. The debate also will be recorded by KIOS public radio for playback over the noon hour at a later date.

FRIDAY, APRIL 14
NOON TO 1 P.M.

Debate begins immediately at noon
$17 per person includes lunch, which begins at 11:30 a.m.

Call 402-345-8008 for reservations or email Jeanie at opcjeanie@gmail.com
48-hour cancellation policy
NON-PRESS CLUB MEMBERS WELCOME
Validated parking in the DoubleTree Hotel garage for members.

The Press Club remembers Judy Horan

By Don Summerside
Communications Committee

“OPC Hero: Judy Horan”

That was the 2014 headline on an OPC News feature that periodically salutes members for their exceptional volunteerism. And “exceptional volunteerism,” while accurate, seems...
Mark your calendar for Hall of Fame event June 3

Each year the Omaha Press Club is honored to recognize the most distinguished journalists of the past and present. This year the 2017 class of inductees in the Journalists of Excellence Hall of Fame is exceptional in every category we recognize. Those to be honored:

**Judy Horan**, WOWT, freelance (posthumous)
**C. David Kotok**, Omaha World-Herald
**Patti Mattson**, ABC, Nixon-Ford press offices

**Steve Jordon, center, with, from left, Mike Kelly, Jim Fogarty, Mike Reilly and Pat Waters. Other roasters not present for the photo were Mike Holmes and Lyn Wallin Ziegenbein.**

**Sibyl Myers**, Omaha World-Herald (posthumous)

**Alfred “Bud” Pagel**, UNL College of Journalism

**Dave Webber**, KFAB, KMTV, WOWT

Please call or email the Omaha Press Club to reserve your seat at this year’s dinner. We will be honoring our outstanding nominees with a cocktail hour at 5:30 p.m. on June 3, followed by dinner and our induction ceremony. This is always a fun, fast-paced evening with some stories you’ll hear nowhere else – and some you may have heard a hundred times!

Whether you’ve been in journalism for 50 years or only five months, the Hall of Fame event is not to be missed.

We encourage you to invite your family, friends, and current or past colleagues. The price is $55 ($45 per person for OPC members). Call 402-345-8008 for reservations or email opcjeanie@gmail.com. Please share this contact information with others who may wish to attend. We look forward to seeing you in June.

Press Club rocks at Steve Jordon roast

**By Don Summerside**
**Communications Committee**

**Photo by Tom Plambeck**

He’s the rock of the newspaper by day, a sometime rocker at night and a Warren Watcher around the clock. That summed up the roast and toast of Steve Jordon, marking his 50th anniversary at the World-Herald and his installment as the OPC’s 152nd “Face on the Barroom Floor.”

Before a full house on March 18, roasters focused on Steve’s age and long career, his drumming talents and his years of reporting on Warren Buffett.

OPC President Marcia Cady said: “I understand Steve was ‘this close’ to landing Warren Buffett as one of his roasters. Then Warren realized that it was Steve Jordon, not Michael Jordan.”

Mike Reilly, former World-Herald executive editor and now vice president of BH Media Group, praised Steve’s longevity and versatility: “I’m honored to represent all of Steve’s editors present and past -- going back to whom, William Jennings Bryan? Steve has been a jack of all trades -- covering police, sports, youth, county, education, business, Obamacare. For a while, he drew Blondie. When Heloise is off, guess whose ‘Hints’ we use.”

“Steve’s talent, his drumming abilities and his years of writing -- he’s the rock of the newspaper by day, a sometime rocker at night and a Warren Watcher around the clock.”

In response to the roast, Steve noted the Buffett-Jordon association along Jordon for 47 of Steve’s 50 by-lined years. The Buffett-Jordon association has grown so close, Kelly said, that “in a quiet ceremony yesterday afternoon at the Douglas County Courthouse, Warren adopted Steve.”

Lyn Wallin Ziegenbein, executive director emerita of the Peter Kiewit Foundation, saluted the “reporter by day, percussionist rock star by night.” In recognition of Steve’s talents, she presented him with drumstick pens -- one for writing and the other for drumming.

Over the years, Steve has played in college bands, big bands, Dixieland and rock and roll. His newest role is that of a conga player in the Monkey Funk fusion band.

By day, Steve’s persona is more subdued. Pat Waters, former business editor at the World-Herald, said: “Steve is a rock, but he’s not what you would call flashy. If the newsroom were a tuxedo, Steve would be a pair of brown shoes.”

“Warren’s hired Steve to spy on Donald Trump. So watch for the new column from Washington D.C. Warren says ‘it’s better than Steve following me.’”

Artist Jim Horan’s “Face” caricature depicts reporter Steve writing in his spiral notebook. He is flanked by the World-Herald Building on one side and Warren Buffett on the other. There is a trail of newspapers headlining some of Steve’s big stories. Also in the picture: tennis and golf equipment (Steve’s favorite sports) and various percussion instruments.

In response to the roast, Steve noted the jokes about his age and said: “When you’re 70 you’ve got a great advantage. You’ve managed to skip early-onset dementia and you go right to the real thing.”

“This has been a terrific evening. And we really should have a little bit of news. So last night I wrote down when I’m going to retire.”

Steve disappeared for a moment and then returned to hold up a card in front of the video camera with the words: “Maybe Never.”
From Christine Jones Villamonte: “I did my best work (especially when the kids were younger) in the middle of the night. I would send out an email at 3 or 4 a.m. Guess who I would get a response from? Judy!”

Jim Horan, Judy’s husband, has been the artist for 150 of the 152 Faces, and Judy assisted as a longtime member of the Face Committee. In 2003, Judy and Jim produced a booklet of the first 100 Faces.

Judy was a member of the OPC board of directors from 2002-2009 and again from 2012-16, also serving as board secretary. She helped judge journalism contests and assisted at the annual Omaha Press Club Shows.

In 2005, the club celebrated its 50th anniversary, and Judy compiled a history of the OPC for the occasion.

How did one volunteer accomplish so much while never raising her voice or losing her cool? Husband Jim said Judy’s work experience at WOWT-TV, where she served for years as promotion and marketing director, gets some of the credit. “Television is a deadline-intensive business, and Judy learned to multitask under pressure,” Jim said.

The above relates just some of Judy’s organizational contributions. For the personal side, the tributes of two longtime associates:

“Judy was my co-pilot, mentor and dear friend,” said Susan Eustice, Judy’s Communications Committee co-chair since 2004. “The ‘goddess of good grammar’ was an exceptional volunteer who devoted her time, talent and many treasures to the OPC, where her legacy will live on forever.”

“Judy Horan was a friend first and foremost,” said Christine Villamonte, OPC restaurant and events manager. “She always had an open ear for everyone around her, whether it was for business and personal. Judy was my mentor, my muse, my editor, my counselor, at times my psychiatrist (unpaid, I might add)...one I could always count on to guide me in the correct direction. She was the most humble person I have ever met in my 17 years here at the club.”

A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDATION

By Eileen Wirth
OPC Foundation

It’s time to turn the reins of the OPC Foundation over to incoming President Howard Marcus and Vice President Elaine Allen. Both were slated to move up to their new offices at our late March annual meeting. Congratulations!

The Foundation Board also planned to revise its bylaws to expand the board, add a second vice president and establish standing committees on finance and development in addition to the existing scholarship and show committees.

Our nominating committee slated seven outstanding new members, including two representing their universities:

- Professor Hugh Reilly, director of the UNO School of Communication
- Dr. Peggy Rupprecht of the Creighton University Department of Journalism, Media & Computing
- Mary Macchietto Bernier, owner of Inspired Giving: Changing the World Through Philanthropy
- Bridget Weide Brooks, a partner in Image Building Communications and founder of Resume Writers Digest
- Josh Bucy of the Central High School Foundation, who works with database management and social media.
- Brian Norton, a marketing writer for Steier Group
- Wendy Townley, director of the Omaha Public Library Foundation

The incoming directors include several OPC scholarship recipients and past OPC presidents. They will especially strengthen the board’s fundraising abilities.

We also hope that nonboard members will volunteer for the committees. Contact Howard Marcus at the Omaha World-Herald if you would like to get involved.

The foundation is changing rapidly, but its mission of supporting the area’s best journalism students will never change. It has been an honor to serve as president.
Have you heard about the rethink-ing going on concerning the future of 16th Street? There’s talk of reconnecting the street north and south of the Doubletree Hotel by either tunneling under the Doubletree or demolishing the hotel.

Mayor Stothert was quoted in an Omaha World-Herald story, “Opening up 16th Street would make a lot more sense to encourage downtown development and jobs. It’s about bringing jobs back to the urban core and adjacent neighborhoods.”

What an exciting idea that has many implications for the Omaha Press Club! Think of what the reconnection of Capitol Avenue and Dodge Street could have on our membership. We’re trying to position the club as a destination for the young professionals who are deciding to not only work downtown but to live there, too. We offer an exclusive entertainment experience at very reasonable prices with a fantastic view. Our challenge is to find the right way to market the club to these young eyes.

We’ve started by reaching out to the professional organizations that are a natural fit like the Nebraska Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. There are many former journalists who have moved into the public relations field and see the club as an opportunity to get involved in the community where they haven’t before. Working with the Greater Omaha Chamber’s Young Professionals group offers us another window into what young professionals are looking for in a membership experience.

Just imagine the pedestrian and vehicle traffic and even a streetcar returning to 16th Street. Add the new Capitol District, a possible “river walk” along the Gene Leahy Mall and whatever develops on the former Civic Auditorium site, and it’s clear we could be at the center of a growing resurgence of downtown and reconnection to north Omaha.

Of course, our landlord, First National Bank, has a say in all of this. It’s clear from their comment in the World-Herald that they need to see a specific plan.

But we can dream about the possibilities and the opportunities and lay the groundwork now to play a role in whatever happens 22 stories down.

- Marcia Cady, OPC President

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**Easter Buffet**
Sunday, April 16
Two seatings: 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

- **Carving Station**
  Steamship Round of Beef
  Whiskey Pepper-Glazed Ham

- **Entrées**
  Chicken Bourguignon
  Lemon Pepper Butter Baked Tilapia
  Eggs Benedict
  Lyonnais New Potatoes
  Biscuits & Sausage Gravy
  Seasonal Vegetables
  Build-Your-Own Omelets
  Multi-Topping Buttermilk Pancakes

- **Salad Display**
  Thunderbird Salad, Chef’s Salad, Broccoli Salad, Creamy Dill Cucumber Salad, Potato Salad, Deviled Eggs, Smoked Salmon Chaud-Froid Continental Fruit Display

- **Desserts**
  Fresh Baked Cream Puff Profiteroles,
  Fresh Danish, Sticky Buns, Chocolate Dipped Driscoll Strawberries & Homemade Coffee Cake

**Price:** Adults $22 • Children $12

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**Scholarship Awards Dinner**
Friday, April 28
5:30 p.m.

- **Hors d’oeuvres**
  Dill Cream Cheese Chicken Croustade
  Bruschetta Tapenade

- **Entrée**
  Roasted Garlic & Portaballa Mush-room Breast of Chicken with a Whiskey au Poivre
  Risotto Pilaf & Asparagus
  Rotella’s French Roll & Butter

- **Dessert**
  Banana Bread Pudding with a Crème Anglaise Rum Sauce

**Price:** $35 Inclusive

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**Mother’s Day Brunch**
Sunday, May 14
Two Settings: 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

- **Carving Station**
  Steamship Round of Beef with Horseradish Chantilly & Red Wine au Jus
  Old School Pineapple-Glazed Ham

- **Entrées**
  Chicken Supreme
  Baked Tilapia Buerre Blanc
  Eggs Benedict, Risotto, Lyonnais Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables
  Build-Your-Own Omelets
  Multi-topping Pancake Bar

- **Salad Display**
  Thunderbird Salad, Imported Cheese & Antipasto, Cole Slaw, Potato Salad, Deviled Eggs, Smoked Salmon Chaud-Froid
  Fresh Fruit Display, Fresh Baked Pastries, Breakfast Breads, Pecan Rolls

- **Desserts**
  New York-style Cheesecake with Strawberries Chocolate Driscoll Strawberries
  Warm Peach Cobbler with French Vanilla Ice Cream

**Price:** Children Under 10 $12 • Adults $22

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**Reservations** can be made by calling the Omaha Press Club at 402-345-8008
A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

With the nice weather and spring rolling in, there are plenty of reasons to visit your club. Consider attending the Easter Brunch, April 16, and Mother’s Day Brunch, May 14, two of the club’s signature events. It’s a great time to bring the whole family and friends.

Also worthy of special mention is the return this month of the Tom Shatel Sports Series. The lunch hosted by the World-Herald’s lead sports columnist on Tuesday, April 18, will feature our homemade fried chicken buffet.

Bring your valued administrative assistant to lunch Wednesday, April 26, and we will treat them to a free dessert. Join us in celebrating the annual Scholarship Dinner on Friday, April 28. June 23 will be the next wine dinner, with a special guest. This event is always sold out, so call in your reservation today to ensure your spot.

Menu favorites: OPC has several signature items on the menu including the Thunderbird Salad, French Onion Soup, Prime Rib and the Reuben. Many of the members will testify that the Press Club has the best Reuben in town, and I am one of them. On occasion I have presented our famous Thunderbird Salad in a parmesan cup. This has met with such rave reviews that I have decided to make it a menu option. So now you have two choices when enjoying the Thunderbird.

Bridal link: Do you know a soon-to-be bride or groom? If so, send them to our new bridal link on our website: http://omahapressclub.com/wedding-receptions/

Goodbye, Judy: Farewell to my friend, longtime Press Club member and volunteer Judy Horan, who passed away recently. Judy was one of the hardest-working Press Club volunteers that I have had the pleasure of working with. I used to tell Judy that not just the club, but also my family and I have benefited from all the business she helped bring to the club with her volunteer work over the years. Not only was she a hard worker, she was a great mentor and friend. I had the highest respect for Judy.

Thank you all, and see you at the club.

Steve Villamonte CEC, BS
OPC Executive Director
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Claudia Bohn ....................... Coordinating Editor

Submissions for the May issue are due on or before April 20.

Hours of Operation

LUNCH
Monday - Friday
11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
BAR
Tuesday - Saturday
4:30 p.m. to close
DINNER
Thursday - Saturday
5:30 p.m. to close

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

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

Wednesday, April 26
Easter Brunch
10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Friday, April 28
OPC Scholarship Awards Dinner
5:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 14
Mother’s Day Buffet
10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Monday, May 29
Closed for Memorial Day

Saturday, June 3
Hall of Fame Recognition Night
5:30 p.m.

Are you looking for a perfect party setting? A lunch surrounded by brilliance? A dinner your guests will always remember? Keep the OPC in mind.

Friday, April 14
Omaha Mayoral Debate
Jean Stothert, Heath Mello
11:30 a.m. lunch, noon debate

Sunday, April 16
Easter Brunch
10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 18
Shatel Sports Lunch
11:30 a.m. lunch, noon program

Thursday, April 20
Noon Education Forum
Newseum trustee Shelby Coffey III
11:30 a.m. lunch, noon program

Are you looking for a perfect party setting? A lunch surrounded by brilliance? A dinner your guests will always remember? Keep the OPC in mind.