Jordon ‘Face on Barroom Floor’ event set for March 18

By Tom O’Connor
Face on the Floor Committee

The “Face on the Barroom Floor” event for Steve Jordon, a longtime Omaha World-Herald reporter, will be held Saturday, March 18, at the Omaha Press Club. The reception begins at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. and the roast around 7:45 p.m. Jordon's byline has graced the pages of the World-Herald for 50 years. He is perhaps best known as the reporter who covers Warren Buffett for the newspaper. In 2013, Jordon wrote a World-Herald book about Buffett titled, “The Oracle and Omaha: How Warren Buffett and His Hometown Shaped Each Other.”

Roasters for the event will include: Mike Kelly, Omaha World-Herald columnist (emcee); Mike Reilly, a longtime World-Herald editor and a vice president of BH Media Group; Mike Holmes, former editorial page editor for the World-Herald; Lyn Wallin Ziegenbein, executive director emerita, Peter Kiewit Foundation; Jim Fogarty, co-owner of Legacy Preservation Book Publishers and a former World-Herald reporter; and Pat Waters, former World-Herald Money editor.

Since joining the World-Herald full-time in 1968, Jordon has covered police, county government, the courts, youth, and the Best View in Town.

Stothert, Mello to debate at OPC on April 14

A debate between Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert and challenger Heath Mello will be held Friday, April 14, over the noon hour at the Omaha Press Club.

Reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis. The price is $17 per person, which includes lunch.

WOWT 6 News will record the debate for playback that evening during prime time.

The moderator will be Channel 6 anchor/reporter Brian Mastre.

WOWT 6 News has agreed to be the permanent television partner for debates sponsored by the OPC and the League of Women Voters. The league and the Press Club have been sponsoring mayoral and congressional debates for 16 years.

Stothert and Mello, as the leading mayoral candidates, are expected to emerge as the top vote recipients in the April 4 primary election to face off in the May 9 general election.

The 2017 Hall of Fame class is set!

Please make your reservations now to attend the Journalists of Excellence Hall of Fame event on Saturday, June 3, at 5:30 p.m.

We will be honoring the following five individuals: David Kotok, Omaha World-Herald; Patty Mattson, ABC, Nix-on Press Secretary; Sibyl Myers (deceased), Omaha World-Herald; Bud Pagel, UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communication; Dave Weber, KFAB, KMTV, WOWT.

Detailed information on the event and our honorees will be featured in upcoming issues of the newsletter.

- Todd Murphy, Hall of Fame Co-Chair

Pioneer voice will retrace road to statehood

It was 150 years ago that Nebraska became a state. As part of its Noon Forum series, the Omaha Press Club is sponsoring an appearance by Omaha re-enactor Darrel Draper playing the role of Peter Sarpy, for whom Sarpy County is named.

Dressed in period costume and speaking in his native French accent and using humor and factual historical anecdotes, Sarpy will describe the transformation of Nebraska from French colony to statehood.

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OPC Insider... with Marcia Cady, OPC President

Name: Marcia Cady.
Age: 62.
Place of employment: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska.
Title: Media Relations Manager.
Number of years as OPC member: Four.
Current role with OPC: President of the Board of Directors.
Favorite movie: “Pride and Prejudice” (Keira Knightley version).
Favorite memory of career: When I was a reporter at KMTV, riding in a limo with then-Vice President George H.W. Bush.
Best advice you ever received: From a former news director: “If you don’t have your integrity, you don’t have anything.”
Hobbies: Running, biking, yoga, reading and old movies.
Favorite dish at OPC: Steak Diane.
Favorite memory at OPC: New Year’s Eve fireworks.
Favorite vacation spot: San Francisco.
Favorite social media app: Twitter.

Newseum trustee to speak at April Forum

Journalist and Newseum trustee Shelby Coffey III will be the speaker at the April 20 Noon Education Forum.

The Newseum is an interactive journalism museum in Washington. The seven-level building on Pennsylvania Avenue features 15 theaters and 15 galleries. Its mission is to promote, explain and defend free expression and the five freedoms of the First Amendment: religion, speech, press, assembly and petition. The museum was founded by the Freedom Forum, formerly the Gannett Foundation.

Coffey is a senior fellow of the Freedom Forum. He was editor and executive vice president of the Los Angeles Times from 1989 to 1997. He has also been executive vice president of ABC News and was president of CNN Business News and CNNfn. Coffey was a reporter and editor at the Washington Post, where he spent 17 years, and then editor of U.S. News & World Report. He also was senior vice president and editor of the Dallas Times-Herald.

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152nd ‘FACE ON THE BARROOM FLOOR’ -- STEVE JORDON
SATURDAY, MARCH 18
Reception: 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Dinner: 6:30-7:45 p.m.
Roast: 7:45-8:45 p.m.
Price: Members $50, Non-members $60
Reservations: Call 402-345-8008
The Omaha Press Club Foundation’s Annual Fund Drive has reached $11,890, up more than $2,000 from last year. The foundation is extremely grateful to the 36 contributors whose gifts will help finance scholarships for top journalism students at Creighton University, the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Among our donors was Robert Dorr, award-winning investigative reporter during his long and distinguished career at the Omaha World-Herald who contributes to the drive annually.

“It is becoming clear that, in the years ahead, we are going to need well-trained, highly committed journalists more than ever before,” said Dorr. “I see the Omaha Press Club Foundation’s scholarships as a cost-effective way of encouraging our best college journalism students. I donate each year to this scholarship program, and am happy to do that.”

Other notable givers included Sissy Silber, widow of Howard Silber, another longtime World-Herald reporter. Silber has donated two scholarships in her husband’s memory that will be awarded at this spring’s scholarship banquet.

Donations like those from Dorr, Silber and all of our givers help tomorrow’s outstanding journalists prepare for great careers. On behalf of the OPC Foundation Board, thanks for investing in the future of our profession.

Annual Fund Drive donors:

Health care to change – but how much?

By Claudia Bohn
Communications Committee

There is a lot of noise surrounding health care these days. Certainly the recent election heightened those discussions, and President Trump’s goal to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act has everyone’s attention.

The state of health care in the United States is uncertain, but one thing is for sure -- the focus should be on providing value to patients and an efficient price, according to Dr. Dan DeBehnke, chief executive officer of Nebraska Medicine.

“If we don’t change our mindset in how we provide care, we will miss the boat,” DeBehnke told a capacity crowd at the Feb. 16 Noon Educational Forum. “We have to provide care in a way that provides value to the patient. That should be our ultimate goal.”

While some have been critical of the Affordable Care Act, he noted that it did accomplish what it set out to do.

“The ACA achieved its goal and we now have more people covered by insurance than ever before,” DeBehnke said. “Where in history have we added a social reform and then taken it away? It’s never happened, and I don’t think it will. I think there will be changes -- but they will be incremental changes -- because it’s so complex.”

DeBehnke became CEO at Nebraska Medicine in July 2016. Prior to coming to Omaha, he served as CEO of Medical College Physicians in Milwaukee and senior associate dean of clinical affairs-adult and professor of emergency medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin. In his short time in Omaha, he’s been impressed.

“There is really good health care delivery in this community,” he said. “Omaha is a good place to be. While we certainly have the opportunity to tweak some things, I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else.”

You can listen to all of DeBehnke’s presentation by tuning in to KIOS on March 13 from noon to 1 p.m.
Where are they now?
Ex-Mayor Hanafan continuing public service

By Don Summerside
Communications Committee

Tom Hanafan is another “Face on the Barroom Floor” who didn’t really retire when he retired.

Hanafan was honored by the OPC in 1996, eight years into a Council Bluffs mayoral reign that lasted more than a quarter-century. When he announced in March of 2013 that he was stepping down, he said: “I don’t want to go home and lie on the coach. I want to stay involved.”

And involved he is. A year and a half after leaving the mayor’s office, Hanafan was elected in 2014 to the Pottawattamie County Board of Supervisors. He said his return to public office was motivated in part by the County Board’s decision “to raise taxes 17 percent. I thought we needed firmer hands on the budget process.”

And what does the think of his move from City Hall to the Courthouse? “It’s been a change,” Hanafan said. Instead of making unilateral decisions for a city, he is one of five board members sharing administrative responsibility for the county. Two of the other supervisors, in addition to Hanafan, were newly elected members.

“I think things in the county are better today,” he said. “Some county policies had not been updated for 50 years.” Hanafan said it has been his custom in public life to have a set of 10 goals. They are updated annually, with goals achieved and goals added. “You get out of a job what you put into it.”

His county work includes weekly board meetings, plus frequent speeches, public appearances and contacts with constituents. In addition, Hanafan found time to serve as chairman of the capital campaign for the new Charles E. Lakin YMCA at Kane Street and East Kanesville Boulevard in the Bluffs. It is scheduled to open in the fall of 2017 and replace the current facility at Seven South 4th St.

Despite all the activity, the county job consumes less time than his mayoral responsibilities did, Hanafan said. “I’ve found more time for travel and the grandkids.”

He is currently in the third year of a four-year County Board term. As he turns 70 in 2017, would he go for another quarter-century of public service? “Oh, God, no! I’d be Strom Thurmond!”

St. Patrick’s Day Buffet
Friday, March 17
11:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.

All-you-can-eat
Fresh Corned Beef
Boiled Cabbage
Irish New Potatoes
Dark Rye Bread & Butter

Dessert
Frosted Brownie

Price: Members $15

Steve Jordon
152nd “Face on the Barroom Floor”
Saturday, March 18
5:30 p.m. no-host cocktails,
6:30 p.m. dinner
7:45 p.m. roast

Hors d’Oeuvres
Continental Cheese Display with Brie en Croûte
Prime Rib Carpaccio
Salad
Omaha Press Club Thunderbird Salad

Entrée
Filet of Beef au Poivre
Loaded Twice-Baked Potato, Garlic Buttered Asparagus

OPC Signature Dessert
Bavarian Chocolate Cheesecake with a Raspberry Coulis

Space reservation can be made by calling the Omaha Press Club at 402-345-8008

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

Continental Cheese Display

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

Price: Adults $22 • Children $12

By Don Summerside
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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Marcia Cady

W atching the protests over the last few weeks got me thinking about the club. Sounds a little weird, I know, but bear with me for a minute.

Press clubs, after all, were formed to encourage communication and the freedom of speech.

The National Press Club in Washington was started by a bunch of journalists in 1908. (By the way, your membership in the Omaha Press Club gives you access to the National Press Club.) Those 1908 founders promised “to promote social enjoyment among the members, to cultivate literary taste, to encourage friendly intercourse among newspapermen and those with whom they were thrown in contact in the pursuit of their vocation, to aid members in distress and to foster the ethical standards of the profession.”

I think that’s our credo, too. We bring business leaders, government officials and campaigning politicians to the club each month to take part in our noon forums. So far this year we’ve had the chairman of the steering committee to develop the Missouri River Commons and the CEO of Nebraska Medicine talk about the future of health care. The Education Committee, chaired by Gary Kerr, has forums lined up into June already. The forums are an excellent opportunity for members to be “thrown into contact” with issues and ideas they wouldn’t have the opportunity to be a part of otherwise.

Our mayoral debate, which we will sponsor along with the League of Women Voters on April 14, is another example of how we provide a platform for our members and the public to be more involved in the political process. With our WOWT partnership, the debate this spring and those in the future will have a broader exposure and impact, too.

Press clubs across the country provide these community services along with honoring the journalists and leaders that have informed and shaped our opinions over the years. Our Journalists of Excellence Hall of Fame event in June is highly regarded by the honorees and their families. Recognition of journalistic accomplishments needs to emphasized in today’s world where many think Facebook is a news source.

I guess what I’m trying to say is that we may be taking the club for granted. It’s good to stop and think about how we contribute to history, encourage communication across our community and honor those journalists who stand up and fight for freedom of speech.

It’s incumbent upon us to pass down this heritage to the next generation by encouraging more young people to join the Omaha Press Club.

- Marcia Cady, OPC President

A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER

Christine Jones Villamonte

W elcome to “spring winter” at the Omaha Press Club. After the February weather in the 70s followed by a snowstorm, I’m not sure if I should shut the door to the OPC coat closet or put up coat check tags . . . flip a coin.

I am excited about the coming months with lots of events to talk about – beginning with our Lenten specials featured every Friday in March through April 14, both lunch and dinner. On March 17 we will offer the St. Patrick’s Day Buffet all day long . . . wear your green.

Two more holidays to talk about are those with Sunday brunches. The club will be open on Easter Sunday, April 16, and Mother’s Day, May 14, with two seatings at 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

The brunches are a decadent delight that appeal to all palates. I must ask all members and their guests to bring their appetites! Repeat members can vouch for the variety -- from sticky buns to homemade cheesecake to, of course, breakfast omelets and eggs benedict to our meat lovers with a carving station and trimmings. Starting with a mimosa or poinsettia always helps relax the mood and improve the appetite. To be fair, there are salads and vegetables to help balance the meal, just in case anyone is counting. The chefs work for days preparing the offerings from scratch, so you do not have to spend the holiday in the kitchen. Many members highly recommend bringing the entire family to these brunches, building a tradition for years to come.

Our chefs also will have a nice surprise for Administrative Professionals Day on April 26. Our scholarship dinner is coming up on April 28, so mark your calendar for this event. We will have two forums in April: the mayoral debate on the 14th and the Washington D.C. Newseum’s Shelby Coffey III on the 20th.

May and June bring the graduation season, so do not forget to call or email me if you would like to reserve your private room. What better way to show off your city, letting the club’s windows tell the story to your guests.

And last but not least: We have another wonderful wine dinner coming in June, with the date still to be determined (Watch for it in OPC News or on the website).

- Christine Jones Villamonte, B.S. Nutrition, Restaurant Manager / Events Coordinator
Committee Chairs

Communications Co-Chairs
Susan Eustice, Judy Horan

Education
Gary Kerr

Executive Committee
Marciia Cady, Claudia Bohn, Bridget (Weide) Brooks & Sean McGuire

“Face on the Barroom Floor”
Tom O’Connor

Hall of Fame
Todd Murphy, Judy Horan

Marketing / Membership
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Restaurant .................................. 402-345-8008
Website ....................................... omahapressclub.com

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Tom O’Connor......................... Proofreader
Don Summerside..................... Copy Editor
Judy Horan......................... Coordinating Editor

Submissions for the April issue are due on or before March 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 OMAHAPRESSCLUB.COM

OMAHA PRESS CLUB STAFF

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Restaurant and Events Manager
Christine Villamonte...opcchristine@gmail.com

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Communications Committee

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.

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

Wednesday, April 26
Administrative Professionals Day

Friday, April 28
OPC Scholarship and Awards Dinner

Saturday, June 3
Hall of Fame Recognition Night

Friday, March 17
St. Patrick’s Buffet
11:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Saturday, March 18
“Face on the Barroom Floor” salutes Steve Jordon
5:30 p.m. reception, 6:30 p.m. dinner
7:45 p.m. roast

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.

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