Prominent Omaha couple to be next ‘Face’ on April 13
Thomas and Aileen Warren have been longtime community leaders

By Tom O’Connor
Communications Committee

An Omaha couple that has left an indelible mark on the community over the past three decades – Thomas and Aileen Warren – will be honored April 13 as the Omaha Press Club’s 160th “Face on the Barroom Floor.”

Thomas Warren has served as president and CEO of the Urban League of Nebraska (ULN) since 2008, after retiring from a 24-year career with the Omaha Police Department including his final four years as chief of police.

Since 2014, Aileen Warren has served as assistant vice chancellor, business and finance, and director of human resources for the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Prior to this, she worked at First Data Corporation for 17 years, where she attained the title of vice president of human resources. Her previous work experience also includes positions at First National Bank of Omaha and WorldCom.

“Yeah, we couldn’t be more honored – or excited – to receive this recognition,” the Warrens said. “We are quite aware of the illustrious people who have preceded us on the barroom floor, and we are humbled to be included among them. We can’t wait for the fun to begin and know it will be quite an evening.”

Their roasters will include a former Omaha Police Department Chief as well as a former President of the City Council.

Voter ID will be April Forum topic

Do Nebraskans need protection from potential voter fraud?

The April 11 Noon Education Forum will feature two Lincoln attorneys – Robert Evnen, who is Nebraska’s secretary of state, and John Cartier, who is director of Voter Rights – Civic Nebraska, a nonprofit advocate for democratic institutions.

Bob Evnen, who was elected last November, plans to introduce a voter ID plan in the 2020 legislative session. He plans to look at other state ID laws prior to introducing a Nebraska proposal. Prior to being elected last November, Evnen was a labor attorney practicing law in Lincoln for more than 40 years. He also is a former member of the State Board of Education.

Cartier is skilled in journalism, legal writing, government relations and experienced in working in the public policy industry. Currently he serves on the Lincoln Public School Advisory Committee.

Please join us for this highly informative discussion from noon to 1 p.m. on Thursday, April 11. Call 402-345-8008 for reservations or jeaniec@opc.omhcoxmail.com. Non-Press Club members are welcome.
“Face on the Barroom Floor,” an elected official, two business executives and the Warrens’ daughter.

The former “Face” is Brenda Council (No. 62 in 1995), who is a former state senator and now adolescent health project manager for the Women’s Fund of Omaha. Council is the sister of Thomas Warren. The elected official is John Ewing, Douglas County treasurer. The two business executives are Jason Hanson, senior vice president, American National Bank, and Ivan Gilreath, CEO, Boys and Girls Club of the Midlands. One of the Warrens’ three children, Jessica (Jay) Warren-Teamer, will round out the roasters. She is community affairs coordinator for Mutual of Omaha.

Over the past decade, Thomas Warren has transformed the ULN. When he began in 2008, the ULN was struggling with eight full-time employees and was operating with a deficit. The revitalized organization now has 34 full-time employees, 24 part-time employees, a $3 million operating budget and a cash reserve. A traditional civil rights organization that advocates for social justice, the ULN also administers programs in education/youth development, employment/career services and violence prevention.

Warren was the first African-American to serve as chief of police with OPD. During his tenure, he was able to improve police-community relations, enhance the professional image of the department and reduce the overall crime rate in Omaha for four consecutive years. In 2007, OPD was recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice as the “Local Law Enforcement Agency of the Year” for its Project Safe Neighborhoods violence reduction strategy.

Warren serves on the board of directors of the Omaha Chamber of Commerce, the Omaha Community Foundation, Heartland Workforce Solutions (Workforce Development), 75 North Community Revitalization, Partnership for Kids, Durham Museum and the Omaha Police Foundation. He also holds board or trustee positions with American National Bank, the University of Nebraska Foundation and Creighton University and is on the community board of advisors for CHI.

In her current position, Aileen Warren provides leadership and strategic direction for all HR functions at UNMC, including employee benefits and wellness, employee relations, organizational development, staffing, compensation, records management, diversity and HR technology. The budgetary and operational oversight of the UNMC Center for Healthy Living and the Child Development Center also fall under her areas of responsibility.

She is currently on the boards and serves as an executive committee member of the Omaha Home for Boys, Institute for Career Advancement Needs (ICAN) and the Women’s Fund of Omaha. She also is on the Boys and Girls Club of the Midlands Executive Scholarship Committee.

Active in the community, she has been involved with numerous other organizations including the Omaha Rotary, American Red Cross, Family Services, Girls Inc., Human Resources Association of the Midlands and Catholic Charities. She received the Woman of the Year Award and the National Service to Youth Award from the Boys and Girls Club. She was named a Viking of Distinction by Omaha North High School.

The Warrens recently were selected to Aksarben’s annual Court of Honor. This is a recognition given to individuals who contribute to their community and excel in their respective fields, such as arts, business, industry, education and sports.

Both Warren hold master’s degrees from the University of Nebraska at Omaha – Thomas in criminal justice and Aileen in social work. Both are alums of the Leadership Omaha program through the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce.

The Warrens have been a couple since junior high. Both have excelled in athletics. Thomas played football for Morning-side College and has been inducted into the Omaha Technical High School Hall of Fame and the Omaha Public Schools Sports Hall of Fame. Aileen keeps active by jogging and has completed the Chicago Marathon and three half-marathons.

The Warrens have three children – Jessica (Jay), Thomas Jr. and Alexandra – and one grandson, Evan Thomas.
The OPC remembers:

Charter club member Anne Boyle spent a lifetime in public service

By Anne Walsh
Communications Committee

Former Nebraska Public Service Commissioner and Democratic Party Chair Anne Boyle died Feb. 2 at her Omaha home, where she had been in hospice care after suffering a stroke Jan. 28.

Boyle, 76, was a political force, unafraid to work across the aisle. She advocated for the underprivileged, defended consumers, mentored women in politics and supported LGBTQ rights.

Her most notable political achievements included chairing the Douglas County Democratic Party from 1972 to 1974 and the Nebraska Democratic Party from 1998 to 2001. A four-time delegate to the Democratic National Convention, she worked on numerous political campaigns. Boyle was elected to the Nebraska Public Service Commission in 1996, then re-elected twice to six-year terms, serving 18 years until her retirement in 2015.

Her lifetime in public service carried on the legacy of her well-known political family, the Howells. Her father was Douglas County Treasurer Sam J. Howell, Jr.; her grand-father, Sam J. Howell, served in the Nebraska Legislature in the 1930s, and her great-grandfather, Edward E. Howell, served on the Omaha City Council and in the Legislature during the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Anne was married to Mike Boyle, Douglas County Board member and former Omaha mayor. The two were charter members and supporters of the Omaha Press Club, with Mike honored as the 19th “Face on the Barroom Floor” in 1982.

OPC Manager Christine Villamonte said the Boyles dined at the club with friends the weekend before Anne fell ill. “They were great. As usual, Anne talked about her kids and grandkids,” said Villamonte. “Politics always brought a conversation out of her. She did what she thought was right, even if the party was not always behind her. It was one of the many things I admired about her. She will be deeply missed.”

In addition to husband Mike, Anne is survived by five children – Maureen Boyle-Manganaro, Michael, Patrick, James and Maggie Aliabadi – and 18 grandchildren.
Scholarship dinner to honor Steve Jordon

By Henry Cordes
OPC Foundation

Longtime Omaha World-Herald reporter Steve Jordon will be among the honorees during the annual Omaha Press Club Foundation Scholarship Awards Dinner set for Friday, April 26.

Jordon, who retired last year after five decades with the paper, will be honored with the foundation’s Career Achievement Award. He was best known for his work as a business reporter, including his coverage of the rise of Warren Buffett and Berkshire Hathaway.

Another highlight of the evening will be the awarding of more than $40,000 in journalism scholarships to students at Creighton University, the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The night will begin with a 5:30 p.m. cocktail reception followed by the dinner at 6:30. The cost of dinner is $35.

Call the club at 402-345-8008 for reservations.

PHONE 402-345-8008 FOR RESERVATIONS

Quarterly Beermakers Dinner
March 8, 6 p.m.
$55 members, $65 non-members

Quaff
Cape Cod Crab Croustades
OPC Artichoke Dip Croustade

Appetizer
Beef Wellington with a Portabella Mushroom Madeira

Salad
Villamonte’s Thunderbird in Parmesan Crust

Sorbet
Cranberry Mango

Entrée
Traditional Chicken Kiev
Rosemary Whip Potatoes
Roasted Parsnip & Spring Carrot

Signature Dessert
Banana Bread Pudding with a Crown Royal Whiskey Cream Caramel

Chef de Cuisine: Steve Villamonte BA, CEC (Certified Executive Chef)

St. Patrick's Day Buffet
Saturday, March 16
11:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Members $15

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

Dessert
Frosted Brownie

$3 Green Beer

Scholarship Awards Dinner
Friday, April 26
5:30 p.m.
$35

Salad
OPC Famous Thunderbird Salad with Sautéed Toppings

Entrée
Chicken Veronique
Creamy Risotto
Sautéed Vegetable Medley

Signature Dessert
French Chocolate Mousse in a Chocolate Cup Framboise Raspberry Sauce

Easter Buffet
Sunday, April 21
Seatings at 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
Adults $22 • Children $12

Carving Station
Steamship Round of Beef
Whiskey Pepper-Glazed Ham

Entrées
Chicken Bourguignon
Lemon Pepper Butter-Baked Tilapia
Eggs Benedict
Lyonnaise New Potato
Biscuits & Sausage Gravy
Italian Sausage Cheesy Casserole
Build-Your-Own Omelet
Multi-Topping Buttermilk Pancakes

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

Signature Dessert
Fresh-Baked Cream Puff Profiteroles, Raisin Bread Pudding, Fresh-Made Danish, Sticky Buns, Chocolate-Dipped Driscoll Strawberries & Homemade Coffee Cake
Believe it or not – after nearly 20 years of never closing due to winter weather – the Press Club was finally forced to close twice this past month due to blizzard conditions.

The snowy and cold beginning to 2019 has been a hot topic, with the punch line usually uttered by a meteorologist. But during and after the blizzard in late February, everyone had stories to tell.

As you probably recall, Interstate 80 in Nebraska was closed for more than 150 miles after several multi-vehicle accidents. A 25-car/semi pileup even stranded one of my own family members, who happens to be pregnant.

Our neighborhood had four-foot snowdrifts, with three neighbors and three snowblowers plowing for a couple hours and helping those who did not have a snowblower. My children finally understand what we adults dealt with growing up in Nebraska with snow, snow and more snow.

In the First National Bank building, many engineers as well as security have stayed the night more than once during the stormy weather to make sure the building systems were operating properly. Thank you!

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Last month we lost two of the Omaha Press Club’s special people, Anne Boyle and Terry Forsberg. Please read about them elsewhere in our newsletter.

I personally had not met Mr. Forsberg, but he sounded like an all-around great person. Anne Boyle left footprints wherever she went for the greater good of our community, and she will be remembered as one of the club’s best friends.

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On the March special events schedule, we will have a craft beer tasting on the 8th, the St. Pat’s Irish buffet on the 16th (all day and into the night) and Lenten season dining every Friday. The latter will offer fish specials and vegetarian options starting on Ash Wednesday, March 6. My personal seafood favorite is the stuffed tilapia beurre blanc served with creamy risotto and a vegetable.

As I write this, springtime seems so far away. But ladies, let’s start dreaming of spring dresses and sandals. Easter is later this year, April 21, with our Easter Sunday buffet offering two seatings, 10 a.m. and 12:30 pm.

Our annual Scholarship and Awards Dinner is April 26. See Henry Cordes’ column on Page 4 for details. It’s always a great night to honor some well-deserving guests and special honorees.

-- Christine Jones Villamonte
Restaurant and events manager

OPC members receive up to two hours of free parking in the Central City Garage, directly west of the club at 122 N. 17th St., during the workday and free parking in the evenings from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. with validation.

Members can still receive up to two hours of validated parking in the DoubleTree Hotel garage from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

No validated parking is available in the DoubleTree garage after 5 p.m. However, you may still park in that garage in the evenings if you wish to self-pay.

In the Central City Garage, members may park free in any space on the rooftop level at lunchtime, and in any space from #142 on up after 5 p.m. To reach the OPC, take the garage elevator to the basement level (marked B on the elevator). Follow the signs east and proceed through the tunnel into the First National Bank and just a few steps more to the elevators.

Important: Bring your parking ticket to the club for validation.
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Ash Wednesday, March 6
Lenten fish specials begin and continue on Fridays

Friday, March 8
Craft Beer Dinner
6 p.m. social, 6:30 p.m. dinner
$55 OPC members, $65 non-members

Saturday, March 16
St. Patrick’s Day Buffet
11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.
$15

Thursday, April 11
Noon Education Forum
“Should Nebraskans have voter IDs?”
Secretary of State Bob Evnen
Voter rights advocate John Cartier
Open to the public – cost $17

Saturday, April 13
“Face on the Barroom Floor”
Thomas and Aileen Warren
5:30 p.m., reception; 6:30 p.m., dinner; 8 p.m., roast
$45 OPC members, $55 non-members

Easter Sunday, April 21
Buffet seatings
at 10 a.m., 12:30 p.m.

Friday, April 26
Scholarship and Awards Dinner
5:30 p.m. non-host social
6 p.m. dinner and awards
$35 OPC members and non-members

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.