New president cherishes a 27-year OPC love story

By Roger Humphries
OPC President

I f you had told me back in 1993 when I joined the club that I would someday become the president of the club, I would have said you were crazy. Well, as you realize by now, the world has become a bit crazy with the COVID-19 virus changing not only how the club operates, but the restaurant as well.

I am really honored to serve as president. When I became the Customer Relations Coordinator (Public Relations) for the Omaha Post Office, one of the first reporters to interview me for a story asked me if I was a member of the Omaha Press Club. That reporter was Frank Brown, and he said it would be one of the best moves I could make as a public relations newbie. He was right.

By joining and becoming involved in the club, I created relationships/friendships that have helped throughout my career and continue even today. As a member for over 27 years, I have grown to love — and even cherish — the club. It has brought many fond memories of how my family has utilized the club. We have had lunches, dinners, birthday parties, graduations — and especially the work of Steve and Christine. The board has tackled many of the obstacles the COVID-19 restrictions have thrown our way. Working with Steve and our accountant, we have managed to stay afloat, and ours is one of the few clubs of our type still in operation since the virus changed our world.

It is my belief that all those mentioned will continue to work for the betterment of the club and keep the club viable for our members. The club is here for you, our members, but we need your help. Are you — or someone you know — looking for that special place to hold that special event, such as a wedding, birthday, graduation, or retirement party? If your organization — or a charity you are a part of — needs a venue, offer the club. Christine would be happy to assist in making sure all their needs are taken care of.

And then there is the view; our club offers a view that still wows me even today. And if you are interested in helping us succeed, I am sure there is a committee that could use your expertise and enthusiasm. Get with me or any of our committee chairs to see where you would be a good fit.

This year will bring many challenges, but as I stated before, I am confident that — with the board and your support — we will be able to meet these challenges and continue the great tradition that others before us have faced — making the club what it is today.

So, make it a point to visit the club for lunch or dinner, or even take us up on that special curbside dinner offering we have on Friday nights. Just visit the club on the web at www.omahapressclub.org or Facebook to find out about hours of operation, events, or special offerings throughout the year.

See you at the club.

OPC’S 2021 Leadership

Front row, from left: President Roger Humphries, Secretary Bridget (Weide) Brooks, Board Member Liz Hruska. Back row: President-elect Hunter Samuels, Past President Tom Shatel, Board Member Angella Arndt, Executive Director Steve Villamonte, Board Members Woody Bradford and Allen Beermann.
Photo by David Overholtzer.
Richard Roth dies; sheriff, federal agent

Editor’s Note: On Pages 2 and 3, the OPC remembers Richard Roth, Norman Krivosha and John Ritums, all “Faces on the Barroom Floor,” as well as OPC Hall of Famer Robert Dorr, longtime Omaha World-Herald reporter.

By Don Summerside
Communications Committee

From Secret Service agent to sheriff, former Omahan Richard Roth had a long career in a variety of law enforcement roles.

Roth, 93, died Jan. 19, and his wife of 72 years, Carol, 92, died a day later while both were in hospice care at the Gallatin, Tennessee, home of their son, Richard “Dan” Roth.

Roth was Douglas County sheriff from 1978-94 and became the Omaha Press Club’s 18th “Face on the Barroom Floor” in July of 1982.

The St. Louis native got his first experience in law enforcement as a teenager when he was a night police dispatcher in the suburb of Richmond Heights. After high school he was a military policeman with the U.S. Army in Japan.

Then after graduation from Washington University in St Louis, Roth settled into his first long-term job – 20 years with the Secret Service. A highlight was a four-year tour with the White House detail during the Eisenhower administration.

Roth went on to become agent in charge of several Secret Service offices, with his last stop being Omaha, where he arrived in 1963 to head the Nebraska-Iowa office. In 1971, he accepted another Washington assignment – a two-year stint as agent in charge of the Foreign Protection Detail proving security for visiting heads of state.

Upon returning to Omaha, arthritis led to his retirement from the Secret Service but opened the door to law-enforcement positions in Omaha. First, he was appointed Omaha public safety director by Mayor Ed Zorinsky. Then came his 16-year run as sheriff, during which he was elected four times before being defeated.

Dick and Carol went on to own and manage an apartment complex for the elderly in northwest Omaha. In their mid-80s, the Roths moved to the Nashville area to be near son Dan and his wife, Henrietta.

The Roths also are survived by son Robert (Marcia) of Lincoln and daughter Peggy Ann Roth McCune of Omaha.

Norman Krivosha was Nebraska chief justice

Norman Krivosha, retired chief justice of the Nebraska Supreme Court, died Jan. 26 at his home in Naples, Florida. He was 86.

Born in Detroit, Krivosha moved to Lincoln to live with his cousins and attend the University of Nebraska, where he graduated from college and law school. He was a partner in the law firm of Ginsburg, Rosenberg, Ginsburg and Krivosha, when Gov. Jim Exon appointed him chief justice.

Krivosha served on the state bench until 1987 and was OPC’s 20th “Face on the Barroom Floor” in November of 1982.

Krivosha responded to the “Face” honor with these words:

“You do me honor. I thank you so. Receiving this award, thrills me more than you know.

“To be so recognized is no small joy. To say anything else would be coy.

“I’ve received some accolades and a few awards. Been named a director and appointed to boards.

“But this tops all. I send up a roar. To at last be named, the Face on the Floor.

“I entered this life to run a good race. Alas, I have failed. I’m just another pretty face.

“But one thing is clear, it’s absolutely true. For this honor, I thank you, and you and you.””

After his retirement from the court, Krivosha became general counsel for Ameritas Financial Corporation until 2000. He then served “of counsel” for Kutak Rock LLP and opened its first office in Lincoln.

Away from his legal work, Krivosha raised funds for Israel Bonds with speeches throughout the country. He also served as national president of Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity.

Beginning in 2000, Norman and his wife, Helene, split their time between Lincoln and Naples and in 2005 moved permanently to Naples.

Krivosha is survived by Helene, his wife of 65 years, as well as daughters Terri Krivosha (Rabbi Hayim Herring) and Rhonda Hauser (Adam Hauser) and “adopted son” Herzi Sulamanzaidah.
Apartment developer Ritums served on City Council

John Ritums, a Latvian immigrant and Omaha apartment developer who served on the City Council, died on Jan. 13 in Riga, Latvia. He was 92.

Ritums was honored as the fifth “Face on the Barroom Floor” in November of 1972, and longtime “Face” artist Jim Horan remembered Ritums’ craggy facial features and long sideburns inspiring one of his favorite drawings.

“He was a caricaturist’s dream,” Horan said. “Flamboyant personality, interesting life and those wonderfully distinguishable facial features -- a fun face to do.”

Arriving in Omaha in 1951, Ritums built a successful career in real estate and construction, including the Latvian Village apartments. He was also active in Old Market and riverfront development. He was a city councilman during his “Face” unveiling and served on the City Council from 1969 to 1973.

After growing up in a Latvia ruled by Nazi and then Soviet invaders, Ritums embraced the democracy of the United States when he immigrated to South Dakota in 1950. He came to Omaha a few months later and stayed 30 years. He moved to Chicago in 1980, later living in California and Florida before returning to his Latvian homeland in 2008.

Ritums was preceded in death by his wife, Ingeborga Astrid Dukats Ritums; daughter, Selga Rudite Noel; and grandson, Derek Noel of Omaha. He is survived by his wife, Irina Bideres Ritums; daughter, Sandra (Mrs. Robert Pospisil) of Bend, Oregon, and Silva (Mrs. Michael Malone) of Odessa, Florida; son-in-law, Donald Noel of Omaha; seven grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren. Services and internment will be held in Omaha at Forest Lawn Cemetery at a later date.

Annual Meeting was a distance event – but social!

Social distancing was practiced on Jan 21 at the Omaha Press Club Annual Meeting. New officers and directors were elected for 2021 and beyond. Reports from the officers and committee chairpersons were presented and will be detailed in the March OPC News. Photo by David Overholtzer.

Longtime World-Herald reporter Bob Dorr dies

Bob Dorr, whose reporting talents and techniques became legendary during a 41-year career at the Omaha World-Herald, died Jan. 14 at age 84.

Dorr was held in such esteem by his colleagues that the Robert C. Dorr Award was established after his retirement to honor the World-Herald's most outstanding newsroom performer.

Eileen Wirth paid tribute to her former World-Herald colleague in the newspaper’s Public Pulse: “Bob Dorr was a reporter’s reporter whom his colleagues loved and admired even when he was driving us crazy because he was so thorough.”

Dorr’s career at the World-Herald included a stint as city editor, but he was most widely known for his skills as a reporter. A meticulous writer, his patient but persistent style of conducting interviews led him to be called the “Lieutenant Columbo” of newspaper reporters.

Particularly adept at unraveling and simplifying complicated stories, Dorr in 1966 wrote the first definitive story about a young investment whiz named Warren Buffett. His list of other major stories was lengthy: court-ordered school desegregation, railroad mergers, Enron’s departure from Omaha, the riverfront arena and convention center development, casino gambling, the meatpacking industry and the Franklin Community Credit Union scandal.

He was inducted into the Omaha Press Club Hall of Fame in 2014, 13 years after his retirement from the World-Herald.

Dorr is survived by his wife, Rose; sons Dave and Rick, brother Jim, three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Betty, and son Mike.
Meanwhile, the club is moving forward in 2021 after our annual meeting and the installation of new board members. Welcome to our new president, Roger Humphries; president-elect, Hunter Samuels, as well as new directors Angella Arndt and Dr. Robert Meyers. And thank you to our past board members. We appreciate all you have done.

Valentine’s Day will be celebrated at the club on Saturday, Feb. 13, with a multicourse dinner starting at 6 p.m. (sit-down social) and 6:30 p.m. meal. Please see the menu for details on the entree selection. Curbside will be available with a smaller menu.

Each year I talk about the top questions I receive. This year the questions have changed a little.

1. How do I get in? Use the Central City parking garage entrances at 17th and Capitol or at 18th, right off Dodge. The walk-in street entrance to the club is at 16th and Dodge. All other entrances are rerouted.

2. Curbside meals. Every Friday from 4:30 to 6 p.m., club volunteers and I deliver hot and ready meals (every 15 minutes). We send out a social media alert every Tuesday. If you are not currently on the list, please send me your information. Choices have included lasagna, chicken cordon bleu, prime rib, four-course meals on New Year’s Eve and the approaching Valentine’s Day to classics such as reubens and french onion soup. We welcome suggestions.

3. How do I pay my bill? Revolving accounts can be set up with a credit card on file, ACH (need a voided check) or just reach out to me personally.

4. When will you be open? The club is open Monday through Friday for lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Prime rib dinners are on Thursday nights, and we can accommodate additional menu selections with a quick email or phone call. Friday is curbside. We’ll be ready for more once the world turns around!

5. Private events are happening. We have plenty of room with social distancing and a great view. Call and reserve. Re-

### Valentine’s Dinner Menu

**Saturday, Feb. 13, 6 p.m. social, 6:30 p.m. dinner**

$120 per couple

**Appetizer Choice**

Lobster Bisque

Prime Rib Carpaccio with a Garlic Remoulade

**Salad**

Villamonte’s Famous Thunderbird Salad

Served in a Parmesan Crisp

**Entrée Choices**

RSVP Your Selection

Prime Rib of Beef with Chantilly and Au Jus

Pan Roasted Rack of Lamb with a Cabernet Jus

Omaha Steak Filet Mignon Finished with Maitre d’Hôtel Butter and Bordelaise Sauce

Sun-Dried Cranberry and Bacon-Encrusted Fresh Atlantic Salmon Served with a Buerre Blanc and Cranberry Gastrique

Chicken Villa Encroute Mushrooms, Onions, Sun-Dried Tomatoes, Fresh Herbs, Mozzarella wrapped in a Puff Pastry & Sauce Au Poivre

**Desserts**

A Signature Trio of Petit Fours

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**A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER**

The waiting game begins.

I have heard it from many members of the club: From seniors to newbies, they are ready and eager for their shots so that they can feel free again. Many have already received their vaccinations, with little or no repercussions besides a sore arm. Good news for all.

And thank you to our past board members. We appreciate all you have done.

Christine Villamonte

OPC Restaurant and Events Manager

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**PHONE 402-345-8008 FOR RESERVATIONS**

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**FEBRUARY 2021**

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**Committee Chairs**

- Communications: Gary Willis, Cindy Workman
- Education: Dr. Bob Meyers
- Executive Committee: Tom Shatel, Roger Humphries, Bridget (Weide) Brooks and Jeremy Maskel
- “Face on the Barroom Floor” Committee: Roger Humphries
- Hall of Fame: Woody Bradford
- Marketing / Membership: Bridget (Weide) Brooks

**OPC Foundation**

- Bridget (Weide) Brooks: President
- Josh Bucy: Vice President
- Henry Cordes: 2nd Vice President
- Steve Jordan: Treasurer

**Board of Directors**

- **2020-2022**
  - Allen Beermann: Retired
  - Woody Bradford: Houghton Bradford Whitted
  - Bridget (Weide) Brooks: Image Building Communications
  - Gary Willis: NP Dodge Real Estate

- **2021-2023**
  - Angella Arndt: Freelance Writer
  - Chris Allen: UNO
  - Todd Andrews: Salvation Army
  - Liz Hruska: Legislative Fiscal Office
  - Mike McKnight: WOWT
  - Robert Meyes: Retired

**Communications Committee**

- Cindy Workman • Don Summerside
- Gary Willis • Jennifer Bull • Karen Way
- Tom O’Connor • Anne Walsh • Sandra Tursi
- Bridget (Weide) Brooks • Hunter Samuels
- Lauren Robinson • Todd Andrews • Jon Brooks
- Angella Arndt

**OMAHA PRESS CLUB STAFF**

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- Restaurant and Events Manager: Christine Villamonte ... opcchristine@gmail.com
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- Restaurant: 402-345-8008
- Website: ......................... omahapressclub.com

**NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE**

- Sandra Tursi: ............ Graphics Editor
- Tom O’Connor: ............. Proofreader
- Don Summerside: ........ Copy Editor

Submissions for the March issue are due on or before February 20.

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**2020 - 2021 Officers**

- **Roger Humphries**
  - President
  - Roger Humphries Photography
- **Hunter Samuels**
  - President-elect
  - Ron McDonald House
- **Dale Ervin**
  - Treasurer
  - First National Bank
- **Bridget (Weide) Brooks**
  - Secretary
  - Image Building Communications
- **Tom Shatel**
  - Immediate past president
  - Omaha World-Herald

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

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.

**Hours of Operation**

**LUNCH**

Monday - Friday
11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.