Foundation to reschedule scholar dinner; makes plans for OPC Show watch parties

By Bridget (Weide) Brooks
OPC Foundation

M y term as president of the OPC Foundation recently ended. What I am most proud of is that the pandemic couldn’t keep us from our mission of supporting journalism education. We were able to award more than $50,000 in scholarships to students at Creighton University, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

As a previous scholarship recipient myself, I know how important the money is ($2,500 per scholarship) for students, but also the recognition that I had the support of journalists, those in my profession of public relations, and the community.

What a memorable year for journalism students. The events of this past year will surely shape their careers. My wish for them as we go through 2021 is that they are able to reschedule their internships and take advantage of those opportunities to figure out what they want to do next.

Speaking of rescheduling, we are looking to have our banquet (traditionally held in the spring) later in the year. Students receiving these scholarships are sophomores and juniors, so we’ll have the opportunity to honor them in a few months.

We’re also working with the Omaha Press Club board to host OPC Show watch parties at the club. Trustee Chris Christen and her husband, Kurt Keeler, had the OPC Show recordings digitized for posterity. It’s our goal to host watch parties at the club to raise money for future scholarships while helping celebrate the Press Club’s 50th anniversary. So stay tuned for details on that.

By Roger Humphries
OPC President

T he Press Club is open for business. Yes, things are not normal, but they are changing for the better. To that end, the club would love to see you come up for lunch and dinner. Have your business meetings and family events at the club.

Steve and Christine have worked diligently to keep the kitchen and dining room open. They have even come up with curbside family dinners on Friday nights which may become a staple for the club. If you have not tried some of Steve’s fabulous fried chicken, you are missing out. Every Friday there is another wonderful meal to take home after the workweek.

The board and various committees are also meeting — both in person and virtually — to ensure that all the club events which you have come to know and love start up again soon. Events such as the “Face on the Barroom Floor”, Hall of Fame and many more will be returning.

Even now, some events — such as the wine dinners and noon forums — have already been taking place, with more to follow. Christine has hosted several weddings and small group gatherings just in the past month.

As you can see, the club is here for you. Ready and able to meet your needs. We would love to see you. Invite your friends, your co-workers and others to utilize the club and share with them your love of the club. I am.
Enriching Omaha through sport – the Omaha Sports Commission

By Angella A. Arndt
Communications Committee

Josh Todd, executive director and president of the Omaha Sports Commission (OSC), spoke about Omaha’s 2021 sports outlook at the March Noon Forum.

The OSC’s vision is to enrich Omaha through sport, and its economic impact sports events on the community is estimated at a staggering $333 million since 2008.

“As a 501c3 (nonprofit), every dollar we get goes back to enriching Omaha through sport,” Josh affirmed.

Featured events coming to Omaha in 2021 include the NAIA National Basketball Tourney; NCAA Division I Women’s Volleyball Final Four; Valley O.N.E Marathon, including the Paralympic Ambulatory Marathon Trials for Tokyo; U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Swimming; Capitol District Pole Vault; and the U.S. Olympic Curling Trials.

(’The NCAA Division 1 Baseball Championship, more popularly known as the College World Series, is conducted under the separate auspices of CWS of Omaha, Inc.)

Thanks to the OSC, Omaha has the distinction of being the first city to host three Olympic qualifying events in the same year. Besides bidding on significant events, the OSC creates its own events (such as the Valley O.N.E Marathon and Capitol District Pole Vault) and bids on smaller events.

“We strive to find events that are a fit for Omaha,” Josh explained.

Bob Mockler
long career with WOWT

Bob Mockler, longtime cameraman and director of news photography at WOW-TV (later WOWT), died March 18 in Boulder, Colorado. He was 93.

Mockler covered a range of stories during his more than 40 years (1950-92) at Channel 6, including the Missouri River flood of 1952 and the Omaha tornado of 1975.

He also did weekly features with the late Arnold Peterson, “Farm Family of the Week” and “Arnold’s Garden,” which often featured Bob’s homegrown tomatoes, apples and other gardening projects.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Mary Pat Mockler, five children and a sister.
The gates are swinging open . . . slow but steady with regulations still in place but easing. As 2020 becomes a shadow of your imagination – or for me, a bad dream – the rules are finally moving forward toward that long-hoped-for return to normal. Hors d’oeuvres and buffets are currently available again, beginning last month. The club staged its first buffet on St. Patrick’s Day with guidelines in place and hand sanitizers accented like decorations. I enjoyed the colorful masks decorating your mysterious faces. Ironically, the buffet-style dining returned one year to the day from when most businesses shut down (St. Patrick’s Day, March 17, 2020). And so, one year later, bring on the events and the socialization (with sanitation stations in place)!

Our 6,000-square-foot private club has been open since last June for lunches Monday through Friday and dinner on Thursday nights. Our Friday specials, curbside dinners from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., have been a big hit. The meals are mostly the Press Club favorites, but with some new twists like paella and fried chicken. Our board members have been helping with the curbside deliveries as this is not a one-man-band production. Thank you for the support!

Lenten-friendly meals went well with add-ons available for those who wanted a non-meat entrée. Now our springtime events are blooming, beginning with our always-popular Easter Brunch and its two seatings, at 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., on April 4.

Next on the calendar are Administrative Professionals Day, April 21, and the Winemaker’s Dinner, April 23, with hors d’oeuvres at the fireplace and a multi-course sit-down meal paired with wine. Then comes the Mother’s Day Brunch on May 9.

The Educational Forums are back in full swing, starting with a mayoral debate, April 22; James Jones speaking on “Restorative Justice,” May 20, and David Brown, CEO of the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, June 17. Thank you, Josh Todd, CEO of the Omaha Sports Commission, for your 2021 preview at our March Noon Forum.

The club also has been hosting small wedding receptions and rehearsal dinners. Love is not gone, just confined to intimate celebrations by family, close friends and mandatory mask wearing. Creative masks can be a visual delight with rhinestones and sequins to make the pictures memorable.

Give us a call/email about your special gathering as our staff is excited to get back to work and have some fun. One staff member said Groundhog Day is finally over. The more and the sooner we see our members, the better the options we can offer you.

Directions to get in the club are still the same with two entrances only: through the Central City parking garage tunnel and at the northwest corner of 16th and Dodge Streets.

Christine Villamonte, OPC Restaurant and Events Manager

PHONE 402-345-8008 FOR RESERVATIONS

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Thomas Wilkins

Face on the Ballroom Floor

Members $55 • Non-Members $65
+ Tax and Gratuity

5:30 p.m. Social, No-Host Bar
6:30 p.m. Dinner

**Hors d’oeuvres**
Assorted Canapes

**Salad**
OPC Signature Thunderbird Salad

**Entrée**
OPC Filet with Maître d’Butter
Fresh Asparagus Citron
Loaded Twice Baked Potato

**Desserts**
Chocolate Mousse Framboise

Mother’s Day Brunch

Sunday, May 9, 2021
Two seatings: 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
Adults $25 • Children 10 and Under $15

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

**Entrées**
Chicken Crepes Supreme
Baked Tilapia Buerre Blanc
Eggs Benedict
Risotto • Lyonnais Potatoes
Seasonal Vegetables

**A La Carte**
Build-Your-Own Omelet • 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
Sticky Buns, Chocolate-Dipped Driscoll Strawberries & Homemade Coffee Cake
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Gary Willis NP Dodge Real Estate
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Chris Allen UNO
Todd Andrews Salvation Army
Liz Hruska Legislative Fiscal Office
Mike McKnight WOWT
Dr. Robert Meyers Retired

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.

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

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