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All-star cast of roasters includes Union Pacific CEO

Face event on June 7 will honor Omaha Symphony music director

By Tom O'Connor
Communications Committee

For the past 16 years, Thomas Wilkins has been one of the key faces in the Omaha arts community. On June 7, Wilkins, longtime music director of the Omaha Symphony, will experience a different sort of “facial” experience when he becomes the Omaha Press Club’s 164th “Face on the Barroom Floor.”

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event will be the first Face event since November 2019. All signs indicate that a strong turnout will be on hand to recognize Wilkins, who will conduct his final concert with the Omaha Symphony on June 12. His successor as music director of the Omaha Symphony will be Ankush Kumar Bahl.

“The early response has been excellent,” said Roger Humphries, president of the Omaha Press Club and chair of the Face on the Barroom Floor Committee. “We are thrilled to see that the community is excited to come to the Omaha Press Club and recognize Thomas for all he has done.”

The Face events are always a ton of fun. Everyone enjoys a good laugh – especially coming out of a pandemic.”

Laughs should be plentiful, as Wilkins will be roasted and toasted by five gentlemen who are actively engaged with the Omaha Symphony.

Trenten P. Bausch, a partner in the Cline Williams law firm, will serve as emcee. Four other Omaha business executives will round out the roasters. The group is headlined by Lance Fritz, chairman, president and CEO of Union Pacific. Others sharing the podium include:

- Bruce Carpenter, senior vice president, HDR, Inc.;
- Dave Diamond, retired chief financial officer, Mutual of Omaha; and
- David Slosburg, Spruce Capital Group.

Slosburg chairs the Omaha Symphony Board of Directors, which includes Diamond and (formerly) Fritz, while Bausch and (formerly) Carpenter are Omaha Symphony Governing Members.

A native of Norfolk, Virginia, Wilkins is a graduate of the Shenandoah Conservatory of Music in Virginia and



Thomas Wilkins

the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. He is professor of music and Henry A. Upper Chair of Orchestral Conducting at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.

In addition to his role with the Omaha Symphony, Wilkins is principal conductor of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra and is artistic advisor for education and community engagement for the Boston Symphony.

Previously, he has held conducting positions with the Detroit Symphony, the Florida Orchestra (Tampa), and the Richmond (Virginia) Symphony. He also has served on the music faculties of North

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What’s happening in Omaha? Find out at June 17 Forum

By Angella Arndt
Communications Committee

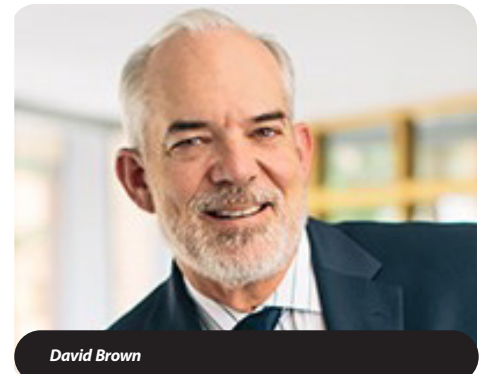
The Noon Education Forum on Thursday, June 17 will feature David Brown, president and CEO of the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, as he speaks about “What’s Happening in Omaha.”

The chamber is one of the largest, most highly accredited chambers in the nation with a five-star accreditation by the U.S.

Chamber of Commerce, placing it in the top 1% of chambers nationally.

Noon Forum lunch service begins at 11:30 a.m. for \$17 per person. The program starts at noon and concludes at 1 p.m.

Call 402-345-8008 for reservations or email Christine Villamonte at opchristine@gmail.com. Non-Press Club members are welcome.



David Brown

Park University (Chicago), the University of Tennessee in Chattanooga, and Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

During his conducting career, he has led orchestras throughout the United States, including the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Cincinnati Symphony and the National Symphony.

His numerous awards include: the Boston Globe naming him among the "Best People and Ideas of 2011;" the Outstanding Artist Award through the Nebraska Arts Council/Governor's Arts Awards; the Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award for the Elevation of Music in Society conferred by Boston's Longy School of Music; and the Dick and

Mary Holland Leadership Award from the Omaha Symphony.

Wilkins has been active in the Omaha community, serving on several boards including the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce and the Charles Drew Health Center. In Florida, he has been on the boards of a spouse abuse program in Tampa, as well as the Museum of Fine Arts and the Academy Preparatory Center, both in St. Petersburg.

He currently serves as chairman of the board for the Raymond James Charitable Endowment Fund and as national ambassador for the nonprofit World Pediatric Project in Richmond, which provides children throughout Central America and the Caribbean with critical surgical and diagnostic care.

An avid golfer, Wilkins and his

wife, Sheri-Lee, are the parents of twin daughters, Erica and Nicole.

With the lifting of the COVID mandate in Omaha, face masks are no longer required in the First National Bank building or in the Press Club. OPC staff will continue to wear masks.

FACE ON THE BARROOM FLOOR – THOMAS WILKINS

WHEN: MONDAY, JUNE 7 – RECEPTION, 5:30 P.M.; DINNER, 6:30 P.M.; ROAST, 8 P.M.

COST: \$60 FOR OPC MEMBERS; \$70 FOR NON-MEMBERS

RSVP: CALL THE OPC AT 402-345-8008. MEMBERS CAN CHARGE TO THEIR OPC ACCOUNT. NON-MEMBERS NEED TO PROVIDE THEIR CREDIT CARD INFORMATION.

Foundation looking forward to fall banquet

By Josh Bucy

OPC Foundation President

As spring turns to summer, the Omaha Press Club Foundation is looking forward to gathering in person again for our annual scholarship banquet.

Due to the pandemic, the OPC Foundation was unable to hold an in-person scholarship banquet in 2020. Thanks to the creative prowess of trustee Brian Norton, the OPC Foundation created and shared a video with student interviews and speeches from our honorees.

As health restrictions and guidelines are lifted, I am optimistic and hopeful that we will be able to host an in-person scholarship banquet for the Class of 2021 honorees this fall once again at the Press Club. Details will be announced in upcoming newsletters once plans are finalized.

At the foundation's April meeting, we elected officers for the 2021-22 term. The newly elected officers are as follows:

President: Josh Bucy

First Vice President: Henry Cordes

Second Vice President: Brian Norton

Treasurer: Mike Holmes

Secretary: Steve Jordon

Lastly, I wanted to briefly introduce myself. I am creative director and database

administrator for the Omaha Central High School Foundation.

I joined the OPC Foundation as a trustee in 2017 thanks to the nomination and recommendation of my mentor and good friend, Dr. Eileen Wirth.

As a graduate of the Journalism, Media & Computing Department at Creighton University, my passion for journalism and respect for journalists has only grown during my time at the OPC Foundation.

I am deeply honored to serve as president of the foundation, and I am excited that we get to help students at Creighton University, the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln find their own passions and interests in journalism and media.

If you would like to help future journalists and provide funding for our scholarships supporting students pursuing careers in radio, television, print, public relations and new media, you can make your donation online at www.opcscholarships.org or by reaching out to me directly. You will also find the video from our 2020 virtual scholarship celebration on our website.



Josh Bucy

The OPC remembers: Nancy Edwards was pianist for gridiron shows

Nancy Edwards, longtime pianist at Dundee Presbyterian Church and an accompanist for numerous Omaha Press Club shows, died April 1. She was 84.

In addition to teaming with the late pianist Eleanor McHale for several years of OPC show rehearsals and performances, Edwards was an accompanist for junior and senior high school programs across the Omaha area. She also played for community theater and for the Voices of Mel Olson.

Perhaps her musical talents will be remembered most at Dundee Presbyterian, where she taught preschool and was a church member for more than 60 years. She played the keyboards there nearly every Sunday up until the time of her death.

Nancy and her Wahoo Junior High School sweetheart, Bill Edwards, were married for 44 years until his death in 2002. She is survived by three children and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Retiring health chief Pour to speak at July Forum

By Gary Kerr
Education Committee

The director of the Douglas County Health Department who led the local effort in fighting COVID-19 will be a Press Club guest in July. Dr. Adi Pour will speak and take questions from our audience at a Noon Forum on July 8.

Dr. Pour, who is retiring the end of June, has been the Health Department director since 2002. Before that, she was the state toxicologist with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services for 13 years. She has

been a well-known and respected leader in Nebraska public health circles for decades.

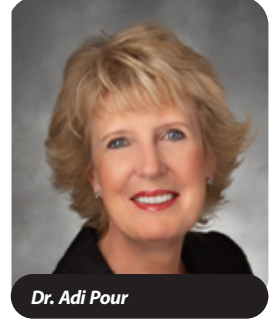
Not so well known by the general public before the pandemic, it was her face you saw almost nightly on TV advising us how to respond as the scourge got a grip on the local area and around the country.

Join us on Thursday, July 8, from noon to 1 p.m. at the Omaha Press Club to hear Dr. Pour talk about fighting the pandemic and other challenges she and her colleagues have faced during her many years heading up the Douglas

County Health Department.

Noon Forum lunch service begins at 11:30 a.m. for \$17 per person. The program starts at noon and concludes at 1 p.m.

Non-OPC members are welcome; call 402-345-8008



Dr. Adi Pour

PHONE 402-345-8008 FOR RESERVATIONS

Thomas Wilkins Face on the Barroom Floor

Monday, June 7, 2021

Members \$60 • Non-Members \$70

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

Baseball Championship Kickoff Buffet

June 18, 2021

6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

\$25 Adults, \$15 Children

Buffet Menu

Carved Beef Brisket
Southern Fried Chicken
BBQ Pork Baby Back Ribs,
Vienna All-Beef Hot Dogs
Tossed Salad, Deviled Eggs
Coleslaw, Signature Baked Beans
Corn-on-the-Cob, Potato Salad
Whipped Potatoes & Gravy

Desserts

Brownie à la Mode
Strawberry Cheesecake

Father's Day Steak Grill

Saturday, June 19, 2021

5:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Adults: \$27 • Children: \$16

From the Kitchen

à la Carte Choice:

Prime Rib of Beef • Ribeye
New York Strip • Club Steak

On the Buffet

Vienna Hot Dogs • Baked Potatoes
Baked Beans • Corn-on-the-Cob
Potato Salad • Pasta Salad
Coleslaw • House Salad
Deviled Eggs

Desserts

Brownies • Strawberry Shortcake

Validated parking at Doubletree

The Omaha Press Club is no longer offering validated parking in the Central City Garage west of the First National Bank building.

Instead, validated parking again is available at the DoubleTree Hotel Garage east of the main hotel entrance. Bring your parking ticket to the club for validation of up to two hours.

Self-pay parking remains available in the Central City Garage.

A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER

I was told to share my story. I hope I do not offend any PETA groups out there, but this is part of my job to understand all parts of the food chain from start to finish.



Christine Villamonte

I was asked by a family member in Stanton, Nebraska, to attend a branding. By my definition, branding cattle happens when they are young and easier to handle. Ranchers must be able to identify their stock from other ranchers' stock or thieves. The animals are marked with a hot brand, tagged/chipped in the ear and inoculated in the neck, nose and armpit with all different types of medicine. If the animals were to get out of their fields, the owners are able to find them with chips, just like your own personal domestic animals.

Cattle are their owners' livelihood, so branding is a must. The brands are licensed for what can be big money, so families hold on to them from generation to generation.

The food chain starts with the farmers and ranchers, so I said why not educate me in real-world experiences from beginning to end.

To my surprise, my cousin did not mention the amount of people involved to make this a successful "another day on the farm." There were three working horses with real cowboys/girls roping the calves, multiple want-to-be veterinarians giving injections and branding, high school and college-age kids (not just young men, but also young women) to hold the animals down safely and securely to make every step count with no injuries to animals and humans.

There were 74 calves and 14 able bodies on that branding day. I watched the first 10 or so calves through the entire branding process before I said, "Let me help." I inoculated probably more than 40 calves,

branded five and wrestled three small calves (front end only). The whole branding process takes about two minutes if all are in rhythm.

I can proudly say that I am on the rotation for next year's branding, as I truly had an experience of a lifetime. I see how difficult the farming and ranching can be and respect the process from farm to table.

Join us in June!

June will be a busy and fun month at the Omaha Press Club, with the Thomas Wilkins "Face on the Barroom Floor," KFAB Wine Dinner, baseball championship kickoff buffet (fireworks to be determined) and Father's Day Grill, buffet and steak the way you like it.

See you on the 22nd floor!

-Christine Villamonte
OPC Restaurant and Events Manager

The impact of restorative justice

By Hunter Samuels
Communications Committee

As the executive director of Lincoln's Community Justice Center, James Jones has served more than 12,000 justice-involved individuals to heal victims, rehabilitate offenders and rebuild communities. But as he told a crowd of roughly 40 at the May 20 Omaha Press Club Noon Forum, there's still a lot of work to be done, and one of the first things to do in that effort is to change the language around crime.

More specifically, Jones suggests, we shouldn't talk about "crime" at all. Instead, when using a restorative justice system, the focus should be on "harm." Jones says that when the law is broken, the person responsible should be asked two questions: Whom did you harm? And how are you going to fix it?

At the core of the restorative justice movement is the realization that, as Jones says, "crime is not an act against the state, but against human relationships." By asking those questions, the needs of the victims

are elevated first and foremost. At the same time, the needs of the community, as well as those of offenders, must also be addressed. When organizations like the Community Justice Center focus on all three parties, they can reduce the rates of recidivism in



James Jones directs Lincoln's Community Justice Center.
Photo by Gary Willis.

the community.

Numerous studies have been done on the subject, including a pair published by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Texas Tech University, and in one comparison, the Community Justice Center reduced recidivism by 66% over a two- to six-year follow-up period, compared to a more typical probation treatment.

Jones references a quote from restorative justice pioneer Howard Zehr on the purpose of the justice system: "If crime wounds, justice should heal."

It's this mindset that Jones hopes will lead communities to pursue a system truly focused on rehabilitating offenders instead of simply punishing them. While he says he pulls no punches when it comes to dealing with arrested individuals, he wants them to feel like they do have a second chance after prison, just as he did after an arrest for robbery in 1989, when he spent the next three years in the Nebraska State Penitentiary.

By centering the victims in the process, Jones says offenders are led to address and attempt to correct the harm they've caused, but after doing so, they can become productive members of their community. And as he explains, "when you belong to the community, you don't destroy it."

To learn more about the Community Justice Center and their work in restorative justice, visit communityjusticecenter.org.

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Roger Humphries Photography

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Bridget (Weide) Brooks
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"Face on the Barroom Floor" Roger Humphries
Hall of Fame Woody Bradford
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	Joseph Weber

WE'RE ONLINE! READ YOUR OPC NEWSLETTER AT OMAHAPRESSCLUB.COM



Thursday, June 3
Prime Rib Night
5:30 p.m. to close

Monday, June 7
"Face on the Barroom Floor"
Thomas Wilkins
5:30 p.m. social, 6:30 p.m. dinner
\$60 OPC members, \$70 non-members

Thursday, June 10
Prime Rib Night
5:30 p.m. to close

Friday, June 11
KFAB and OPC Wine Dinner
Scott Voorhees host
6 p.m. hors d'oeuvres, 6:30 p.m. dinner
\$60 OPC members, \$70 non-members

Thursday, June 17
Noon Forum
David Brown, CEO of Greater
Omaha Chamber of Commerce
11:30 a.m. lunch, \$17
Noon to 1 p.m. forum

Thursday, June 17
Prime Rib Night
5:30 p.m. to close

Friday, June 18
Fireworks Buffet
for college baseball's
championship
opening ceremonies
6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.
\$25 and \$15 (kids 3-10)

Saturday, June 19
Father's Day Grill
5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
\$27 and \$16 (kids 3-10)

Thursday, June 24
Prime Rib Night
5:30 p.m. to close

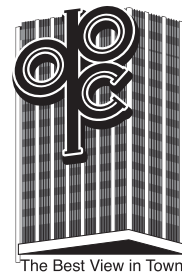
Thursday, July 1
Prime Rib Night
5:30 p.m. to close

Saturday, July 3
Home Run Derby
Baseball Buffet
6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
\$25 and \$15 (kids 3-10)

Sunday, July 26
to Monday, August 16
Club's annual closing

Hours of Operation

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



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Tom O'Connor Proofreader
Don Summerside Copy Editor

**Submissions for the July
issue are due on or before June 20.**

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.