Dr. Jeffrey Gold will be next ‘Face on Barroom Floor’

All-star cast of roasters will try to make UNMC chancellor squirm on April 28

By Tom O'Connor
Communication Committee

A star-studded cast of roasters should provide plenty of laughs — and some uncomfortable moments — when Jeffrey P. Gold, MD, chancellor of the University of Nebraska Medical Center, is enshrined as the next “Face on the Barroom Floor” at the Omaha Press Club on Thursday, April 28.

The list of roasters includes four past “Faces on the Barroom Floor,” the CEO of one of Omaha’s major employers, as well as a legendary — but unsung — figure in Omaha media/public relations.

Trev Alberts, athletic director for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, will serve as emcee. Alberts, who was honored as the 149th “Face” in 2016, has been one of the state’s most recognized sports icons since being an All-American linebacker for the Nebraska Cornhuskers in the early 1990s. He went on to serve as athletic director at the University of Nebraska at Omaha for 12 years before being selected as UNL’s AD in 2021.

Other roasters include:
• Mike Yanney, chairman emeritus, Burlington Capital Group LLC and a longtime UNMC supporter (166th “Face” in 2021);
• Jim Linder, MD, CEO, Nebraska Medicine, UNMC’s principal clinical partner;
• Aileen Warren, president and CEO, ICAN, who served as associate vice chan-

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2nd Congressional District Democratic Debate April 19

By Gary Kerr
Education Committee

Alisha Shelton and Tony Vargas, Democratic candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives from the 2nd Congressional District, will debate the issues April 19 at the Omaha Press Club to see who will face Republican Congressman Don Bacon or GOP challenger Steve Kuehl of Gretna in the fall election.

Alisha Shelton is an Omaha mental health therapist, professional counselor, and community advocate. She has lived in Omaha most of her life. She is a pre-med graduate from Xavier University of Louisiana and attended graduate school for counseling at Bellevue University.

Tony Vargas is a Nebraska state senator serving his second term representing District 7, which includes downtown Omaha and much of southeastern Omaha. He received a master’s degree in education from Pace University and is a former teacher and member of the Omaha Public Schools Board.

The Democratic and Republican nominees will be decided in the May 10 primary election. The April luncheon debate is sponsored by the Press Club and the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha.

The debate begins at noon and continues until 1 p.m. Lunch, at $19 per person, is served beginning at 11:30 a.m. For reservations, email Christine at opcchristine@gmail.com or call 402-345-8008. Non-Press Club members are welcome.

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OPC: A Place for Connections and Community

By Hunter Samuels
OPC President

There are a lot of things that make the Omaha Press Club, the Omaha Press Club.

The food. The views. The events.

But a club isn’t truly a club without the people.

Our staff is tremendous, and as you know, all work incredibly hard to keep this place running at such a high level. Plus, the club is regularly filled with many brilliant folks from every corner of the media and communications industry and beyond. I know that every time I walk through that big glass door, I’m going to learn something. Whether it’s a committee meeting, board meeting, or simply an event with other club and community members, I relish those opportunities to hear stories about the club’s history or to receive nuggets of wisdom from fellow communications professionals.

The Omaha Press Club exists to bring people together for those opportunities, and if you’re looking for more interactions like that, you’re in luck.

Just take a gander at the list of events on the last page of the newsletter. I’ll wait, because this could take a minute.

All done? Great.

From the OPC Foundation Scholarship ceremonies, to the upcoming Noon Forums, to Easter and Mother’s Day celebrations, we’ve got brunches and lunches in bunches. And that’s just in the next several weeks! Beyond those events, the Omaha Press Club is here for your midweek lunch meetings, your

NEW DINNER HOURS
THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY
5:30 P.M. TO 8 P.M.
cellor and executive director for UNMC's human resources from 2014-2021 (160th "Face" in 2019);
• Rich Watson, UNMC videographer who previously worked for KMTV-Channel 3 for more than 30 years, establishing himself as one of Omaha's leading videographers; and
• Jean Stothert, Omaha mayor (159th "Face" in 2018).

A native of New York City, Dr. Gold was named UNMC's eighth chancellor in 2014 after serving in leadership positions in Ohio and New York. He also serves as board chair of Nebraska Medicine. In 2021, he was named provost and executive vice president of the University of Nebraska System. From 2017-2021, he also served as chancellor of UNO.

As UNMC’s chief executive officer, Dr. Gold oversees seven colleges, numerous institutes, a staff and faculty of about 7,000 and 4,300 health professions students. The combined annual economic impact of UNMC/Nebraska Medicine's 500-mile campus is estimated to be more than $6 billion.

A cardiothoracic surgeon during his medical career, Dr. Gold earned his undergraduate degree from the Cornell University College of Engineering and his medical degree from the Weill Cornell College of Medicine.

**‘FACE ON THE BARROOM FLOOR’ – JEFFREY P. GOLD, MD**

WHEN: THURSDAY, APRIL 28 – RECEPTION, 5:30 P.M., DINNER, 6:30 P.M., ROAST, 8 P.M.
COST: $75 FOR OPC MEMBERS; $85 FOR NON-MEMBERS.
RSVP: THE EVENT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.
CALL THE OPC AT 402-345-8008. MEMBERS CAN CHARGE TO THEIR OPC ACCOUNT. NON-MEMBERS NEED TO PROVIDE THEIR CREDIT CARD INFORMATION.

Stander was OPC’s 3rd ‘Face on the Floor’

World champion Joe Frazier.

“The Bluffs Butcher” lost the fight, a technical KO due to cuts, but never the affection of his fans and friends. Long after the end of his boxing career, Stander received a standing ovation when he took part in the 2015 Press Club roast of Bud Crawford, “Face” No. 145 and the second boxer to be honored by the club.

Stander died March 8 at his home in Ralston at age 77. He succumbed to complications from diabetes, said his wife, Toddye.

A South Carolina native, Stander grew up in Council Bluffs and graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School, where he was a multi-sport athlete. He won an Omaha Golden Gloves championship at age 24 and then turned pro. Over the next three years, he compiled a 23-1-1 record and climbed as high as No. 8 in the world rankings. After the Frazier title match, he fought for another decade before retiring with a 38-21-3 record.

Later, he maintained a ring presence as a referee, judge and trainer, worked as a bodyguard and also was employed at Vickers Inc. in Omaha.

While Stander fell short in his championship quest, the Bluffs Butcher’s hometown made sure his place in local boxing history would not be forgotten. At a Council Bluffs event in 2012 marking the 40th anniversary of his title bout, Standers was presented with a championship-style belt that proclaimed him “The People’s Champion.”

Bud and the 'Butcher'

Boxing's past and present came together at the Press Club in May 2015 for the installation of Bud Crawford as the 145th "Face on the Barroom Floor." Stand, OPC’s “Face” No. 3, fought for the heavyweight title in Omaha in 1972. Crawford has held multiple world titles and is currently the WBO welterweight champion.

Ron Stander caricature

By Don Summerside
Communications Committee

The “Face on the Barroom Floor” tradition was launched a half-century ago with some heavy hitters the first to be honored at the then-new Omaha Press Club.

An idea initially inspired by the late columnist Robert McMorris and illustrated by artist Jim Horan, what was to become the OPC’s hallmark event got off to a rousing start in November 1971 with “Face” No. 1: Mayor Eugene Leahy. Cornhusker coaching legend Bob Devaney was No. 2 in February 1972.

Then in May 1972, literally the heaviest hitter became the Press Club’s third “Face on the Barroom Floor,” Boxer Ron Stander was honored shortly before his heavyweight title fight at the Omaha Civic Auditorium with Saturday night prime rib cravings, and of course, all your private event needs. As a reminder, OPC members can rent space in the club at no charge, so be sure to consider us for any event you’re looking to plan.

All the events that happen in the club are successful because of the people here. The staff obviously are instrumental, our board and committees have a big hand in it, and we’re hoping you can join us in those efforts, as well. Whatever it is you want to do to support the club, there is a place for you.

Want to write stories? Join the Communications Committee.

Love marketing? Join the Marketing/Membership Committee.

Enjoy tacos? Join the Taco Committee.

Okay, so we don’t actually have a Taco Committee. Yet. But we do have plenty of room for talented and passionate individuals to contribute to the success of the Omaha Press Club, so if you think you want to get involved, shoot me an email at hsamuels@rmhcomaha.org, and let’s figure out what that looks like together.

Even if you don’t want to join a committee, all our events have opportunities to volunteer for a couple of hours and ensure our guests have a fantastic time.

This year is shaping up to be an exciting one, with plenty of events planned, beautiful views to take in, and delicious food to enjoy. It’s also a great time to make connections and interact with a remarkable group of people.

It’s a great time to be at the Omaha Press Club.
Riverfront Revitalization Project – transforming Downtown Omaha

By Angella Arndt
Communications Committee

Kristyna Engdahl, director of communications for the Metropolitan Entertainment & Convention Authority (MECA), spoke at the March 17 Noon Forum about the progress of the Riverfront Revitalization Project.

Known as “The Riverfront,” this project includes Gene Leahy Mall, Heartland of America Park, and Lewis & Clark Landing. Engdahl reported that walkways and bridges will connect all three parks. “Our goal is to unify parts of downtown Omaha and bring crowds into the heart of the city and back down to the Missouri River.”

Gene Leahy Mall is scheduled to reopen in 2023, Lewis & Clark Landing will reopen later in 2023, followed by Heartland of America Park.

Visitors will find a significant transformation at Gene Leahy Mall, including the lagoon brought up to street level. The mall features two lawns, an art plaza, an event pavilion, a playground, and spaces for quiet enjoyment. In addition to the pond, an interactive water feature provides an opportunity to cool off or play. Dog lovers will enjoy the dog park covered in artificial turf. Installations such as seesaws and tunnels provide entertainment for large and small dogs.

While the project aims to reconnect the city with the Missouri River, the 11th Street Promenade helps connect the Old Market to the Capitol District.

Familiar sights remain, such as the mall’s historic orange lights and slides. “We thought a lot about bringing this park into the future while finding ways to celebrate the past,” Engdahl said. “People wanted the slides to stay, and they have been preserved, along with some additional elements. Things like the orange lights express signature Omaha, but we also needed things that modern families will want to come down and use.”

Heartland of America Park is the largest of the three parks. The lake and fountain will remain, along with new amenities to enjoy. A skate ribbon features an exterior racing track about the size of a football field and rinks inside that allow for more traditional skating. Visitors can enjoy ice skating during the winter and rollerblading and skating during the summer. The park also has an event lawn, amphitheater, and bocce courts. This park will be the last of the three parks to reopen in 2023.

Lewis & Clark Landing on the Riverfront historically had a lot of concrete. The redesign includes plenty of green space and a trail system. New features such as an event plaza, destination play area, urban beach, and sand volleyball courts provide plenty of opportunities to play and relax. The marina is being renovated to provide access to the Missouri River. Lewis & Clark Landing is scheduled to reopen in 2023.

Also under construction at Lewis & Clark Landing and scheduled to open in 2023 is the $101 million Kiewit Luminarium, a privately funded science museum.

The Riverfront will be a highly activated space for people to come down and enjoy. A variety of programs, events and activities will be available on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Engdahl stated that active parks are essential for many reasons, such as increasing attendance, encouraging new development, creating iconic destinations, and attracting diversified user groups.

Engdahl discussed the overall goals for the project. “In addition to having great amenities and programming available, we want to establish an identity for the Riverfront. We want to build an inclusive community that is a cherished place for every demographic to enjoy.”

The ‘First 100 Days,’ Part 3: Mayor Stothert will look back, ahead at May 5 Noon Forum

It’s been 100 – make that 300-plus – days since Jean Stothert began her third term as mayor of Omaha.

So where is Omaha headed and how’s it going, Mayor? In this OPC check-in, the Noon Forum on May 5, Stothert will discuss the BIG Mutual of Omaha/streetcar/library development for Downtown and Midtown. And whatever else might be up her sleeve.

First elected in 2013 and again in 2017 and 2021, Stothert is the city’s 51st mayor and first woman. After serving on the Millard Board of Education, she was first elected in 2009 to the City Council representing District 5 in southwest Omaha.

Now, OPC welcomes Mayor Stothert to this third “100 Days” update.

Lunch service for the Noon Forum begins at 11:30 a.m. for $19 per person. The program starts at noon and concludes at 1 p.m. Call 402-345-8008 for reservations. Or email opcchristine@gmail.com. Reservations must include an OPC member number or credit card. Non-members are welcome.
A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER

Christine Villamonte
Restaurant and Events Manager

Can we say spring . . . please? On the bright side, the springtime calendar is brimming with events at your Omaha Press Club.

April offers Lenten specials for those who participate in no-meat Fridays. Then comes our Easter Brunch, with two seatings on Sunday the 17th.

On the political front, Democratic candidates for Congress in the 2nd District will debate at the Press Club on April 19. Closing out the jampacked month are the Scholarship Brunch on April 23, Administrative Assistants Day on the 27th and the “Face on the Barroom Floor” roast saluting UNMC’s Dr. Jeffrey Gold on the 28th.

May brings the Mother’s Day Brunch on the 8th and a Friday the 13th Winemaker’s Dinner. The latter event will include hors d’oeuvres at the fireplace and a multicourse sit-down meal with wine pairings.

Keep an eye on future newsletters for information regarding “Face on the Barroom Floor” events honoring Gov. Pete Ricketts on June 16, volleyball star Jordan Larson in July and North Omaha developer Othello Meadows in November. The “Face” dinners and roasts are our signature events, so if you have never been to one, you’ll discover a great way to support the club and have a wonderful time with a bubbling atmosphere.

Meanwhile, a reminder to you and your friends to consider the club for wedding receptions and rehearsal dinners, anniversaries and birthdays. If the Omaha Press Club member is present, the rental fee is waived for the majority of our fulltime memberships (not available to student, day and tenant memberships).

Give us a call or email about your special gathering and I will get back to you with planning options, dates of availability and pricing to keep everyone on budget.

See you soon.

Christine Villamonte
Restaurant and Events Manager

PHONE 402-345-8008 FOR RESERVATIONS

Easter Buffet

Sunday, April 17, 2022
Two seatings: 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
Adults $30 • Children $15

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 Vegetable
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

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

Mother’s Day Brunch

Sunday, May 8, 2022
Two seatings: 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
Adults $30 • Children 3-10 $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 / Lyonnais Potatoes
Seasonal Vegetables

A La Carte
Build-Your-Own Omelet
Multi-Topping Pancake Bar

Salad Display
Thunderbird Salad, Imported Cheese & Anti Pasta, Cole Slaw, Potato Salad, Deviled Eggs,
Smoked Salmon Chaud Froid,
Fresh Fruit Display

Breads
Fresh-Baked Pastries
Breakfast Breads • Pecan Rolls

Desserts
New York-style Cheesecake
with Strawberries Dipped
Chocolate Driscoll Strawberries
Warm Peach Cobbler
with French Vanilla Ice Cream

Italian Winemaker’s Dinner

Friday, May 13, 2022
6 p.m.

Members $75 •
Non-Members $85

Aperitivo
Crostini Eggplant & Smoked Cheese Wine

Primo
Tagliatelle with Ragù Bolognese
Besciamella
Wine

Secondo
Pork Rolls Alla Messinese Siciliana
Wine

Contorno
Mixed Salad, Fresh Fruit & Rosemary Potatoes
Wine

Dolce
Almond Pie
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.