Gary Sadlemyer, Larry the Cable Guy will headline Ricketts roasters

By Tom O’Connor
Communication Committee

With two iconic roasters – Gary Sadlemyer and Larry the Cable Guy – headlining the festivities, the June 16 “Face on the Barroom Floor” event for Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts promises to be one for the ages.

Sadlemyer, the longtime morning show host for KFAB-AM (1110), was ‘Face’ No. 115 in 2008 and will serve as emcee. Larry the Cable Guy, whose real name is Dan Whitney, was ‘Face’ No. 113 in 2007 and is considered arguably the most famous comedian to come out of Nebraska since Johnny Carson.

Two other roasters will join in the skewering of the governor. They include:
• Rick Bettger, owner of Omaha Car Care, a prominent auto service center with four locations; and
• Scott Cooney, a Chicago native who owns several health care businesses in Omaha and Lincoln and now lives in Logan, Iowa.

The event will be an invitation-only affair, as Ricketts has generously agreed to cover all meal and bar expenses for attendees.

Sadlemyer has emceed numerous Omaha Press Club events over the years, including the Omaha Press Club Show, the Hall of Fame banquet and the ‘Face on the Barroom Floor’ for Kent Pavelka, which generated one of the largest crowds ever for a ‘Face’ event.

A native of Pawnee City, Nebraska, Larry the Cable Guy has carved out a unique comedy niche that has made him one of the most beloved comedians in the country.

He has been one of the stars on the Blue Collar Comedy Tour and its subsequent series – Blue Collar TV. His movie credits include “Larry the Cable Guy: Health Inspector” and “Delta Farce.” He also provided his voice as ‘Mater’ in the popular animated film “Cars.” In 2007, he was featured on a 60 Minutes” segment as one of the hottest comedians in the country.

With more than 230 people in attendance, the 2007 ‘Face’ event for Larry the Cable Guy ranks as one of the memorable evenings in the history of the Omaha Press Club. And the largest crowds ever for a ‘Face’ event.

Continue on Page 3

Aqua-Africa will be June 15 Forum topic

Buey Ray Tut, Aqua-Africa’s co-founder, has a dual mission in Africa and Omaha. In Africa, the mission is to provide access to clean water for communities in need. In the Greater Omaha community, the mission is to bridge cultural gaps that exist in the community, helping youth with social and emotional growth.

Buey and his childhood friend, co-founder Jacob Khol, decided they wanted to help their homeland with plans to transform the way in which aid is administered to underdeveloped nations.

Since 2011, Aqua-Africa has drilled 25 wells in South Sudan and constructed three water towers, saving residents thousands of collective hours manually transporting water.

In Omaha, the founders and their team have visited more than 30 schools and youth organizations telling the Aqua-Africa story.

Join us June 15 from noon until 1 p.m. at the Omaha Press Club to hear Buey Ray Tut tell his story of immigration to the United States and give details on Aqua-Africa.

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 opchristine@gmail.com. Reservations must include an OPC member number or credit card. Non-members are welcome.

OPC QUARTERLY MINIMUM PERIOD ENDS JUNE 30
‘Big Mo’ pushing Omaha forward, Stothert says

By Connie Winkler
Education Committee

Omaha has the “Big Mo” – “Mo” for momentum, says Mayor Jean Stothert, pointing to downtown, the Blackstone district and the expanding University of Nebraska Medical Center.

“The momentum with development is undeniable, including with the Med Center. And it’s important to move people in and out of the urban core,” she explained regarding the new streetcar service planned for Farnam Street from 10th Street to Saddle Creek Road.

At the May 5 Noon Forum, the third-term mayor shared details about the development surge and population jump that makes Omaha the 39th largest city in the U.S. and one of the liveliest and safest cities with populations under 500,000, according to the 2020 census and other measures. Some of the highlights mentioned by Stothert:

• The new Gene Leahy Mall will open in early July, with major improvements and expansions of the downtown park, including for security. The Heartland of America Park, abutting the river, will open in 2023, with Union Pacific and the city working on a bridge across the rail tracks.

• “Don’t call them trolleys,” chastised Stothert about the planned streetcars, which will be light-rail vehicles like those popular in Kansas City. Indeed, Omaha is working with Kansas City to find the best deals on cars, at roughly $6 million each.

• Thanks to $100 million from the philanthropic community – as Stothert refers to Omaha’s benefactors – the city will build a new main library at 72nd and Dodge Streets, with the city maintaining ownership of the modern hub.

• The new downtown library at 1401 Jones St., on the fringe of the Old Market area, may not be the final site; other plans may develop in time. (The new Mutual of Omaha headquarters is slated for the existing downtown library site.)

During questions, the mayor rejected assertions that she had “handcuffed” the Douglas County health director’s mandate authority for masks during the Covid pandemic by pushing to have mandates subject to approval by the mayor and City Council. The City Charter had prescribed this arrangement, which led to legal action.

Ironically, Omaha’s Charter is overdue for updates (which have begun since the forum). Stothert is keeping an eye on the health department issue and updating the use of personal pronouns in the Charter so that the mayor and other officials can be referred to as “she,” not just “he.”

Will the mayor seek a fourth term? Don’t know yet, she says, adding “I’m getting kind of old; but I have no desire for (U.S.) Congress or the Senate. I like local government.”

And, as she also offered, “I love my job.”

Retired OPC artist looks over face drawings of Jeff Koterba

By Gary Willis
Communications Committee

Jim Horan, former OPC artist, recently paid a visit to the club to enjoy his favorite lunch item, Villamonte’s famous Reuben sandwich. Afterwards he viewed the works of Jeff Koterba, the new artist for the “Face on the Barroom Floor” events, and gave a thumbs up to Koterba’s works.

Before Horan retired in December 2019, the Omaha artist drew 160 of the first 162 “Faces” dating back to their origination in 1971. Two artists filled in for Horan during his tenure — Tom Dolphins did the “Face caricature for Gerald Ford in 1975 and Bill Johns was the artist who did the caricature of Horan in 1991.

When Horan retired, he was followed by artist Wayne Sealy, who created three “Faces.” Former Omaha World-Herald artist Koterba picked up the OPC artist’s brush last November. Jeff so far has drawn the Mike Yanney, Symone Sanders, Dr. Jeffrey Gold and Gov. Pete Ricketts “Faces.”

Koterba’s Ricketts caricature will debut on June 16, when the Nebraska governor

OPC Hall of Fame accepting nominations

Since 2007, the Omaha Press Club has honored more than 80 notable area journalists from the past and president. Honorees are recognized for their extraordinary contributions to the media industry. Nominations are welcome from Omaha Press Club members. The nominee may be living or deceased and should have made notable contributions to the broadcast, print or news media journalism. They have shown exceptional leadership, courage or contributions to the industry. They either have worked in the Omaha area or had a reasonable career in Omaha before going elsewhere.

To submit a nomination, please send an email to event chair Roger Humphries at rogeromaha@gmail.com with the individual’s name and a brief statement (50-250 words) on why the person should be inducted. Please indicate if the nominee is deceased and is being nominated posthumously. Also include your name and your phone number. Submit nominations by June 29, 2022.

And save the date for Saturday, Sept. 10 when the selected nominees will be inducted. The Omaha Press Club Journalists of Excellence Hall of Fame is an amazing experience for honorees and guests.
Dr. Joanne Li will speak at the July 21 Omaha Press Club’s Noon Education Forum about her first year as UNO’s chancellor.

Dr. Li became the 16th chancellor of the University of Nebraska Omaha on July 1, 2021. She is the first woman of color to serve as UNO chancellor and the first Asian-American in the history of the University of Nebraska System to hold an executive leadership role.

Dr. Li was recently named to serve a four-year term as a trustee on a national accreditation commission for post-secondary institutions. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC)’s board of trustees includes university administrators and community leaders from across the country. Dr. Li is the first Nebraska higher ed administrator to serve on the HLC since 2017. Her term will begin Sept. 1.

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.

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Ricketts story; continued from Page 1

Omaha Press Club history.

The roasters will take aim at Ricketts, who is completing his second four-year term as governor this year. A native of Nebraska City, Ricketts is the oldest of four children of Joe and Marlene Ricketts. Joe Ricketts is the founder and former CEO of TD Ameritrade and was recognized by the OPC in 2012 as ‘Face’ No. 132.

In 2009, the Ricketts family trust bought the Chicago Cubs baseball team with Ricketts and his siblings occupying four of the five seats on the team’s board of directors. In 2016, the Cubs won the World Series, breaking a 108-year drought.

Pete Ricketts’s top accomplishments as governor include:
• Delivering $12.6 billion in tax relief to Nebraskans;
• Leading Nebraska through historic floods in 2019 and the COVID-19 pandemic, where Nebraska’s response was ranked No. 1 in the nation;
• Dramatically reducing the rate of state spending growth; and
• Developing Nebraska’s workforce by improving operations, cutting red tape, and expanding international markets for Nebraska’s farmers and ranchers.

Thanks in part to Ricketts’s leadership, Nebraska won the Governor’s Cup for the most economic development projects per capita three years in a row from 2016 to 2018.

Ricketts and his wife, First Lady Susanne Shore, have been married for 24 years and live in Omaha. They have three children: Roscoe, Margot and Eleanor.

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PHONE 402-345-8008 FOR RESERVATIONS

Father’s Day Steak Grill
Saturday, June 18, 2022 • 5:30 to 9 p.m.
Adults: $35 • Children 12U: $18

From the Kitchen: Choice of One
Prime Rib • 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 Salad • Deviled Eggs

Desserts
Brownies • Strawberry Shortcake

4th of July Holiday Buffet
Saturday, July 2, 2022 • 6:30 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Adults: $30 • Children 12U: $18

On the Buffet
Tossed Salad • Deviled Eggs • Coleslaw
Baked Beans • Corn on the Cob
Potato Salad • Whipped Potatoes
Beef Brisket • Southern Fried Chicken
BBQ Pork Baby Back Ribs
Vienna All-Beef Hot Dogs

Dessert
Brownies a la Mode, Strawberry Cheesecake

KFAB Scott Voorhees Winemaker’s Dinner
Thursday, June 23, 2022 • 6 p.m.
Members $75
Non-Members $85

Appetizer
Prosciutto Melon
Wine

Amuse
Ribeye Crostini Brie
Wine

Salad $5
Classic Thunderbird
Parmesan Croustade
Wine

Sorbet
Kiwi Sorbet
Wine

Dual Entrée
Roasted Tenderloin Bordeaux Bordelaise
Cordon Bleu with a Saffron Hollandaise
Creamy Risotto
Wine

Dessert
Belgium Mocha Pave
Wine
2022 - 2023 Officers

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Ronald McDonald House

Angella Arndt
Freelance Content Contributor

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Treasurer
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Tracie McPherson

Peggy Ruprecht

Joseph Weber

Matt Wynn

Hours of Operation

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

DINNER
Thursday - Saturday
5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

OMAHA PRESS CLUB STAFF

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NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Sandra Tursi ......................... Graphics Editor

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.

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

Thursday, June 2
(and every Thursday)
Prime Rib Night
5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

June 3-4
(and every Friday and Saturday)
Special Dinner Menu
5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Thursday, June 16
“Face on the Ballroom Floor”
Gov. Pete Ricketts
5:30 p.m. social, 6:30 p.m. dinner
8 p.m. roast
(invitation only)

Saturday, June 18
Father’s Day Grill
5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Adults $35, Children $18

Thursday, June 23
KFAB Wine Dinner
with Scott Voorhees
6 p.m.
Members $75, Non-Members $85

Saturday, July 2
Holiday Buffet
6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Adults $30, Children $18

Monday, July 4
Club closed for holiday

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