First residential real estate person to be honored

Van Deeb will be next Face on Barroom Floor June 8

By Tom O’Connor
Communications Committee

From sports and entertainment to politics and business, the Omaha Press Club’s Face on the Barroom Floor has recognized a wide variety of people over the past 52 years. But, when the OPC honors Van Deeb as its 173rd Face on June 8, it will be breaking new ground, as it marks the first time the club has honored someone from the residential real estate field.

For Deeb, who has been in the real estate industry for the past 40 years, it is a landmark achievement.

“I’m truly honored,” he said. “This is a very big deal for me. I’m super excited. When Gary (Sadlemyer) called me, I said, ‘You must have the wrong number.’”

An Omaha native, Deeb has prominently used the media to spread the word about his business. For many years, you could hardly turn on your television set without seeing a commercial featuring Deeb.

Today, he continues to use the media hosting a weekly radio show on KCRO-AM (660) called “The Journey.” The hourlong program features prominent guests from the community and airs at 5 p.m. on Thursdays and at 10 a.m. on Sundays.

“I love Omaha,” Deeb said. “The show is all about my guests.”

After graduating from Burke High School, where he is a member of the school’s Hall of Fame, Deeb went on to play football at the University of Nebraska Omaha.

An outside linebacker at UNO, Deeb said his gridiron career was underwhelming. His UNO coach, Sandy Buda, established the

Van Deeb 30 Rule – Van doesn’t play unless we’re up by 30 points.

Deeb said playing football “made it easier to talk to the cheerleaders.” His greatest game came in his freshman year when he didn’t even make the team’s road trip.

He said, “A bunch of my buddies came over to my parents’ basement, and we were chugging Falstaff and listening to the game on the radio. The radio announcer kept calling Deeb’s name for making tackles. Turns out, Barry Leif – one of UNO’s best players – was wearing my number. I made 20 tackles, and I didn’t even leave my basement.”

In 2000, UNO honored Deeb with its Man of the Year Award. Following college, Deeb moved to Dallas, where he sold real estate for 10 years before moving back home to Omaha to open up DEEB Realty in 1993.

Deeb started his company with just himself working out of his basement. In 15 years,

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Clay Anderson has big ideas for museum

By Anne Walsh
Communications Committee

The little boy crawling up a hill near his rural Ashland, Nebraska, home some 55 years ago didn’t know he would grow up to:

• Become Nebraska’s only astronaut.
• Log 167 days in space, living on the International Space Station for five months in 2007.
• Complete six spacewalks while helping build the Space Station, ranking him in the top 40 for all-time spacewalk records.
• Return to Ashland in 2022 as leader of the Strategic Air Command & Aerospace Museum – built 25 years ago on the very hill where he played.

Clayton Anderson described his vision for the museum and answered a variety of space-related questions at the Omaha Press Club’s

Noon Forum April 13. Nearing his first anniversary May 5 as president & CEO of the museum, Anderson said his journey back to Nebraska after 42 years in Houston “seemed like fate.”

A 1977 graduate of Ashland-Greenwood High School, Anderson received a Bachelor of Science degree (cum laude) in physics from Hastings College and a Master of Science degree in aerospace engineering at Iowa State University.

Retiring from NASA in 2013 after a stellar 30-year career, Anderson remained busy in Houston as a motivational speaker, a professor of practice at Iowa State University in aerospace engineering, and an author of five books, including three for children.

He also was a long-distance SAC Museum board member. That piqued the interest of

Next Sister City will be subject of May Forum

By Robert Coates
Education Committee

Representatives of Omaha’s Italian community are currently in talks to formalize a Sister City agreement between Omaha, Nebraska, and Carlentini, Sicily.

Sheri Kanger, director and co-founder of the Sicula Italia Association and co-founder of the Carlentini Omaha Association, will address the Omaha Press Club about the connection between the two cities.

We will also hear from Steve Gerdes, president of the Omaha Sister Cities Association that started in 1965 when Shizuoka, Japan, became Omaha’s first Sister City.

The association is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization promoting citizen
Gary Gates, retired CEO of OPPD, and several “angel investors” who asked Anderson about his interest in leading the organization.

He and his wife Susan “talked and prayed” about the move, and after a museum leader vowed to support the couple “every single step of the way,” Anderson now believes “I’m supposed to be here doing this job.”

It was ugly at first, he said. Some of the museum’s issues were COVID-related, but not all. Achieving lift-off to become the Midwest’s preeminent aerospace educational museum, Anderson said, depends on:

• Adding interactive, space-themed exhibits and improving the experience related to existing, historic aircraft.
• Building relationships with additional investors and donors, through solid strategic planning.
• Reuniting with STRATCOM/SAC and Offutt’s 55th Air Wing.
• Partnering with the newly opened Kiewit Luminarium, Joslyn Art Museum and other venues.
• Bringing in talent from the University of Nebraska and Creighton University campuses.

“That’s my vision. I heard somebody somewhere say, ‘Failure is not an option.’ I’m not sure where that came from – maybe a movie or something,” he quipped. “But I don’t believe in failure. And I don’t quit.”

Like many institutions, the museum needs funding and the right people to run it. Donations of space equipment and memorabilia also are needed, with the museum paying transportation costs to Nebraska.

For example, Anderson is trying to secure a full-sized, S-Zero truss segment used as a test article for the International Space Station. Identical to the truss that forms the current Space Station’s backbone, the mammoth structure was scheduled to be dumped and made into a reef in the Gulf of Mexico. Getting it to Ashland from Houston won’t be cheap, but Anderson has many ideas how to turn it into an educational, interactive exhibit.

“You can’t just bring an artifact into the museum and let it sit. My job is to make them not sit; they need to have interactive components,” he said.

To that end, University of Nebraska-Lincoln engineering students are designing a replica of the museum’s B-36 bomber fuselage transport tunnel. Slightly shorter than the real McCoy, it links the flight deck to the rear sleeping quarters and toilet. Museumgoers will be able to recreate the airman’s experience, positioned on their backs atop a skateboard-like device, while using a rope to pull themselves back and forth through the tunnel.

A Smithsonian Museum affiliate, the SAC Museum recently received a “Center of Excellence” grant from Nebraska children’s groups to bring hands-on, engaging space-based STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) learning to the state. The grant is funding creation of a student activity book, based on NASA content, that will reach all Nebraska schools.

From the moon to Mars and beyond . . .

Beloved as the Press Club’s 127th Face on the Barroom Floor, Clay Anderson fielded many questions from Noon Forum attendees. Among them:

Q: Are you disappointed you didn’t go to Mars?
A: No. You know, Mars is a long way away. It takes six-to-nine months just to get there. As the planets rotate around the sun, there’s an optimal and non-optimal time to go. To go that far and be that far away from my family, that’s a non-starter for me. My wife Susan sacrificed a lot for me to live my dream so that I could be an astronaut and travel around the world.

It will not be easy getting to Mars. The propulsion systems we have today will not make six-to-nine months any smaller. And, if you actually go to Mars, you’ll need to either ‘build Earth when you get there’ or ‘take Earth with you.’

Q: What is NASA doing to solve environmental problems, such as climate change?
A: I’m not a climate denier; I’m a climate realist. My theory on climate change is based on binomial expansion summation, giving an approximation that has seven individual components: human contribution is one; the solar cycle, which goes from max to min every 11 years; Milankovitch (orbital variations) cycles, the orbital tug-and-pull between the gravitational attraction of all the planets and bodies in our solar system; tectonics, what the Earth does below the surface; biological (methane); volcanic eruptions, and meteor impacts. My theory is that each independent variable contributes, but to what level? We don’t know the level of those individual contributions, but in my estimation, the solar cycle impact is much greater than the biological (methane) impact.

Yes, we need to do whatever we can do. We are smart. I believe in God, and I have faith. Since God gave us a brain, and that brain is developing all the time, it enables us to continue coming up with ideas and better, smarter ways of doing things.

Our Earth has been here for billions of years, and it is a huge ecosystem. I don’t believe we humans are here to destroy it.

Q: Do you think we’ll discover life in space during our lifetime? Do you think the James Webb telescope will make the discovery?
A: No. Think of the universe; it is so large we can’t comprehend how large it is. The James Webb is taking new pictures showing us that where we thought there were maybe 10 galaxies, there are 10 billion galaxies. We’re the only life in our solar system; the only known life in our galaxy, the Milky Way.

Imagine the universe as a big pizza and we’re on the outside crust, and the most we’ve ever done is go 238,000 miles to the moon – that is a very small relative distance. So, what if there’s a species on the opposite side of our pizza, doing exactly what we’re doing? How do we meet at the pepperoni in the middle, because that’s a very long way?
Deeb story; continued from Page 1

he grew it to one of the largest real estate firms in the Midwest with more than 350 agents.

In 2009, Deeb sold DEEB Realty (now Nebraska Realty). He now travels the country inspiring and motivating sales and customer service people to be the best they can be, and he also owns Big Omaha Realty.

Deeb's many accomplishments include: receiving more than 100 sales and business awards; authoring six books on sales and customer service; and serving on the Omaha Planning Commission (2009-2016).

"My goal has always been to help get people from Point A to Point B," he said. "It’s been a privilege to go to work and be in real estate for 40 years. These days, I get to do a ton of mentoring. I’ve never had more fun and feel extremely blessed.”

Roasters for Deeb’s Face on the Barroom Floor event will include two past Faces:

- Emcee – Gil Cohen, executive vice president, sales and marketing, for Omaha Publications;
- Julie Cornell, longtime news anchor for KETV Newswatch 7 (Face No. 155 in 2017);
- Andie Hoig, publisher and CEO, Midlands Business Journal (Face No. 134 in 2012); and
- Kristi Andersen, vice president, CBRE, who has had a distinguished career in the media, public relations, communications and new real estate.

FACE ON BARROOM FLOOR – VAN DEEB

WHEN: THURSDAY, JUNE 8
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.

Media future is June Forum topic

By Gary Willis
Communications Committee

The June 15 Noon Educational Forum will feature Matt Wynn, Flatwater Free Press, and Cate Folsom, Nebraska Examiner.

It’s a turbulent time in the world of journalism, but also an exciting time. Professional journalism continues to play a vital role in the health of our democracy. But how news is produced and disseminated is evolving.

Matt Wynn is the executive director of the Nebraska Journalism Trust, which operates the Flatwater Free Press and Silicon Prairie News. Most recently he was an editor on the investigative desk at USA Today, where his investigation into the proliferation of model bills in statehouses was awarded the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting. Prior to that, he was the director of investigative and enterprise at MedPage Today. He also spent time as a reporter at the Omaha World-Herald and other newspapers.

Cate Folsom is editor-in-chief of the Nebraska Examiner. She has spent more than 40 years in daily journalism, the bulk of that time at the Omaha World-Herald. During her newspaper career, Cate worked in various roles, including features writer, copy editor and Washington Bureau reporter. She also served as assistant city editor, assistant features editor, investigative team editor, metro-regional editor, and editorial page editor.

She retired from the World-Herald at the end of 2019 but came out of retirement to launch the online Nebraska Examiner in January 2022. Cate has led numerous award-winning reporting efforts during her career, including investigations that triggered resignations of state officials and reforms in state laws.

Our speakers will talk about what the evolution of journalism looks like in Nebraska and why we still need strong journalism schools and bright, curious students. They will also discuss their own online, nonprofit news organizations and how their efforts fit into Nebraska’s journalism landscape.

Reservations for the Noon Forum can be phoned to 402-345-8008 or emailed to Christine at opcchristine@gmail.com.
The summer months are almost upon us, and we have plenty going on at the Omaha Press Club. Most notable in June is our KFAB wine dinner hosted by Scott Voorhees. This event is always popular, so get your reservation in early. We also have the annual college baseball buffet on the night of the championship opening ceremonies and the Father's Day Grill – back-to-back-to-back events June 15-17. The college baseball opening ceremonies customarily feature a fireworks finale, and the Press Club is a fantastic place to view downtown displays. The Father's Day Grill is a unique club event in that members proceed through a buffet and its multiple options, then order a steak choice a la carte. For more details, check out the menus in this newsletter.

On March 17, 2020, the club closed for three months due to the pandemic. That year Christine and I did curbside takeout on Fridays and opened the dining room at lunch Monday through Friday but had little business. It is hard to believe we are in the fourth year since the onset of COVID. The restaurant industry suffered more than most businesses because we needed customers in the seats for sales. Fast food and pizzerias did better than the sit-down and fast-casual restaurants. Almost monthly, Omaha is shutting the doors on another restaurant still feeling the effects of COVID.

The club is still operating, but we, too, have not bounced back fully and need our membership base to use the restaurant. Your club is open Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. for lunch, Thursday for the two-for-one Prime Rib Night, and Friday and Saturday with special dinner menus. Check out our monthly calendar on the website or newsletter for more upcoming events, and bring a friend. We always have something going on for everyone. And remember: We can do special requests anytime for evening events of 10 or more.

See you at the club,

- Steve Villamonte B.S. C.E.C.
Executive Director Omaha Press Club

Mother's Day Brunch
Sunday, May 14, 2023
Two seatings: 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
Adults $30 • Children $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, Cole Slaw, Potato Salad, Deviled Eggs, Imported Cheese & Antipasta, Smoked Salmon Chaud-Froid, Fresh Fruit Display
Pastries • Breakfast Breads • Pecan Rolls

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

Fireworks Buffet
In conjunction with college baseball championship opening ceremonies

Thursday, June 15, 2023
7 to 9 p.m.
$25

Buffet Menu
Tossed Salad, Deviled Eggs, Coleslaw, Baked Beans, Buttered Corn, Potato Salad, Whipped Potatoes & Gravy, Southern Fried Chicken, BBQ Baby Back Ribs, Vienna Hot Dogs

Desserts
Brownie a la Mode

KFAB Wine Dinner
Hosted by Scott Voorhees
June 16, 2023 • 6 p.m.
$85

Wine Pairing
Charcuterie
Wine Pairing
Amuse
Brie & Caponata
Wine Pairing
Salad
Classic Thunderbird, Parmesan Croustade, Wine Pairing
Sorbet
Passion Fruit Sorbet, Wine Pairing
Dual Entrée
OPC Filet of Beef, Rosemary Maitre D, Chicken Wellington au Poivre, Bacon & Chive Risotto, Grilled Asparagus, Wine Pairing
Dessert
Chocolate Mousse Ramekin, Gateau Riche, Wine Pairing

PHONE 402-345-8008 FOR RESERVATIONS
Father’s Day Steak Grill

Saturday, June 17, 2023
5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Adults $35 • Children 12 U $18

From the Kitchen
A la Carte Choice:
Club Steak • Filet • New York Strip
Prime Rib of Beef

On The Buffet
Vienna Hot Dogs • Fried Chicken
Baked Potatoes • Baked Beans
Corn-on-the-Cob
Potato Salad • Pasta Salad
House Salad
Coleslaw • Deviled Eggs

Desserts
Brownies • Strawberry Shortcake

The first Rudolph “Rudy” Smith Sr. Scholarship was awarded to a University of Nebraska-Lincoln student, Valeria Uribe, during the Omaha Press Club Foundation's Scholarship Awards Brunch on Saturday, April 22.

Longtime Omaha Press Club Board member Dr. Chris Allen gave the keynote address at the event.

Uribe was one of 19 journalism, advertising and public relations students who were awarded more than $50,000 in scholarships. Previously, only students from UNO, UNL and Creighton were considered for these scholarships. However, for the first time, students from the University of Nebraska-Kearney (UNK) and Wayne State College were awarded the Jim Denney “Good News” Scholarships.

In addition, the Nebraska Broadcasters Association awarded its scholarship at the brunch, and three John Savage Visual Communications Fellowships were granted to UNO, UNL and Creighton.

Here is a list of the scholarship recipients and their schools:

Panko-Roberts/President’s Memorial Scholarships:
Daytin Inserra – UNO.
Taylor Daffer - Creighton.
Jacob Vanderford - UNL.

Floyd Kalber Scholarship:
Wyatt Moravec – UNO.
Stan Bond Scholarship: Megan Buffington – UNL.

Mark Gautier Intern Award: Derek Shadle – UNO.

Paul N. Williams Scholarships:
Samantha Pastorino – UNO.
Cecelia Fuller - Creighton.
Damon Bennett – UNL.

Edward Zorinsky Memorial Scholarship:
Samantha Pastorino – UNO.

Susan Eustice Memorial Scholarship:
Samantha Childers – UNO.

Nebraska Broadcasters Association:
Jenna Jansen – UNO.

Robert McMorris Scholarship:
Bishop Schugel – Creighton.

Judy Horan Scholarship:
Susanna Hernandez - Creighton.

Rudy Smith Scholarship:
Valeria Uribe – UNL.

John F. Davis Scholarships:
Macy Walczer – UNO.
Maggie Dwyer - Creighton.
Marissa Kraus – UNL.

Caption: Back row, from left to right: Brianna Breazier UNL, Samantha Pastorino UNO, Jenna Janssen UNO, Jacob Vanderford UNL, Damon Bennett UNL, Bishop Schugel CU, Wyatt Moravec UNO.

Middle row: Macy Walczer UNO, Daytin Inserra UNO, Samantha Childers UNO, Megan Buffington UNL, Marissa Kraus UNL, Maggie Dwyer CU, Susanna Hernandez CU, Taylor Daffer CU.

Front row: Aubreanna Miller of Wayne State, Dr. Chris Allen UNO, Shelby Berglund UNK.

Not Pictured: Derek Shadle UNO, Cecelia Fuller CU, Valeria Uribe UNL.

Photo by Kurt A. Keeler
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Hall of Fame: Hunter Samuels
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CANCELLATION POLICY: All reservations must be cancelled 48 HOURS in advance.

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

Events

Thursday, June 8
Face on the Barroom Floor Van Deeb
5:30 p.m. social, 6:30 p.m. dinner 8 p.m. roast
$75 OPC members, $85 non-members

Thursday, June 15
Noon Forum
Journalism in Nebraska: Its Present and Future
11:30 a.m. lunch, $19
Noon to 1 p.m. program

Friday, June 16
KFAB Winemaker’s Dinner
Six courses, wine pairings 6 p.m. social, 6:30 p.m. dinner
$75 OPC members, $85 non-members

Saturday, June 17
Father’s Day Grill
5:30 p.m. - 9 p.m. $35

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.

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