

OPC NEWS

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Event will recognize Omaha's version of TV character

Schmaderer Face on Barroom Floor rescheduled for March 12

Editor's note: Due to the snowstorm on Feb. 19, the Face on the Barroom Floor event for Police Chief Todd Schmaderer was cancelled. Safety was everyone's concern, and the club was closed. The Face festivities are now scheduled for Thursday, March 12.

By Tom O'Connor
Communications Committee

With his Hollywood looks and macho personality, Omaha Police Chief Todd Schmaderer gives our city an impressive flair in the law enforcement world. It wouldn't be a huge stretch to compare his character to the role of Frank Reagan, the New York City police commissioner played by Tom Selleck in the popular TV show "Blue Bloods."



Police Chief Todd Schmaderer

Schmaderer joined the Omaha Police Department in 1996 and has served as chief since 2012, making him the longest-serving police chief among all major cities. In March

2025, he signed an agreement with the City of Omaha to extend his term as chief another five years.

His longevity is evident by the fact that he has served as police chief under three mayors – Democrats Jim Suttle and John Ewing Jr. and Republican Jean Stothert. He jokes, "Nobody knows what political party I am."

On Thursday, March 12, Schmaderer has agreed to place himself under "house arrest" when he comes to the Omaha Press Club to be honored as the 185th Face on the Barroom Floor. It promises be a memorable night, as the OPC recognizes him as the first active police chief ever to become a Face on the Barroom Floor.

(NOTE: Tom Warren had been retired as police chief for 11 years and was serving as president and CEO of the Urban League of Omaha when he and his wife, Aileen, were honored as Face No. 160 in 2019.)

Being a Face means a lot to Schmaderer. "This is the Heisman Trophy of awards in

Omaha," he said. "As chief of police, it's the kind of award you don't expect to receive. It's certainly a tremendous honor."

Police work runs in the Schmaderer family. Todd's father, Rich, is a retired police sergeant in the Omaha Police Department, while his younger brother, Brian, serves as an active lieutenant in the OPD. He also has a nephew who is an OPD rookie police officer.

Being behind a microphone and podium is nothing new for Schmaderer, who is known for being in complete control when dealing with media. He's done nearly 100 news conferences in his 13-plus years as Omaha's police chief. He has been featured in national media outlets such as Dateline NBC, CNN, Fox News and Washington Post Live.

"When Todd does a news conference, he runs the room. It's because of his respect and accomplishments, his genuine professional-

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Democratic candidates for Congress to debate at OPC

By John Fey
Communications Committee

With the withdrawal of former State Sen. Brett Lindstrom from Nebraska's 2nd Congressional District race, the Republican field was reduced to Omaha City Council member Brinker Harding. That ended the need for a GOP debate and turned the spotlight on the six Democratic contenders to replace current Republican Congressman Don Bacon, who is retiring.

That debate is set for March 19 at the Press Club. Lunch will be served starting at 11 a.m. The debate will begin at noon and end at 1 p.m. Cost is \$19.

WOWT newscaster Brian Mastre will moderate the Democratic debate featuring candidates Evangelos Argyrakis, Kishla Askins, John Cavanaugh, James Leuschen, Denise Powell, Crystal Rhoades and Melanie

Williams.

Cavanaugh, a Nebraska state senator, clearly has the name recognition. His father, John J. Cavanaugh III, served the Omaha area in Congress for two terms (1977-79 and 1979-81). But, according to a recent story published by the Nebraska Examiner, Powell was the fundraising leader heading into 2026.

"The investment that Nebraskans have made in our campaign shows that people here are ready for new leaders who will lower costs and stop corruption," Cavanaugh told the Nebraska Examiner.

Rhoades is known by Omahans as the Douglas County District Court clerk. She and Cavanaugh are the only two elected officials in the race.

The 2nd District has been in the national news over the past few elections for its recent history of giving Democrats a real chance of winning the congressional seat – not to men-



Evangelos Argyrakis



Kishla Askins



John Cavanaugh



James Leuschen



Denise Powell



Crystal Rhoades

tion figuring in the presidential electoral voting. (Nebraska and Maine are the lone states to divide their electoral votes.) Two years ago, the losing popular-vote candidate for president nationally won



Brinker Harding

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The roast marked the first Face on the Barroom Floor caricature done by Jeff Koterba, former cartoonist for the Omaha World-Herald who continues to produce cartoons available through the Patreon platform.

Koterba drew Mike sitting on the roof of the Woodmen Life Tower, where the Yanneys live on the 28th floor. Mike is holding a fishing pole and has snagged a fish.

As always, Yanney is dressed impeccably with a pocket square matching his necktie. Perched on top of his head is a crown to celebrate him being the 118th king of Ak-Sar-Ben.

Koterba featured the entire Yanney family in the caricature including Gail, Lisa and Bill Roskens and their two children, Charles and Mary. Standing nearby is Walter Scott, Mike's closest friend and longtime sidekick.

Koterba spanned Yanney's distinguished business career. He included his first job – selling vegetables from a pickup truck – to his most current job with Burlington Capital. To depict Yanney's many years of doing agricultural business in Russia, Koterba added some Russian onion domes in the background along with a barn and some silos.

Community service has always been a mainstay for the Yanneys, so Koterba showed some of the organizations that have benefited from their support – the Henry Doorly Zoo, the University of Nebraska, UNO and UNMC.

Since Mike is a native of Kearney, Nebraska, Koterba included a directional sign to Yanney Park in Kearney, which is named in his honor.

The Woodmen Life Tower is home to peregrine falcons, so Koterba added falcons flying around carrying banners saluting Mike for:

- Being a member of the Omaha Chamber of Commerce Business Hall of Fame;
- His service in the U.S. Army, where he served in Germany;
- Receiving the prestigious Horatio Alger Award; and
- Earning several track medals in high school.

OPC president will discuss visual storytelling at EthicSpace 2026

Ethical storytelling in business is the mission of an upcoming area event, with the Omaha Press Club well represented in the effort.

The Business Ethics Alliance is hosting its annual EthicSpace event at Creighton University. For years, the gathering has featured local and national speakers, panels and breakout sessions to cover topics of ethical business.

Focusing on ethical storytelling, the group turned to Omaha Press Club president and former photojournalist Josh Gear to illustrate the importance of visual and non-verbal storytelling for businesses and companies.

“Be it marketing or mass media, visual storytelling is a powerful tool,” Gear said about his upcoming presentation. “Showing the psychology and study behind

explaining something through still or moving pictures is a true passion of mine, and I'm excited to collaborate at the event.”

Gear will join area professionals and fellow former journalists from Lozier, Cox, Lozafina, BBB of the Midwest Plains and more in sharing professional storytelling solutions for ethical business efforts.

Headlining the event is Jason Bevan, co-founder of Content Creator Studios and former creative head for Warner Bros. Pictures, who will discuss examples, how-to's and AI trends in the storytelling process.

EthicSpace takes place on March 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Creighton University's Heider College of Business. Visit businessethicsalliance.org to learn more or apply to attend.

Bourbon Street at the OPC



Bourbon connoisseurs were greeted by this tempting display at the recent whiskey tasting at the Omaha Press Club.

Debate story; continued from Page 1

the District 2 electoral vote.

Powell, who trailed Cavanaugh in fundraising over the last three months of 2025 (\$343,608 to \$305,313), told the Examiner she's the best candidate in the field to flip the District 2 seat to the Democrats.

“It's why I'm the only candidate in this race to have raised over a million dollars,” she

said, “and January was one of our strongest fundraising months yet.”

Rhoades begged to differ, telling the Examiner: “This is a two-person race between myself and Cavanaugh. Despite being outspent by my opponents, I remain extremely competitive and confident in our path to victory.”

accomplishments, his genuine professionalism and transparency – the media have to be nice and play fair with him,” said his fiancée, Carla Liberty, who is business development director for YASH Technologies, a global IT consultant firm. Carla will be one of Schmaderer’s roasters at the OPC event.

Schmaderer, who is the 32nd chief in OPD history, has had a distinguished and impactful career in law enforcement. He leads a department of 1,200 employees, including 906 sworn officers.

In addition to pioneering OPD’s media strategy, he has navigated the department through a variety of critical incidents, from citywide civil unrest involving the National Guard, police corruption scandals, the arrests of two separate serial killers, officers killed in the line of duty, community-shattering child murders, and high-profile deaths involving in-custody prisoners.

Under Schmaderer’s leadership, Omaha has witnessed significant advancements in public safety and police-community relations. His tenure has seen a remarkable reduction in gun violence, with homicides reaching a 40-year low, while achieving a 100% clearance rate for homicides for the last three years, an unheard-of statistic for a major city.

The department also has experienced a notable decrease in complaints against officers, a substantial increase in diversity reflective of the community, and a reduction in officer-involved shootings to their lowest level. Most notably, Omaha recorded no homicides for 120 days in 2019, none the first 133 days of 2023, and achieved a city/national record low of homicides in 2024.

An Omaha native, Schmaderer attended St. Pius X Catholic School and Roncalli Catholic High School, where he was a multi-sport athlete. He received a full-ride scholarship to play football at Wayne State College, in Wayne, Nebraska. He spent one year playing at Wayne State as a running back/receiver/kick returner, while pursuing a degree in business.

After his first year at WSC, Schmaderer decided to follow in his father’s footsteps and pursue law enforcement. He returned to Omaha and earned his bachelor of science degree in criminal justice from the University of Nebraska Omaha. In 2007, at the age of 36, Schmaderer received his master’s

degree in criminal justice from the University of Cincinnati, one of the leading criminal justice programs in the country. Further augmenting his expertise, Schmaderer is a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Executive Institute.

Business and the stock market have always been a significant interest of Schmaderer. He and his father discuss market trends and their

system.

Schmaderer lives in the Elkhorn area with Carla, a New Orleans native, and her 13-year-old daughter, Mina Merwick. Together, they share a blended family that includes three other grown children, who are college graduates with promising careers in Nebraska – Ashlynn Schmaderer, 26, Garret Schmaderer, 22, and Derek Merwick, 22.

The couple first met when Carla came to Schmaderer’s office in 2018 as a government sales representative for USCellular to discuss Nebraska’s first priority network for public safety. They were engaged on July 6, 2025 on a Gulf Coast trip to celebrate Carla’s 45th birthday at one of their favorite beaches in Orange Beach, Alabama.

In their spare time, Schmaderer and Carla enjoy spending time with family, golfing, boating, exploring local dining and new culinary experiences, traveling throughout the United States and abroad – ideally near the ocean – attending sporting events, and relaxing at home or at the family farm in southeast Nebraska.



Police work runs in the family. From left: Todd’s father, Rich, a retired OPD sergeant; younger brother Brian, an OPD lieutenant; and Chief Schmaderer.

Roasters for Schmaderer Face event

The list of roasters includes:

- Emcee – **Brian Mastre**, news anchor for WOWT (Ch. 6);
- Matt Kuhse**, city attorney, City of Omaha;
- Mike Dowd**, attorney, Dowd & Corrigan, LLC and Omaha Police Officers Association;
- Scott Voorhees**, morning show host, KFAB-AM (1110);
- Jim Suttle/John Ewing Jr.**, mayors that Todd has worked under; and **Carla Liberty**, business development director, YASH Technologies, a global IT consultant firm, and Todd’s fiancée.

day trading every morning on his drive to work.

Schmaderer’s numerous awards include: Alumni Award for Excellence (2013 and 2017) and Lifetime Achievement Award (2024), all from UNO; Special Achievement Award (2022), Metropolitan Chiefs Association; Distinguished Service Award (2022), Omaha Police Foundation; Omahan of the Year Award (2023), Suburban Rotary of Omaha; and Law Enforcement Champion Award (2024), Special Olympics.

He is affiliated with several professional associations, including Major Cities Chiefs Association, International Chiefs of Police Association, and the Omaha Metropolitan Chiefs Association. He also serves on the board of directors of the Boys and Girls Club of the Midlands. In 2016, Schmaderer – along with Mayor Ewing – participated in Omaha’s Dancing with the Stars fundraiser for children battling cancer. He won first place in the event and set a record for funds raised.

In 2024, after 2½ years of writing, Schmaderer authored and self-published his first textbook – “Synergy of Influence: Leadership, Law Enforcement & the Media” – a book shaped by 10 years of reflection on his career as police chief. The book has currently been launched as a textbook resource in multiple curriculums within the UNO collegiate

FACE ON BARROOM FLOOR – TODD SCHMADERER

WHEN: THURSDAY, MARCH 12:
5:30 P.M. – RECEPTION;

6:30 P.M. – DINNER, 8 P.M. – ROAST

COST: \$90 FOR OPC MEMBERS;
\$100 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. DRESS IS BUSINESS CASUAL.

A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER

This is my green month. With my heritage partially Irish, bring it on. Everything in March is green.



Christine Villamonte

Our St. Patrick's Day Buffet on March 14 will feature the traditional slow-roasted corned beef and fixings like Irish potatoes, cabbage and dark rye bread. And do not forget the green cream-cheese frosting brownies. We'll serve the drinks on the menu that are green. But perhaps to your surprise, kegs are no longer green.

Our corned beef is slow-roasted in an Alto Shaam. The oven is designed to seal in the juices by not allowing any moisture to escape. Alto Shaams can handle meats for long durations and more product retention.

Our prime rib is cooked in the Alto Shaam as well (every Thursday is Prime Night). My family comes every year for the St. Paddy's buffet and loves it.

March 12 is the new date for the Face on the Barrroom Floor honoring Police Chief Todd Schmaderer. Due to the surprise blizzard on Feb. 19, the scheduled date for the event, the club was forced to close. Wow, what a storm. Fortunately, we were able to alert all the guests before the snowflakes landed. Keeping everyone safe was first priority.

Also on the schedule this month is a luncheon debate on March 19 starring the six Democratic congressional candidates. Make your reservation now. (Only one Republican is on the primary ballot, so there will be no GOP debate).

Easter is around the spring corner for one of our popular brunches, boasting more than 40 items. There will be two seatings on Easter Sunday, April 5, with options for all ages. We keep it classic, an identifiable menu

to all. With sweets to end the multicourse options, no one leaves hungry. See the menu below.

Also in the spring, the OPC Foundation will host its annual Scholarship Brunch on April 25. Journalists, including previous scholarship winners, mix with the new honorees, giving students the opportunity to chat with the local legends. It's a great way to learn from some of the brightest around the Midwest.

A reminder: Quarterly minimums for the first quarter end on March 31.

And one more reminder: During our building's transition to new ownership, the Level 1 hallway from the DoubleTree parking garage now closes at 6 p.m. OPC members and guests who arrive after 6 should leave the garage elevator at level 2, walk outside to the building entrance at the northwest corner of 16th and Dodge, and buzz in.

See you at the club!
-Christine Villamonte
Restaurant and Events Manager

PHONE 402-345-8008 FOR RESERVATIONS

St. Patrick's Day Buffet

Saturday, March 14, 2026
5 p.m. – 8p.m.
Members \$22

All-You-Can-Eat Buffet

Fresh Corned Beef
Boiled Cabbage
Irish New Potatoes
Dark Rye Bread & Butter

Dessert
Frosted Brownie

Beverage
\$2 Green Beer

Easter Buffet

Sunday, April 5, 2026
Seatings: 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
Adults \$35 • Children \$17

Carving Station
Prime Rib of Beef
Whiskey Pepper-Glazed Ham

Entrées
Chicken Bourguignon
Lemon-Pepper Butter Baked Tilapia

Eggs Benedict
Lyonnais New Potato
Biscuits & Sausage Gravy
Seasonal Vegetable
Build-Your-Own Omelet
Multi-Topping Buttermilk Pancakes

Salad Display
Thunderbird Salad, Chef Salad,
Creamy Dill Cucumber Salad,
Potato Salad, Deviled Eggs,
Smoked Salmon, Chaud-Froid,
Continental Fruit Display
Continental Cheese Display

Desserts
Pastries, Sticky Buns,
Chocolate-Dipped Driscoll Strawberries
& Homemade Coffee Cake, Cheesecake

Mother's Day Brunch

Sunday, May 10
Seatings: 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
Adults \$35 • Children 10 & Under \$17

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

Entrées
Chicken Crepes Supreme
Baked Tilapia Buerre Blanc
Eggs Benedict

À 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
Pecan Rolls

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

OPC Scholarship Brunch

Saturday, April 25, 2026
10 a.m.
\$30 Inclusive

Fresh Fruit
Pecan Cinnamon Rolls

Egg
Bacon
Lyonnais Potatoes

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Every Thursday
Prime Rib Night
5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.



Thursday, March 12
Face on the Barroom Floor
Police Chief Todd Schmaderer
5:30 p.m. reception, 6:30 p.m. dinner,
8 p.m. roast
\$90 OPC members, \$100 non-members

Saturday, March 14
St. Patrick's Day Buffet
5 p.m. - 8 p.m.
\$22

Saturday, March 17
St. Pat's Special
and regular lunch

Thursday, March 19
Democratic Congressional Debate
11 a.m. lunch & social
Noon-1 p.m. debate
\$19

Saturday, March 21
Hillcrest Foundation Fundraiser
Italian Winemaker's Dinner
(501c3 applicable)
6 p.m. social, 6:30 p.m. dinner
\$185

Sunday, April 5
Easter Brunch
Two seatings:
10 a.m.-noon, 12:30 p.m.-2 p.m.
Adults \$35 • Children 3-10 \$17

Saturday, April 25
OPC Scholarship Brunch
10 a.m., \$35

Sunday, May 10
Mother's Day Brunch
Seatings: 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
Adults \$30 • Children 10 & Under \$17

Hours of Operation

1620 Dodge St., Omaha NE 68102

LUNCH
Tuesday- Saturday
11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Closed Mondays

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



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**Submissions for the April issue
are due on or before March 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.