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News & Views is published in March, June, September & December. Comments, facts and opinions expressed herein are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not express agreement of the members. If you would like to contribute information for upcoming newsletters, please mail to the ORA - 4270 N. 139th Street, 68164, or CALL (402) 493-4739.



- Ameristar Casino & Hotel
- Block 16
- Brickway
- Cozzia
- Dante Pizzeria Napoletana
- DFI Solutions in Print
- Digital Cashbox
- Embassy Suites - Old Market
- Happy Hollow Club
- JAVO Beverage
- Omaha Culinary Tours
- Pavers & Pints
- Quench Fine Wines
- Quail Distributing
- The Session Room
- True North Technologies
- Truebridge Foods
- Yoshitomo

## From Your President

Hello Everyone,

Uncertainty seems to be one of the only guaranteed components of our lives right now. I would like to send a sincere message of hope and appreciation to all of you. The resiliency and genuine work ethic of Omaha businesses is truly shining. The challenges we face are changing daily and have served as a reminder of the importance of the Omaha Restaurant Association. It is vital that our members have accurate and up-to-date information. We remain dedicated to providing the resources necessary for your success, both today and in the future. Although we have not been able to meet in person over the last few months we have continued to strive for the betterment of our industry. We look forward to hosting our annual golf tournament in August and continue to adapt plans for events through the end of the year. The Omaha Restaurant Association exists only because of our members. I would like each of you to understand the importance of your contribution. The only way our organization continues to operate is thanks to your annual membership dues and participation. We value your membership, please know that we are always adaptable and here to support your business. Once more, THANK YOU and I very much look forward to working together to make Omaha even stronger in the future.

Dine Out Often,  
Your President, Matthew Brown



# MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS:**

Online <https://dineoutomaha.com/ora-golf-tournament/>

or Email [dineoutomaha@cox.net](mailto:dineoutomaha@cox.net)

# 76TH ANNUAL DINNER MEETING AND AWARD PRESENTATION

The 76th Annual Dinner Meeting was held on January 19th at the Hotel Deco and Monarch Prime Steakhouse. The "Prohibition Era" theme was entirely fitting, as prohibition began January 20, 1920. 100 years later, we can still see the lasting effects and lessons that came from that 13-year period. Not the least was the demonstration of people's need for a place to gather, to socialize, and enjoy fine drinks and food. The speakeasy became an important part of our country's culture and contributed to the development of our society. A "Prohibition Theme" seemed to fit a celebration of the people who dedicate their lives on a daily basis to provide and create those gathering spaces for our community today.

During our cocktail hour, we installed the 2020 Board of Directors, listed on the last page of this newsletter, and presented our annual awards. Our themed drinks included Old Fashions, Sidecars and Bees Knees to name a few. **Johnson Brothers, Republic National Distributing Company, Southern Glazers, Premier Midwest, Quality Brands, Chesterman Coca Cola and Pepsi**, sponsored the drinks. Our mixologists were Kris Gholson and Ben Rowe from V Mertz. Guests enjoyed the appetizers created by Paul Kulik of Le Bouillon and Via Farina. We gave permanent plaques to the **2018 award winners: Dave Mainelli, Julio's Tex-Mex, Jim Olafsson, H. Olafsson International Specialty Foods and Pete Garcia, J. Coco's.**

The 2019 Restaurateur of the Year went to **Greg Cutchall. Greg is the President, CEO and Founder of Cutchall Management Co.** He started his career in the 70's as an assistant manager at KFC where he developed a catering program that was adopted nationally by KFC. He consulted for KFC Corporation and franchisees around the country. He was also invited to speak to the National Restaurant Association in Washington DC. Greg rose through the ranks at KFC Omaha



WILLY THEISEN ACCEPTS RESTAURATEUR OF THE YEAR TROPHY ON BEHALF OF CUTCHALL MANAGEMENT CO.

as GM, Director of Catering, Director of Marketing, SVP, and in 1986 organized a leveraged buyout of the 12 Omaha KFC's and served as President and CEO until 1989 when he left to form his current company. Starting with one restaurant in Lincoln, Nebraska, he opened, developed or acquired over 120 restaurants in the following 30 years. His company was one of the only three companies that made Inc. 500's fastest growing companies four year's in a row and named Top 10 Omaha's Employers. Today, they own and operate nine different concepts with 44 locations in Nebraska, Iowa, Utah, Arizona and Texas. Brands currently owned and operated by them include, Jams, First Watch, Domino's, Oklahoma Joe's, Omaha Design Center, Paradise Bakery, The River City Star, Salty Seniorita and Sonic. More importantly, they support numerous charities and causes to make Omaha a better place for all of us! Greg is an asset to our community and a friend to the association. We are proud to announce Greg as the 2019 Restaurateur of the Year!

The 2019 Purveyor of the Year serves Lincoln, Nebraska City, Wahoo, Blair, Plattsmouth, Elkhorn, Council Bluffs and Des Moines. They pride themselves on "You're not getting a vendor, you're getting a partner!" They promise they'll be there when you need them! In 1932, they started a dry cleaning and shirt laundry in downtown Omaha. Since then they have evolved to a full service linen company. Founded by Gus and Vic Shiro, they expanded to include linen supply in the 60's at the request of several businesses in the area. In 1979, Del Ringling and father-in-law, Mike Nisker purchased the company from the Shiro's and continued to grow the company to include not only hospitality but healthcare services as well. During their 25-year tenure, they grew the company and further established a solid foundation in the community. Angie Ringling, Del's daughter, bought the company from

Del in 2005. In that time the company has grown and now services 500 customers. They continue to grow their company without compromising their high service standards and excellent product quality-all at a fair price! They are committed to their community and developing strong, mutually beneficial partnerships with their customers. They belong to many organizations in the industry. Jeff Peterson is the Sales Manager and has been on the board of the ORA since 2012 in many areas and is a true asset! **We are proud to announce Spin Linen as the 2019 Purveyor of the Year!**

The 2019 Harold Norman Excellence Award went to someone who demonstrates an incredibly positive and professional attitude. She is the FACE that many look forward to seeing when visiting her place of employment. She works to ensure that not only each and every visit or catered event is not just ready but perfect for the guests, but also ensures that each student or staff member's needs are met. Whether reminding a new student



the proper way to cut an onion, “you do not cut off the ends”, or shadowing a chef to learn a new technique, she is not only demonstrating characteristics of an incredible staff member always teaching and showing and giving examples, but also exemplifies why the ICA at MCC is there, to learn. Her spirit of hospitality permeates whomever and whatever she touches. She is the right hand, the big toe, the FACE that they love to see at the ICA. She has been at the college for 13 years working within the culinary department. She has seen significant transitions and change within the program, and her responsibilities within the program. From humble beginnings in Building #10 to the top-notch culinary institute today, her dedication has been constant, leading and demonstrating to both students and the staff. Observing Linda on any given day when she interacting with others, one will see a generous smile and welcome and often a lot of hugs and a good hearty laugh. From the prospective student talking a tour, to the MCC Board of Governors member that knows her from each monthly meeting, she is always there! She

listens with a compassionate heart and cares deeply for her co-workers, fellow employees and guests. She is the first one to compliment or thank someone for an act of kindness, assistance or something that is extraordinary. If only we could have more Linda Faye Austin’s in our establishments!! **Congratulations to Linda Faye Austin for the 2019 Harold Norman Excellence Award!**

We moved into the beautiful Monarch Prime dining rooms for an incredible meal prepared by **chefs Jared Clarke from Timber and Railcar, Jacob Newton from V Mertz, Drew Statz from the hotel and Monarch Prime & Bar and Jennifer Coco from J. Coco!** An amazing culinary treat – enjoying the fine foods prepared by each of these gifted chefs in one sitting!! Matt Brown ended the evening with a recap of 2019 and presented the 2020 forecast before thanking the outgoing board members for their hard work. It is their dedication and the many volunteer helpers who make this event possible. The ORA is especially grateful to the hotel, their staff and the student volunteers from the ICA.

# 2020 ANNUAL INDUSTRY NIGHT OUT



February 16th, 2020, DJ’s Dugout was again the perfect host to our Membership Drive/ Industry Night Out. This year featured a Ski Chalet Theme with a Soup Bar and Cocoa Bar. Chefs Jared Clark of Timber/ Railcar, Jimmy Masters of J Gilberts, Jake Newton of VMertz and Mikey Hill from Corkscrew prepared bowls and bowls of soul warming soups for the attendees and guests. This year saw more new members join than in

any past years! Snow boards, ski coats, hotel stays and many other prizes went home with lucky winners. A hearty Thank You to all who helped make this event a success.

## Board Member Bio



*If you want to talk about the wines of Burgundy, give Grant a call; but you might be in for a long conversation.*

*“I love Burgundy,” Grant said. “Selling the Rosenthal portfolio and learning from John Paine [Regional Sales Manager for Rosenthal Wine Merchant] I discovered the greatness of Burgundies. It’s basically all I want to drink.”*

## GRANT GASTON The Italian Vine Wine Distributors

*Grant, however, didn’t start by drinking Burgundy, his love of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay has been developed through his travels and experience in the food and beverage industry.*

*Born, and raised, in Lincoln, Nebraska, Grant was working his way through college at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, when he got his first job in the booze business at The Still.*

*“I loved working at The Still. I was kind of a knucklehead back then, so I’m not sure John and Jackie [the owners of The Still] loved me, but it was a great experience,” noted Grant.*

*Shortly after, Grant began managing the wine & spirits department at Russ’s Market, a grocery store in Lincoln. In 2007, Grant helped open Carmela’s Bistro & Wine Bar, where he then met his future boss, and professional mentor, Mark McDonald.*

*“I had just graduated with a journalism degree, but I didn’t want to do that professionally; I was looking*

*to get into the distribution side of the wine business, and Mark had just started The Italian Vine,” said Grant. “It was kind of the perfect match; I was willing to work for nothing, and that’s what Mark needed to build the business. I had to develop all my own accounts; there weren’t customers just given to me.”*

*Grant is now beginning his twelfth year with The Italian Vine. He oversees the states sales team, while handling key accounts that need a high degree of wine expertise. During his tenure at The Italian Vine, Grant received sommelier certification and has been able to travel to vineyards in Oregon, California, Italy, Spain and Germany.*

*“I’m still waiting for that trip to Burgundy”, joked Grant.*

*Grant lives in Omaha with his wife, Ellie Pegler and his two children, Corinne and Meredith. Grant and Ellie, owner of Farine + Four, got married June 1st of this year.*

*“I now have three things that I love more than Burgundy.”*





## **Omaha** RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

# 76th Annual DINNER MEETING

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2020

5:00 Cocktails and Hors d'oeuvres  
6:00 Dinner, Awards and Inductions  
7:30 Dessert, After Dinner Drinks,  
Photo Booth, Celebration of Award Winners

### **HOTEL DECO**

1504 Harney Street

A block of rooms has been reserved under Omaha Restaurant Association for \$99/room. Call 402-991-4981 by December 31st to reserve your room

**2019 Restaurateur of the Year**  
**2019 Purveyor of the Year**  
**2019 Harold Norman Excellence Award**

The following 6 chefs will each be preparing a course  
Jared Clarke, Railcar & Timber • Jennifer Coco, J. Coco •  
Paul Kulik, Le Bouillon • Drew Statz, Monarch Prime • Jacob Newton, V Mertz

**\$81.75 PER PERSON**

\$55 is tax deductible, tax is included

Prohibition Theme – Roaring 20's Attire

For reservations and payment  
call 402.493.4739, visit [www.dineoutomaha.com](http://www.dineoutomaha.com)  
or mail check to 4270 N. 139th Street | Omaha, NE 68164











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# DINE

M A G A Z I N E

## DINE

Elevating the Nebraska  
dining experience

DUTCH GIRL CREAMERY • SPENCERS  
NEBRASKA BREWING • SOLDIER VALLEY  
ADVICE OF CHEF GLENN WHEELER



WINTER 2020

NEW ISSUE AT

DINENEBRASKA.COM

## CONGRATULATIONS

# James Beard Foundation NOMINEES

The James Beard Awards open call for entry begins on the first of October every year. Committees meet after deadlines close to the review the entries, confirm eligibility, and in some cases, make the first cut. Judges chosen by the committee then review and vote on the entries to determine the semifinalists, nominees and winners.

Semifinalists for the Restaurant and Chef Awards are announced in late February. All Awards nominees (finalists) are announced in late March.

The March nominees for the 2020 James Beard Award included Omaha Restaurant Association member David Utterback of Yoshitomo. Utterback was among 20 others, including Omaha's Benjamin Maides of Au Courant Regional Kitchen for the Midwest division.

The Midwest division includes Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

## WINNER! WINNER! HAMBURGER DINNER

On Sunday, February 23, the ultimate burger battle royale kicked off at 5:00 p.m. and battled on until 9:00 p.m. One of Omaha Restaurant Association's newest members, Block 16 (1611 Farnam Street) hosted this fight for the coveted title of Burger Fight Champion.

Chef's Nick Strawhecker (Dante, Forno) Paul Kulik (Via Farina, Le Bouillon) and Dario Schicke (Dario's, Avoli) Battled it out at Block 16's third annual "Burger Fight" to see who would take home the title of "best burger". Guests who attended the event received 1 slider from each chef and "all you could stomach fries" from the Block 16 fry bar (and yes, it included the fabulous gravy fountains).

Nearly 200 voters took part, with lines forming nearly a half an hour before the doors opened. When the smoke cleared and the tasting stopped, it was Nick Strawhecker who was awarded the Burger Fight Champion winner's belt.

Congratulations to Nick and all who participated in this exciting event. A hearty thanks to the team at Block 16 who made the event possible.



**GOLF**  
**SCRAMBLE**  
Monday, August 10, 2020  
Stone Creek Golf Course

June 17, 2020

Dear Omaha Restaurant Association Member,

I am writing you to invite you to participate in the 2020 ORA Golf Scramble. This year's event is scheduled for August 10th. We will be returning to the well-manicured, Stone Creek Golf Course where their 27 holes and professional staff can accommodate the size and magnitude of our event. This year, due to the challenges we are facing with COVID-19, we will not be gathering for a buffet dinner while announcing prizes. We will still be able to social distance and enjoy a cocktail while collecting prizes and awaiting the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes as well as flag prizes. We promise this event will maintain its reputation as a great time and an amazing way to support our industry while having the chance to catch up with your peers.

Every year, the ORA is proud to provide industry support through quality, service and education in an effort to deliver the very best experiences for our community and guests. Each year, tens of thousands of dollars are raised for scholarships to students pursuing a college level education in our field, as well as professors furthering their knowledge on food safety awareness and education supplied through workshops. We also help to feed the hungry through the Food Bank of the Heartland, No More Empty Pots, Saving Grace and Feed Back Omaha.

As you are all aware, this year has proven to be especially challenging to raise funds due to the pandemic. We were forced to cancel our most profitable fundraiser, Too Many Cooks in the Kitchen, and have made the decision not to have the Hall of Fame Celebration in the fall. This golf tournament is extremely important to the success of our association and we hope you see the value in our efforts and in your difficult times, are able to support our mission. We need to move forward together and rise above this challenge!

If you are unable to golf but would still like to support you can always sponsor a hole, donate a prize or make a cash donation.

The ORA is a non-profit, volunteer organization with a 501c status. Our tax ID # is 47-0488013. All taxes are included in the prices. Thank you for your continued support and generosity to make this event above par!

Sincerely,

Jennifer J. Warren, Executive Director





## GOLF SCRAMBLE SIGN-UP / SPONSORSHIP FORM

**Stone Creek Golf Course | 6220 N 160th Avenue**  
**Monday, August 10th, 2020**

9:00 a.m. Check-in & Breakfast/Driving Range • 10:00 a.m. Shotgun Start/Texas Scramble  
12:00-2:00 p.m. Lunch Offered at the Turn • 3:00-4:00 p.m. Cocktails & Prizes  
(Due to Covid-19 we will disperse as soon as prizes are picked up and winners are announced.)

☐ **Level 1 Sponsor \$250** *includes tax*

This sponsorship means you are unable to golf but includes a sign bearing your company name and logo which will be displayed on the course throughout the entire day. **Level 1** also offers to you the opportunity to promote your company product by either donating the prize for that hole or supplying complimentary samples to be handed out to golfers. If able, we would greatly appreciate both!

Company \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please create a sponsorship sign for me. I will be sending a jpeg of my company logo to be printed on my sign to [dineoutoften@cox.net](mailto:dineoutoften@cox.net).

☐ I would like to donate a gift for a FLAG PRIZE. Contact my phone number listed above.

☐ I am unable to attend but would like to support the Association in its mission.

☐ **Level 2 Sponsor \$750** *includes tax*

This sponsorship includes a foursome, driving range, two carts, breakfast, lunch and libations.

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

My Tournament Team Members Are:

1.) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 2.) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

3.) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 4.) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to donate a gift for a FLAG PRIZE. Contact me at the above phone number.

**NEW!** OPTION TO PRE-PURCHASE RAFFLE TICKETS, MULLIGANS, POKER HANDS, AND CIGARS!  
(Fill out order form on next page)





# GOLF SCRAMBLE PRE-ORDER FORM

## RAFFLE TICKETS, MULLIGANS, CIGARS AND POKER HANDS!

Company \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

<b>LEVEL 1 SPONSOR</b> (\$250)	_____	X	<b>\$ 250.00</b>	=	<b>0</b>
	QUANTITY		COST		TOTAL COST
<b>LEVEL 2 SPONSOR</b> (\$750)	_____	X	<b>\$ 750.00</b>	=	<b>0</b>
	QUANTITY		COST		TOTAL COST
<b>RAFFLE TICKETS</b> (5 for \$20)	_____	X	<b>\$ 20.00</b>	=	<b>0</b>
	QUANTITY (SETS OF 5)		COST		TOTAL COST
<b>MULLIGANS</b> (\$20.00 EA)	_____	X	<b>\$ 20.00</b>	=	<b>0</b>
	QUANTITY (UNLIMITED)		COST		TOTAL COST
<b>CIGARS</b> (\$10.00 EA)	_____	X	<b>\$ 10.00</b>	=	<b>0</b>
	QUANTITY		COST		TOTAL COST
<b>POKER HANDS</b> (\$5.00 EA)	_____	X	<b>\$ 5.00</b>	=	<b>0</b>
	QUANTITY		COST		TOTAL COST
					<b>\$ 0.00</b>
					<b>TOTAL AMOUNT DUE</b>

*Thank You for Your Order*



## Restaurant, Bar, Tavern, Clubs, & Bowling Alley In-Room Guidelines (including Gentleman, Bottle, and Private Clubs)

Updated June 19, 2020

The following requirements found in the most recently issued Directed Health Measures (DHM), found at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/COVID-19-Directed-Health-Measures.aspx>, must be followed at all times if a restaurant, bar, tavern, bowling alley or club provide dine-in service:

- Refer to the county DHM requirements on occupancy, party limits, physical distancing of tables/parties, and games such as pool tables, dart boards, shuffle board, arcades and other gaming areas.
- Self-serve buffets and salad bars are prohibited. Establishment staff must serve food directly to customers or implement buffet orders from the customer table. No customer self-service.
- Each party must be seated at individual tables. Refer to county DHM for bar and counter seating.
- Refer to county DHM regarding requirements for consumption of alcohol on premises.

In addition to the requirements found in the DHM as outlined above, establishments are asked to adhere to the following [guidelines](#) developed by the Division of Public Health and the Nebraska Restaurant Association.

- Post this document at entry to the facility.
- All employees should wear face coverings ([cloth mask](#)) that are washable and must be laundered or replaced daily. Employees must wash hands before and after putting on the face mask and after every time they touch it.
- Whenever possible, establishment staff should not perform multiple roles (Example – servers should not also take money). Ensure proper training for food employees with new or altered duties and that they apply the training according to established procedures.
- Disinfect tables and chairs after each customer use using an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#).
- Disinfect all high touch surfaces at least once every four (4) hours.
- Complete employee pre-screening (e.g., take temperature and assess for any symptoms consistent with COVID-19) prior to starting work.
- Consider using stickers after fever check and a confidential symptoms log. Communicate daily with staff that they must immediately inform a manager if they feel sick or experience [any symptoms](#), including, but not limited to: onset of fever, cough, or shortness of breath.



- Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 (either lab-confirmed or clinical diagnosis) should notify their supervisor prior to the start of their work shift. The employer should consult with their [local health department](#) to assess whether there was an exposure to the family member at home (example: if the individual takes care of the sick family member) or if there is no exposure (example: individual resides in a separate room and bathroom) before determining if it is appropriate to come into work or needs to self-quarantine. Continue to monitor employee health during their shift for COVID-19 [symptoms](#) (including, but not limited to: fever, cough, shortness of breath). If an employee becomes sick at work, send them home immediately and then clean and disinfect surfaces in their workplace. Other employees and customers at the facility with close contact (within 6 feet) of the sick employee during this time should be considered exposed. Instruct sick employees to stay home and follow the CDC's [What to Do If You Are Sick](#) precautions and consult with their local health department on additional guidance.



- Create a [response plan](#) for any instance of an employee with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. If needed, consult your [local health department](#) for additional guidance.
- Create employees “contact pods” that only work together and redesign workflow to eliminate cross-pod interactions that meet the close contact criteria (contact within six (6) feet for several minutes or more). Close contacts of a COVID-19 positive individual are required to self-quarantine. Working in “contact pods” may reduce the number of employees that must self-quarantine for 14 days in the event that an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Whenever possible, practice social distancing between staff. Redesign workflow, designate tasks and workstations to specific employees or contact pods to minimize comingling and maximize social distancing.
- Create and implement an enhanced cleaning/[sanitizing](#) schedule for all food contact surfaces, and cleaning/[disinfecting](#) of non-food contact surfaces using an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#). Increase disinfection frequency of commonly touched surfaces throughout entire facility (both front and back-of-house) such as door handles, credit card machines, bathrooms, etc. Although the food code does not emphasize front-of-house sanitation, COVID-19 requires enhanced cleaning/disinfection of any frequently touched but non-food contact surface, in addition to enhanced sanitization of food contact surfaces.
- Enhance employee safety training, emphasizing hygiene etiquette (avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth), and proper hand hygiene including washing hands for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after any sneezing or coughing, or after touching high touch surfaces (e.g., door handles, chairs, and tables).
- If an employee needs to remove their face mask and set it down (either to take a drink or eat), they should disinfect the surface the mask was placed on. Again, employees should wash their hands before and after putting on their face mask.
- Have hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers. If possible, have an automated, touchless hand sanitizing station to avoid frequent touching of hand sanitizer device. Have employees use hand sanitizer between customers.
- Designate with signage, tape, or by other means appropriate social distancing spacing for employees and customers. Facilitate and designate social distancing for those waiting to enter your establishment.
- If possible, provide distinct walking lanes to minimize close contact as customers are being seated to conform with social distancing practices. For example, in a table/booth layout, central tables can be removed, and markings can be installed designating the path for seating.
- Refer to the county DHM for pool tables, dart boards, shuffle board, arcades and other gaming areas requirements.
- If possible, implement partition walls to separate high traffic walking areas from tables and customers.
- Implement touchless payment or pay-at-table options if possible.
- Implement digital menu boards or tablets with anti-microbial screens in lieu of paper menus. If digital options are not available, switch to single use menus.
- For establishments without touchless payment, consider disinfection of the credit card upon return to the customer.
- Consider cleaning and disinfection of the POS terminal between transactions or when a different employee uses it.
- Patrons must be seated at tables, unless ordering, using restrooms, playing or participating in games. There is to be no congregating around gaming areas.



## In Memoriam



*Our deepest sympathies to the family members and friends of Helen M. Rotella (Born September 10, 1930 - Entered into Rest June 2, 2020). Preceded in death by her devoted husband Louis J. Rotella, Sr.*

*Helen Rotella gave her husband the above photograph, writing on the back: "December 4, 1988. To my husband, Louis Rotella Sr. Rotella's Italian Bakery under construction. 6949 South 108th Street. I love this picture. A lot of hard work and planning (a dream come true). Buona fortuna! Love eternally, your wife, Helen."*

*She was a true partner in the building of the beloved Rotella name in the city of Omaha. A mother to son, Louis J. Rotella, Jr. and daughter, Maria C. Jacobsen. Her spirit will live on in their lives and in the business she and Louis built together.*

# PANDEMIC STRIKES

## Glenn Wheeler Strikes Back

To say Glenn Wheeler is well known in the Omaha restaurant community would be an understatement. He is not only an amazing culinary genius in the kitchen at the downtown steakhouse, Spencer's For Steaks & Chops, but also known as a friend to chefs across the city. Wheeler is a Michigan City, Ind., native and an honored member of the Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame.

When Wheeler learned that Spencers was going to be shut down during the pandemic's movement across the city of Omaha he went to work. His first order of business was to ensure his staff had adequate food supplies, he started to disassemble his well-stocked kitchen pantry and loaded up his workers. Seeing all the food that would still go to waste his first thought was "I know I have food I need to use, I can put it out on social media, we can provide meals for out-of-school children who need help and any elderly whose health might be compromised." So, that's what Wheeler set out to do.

Soon an array of restaurant chefs across the city of Omaha joined him and they created a movement that became a force for good! "We acquired a lot of proteins and other products from other chefs who didn't want their food to go to waste. We started cooking and serving the homeless and out-of-work restaurant folks—and, quite frankly—anybody who was in need of a meal in these uncharted times. I had Dan Watts from Sysco smoking slabs of ribs, Blaine Hunter from Porky Butts BBQ smoked pork shoulders and Jacobson Fish donated 30 pounds of yellow fin tuna that I transformed into tuna sandwiches. A lot of really great people



were involved." Wheeler remarked. And that's just a few who started out helping. People and companies came out of the woodwork to help and continue to offer help. There really are too many to name but they know who they are!

So, while the city salutes those who held down jobs in the clinics and hospitals across Omaha and those in essential businesses. We salute Glenn and his troupe of hero's who figured out a way to provide for Omaha's needy and strike back at Covid 19 with generosity and human kindness.

# MUCH APPRECIATION

To Our Generous Sponsors For Our ANNUAL DINNER MEETING AND INDUSTRY NIGHT OUT

- Absolutely Fresh Seafood Company
- Hotel Deco & Monarch Prime
- Johnson Brothers of Nebraska
- Republic National Distributing Company
- Rotella's Italian Bakery Distributing Company
- Southern Glazers Wine and Spirits
- Sysco Lincoln, Inc.
- Spin Linen
- US Foods
- The very talented chefs and mixologists
- Di Tendenza, Sheri Potter
- Loffredo Fresh Produce
- Peps
- Premier Midwest Beverage Company
- Quality Brands of Omaha
- Reinhart FoodService
- H. Olafsson International Specialty Foods
- Heartland Payment Systems
- Hiland Dairy



# EVENTS CALENDAR

\*Any ORA member is welcome to share in any meeting at any time. If you would like to speak at a meeting, please call Jennie Warren at 402-493-4739 and schedule a time.

<b>JUNE</b>	<b>No Board Meeting</b>
<b>JULY</b>	<b>No Board Meeting</b>
<b>AUGUST 10th</b>	<b>Annual Golf Tournament</b> Stonecreek 10:00 a.m. 6220 N 160th Avenue
<b>SEPT 8th</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b> Le Bouillon - 3:30 p.m. 1710 Howard Street
<b>SEPT 13th-22nd</b>	<b>Omaha Restaurant Week</b>
<b>OCTOBER 8th</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b> Jams Old Market - 3:30 p.m. 11th & Harney

## Omaha Restaurant Association Board of Directors

<u>PRESIDENT</u>	<u>RESTAURANT DIRECTORS</u>	<u>PURVEYOR DIRECTORS</u>
<b>MATT BROWN</b> V Mertz	<b>JARED CLARK</b> Railcar / Timber Wood Fire Bistro	<b>SCOTT BOWDEN</b> Southern Glazer's Wine and Spirits
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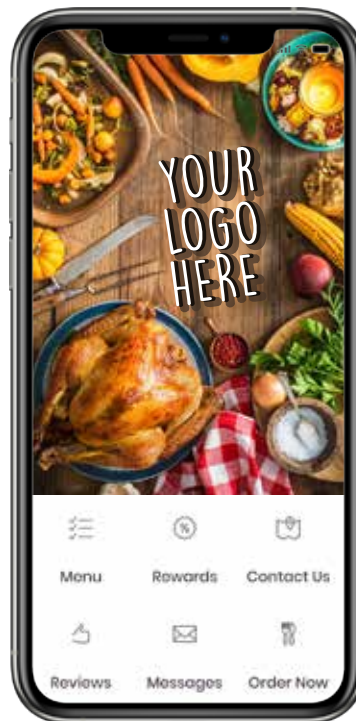
With much regret and an interest  
in the safety of all involved  
this event has been

# CANCELED DUE TO COVID-19



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Our September issue will  
feature the names and bios  
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