Omaha Restaurant Association

NEWS & VIEWS

Volume 39 • Issue 4 • December 2024

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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 up coming newsletters, please mail to the ORA - 4270 N. 139th Street, 68164, or CALL (402) 493-4739.

From Your President

Wow what an amazing year. I could not be more grateful for all of you and the efforts you all put into the ORA to make it another successful year. The committees have and continue to work so hard to ensure 2025 is even better. Lots of fun changes and additions coming to the Calendar. Looking forward to our Annual Dinner Meeting at Cascio's on January 26th.

In the coming year I am excited to see more growth in the ORA and in our industry. I want to continue to push for higher attendance at all of our events and board meetings. This helps increase the productivity of our board and putting more power behind each of our events. I know we all continue to face challenges, but I know great things are to come because we are all so passionate about this industry and love watching Omaha grow in the Culinary Scene.

Happy Holidays & Cheers to a Happy New Year
Your President, Natalie Hankins

Welcome NEW MEMBERS

- ALLY POYNER MACCHIETO ACHITECTURE
- FILTA ENVIRONMANTAL KITCHEN SOLUTIONS
- BARN GIRLS FARMS
- STEIER QSR
- ON THE FLY RESTAURANT CONSULTING
- PANDO PEO

2025 ANNUAL MEETING
LET'S DO LUNCH!

(VOTING BALLOT & INSTRUCTIONS ON INSIDE BACK PAGE)

Brought back by Popular Demand: Let's Do Lunch at Cascio's! Our Build Your Own Bloody Mary, Mimosa & Coffee Bar is available from 11:00-NOON. To be followed by a Lunch, Board Member Inductions and Award Celebration.

Please take a minute today to cast your vote for Restaurateur of the Year, Purveyor of the Year and Employee of the Year (Harold Norman Excellence Award).

Fill in the name of a person you feel goes the extra mile to make our industry better. The Purveyor of the Year can be chosen from five companies that the board of the ORA feels give a tremendous amount of support not only our mission but to their customers. Please choose from these very deserving companies only! The Employee of the Year was created to honor that hard working employee who often goes unthanked. Nominate someone you feel goes above and beyond the call of duty. Let us know via e-mail the reason you would like this person to receive the award and be honored. Please send your email to; JWarren@DineOutOften.com

We hope to see you at Cascio's Steakhouse on January 26th, 2025!

PLEASE NOTE: The past recipients of the Restaurateur of the Year are listed and cannot be nominated and voted for again.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Omaha Restaurant Association

Celebrating Our 81st YEAR

ANNUAL MEETING
Let's Do Lunch

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26th, 2025
Cascio's Steakhouse

11:00 am - NOON	Build Your Own: Bloody Mary, Mimosa or Coffee
NOON - 1:30 pm	Lunch, Awards and Board Member Inductions
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Celebration of Award Winners

2024 Restaurateur of the Year
2024 Purveyor of the Year
2024 Harold Norman Excellence

$85.00 PER PERSON

$55 is tax deductible, tax is included

($85 per person or $680 for a table of eight)

For reservations and payment visit
www.dineoutomaha.com or mail check to ORA
4270 N. 139th Street | Omaha, NE 68164
www.dineoutomaha.com or mail check to ORA

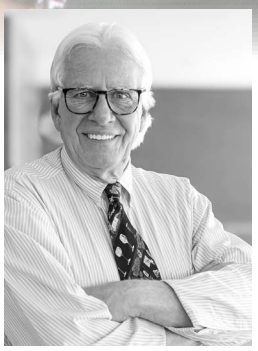
MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS BY JANUARY 13TH

To Vote Online: https://dineoutomaha.com/annual-dinner-ballot/

OMAHA HOSPITALITY HALL OF FAME

2024 INDUCTEE CELEBRATION





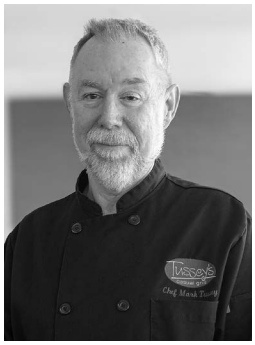
John Benker



John Heaston



Mitch & Carole Tempus



Mark Tussey



John Wade



Erin Vik

On October 20th we gathered at the Institute for the Culinary Arts at MCC to recognize the achievement of seven amazing industry leaders and welcomed them into the Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame. This annual event is to support education through culinary scholarships. This year's inductees to the Hall were: **John Benker,** Chef & Caterer, **John Heaston**, Friend of the Industry, **Mitch & Carole Tempus**, Purveyors & Restaurateurs, **Mark Tussey**, Chef & Restaurateur, **Erin Vik**, Restaurateur & Foodservice Director and **John Wade**, Restaurateur.

Leo Fascianella, the Board Chairman and Brian O'Malley, the Masters of Ceremonies welcomed the honorees, their friends and families and many industry supporters. Each honoree was introduced on film and accepted their induction on stage. Past inductees were honored as well as Jim Trebbien, recognizing the newest Golden Toque recipient, Cedric Fichepain.

Matt Brown, Master Sommelier, introduced each course, which was prepared by students, faculty and staff at the ICA@ MCC, and paired with a wine. Past recipients who had passed since last year's induction were recognized as The Beatniks played during their In Memioriam and throughout the night.

The evening ended with a toast to the honorees and a dessert and cocktail reception downstairs in the cooking and baking labs. The food and drinks were outstanding thanks to our supporters listed on the next page.

To read more on each honoree or to nominate someone to be considered for induction please visit www.omahahospitalityhalloffame.com.

Board Member Bio

ZACHARIAH A. BARRIENTOS

Portfolio Manager, Premier Midwest Beer & Beverage



I joined Premier Midwest Beer & Beverage in 2005, when it was called Nebraska Distributing, as a part-time sign maker. Having a background in the industry as a graphic designer, I was a part of its marketing growth from NDC to Premier Midwest Beer & Beverage. The journey from part-time sign shop to unique events to marketing was an amazing part of my growth in the beer industry. I did have a small hiatus from 2014-2021 but the industry would not let me go, so I came back to do more.

Premier became a division of Glazer's Beer & Beverage in 2023. We retained the name and staff. Our company is a family, and we complement each other to build our brands and our relationships in the Omaha-area.

Currently, I serve as the Portfolio Manager for Premier, handling over 60 different suppliers with over 1000 brands. The biggest brand I represent is Premier, though. I want to represent and establish Premier Midwest Beer & Beverage as the top supplier to retailers in Omaha.

I did not know what being an ORA member was going to entail, but as my first few days and weeks went by I began to understand the importance of this group and how each member is an important part of helping the community. I am honored to be a part of ORA and look forward to doing more with the retailers in Omaha and its surrounding areas.

THANK YOU

to these businesses for their generous support of the 2024 Hall of Fame Event

Chesterman Coca-Cola
Chieftain Distribution
Fortune Fish Gourmet
Johnson Brothers of Nebraska
Loffredo Fresh Foods
Nebraska Textile & Supply
Nelligan Creative
Niman Ranch
Premier Midwest Beer & Beverage
Performance Food Group
Quality Brands of Omaha
RNDC
Southern Glazers Wine & Spirits
Sysco
US Foods

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY
25TH | 2025
5:00PM – 8:00PM

Omaha Restaurant Association's
SIPS & SAVOR

A VENUE ON THE RIDGE
20033 Elkhorn Ridge Drive

A wine AND food tasting event to raise funds for **Culinary, Hospitality and Sommelier Scholarships** as well as supporting food insecurity in our community.

Omaha Restaurant Association

LOAD UP on discounted wine!

$75 TICKETS

Visit www.dineoutomaha.com or Send checks to ORA at 4270 N. 139th Street, Omaha, NE 68164 by February 17, 2025

Chieftain Distribution, Johnson Brothers of Nebraska, RNDC and Southern Glazers Wine & Spirits will be sampling wine for you to buy at DISCOUNTED PRICES to stock up!

The Following restaurants will be supplying a tantalizing taste

Goose 120 · Fleming's · Talus · Institute for the Culinary Arts · Fernando's · Venue on the Ridge · Bella Vita · Phoenix · Spaghetti Works · Cibo Vino

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WITH PASSION AND AN
Scholarship Money is available for them!

NEBRASKA RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION
HOSPITALITY EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

2025 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

DEADLINE TO APPLY: MARCH 3, 2025

The Nebraska Restaurant Association Hospitality Educational Foundation provides scholarship opportunities for qualified students and professionals who plan to pursue higher education in the fields of culinary and hospitality and will use those skills in Nebraska. Scholarship(s) will be awarded at the discretion of the scholarship committee.

Please attach your resume and fill out Parts A, B, & C to complete the application process

PART A:

Name: _____
Cell Phone: _____
Email: _____
Current Address: _____
City:_____ State:_____Zip Code _____

Please write "N/A" for anything that doesn't apply to you

Current High School or Career Academy: _____

GPA_____

I have participated in a Nebraska ProStart Program: Yes_____ No_____

Current Post Secondary Institution or Employer:_____

GPA_____

I have participated in a Nebraska ProStart Program: Yes_____ No_____

I am applying for Professional Development (I already work in the industry): Yes_____ No_____

In 2025, I will be enrolled at: Post-Secondary Institution or Professional Development Program

_____

Institution Address:_____

City:_____ State:_____ Zip Code:_____

Major:_____

Degree Objective:

Associates _____ Bachelors _____ Diploma _____ Certificate _____

Area of Emphasis:

Culinary Arts _____Baking and Pastry _____Food & Beverage _____

Restaurant Management _____ Entrepreneurship _____ Lodging _____

Other (Name of Emphasis) _____

Are you a previous NRAHEF/NRAEF Scholarship winner? Yes _____ No _____

INTEREST IN PURSUING A CULINARY EDUCATION?

Apply by March 3st, 2025!

PART B:

In the space provided, please tell us:

A. Why did you select the culinary or hospitality field as a career?

B. What are your future goals in the hospitality industry?

C. Describe the most challenging hospitality related experience that you have ever faced. What did you learn from the experience?

Scholarships are available - Apply by March 3st, 2025!

D. Describe your employment history in the hospitality industry:

E. How many credits and/or semesters do you have remaining to accomplish your educational goals OR What is your anticipated graduation date?

PART C:

Additional Contact Information (Please list three)
Please provide the names and phone numbers of at least three people who will know how to contact you in the next six months or more (e.g., parents, siblings, friends)

Name/Relationship	Cell Phone Number
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please e-mail no later than March 3, 2025 to: craig.casados@nebraskadining.org

or mail this form postmarked by March 3, 2025 to: Nebraska Restaurant Association HEF
Attn: Craig Casados
5100 N 27th St, Ste A2
#238 Lincoln, NE 68521

If you are a scholarship finalist, you will be required to attend an interview via Zoom with a panel of industry professionals. Interview times and Zoom information will be included in the interview notification letter.

If you are selected for a scholarship you will be required to give us your social security number. After enrollment verification is determined, scholarships will be mailed to the financial aid office of the recipient's institution or program.

Thank you for applying for a scholarship from the Nebraska Restaurant Association Hospitality Educational Foundation.

TO DOWNLOAD THIS FORM
HTTPS://DINEOUTOMAHA.COM/SCHOLARSHIPS/

FAMILY MEAL 2-2-25

Doors Open at 5pm - 8:30 p.m.

Join us for a delicious family-style gathering for
alumni, family + friends, ICA personnel and industry partners.

Come as you are to share, connect, and discover ways to help current students.
Advance tickets are $15 per person or $120 for a table of 10.
Ticket sales will be going to our Industry Support Fund through the MCC Foundation.
This fund assists students in finding opportunities in our industry to grow.
If you have any questions please reach out to
Emma Helwig - erhelwig@mcneb.edu

Metropolitan Community College
INSTITUTE FOR THE CULINARY ARTS

On The Fly
RESTAURANT CONSULTING

Zach Fetter – Owner
402.208.8556
zach@otfrc.com
www.otfrc.com



HAND CRAFTED Copps PIZZA • SALADS • BURGERS



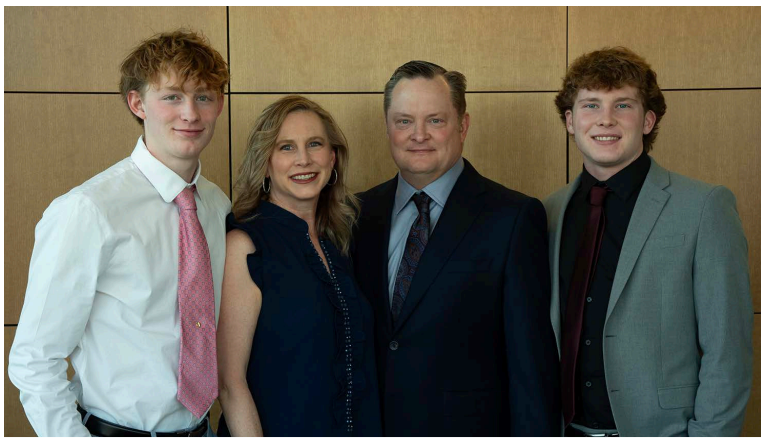
MERCURY BUILDERS

Jeff Gehring – Owner
402.689.1423
jeff@mercurycontractors.com
www.mercurybuilders.com

We offer premium state-of-the-art services for design, build. and operations of your restaurant. With a combined experience of over 50 years, we are poised to offer you the best services. From the beginning design stage, complete construction and certificate of occupancy, to the opening of operation and beyond. We will be your turnkey partners.







Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame

2024 Inductees

John Benker • John Heaston • Mitch & Carole Tempus
Mark Tussey • Erin C. Vik • John Wade

Sunday, October 20, 2024

Dinner and Awards begin ***Promptly*** at 5:00 pm
Doors open at 4:50

Inductee Dessert & Cocktail Reception
Immediately Following

Food prepared by The Institute for the Culinary Arts at MCC

The Institute for the Culinary Arts




























EXIT


Mark Tussey




EXIT
EXIT



EVENT PHOTOS

December 2024




















METROPOLITAN
Community College






METROPOLITAN








METROPOLITAN
















TABLE


METROPOLITAN














2










3






Dan
Preusser
Mitch
Tempus
HONOREE


























Tiffany Perkins



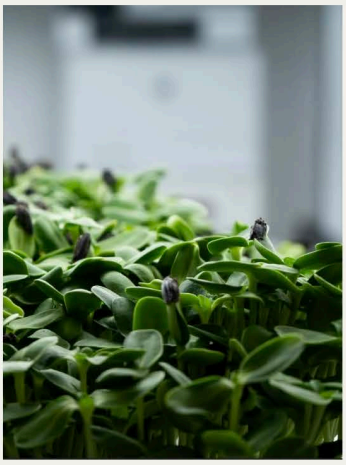
Welcome to Barn Girls Farms, Omaha's hidden gem for locally sourced, nutrient-rich foods, located in the heart of Ralston.

BARN GIRLS Farms

HARVESTING HEALTH

Our urban farm is a labor of love born from our shared passion for healthy living, fitness and nutrition. We founded Barn Girls Farms to bring the benefits of microgreens to Omaha. At Barn Girls Farms, we grow these microgreens and deliver these vibrant, nutrient-packed powerhouses to chefs and restaurants at their peak freshness.

But Barn Girls Farms is more than just a microgreens supplier. We are a bridge between the city and the best Nebraska farms. From locally sourced, grass-fed, and finished meats to farm-fresh eggs, artisanal cheeses, and hand-selected breads, Barn Girls Farms ensures clean, wholesome food options for every table.









Barn Girls Farms also boasts a bistro that serves up healthy, delicious lunches alongside a curated selection of wines. With its cool, welcoming vibe, our bistro is the perfect spot for a midday break or a casual happy hour. Whether you're a health enthusiast, a chef, or simply someone who loves good food, Barn Girls Farms invites you to rediscover the true meaning of eating local. We're here to bring you food that's as authentic as it is delicious, straight from the soil to your soul.

WHAT MAKES BARN GIRLS FARMS UNIQUE?

- **Peak-Fresh Microgreens:** Grown in-house and delivered straight to chefs, restaurants, and local customers.
- **Locally Sourced Foods:** Grass-fed meats, farm-fresh eggs, and cheeses selected from Nebraska's best producers.
- **Authentic Bistro Dining:** Healthy meals and carefully chosen wines served in a relaxed, inviting atmosphere.

At Barn Girls Farms, our mission is simple: to provide Omaha chefs, restaurants, and families with the freshest microgreens and locally sourced foods. We invite you to visit our urban farm in Ralston or contact us to arrange a delivery of Barn Girls Farms microgreens.

Owners: Gunnar and Stefani
402-984-1455
stefani@barngirls.com
5306 S. 72nd St. Ralston, NE 68127

Host a Student Culinary Stage + Tasting Program

STUDENTS | complete 50 hours of experiences, through at least three different places, across at least three channels of industry, with no more than 30 hours at one operation. Current places of employment can be eligible. Students submit a reflection journal.

ESTABLISHMENTS | Offer at least one Five-Hour Stage per week or one $5-Tasting. Work with students when they reach out to schedule either experience. Receive information back from reflection journals about students' experiences.

5-Hour *Stage*

A micro-internship-like experience where a single student comes to your operation and works alongside you and your crew for a minimum of five hours.

GOALS: to see what it is like at work at a variety of operations, create connections, get some work outta the student, and give your crew another chance to grow by developing others.

If you are open to hosting these kinds of engagements, working hard to make sure they are doing something that is truly indicative of your operation, and your channel in the industry, will have the most impact. Help students determine where to spend their upcoming 9 months of Culinary or Baking Internship.

$5-Tasting

If you had one little plate to tell your story to a budding culinarian and potential employee, what would it be? The $5-Tasting is a chance for you to tell that story to students from the Institute for the Culinary Arts.

GOALS: help culinarians discover more Omaha food. Inspire engagement as a customer, stage, intern, employee, and/or supporter.

PROCESS: you determine what you're willing to do, and how you want students to book it, tell us and we'll make that come true.

More on Tastings: A taste of the carbonara at Avoli? Some cottage cheese spread and a little Scooby-Snack size piece of prime rib at Johnny's Café?

Whatever you are up for making, that tells your story, for $5. You pick the parameters on everything, except the $5. No bogo's, with the purchase of's, or fifth sandwich free deals.

Just squeeze it into what you'd be willing to sell for $5 to help somebody learn about your joint.

If you want to be non-committal about what it is, that's cool too..."Tasting to be determined by the kitchen. Call ___ to arrange."

Or whatever crazy idea suits your fancy and accomplishes the goal: "We have family meal everyday at 400P, we'd love to have you join us for $5. Call Chef ____ at __ to talk through the details."

SIGN-UP

Click Here <https://www.openkitchenleadership.com/student> If your establishment is interested in strengthening students' connectivity to the Restaurant and Foodservice Industry by participating in this program. Reach out with other questions.

Metropolitan Community College
INSTITUTE FOR THE CULINARY ARTS

OFFICIAL BALLOT

Restaurateur of the Year 2024 | Purveyor of the Year 2024
Harold Norman Excellence Award 2024

Please vote on the ballot below by January 13th, 2025 and return it to:

Omaha Restaurant Association | 4270 N. 139th Street | Omaha, NE 68164
E-Mail: JWarren@DineOutOften.com

Winners will be presented at this year's 2025 Annual Meeting
on January 26th, 2025 and will **not** be informed prior to the meeting

RESTURATEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD 2024

YOU CANNOT SELECT A PAST RECIPIENT

Please choose someone you believe stands out in the industry through providing an outstanding business as well as contributing to the industry through the ORA and other civic causes.

PRIOR WINNERS

1989 Mac Thompson
1990 Rick Fox
1991 Linda Anania
1992 Ron Samuelson
1993 David Hayes
1994 John Chisholm
1995 Bill McKenna
1996 R. Tim Peffer
1997 Mark Hoch
1998 Denis Hall
1999 Matt Warren
2000 Brian Magee
2001 Sally Kawa
2002 Vince Fletcher
2003 Ann Mellen
2004 Nicole Jesse
2005 Chuck Caniglia
2006 Cedric Fichepain
2007 Katie O'Connor
2008 Tony Fucinaro, Jr.
2009 Cory Guyer
2010 John Wade
2011 Yves Menard
2012 Greg Lindberg
2012 Don & Marie Losole
2013 Brad Marr
2014 Glenn Wheeler
2015 Jared Clarke
2016 Jennifer Coco
2017 Darwin Hanssen
2018 Dave Mainelli
2019 Greg Cutchall
2020 MitchTempus
2021 Bob & Amy Freshman
2022 Alfie Cascio
2023 Raechel & Zach Van Buskirk

PURVEYOR OF THE YEAR 2024

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING FIVE PURVEYORS

All outstanding companies, who promote the mission of the ORA by sponsoring and attending the events and have a strong desire to improve the hospitality industry.

VOTE FOR ONE

- ◯ North Hospitality
- ◯ Quail Distribution
- ◯ Premier Midwest Beer and Beverage
- ◯ US Foods
- ◯ Performance Food Group

PRIOR WINNERS

2012 Rotella's Italian Bakery
2013 Omaha Steaks
2014 Quality Brands of Omaha
2015 Reinhart Food Service
2016 Loffredo's Fresh Foods
2017 Southern Glazers Wine & Spirits
2018 H. Olafsson International Specialty Foods
2019 Spin Linen
2020 TriMark Hockenberg's
2021 Chesterman Coca-Cola
2022 Glenn Valley Foods
2023 Johnson Brothers of NE.

HAROLD NORMAN EXCELLENCE AWARD 2024

Choose any employee who shows strong leadership, works hard, is dedicated, loyal and wants to see improvement in the industry.

**Include a short story of why you choose this person.*
Please email to: JWarren@DineOutOften.com

PRIOR WINNERS

2014 Katie Vap
2015 Kevin Caniglia
2016 Brian Young
2017 Bobby Mekiney
2018 Pedro "Pete" Garcia
2019 Linda Faye Austin
2020 Zac Triemert
2021 Danny Dominguez
2022 Dave Warren
2023 Jesus Garibay

2024_____
Please fill in your choice for RESTAURATEUR OF THE YEAR

2024_____
Please fill in your choice for HAROLD NORMAN EXCELLENCE AWARD
(EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR)

HTTPS://DINEOUTOMAHA.COM/ANNUAL-DINNER-BALLOT/

WE ARE THE

HOSPITALITY EXPERTS.

Since 1982, HMS has served as the premier supplier of up-to-the-minute point-of-sale technology and world-class service for the Hospitality industry. Put the power of our unrivaled experience and expertise to work for you with customized solutions.

CLOUD POS PLATFORM

SIMPHONY.

The premier cloud and mobile-based hospitality management platform, Simphony provides enterprise-level point-of-sale and back-office functionality to support a wide range of food and beverage operations. A truly comprehensive management platform, Simphony also offers gift and loyalty card acceptance, inventory and labor management, loss prevention, and much more.

SALIDO

The single platform for all your restaurant operations.
Whether you're running a full-service, casual, upscale casual, or fine-dining establishment, SALIDO will unify all your restaurant operations under one convenient interface. All while serving as the comprehensive hospitality payments and back-office solution.

PAR™ » Brink POS

Introducing the preferred all-in-one restaurant point of sale solution for both enterprise-level businesses and independent restaurateurs. Best of all, with a convenient monthly software as a service (SaaS) subscription, you can experience all that Brink has to offer risk free!

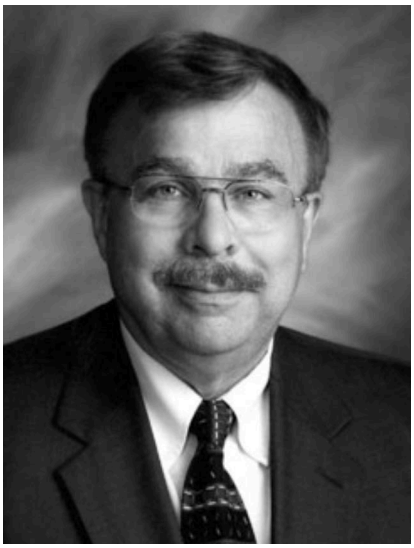
Tabit

Provide a personalized dining experience with the mobile-first hospitality platform. Allow your customers to submit allergy info and preferences, make online reservations, and more — all while keeping your staff in the loop on how many specials remain, providing easier upsell opportunities, and more.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT JOEL PRIEST, OMAHA HOSPITALITY CONSULTANT.
402.250.1804 | JPRIEST@HMSKC.COM

HMS Hospitality Management Systems
A North American Bancard Company

THE HONORABLE ORDER OF THE GOLDEN TOQUE



Chef Jim Trebbien has had an incredible career that spanned six decades.

Born and raised on an Iowa farm in the 1950s and 1960s his journey took him from the fields to the professional kitchen and everywhere in between. A true farm to table journey! Falling in love with how impactful a chef can be in the lives of those he feeds, after college and service in the United States Army in Korea he set out to be a professional chef.

His path took him into the kitchens of two masters of the craft French Chef Pierre Bossant and Golden Toque Chef Paul Goebel where his work ethic saw him through his uncertainty especially under Chef Goebel. After working in several industry chef positions, he would soon find himself teaching at Metropolitan Community College in the small culinary arts program. Soon he would be leading the program to a long sustained meteoric rise that transformed it from more of a home economic program to a world class culinary arts program and placed it on the map with a national reputation as one of the highest quality culinary arts programs in the United States.

He realized the best way to build the program was to be involved and make it his business to know the decision makers and the influencers, the movers and shakers. This led him to join the Omaha Restaurant Association and in 1993 while driving to downtown Omaha, Nebraska to attend the annual Omaha Restaurant Association dinner he heard people talking on the radio about the Bowlers Hall of Fame; he conceptualized and soon after co-founded the Omaha Hospitality Hall of Fame where he himself has been enshrined since the year 2000. With the culinary program and college becoming a driving force for the hall of fame this played a major role in his program growing and becoming known throughout the industry. Which helped lead to a complete paradigm shift of how the program at MCC was viewed by the Omaha restaurant industry and the rest is history.

In his time at Metropolitan Community College leading the program eventually as its dean he became the influencer, the mover and the shaker whose work ethic, expertise, love of the culinary arts and savvy leadership helped to cement the reputation of not only the Metropolitan Community College culinary arts program but the entire Omaha Nebraska food scene for years to come.

I hope you all enjoy a glimpse into the life and career of a living culinary legend as he shares his amazing story and wisdom with us in this segment of the Senior Member Spotlight.

TR: *Tell us about yourself, where were you born and where did you grow up?*

Chef Trebbien: I was born on a farm in NW Iowa a few miles from a vacation area called The Iowa Great Lakes.

TR: *What was your first job? Was it in the kitchen? What attracted you to the profession of being a chef?*

Chef Trebbien: When I was 15 years old my cousin got me a job working at a lakes area restaurant. The next summer my dad, who knew the owner of a famous Steakhouse on the lake, got me a job washing dishes at higher pay. The place was very busy, and they needed someone to help with hot food, so I got promoted to cook.

I learned a lot and loved making customers happy and helping the servers make a lot of money. The restaurant was sold after the owner died unexpectedly, so I answered an ad looking for a cook to work with the chef at the Boys Town summer camp. They had hired a chef (Pierre Bossant- who was from France) to make sure the boys got good, tasty food. When there were no boys at the camp, we would make special dinners for the staff and one evening we did pheasant under glass for the staff- and that was the moment I fell in love with making people smile. Nevertheless I went to college, got a degree in mathematics and joined the US Army where they made me a cook.

TR: *Describe your pathway throughout your career. Where did you start and where did it lead you? At the time that we met, you were already a legend in the profession but how did you get there, what came before that?*

Chef Trebbien: After the army I landed in Omaha, at the main campus of Boys Town and cooked food for the Boys Town boys for 2 years before moving into the world of hotel kitchens.

My new mentor was Golden Toque member Chef Paul Goebel. Chef Paul taught me so much about the world of food, customers, and hard work that I was set up for success. I gained more experience in food in other future jobs working with chefs and managers in small restaurants, large department stores, and a major hospital.



My next stop was teaching at a community college. We had 38 students in culinary arts when we applied to become ACF accredited. Mary Peterson (Golden Toque) came to Omaha to accredit the program. Mary was amazing and so instrumental in my life and in the growth of the program. She was responsible for me to set out on a path to make our program renown. I worked so hard for the next seven years to transform the program into a winner that grew it to almost 500 students fifteen years later. I became the Dean for fifteen years before retiring in 2015.

Now the program is known and recognized around the country. The Golden Toque hosted our annual meeting at the college in 2013.

TR: *What attracted you to the profession of being a chef?*

Chef Trebbien: I love to keep busy, I love to learn, and I like to make people happy, and the food industry is the place to do all those things. Many times, throughout my working years I was offered positions outside of the food world, but always stayed in food. I loved to go to work every day.

TR: *What do you think is the most significant change to the profession since you first started? How are things different now than they were when you first entered a professional kitchen? How are they the same? Are the same things still important to today's chefs in 2024 as they were at the height of your career?*

Chef Trebbien: Something that has really changed kitchens is air conditioning. What an amazing thing to go from temperatures well over 100 degrees to 75…and the regulation of the workforce by the government has been amazing.

The biggest thing/ challenge to happen in our field is the machinery, and the processing of the food ingredients, that we use daily in the kitchen and the office.
The bigger related challenges are to come shortly as the next few generations have less people and that will result in a smaller workforce. We will definitely be doing things differently.

People are the same with the same desires to be cared for and appreciate, so how we treat people, and their needs will be as important to our success as chefs, as anything we do.

TR: *What advice would you give to an aspiring young chef?*

Chef Trebbien: If you don't have passion, and don't want to work harder than everyone you know, don't get into food

TR: *You were, inducted into the Honorable Order of the Golden Toque in 2009. Who nominated you to become a member of the Golden Toque?*

Chef Trebbien: My mentor, Chef Paul Goebel and Jim Miller "Paul was always intimidating. There was one way of doing stuff and it was Paul's way. But I kept in contact with that man over the years. Then I hired him to work for me at (Metro). People that knew me and knew him asked, 'Jim, did you hire Paul to get a little revenge?' and I said, 'Not at all, I treated him like my dad, I treated him with love and respect.' People wondered why since he'd been so mean to me before – because Paul taught me an awful lot. He was so demanding that you figured out how to do it before he'd get there because you wanted to do it right and please him. I loved the guy."

"Having worked for Paul Goebel, I always thought, 'Oh that's something I could never do, but when I got in, I couldn't believe it. It is quite prestigious and I was just tickled."



Leftto right James E. "Jim" Trebbien, Leo Fascianella & Cedric Fichepain
November/December 2024 issue of Omaha Magazine Photo by Bill Sitzmann

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DOUGLAS COUNTY Health Department

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For Immediate Release: December 5, 2024

It's Time to Renew Food Permits

This is the time of the year when food and drink businesses in Douglas County are required to renew their permits. All current permits expire on Dec. 31 and new ones are required to be in place by Jan. 1. New businesses that opened during 2024 had their original fees pro-rated, so their permits are also due by the end of December.

The Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) mailed the invoices Nov. 1 to the billing addresses on file and is asking all businesses to look for them in the mail. Any business that has not received its invoice should contact the Health Department at (402) 444-7480.

"We hope to have every food permit renewed by the end of the year," Health Director Dr. Lindsay Huse said. "We know the hospitality industry is busy this time of year, so we hope to help them with this early reminder."

Operating without a permit makes violators subject to a fine and jail time, or both, for each offense.

"The Food Safety and Compliance Section has the responsibility of protecting the food we eat," Dr. Huse said. "Our inspectors visit food and drink establishments to ensure that what you are served is being handled safely every step of the way."

Dr. Huse added, "Our goal is to avoid any closing or late fees. This is a tremendous restaurant community, and we encourage you to support them during the holidays."

Seasonal businesses such as ice cream trucks, and some food trucks are invoiced in the spring. Special events are invoiced when permit applications are made. Anyone with questions should call the Health Department at (402)-444-7480.

Dr. Lindsay Huse, MPH, DNP, RN, PHN0A-B
Health Director
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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.

JANUARY 26th	**Annual Meeting-Lunch** Cascio's Steakhouse - 11 a.m. 1620 South 10th Street
FEBRUARY 4th	**Monthy Board Meeting** Goose 120 - 3:30 p.m. 12051 Blondo St.
FEBRUARY 25th	**SIPS & SAVOR** 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. A Venue on the Ridge 20033 Elkhorn Ridge Dr.
FEBRUARY 27th	**SIPS & SAVOR** **Wine Pick Up** 4:00 -6:00 p.m. A Venue on the Ridge
MARCH 11th	**Monthy Board Meeting** Spaghetti Works - 3:30 p.m. 8416 Park Drive, Ralston

Photos in this issue were graciously provided by Beverly Nelligan at NELLIGAN CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY AND DESIGN.
EMAIL; NelliganCreative@gmail.com

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IMPORTANT NEWS FOR OUR MEMBERSHIP: Please Read!

ServSafe MANAGEMENT TRAINING

ServSafe National Restaurant Association™

We were hoping the Extension Office would have hired a Spanish speaking instructor by now but it has not happened yet. They are trying hard to make it happen as we are getting more and more requests for this. We are holding off on scheduling the spring dates to give them a little more time to try to hire someone.

We will be sending out the new spring dates, separately, within a couple of weeks from now. **STAY TUNED!**