



Vol 48 No 2 June 2025

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## 2025 NBA Annual Convention



### Experience the Power of Local Broadcasting in Nebraska!

Registration is now open for the 2025 NBA Annual Convention at the Embassy Suites complex in La Vista on August 12 & 13! Hear from leading industry trainers with information you can use immediately to make an impact on your personal and company performance. Banquets include Tuesday's Hall of Fame, and Wednesday's Keynote Luncheon and Pinnacle Awards. Expand your network at our popular Networking Lounge following Wednesday's afternoon sessions.

We've held our member pricing again: just \$225 per SEU for unlimited seats at all training sessions. Meal functions are priced per-person. Early Bird pricing expires after July

28<sup>th</sup>. Book your hotel rooms now as our group rate expires July 24 or whenever the block is full – whichever happens first. We look forward to seeing you there!

Agenda, Pricing, Hotel and Registration Info



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## Legislative & Regulatory Update



On Capitol Hill, support continues to grow for the **AM For Every Vehicle Act**. Unknown as of this writing is what its best path will be for passage. The **Local Radio Freedom Act** also continues to gain support. The NBA thanks **Congressmen Don Bacon, Mike Flood, & Adrian Smith** and **Senators Deb Fischer & Pete Ricketts** for renewing their support of both initiatives.

In welcome FCC news, the Fifth Circuit released its decision on May 19 unanimously vacating the FCC's order requiring collection of Form 395-B data. Relying directly on the arguments raised in the Texas Association of Broadcasters' briefs, it found that the FCC lacks statutory authority to collect broadcaster race and gender employment data at all, and therefore is not permitted to require broadcasters to submit Form 395-B. The NBA joined 43 of our fellow state broadcasters associations in supporting Texas' effort to seek relief from this proposed filing requirement. In other FCC news, the NBA joined other state broadcast associations in filing joint comments through NASBA in response to Chairman Brendan Carr's "Delete, Delete, Delete" initiative.

### Nebraska Legislature Update



A sigh of relief for the NBA and our members accompanied the June 2 Sine Die adjournment of our Nebraska Legislature. Despite a number of different bills that could have impacted different facets of station operations, we emerged without harm. We greatly appreciate Governor Pillen and his staff's recognition that a bill taxing advertising is beyond complicated to pass, let alone administer, and would be incredibly harmful to local broadcasters and the citizens we serve. It was nice to avoid that skirmish in this session. That said, we remain watchful and vigilant as next year's session is already expected to begin with budget shortfalls. As the list of tax-exempt goods and services grows shorter, the target on the backs of those exempt grows larger. The NBA thanks our lobbying team of **Korby Gilbertson** and **Justin Brady** for their continued guidance and work on our behalf.

*To learn more about any of these issues, contact Jim Timm at [jim@ne-ba.org](mailto:jim@ne-ba.org) or 402-933-5995.*

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## NBA Refreshes Mission Statement

Following discussion in our May board of directors meeting, unanimous approval was

given to update the NBA mission statement as follows: “Established in 1934, the NBA works to advance the best interests of FCC-licensed, over the air local radio and television stations in the state of Nebraska. The NBA supports our member stations through advocacy, education, innovation and the celebration of local broadcasters’ efforts to better serve the people of Nebraska.”

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## Chairperson's Column



Jessie Johnson  
Flood Communications, Kearney

There's no better time — or place — to connect, learn, and celebrate broadcasting in Nebraska than at our **Annual Convention this August 12th and 13th at the Embassy Suites in La Vista.**

Whether you're a seasoned broadcaster, an up-and-coming talent, or part of the essential support teams that keep Nebraska's stations running strong, this event is for you.

The broadcasting industry continues to evolve rapidly. Staying ahead means staying connected with your peers, with new technologies, and with the ideas that shape the future of our work.

That's exactly what our convention delivers:

**Relevant, timely sessions** on industry trends, digital innovation, sales strategy, and public policy.

**Networking with fellow broadcasters** from across the state — the kind of in-person connections that spark partnerships and fresh thinking.

**Recognition and celebration** of excellence in Nebraska broadcasting.

**Access to vendors, sponsors, and services** tailored to your station's needs.

**Mark your calendar** and make it a priority to be there. This is more than a conference. It's a gathering of the voices and visionaries who make broadcasting in Nebraska thrive.

**Let's come together to celebrate, learn, and build the future — together. We can't wait to see you there!**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessie Johnson". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "J" and a distinct "H".

Jessie Johnson  
Chairperson of the Board 2024-2025  
Nebraska Broadcasters Association

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## Board Briefs



*A summary of the NBA Board of Directors spring meeting held on May 14, 2025, in Kearney.*

Chairperson **Jessie Johnson** called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. and recited our Antitrust policy.

Minutes from the February 12, 2025 meeting were approved.

Financial reports for January, February and March 2025 were approved as presented by Secretary-Treasurer **Graig Kinzie**.

President/Executive Director **Jim Timm** reported on federal and state legislative & regulatory matters.

Timm reported on the recent “Leadership Masterclass” and it was agreed to survey members about potential interest in repeating the program in 2026.

An update on Pinnacle Awards entries and Annual Convention planning was provided by Timm.

Approval was given to an updated NBA mission statement.

Johnson thanked everyone for attending and the meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

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## Juliette Eckler Awarded Omaha Press Club Scholarship



*Eckler and the NBA's Jim Timm*

**Juliette Eckler** is the recipient of the NBA's 2025 Omaha Press Club \$2,000 Scholarship. Eckler is majoring in Journalism and Media Communication at the University of Nebraska – Omaha, where she serves as station manager of MavRadio.FM and has worked to expand the station's sports programming. Congratulations, Juliette!

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## 2025 Student Debt Assistance Grant Recipients

Nine NBA member employees are each \$1,000 closer to eliminating their student loan debt thanks to the NBA Foundation's Student Debt Assistance Grant program. Now in its fifth year, this program has provided \$44,000 to NBA member station employees. Applications are judged by a panel of NBA board members with no parent company/employee



applicant conflicts. Congratulations to these dedicated NBA-member station employees:

**Katelyn Andersen**, Media Executive – WOWT TV, Omaha

**Robyn Burnison**, Sales & Promotions Assistant/On Air Talent – NRG Media, Lincoln

**Amantha Dickman**, News Director – KZUM, Lincoln

**Steven Hardesty**, Assistant Program Director – KLIN/NRG Media, Lincoln

**Alyssa Huwaldt**, Client Marketing Coordinator – NRG Media, Lincoln

**Ryan Messman**, Senior Audio Engineer – Nebraska Public Media, Lincoln

**Santiago Pardo-Rey**, Brand Manager – KFRX/Alpha Media, Lincoln

**Josh Peterson**, “Unsportsmanlike Conduct” Co-Host – KOZN/NRG Media, Omaha

**Megan Rieder**, On-Air Talent/Music Director – KQKQ/NRG Media, Omaha

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## NBA Welcomes New Members



KBTI-LP (Omaha), KDPP-LP (Lincoln),  
RadioGearheads.com and Two Media.

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## Transactions

Connoisseur Media announced it will acquire Alpha Media in a transaction expected to clear the FCC later this year. A Local Marketing Agreement is underway, which includes the current Alpha Media clusters in Columbus and Lincoln.

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## Virtual Job Fair September 29 - October 3, 2025



Hiring? The NBA's next Virtual Job Fair is September 29-October 3. Member stations can post jobs, interact with candidates and expand your outreach program.

**Registration deadline is September 22nd.**

Complete details [here](#):

Contact Jenna McKain at [Jenna@ne-ba.org](mailto:Jenna@ne-ba.org) with any questions.



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## Walnut Media adds Husker Sports Omaha Affiliation



**Walnut Media**, the University of Nebraska and Play Fly Sports announced a five-year partnership that will establish “Boomer Radio” as the new Omaha affiliate for Husker Sports. Starting July 7, KIBM AM (1490) and KIBM FM (97.3) will air live broadcasts of Husker Football, Men’s and Women’s Basketball, Volleyball, Baseball, and “Sports Nightly.” In the event of scheduling conflicts, broadcasts will air on KCRO AM (660). Husker Football programming also will air on KCRO, and Walnut will launch a dedicated Husker Sports stream available on the MyBoomerRadio.com app.

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## Members in the Spotlight

### Awards and Honors



WOWT TV’s **John Chapman** was honored (ok, roasted) as the 181st “Face on the Barroom” Floor at the Omaha Press Club on April 24.



The **Omaha Press Club** Journalists of Excellence Hall of Fame welcomed six new members on May 31, including **Clint Bellows, John Knicely, Jeremy Maskel, Andrew Ozaki** and **Michael Scott**.

The **Eric Sevareid Awards** were presented on April 12 as part of the 2025 MBJA Conference in Minneapolis. NBA members earning some new hardware include **KCNI/KBBN, KLIN, KRVN, Nebraska Public Media, UNK, UNL, UNO** and **WOWT**.



NBA members collected honors in Region 5 of the 2025 RTDNA Edward R. Murrow Awards. **KETV, KOLN** and **Nebraska Public Media** added to their trophy cases and are eligible for national honors, to be announced in August.

## People on the Move

GM moves at Gray Media: Following eight years as GM of Gray's Lincoln, Central Nebraska and North Platte properties, **Shannon Booth** has been named GM of WOWT TV in Omaha. Taking Shannon's Lincoln-based GM chair is **Jacque Harms**. The moves follow the June 2 retirement of **Jim McKernan** following his 44-year career in Omaha television and radio. Over 100 people attended his surprise party.



Shannon Booth



Jacque Harms



*L to R: Gray Senior VP Mike King, Jim McKernan and Gray President/Co-CEO Pat LaPlatney*



KLKN TV has named **Daniel Talley** as GM/DOS of the Lincoln ABC affiliate.

**Steve White** has been named Farm Director for KRVN and the Nebraska Rural Radio Association.



**Susan Littlefield** joined Farm and Ranch Media and is partnering with News Channel Nebraska to provide multiplatform Ag reports.



Sinclair announced the hiring of **John Hannon** to oversee its properties in Omaha, Lincoln and Central Nebraska.



**Jennifer Stocker** is the new iHeartMedia Area President for Nebraska-Iowa; her oversight includes the company's Ogallala and Omaha operations.

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## Future Talent

### Connecting with Tomorrow's Broadcasters

As part of our ongoing "Future Talent" initiative, the NBA actively seeks opportunities to showcase broadcasting careers with high school and college students involved in media and journalism classes and related activities.

#### UNO High School Media Conference

Over 200 students from 15 Omaha metro area high schools attended the annual UNO High School Media Conference on April 11, sponsored by the NBA. In addition to keynote speaker **Holly Rowe** of ESPN, students also heard from KETV's **Samantha Pastorino** and WOWT's **Gina Dvorak** about their roles at their respective local TV stations.

#### UNK Digital Expressions Media Camp

This camp was established in 2016 and 9 years later is still going strong. 12 high school students from all across Nebraska gathered on the UNK campus from June 2-6 for a week of hands-on instruction and content creation in radio, television and digital media led by **Jacob Rosdail**, associate professor & assistant department chair in the Department of Communication. Personnel from NBA members **NRG Media**, **Nebraska Rural Radio Association** and **News Channel Nebraska** combined to provide tours and guest speakers. The NBA has proudly supported this camp since its inception.





*NRG Media Hosts UNK Campers*

✓ Supporting Radio & TV  
broadcast professionals

✓ \$20 million  
in grants funded

✓ Serving all US  
states & territories

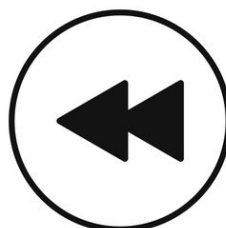


Find out how the **BFOA** can help  
broadcasters in your community.

LEARN MORE



[www.broadcastersfoundation.org](http://www.broadcastersfoundation.org)



*The NBA thanks President Emeritus  
**Marty Riemenschneider**  
for compiling items from the NBA  
archives.*

# REWIND

## 1965: 60 Years Ago

**Roy Lenwell, KBRL**, McCook, has filed for the state legislature. The FCC is cracking down on double billing; this is an illegal and unwise practice. **KOLN TV** and the **Stuart** stations have agreed to underwrite full scholarships to the University of Nebraska Broadcast School.

## 1975: 50 Years Ago

For the first time, the official State of Nebraska Highway Maps and Tourist Guides list the locations, call letters and frequencies of Nebraska commercial AM and FM radio stations, as a service to the traveling public. Seven hundred thousand copies have been printed for free distribution. The project originated in the NBA Public Relations Committee led by **Ms. Lynne Grasz**, chairperson, and **Max Brown**, director.

## 1985: 40 Years Ago

On April 14, the Nebraska Legislature gave 28-18 approval to LB 461 authorizing the creation of a statewide public radio network. **Governor Robert Kerrey** signed the bill April 18. This ended the NBA's long, bitter struggle to keep statewide government radio out of Nebraska. According to NBA Executive Director **Ed Schafer**, it was apparent from the outset that the bill could not be killed in committee.

June 29 will be the date of the "Network Switch" for **WOWT** and **KMTV**. KMTV will become a CBS affiliate and **WOWT** will become an NBC affiliate. CBS' contract with WOWT was scheduled to expire in October; NBC's contract with KMTV expires in mid-June. Syndicated shows will not be affected.

## 1995: 30 Years Ago

**John Webster**, current President of the Nebraska Broadcasters Association is busy bringing new ideas to the organization. In addition to creating the NBA Foundation, he is hoping to establish a "Pioneers Club", honoring retired broadcasters in the state.

## 2005: 20 Years Ago

Journal Broadcast Group- Omaha's **KBBX FM**, was awarded a Crystal Award at the NAB 2005 Convention in Las Vegas this past April 19. This is the first time a Crystal has been awarded to a Spanish language station. "**Radio Lobo**" has been serving the Latino community for six years and is the only live and local Spanish outlet for news and information. The station was one of 10 Crystal Award Winners out of 50 finalists.

Upon a request made to the NBA by State Senator **Mike Flood, KUSO**, Norfolk, the NBA has donated audio equipment to the information technology department at the state Capitol in Lincoln, which will allow members of the Unicameral to record news cuts and segments via the internet (mp3) to distribute to stations in their districts.

## 2015: 10 Years Ago

Radio and TV Journalists who have made notable contributions to Omaha-area journalism were inducted into the Omaha Press Club Journalists of Excellence Hall of Fame on June 6. **Gary Sadlemyer, KFAB** and **Chuck Roberts KMTV/CNN** were inducted in front of a room full of colleagues, family and broadcasting friends. Broadcasters inducted posthumously were **Jack McBride** and **Arnold Peterson**.

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## Sync with the NBA Calendar

### EVENTS, MEETINGS & DEADLINES

**2025 NBA Annual Convention (La Vista):** August 12 & 13, 2025

**2025 NBA Hall of Fame Banquet:** August 12, 2025

**2025 Pinnacle Awards Banquet:** August 13, 2025

**2026 NBA Annual Convention (Lincoln):** August 11 & 12, 2026

### 2025 GOVERNOR PILLEN CALL IN SHOW SCHEDULE

*All shows air at 2:00 pm CT unless otherwise noted.*



*Governor Jim Pillen*

More than 40 member stations carry the NBA Governor's Monthly Call In Show, which originates from KLIN in Lincoln. The NBA and Governor Pillen thank our many affiliates and remind you to promote each month's program on the air, online and through social media.

Upcoming Call In Show Dates:

- **July 14, 2025**
- **August 18, 2025**
- **September 15, 2025**
- **October 20, 2025**
- **November 10, 2025**
- **December 15, 2025**

2026 dates to be announced.

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## In Remembrance



*Jim Lambley* -  
former longtime owner/operator of KSDZ  
(Gordon) and KDJL (Kilgore)

*Stephen Sanders* -  
longtime general sales manager at KFAB &  
KFOR

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