



Vol 48 No 4 December 2025



NBA Initiates "Trust" Campaign



"Where do I go to find news I can trust?"

That question is increasingly asked by people every day across Nebraska.

To support our valued NBA members in your ongoing mission of producing trusted local news, we recently unveiled the [NBA Trust Campaign](#).

The campaign assets are customizable for each member station, and we are requesting that participating members support the campaign as they see fit through May, 2026.

A heartfelt thank-you to our member partners at **KETV, KOLN/KGIN TV, KRNU, KVNO, NRG Media – Omaha** and **Walnut Media** for their invaluable contributions in developing the Trust Campaign message and assets. Their generous support has been instrumental in bringing this campaign to life.

Sales & Leadership Growth in 2026: Join us for "Rising Above"



NBA training partner **Ten Minute Trainer Network** will present "Rising Above" on January 28th & 29th. This virtual event will focus on leadership, sales, marketing, culture and motivation, presented by some of the brightest minds in the business. Participation is FREE for NBA members. Watch your inbox for registration details coming soon!

NBA Hall of Fame Nominations due by January 12

Nominations for the NBA Hall of Fame Class of 2026 will be accepted through **Monday, January 12, 2026**. Details are available [here](#). If you wish to advocate for the induction of someone already in nomination, contact jim@ne-ba.org.



Legislative & Regulatory Update



Federal Legislative Update

With Congress in recess through the holidays, activity on the "AM For Every Vehicle Act" will resume next month with the goal of securing a House floor vote that should send it back to the Senate. The bill has 313 supporters in the House and 61 in the Senate. The Local Radio Freedom Act continues to gain support, now one away from the magic number of 218 House members and 26 Senate members. The NBA thanks **Congressmen Don Bacon, Mike Flood, & Adrian Smith and Senators Deb Fischer & Pete Ricketts** for their continued support of both initiatives.

State Legislative Update

In Lincoln, next year's "short session" will open January 7th with a significant budget shortfall as the elephant in the room. The return of an ad tax proposal seems likely and we also expect another "Winner Take All" push. We will continue monitoring for bills that might address the use of AI in Political ads and regulations on the advertising of prescription



medications and related treatments. The NBA thanks our lobbying team of **Korby Gilbertson** and **Justin Brady** for their continued guidance and work on our behalf.

Chairman's Column



Mark Jensen
KNLV AM/FM, Ord

Merry Christmas to all of our members of the Nebraska Broadcasters Association. This holiday season we want to extend our heartfelt appreciation for your exceptional service to the communities you serve and our partnership in supporting the broadcast industry. Our members dedication and commitment to the listeners and viewers they serve plays a vital role in the success of over the air broadcasting and digital platforms.

We're excited to see what 2026 will bring in new technology and will continue to offer this association's support on all government matters that affect you on a state and national level throughout the coming year.

I also want to take a moment during the holidays to express my deepest gratitude for the visionary guidance and unwavering support of our Board of Directors and our President Jim Timm. We have a wonderful board that is focused on what we can continue to offer our members and a leader who continues to have his finger on the pulse of what is happening to our industry. We are very blessed to have such a dedicated association representing TV and Radio Broadcasting.

As the holiday season approaches, we want to extend our warmest wishes to you and your family. May this time be filled with joy, peace, and happiness. Your hard work throughout the year has been invaluable, and we look forward to another year of achievements together. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and your family from the Nebraska Broadcasters Association.

Wishing you all the best in 2026,

Mark Jensen
Chairman of the Board 2025-2026
Nebraska Broadcasters Association

NBA Foundation Awards \$17,000 in College Scholarships

The Nebraska Broadcasters Association Foundation (NBAF) has awarded \$17,000.00 in scholarships to these four students who are currently attending Nebraska universities with aspirations to work in broadcasting upon their graduation:



Lucy Mendez- a junior at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, pursuing a dual major in Broadcasting and Journalism.



Eli Rodriguez- a sophomore at University of Nebraska – Lincoln pursuing a double major in Sports Media & Communication and Broadcasting.



Jacqueline Ruiz-Rodriguez- a junior at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, pursuing a dual major in Broadcasting & Journalism.



Barrett Stearns- a sophomore at Wayne State College, pursuing a dual major in Sports Media and Mass Communication.

Current NBA Board Chairman **Mark Jensen**, President of MWB Broadcasting II, LLC said, "The Nebraska Broadcasters Association Foundation is proud to celebrate our scholarship winners, whose talent and ambition promise to illuminate the future of our industry. May these scholarships open doors to new opportunities and be a vote of confidence in their abilities."

Scholarship Funds Available!



Nebraska High School seniors with plans to enroll in a broadcasting related college degree program can earn one of four, \$1,000 scholarships from the NBA Foundation. [Online applications](#) are due by **January 31**.

College students with Nebraska ties will soon be able to apply for one of three, \$2,000 EEO Scholarships. The [application window](#) for two and four-year degree program students will be open **from January 1 – March 1**.

Generous Donors Support Scholarships

The NBA's ability to fund over \$30,000 in annual scholarships and other initiatives wouldn't be possible without the generosity of [so many NBA members](#). **Tax deductible donations of any amount** can be made online or by check; complete details on the link above. Thank you for your consideration.

Transactions

NRG Media has agreed to sell its Central Nebraska holdings to **Usher Media, LLC**. The \$3.75 million deal, pending FCC approval, includes **KSYZ** (107.7, Grand Island); **KROR** (101.5, Hastings); **KQKY** (105.9, Kearney); **KRNY** (102.3, Kearney); **KGFW** (1340, Kearney) and **KGFW** translator **K241CN** (96.1, Kearney).

Rincon Broadcasting Group closed on its purchase of Lincoln's **KLKN TV** (ABC) from **Standard Media Group**.

Also in Lincoln, **Connoisseur Media** returned the license of **KLMS** (1480) exactly one year after the station went silent.

2026 Pinnacle Awards Recording Week set for February 16-20



Planning is underway for the 2026 NBA Pinnacle Awards competition, sponsored by Pinnacle Bank and NPPD. Action dates will soon be upon us!

The recording week for the categories of Best Newscast, Best Sportscast and Best Weathercast (TV) is set for February 16 – 20, 2026. In the following week, the NBA will announce on which one of those five days that all entries in the aforementioned categories must have aired.

All other Pinnacle Awards entries **must have first aired/appeared between April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026** unless otherwise specified. Official rules including

categories & relevant dates will be released in the coming weeks.

We look forward to seeing which NBA members will be recognized among the best of the best in Nebraska broadcasting on **Wednesday, August 12** during our Annual Convention in Lincoln!

Board Briefs



A summary of the NBA Board of Directors fall meeting held on November 5, 2025 in Kearney

Chairman **Mark Jensen** called the meeting to order at 9:58 a.m. and recited our Antitrust policy. An updated Conflict of Interest policy and Code of Conduct were circulated for signature by all board members.

Minutes from the August 12, 2025 meeting were approved. Financial reports for July, August, September and fiscal year 2024-2025 were approved as presented by Secretary-Treasurer **Jeffrey Steffen**.

President/Executive Director **Jim Timm** reported on federal and state legislative & regulatory matters. Regarding Annual Membership Dues, approval was given to hold the dues at the current level.

Regarding our 2026 Annual Convention, approval was given to a lineup of speakers and to holding meal function prices and Pinnacle Awards entry fees at the 2025 levels.

Regarding the “Trust” campaign, Timm reported all media elements are in development for a late November release for the campaign designed to run from December through May.

An operating budget for fiscal year 2025-2026 was approved. Jensen thanked everyone for attending and the meeting adjourned at 12:46 p.m.

Future Talent: NBA Members Connect with High School Students



Kopsa with a student

Cory Kopsa, owner/operator of **KRFS AM & FM** in Superior, gave students a chance to hear and see what it's like to work in the radio business during the Superior High School College & Career Fair on November 19th. Students from Superior, Lawrence/Nelson and Sandy Creek high schools attended the event.

The **Nebraska High School Press Association (NHSPA)** held its Annual Fall Conference on October 20th at the UNL Student Union. Over 700 students from more than 40 high schools attended and learned from a variety of NBA members, including **Jacque Harms, Brandon Mueting & Madison Pitsch** from **KOLN/KGIN TV**, **Jon Willis & Steve White** from the **Nebraska Rural Radio Association**, **Pat Janssen & Sean X. Ahern** from **KWSC**, **Maddie Augustine** from **KETV**, **Grant Hansen & Nick Handley** from **Walnut Media** and the **NBA's Jim Timm**.



Madison Pitsch



Grant Hansen & Nick Handley

Hundreds of northeast Nebraska high school sophomores descended upon Wayne State College on October 14th for the **Annual Extension Sophomore Career Day**, where **Jim Timm** made a presentation on careers in broadcast TV and radio.



The NBA's **High School Radio Project (HSRP)** remains highly active with online broadcasts from "The Oracle" at **Platteview High School** and "The Mob on the Mic" at **Omaha Westview High School**. [Click here](#) to listen to the content they're creating. The HSRP is also active in Louisiana, Massachusetts & Michigan.

Virtual Job Fair January 12 - 16



Hiring? The NBA's next Virtual Job Fair is January 12 - 16. Member stations can post jobs, interact with candidates and expand your outreach program.

Registration deadline is January 5, 2026.

Complete details [here](#).

Contact Jenna McKain at Jenna@ne-ba.org with any questions.

NEW NBA Career Achievement Award



The NBA Board of Directors is proud to introduce the “**NBA Career Achievement Award**” program. Created to recognize NBA member station personnel from any station department who have demonstrated a significant, long term commitment to their career in Nebraska radio and/or television broadcasting, nominees must have worked for at least 25 years in Nebraska radio and/or TV to be eligible for consideration.

Complete details and the nomination form are found [here](#). The NBA thanks former NBA Chairman of the Board **Craig Larson** (retired, Nebraska Rural Radio Association) for introducing the concept for the board’s consideration.

SBE Training Program: FREE for NBA Members



The NBA can assist our members in **advancing their technical & engineering skills** through the Society of Broadcast Engineers (SBE) [Technical Professional Training program](#) (TPT). You’ll follow a course of monthly activities to raise your skill level and earn SBE certification. Upon successful completion, the NBA will reimburse your station for the \$545.00 program cost. Contact Jim@ne-ba.org to apply.

Mike Fass of Gray Digital Media in Lincoln recently completed the program and said: *“I joined the SBE Technical Professional Training Program this year with the goal of continuous learning. I enjoyed connecting with an engineer in another location with different and similar challenges. We met remotely once a month. It was great to be able to share experiences, and I came away from the program with new ideas and a new way of looking at certain*

areas. Overall, I thought it was a great experience.”

As the need for engineering & technical support grows, the SBE TPT can be a helpful resource.



Members in the Spotlight



Kathi Blaha will retire at year-end after serving as KETV's Business Manager for 14 years. Kathi's 40-year career included work at KPTM/KXVO and Journal Broadcast Group - Radio.



After 44 years at KOLN/KGIN TV, **Ken Siemek** retired from his Chief Meteorologist role at the end of October.



Also at KETV, veteran news anchor **Rob McCartney** will retire at the end of 2025 following 40 years with the station. Rob's extensive work has included hosting "Chronicle," the station's public affairs program, as well as significant community outreach.



Across town at KFAB, "KFAB's Morning News" host (and NBA Hall of Fame member) **Gary Sadlemyer** called it a career on December 12th after 49 years on 1110 AM, capping more than 50 years in Nebraska broadcasting. Gary plans to do some occasional work with the station.

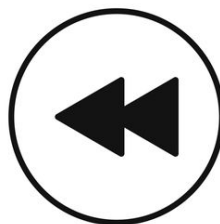


Among the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) 50 Crystal Radio Award finalists are NRG Media – Lincoln's **KFGE** and iHeartMedia – Omaha's **KXKT**. Ten Crystal winners will be announced on March 3, 2026 at an event in Washington, DC.

Shari Veil, dean of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's College of Journalism and Mass Communications, will step down from her position on December 23. Veil has been named provost at North Dakota State University, her alma mater.



The **Nebraska Rural Radio Association** earned six national awards at the 2025 National Association of Farm Broadcasting (NAFB) annual convention in November.



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

REWIND

1975: 50 Years Ago

The FCC has approved the application of Airwaves Broadcasting Services for a new FM in Crete, Nebraska. **Principals: Joe Stavas, Donald L. Robson, William C. Whitlock & Ronald L. Kruse.**

“WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE 1976 ELECTIONS” is the subject of **Allen J. Beermann**, Nebraska Secretary of State, who will be the speaker at the NBA membership luncheon in the Radisson-Cornhusker Hotel at the two-day “Mini-Convention” of the NBA in January.

1985: 40 Years Ago

KNEN, 94.7 FM, Norfolk has completed a 1,000 square-foot addition and total remodeling inside and out. The \$80,000 project took nearly four months, says General Manager **Gene Koehn**. “We were over-crowded in our original 1,800 square-feet and thought the staff deserved more space and wanted to look a little nicer.”

KAAQ FM has joined sister station **KCOW AM**, Alliance on the air. The 100,000-watt, 24-hour Country station is at 105.9 on the dial. Three new fulltime employees and one part timer have been added to the staff, says Station Manager **Jim Kamerzell**.

1995: 30 Years Ago

Freedom of Information Chair **Steve Murphy (WOWT)** reported that in the 1995 state legislative session, thirty bills had the potential to create problems for the news media. A Media of Nebraska delegation met with Attorney General **Don Stenberg** regarding the matter of cooperation of local law enforcement authorities.

Dr. Larry Walklin, Chair of Cameras in the Courts for the NBA, said progress has been made with the new Chief Justice who is receptive to expansion possibilities. Underway is the addition of a second camera in the Supreme Court which would improve coverage.

2005: 20 Years Ago

NRG Media, LLC has obtained \$40 million in senior secured financing from GE Coleman Finance Global Media & Communications. The new facility will be used to finance existing debt and allow the company to acquire additional stations. NRG owns 23 stations in Nebraska.

Platte River Broadcasting, owners of **KKPR-FM** and **KXPB AM**, Kearney are acquiring **KLIQ** (The Breeze, 94.5 FM), Hastings from **Eternal Broadcasting** (Dick Chapin) for \$700,000. The sale results from a swap from **NRG Media** and \$270,000 to Eternal for **KROR** (Rock 101.5) Hastings, which had been operating under a JSA to NRG from Neuhoof. KROR will now be owned outright by NRG.

2015: 10 Years Ago

A combination of vision, leadership, teamwork and capital formed the recipe for Hearst-owned **KETV**, Channel 7 in Omaha, to rejuvenate Omaha’s historic Burlington Station from a cavernous, crumbling mess to a modern-day media facility. Just a few days after KETV viewers saw the first broadcasts from 7 Burlington Station, KETV held a ribbon cutting to mark their new facility’s official grand opening. NBA President/Executive Director Jim Timm presented KETV President and General Manager (and NBA Secretary-Treasurer) Ariel Roblin, the visionary behind this project, with a plaque commemorating this special occasion.

SECC Releases 2025 RMT Schedule

The Nebraska State Emergency Communications Committee (SECC) has approved the following 2026 EAS RMT schedule:



Nebraska EAS 2026 RMT Schedule

<u>Month</u>	<u>Date</u> <i>(3rd Tue.)</i>	<u>Central Time</u>	<u>Mountain Time</u>
January	20	10:00 AM	9:00 AM
February	17	11:00 PM	10:00 PM
March	17	10:00 AM	9:00 AM
April	21	11:00 PM	10:00 PM
May	19	10:00 AM	9:00 AM
June	16	11:00 PM	10:00 PM
July	21	10:00 AM	9:00 AM
August	18	11:00 PM	10:00 PM
September	15	10:00 AM	9:00 AM
October	20	11:00 PM	10:00 PM
November	17	10:00 AM	9:00 AM
December	15	11:00 PM	10:00 PM

Sync with the NBA Calendar

EVENTS, MEETINGS & DEADLINES

Nebraska Primary LUC Window Opens: March 28, 2026

Iowa Primary LUC Window Opens: April 18, 2026

Nebraska Primary Election: May 12, 2026

Iowa Primary Election: June 2, 2026

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

General Election: November 3, 2026

2027 NBA Annual Convention (La Vista): August 10 & 11, 2027

2025 NBA 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:

- January 12, 2026
- February 9, 2026
- March 16, 2026
- April 20, 2026
- May 18, 2026
- June 15, 2026
- July 13, 2026
- August 17, 2026
- September 21, 2026
- October 19, 2026
- November 16, 2026
- December 14, 2026

In Remembrance



Alan Peterson -

First Amendment attorney who tirelessly supported NBA members.



**Supporting Radio & TV
broadcast professionals**



**\$20 million
in grants funded**



**Serving all US
states & territories**



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