



Volume 49, Issue 2 - June, 2026

## 2026 NBA Annual Convention



### “Broadcast Proud” – Register Now for the NBA Annual Convention!

Registration is now open for the 2026 NBA Annual Convention at the Embassy Suites in Lincoln on **August 11 & 12!**

Hear from leading industry experts with information you can use *immediately* to make an impact on your personal and company performance. Four sessions each for managers, news & sales plus two radio programming sessions and a full day for engineers!

**John Knicely, Kevin Kugler, Steve Lundy and Ken Siemek** will join the **NBA Hall of Fame**. Our **Keynote Luncheon** presentation is “**Broadcast Proud – Why Our Industry Still Reigns Supreme**” with **Derron Steenbergen**. Expand your network at our popular **Networking Lounge**. We’ll close things with our annual **Pinnacle Awards** banquet, honoring the best of the best in Nebraska broadcasting.

**PRICE REDUCTION:** In honor of the NBA’s 92<sup>nd</sup> year, we’ve reduced our registration fee to just **\$92** per SEU for unlimited seats at all training sessions. Meal functions are priced per-person.

Early Bird pricing expires after July 27. 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



Even with 310 cosponsors in the House and 61 in the Senate, the “AM For Every Vehicle Act” has yet to advance. The NBA will participate in a NAB-hosted July fly-in with AM broadcasters from around the country converging on Capitol Hill to press for movement on this critical piece of legislation. We remain grateful to our entire federal delegation of **Congressmen Don Bacon, Mike Flood, & Adrian Smith** and **Senators Deb Fischer & Pete Ricketts** for supporting “AM4EVA” from the jump.

Another important issue is the growing migration of professional sports leagues – primarily the NFL, so far – moving games to streaming services and off of free, over the air broadcast TV. Radio is also seeing some collegiate broadcasts move to streaming-only platforms via conference and university-driven decisions. The NBA joined all states in a resolution to support the “No Fakes Act” which offers voice and visual protection rights. The NBA also joined Joint Reply Comments regarding the FCC’s proposal to increase 2026 Regulatory Fees, after a few years of successful advocacy work to have our fees reduced.

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## Nebraska Legislature Update



Fortunately for NBA members, the 109th Nebraska Legislature, 2nd Session, was pretty quiet. Next year will likely be different as an already-growing budget deficit is certain to prompt the introduction of bills seeking to remove certain industries and services from their current tax-exempt status. We also anticipate continued attempts to make public records less public and open meetings less open. The NBA remains in frequent contact with our tremendous lobbying team of **Korby Gilbertson** and **Justin Brady** to strategize and take needed actions to protect the interests of our membership.

*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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## Chairman's Column



Mark Jensen  
KNLV AM/FM, Ord

## Broadcast Proud!

The 92nd Annual Nebraska Broadcasters Convention - August 11th and 12th at the Embassy Suites in Lincoln - is just around the corner. You may have seen the NBA e-mails hitting your inbox with all sorts of sessions that will help make you a better broadcaster. We are encouraging everyone to attend this year's event as we have a lot of amazing management, news, programming, sales and engineering sessions for you to attend.

We will kick things off with management sessions on Tuesday featuring Nicole Gustafson from the NAB and Davina Sashkin from Wilkinson Barker Knauer with information on hot topics before the FCC and Congress.

We also look forward to hearing from Tara Stingley with an employment law update, and UNL AD Troy Dannen on leading teams through unforeseen change. Plus, we'll feature a Broadcasters Roundtable with U.S. Representative Mike Flood which is a new addition to our convention schedule.

Later that evening the NBA Hall of Fame Banquet will take place as we recognize the best of the best in our industry and afterward, the Chairman's hospitality suite with an opportunity for you to catch up with all of your Nebraska broadcast friends.

On Wednesday we will feature Programming with Mike McVay and Steve Reynolds, Sales with Chris Brunt, Tom Ray, Kelli Frieler and Derron Steenbergen, and News sessions with Brendon Keefe and Chip Mahaney for both Radio and Television along with a special panel discussion with several law enforcement officials and local broadcasters, which will benefit all news reporters across the state. After our morning sessions we will take a break for lunch with this year's Keynote speaker being none other than Derron (Mr. Energy) Steenbergen from the Swagger institute, with "Broadcast Proud: Why Our Industry Still Reigns Supreme."

Our afternoon sessions will start back up after lunch and will continue through the afternoon. The evening will kick off with our Pinnacle Awards Banquet and our Nebraska Lottery KaHoot contest. The final Chairman's hospitality suite will take place right after the banquet and you will be on your way home the following day with an amazing convention experience and the motivation you need to make things happen in the 4th quarter and next year.

I encourage everyone to get signed up early for this year's 92nd Annual Nebraska Broadcasters Convention!

We are Broadcast Proud!

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

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**NBA Members Asked to Support Media of Nebraska**

## "Speak Up" Campaign



As members of Media of Nebraska – our FOI coalition with the state’s newspapers – **the NBA is requesting your support of Media of Nebraska’s new “Speak Up” campaign.** In a time where attempts to stifle free speech and civic involvement are on the rise, the Media of Nebraska trustees agreed that a campaign is needed to stress the importance of getting involved in government affairs and speaking up about issues that concern Nebraskans – as protected by our First Amendment.

Click [this Dropbox link](#) to access the many different “Speak Up” media assets developed by Clark Creative Group. You will find a variety of radio, TV and social media messages to support our campaign. We also created [this website](#) to explain what Media of Nebraska is, why we exist and to show examples of the campaign assets.

**Our ask:** from now through September, support this campaign on any or all of your content platforms at whatever level you choose. It is up to us to remind our citizens of their freedoms and opportunities...to help them shape what happens... instead of wondering what happened. Your support is critical and appreciated. Thank you for your consideration.

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## Transactions

The FCC recently approved the following transactions: on April 1, NRG Media’s central Nebraska stations (Kearney’s **KGFW AM** & translator **K241CN**, **KQKY FM** & **KRNY FM**, and Grand Island’s **KROR FM** & **KSYZ FM**) to Usher Media Group; on April 13, **KOOO FM** (La Vista) to Nebraska Public Media from NRG Media; on May 6, **KLKN TV** (Lincoln) to Community News Media, LLC from Rincon Broadcasting Group and on June 15, **KSXP AM** (Omaha) to Walnut Media from SummitMedia, LLC.

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## Juliette Eckler Earns NBA Omaha Press Club Scholarship



*Eckler and the NBA's Jim Timm*

For the second consecutive year, **Juliette Eckler** has been awarded the \$2,000 NBA Omaha Press Club Scholarship. A Journalism and Media Communication major at UNO, Eckler serves as co-station manager of campus radio station MavRadio.FM. She has called play-by-play and covered major events including the Men's College World Series, Omaha Lancers hockey and Athletes Unlimited volleyball. Upon graduating in the spring of 2027, Eckler plans to pursue a career in sports broadcasting with goals in television, radio and live sports coverage. Congratulations, Juliette!

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## Board Briefs



*A summary of the NBA Board of Directors spring meeting held on May 13, 2026 in Kearney.*

Chairman **Mark Jensen** called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. and recited our Antitrust policy.

Minutes from the February 4, 2026 meeting were approved. Financial reports for January, February and March 2026 were approved as presented by Secretary-Treasurer **Jeffrey Steffen**.

President/Executive Director **Jim Timm** provided an update on federal & state legislative concerns. Regarding Media of Nebraska, Timm provided a session recap and stated their pending media campaign will be ready to start in June.

Regarding Member Services, Timm said that SBE is working on an update to station self-inspection guides. He also reminded the group that notifications will be sent in August for renewed support of our EEO Scholarship Program for 2027-2028. Timm then provided an update on Annual Convention planning and related details.

Discussion of a "Digital Ambassadors" program and "Sales Pitch Contest" done in other states resulted in direction for Timm to develop plans for both programs for the board to review at our summer meeting.

Jensen thanked everyone for attending and the meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

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## NBA Welcomes New Members

**Bailey Lauerman** – Bill Patterson, Public Relations Director

**Broadcasters General Store** – Dave Kerstin, Sales Representative

**Today's Sound, LLC** – Ken Beckwith and Ed Holloway, Broadcast Engineers

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## **KRNU Renovation Project on Schedule**



Things are far from quiet inside UNL's Andersen Hall during the summer break, as the KRNU FM renovation project continues on schedule. "Construction" should be done by the time you read this with HVAC, lighting and windows installed. Next up is carpet and wall treatments.

The fun stuff: Broadcast Depot is scheduled to be onsite starting the week of July 6 to begin installing furniture and equipment. RCS is scheduled to be onsite starting July 13 to set up their scheduling and automation systems. The project should wrap up around July 24, with training starting August 3rd.

This \$900,000+ project was funded in part by a \$100,000 contribution from the NBA Foundation.

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## **2026 Student Debt Assistance Grant Recipients**



Ten NBA member employees are each \$1,000 closer to paying off their student loan debt thanks to the NBA Foundation's Student Debt Assistance Grant program. In just six years, this program has paid out **\$54,000** 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 recipients:**

**Andrew Brandt**, Multimedia Sales Representative – NRG Media, Lincoln

**Samuel Brodersen**, Videographer/Editor – Nebraska Public Media, Lincoln

**Katelyn Ciesielski**, Integrated Marketing Consultant – Connoisseur Media, Lincoln

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

**Nicholas Grimm**, Assistant Program Director – KOZN, Omaha

**Colleen Kelley**, Videographer/Editor – Nebraska Public Media, Lincoln

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

**Joshua Peterson**, Unsportsmanlike Conduct Co-Host – KOZN, Omaha

**Sophia Ridder**, Producer – WOWT TV, Omaha

## Future Talent: Connecting with Tomorrow's Broadcasters



Our ongoing "Future Talent" initiative seeks opportunities to showcase broadcasting careers with high school and college students involved in media and journalism classes and related activities.

**UNK Digital Expressions Media Camp:** Nineteen high school students from across Nebraska gathered on the UNK campus from June 1-5 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 **Flood Communications, Nebraska Rural Radio Association, Sinclair Television and Usher Media Group** combined to provide tours and guest speakers. The NBA has proudly supported this camp since its inception in 2016. A showcase of the students' work is on the [NBA YouTube Channel](#).



*Inside the NTV Control Room*



*LIVE on KLPR FM*



*Inside the KGFW Studio*



*Jim Timm with the Campers*

**UNO High School Media Conference:** Over 200 students from 15 Omaha area high schools attended the annual UNO High School Media Conference on April 10, sponsored by the NBA. In addition to keynote speaker **Waverle Monroe** of KETV, students also learned about the career paths and current jobs of KOZN's **Josh Peterson**, KQKQ's



Jason Spicoli & Meg Rieder, Nebraska Public Media's Maddie Ames and WOWT TV's Sydney Babb.



*Waverle Monroe Speaks at UNO*

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## Members in the Spotlight

Following the start of an LMA ahead of Usher Media Group's pending purchase of NRG Media's Omaha cluster, the following staff promotions were announced: **Stacie McElligott** to assistant GM, **Meg Rieder** to KQKQ PD and **Alyssa Siebken** to PD of KOPW.



Stacie McElligott



Meg Rieder



Alyssa Siebken

Scripps-owned KMTV named **Charlie Grisham** as GM/DOS of the Omaha CBS affiliate, marking a return to Omaha broadcasting for Grisham.



Following 41 years on the radio, **Mark Reid** retired from Kearney's KQKY on May 29. Mark also spent 20 years as KHGI TV's Sunday weathercaster.

**Chris Allen, Scott Buer and Ross Jernstrom** were inducted into the Omaha Press Club's "Journalists of Excellence" Hall of Fame on June 6.



**John Hannon** has announced that he will retire in August, making his leadership of Sinclair's Nebraska operations the final stop of his broadcasting career.

**Nebraska Public Media Omaha** made its debut at 101.9 FM on June 15, after acquiring the signal from NRG Media. The station features a variety of news, music and other programming.





KLPR FM, the student-run station at the University of Nebraska at Kearney recently rebranded as “91.1 The Clear Alternative.”

Lincoln’s KOLN TV won the NAB’s “Celebration of Service to America Award” in the TV-Small Market division for their series, “Breaking the Silence on Domestic Violence.” The award was presented on June 9 at a gala in Washington, DC.



In a five-minute floor speech on June 3, Senator Pete Ricketts acknowledged KRVN’s 75 years of service to farmers and ranchers across Nebraska and beyond.

Region 5 winners in the RTDNA’s “Edward R. Murrow Awards” include KETV, KOLN TV, Nebraska Public Media and WOWT TV. All regional winners advance to the national competition with winners to be announced in August.



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

### 1966: 60 Years Ago

One of the most effective Nebraska tourism promotions was when about 50 Nebraska Radio stations took part in the Nebraska Broadcasters’ Association Tourism Promotion project. Radio sold directly to auto travelers as they listened on car radios as they approached or crossed the State. The value of contributed free commercial time exceeded \$200,000 in 1965, more than three times the entire 1966 state tourism advertising budget. WOW radio alone aired tourism-promotion time worth over \$25,000.

### 1976: 50 Years Ago

Frank Scott is the new General Manager of radio stations **WRC** and **WKYS**, Washington, D.C., formerly regional vice-president of **KLNG**, Omaha and **KTLK**, Denver. He is a past president of the Nebraska Broadcasters Association.

The \$600,000 sale of **KHUB-AM-FM** Fremont, has been approved by the FCC. Sellers were **Harry Snyder** and **Glen Ilgenfritz**. The buyer is a corporation owned by **George Allen**, Algona, Iowa, **Richard Shaheen**, Chicago, and **Ray Shaheen**. Ilgenfritz will remain with the station in his previous capacity. Snyder will continue to live in Fremont and will pursue real estate and engineering interests.

### 1986: 40 Years Ago

**KPTM TV**, Omaha's first independent commercial station went on the air Sunday, April 6 with primetime movies, off network hits and children's programming. The Grade B signal reaches 23 counties in Nebraska and nine in Iowa.

Sunday, June 29 will be the date of the "Network Switch" for Omaha's **WOWT** and **KMTV**. KMTV will become a CBS affiliate and WOWT will become an NBC affiliate. Syndicated shows will not be affected: "Wheel of Fortune" will remain on KMTV and "Entertainment Tonight" will remain on WOWT.

### 1996: 30 Years Ago

Thanks to our Nebraska Congressional Delegation for the passage of the **Telecommunications Act of 1996**. Benefits to broadcasters are expansion of radio and TV ownership, and extension of license terms to eight years.

As a service to NBA members. The Association co-sponsored a legislative issues teleconference along with the UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications and the Nebraska Press Association. **Larry Walklin**, NBA Services Committee chair, coordinated much of the event. The 90-minute teleconference was offered by satellite to locations around the state. The topic was legislation in the 1996 session of the Nebraska Unicameral important to journalists. Moderator was **Will Norton, Jr.**, Dean of the UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications. Panel members were **Alan Peterson** and **Shawn Renner**, attorneys with Cline, Williams, Wright, Johnson & Oldfather in Lincoln, who also serve the NBA through Media of Nebraska.

### 2006: 20 Years Ago

Mission Nebraska, owner of 95.7 **KROA**, "The Bridge FM" is purchasing **KMMJ**, 750 AM to expand its programming. KROA programs Christian Music and programming. This will give the station a similar outlet on the AM side of the dial. KMMJ, currently owned by GI Family Radio, Grand Island, is one of Nebraska's oldest radio stations, having started broadcasting in November 1925. GI Family Radio is spinning off KMMJ to make room for their new station, **KKJK**, 103.1 FM, which recently signed on with a rock format.

Thirty Nebraska State Senators and their guests attended the NBA's 2006 Legislative Reception held at the Ferguson Center, near the State Capitol. NBA Chairman **Roger Moody** paid special tribute to the legislators for their dedication and personal sacrifice in serving the people of Nebraska. Everyone enjoyed the intimate, warm atmosphere of the Ferguson Center. All senators were given a gift from the NBA, an AM/FM radio in the form of a radio microphone.

### 2016: 10 Years Ago

To celebrate their 20th anniversary, **KLKN TV** hosted a luncheon at Wilderness Ridge to honor their long-term employees and charter member clients from Lincoln. On April 1, 1996 KLKN TV signed on to serve the greater Lincoln area. Under the steady leadership

of **Roger Moody**, the KLKN team has developed a strong reputation of serving their viewers and evolving along with the industry's constant changes.

The UNL J-School's annual "Salute to Students" held on May 6th at the Student Union saluted a couple of Nebraska Broadcasters, too. **Mike Flood** of Flood Communications was presented with the **Kappa Tau Alpha Service Award**, in recognition for his past and ongoing contributions to our field. **Don Wright** was presented with the **Broadcast Pioneer Award**; an award co-presented with UNL and the NBA, which was presented to Don by NBA President/Executive Director **Jim Timm**. Don's career in Nebraska broadcasting was more than legendary; it was truly pioneering. While Don may be best known for shooting the first pictures of the 1957 murder spree of Charles Starkweather, he went on to embrace emerging TV camera and editing technology.

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## 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](#).

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## Virtual Job Fair July 27 - 31, 2026



Hiring? The NBA's next Virtual Job Fair is July 27 - 31. Member stations can post jobs, interact with candidates and expand your outreach program.

**Registration deadline is July 20th.**

Complete details [here](#):

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

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## Sync with the NBA Calendar

### EVENTS, MEETINGS & DEADLINES

**Virtual Job Fair Registration Deadline:** July 20, 2026

**Virtual Job Fair:** July 27 - 31, 2026

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

**2026 NBA Hall of Fame Banquet:** August 11, 2026

**2026 Pinnacle Awards Banquet:** August 12, 2026

**General Election:** November 3, 2026

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## **2026 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 13, 2026**
  - **August 17, 2026**
  - **September 21, 2026**
  - **October 19, 2026**
  - **November 16, 2026**
  - **December 14, 2026**
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## **In Remembrance**



**Mary Mitchell -**  
*Vice President of Mitchell Broadcasting Corporation.*

**Warren Swain –**  
*radio voice of Huskers football & basketball from 1996-2001*

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✓ **Supporting Radio & TV  
broadcast professionals**

✓ **\$20 million  
in grants funded**

✓ **Serving all US  
states & territories**



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broadcasters in your community.

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