**OPC Helps Welcome Cathy Hughes Home**

The homecoming of Cathy Hughes came to a ceremonial end on the barroom floor.

To be precise, the chairwoman of Urban One -- the nation’s largest distributor of radio, TV and digital programming for black audiences – wound up a series of honors bestowed in her native Omaha by becoming the Press Club’s 157th “Face on the Barroom Floor.”

Earlier, the Johnny Rodgers Youth Foundation and the City of Omaha honored her with a street-naming ceremony. A community reception followed. Hughes also headlined an economic conference in Omaha conducted by the Empowerment Network.
And then the second-wealthiest black woman in America (Oprah Winfrey is No. 1) was saluted at the Press Club on May 18.

Hughes’ roasters included lifelong friend Theresa Glass Union, mother of actress Gabrielle; football legend Johnny Rodgers; Elmer Crumbley, retired Skinner Magnet School principal; Dr. Blandina Rose Williams, president of Humanistic Solutions; and Al Goodwin, retired development director for the Omaha Economic Development Corp. Emcee for roast was national radio-TV personality Dyana Williams.

As for the secret of Hughes’ success, whose net worth has been estimated at $450 million, roaster and childhood buddy Theresa Glass Union offered one explanation: “I’m a first-born in my family. Cathy was born second. Second-born children always try harder.”

The “Face on the Floor,” drawn by artist Jim Horan, depicts Hughes surrounded by the symbols of her media success. Included are transmission towers and the call letters of KOWH in Omaha, where she began her radio career; WHUR at Howard University, where she was a lecturer in the communication school and general sales manager of the radio station; and WOL in Washington, D.C., the first station that she purchased. Urban One now operates 55 stations in Radio One, the TV One television network and the Interactive One digital company.

Also pictured in the “Face” caricature is Cathy’s son and business partner, Alfred Liggins III. He is CEO of Urban One.

As for the honoree, Cathy told the Omaha World-Herald's Michael Kelly before her homecoming: “Omaha is my village. Everyone wants to come home, and I’m thrilled to be coming back.”

**Artist Jim Horan’s description of the “Face”:**

Cathy is standing on the newly named Cathy Hughes Street in Omaha.

The Radio One founder is holding some Radio One information….and plans….maybe for a Radio Two or even Radio Three or Four.

On the left side of the drawing is Cathy’s son, Alfred Liggins III. He is working on some “Quiet Storm” plans. This is the program, which revolutionized urban radio and was aired on more than 480 stations nationwide.

It begs the question – will there be a “Loud Thunderstorm” program in the future?
Then, there are some of the radio stations that Cathy has worked at or owned….KOWH in Omaha where she started her radio career….WHUR at Howard University….WOL in Washington, DC.

Then, there is Urban One, the company that includes 55 radio stations. Also, TV One, which reaches more than 57 million people. And, Interactive One, a digital company that reaches more than 18 million people.

Several things are happening:
* Two radio and television antennas are sending out signals in every direction.
* The top of the U.S. Capitol Building has the bronze statue of freedom wearing earphones and balancing a giant antenna.
* The bird that sits on the statue of freedom has lost a few feathers after being struck by the radio and TV signals.

So, as the old radio programs used to say, “We will be right back. Don’t touch that dial.”

In Cathy’s case, it would be, “Don’t touch any of those dials.”

I can’t say how many dials that could be, as I lost count at 75 million.

So, that’s my depiction of Cathy Hughes, the media mogul who has made Omaha proud….and who now is the 157th Face on the Barroom Floor.