Father-son duo – Jim and Todd Murphy – to be ‘Face on Barroom Floor’ on Nov. 22

Through their communications firm, Murphys have been advocates for media and free speech

By Tom O’Connor
Communications Committee

Jim Murphy

Jim and Todd Murphy – a father-son duo who have passionately advocated for a strong media while building a dynamic and unique company in the communications field – will be the next “Face on the Barroom Floor” when they are honored by the Omaha Press Club on Friday, Nov. 22.

For nearly 60 years, the Murphy family has run Universal Information Services, Inc., a company that has grown into a global provider of monitored news media and measurement services. Jim Murphy bought the company in 1960 and served as CEO until Todd acquired the firm in 2015 and took over as CEO.

Throughout their careers, the Murphys have been strong supporters of the Omaha Press Club. Jim Murphy is one of the earliest members of the OPC, having joined the club before it moved in 1971 to its current home in the First National Bank Tower. In 2017, Todd Murphy served as president of the club.

“This will be tremendous Face event,” said Jeremy Maskel, president of the Omaha Press Club. “Just like their company name, the Murphys are ‘universally’ respected. Their company has been a key part of the media and public relations landscape across Nebraska and beyond. Both are so deserving to be honored by the Omaha Press Club.”

In addition to his work with Universal Information Services, Jim Murphy had a distinguished career with the Nebraska Army National Guard, retiring as a brigadier general in 1993 after receiving his service ribbon for Operation Desert Storm. During his 36 years with the military he served as assistant adjutant general for the State of Nebraska as well as commander of Camp Ashland for 10 years, directing all training of more than 5,000 Nebraska troops.

Following this assignment, he was promoted to the rank of general and commanded all Army Guard troops in Nebraska. During this assignment, he worked closely with the newspapers and broadcast media to bring broader attention to the mission of Nebraska’s National Guard troops by coordinating helicopter tours, range visits and troop deployment/return ceremonies, so the public could learn the value of their state military.

For the past nine years, he has served as the civilian aide to the Secretary of the Army for the State of Nebraska. A native of Santa Barbara, Calif., Jim Murphy received his bachelor’s degree in history from the University of Maryland.

An entrepreneur, Todd Murphy was the perfect protégé of his father. At the age of 13, he developed the broadcast monitoring services for Universal Information Services. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1991 with a B.A. degree in psychology and communications, Todd joined Universal to develop innovative services that deliver media monitoring and measurement tools.

Active in numerous community and professional organizations, including the National Football Foundation and the National Football League, Todd and Jim are recognized as leaders in the industry.

Solutions Journalism to host workshop at Omaha Press Club

A Solutions Journalism Workshop will be held at the Omaha Press Club on Tuesday, Oct. 29, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Solutions Journalism is a top funder nationally for journalism and is designed to help reporters, producers and editors bring the same attention and rigor to stories about responses to problems as they do to the problems themselves.

The cost of the workshop is $17 and includes lunch. The event is open to non-members. Please RSVP for the event by calling the Omaha Press Club at 402-345-8008.

Carolyn Robinson, regional director of the Solutions Journalism Network, will present the two-hour workshop, which is open to all newsroom staff, not just reporters/editors, and will delve into four topics:

UNO’s Alberts will speak at October Noon Forum

The Alberts Era at the University of Nebraska at Omaha will be the topic at the Oct. 17 Noon Forum at the Omaha Press Club.

Trev Alberts, vice chancellor and director of athletics, will discuss the challenges and highlights of his 10 years at UNO, along with his goals to keep the athletic programs thriving.

Recent program highlights have included success in men’s soccer, women’s soccer, and men’s basketball and baseball. The move to the Summit League has been beneficial to UNO.

Continued on Page 5
CNN’s Zeleny a ‘Certified Native Nebraskan’

By Cindy Workman
Communications Committee

W hile there is plenty to talk about in Washington, it was the Daily Nebraskan days of CNN senior Washington correspondent Jeff Zeleny that made for an entertaining roast at the Omaha Press Club’s 162nd “Face on the Barroom Floor” event.

Paula Lavigne, an investigative reporter for ESPN who worked with Zeleny when he was the editor of the Daily Nebraskan newspaper at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, served as emcee.

“Glad we could catch you on such a slow news week,” quipped Lavigne in her opening remarks on Sept 27, three days after a presidential impeachment inquiry was launched.

A native Nebraskan and 1996 UNL graduate, Zeleny played trumpet in the Cornhusker Marching Band as well as serving as editor of the Daily Nebraskan where he caught the ire of Coach Tom Osborne for coverage of the football team on and off the field.

Lavigne recalled Zeleny sending her to the field.

“Coach Osborne had closed all practices to reporters because of some of the coverage the team had received.

“He knew Osborne wouldn’t kick a girl out,” she said. “And he was right.”

Lavigne described Zeleny as a person with unassuming farm boy looks, who had a crushing handshake and would introduce himself as “Hi, I’m Jeff Zeleny and I will be covering the White House someday.”

His brother Mike, chief of staff and covering the White House someday.”

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His brother Mike, chief of staff and associate to the UNL chancellor, talked of Jeff’s early reporting days at the York News-Times and the Fillmore County News in Exeter.

“He learned early how to cover a story and the importance of being first,” Mike said. “But Mom would sometimes scoop him. She told him then-Gov. Mike Johanns would be resigning to accept the ag secretary position as well as telling him that the president would be visiting the troops at Thanksgiving -- to which Jeff said, ‘No way.’ ”

Mike went on to say that when his brother took a job at the Des Moines Register as a political reporter after the Omaha World-Herald turned him down at graduation, it changed the course of history.

Jeff moved on from the Register to the Chicago Tribune, the New York Times, ABC and then CNN.

“Roasting Jeff is tough because he’s such a nice guy...or is he? He doesn’t let up until he’s done with you,” his brother said. “He’s covered a lot of people in his lifetime, all who have become victims of his reporting.”

Another roaster, Joe Starita, a journalism professor at UNL, said, “Brooklyn has its Jay-Z and Nebraska has its JZ, dropping F-bombs on the air every night – one fake news bomb after another.”

Starita noted that Zeleny had a natural instinct for news. “When other students were sucking up, Jeff was filing FOIAs.”

Allen Beermann, the Omaha Press Club’s 121st “Face on the Barroom Floor,” who is retiring in 2020 as executive director of the Nebraska Press Association after 25 years, said the roast was his opportunity for revenge.

“This was the final “Face” for artist Jim Horan, who has been drawing the “Face on the Barroom Floor” since 1971. While Horan was unable to attend the event, he did share a description of Zeleny’s “Face,” which includes three of the presidents Zeleny has covered — Donald Trump, Barack Obama and George W. Bush, who is on all fours “looking like an offensive lineman.”

“I’m honored to bring Trump to the walls of the Omaha Press Club,” joked Zeleny. “Trust me, my face has been on the barroom floor many times.”

A native of Exeter, Zeleny is one of the most accomplished journalists to come from Nebraska.

“I am living out my childhood dreams, and who knows where it will go from here,” he said.

While the roasters all had fun at Zeleny’s expense, Beermann perhaps summed up the evening best as he told the crowd, “Zeleny is CNN – a Certified Native Nebraskan --and we get to call him Jeff.”

professional organizations, Todd currently serves on the board for the Nebraska Broadcasters Association and the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce. He is chair of the advisory board for the Epilepsy Foundation of Nebraska and was president of The Rotary Club of Omaha-Downtown in 2012-2013.

Under Todd, Universal has expanded its digital information services to include the digitization and restoration of historical documents and assets. Serving libraries, universities, historical societies, corporations and other institutions, Universal now assists institutions in preserving their history while making historical assets relevant again.

Since 1991 Universal has enjoyed continued growth in revenue and client base, becoming the only company in the United States to comprehensively monitor and evaluate all media types within the company.

FACE ON BARROOM FLOOR – JIM AND TODD MURPHY

WHEN: FRIDAY, NOV. 22 – RECEPTION, 5:30 P.M.; DINNER, 6:30 P.M.; ROAST, 8 P.M.
COST: $55 FOR OPC MEMBERS; $65 FOR NON-MEMBERS
RSVP: CALL THE OPC AT 402-345-8008.
MEMBERS CAN CHARGE TO THEIR OPC ACCOUNT. NON-MEMBERS NEED TO PROVIDE THEIR CREDIT CARD INFORMATION.
Omaha’s intersection of athletics, civil rights

Author Chatelain brings ‘24th & Glory’ to OPC

By Tom O’Connor
Communications Committee

As one looks out the north windows of the Omaha Press Club, it isn’t hard to see north Omaha and the area that some of Nebraska’s greatest athletes called home.

In his new book, “24th & Glory: The Intersection of Civil Rights and Omaha’s Greatest Generation of Athletes,” author Dirk Chatelain tells the story behind the incredible neighborhood that produced so many world-class athletes in the 1950s and 1960s.

A sports writer for the Omaha World-Herald, Chatelain spent 13 years conducting oral interviews and doing exhaustive research for the book. He shared some of those stories on Sept. 18 as the featured speaker for the Shatel Lunch Series at the Omaha Press Club.

Tom Shatel, longtime Omaha World-Herald sports columnist and host of the lunch series, introduced Chatelain by saying, “I have a confession. I wish I had done this book. Journalism is about service. It’s very rare to do something with this much meaning.”

Chatelain conceded that he’s an unlikely person to write this book. “I’m young, white and rural,” he said, noting that he was born in 1981 in Rising City, Neb., population 392.

The book, which was featured in a popular series in the World-Herald, highlights seven of Omaha’s elite black athletes — Bob Gibson, Gale Sayers, Johnny Rodgers, Marlin Briscoe, Bob Boozer, Roger Sayers and Ron Boone.

Roger Sayers attended the lunch and even shared a humorous story on how his brother, Gale, wound up going to the University of Kansas instead of the University of Nebraska. Also in attendance was Jerry Bartee, who served as a key adviser to Chatelain for the book. Bartee was an outstanding athlete who went on to become head baseball coach at Creighton University and later assistant superintendent for the Omaha Public Schools.

In his presentation, Chatelain talked about the key role played by two north Omaha people — Josh Gibson and Bob Rose — in helping to develop the star athletes. Gibson, who was the older brother by 15 years to Bob Gibson, was instrumental in building the community’s baseball program, while Rose, a grade school physical education teacher at Howard Kennedy Elementary School in north Omaha, helped build the football and basketball programs.

The book details how the meatpacking industry of south Omaha attracted blacks to neighborhoods on the northern side of the city and how that industry supported Omaha.

“It’s a complex story that has a lot of connections between sports and history and the social conditions of the civil rights era,” Chatelain said.

These star athletes “were not just sports figures,” he said, “they also were civil rights figures.”

As an example, he cited Bob Gibson, the Hall of Fame pitcher for the St. Louis Cardinals who was MVP when the Cardinals beat the New York Yankees in the 1964 World Series. Gibson returned to Omaha as a hometown hero after the World Series, but due to Omaha’s segregation issues, was met with resistance when he attempted to buy a suburban home in the Rockbrook area. Eventually, he was able to buy it.

Chatelain detailed how he struggled for years to get Gibson to interview for the book, as Gibson didn’t want anybody to make money off of him. In the past year, however, Chatelain said Gibson did do an interview with him and has even shared copies of the book with some of his famous media contacts such as Bob Costas and Tim McCarver.

Chatelain said he would love to see the book become part of the civil rights curriculum in the Omaha Public Schools. As the lunch concluded, Bartee praised Chatelain for his persistence in getting the book to the finish line. He said, “Job well done, son.”

Autographed copies of the book were available at the end of the presentation. The 184-page book sells for $19.95 and is available online through the Omaha World-Herald Store.
**QLI rehab center will be November Forum topic**

What does QLI (Quality Living, Inc.) have to do with an old apple orchard, a ball field and a facility in northwest Iowa? You can find out the answers to these questions and more at the Nov. 21 Noon Forum.

Bob Cook, retired chief operating officer of the medical rehabilitation center, will provide a brief history of how this facility had its beginnings back in 1986 with a group of parents who cared for adult sons and daughters with traumatic brain injuries or severe physical disabilities.

This history details how local corporate foundations, private foundations, private citizens, the State of Nebraska Social Services and Health Departments, the City of Omaha, the Federal Housing Department, and the Nebraska Legislature all contributed to the development of QLI.

Today QLI is a private, nonprofit corporation whose mission has been to deliver life-changing rehabilitation and care for individuals with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries or other severe physical disabilities. Based on a beautiful 60-acre campus in northwest Omaha, QLI has become the largest and most comprehensive center for post-hospital brain injury and spinal cord injury rehabilitation and care services in the United States.

Thanks to generous philanthropic support, QLI has grown to offer specialized services to up to 211 individuals residing in private rooms across five distinct programs and services. QLI employs more than 350 staff members in the Omaha area.

The OPC forum will run from noon until 1 p.m., with lunch service beginning at 11:30 a.m. The cost is $17. Non-OPC members are welcome.
**KIOS celebrates golden anniversary**

**By Hunter Samuels**  
Communications Committee

Doing anything for 50 years is worthy of recognition. Serving the Omaha community for 50 years? That’s worthy of a celebration, which is exactly what KIOS did last month. As part of that 50th anniversary celebration, some of their staff visited the Omaha Press Club on Sept. 19 for a Noon Education Forum, regaling attendees with tales from their past, along with plans for their future.

KIOS (FM 91.5) is Omaha’s only public radio station, providing news, information, jazz and entertainment programming to roughly 60,000 listeners each week. The OPC forum included remarks from the KIOS station manager, Ken Dudzik; the former program director, Bob Coate; development director, Michael Lyon; and current program director, Todd Hatton.

KIOS got its start in 1969, broadcasting from a cozy studio in Omaha Central High School.

Coate, who began working at the station in 1973, looks back fondly on that first studio, but notes it wasn’t the most spacious area. “You could probably fit that old station in the waiting room of our new station.”

Square footage hasn’t been the only area of growth experienced by KIOS, of course.

Dudzik says the station had an annual budget of about $40,000 in 1969, while they now boast a budget of more than $1 million, which comes from a combination of funds from Omaha Public Schools, a government grant, and of course, donations from the public. “Without those dollars [from pledge drives], we wouldn’t be able to do what we do every day,” Dudzik says.

As a charter member of National Public Radio, KIOS broadcasts programs that are nationally syndicated, but they are heavily invested in telling the stories of folks right here in Omaha. It’s their mission to empower their community, and Hatton says they are focused on building upon that local programming. He wants those stories to foster a sense of pride within this community, saying “wherever you are, you should be proud to be from there.”

While KIOS has been around for 50 years, they realize the need to adapt in order to stick around for another 50 years. Dudzik says, “We’re excited about where we’re headed.” And as Hatton says, they’ve made sure they’ll have the tools necessary to reach that destination, thanks to a recent “generational technology upgrade.” While they were able to use their previous equipment for a long time to maintain their fiduciary responsibility to the public, KIOS can now say with confidence that they have top-of-the-line equipment with which to carry out their mission. They’ll be able to automate some of their programming, giving them the freedom to be out on the streets of Omaha, gathering those stories.

Hatton also mentions that they’ve added three new online streams, allowing them to offer different types of music and programming that may appeal to a new group of potential listeners. This is all so the station can remain nimble and adjustable, two traits not often seen in the field of public radio, Hatton notes.

All of these initiatives tie back to what Hatton sees as their true purpose. “We believe that public service is the highest calling, and that is our mission. Full stop.”

To learn more about KIOS, visit www.kios.org.

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**Noon Forum, continued from Page 1**

athletics, and the teams have quickly adjusted to the challenge of a higher level of competition.

Albert said, “Much of this has come so much quicker than we anticipated. I’ve always thought that we can take a leadership position in the Summit League. We’re just really blessed to have incredible coaches, people who really work hard at their craft.”

The OPC program begins at noon and continues until 1 p.m. Lunch, at $17 per person, is served beginning at 11:30 a.m. Call 402-345-8008 for reservations. Non-Press Club members are welcome.

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**Journalism Workshop, continued from Page 1**

- What is Solutions Journalism, exactly?
- And what isn’t (PR, advocacy, feel-good, hero stories, trouble-shooters, fluff); and
- Why do solutions journalism? Impact and case studies from past experiences; and
- How to do solutions journalism -- reporting ideas, techniques and formats;
- Brainstorming story development exercises.

Robinson is a video journalist, media development program director and educator. She began her career with CNN’s medical news unit in Atlanta before relocating to Asia and the Middle East, first as a senior news producer in Hong Kong, and then in East Timor, where she ran the local TV station for the United Nations.

She was the Internews program director in post-revolution Libya, overseeing journalism training projects in Tripoli and Benghazi. She has received a Jefferson Fellowship, a Freedom Forum Fellowship and four Knight International Journalism Fellowships and has trained journalists in almost two dozen countries around the world.
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Submissions for the November issue are due on or before October 20.

WE’RE ONLINE! READ YOUR OPC NEWSLETTER AT OMAHAPRESSCLUB.COM

EVENTS

Monday, Oct. 14
Columbus Day
Club closed

Thursday, Oct. 17
Noon Education Forum
Trev Alberts, UNO
derector of athletics
Noon to 1 p.m.
Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m.
Open to the public, $17

Friday, Oct. 25
Octoberfest Beer or Wine Dinner
6 p.m. hors d’oeuvres
6:30 p.m. multi-course dinner
(Pairing of beer or wine with RSVP)
$55 OPC members, $65 non-members

Tuesday, Oct. 29
Solutions Journalism Workshop
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
$17 cost includes lunch
Non-members welcome

Thursday, Nov. 7
Past Presidents Dinner
5:30 p.m. social, 6 p.m. dinner
$35 per person

Thursday, Nov. 28
Thanksgiving Day
Club closed

Friday, Nov. 29
Club closed
(Regular hours on Saturday)

Sunday, Dec. 15
Santa Brunch
Two seatings – 10 a.m., 12:30 p.m.
$24 and $14 (children 3-10)

CANCELLATION POLICY: All reservations must be cancelled 48 HOURS in advance.

Are you looking for a perfect party setting? A lunch surrounded by brilliance?
A dinner your guests will always remember? Keep the OPC in mind.

Hours of Operation

LUNCH
Monday - Friday
11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

BAR
Tuesday - Saturday
4:30 p.m. to close

DINNER
Thursday - Saturday
5:30 p.m. to close

The Beat View in Town