

McDaniel's **Do it center** **KICK START 20% OFF**
 Your Garden Today! All Garden Seeds **Ed Hume Seeds**

Published: Monday, January 19, 2009

An eye on celebs from a life behind the lens

By Kristi O'Harran, Herald Columnist

When Carl Murray takes a moment to watch Tuesday's presidential inauguration, he'll have visual memories that no one can match. He's photographed all the big players we'll see on TV, including President-elect Barack Obama, Vice President-elect Joe Biden and Sen. John Kerry.

He knows their foibles.

For example, Joseph Kennedy II constantly blinks his eyes, said Murray.

Murray started Seattle Photography Inc. in 1975 and has an office in Everett. He has provided photography at national and international conferences, produced advertising images for local firms and created Web site visuals for many northwest clients.

If your bank or CPA firm needs photographs of your staff, he will take their pictures for publicity and Web sites -- at your office. If you want a poster of a 100-ton earth-moving machine, he's a good person to call.

When our state needs an official Washington Supreme Court photo, it hires Murray.

The New York native, whose father worked for General Electric, was uprooted to Boston and Detroit. He graduated with an advertising degree from Michigan State University and was a Lieutenant in the Navy during Vietnam. He was honorably discharged in San Diego, Calif.; bought a VW van; and explored the United States and Canada for several months.

After working a corporate job in California, he used the GI Bill and enrolled at Brooks Institute of Photography. After his traveling adventure, a Seafair

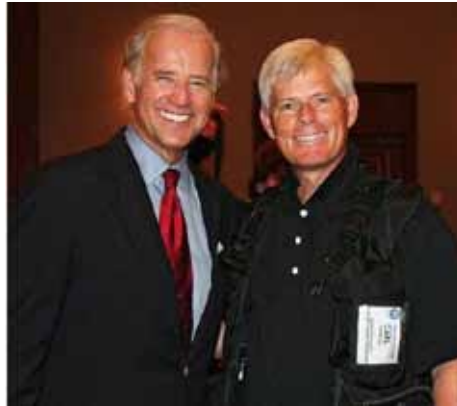


Photo by Carl Murray
 Carl Murray (right), owner Seattle Photography in Everett, has photographed many politicians, including Vice President-elect Joe Biden.

weekend in Seattle introduced Murray to the delights of our area. He moved here, briefly worked for an established studio and then started his own business.

One of his first assignments was photographing Barbi Benton, former girlfriend of Hugh Hefner, who was featured on the cover of "Playboy" several times.

She came to Seattle, fully clothed, to promote her career. He was hired to produce publicity photos of her during radio interviews, as well as when she signed posters during an evening reception.

"While photographing her, I realized this was going to be a very entertaining career," said Murray.

He's also photographed Christie Brinkley and Erin Brockovich.

When Seattle was promoting itself as the "Emerald City," he walked out of Fox's Gem Shop with a bodyguard and a 625-carat emerald to photograph at his studio.

Murray has worked for Gary Kerr, owner of Kerr Marketing Communications in Snoqualmie. They've known one another for more than 30 years. Murray has photographed airplane seats and automobile lights for Kerr.

"I value and appreciate his broad experience in advertising, conventions and public relations events," said Kerr. "I know you could put him in any environment."

Gloria Vanderberg, Murray's wife, does marketing, project managing and customer service for Seattle Photography. She's the keeper of the names -- show her any of her husbands photographs, and she knows the name and title for each person.

Sometimes on shoots, politicians and personalities will ask if Murray would like a picture taken with them. That explains the photograph of Murray and Biden in Toronto, Canada.

Murray also has photographed Jay Leno, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, former President Bill Clinton, Sen. Hillary Clinton, Melvin Belli, Sen. Ted Kennedy, former President Ronald Reagan, former President Jimmy Carter, Johnnie Cochran (O.J. Simpson's lawyer), Howard Dean and Eliot Spitzer.

In his photographs, Murray aims to capture energy that illustrates personalities of each subject, event or product being featured. When he photographed Kennedy, Murray used his skills as a both a photographer and a gentleman to quickly straighten the senator's necktie.

When he watches President George W. Bush hand over the presidency tomorrow, Murray will remember the day he photographed Bush during a private reception in St. Louis, Mo., and had his picture taken with him afterward.

"The president shook my hand and made a point of acknowledging that I had done a good job," said Murray. "It was an unexpected compliment."

Columnist Kristi O'Harran:
 425-339-3451 or oharran@heraldnet.com.