
From: stevenspl@live.com on behalf of Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]
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Connecting

March 13, 2014



Associated Press Honored at 2014 RTDNF First Amendment Awards

owski, Emerson College

Electronic media's finest faces and their families, from inside the Beltway and beyond, attended RTDNF's 2014 First Amendment Awards in Washington, D.C. The year's event, the 24th in RTDNF's history, was dominated by a very vocal sense of pride in press freedom.

Executive Director, Mike Cavender kicked off the proceedings Wednesday night by welcoming the crowd and announcing a record number of awards had been placed for the Edward R. Murrow Awards this Fall. He was followed by RTDNF Chairman, Vincent Duffy, who introduced the evening's events. Funds raised at the event go toward scholarship and fellowships for aspiring journalists. Duffy then provided the first allusion to the evening saying, "It's been a busy year for defenders of freedom of the press." He recounted several instances throughout the year where the government clashed. Throughout the evening, hosts, presenters and speakers expressed concern about the White House, the FCC and other government agencies, for the increased pressure they put on newsrooms over the past year.

The Associated Press received the night's first award for their work leading the response to the NSA's seizure of reporter phone records. A video narrated by CBS' Bob Schieffer, AP CEO Gary Pruitt went up to receive the award on AP's behalf. Pruitt said the press freedom fight would help future generations of reporters and touted the accomplishment of the DOJ's promise to "never prosecute a reporter for doing their job." Ending on a light note, he added, "Tonight, we should all drink to that."

by the honoring of another key First Amendment advocate, ABC Washington Bureau Chief Robin Sproul. She was introduced by Martha Raddatz who said, in reference to Facebook's Sheryl Sandberg, "Sproul was leaning in before it was trending." Her praise tribute video for Sproul hosted by Cokie Roberts and featuring ABC News President Ben Sherwood, USA Today's Susan Page and "Nightline" anchor Charlie Gibson. Sproul's following remarks highlighted the critical state of the 1st Amendment, summarizing the struggle with press access and itself over digital content. She concluded, "these fights are good to have."

That honoree received a red carpet treatment. Veteran CBS White House correspondent, Bill Plante received the second-ever RTNDA award, the first to be given to a living correspondent. He received congratulations from President Obama via video tape. After an hour, CBS News senior producer Susan Zirinsky reviewing Plante's defense of the First Amendment in "tight quarters" at the White House. It contained everything from Plante's original CBS News application reel to a bungee-jumping trip and hot air balloon ride. Plante received a letter from President Obama, telling Plante to never stop pressing him for answers. When Plante got up to receive his award, he said he used his time to thank the many producers and technicians he's worked with in his 50 years at CBS.

Although to follow that presentation, Lester Holt and NBC Senior Executive David Corvo proved a fitting next at bat. Corvo's introduction to think about the weekends Holt spends when he anchors Dateline Friday night, pulls double duty on "TODAY" and "Evening News" on Mondays and Tuesdays. Holt's tribute video included appearances from NBC's Matt Lauer and Erica Hill. It was impossible to name the presenters who followed Holt, all called him "the hardest working man in news." For Lauer, Holt was a perfect choice to receive the award. The TODAY co-host said in his video message, "You should've gotten it long ago." Holt was modest in his remarks and focused on people entering the journalism field. He said, "I want you to know when I was coming up, Bill Plante was coming up, we didn't have a lot of help. We reconnect to your success. It's a different environment but we need you to succeed."

The recipient of the night was Gannett's David Lougee with NBC Nightly News anchor Brian Williams making an appearance in his tribute speech brought the event back to its focus on the First Amendment, reminding the audience of the importance of local news in rural communities and stressing that fact that, "97% of the country doesn't live in the Beltway."

The show wrapped up the show thanking the audience, inviting them to the 25th annual First Amendment Awards next March in Washington.

Watch this video of remarks by AP's CEO **Gary Pruitt** and other First Amendment Award recipients at last night's RTNDA dinner. Click here for more.



Connecting mailbox

George Krimsky: While covering the Soviet Union in the mid-1970s for the AP, I would frequently get the question: *Where did you get your name?*

The curiosity was understandable. Krimsky means "Crimean" in Russian and Ukrainian ("Krim" is the name of the Crimean Peninsula). I would explain that my grandfather on my father's side emigrated from Ukraine when he was a child. The next question would usually be: *Did he actually come from the Crimea?*

"No, but I have a claim on the place."

The joke wasn't always well received. The Russians had a claim on it, too - ever since Nikita Khrushchov moved the Crimean Peninsula to the Ukrainians in 1954 (Some say he was drunk at the time).

What is happening there today is history coming full circle.

If you look at a map, it might seem logical that Crimea - about the same size as Maryland - be part of U.S. territory.

nically does not border it. During Soviet times, that hardly mattered, because everything belonged to Moscow. Now it matte

ater from his beloved Sochi, Vladimir Putin believes he is removing a "stone in his shoe," as the Mafia saying goes. Given his o
to its former glory and maintaining seaborne access to the south, it seems unlikely he will let Crimea, where nearly 60 percent
nic Russian, remain in Ukrainian hands. He is already talking about building a bridge to the Russian mainland to seal its fate.

climate, Crimea has traditionally been the playground of czars, commissars and oligarchs as well as the warm-water port for R
ccident that Josef Stalin hosted the 1945 wartime conference of allied leaders in balmy Yalta during frigid February.

Moscow, my wife Paula and I planned to visit Crimea, but we never got the chance. The Soviets gave me the boot in February
y three-year tour was up.

nal interest in the place, it is still just a sideshow in the confrontation between Russia and Ukraine. The stakes are much high

m Kuglin, son of former AP Helena bureau chief **John Kuglin** and his wife Gale, is returning home to cover natural resources for
ord. He is graduating from the University of Montana this May with a master's degree in environmental science and natural re
y in the Record said, "Kuglin is an avid hunter, fisherman, backpacker and skier. He has spent considerable time in Montana's
nada and other states across the West. He realizes how important wildlife and natural resources are to the people of Montana
t people not only enjoy reading but also impact all of our lives." Proud dad notes that this is Tom's first newspaper job, and th
spaper and taught journalism at a college in Wyoming.

Happy Birthday wishes from Connecting



to

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[Estes Thompson](#)

[Nancy Trott](#)

erest...

looms over Pulitzer Prizes

ps aren't a revolution if they're filled with all these white men

aves NY Times for Mashable

voids press, goes between ferns

ehind bars in Egypt

hen the Boss's Reply Seems Cryptic (Mark Mittelstadt)

eporters are sticking it out post-Patch

ds hides Milwaukee Magazine's lesbian wedding cover

t cheated out of Obamacare scoop? (Bob Daugherty)

ends Foodday Readers to Porn Site

z Heron Joins Facebook in News Partnerships Role

nd school react to New York Times heroin article

ts fans protected by the First Amendment?

k

Week (Valerie Komor)

asiest place to develop sources even under ordinary circumstances. This was hardly ordinary. The Chinese Communist Party w
wn officials to get them to confess to corruption as part of government anti-graft efforts. It would be virtually unprecedented t
e record _ in China of all places, with the likelihood of retaliation.

woman **Gillian Wong** did it, breaking a huge story and winning the Beat of the Week in the process.

ublic defiance, three local officials and another party member described months of abuse they said they endured in detention.
was deprived of sleep and food, nearly drowned, whipped with wires and forced to eat excrement. The others reported being
bags, strung up by the wrists from high windows, or dragged along the floor, face down, by their feet.

d to Wong, and allowed use of their names, because they were victims of political vendettas and wanted to expose what had

u last October, when she first saw essays by him on his lawyer's blog. The censors saw the essays, too, apparently and forced th

eady on the case. At that point Zhou refused to talk. The next day, his lawyer told her that Zhou's phone was being tapped and
cal official warned him not to talk to the foreign media.

eral weeks, Wong called Zhou, texted him descriptions of the AP's work and told him why she was interested. In January, Zhou
viewed. He had changed his number twice, and Wong changed hers, too.

deo by senior producer Aritz Parra and pictures by photographer Andy Wong of officials re-enacting abuse, brought the accus

emories of refusing time and again to confess to bribery he says he didn't commit, even as his four interrogators were forcing
ould go. He begged them to stop, but the men taunted him and kept pushing.

ote, "with a loud 'ka-cha,' his left thigh bone snapped. The sickening crunch reverberated in his mind, nearly drowning out his
ounding of his heart."

[n.com/in-depth/in-china-brutality-yields-confessions-of-graft](http://www.nytimes.com/in-depth/in-china-brutality-yields-confessions-of-graft).

rong play, with tweets, retweets and praise from many competitors, and chilling reaction from Communist Party leaders who

conveyed a message from the deputy party secretary of Liling city to "be careful." A party member who said he was fed halluc
atened.

eporting that exposed torture used to enforce the Chinese government's much-touted campaign against corruption, Wong wi

rk impressed the judges:

a, business writer, Los Angeles, for an exclusive, all-formats interview with the man who refuted Newsweek's cover story claim
software underlying the digital currency bitcoin. Nakashima outmaneuvered other reporters waiting outside Dorian S. Nakamoto
him up on his request for a "free lunch" and then driving him to the AP bureau for a two-hour interview over sushi.
<http://www.ap-exclusive-man-denies-hes-bitcoin-creator-035155169--finance.html>

newsman, Sacramento, Calif., for reporting exclusively that prosecutors across California have been charging more criminals v
d strikes." That will cause the state's prison population to rise at a time when the governor is trying to reduce overcrowding by
serious crimes to county jails.
m/1fkBHkr

tz, business writer, New York, for being first among mainstream media to report that United was cracking down on passenger
cing violators to pay a fee. Scott appeared on Good Morning America to explain the story.
.com/id/101467482

am, correspondent, Allentown, Pa., for reporting exclusively on a congressional inquiry into a Transportation Department surv
involved uniformed police officers forcing motorists off the road and asking them for blood, breath and saliva samples. The inq
ubinkam on a government report that found the survey tactics were out of the ordinary and that many police departments w
w4

newsman, Washington, for being more than an hour ahead of the competition to report on a \$227.5 million settlement betwe
d one of the nation's largest coal producers over illegal toxic discharges into hundreds of waterways across five Appalachian s
business/record-fine-proposed-for-coal-mining-operations/article_dae6261a-1cb9-5f12-b7bf-f6e10e0f8fea.html

zio, business writer, New York, for reporting that Target's chief information officer had resigned in the aftermath of a massive
d other personal data from millions of the retailer's shoppers.
o.org/article/target-tech-chief-resigns-it-overhauls-security-0

correspondent, Reno, Nev., for an APNewsBreak about a sheriff's deputy in rural Nevada who is being sued for pulling over driv
s of supposed drug money without arresting them or bringing any charges. Sonner's scoop was based on court documents and
ltivated over the years.
n/n8o3a3l

Licon, correspondent, Mexico City, for scooping local and international media with a story about Mexican authorities killing a
ed dead since 2010. The AP was tipped off to the news after it had begun looking into whether the news of the drug lord's dea
www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/09/mexico-cartel-leader_n_4931582.html

correspondent, Dover, Del., for reporting exclusively that Delaware has 17 prisoners facing the death penalty, but no means of
ths fighting state officials for the documents to prove his story was correct.
us/1oFsvwr

correspondent, Ukraine, for the first all-formats interview with Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk since he took offi

stern publication, news agency and TV network were bidding for this interview with Yatsenyuk, who Danilova has been cultivated

ent/Default.aspx?action=search&Search=yatsenyuk&ROSlug=&From=&To=&TS=Mon%2C%2010%20Mar%202014%2007%3A

newswoman, Boise, Idaho, for an APNewsBreak on the FBI launching an investigation into Corrections Corporation of America's Idaho's largest prison. This was the latest in a series of stories over the past year that Boone has written about the trouble with the system. <http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/apnewsbreak-fbi-investigates-prison-company-cca-22819958>

er, newsman, New York City, for the first sit-down interview with the city's first lady, Chirlane McCray, who has emerged as the most influential and the most influential mayor's wife in memory. She made news by saying she has been enlisted to lobby in Albany for a tax on the rich to pay for universal pre-kindergarten in the city. <http://abcnews.go.com/apnewsbreak-nyc-mayors-wife-lobby-albany-193059370.html>

newsman, Seattle, and Rachel La Corte, correspondent, Wash., for being one day ahead of the competition in naming the person to get the first marijuana license. The story appeared on the main page of The Seattle Times' website, the Spokesman Review Web page. <http://seattletimes.com/2014/03/04/3305371/1st-washington-pot-license-goes.html>

newsman, New York City, for using the Freedom of Information Act to obtain an internal report that showed an average of three inmates at Rikers Island jail had visible injuries that they say were caused by guards. The findings bolstered arguments of inmate advocates for more control at the 12,000-inmate jail. <http://abcnews.go.com/apnewsbreak-many-nyc-inmates-report-head-shots-190609307.html>

national writer, and Alan Suderman, correspondent, Richmond, Va., for reporting exclusively on a cache of emails illustrating the corruption of former governor Bob McDonnell, who, along with his wife, was indicted on federal corruption charges. Breed and Suderman reported nearly 1,000 pages of emails detailing what was happening inside the governor's mansion. <http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/mcdonnell-corruption-disarray-22791416>

newsperson, Pittsburgh, for taking the time to visit Bobtown, Pa., and find out how residents there felt about Chevron's offer to buy the town after the aftermath of a nearby natural-gas explosion that killed one worker. Critics of drilling called the offer scandalous and demanded an investigation. Town residents weren't outraged at all. <http://thehill.com/news/nation/2014/03/08/chevron-pizza-scandal-isn-one-small-town/lc7KNlwDg4PDZ2n19nnr00/story.html>

Latrice Davis)

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