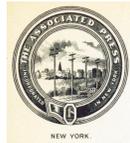

From: stevenspl@live.com on behalf of Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2014 9:30 AM
To: stevenspl@live.com
Subject: CONNECTING - March 22, 2014

Having trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#)



Connecting

March 22, 2014



Colleagues,

Over. More than.

Who would figure the consternation these words are causing in the copy-editor world. Read this from Poynter:

And you thought the AP ruckus was just about style

by **Jill Geisler**

Read Poynter's [Storify of reactions](#) to the [AP Stylebook "over"/"more than" revision](#), and you get a quick class in change management, especially about the emotional impact of change.

I've always taught leaders that change involves two key challenges: **learning** and **letting go**.

This time, for legions of teachers, editors, and grammar fans, it's about **unlearning**. It's about changing a standard of quality. And that is truly

painful. It's like telling people that effective immediately, the sound of fingernails on a chalkboard is as melodious as a harp.

For word nerds (a term I use with great affection), it's also about **letting go** of a part of their expert identity. Those who've made a commitment to studying language, memorizing its rules, and protecting its integrity have been correcting and coaching others for years - either as vocation or avocation. They've righteously talked or tussled with writers about "more than" and "over" - citing the AP Stylebook as the argument settler. Now the argument is over. Wrong is now right. On this one, everyone's now the expert.

Expertise is a powerful commodity. In fact, research says that competence and mastery are potent intrinsic motivators. ([Watch Daniel Pink's video - it's had nearly 12 million views.](#))

Human beings love to do what they do well. When you tell people their mastery doesn't matter - even if it's just letting go of a lone, longstanding grammar point - you see the reaction. Twitter erupts in lamentations from the experts. There's also laughter from those who've been on the receiving end of "over"/"more than" copy edits, as they've miraculously become more competent. What a lesson in [the emotions that accompany change](#).

It doesn't help that this change simply *happened*. When change is imposed, resistance rises. When people feel they are part of the process, [they adapt more quickly](#). Even if they don't get a vote, people at least want a voice - a chance for input and insight.

When they don't get that voice before change occurs, they can get plenty loud afterward. The torrent of comments on Twitter and elsewhere proves that point. It's creative, clever, rebellious, passionate - and I love it. It's what wordsmiths do best when challenged by change; they craft their own narratives around it.

I also love the idea that individuals and organizations are talking about what they'll do next. Will they adapt the AP style? Reject it? Why? With what process? With whose input? Imagine that: Another exercise in managing change. Learning. Letting go. Look what the AP started.

From the Connecting mailbox:

[Charles Bennett](#), on an embarrassing work moment: In the Dallas bureau I was assigned to go with this cub reporter for an interview with a man who had reached the century mark. It was the reporter's first assignment out of the office. The old man's relatives had called the office to inform us about the birthday so he was unaware of our purpose. We met the old man sitting on his front porch sipping an unidentified beverage. We

introduced ourselves and the reporter led with the obvious question: what do you contribute to your longevity? The old man took a sip of his drink and appeared to be deep in thought. A long pause and then the answer: not dying. That was the end of the interview. He completely ignored us after that. I didn't see the reporter much after that.

Valerie Komor sends greetings from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, settled 1623. She attended a workshop on digital curation sponsored by the Society of American Archivists. Archivists are learning the complex planning that goes into preserving digital records. However, fresh lobster, oysters and haddock provided delight and nourishment and the town itself is full of historic 18th and 19th century wood and brick civic and domestic structures. Daniel Webster served as Warden of North Congregational Church. (She shares photo at right, an oak tree planted in 1776 standing outside the Ladd House. Portsmouth, March 20, 2014)



Conecting wishes a Happy Birthday

to

Stan Miller

Editorial Talking Points - week through March 16, 2014

UNCHECKED POT DEALERS:

A tip from a federal source led to a big exclusive for Seattle newsman Gene Johnson. Last fall, the source said, there was a dustup over whether the FBI would run background checks on businesses that wanted to deal in marijuana in Washington state. State law requires applicants to pass a federal check, and the federal government has told states to tightly regulate their marijuana markets. But if the FBI wouldn't do the background checks, how could they accomplish that?

From Washington state officials, Johnson learned the FBI had ignored a year of requests that it perform the checks. Meanwhile, he discovered that the FBI had dutifully conducted pot-industry background checks in Colorado since

2010, when that state regulated its medical marijuana industry. In a statement, the Justice Department didn't explain the inconsistency. Yet it acknowledged Washington and Colorado were being treated differently and that a more consistent national approach was needed.

Finally, Johnson confirmed that the state was issuing the licenses despite the lack of federal checks _ a violation of its own rules.

The story received prominent play on websites and on front pages. Even a one-time felon who has applied for a growing license called Johnson to say he couldn't believe out-of-state criminal records weren't being checked.

<http://bit.ly/116OE9S>

MISSING PLANE: One week after Malaysia Airlines flight 370 went missing, it became clear that the plane had veered off course after its last radio contact. That was about the only thing that was clear.

In Washington, a source hinted to transportation writer Joan Lowy that investigators were looking at the possibility that someone with aviation skills was involved.

In Kuala Lumpur, newswoman Eileen Ng kept pursuing an official investigator, wearing him down until 1 a.m. when he confirmed that someone in the cockpit deliberately turned off communication devices and steered it off course.

The global scoop was later confirmed by Malaysia's prime minister. But for 3½ hours, the AP owned the story and dominated news sites, TV channels and newspapers worldwide. The story capped a week of outstanding coverage of the story, reporting it from every angle by an all-formats team that has assembled in Kuala Lumpur as well as colleagues elsewhere around the world.

<http://bit.ly/1d3tmXP>

Stories of interest...

Jill Craig named AP video journalist in Houston

-0-

Nieman Week in Review: Nate Silver and data journalism's critics, and the roots of diversity problems

-0-

For Topeka reporter, covering Fred Phelps 'part of my beat' (Anita Miller)

Fry)

-0-

An ex-Tribune journalist tries to come to peace with being 'put out to pasture' (Bob Daugherty)

-0-

Sen. Chuck Schumer predicts Senate will pass media shield bill later this year

-0-

Journalist uses algorithm to gather earthquake data and write reports in minutes (Sue Cross/LinkedIn)

-0-

Afghan Journalists Boycott Taliban Coverage After Kabul Hotel Attack Kills Reporter, Children

-0-

Sony's World Photography Awards Youth Winner Disqualified for Falsifying Age (Bob Daugherty)

-0-

The great Canadian newspaper exodus

-0-

Local News Helicopters Are Killing People - and Local News (Bill Beecham)

-0-

Halliburton to media: We grant interviews only if you agree not to portray us in a negative light

-0-

Bloomberg News's deepening China problem

-0-

Women, Men & Food Criticism: Why the Disparity?

-0-

The pitfalls of data journalism (Latrice Davis/Facebook)

-0-

Al Jazeera America CEO: "We're in for the long haul"

-0-

The University of Dayton



Paul Stevens
Connecting newsletter
stevenspl@live.com

[Forward this email](#)



Try it FREE today.

This email was sent to stevenspl@live.com by stevenspl@live.com | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).
Connecting newsletter | 14719 W 79th Ter | Lenexa | KS | 66215