
From: Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 19, 2014 9:35 AM
To: stevenspl@live.com
Subject: Connecting - June 19, 2014

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



Connecting

June 19, 2014

Click [here](#) for sound of the Teletype



Buzbee, Carovillano named AP vice presidents

Colleagues,

AP's Executive Editor **Kathleen Carroll** announced Wednesday that Washington bureau chief **Sally Buzbee** and Managing Editor of U.S. News **Brian Carovillano** are the newest AP vice presidents.

Here is her note to staff:

I am delighted to tell you that two of our best news leaders, Sally Buzbee and Brian Carovillano, are now also Vice Presidents of the company. The additional title is an important recognition of the contributions they make to the AP and our news report and customers every day.



Sally is our highly accomplished Washington Bureau Chief, and as you know, her influence and impact are far broader than that. She is involved in any number of key strategic initiatives and is a critical voice in discussions on everything from the direction of the day's report to training and customer outreach. She builds on her experience as the first head of the Nerve Center, leader of our Mideast operation during the teeth of several wars in the last decade, and positions in Washington, California and other points on

the map.

Brian took up the portfolio of Managing Editor of U.S. News late last year and has been deeply involved in work on state news and news about the United States for audiences everywhere. He has a feel for what those audiences want having worked with them in several U.S. bureaus (Providence, Boston, San Francisco and as South Regional Editor, our first in the U.S., as well as his most recent post as Asia News Director).



The recognition is important, particularly when they are dealing with outside

customers, but aside from new business cards, it won't change how they operate inside the AP. No funny hats or special salutes.

They join the other Vice Presidents who lead news - John Daniszewski, Lou Ferrara, Santiago Lyon, Sandy MacIntyre and Mike Oreskes. The group as a whole is referred to in shorthand as the Wednesday Group because ... well, because we have a weekly meeting on Wednesdays.

I know you'll join me in offering congratulations to Sally and Brian. And feel free to share this with AP colleagues.

Kathleen

Sally became Washington chief of bureau in October 2010 after serving as a deputy managing editor of the AP, leading the AP News Center in New York. She earlier was Middle East editor, based in Cairo, from 2004 to late 2009, supervising Iraq war coverage and overseeing news, staff, budgets and logistics in 16 countries stretching from Libya to Iran. Prior to her assignment to Cairo, Sally served as assistant chief of bureau in Washington, supervising foreign affairs and national security coverage in the wake of the invasion of Iraq and guiding the AP's daily news production from the nation's capital, and had earlier Washington assignments covering education, politics, economics and foreign affairs. She joined the AP in Topeka in 1988 and was correspondent in San Diego before moving to Washington in 1995. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas and an MBA from Georgetown University.

Brian was named Managing Editor for U.S. News in November 2013 after serving as AP's Asia-Pacific News Director, leading coverage in text, photos and video in the region that extends from India to the South Pacific. Most of his career has been in posts across the United States. In 2008, he was named AP's first U.S. regional editor and was part of the team that built the Atlanta-based South operation. Before that, Brian was part of the news leadership in AP's bureaus in San Francisco and Boston. He started his AP career in 2000 as a reporter in Providence, Rhode Island, and worked at newspapers in Framingham, Massachusetts, and Peterborough, New Hampshire. A native of New Jersey, Brian graduated from Colby College in Waterville, Maine, and was a Sulzberger Fellow at Columbia University in 2010.

Jim Reindl, wife Graca to join Peace Corps

Connecting colleague [Jim Reindl](#) shares the news that he will take a leave of absence from the AP to spend two years with the Peace Corps in Ghana.

He and his wife **Graca** will leave for Ghana in early October.

He noted, "I know, Reindl and Peace are two words you rarely hear in the same sentence but it's true. This fulfills something Graca and I have long thought about and I'm glad we have the opportunity to do it."



Jim joined the AP as a newsman in Detroit in

January 1983, having grown up in nearby Wyandotte. He was named Milwaukee news editor in 1985, Chicago news editor in 1987 and Chicago ACoB in 1990. After a stint as acting bureau chief in 1993, he was named chief of bureau in Miami, then moved to bureau chief in Indianapolis in 1997 and to bureau chief in Chicago in 2000. In 2005 Jim was named to the new position of Director of Major Accounts where he has handled AP relationships with some of its biggest members and their corporate owners. In 2010 he took on the role of director of sports products and business development.

Connecting is pleased to soon have a correspondent in Ghana. Jim says he will figure out a way to post updates for a blog AND Connecting, depending on the communications situation.

Hal Bock: "I talk to him every day...on everything including baseball"

Connecting colleague [Hal Bock](#) - who worked 40 years in AP Sports in New York before retiring in 2004 - shares this memory of his father sparked by our recent Father's Day remembrances:

Your Father's Day tale touched a nerve. I miss my dad a lot, even now 22 years after I lost him. He was a source of strength and counsel, a great example of a blue collar working man.



My father took me to my first baseball game when I was eight years old, paying \$1.25 each for our seats. no small investment in those days. But he wanted to introduce me to the game. I looked around the ballpark in a state of wonder, the grass the stands, the lights. It was magical. Then I noticed a structure hanging off the second deck and asked my father what it was.

“Oh, that's the press box,” he said. “That's where the writers sit.”

Now, he had my attention.

“They come here every day?” I asked.

“Every day,” he said. “That's their job.”

“That's their job? To come to a baseball game every day?”

“That's it,” he said.

“I think that's what I want to do,” I said.

And I did.

All these years later, I miss my dad a lot. But it's not so bad because I talk to him every day. About just about everything, including baseball.

UPI's Editor-in-Chief Rang Me Up Almost Instantly: "Take That Off the Wire!"

The author of this story, Ron Cohen, is a retired journalist who worked for United Press International for 25 years and for Gannett News Service for 15. He wrote the following for Connecting colleague Jack Limpert's blog, "About Editing and Writing." Click this link to access the blog:
<http://jacklimpert.com/>

By Ron Cohen



Remember back when nobody had heard of the Kardashians? Back before R-rated movies and cable TV made words like "tits" and "motherfucker" household words?

I do, and this is the story about how I decided to put those words and five others like them into a news story aimed at the world's front pages.

In 1972, standup comic George Carlin (photo below) did a monologue titled "Seven Words You Can Never Say on Television." He then said them, in this order: "Shit, piss, fuck, cunt, cocksucker, motherfucker, tits."

The following year, when Pacifica radio station WBAI played the "Seven Words" monologue - it was on a Carlin LP record - Morality in Media stalwart John Douglas filed a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission, saying the Carlin routine should not be broadcast at a time of day children were awake. The complaint morphed into a lawsuit that reached the Supreme Court.

The Justice Department sided with WBAI, saying that the FCC's declaratory ruling against Carlin's words violated the First Amendment, and that its definition of "decency" was too vague to satisfy the due process protections of the Fifth Amendment.

In 1979, the Supreme Court ruled 5 to 4 that the FCC's rules did not violate those amendments, but declined to consider the scope of the commission's definition of "decency." It didn't exactly open the floodgates for broadcasting profanity, but things then loosened up quite a bit.

I was Washington News Editor for United Press International, and when the court ruled I filed it. We put on our main news wire an advisory that warned 1,200 or so newspaper clients that a story was about to move with language some may find objectionable.



Then the urgent story we sent contained another cautionary note on

top, and two more before and after the paragraph containing the seven words. We concluded with another caution about the "offending" paragraph, and capped the whole thing off with a separate "Heads-up!" advisory.

The number of warnings and noise level of the teletype bells all this generated in newspaper offices would have roused Rip Van Winkle.

I sat back to await the shit storm.

It didn't take long. H.L. Stevenson, UPI's editor-in-chief based in New York, rang me up almost instantly.

"What the #@%* are you doing?" he said. "Take that off the wire!"

"This is the Supreme Court, Steve," I said. "It is precedent-setting. Without those words there would be no court case and no story."

"Take it off!" he said.

"It's absolutely crucial to both the court decision and the story," I said. "You have the authority to do it yourself. And you will have to, because I won't." I hung up.

To my surprise he let it stand, and called back 20 minutes later to acknowledge my point. So far as I know, no papers included the words in their stories, intentionally or inadvertently, and only one editor called UPI to complain.

I was interviewed by Editor & Publisher magazine, which included in its story an explanation from the Associated Press why it had decided not to offer the words. They always were more cautious than UPI. (Many Unipressers often employed Carlin's words as adjectives in speaking of the AP, then our bitter rivals.)

Even 35 years later, broadcast networks generally avoid the most virulent profanity. But if you are offended by profanity, you'd better employ earplugs if you go to the movies or watch cable TV.

And if you want to hear Carlin himself, Google "Seven Dirty Words" and it will take you to YouTube faster than you can say "#\$%^&*".

Tom Kent: Is it ISIL or ISIS in Iraq?

How best to refer to the al-Qaida splinter group leading Sunni militants in Iraq? ISIL or ISIS?

In Arabic, the group is known as Al-Dawla Al-Islamiya fi al-Iraq wa al-Sham, or the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham. The term "al-Sham" refers to a region stretching from southern Turkey through Syria to Egypt (also including Lebanon, Israel, the Palestinian territories and Jordan). The group's stated goal is to restore an Islamic state, or caliphate, in this entire area.

The standard English term for this broad territory is "the Levant." Therefore, AP's translation of the group's name is the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or ISIL.

"We believe this is the most accurate translation of the group's name and reflects its aspirations to rule over a broad swath of the Middle East," says John Daniszewski, AP vice president and senior managing editor for international news.

The term ISIL also avoids the common misunderstanding, stemming from the initials ISIS, that the group's name is the "Islamic State of Iraq and Syria." ("Iraq and Greater Syria" might be an acceptable translation, since Greater Syria also implies the entire area of the Levant.) But saying just "Iraq and Syria" suggests incorrectly that the group's aspirations are limited to these two present-day countries.

ISIL is also the term used by the United Nations.

Tom Kent, AP deputy managing editor and standards editor

Stories of interest

[Beloved New Yorker cartoonist Charles Barsotti dies in Kansas City](#)

A single-panel cartoon shows an expressionless circus clown talking into the phone and, underneath, just five words: "What's the next best medicine?"



That's a Charles Barsotti cartoon, one of the many great ones, said Robert Mankoff, cartoon editor of The New Yorker magazine.

"We see his cartoons and think more deeply about things, and we're also involved in the joke," Mankoff said. "The next best medicine has always been Charley Barsotti."

Barsotti, longtime Kansas Citian and cartoonist for The New Yorker for more than four decades, died late Monday at age 80. Barsotti was called a philosopher and "a genius of humor," and his work drew comparisons to the cartoons of James Thurber.

-0-

[Jay Carney's last briefing](#) (Bob Daugherty)



Jay Carney took the podium as White House press secretary for the final time on Wednesday, emerging to blaring guitars of his favorite band before thanking the press, his colleagues and the president for his experiences over

the past five years.

"I just want to say thank you to all of you here," Carney said, speaking a bit more slowly and more wistfully than usual. "This has been an extraordinary experience, and I have loved every minute of every day, even the many minutes of many days that I've spent in this room. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

-0-

Politico's reporting disaster

Dana Milbank, Washington Post: Politico's media blogger, Dylan Byers, regularly supplies his readers with tidbits on comings and goings in the news business, but this week he provided an additional service: a lesson in the limitations of armchair journalism.

After my column appeared Tuesday on a Heritage Foundation event on Benghazi that devolved into anti-Muslim ugliness, Byers tweeted that I had "totally misrepresented the panel." It linked to a nine-minute video clip from the session. Byers followed that up shortly with a blog post titled "Dana Milbank's Heritage Disaster," based on the same excerpt.

I read Byers's post, and there was indeed a disaster: the sort of disaster that occurs when a journalist, from the comfort of his office, levels accusations based on a nine-minute clip of a 65-minute panel he hadn't attended. (Heritage didn't post the full video until well after the Byers report, and Byers didn't take me up on my offer to provide him earlier with my audio recording.)

-0-

Print still matters, even if some would like to believe it shouldn't

The future is digital, of course - but in the present, the revenues generated by print are absolutely critical to supporting local newsrooms. So it makes sense to pay attention to print strategy.

-0-

Polish authorities try to seize magazine's files

Polish police and state prosecutors on Wednesday raided the headquarters of a magazine that recently published compromising information about the government, in a failed attempt to seize its computers.

-0-

[The Corporate Diversity Charade](#) (Latrice Davis/Facebook)

The dirty little secret of corporate America and the practice of diversity is that 25 years after establishing "diversity" offices, most companies have not developed a mature understanding of how diversity can contribute to their bottom lines. Diversity management has a complicated history arising, as it does, from a sequence of discrimination lawsuits that unsettled corporate America in the early 1990s. As the list of individual and class action lawsuits grew, led by Texaco's race discrimination case and First Union's age discrimination lawsuit, both in 1994, a public relations backlash against the companies created a crisis of confidence among shareholders.

-0-

[SPJ is revising its Code of Ethics in a most unethical way](#)

Sometime in the next few weeks (I don't know when), SPJ will pay up to \$11,000 for a group of people (I don't know how many) to spend several days (I don't know the number) in Columbus, Ohio. Those people (who the board of directors didn't approve) will revise SPJ's vaunted Code of Ethics. They'll work off a first draft (written in secret by unknown authors) and submit their shiny new Code at SPJ's annual convention in September - where 200 SPJers in attendance (out of 8,000 members) will endorse it in a single meeting at the end of the last day of the convention. And then the SPJ Code of Ethics will officially change.

-0-

[Conditions for international reporters deteriorating in China](#)

The Foreign Correspondents' Club of China released at the end of May its annual report on conditions for international journalists working in the country. As we have done in the past, we're posting this year's report as a PDF. The takeaway is that conditions have certainly not gotten better and many feel they have gotten worse, according to the 123 respondents to the survey, slightly more than half of its membership of 236.

-0-

[News organizations are the new journalism schools](#)

Politico and Condé Nast are entering the j-school business. Last week, Politico announced the creation of a 10-day Journalism Institute for college students, while Condé Nast is in talks to set up academic programs involving its magazines, including Wired and Gourmet. As journalism schools increasingly try to connect classrooms with

newsrooms to ensure students will have the right skills in a fast-changing job market, news organizations are doing the same from the opposite end.

-0-

Professors Say the Dumbest Things About Journalism

Clay Shirky, described as a writer, consultant, and teacher who has spent a lot of time at Yale, Harvard, and NYU, thinks print is dead and the sooner it's buried the better. In a June 17 post, Nostalgia and Newspapers, he offers this anecdote:

A year or so ago, I was a guest lecturer in NYU's Intro to Journalism class, 200 or so sophomores interested in adding journalism as a second major. (We don't allow students to major in journalism alone, for the obvious reason.) One of the students had been dispatched to interview me in front of the class, and two or three questions in, she asked "So how do we save print?"

I was speechless for a moment, then exploded, telling her that print was in terminal decline and that everyone in the class needed to understand this if they were thinking of journalism as a major or a profession.

Shirkey concluded: "We don't have much time left to manage the transition away from print."

-0-

News Corp board votes to extend poison pill provision

News Corp's board of directors voted to extend a poison pill provision it put in place to prevent hostile takeovers when the company controlled by Rupert Murdoch and his family split from its cable and entertainment properties last year.

AP Beat of the Week

Colleagues,

Most everybody was surprised by House Majority Leader Eric Cantor's resounding loss in last week's Virginia primary.

But caught off-guard? Not AP.

David Pace, AP's director of race calling, and David Wilkison, director

of major accounts and the state's race caller that evening, were well-prepared and remained cool under pressure.

They called the race -- sending shockwaves across America's political establishment -- barely an hour after polls had closed and at least 10 minutes before AP's closest competitors. AP was widely credited by local and national news organizations as others scrambled to catch up.

Here was a case study in the workings of the AP race calling service, which on a big election night operates at a large scale across fifty states. Its careful, fact-based, independent structure is respected and valued across the industry for exactly moments like this.

Pace and Wilkison knew that Cantor faced a genuine challenge: He'd been booed by conservatives at a recent local party gathering; he'd faced questions _ and gone on the attack _ about his immigration stance.

But there were no reliable independent polls, and Cantor's own polling showed him safe. No one seriously predicted that Cantor, one of the savviest politicians in America, could lose to political novice Dave Brat.

Suffice it to say, Pace, in Washington, and Wilkison, in Richmond, could not believe their eyes as the results started coming in. Cantor was trailing badly right from the start. Pace called Washington Bureau Chief Sally Buzbee at about 7:25 p.m., giving her a heads-up.

"It's too early to know for sure," he said, "but Cantor is trailing badly _ we need to prep for a possible upset."

In Richmond, newsman Alan Suderman was already preparing an alert, bulletin and writethru for a potential upset. Newsman Michael Felberbaum headed immediately to Brat's gathering, getting there by 7:30 p.m., and AP's Steve Szkotak to Cantor's.

New political editor David Scott, still in Chicago, mobilized other resources.

Pace and AP's team of race callers prepare relentlessly for each election season, doing in-depth training on statistics, the vote count and political histories of various states. AP's vote count operation, led by Don Rehill, is an invaluable part of that effort.

Because the seat had been safe for Cantor for so long, Pace and Wilkison wanted to make sure that they weren't seeing anomalous results from just one part of the district, which might then be swept

away later in the night if Cantor showed strength elsewhere. As results came in, Pace turned to the AP elections research department's breakdown of the districts' voting patterns from 2012 _ and also worked with the vote count group to triple check that the results were accurate and clean.

Seeing no errors, and no way for Cantor to make up Brat's significant lead, Pace and Wilkison called the race at 8:02 p.m., giving AP a huge advantage on one of the biggest political stories this year.

The impact was electric. Fox broke into a talk show. CNN had to scramble a political analyst by phone to get something on-air.

The early knowledge that Cantor was losing allowed AP text, photo and video reporters to get in place for Cantor's concession speech, which most news organizations missed. Steve Helber's photo of the concession speech grabbed the front pages of the Washington Post, NYT and USA Today. AP also was with Brat in all formats.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/jun/11/eric-cantor-outed-tactless-concession-ignored-dave/>

For calculation, care and cool that turned a surprise result into a definitive election night beat, Pace and Wilkison share this week's \$500 prize.

Others whose work impressed the judges:

_ Daa Hadid, reporter, Beirut; Bassam Hatoum, senior producer, Beirut; and Dusan Vranic, chief photographer, Jerusalem, on assignment in Syria, for their moving portrait of siblings Zeinat and Ayman Akhras. The siblings were among the very few Christians who remained in the rebel-held ancient quarter of Homs during the government's 700-day siege. Over several hours in their Homs apartment, Zeinat, 65, recalled how her world shrunk during the siege to her living room and her kitchen, and how she withered away to 83 pounds and refused to look in the mirror, fearing her appearance would break her spirit. Hadid wrote a moving account of their life under the siege, while Hattoum documented their story in a video package and Vranic produced portraits that captured the siblings' physical frailty after their ordeal. <https://news.yahoo.com/syrian-woman-survives-700-days-blockade-050404851.html>

_ Hope Yen, reporter, Washington; Dan Kempton, Multimedia; Thomas Peipert, Denver; and Brennan Linsley, Denver, for their report on the federal government's failure to inspect hundreds of oil and gas

wells near national forests or fragile watersheds. Starting with a GAO report, Yen worked sources in the Bureau of Land Management to get access to state and county data on the location of the wells. Multimedia's Kempton worked with Yen in analyzing the data, identifying errors, correcting them and then putting the data in an easily accessible form that was sent out to bureaus and members. About a dozen bureaus produced state separates. <http://news.yahoo.com/4-10-higher-risk-wells-arent-inspected-feds-040555139.html>

_ Carla K. Johnson, medical writer, Chicago, for her exclusive two-day series on how President Barack Obama's home state agreed to spend \$33 million in federal money promoting his health care law, hiring a high-priced public relations firm that spent far more per enrollee on television ads than any other large state, and how the subcontractor working on the campaign is a Chicago political strategy consulting firm owned by three former aides to some of the state's most-powerful Democrats. <http://bit.ly/1uywJZI>

_ Lara Jakes, national security writer, Washington, for her exclusive report that U.S. personnel were being evacuated from an air base north of Baghdad, the first indication that the embassy in Baghdad was worried about some of its own personnel and that the U.S. training mission in Iraq was being threatened. http://www.yorkdispatch.com/breaking/ci_25948501/u-s-eyes-new-aid-iraq-curb-insurgent

_ Maria Danilova, reporter, Kiev; Raphael Satter, reporter, Europe Desk, Theodora Tongas, Athens video; and Eldar Emric, Sarajevo video, for their multi-format story uncovering the details of a scam in which former Ukrainian officials siphoned off billions of dollars in tax revenue to enrich themselves in a highly organized operation. Tongas and Emric got video of Ukraine's former tax chief battling his way through an airport security checkpoint to flee the country. And they got into the ousted president's palace to capture new views of the ostentatious lifestyle he enjoyed. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/11/ukraine-tax-scam>

_ Raul Gallego, video journalist, Bangkok, on assignment in Rio, for his exclusive footage of a lone policeman firing a live round at protesters as the Argentina-Bosnia World Cup match kicked off a kilometer away. Only Gallego had the patience to stay at the scene and watch it unfold. The resulting text story lit up social networks. Police have now launched an investigation. Text: <http://www.foxnews.com/sports/2014/06/15/brazil-police-officers-shoot-live-rounds-during-world-cup-protests/>
Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPWS8R16OgA>

_ Tom Hays, newsman, NYC, for getting exclusive first word on one of the biggest New York City stories of the week _ the arrest of four strippers and a bar manager accused of targeting wealthy men, spiking their drinks and then running up their credit cards for hundreds of thousands of dollars in charges while they were too wasted to stop it. Hays found the case started with a wealthy New Jersey doctor who never stopped contesting a huge bill at the Scores strip club despite video evidence showing he was there. Hays got enough advance word that he was able to have his full story on the wire before any competitors. <http://www.seattlepi.com/default/article/Feds-NYC-strippers-drugged-stole-from-rich-men-5544090.php>

_ Jorge Sainz, newsman, Madrid, for his exclusive, based on months of digging, that regional governments in Spain, even as they cut health and education spending, had channeled more than \$1 billion to professional soccer teams between 2008 and 2012. The EU had launched an investigation of government funding of the clubs, but Sainz's review showed it is looking at only a small piece of the funding. Some teams are alive thanks only to funding by the governments, which sports finance experts said are afraid of the political risks of letting them fail. <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2014/06/13/world/europe/ap-eu-spain-bankrolling-soccer.html? r=1>

_ Marko Drobnjakovic, videojournalist, and Evgeniy Maloletka, photo stringer, Ukraine, for tenacious work obtaining the first video and stills of the wreckage of a Ukrainian troop transport plane downed by pro-Russian forces with the loss of 49 lives. The video moved more than an hour ahead of Reuters, with both AP video and photos dominating subsequent play. <http://online.wsj.com/articles/ukrainian-transport-plane-shot-down-by-pro-russian-separatists-in-luhansk-1402736354>

_ Matthew Daly, congressional reporter, Washington, for being first (and alone) with the results of former Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki's promised nationwide audit of patient wait times at VA health centers. Daly, who covers the VA, knew the audit was coming out Monday and worked extensively with VA officials through the weekend to ensure AP got the results first and on an exclusive basis. His advance work put AP far ahead of all competitors in publishing the audit's headline-grabbing conclusions that more than 57,000 veterans have been waiting at least three months to get their first appointment and that another 64,000 veterans appeared to have fallen through the cracks entirely, never getting appointments after enrolling. <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/audit-over-57000-awaiting-initial-va-visits>

_ Margie Mason, medical writer, Jakarta, for weaving the dramatic story of a Burmese man sold into slavery into a larger piece about how Thailand's chronic failure to stop human trafficking may soon produce

U.S. sanctions. Many migrants are forced to work on deep-sea Thai fishing boats, working up to 22 hours a day with no pay, little food and no clean water _ all to provide cheap seafood for export to the U.S. and other countries. Mason was given exclusive access to a group of runaway slaves after gaining the trust of sources on an earlier human rights story. <http://news.msn.com/in-depth/thailands-rampant-trafficking-may-carry-price>

_ David Sharp, correspondent, Portland, Maine, for scooping even a former president's granddaughter on her own family's news: that George H.W. Bush would mark his 90th birthday with a parachute jump. Sharp beat Today show reporter Jenna Bush Hager by about two minutes. It was a closely guarded secret that Sharp ferreted out through longtime sources with the Bush family. The story included AP video of Bush being pushed in a wheelchair to the waiting helicopter. <http://apne.ws/1qHv1F9>

_ John Carucci, entertainment producer, New York, for his interview with Chubby Checker at the Songwriters Hall of Fame ceremony about the exclusion of Philadelphia-based artists in the Rock Hall. Though many journalists were doing interviews, Carucci was the only one who asked the question, and Checker was ready to answer, giving juicy quotes about how they'd better not wait until he's 85 to induct him. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/06/13/chubby-checker-rock-hall-of-fame_n_5490749.html

Mike Oreskes

AP Best of the States

The report from the Government Accountability Office was intriguing: The government had failed to inspect thousands of oil and gas wells on federal and Indian lands classified as potentially high risk for water contamination and other environmental damage.

But the details were missing. Where were these wells? And did the lack of inspections contribute to any environmental damage?

The Bureau of Land Management was reluctant to provide details, but Washington-based reporter Hope Yen, who broke the story on the GAO report, pressed the agency over the course of several weeks, citing the public's right to know.

The GAO's findings came as the use of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, has been increasing around the country. While fracking has produced

major economic benefits, it also has raised fears among environmentalists that chemicals used in the process could spread to water supplies.

When BLM finally released the data to AP, it was in the form of nearly a dozen spreadsheets. Phoenix-based Interactive Editor Dan Kempton, a member of the data journalism team, consolidated them into two master files, allowing calculations to determine which wells on federal and tribal lands were considered higher risk for water contamination and other environmental problems, and whether or not they were inspected by BLM within the given time period, 2009-2012.

Kempton identified, and BLM later confirmed, that its data had duplicate entries and other inconsistencies. Kempton consolidated the duplicates and merged the missing entries to create the most complete and accurate list available of well inspection data. The consolidated spreadsheets were then distributed in advance to AP bureaus and members in states with drilling operations on public and Indian lands, so they could start working on localized stories to accompany [Yen's national overview](#).

But the data alone was dry. Absent was the human impact. What was the reaction of people living near these uninspected wells? With Colorado among the top states with uninspected wells, Denver reporter Thomas Peipert and photographer Brennan Linsely literally knocked on door after door to gather reaction and get photos to illustrate the story.

The story was used on the front pages of more than a dozen newspapers from Denver to Akron, Ohio, to Williamsport, Pa., and Tuscaloosa, Ala. It was featured as a Yahoo showcase, and in the 24-hour period following its release, it was tweeted out nearly 600 times. It was also one of the most widely viewed stories on AP Mobile. About a dozen bureaus produced state separates, and many members did their own stories using data provided by AP ([Salt Lake Tribune](#), [Times Leader](#)).

It was yet another example of how data journalism offers AP an opportunity to work with its members to provide the tools for local, granular coverage of national issues.

For their enterprising and exclusive journalism, and for furthering AP's efforts to help members localize our coverage, Yen, Kempton, Peipert and Linsely win this week's \$300 Best of the States prize.

Brian Carovillano

(Items above shared by Francesca Pitaro and Valerie Komor)

Paul Stevens
Connecting newsletter
stevenspl@live.com

[Forward this email](#)



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

