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Connecting - October 16, 2015

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Connecting

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning!

Nothing warms the heart of Ye Olde Connecting Editor more than to see many of you send in your thoughts and memories for Connecting. Today's is such an issue.

First, however, is an interesting account of how The Associated Press is using user-generated content in its coverage.

Keep your stories coming.

Paul

An inside look at how AP uses UGC

By Ken Romano

We sit down with our social media editor to discuss the growth of user-generated content and how AP incorporates it into its coverage.



People around the world lined up last month to buy the new iPhone 6s from Apple, the latest smartphone to further the proliferation of mobile devices.

We learned last year that there are now more gadgets than humans, and that developing countries are becoming increasingly connected.

So what does this mean for news organizations, or even anyone looking for content?

Ken Romano

"Everybody has right in their pocket everything they need to capture the visuals, sounds and events that happen around them," AP's social media editor, Eric Carvin, said. "And at the same time, the social networks are making it easier and easier to share visual content in particular."

Listen to my full conversation with Eric Carvin about the growth of UGC and how AP incorporates it into its coverage: <https://soundcloud.com/apinsights/user-generated-content-at-ap>

Most of the growth in user-generated content, or UGC, has come in the past five years and stemmed from the Arab Spring uprising in the Middle East.

That story and others prompted us to look at Twitter and other social platforms as sources of content that could help inform our own newsgathering process.

Accuracy is our top priority here at AP, and UGC can be challenging to verify. We understand that our customers might use a piece of content from someone else if they get it first, but we also strive to be the definitive source during times of uncertainty - a similar verification process takes place during elections, as well.

Speed is also important, obviously, and over time we've made some adjustments to become more efficient in our UGC process. In addition to our reporters incorporating it into their beat, we have dedicated staff who vet content as we find it and obtain the rights for distribution in addition to publication.

"We feel that it is our job as AP to go through the entire process and make sure that we're confident that something is reliable and that we have the right rights to be able to use it," Carvin said. "We want our customers to feel like, 'This is done. AP's got this.' And so our customers can then do whatever they need to do with it."

With everyone now firmly entrenched in this digital era, we've seen our customers using UGC in a variety of ways, from photos on front pages to videos on websites as a way to provide different angles of a story. It provides the man-on-the-street perspective as well as analysis and/or commentary from an AP journalist.

"And one of the things we're exploring is potential new delivery mechanisms to share this type of content with our customers in a way that they can use it more directly in their social platforms and their digital spaces," Carvin said. "And to be honest, we're eager to hear what people want along those lines. We're happy to take feedback on that."



Eric Carvin

One thing we have heard feedback on is the importance of providing local content. Many of our customers cover hard news and legislation in their state, but aren't always there to get the local story from the high school prom or baseball game. We want to help them round out their reports - whether it's with UGC from sports, business, tech, etc.

At a time when people are sharing more than ever before, though, Carvin said there's a major concern that much of this content is moving to private spaces such as Snapchat, WeChat and WhatsApp. As establishing relationships with sources only increases in importance, we will continue to fine-tune our UGC processes. The value in it is clear, and we will provide further updates along the way.

Click here to see the complete list of AP's news accounts on Twitter - <https://twitter.com/AP/lists/ap-news-accounts/members>

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Ken Romano is an AP product director responsible for the strategy and rollout of text and multimedia products. Eric Carvin is AP's social media editor and is a member of the Online News Association's board of directors. He directs AP's social strategy and oversees the use of social media to uncover breaking news, gather user-generated content, connect with readers and share AP content.

[Click here](#) for a link to the full post

The best leads written by Connecting members

Thursday's Connecting posed the question: What's the best lead you ever wrote - and, can it top this one from the AP wire:

LONDON (AP) - A former meerkat expert at London Zoo has been ordered to pay compensation to a monkey handler she attacked with a wine glass in a love spat over a llama-keeper.

Before getting to our first responses, Connecting colleague **Charlie Hanley** did some investigation and found - "In the credit-where-credit-is-due category, that wonderful London Zoo love spat lead (and story) was written by the London buro's **Jill Lawless**. I just checked with LON."

Congratulations, Jill. Now, to your responses:

Bill Kole - I've always been a bit fond of this optional lede that I did while covering Pluto's demotion as a planet (one of my all-time favorite assignments.) Even if it is a bit, um, Goofy:

PRAGUE, Czech Republic (AP) - For decades, it's been confused with a cartoon dog and ridiculed as a puny poser. Now Pluto, the solar system's consummate cling-on, has suffered its worst humiliation: It's not even a planet anymore.

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David Smyth -

CAMBRIDGE, England - Dr. Horace N.S. Wilkinson is probably unique in donating the head of a fellow alumnus to his alma mater.

The head is believed to have belonged in life to Oliver Cromwell, who from 1653 to 1658 was Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland.

It was buried in the grounds of Sidney Sussex College, one of the 31 residential colleges that collectively make up Cambridge University, on March 25, 1960, three centuries after Cromwell's death. The college keeps the precise location of the grave secret.

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Mike Holmes - I don't know if this was my best lead, but it keeps with the wildlife theme and was flat-out the most fun interview I ever did -- a John Lumpkin special assignment that, as I recall, had something to do with convincing the main character of the story, "Cowpokes" cartoonist Ace Reid, to speak to the Texas APME.

KERRVILLE, Texas (AP) - For an ol' boy who once made a bundle selling pre-sweated cowboy hats, helping the lowly Texas horned toad ought to be easy. Ace Reid says it's been anything but.

First, there's the name problem. Neither a toad nor a frog, it's a lizard.

Beyond that, the man who once proposed racing an ostrich and a camel is having a little trouble convincing some people he means business.

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Adolphe Bernotas - I'm not sure this is my best lead, but it certainly is my favorite, from about 1968. I don't remember the name of the operator so I made it up, but the details are accurate:

GOFFSTOWN, N.H. - Easy Rider, 19, of Goffstown, escaped injury Thursday, police said, when the snowmobile he was operating crashed into a pile of frozen chicken manure.

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Mike Tharp - From 1974 in the WSJ for a story about efforts to halt coyote predation on

livestock:

How do you make a sheep taste like a toad?

Who would want to?

Donald Balzer, that's who. He's the chief wildlife biologist etc. etc.

In 1999, for U.S. News & World Report, in a story about how the Washington State Department of Transportation was being forced to widen the seats on ferries because of more weighty passengers:

Travel is broadening.

For McClatchy papers in 2008 when I was embedded with the 10th Mountain Division:

KIRKUK, Iraq--For the past 11 months Col. David Paschal has back-slapped, noogied and high-fived his soldiers. He's been kissed on both cheeks by local Iraqis, and he's upbraided or atta-boyed his counterparts in the Iraqi army and police. He's sent his gunfighters after the "bad guys."

He's balanced that wit a reconciliation program for about 350 former insurgents , a six-step process that's becoming something of a model for other provinces.

Paschal, 46, a Chicago native, is the senior U.S. military officer in Kirkuk, a city of 800,000 some 155 miles northeast of Baghdad.

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Kendal Weaver - Here's the lead I wrote when Muhammad Ali came to Montgomery in December 1989 and held a news conference to promote his brand name cologne:

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) -- Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee, and smell like ... Muhammad Ali.

The former heavyweight champion, now on a promotional shuffle for Muhammad Ali Cologne, took jabs at Calvin Klein and Elizabeth Taylor and explained why Joe Frazier never could put his name on perfume.

"It wouldn't smell good," Ali said.

I didn't save the piece, which ran on the sports wire, but it is still around (without attribution, it seems) on the web. I was Montgomery correspondent at the time and assigned myself to cover Ali's news conference, overlooking a young sports writer named Paul Newberry (actually, Paul being Paul, he encouraged me to get out of the office and cover Ali). The former champ's tremor from Parkinson's was evident, as was his beaming smile and impish spirit (he performed a few magic tricks, which weren't disguised too well).

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Joe McKnight - You asked about remembered leads. The late Paul Simmons was Georgia state editor in Atlanta when I joined AP in 1951. Early on, one of his brief but succinct stories still sticks in my mind. I don't recall the family name involved but Paul's brief story went like this:

Lawrenceville, GA. (AP) - Ms. John Doe told her husband not to mess up her house and if he was going to kill himself he should go outside to do it, so he did.

While working at Wichita, KS in the 1960s, I spent a day in a U. S. Air Force underground missile silo for a story on such weapons in the midst of the cold war with Russia. It was the only time I ever agreed to censorship but it was the only way the Air Force would permit me to get the story. I was surprised when the public relations office at McConnell Air Force base returned my story without a single editing mark. My lead went something like this:

WICHITA, KS (AP) -- The biggest guns in the western world are aimed at Russia, loaded, cocked and buried in a Kansas wheat field.

AP Stylebook, let me lend a hand

John E. McIntyre
The Baltimore Sun

As they prepare to consider the annual revisions to the Associated Press Stylebook, the editors have issued a public invitation for suggestions. The Lord has delivered them into my hands.

Here are a few revisions that they might profitably consider in the interest of making the stylebook resemble a publication of the current century.

collide, collision A collision occurs when a moving object strikes another moving object or a stationary object. It is not necessary for both objects to be in motion to use collide.

convince, persuade You may be convinced that something or of something. You may be convinced or persuaded to do something. You may also be persuaded of something. The distinction sometimes observed between convinced and persuade has substantially eroded.

gender-neutral pronouns The use of they/their as a singular, as in Each student should bring their book to class, increasingly appears in publications as well as in speech. Though traditionalists disparage it, it is gaining acceptance in writing with a conversational tone. It avoids the sexist he/him/his and the clumsy he or she. It is also often preferred by transgender individuals. Exercise judgment about its use.

data Singular or plural, depending on context.

loan (n. or v.) lend (v.) Loan as a verb is widely acceptable.

they, their See gender-neutral pronouns



verbs SPLIT FORMS: The split infinitive, to boldly go, is unobjectionable in standard English, and recasting to put the adverb before or after the infinitive can read awkwardly or produce ambiguity. English also idiomatically places adverbs between the auxiliary and main verb in a compound: We have always done it this way.

that, which [added language] That may also be used to refer to an unnamed person or group of people: The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.

who, whom [added language] While who is used with people and animals with a name and that with unnamed animals and inanimate objects, that may also be used to refer to an unnamed person or group of people: The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.

[Click here](#) for a link to this story.

Connecting mailbox

Stories of Bill Crider

Gene Herrick - In the October 14 issue, Kent Prince wrote about Bill Crider, the AP writer who was shot in the back during the "Ole Miss riots" on Sept. 30, 1962.

I remember Crider well, as we used to cover a lot of stories for AP out of the Memphis bureau in the middle 60's. Bill was a great writer, especially on feature stuff. He was a tall handsome fellow, quiet of attitude, good sense of humor, and a great person to work with. He was a great family man as well.

Prince's story reminded me of a couple of events Crider and I covered together. One was about a little girl, Mary Lou Marberry, who had a terrible infection in a finger on her right hand. Crider unearthed the story because it was about a cute little girl, interesting infection, and it was in the Christmas season. We did many stories and pictures about her progress, including various surgeries, including removing the finger, and then the plan to remove her right hand. We had been almost consumed with coverage of the little girl

and her progress. The story and picture play around the country was good. It was just a day before Christmas when Crider wrote what we thought was a great lead: "All Betty Lou Marberry wants for Christmas is a good right hand." The New York desk didn't like it, and killed it.

Crider was calm and helpful. One night I returned from a picture assignment, and was using a typewriter next to his to write a caption. In wanting to tease Bill, I leaned over and showed him a quickly written caption card and asked, "What do you think that word is?" He responded he thought it said "Cat." I wrote cat on the caption, and then asked Bill if he thought if that spelling looked right. I withheld smiling at the tease. After bantering about the looks of the word, Bill looked it up in a dictionary. "See, that's right," he said. He took the joke well and we bumped hands.



Crider broke another good story about a West Tennessee Korean War veteran, who had been a prisoner of war. Upon returning, the vet surprisingly found that his wife had remarried without getting a divorce. Crider found the story among some "Dupes," the old system of the local paper giving up duplicates of their stories. He was quickly reminded of the "Enoch Arden Doctrine," which reflects this problem. As I remember, this case was settled by a legal divorce. Later, the man ran for sheriff, and lost. The man only got a few votes. He was later arrested and charged with carrying a pistol. In court, he responded that he was carrying a gun for protection; that he had more relatives in the area than he got votes, and feared for his life.

Another Criderism was when he was working out of New Orleans. He wrote a story about an infant who, he said, had a look of apprehension. The New York desk queried, doubting an infant could have a look of apprehension. Crider reportedly responded, that "As a father of (I forget the number of children he had, but like 5 or 6), I suggest an infant can have a look of apprehension." NY let the story stand as written.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For your information, here is the wire obituary for Bill Crider:

Bill Crider, Former AP Newsmen, Dies at 83

Posted: 11/10/2003

(AP) Bill Crider, a former newsman with The Associated Press, died Sunday after a long illness, his family said. He was 83.

Crider had been living in Sky Valley, Ga., since his retirement in 1985. He returned to New Orleans earlier this year when his health failed, family members said.

Admired by fellow reporters for his colorful writing, Crider covered hurricanes, riots and politics during his career with the AP. He also was a member of the AP civil rights team in the 1960s, covering the struggles of desegregation across the South.

A turning point in his career came in 1962 when he was shot in the back during the riots over integration at the University of Mississippi.

Surviving the incident, he went on to cover the murder of civil rights leader Medgar Evers, the slaying of three civil rights workers at Philadelphia, Miss., as well as the trial of Byron de la Beckwith, who was accused of killing Evers.

Born William Calvin Crider Jr., in Rome, Ga., he left home during the Depression. He also worked for the Chattanooga (Tenn.) News-Free Press.

Crider spent 14 years at the Memphis bureau before transferring to New Orleans. He entered the news industry in 1947 after serving six years with the Navy. He had no college education, but he lied about it in his interview at the Chattanooga (Tenn.) News-Free Press, where he got his first newspaper job.

His editor discovered the lie and protested that Crider had no experience. Crider said he replied, "No, and I'm not going to get any, either, unless you hire me."

Following his retirement, Crider traveled to Singapore for two years and headed a writing team at a tabloid called The New Paper.

Survivors include his wife, Sammie; two sons; three daughters; two stepdaughters; a brother and sister.

'What fun we had'

Hal Buell - Harry Cabluck, you got it right about Al Resch and the centerfield camera, and the shooting that Harry Harris fired off in the early days with the Big Bertha.

The spot also turned up some fancy home run hits also, nice straight on view of the batter watching the ball take off. And the shooter had to expose every pitch with the new motorized cameras.

Give yourself some credit for your long lens artistry. I may have this wrong, but I believe you were the first to use a long lens to shoot across the length of the Olympic pool into the faces and celebration of relay teammates responding to the final leg of a gold medal, winning run. Great stuff...all common place today.



Harry Cabluck, 2010

And that Political Convention picture made from above the speaker's platform showing the party nominee in profile waving to the cheering crowd with signs and celebratory confetti. Recall we tested that position for two or three days, and finally got it right at the key moment of nomination.

I also remember you getting Terry Bradshaw to run the length of the gridiron from his warm up spot to the opposite end of the field, then trot alongside the huge Steelers logo in the end zone with Suzanne Vlamis making the shot from the stands. Great teamwork, great early shot.

What fun we had.

Remembering a miserable day

Gene Herrick - I would like to add to the discussion of center field camera angle stories by Rex Arbogast, and Harry Cabluck.

While covering the American League All-Star game in Kansas City, on July 11, 1960, I was assigned to the outfield camera position. This time we covered from atop the right field fence, with a 35mm camera, and with a 600 mm lens.

In those days the club and field were owned by Charlie Finley, a character in baseball ownership.

The temperature that day was over 100 degrees. The camera position was a 4x8 sheet of plywood nailed and mounted to the right field fence. The area behind the fence, and under the scoreboard, was filled with goats and sheep that Finley thought was a good place to graze his animals and keep the grass mowed. Animals have a lot of waste material, which takes on a most odiferous taint, especially in very hot, moist weather.

The photo platform got red-hot in the blistering full sun. I would have to constantly stand on alternative feet to battle the heat of the air and the board. It was miserable day!

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Center-field assignment is not easy



Mark Duncan - Expanding on Harry Cabluck's "Importance of the center-field camera angle". Harry should know, since his shot (above) from the outfield showing the Red Sox's Carlton Fisk "willing" his home run fair in the 1975 World Series against the Cincinnati Reds remains one of the most memorable images of the post season classic.

The assignment is not easy by any standard. The photographer is 450 feet or more from home plate, wielding a large, heavy lens with the task of shooting every pitch and required to exactly time the ball coming off the bat for every home run or big hit, in a game that might see 300 or more pitches delivered to the plate.

It can become mind-numbing.

It is difficult to hold the camera and huge lens steady on a calm night, and more so if it is windy. External factors contribute, like the fountain in the outfield at Comerica Park in Detroit that can spray the photographer with water after every Tiger's home run if the wind is blowing the right direction. Or, inebriated fans at old Yankee Stadium delighting in

attempting to hit our center field photographer with cups of beer during the game. The job can be quite a challenge.

In the film era, shooting the center field position meant wasting a lot of film. To do the job properly, once a roll of film was finished, if there was no significant image, the photographer needed to "put it in his pocket" to save the darkroom crew (and avoid the wrath of the editor). This might mean shipping only one or two rolls of film out of 25-30 in a game.

Digital cameras and auto-focus helped a but, but auto-focus doesn't always do well over the extreme distance, or during rain (or snow). I recall Eric Gay having focus issues from center at the 2007 World Series in Denver using the same camera and lens that had worked perfectly in Boston, two days before. Go figure.





Getting those defining shots is well worth the trouble and enhances our photo report from the game. The photos of Pete Rose's hit to break Ty Cobb's career hit record in 1985 and Joe Carter celebrating his home run to win the 1993 World Series for the Toronto Blue Jays are just two of many examples.

In the latter, once the fireworks smoke prevented me from shooting more from my position on a rickety scaffold at (then) Sky Dome, I felt a tug on my pants leg. Looking down, our editor, Brian Horton, stood below with his hands out to grab the film and run to our darkroom just down the concourse. It's good to have friends in high places.

It all came full circle for me helping edit the 2005 World Series in Houston, where I got to handle images from center field shot by one Harry Cabluck.

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Harry's pictures always made my stories look good

Joe McKnight - Good to see Harry Cabluck's name in today's Connecting column. I had the privilege of working on a number of stories with him while he worked in Ohio during the 1970s. His pictures always made my stories look good. Harry told me many times that Leica makes cameras and everybody else makes junk.

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John Brewer: Quite simply, the 'bestest'

Cecelia White - Seeing the smiling photo of John C. Brewer, just-retired publisher and editor of The Peninsula Daily News in Port Angeles, Wash., with two of his staffers in the Oct. 14 "Connecting" flogged such wonderful memories for me. I can hear his infamous, sound barrier-breaking laugh as I gaze at the photo. It is the laugh of an endearing and enduring friend for over 30 years.

It was my good fortune to have worked for John twice - in the AP/LA bureau and for the New York Times News Service/Syndicate. I was his bureau secretary (now administrative assistant) in Los Angeles when he transferred from Seattle. We hit it off immediately. Some years later, John hired me to edit the NYT Syndicate's foreign publications, most specifically, the highly coveted Economist magazine. Plum copy. With a background in photos, I thought John had lost his senses to loyalty, but that was typical of JB: He sees strengths in others of which they are unaware. So it certainly was with me. I have enjoyed years of copy editing for various publications, thanks entirely to him.

From moment one, I was impressed by John's inspiring leadership and sense of fairness; he never expected more of others than he did of himself. And he expected a helluva lot of himself, indeed. A hard-working creature of the night, John burned the midnight oil at his desk, hammering away on his beloved old Kaypro PC (which he could completely dismantle and rebuild) until the break of dawn, questing, testing, never resting. The curse of the overachiever, perhaps, but he truly loved his profession.

Wielding his mighty fountain pen, John worked tirelessly on behalf of his AP newspaper members. There were no limits to his commitment to them - even attending Amway meetings with a key newspaper publisher to keep him happy! At the New York Times

News Service, he went out of his way to make small-market editors, intimidated to call the Times, feel comfortable and part of the fold. More than a few NYT pens and mugs found their way into small newsrooms around the country. And for the amusement of his News Service wire editors, John created a droll column about the exploits of "Lizard Man" and other off-the-wall characters. Pure JB.

For John, though, the world truly revolved around his staff members. With dauntless optimism and oft-expressed appreciation, he always strove to keep staff morale high, despite some very stressful days. There are too many occasions to cite beyond AP baseball games, picnics and a poolside party. But my favorite JB morale booster was when he hired a rather befuddled guy with a hot dog cart outside the L.A. bureau to bring it up in the rickety elevator so that John could treat his staff to lunch! It was a fun and hilarious sight in the newsroom, much appreciated by all.

There were plenty of more personal acts of generosity by John as well, far too many to recount, but one worth mentioning was the push he made to get Dennis Anderson, a recently laid off UPI writer, newly hired by AP/LA, medical insurance for his newborn son, even though he fell well under the mandatory 90 days at AP. Neither Dennis, nor I, ever forgot that.

So, John, a warm "chapeau!" to you on your many accomplishments over nearly 50 years in journalism. You have left an indelible print on every project you've tackled, and on every lucky person with whom you have worked. Your legacy looms large over us all, and over your profession.

Now it's time to tackle new projects, new opportunities, new interests. Lord knows, there is nothing "retiring" about you - ever the overachiever! As with all of your other accomplishments, John, you're likely to deplete the Pacific Northwest's waterways of fish! Watch out, Steelhead!

[Cecilia White ([Email](#)) worked in the AP/Los Angeles bureau from 1982-1989. She is now in Kansas City, Mo. Her sister, Connie, also worked for John Brewer at The New York Times New Service/Syndicate.]

Connecting profile - Nedra Pickler

Nedra Pickler spent 17 years at the AP, starting as a vacation relief temp in the Detroit bureau not far from her hometown of Flint and her alma mater, Michigan State University. In 1999, after less than a year in Detroit, she begged to fill an opening in Lansing for her dream job covering the state Legislature. In 2000, she moved to Washington as the Michigan Regional Writer, and in 2002 she was promoted to the national staff to cover presidential politics.

She was the lead reporter on the campaign planes for John Kerry in 2004 and Barack Obama in 2008. She covered the White House in the second terms of George W. Bush and Barack Obama, and also spent a couple years at the federal courthouse in DC between having her two sons.



In July, she resigned from AP to become managing director at DC-based public affairs firm The Glover Park Group.

Cabot Prize honors 5 journalists for work in Latin America

By **CLAUDIA TORRENS**
The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) - Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism honored five veteran journalists Wednesday for outstanding reporting that promoted a better understanding of the Western Hemisphere.



Mark Stevenson, an Associated Press reporter in Mexico, was one of those who received the Maria Moors Cabot Prize, considered the oldest in international journalism. A U.S. citizen, he highlighted in his acceptance speech the daily dangers faced by Mexican journalists.

"Of the 64 journalists killed in Mexico since 2000, all have been Mexicans," Stevenson said. "The Mexican press has made great strides in recent decades, but they can't do their jobs if they're worried about being killed." He said he would donate his \$5,000 prize to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

The other winners were Raul Penaranda, founder of Pagina Siete in Bolivia; Simon Romero, reporter for The New York Times; and Lucas Mendes, host and executive editor of a program of GloboNews in Brazil. Ernesto Londono of The New York Times received a special citation for a series of editorials about relations between the U.S. and Cuba.

When Columbia announced the winners in August, it said Stevenson had ventured into some of the most remote and dangerous parts of Mexico during more than two decades of reporting on the country.

Last year, Stevenson investigated the killing by soldiers of 22 suspected gang members in a community about 95 miles southwest of Mexico City. The army reported that only one soldier was wounded in what it said was a gunbattle. But rather than the firefight described by authorities, Stevenson found evidence that suspects had been shot against a wall. Following his stories, several soldiers were charged in the case, and Mexico's human rights commission said in a report that 15 of the dead had probably been killed after surrendering.

Penaranda was honored for his entrepreneurial spirit and his fight against abuse of power and the concentration of media outlets on the part of Bolivian President Evo Morales. Romero was described as a journalist capable of explaining big problems through small chronicles from remote places. Mendes was honored for a successful career in Brazilian television.

The Cabot Prize was founded in 1938.

[Click here](#) for a link to this story.



Ever since he broke a 2011 story about a nuclear smuggling case in the former Soviet republic of Moldova, Desmond Butler has tried to get more, to go deeper. "That story left a lot of questions unanswered," said Butler, AP's Istanbul correspondent. Answering them, he added, "became a bit of an obsession for me." Over the next couple of years, he returned to the story a number of times but could add only limited details; last year, an unrelated project kept him away.

Finally, this May, he and Bucharest photographer Vadim Ghirda, working "hand in glove," as Butler put it, had a breakthrough, meeting with key nuclear investigators in the Moldovan capital and, on follow-up trips, getting access to a trove of investigative files. The result: Their alarming report detailing how nuclear smugglers seeking to sell bomb-grade material to extremists had been caught four times in five years. The investigative exclusive swept play in all formats and earns the Beat of the Week.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/ap-investigation-nuclear-smugglers-sought-terrorist-buyers/2015/10/06/cc398ffe-6c90-11e5-91eb-27ad15c2b723_story.html

The story opens with a nightclub scene where two men - one a smuggler, the other a police informant posing as a representative of the Islamic State group - are plotting a deal.

"You can make a dirty bomb, which would be perfect for the Islamic State," the smuggler says. Eventually, after more meetings and an exchange of cash for a radioactive sample,

the smuggler is arrested. The firsthand details and startling quotes were drawn from among interviews, documents, wiretaps, videotapes and photographs that Butler and Ghirda obtained.

In this and other cases - one uncovering an attempted uranium purchase by a real Middle Eastern buyer, not a police plant - the AP found that smugglers were explicitly targeting buyers who are enemies of the West. As the story said, "The developments represent the fulfillment of a long-feared scenario in which organized crime gangs are trying to link up with groups such as the Islamic State and al-Qaida - both of which have made clear their ambition to use weapons of mass destruction."

The "universal fear that terrorists could get access to the world's most dangerous weapons" was, Butler said, a factor in persuading investigators to cooperate with AP on the story. Another factor: Some of the investigators had recently been fired and were angry, while those who'd fired them were defensive.

"Both sides were competing to tell the story and take credit," Butler explained. "At one point, someone slipped me a thumb drive. 'I think you dropped this,' he said." That, along with a hard drive that another investigator had buried but agreed to dig up for AP, contained key files in the sting operations, which involved a partnership between the FBI and investigators in Moldova, which borders Romania.

"Vadim knew the region and the language, which was key in navigating the reporting. Most of the interviews were in Romanian," Butler noted.

And they looked out for each other on the potentially dangerous story. At one point, they learned that an important source had been detained as the reporters were picking up indications that authorities were unhappy about their work. "Where are the Americans?" the authorities asked, according to an investigator. Butler was suffering from severe food poisoning at the time - "I could barely stand up," he said - but AP, concerned he could be detained next, whisked him off to Bucharest. There, Ghirda kept an eye on him until he was back on his feet.

Play for their story was tremendous. It's rare to do a difficult investigative story in all formats, but Butler and Ghirda made an effort from the start to look for visual angles and to persuade central players to go on camera. Joana Mateus worked for days to produce a

widely used video package.

Besides making the front pages of at least 40 U.S. newspapers and leading all of the American morning news shows with full credit to AP, the story got feature treatment from clients abroad, from Scandinavia to Israel to Australia. It trended No. 10 on Twitter where tweets used words like "blockbuster" and "mid-blowing." The tracking tools NewsWhip, AP Exchange and Teletrax showed unusually strong usage of all elements.

For grabbing the world's attention through persistence, wits and teamwork, Butler and Ghirda win this week's \$500 prize.

(Shared by Valerie Komor)

Welcome to Connecting



Linda Kramer Jennings ([Email](#))

Stories of interest

Rieder: Big changes at a distinguished Washington bureau (USA Today)

It was one of the few bright spots in a wretched episode for American journalism.

While much of the news media uncritically accepted the Bush administration's insistence that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction, thus necessitating an American invasion of Iraq, one small outpost distinguished itself with skeptical reporting.

That would be the Washington bureau of an American newspaper chain called Knight Ridder.

In 2006, Knight Ridder was acquired by another newspaper company, McClatchy, which now owns 29 dailies including the Miami Herald, The Charlotte Observer and the The Sacramento Bee. But the bureau has continued to carry out journalism in the same tradition.

A cluster of events in recent days, however, suggests we are at an end-of-an-era moment.

[Click here](#) to read more. Shared by Lindel Hutson.

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Dave Butler new executive editor of Providence Journal

PROVIDENCE, R.I. - David J. Butler, a veteran editor who has held management positions at newspapers around the country during a journalism career that began in 1972, has been named The Providence Journal's Executive Editor and Senior Vice President of News and Audience Development, Journal President and Publisher Janet Hasson announced on Wednesday.

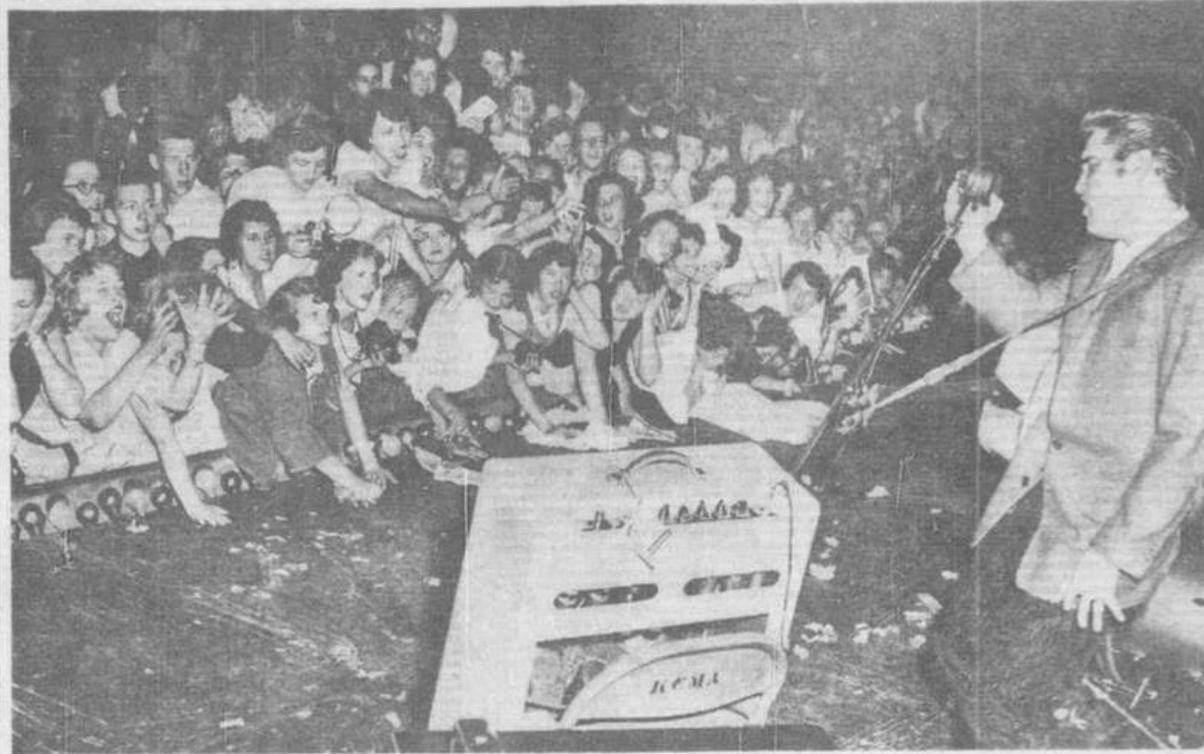
Butler, most recently Executive Vice President and Editor-in-Chief of Digital First Media, a group of 75 daily newspapers that includes the San Jose Mercury News, will take command of The Journal's news operations on Nov. 9. He will succeed Karen A. Bordeleau, who retired early last month.

[Click here](#) to read more. Shared by Andy Lippman. (Dave is a Connecting colleague as is his wife Kate Butler, AP's vice president for membership/local markets.)

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Time Capsule: The Star and Elvis get a young girl in trouble, 1956 (Kansas City Star)





POISED FOR a rush over the footlights, some of these girls leaped on the stage toward Elvis Presley, as the rock 'n' roll singer (right) struck a long

note last night in the Arena of the Municipal Auditorium. One girl led the way by going over the footlights alone and kissing the young singer. In an instant teen-

agers swarmed over the stage, screaming. Presley broke from the grasp of several who were tearing at his clothing and ran back stage, abandoning his bass player

and drummer. A motor car stationed in the corridor took the singer away as hundreds of fans raced after it. Presley's exit ended the show—(Kansas City Star photograph).

May 25, 1956: An Elvis Presley fan is foiled

Reader Laura Willard shares a cherished family story that might sound like a tall tale - but there really is a historical photo to back it up. From Laura:

(My mother) snuck out of her mom and dad's house when she was a young teenager and took a bus across the state line, all so she could go to an Elvis Presley concert that she was forbidden to attend. The story that was passed down to us children and grandchildren is that she thought she got away with it till she woke up the next morning with the morning paper on her plate, with her on the front page, instead of breakfast.

Laura found the clipping here, and showed it to her uncle, who remembered it clearly and picked her mother out in the crowd. Because The Star was an evening paper at the time, the photo ran at the top of the front page of The Kansas City Times, which was labeled as "The Morning Kansas City Star."

[Click here](#) to read more.

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Newsonomics: The thinking (and dollars) behind The New York Times' new digital strategy (Nieman)

By KEN DOCTOR

It was a quiet manifesto - an 11-page document that unofficially serves as The New York Times' follow-up to the much dissected Innovation Report of May 2014. (Nieman Lab's story about the Innovation Report is the most popular story in its history.)

Look at the signatures at the bottom of this new Times document and you can see the impact of a year's changes. CEO Mark Thompson, now moving into his fourth year at the company, has built his own team, and the 10 signatories inked their futures in what we'll call the 2020 memo. Editor Dean Baquet, chief revenue officer Meredith Levien, and executive vice president for digital products Kinsey Wilson were among those laying out "Our Path Forward," first in writing, and now in a series of sessions in the Times building with hundreds of staffers.

"We've talked to a dozen groups already," Thompson told me Wednesday. "And we've got another dozen to go."

[Click here](#) to read more.

The Final Word



Today in History - October 16, 2015

By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, October 16, the 289th day of 2015. There are 76 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On October 16, 1995, a vast throng of black men gathered in Washington, D.C. for the "Million Man March" led by Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan.

On this date:

In 1793, during the French Revolution, Marie Antoinette, the queen of France, was beheaded.

In 1859, radical abolitionist John Brown led a group of 21 men in a raid on Harpers Ferry in western Virginia. (Ten of Brown's men were killed and five escaped. Brown and six followers were captured; all were executed.)

In 1916, Margaret Sanger opened the first birth control clinic in Brooklyn, New York. (The clinic ended up being raided on October 25 by police who arrested Sanger.)

In 1934, Chinese Communists, under siege by the Nationalists, began their "long march" lasting a year from southeastern to northwestern China.

In 1943, Chicago Mayor Edward J. Kelly officially opened the city's new subway system during a ceremony at the State and Madison street station.

In 1951, Johnnie Ray and the Four Lads recorded "Cry" by Churchill Kohlman and "The Little White Cloud That Cried" (written by Ray) in New York for Okeh Records.

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy was informed that reconnaissance photographs had revealed the presence of missile bases in Cuba.

In 1968, American athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos sparked controversy at the Mexico City Olympics by giving "black power" salutes during a victory ceremony after they'd won gold and bronze medals in the 200-meter race.

In 1969, the [New York Mets](#) capped their miracle season by winning the World Series, defeating the Baltimore Orioles, 5-3, in Game 5 played at Shea Stadium.

In 1978, the College of Cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church chose Cardinal Karol

Wojtyla (voy-TEE'-wah) to be the new pope; he took the name John Paul II.

In 1984, Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu was named winner of the Nobel Peace Prize for his decades of non-violent struggle for racial equality in South Africa.

In 1987, a 58-1/2-hour drama in Midland, Texas, ended happily as rescuers freed Jessica McClure, an 18-month-old girl trapped in an abandoned well.

Ten years ago: Polish television broadcast a recorded interview with Pope Benedict XVI, who said that he planned to visit Poland, the homeland of his predecessor, John Paul II. The Chicago White Sox beat the Los Angeles Angels 6-3 to win the American League Championship Series in five games, their first pennant since 1959. Elmer "Len" Dresslar Jr., the booming voice of the Jolly Green Giant, died at age 80.

Five years ago: Iran freed an American businessman jailed in Tehran for more than two years on suspicion of ties to an allegedly violent opposition group. (Reza Taghavi, 71, hadn't been charged with a crime and denied knowingly supporting the organization, known as Tondar.) Actress Barbara Billingsley, the matriarch of TV's "Leave It to Beaver," died in Santa Monica, California, at age 94.

One year ago: During a special congressional hearing on the Ebola crisis, Republican lawmakers pressed for a ban on travel to the U.S. from the West African outbreak zone; the White House resisted the idea and tried to tamp down fear as the pool of Americans being monitored expanded. Tim Hauser, founder and a member of the Grammy-winning vocal troupe The Manhattan Transfer, died in Sayre, Pennsylvania, at age 72. Travis Ishikawa hit the first homer to end an NL Championship Series, a three-run drive that sent San Francisco to a 6-3 victory over the St. Louis Cardinals in Game 5.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Angela Lansbury is 90. Actor-producer Tony Anthony is 78. Actor Barry Corbin is 75. Sportscaster Tim McCarver is 74. Rock musician C.F. Turner (Bachman-Turner Overdrive) is 72. Actress [Suzanne Somers](#) is 69. Rock singer-musician Bob Weir is 68. Producer-director David Zucker is 68. Record company executive Jim Ed

Norman is 67. Actor Daniel Gerroll is 64. Actor Morgan Stevens is 64. Actress Martha Smith is 63. Comedian-actor Andy Kindler is 59. Actor-director Tim Robbins is 57. Actor-musician Gary Kemp is 56. Singer-musician Bob Mould is 55. Actor Randy Vasquez is 54. Rock musician Flea (Red Hot Chili Peppers) is 53. Actor Christian Stolte is 53. Actor Todd Stashwick is 47. Jazz musician Roy Hargrove is 46. Actress Terri J. Vaughn is 46. Singer Wendy Wilson (Wilson Phillips) is 46. Rapper B-Rock (B-Rock and the Bizz) is 44. Rock singer Chad Gray (Mudvayne) is 44. Actor Paul Sparks is 44. Actress Kellie Martin is 40. Singer [John Mayer](#) is 38. Actor Jeremy Jackson is 35. Actress Caterina Scorsone is 35. Actress Brea Grant is 34.

Thought for Today: "No persons are more frequently wrong, than those who will not admit they are wrong." - Francois, Duc de la Rochefoucauld, French moralist (1613-1680)

Got a story to share?



Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Spousal support** - How your spouse helped in supporting your work during your AP career.
- **My most unusual story** - tell us about an unusual, off the wall story that you covered.
- **"My boo boos - A silly mistake that you make"**- a chance to 'fess up with a memorable mistake in your journalistic career.
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service

spanned two or more generations.

- **Volunteering** - benefit your colleagues by sharing volunteer stories - with ideas on such work they can do themselves.

- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?

- **Connecting "selfies"** - a word and photo self-profile of you and your career, and what you are doing today. Both for new members and those who have been with us a while.

- **Life after AP** for those of you who have moved on to another job or profession.

- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.

Paul Stevens

Editor

Connecting newsletter

stevenspl@live.com

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