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Connecting - February 06, 2017

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Connecting

February 06, 2017

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About that game last night...

Colleagues,

There's nothing like a Lost Dog Story that turns out to have a happy ending - especially when the chief party involved is a dog belonging to a fellow AP retiree.

Today's Connecting leads with the story of Chako, a shar-pei who was rescued and adopted in 2013 by **Peggy Andersen** (**Email**) and her perseverance, a bit of luck, a newspaper ad, and caring people who helped look for him in the Great Southwest - including another Connecting colleague, **Rebecca Barber Trefren** (**Email**), who once worked near the area where he was lost.

It's a great story - and with a great ending.

Ye Olde Connecting Editor and his wife Linda head to Florida today, and the reins of the newsletter will be in the able hands of **Mark Mittelstadt** for the rest of the week. So please send your story and photo submissions to him at - markmitt71@yahoo.com

And before the year is a month older, may I offer a shout-out to **Paul Shane** (**Email)** for his tireless efforts to archive each issue of Connecting, on his own time, and place it in the Connecting Archive link in the masthead of each day's issue. You'll note that every issue of Connecting since June 2013 is in the archive, as are the last four issues of AP World. Thanks, Paul, not only for your archiving but your story contributions.

Have a great week!

Paul

It's A Miracle! Andersen and Chako Reunited

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The story below of the unlikely reunion of Chako and his owner Peggy Andersen appeared recently in the Cibola County Beacon, in Grants, New Mexico.*

It began on December 26 when on a cross-country move from Seattle to Ohio, Peggy and a friend and her five dogs stopped along Interstate 40 some 100 miles west of Grants, at Chaco Canyon Visitors Center and Trading Post. Somehow, Chako got loose after someone opened the car door - "We figure the sight of our four larger dogs prompted whoever opened the car door to close it again," Peggy said.

Despite her best efforts to find Chako, he had disappeared - and Peggy and Co. had no choice but to continue the drive to Ohio after putting an all-points alert out for her beloved dog.

A friend and contributor to Connecting, Peggy shared her story with me through emails throughout the process. My friend Becky Barber Trefren once was editor of the Beacon (when it was known as the Grants Daily Beacon), and when I told her about Peggy's loss, she called on her step sister, her children and several friends including Bernie Bustos, former general manager of KMIN, and other sources in Grants to help find Chako.

Peggy started work with the AP in Seattle in 1974 and held later news assignments in Anchorage, Philadelphia, Washington, Chicago and then back to Seattle before retiring in 2006.

She lived in Tacoma, Washington, from 2000 until she sold the home last December when she bought a home in Marietta, Ohio. It was on her trip to Ohio that Chako was lost.

By Donald Jaramillo
Cibola County Beacon

CIBOLA COUNTY, N.M. - Peggy Andersen was traveling from Tacoma, Washington to Marietta, Ohio when she noticed in Santa Rosa that one of her five dogs was missing. "I don't know how just one dog got out, but he did," said Andersen.

The missing dog was "Chako," an adult shar-pei she rescued and adopted in 2013. Andersen said Chako was in bad shape when she found him. "His eyes were almost closed shut," she explained. "He was a blind stray. His eyes were constantly irritated."

Three years later, Chako is much better. His eyes open. Chako was fine until Thursday, Dec. 22, when he was lost.

"We stopped in Sanders, Arizona and between Sanders and Milan, I know he was there. I know that because we accounted for all five dogs when we left Sanders and there was a point when he greeted my friend and I at the front seat of the car while traveling. Was it a ghost of Chako?" she asked herself. "Hmmm, I don't think so."

Andersen believes Chako was let out of her Mercedes when she stopped at Chaco Canyon Visitors Center and Trading Post in Milan. "We made a pit stop and while we were in the store someone must have let him out. Why just him? I don't know," she said.

Andersen and her friend immediately turned back to Milan and looked for Chako to no avail. She talked to many people between Sanders and Milan, posted signs, and also purchased ads in the Beacon newspaper.

Andersen said she received numerous calls from the newspaper ad with several sightings of Chako, or maybe what looked like her shar-pei, near Los Alamitos Heights and near Thunderbird Bowling Center. However, none of the tips led Andersen to her long lost friend.

"I love puppies," said Andersen who has suffered from depression in years past. "Puppies help me battle depression. I just love them. I guess so," she laughed, "I have five of them."

After nearly losing hope in finding Chako, Andersen finally received the call. On Sunday, Jan. 22 she got a call that her dog was found in Sanders, Arizona. A 14-year-old girl who lived near the Interstate found him in bushes, as if he was hiding or afraid. Andersen, who was at her new home in Ohio when she received the call, immediately made arrangements to fly into Albuquerque on Monday to pick up her dog. On Monday, Andersen and Chako were reunited.

On Wednesday at the Cibola Beacon offices, Chako would not leave her side for the entire hour they were at the Beacon. "I am just so grateful," said Andersen. "It's sort of a mellow center to dog craziness. Chako is the youngest, I am thankful to have him back."

Andersen credited several area residents who assisted her and the Beacon ad for ultimately finding her dog.

'Alternative facts': Pity the poor, poor reporter

(Connecting colleague Chuck McFadden wrote this piece on "alternative facts" and the strategies employed by politicians' spokespeople. It ran first in Capitol Weekly, a Sacramento website devoted to California politics and policy.)

By Chuck McFadden (**Email**)

Writing in The New York Times, John McWhorter, an assistant professor of English at Columbia, tells of the Kuma tribe in Panama. The Kuna chief gives a speech in elevated language, and then an assistant tells the crowd what the chief has just said.

We may like to think of ourselves as an advanced civilization compared to a tribe in Panama, but today's spokespeople for politicians are doing the same thing. And one of them has just invented "alternative facts."

Pity the poor poor political reporter.

Here we are on "Meet the Press" a while back with Trump Senior Counselor Kellyanne Conway, the day after Press Secretary Sean Spicer uttered a series of easily disproved falsehoods about the size of the inauguration crowd. NBC's Chuck Todd is asking her about Spicer's whoppers. She says:

'Don't be so overly dramatic about it, Chuck. You're saying it's a falsehood, and they're giving - our press secretary, Sean Spicer, gave alternative facts to that. But the point really is -

Todd, exasperated, cuts in: "Wait a minute. Alternative facts? Alternative facts? Four of the five facts he uttered...were just not true. Alternative facts are not facts; they're falsehoods."

But what is the wretched spokesperson to do? He or she cannot say, "Boy, when he gets wound up, my boss can really uncork some whoppers, can't he?" You can always say "He misspoke," but that's as good as admitting that he was lying, or is pretty foggy upstairs.

No, you have to come up with something like "alternative facts."

As more and more of us are coming to realize, what is likely to result from this New World of alternative facts is an intermingling of truth and falsehoods in a growing flood of news and fake news from television, tweets, newspapers, radio, Facebook etc. Everything is given equal respect and credibility. Fewer and fewer people know the difference between what is true and what is concocted to bail out a politician who has a carefree attitude toward the truth. Facts are being submerged in a tsunami of stuff that is just being made up. That means the loudest and most persistent voice may very well capture enough support to reign supreme politically. Today's confused voters are trending toward believing everything that drops from their favored one's lips, no matter how outlandish.

Reporters are working harder than ever to sort falsehoods from facts, but it may be a losing effort. The reporters provide proof that the pol is telling whoppers? That's just the biased media. And who cares, anyway?

Politician at a news conference: The Moon is made of green cheese, OK?"

Reporter: "That's not true. People have been to the Moon and walked on its surface. We know it isn't made of green cheese."

Politician: "What do you mean 'We know that?' Do you really know that? Have you been there? That's just another example of how biased reporters are. They're making thing up. They're so unfair. They're scum."

Reporter to the politician's spokesperson, the following day: "What do you have to say about your boss's obvious falsehoods?

Spokesperson: "Well, you know, we all have differing interpretations of things. You reporters should not be biased and irresponsible and fail to report alternative facts. You have your so-called facts and we have ours. The point is, what we need to concentrate on going forward is how our administration is going to improve the lives of working American families. That's what we need to be talking about, not something you people like to zero in on because it furthers your elite agenda."

A little perspective is in order here. Artful or not, misdirection and mystification on behalf of a politician aren't all that new. In fact, today's obfuscators will have to go some to surpass the Golden Oldies from Nixon Press Secretary Ron Zeigler. As Watergate unfolded, he told reporters his previous statements on the matter were "inoperative."

Zeigler had other hits, such as this one in February of 1971 when asked if preparations were underway to invade Laos:

"The president is aware of what is going on in Southeast Asia. That is not to say anything is going on in Southeast Asia.'

The Committee on Public Doublespeak of the National Council of Teachers of English gave Zeigler an award (of sorts) in 1974 for the following statement on safeguarding the White House tapes. Hold tight.

'I would feel that most of the conversations that took place in those areas of the White House that did have the recording system would, in almost their entirety, be in existence, but the special prosecutor, the court, and, I think, the American people are sufficiently familiar with the recording system to know where the recording devices existed, and to know the situation in terms of the recording process, but I feel, although the process has not been undertaken yet in preparation of the material to abide by the court decision, really, what the answer to that question is."

Zeigler died in 2003. His spirit lives on in the persons of Kellyanne Conway and Sean Spicer.

Connecting mailbox

The difference between AP and UPI back in the day

Paul Albright (**Email**) - The very competitive AP and UPI New Mexico state bureaus were located across the hallway from each other, sandwiched between the editorial rooms of the *Albuquerque Journal* and the *Albuquerque Tribune*. One day in the late 1960s, I was banging out some story to get it filed ahead of UPI when a guide entered from the *Tribune*'*s* city room trailed by a half dozen middle school kids out for a field trip. She let them gaze at the rattling bank of teletype machines for a minute or so and then gathered them in front of my desk where she declared:

"This is the Associated Press office. The only difference here than the office across the hall is that they use purple ribbons and this office uses black ribbons."

I stopped typing in mid-sentence as she turned and led the kids into the adjacent *Albuquerque Journal* city room. And then I asked myself: "Is that all the difference there is between The AP and UPI?" I am not sure I ever answered my own question, but I do recall that I was far less impressed with subsequent messages from New York that AP had been a few minutes ahead or behind the competition on some story or the other.

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More journalistic tools of the past

Ed Williams (Email) - My pica stick and scaling wheel. And that may be my first scaling wheel -- more than 40 years old probably.

12 points equal one pica, six picas equal 1 inch. I guess that doesn't mean much to folks nowadays.

AP presses for details of judge's ruling on immigration ban

President Donald Trump with Vice President Mike Pence, left, and Defense Secretary James Mattis watching, signs an executive action on extreme vetting of immigrants, at the Pentagon, Jan. 27, 2017. AP Photo/Susan Walsh

At a time when the very integrity of news is under attack in some corners, it is more important than ever that The Associated Press be a key champion of accuracy. This includes not only fighting back against false claims and false reporting, but sometimes simply waiting as we push for more specificity. New York City News Editor David Caruso did exactly that over the weekend, avoiding the missteps of other news organizations by pressing for details of a federal judge's emergency order temporarily staying part of President Donald Trump's travel ban for citizens of seven predominantly Muslim nations.

Caruso demanded, and got, a copy of U.S. District Judge Ann Donnelly's order so the AP could be precise about reporting on its relatively narrow effects, even as other news outlets relied on tweets from advocates who made it seem more sweeping. Caruso's careful, painstaking work that resulted in this Washington-datelined story is the Beat of the Week.

The court ruling came at the end of a dramatic Saturday in New York. Dozens of foreign travelers were being held at the airports. Some were being deported.

Lawyers were scrambling to learn who was in custody. At least 2,000 people spontaneously went to Kennedy airport to protest the detentions.

At 6:20 p.m., AP learned there would be an emergency hearing on the travel ban at a federal court in Brooklyn. NYC bureau reporter Karen Matthews rushed to the courthouse, but was barred from entering by U.S. marshals as a crowd of demonstrators gathered outside.

Just before 9 p.m. rumors began circulating that a judge had issued a ruling. An ACLU attorney tweeted "we won" and "stay is granted" with no explanation.

Caruso held off reporting until we could actually see the ruling. A law student working on the case ... emailed photographs, taken with a smartphone, of the order issued by the judge.

Clearly the U.S. administration had suffered a setback. But what, exactly? Caruso held off reporting until we could actually see the ruling. A law student working on the case who had been speaking throughout the day with reporter Verena Dobnik called the office to ask if we had heard about the ruling. Yes, but could she send us a copy? At 9:22 p.m., she emailed photographs, taken with a smartphone, of the order issued by the judge.

Within a few minutes, AP had an alert on the wire with the news that the judge had temporarily barred the U.S. from deporting travelers covered by Trump's order -- but stopped well short of declaring the executive order unconstitutional. Matthews and New York reporter Colleen Long got quick interviews with the attorneys in the case shortly after to fill in key details on the likely practical effect of the ruling.

A demonstrator holds a sign acknowledging the stay issued by federal judge Ann M. Donnelly, during an immigrants' rights rally in New York, Jan. 29, 2017. AP Photo/Kathy Willens

The court decision capped a marathon of strong reporting across AP. Alicia Caldwell in Washington anchored the story all day. Rachel Zoll in New York and Ellen Knickmeyer in San Francisco started reporting late Friday night after receiving tips about airport detentions and word of panic among faith-based resettlement agencies about the fate of refugees who were already en route to the United States at the time Trump signed the order. They kept working the phones and pressing sources to help lay the groundwork for the refugee coverage over the weekend; their work sounded the alarm for what was to come. There were key assists from Olga Rodriguez, Caryn Rousseau and stringer William Mathis on the impact the travel ban was having on travelers and refugees.

Said AP Executive Editor Sally Buzbee in a note to Caruso: "We have you personally to thank for the fact that our reporting on the court ruling was accurate and precise. That is hugely important: I have frankly been shocked today at some of the imprecision by other news organizations about the court ruling. Accuracy and precision are our bedrock values and they are even more important in hot times like this."

For keeping those values at the forefront of AP's work, Caruso wins this week's $500 prize.

Other work that impressed the judges:

Fast-food empire run by Labor secretary nominee outsourced jobs, running counter to Trump position

Laurie Kellman and Jeff Horwitz - for their Only on AP story that showed Donald Trump's choice for Labor secretary, Andrew Puzder, had outsourced jobs as CEO of a fast-food chain, in contrast to the president's push to keep jobs in the U.S. http://apne.ws/2k4AQBK

AP chronicles dramatic reunion between immigrants, long-lost relatives in Mexico

Manuel Valdes and Peter Orsi - for providing an exclusive, all-formats look at a rare trip to Mexico by young undocumented immigrants to reunite with their long-lost family members just days before the start of the presidency of Donald Trump and his promised crackdown on immigration. http://apne.ws/2kXD0S3

US sent $221 million to Palestinians in Obama's last hours

Matthew Lee and Richard Lardner - for breaking the news that the Obama administration, in its final hours, sent $221 million to the Palestinian Authority, enraging congressional Republicans, who had been holding up the money intended for humanitarian, security and other aid. http://apne.ws/2jRHgEr

Trump's refugee clampdown stops Iranian path through Austria

Alicia Caldwell and George Jahn - for their exclusive report showing how President Trump's expected refugee clampdown already was having ripple effects abroad, as Austria turned away 300 non-Muslim Iranians hoping to transit through the country to resettle in the U.S. http://apne.ws/2k3RX6K

First live footage of rescue helicopter crash in Italy

Paolo Santalucia, Gregorio Borgia and Nicolae Dumitrache - for providing the first live video and first photos from the scene of a rescue helicopter crash that killed six people in Italy, two hours ahead of Reuters. http://fxn.ws/2k3Wi9H

Getting it right on Amtrak crash investigation - Maryclaire Dale for thoroughly reading a National Transportation Safety Board report on an Amtrak crash and avoiding the mistake other news outlets made in reporting the engineer involved had testing positive for morphine; in fact, he had received morphine at the hospital for pain from the crash. http://bit.ly/2jnP1TE

Why Silicon Valley hasn't fixed its diversity problem

Barbara Ortutay - for looking beyond the technology industry's typical explanations for its lack of diversity and finding that the industry's own hiring practices are a big part of the problem. http://apne.ws/2kVFpjm

APNewsBreaks detail Pennsylvania budget crisis on successive days

Marc Levy and Mark Scolforo - for giving readers the first word on two key decisions by Pennsylvania's governor as he combats a budget crisis: a prison closing and the consolidation of four government agencies. http://bit.ly/2jKDTyQ

AP gives first glimpse of Mississippi education proposal's specifics

Jeff Amy - for using his data journalism skills to give readers the first look at a proposal to change how the state pays to educate students. http://bit.ly/2jHdKNP

Trump's transition leader at EPA predicts big cuts in agency staff, budget

Michael Biesecker - for his interview with Myron Ebell in which the recently departed head of Trump's transition team at the Environmental Protection Agency predicted the president will significantly cut the agency's staff and budget. http://apne.ws/2kXu52K

Beyond the catwalk: Exclusive glimpse at how haute couture is made

Christophe Ena, Thibault Camus and Bertrand Combalieu - for taking viewers beyond the catwalk with an exclusive journey through the creation and development of an haute couture collection.http://wapo.st/2jHh4ZF

AP first to report water lead-level drops below federal limit in Flint

David Eggert - or being first to report that Flint's water system is no longer exceeding the federal limit for lead, more than 15 months after the city's water crisis exploded. http://bit.ly/2jCDuMn

NASA displays Apollo relic 50 years after fire

Marcia Dunn - for exclusively reporting that 50 years after America's first space program tragedy, NASA was going to finally display a piece of the burned capsule. http://apne.ws/2kTcSYh

AP BEST OF THE STATES

AP breaks news of Border Patrol chief's departure

An agent of the Border Patrol observes near the Mexico-U.S. border fence between the towns of Anapra, Mexico, and Sunland Park, N.M., Jan. 25, 2017. AP Photo/Christian Torres

San Diego correspondent Elliot Spagat was on his way to the office when a two-word message landed in his inbox from a longtime source: "Morgan resigned."

Spagat knew what it meant -- Border Patrol Chief Mark Morgan was out of his job after just seven months. Spagat had seen this coming because the powerful union representing border agents had endorsed Trump and did not like Morgan.

He prepped a story in December so AP would be ready when Morgan's departure occurred.

But more was needed to go to the wire with the breaking news. He went back to the tipster to get details and permission to use the source in a story. He also immediately enlisted homeland security reporter Alicia Caldwell in Washington.

Within minutes Caldwell had a second source and AP had a clean break on a major follow-up to President Donald Trump's executive order the day before calling for construction of a wall along the Mexican border and the addition of 5,000 Border Patrol agents.

A day after President Trump's border fence decree, the Border Patrol chief leaves the agency. https://t.co/hwLqGnBjaM

- The Associated Press (@AP) January 26, 2017

Caldwell wrote the story with the help of Spagat's prep and both continued pressing for more information from their sources.

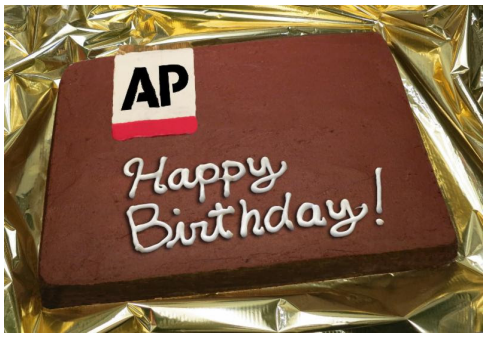
Additional reporting revealed Spagat got the original email 3 minutes before Morgan even started a conference call with his senior staffers to tell them of his resignation. Another source, who was on the conference call, told Spagat that the chief said he resigned at the Trump administration's request.

The largest paper on the border, the San Diego Union-Tribune, credited AP in a headline on its home page throughout the day.

NBC had a matching tweet 13 minutes after AP's NewsAlert but others were much farther behind. Bloomberg and ABC used AP's initial story while The Washington Post had the story on its website for hours - crediting AP in the headline - before matching. The largest paper on the border, the San Diego Union-Tribune, credited AP in its headline for a story on its home page throughout the day. The Los Angeles Times, Fox News and The Hill credited AP with the beat in their staff-written stories. The Spagat-Caldwell story also cracked the top 10 on AP Mobile on an extremely busy news day.

For putting AP out front on an important development in one of the Trump administration's signature early policy decisions, Spagat and Caldwell win this week's $300 Best of the States prize.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Art Loomis - artloomis37@gmail.com

Stories of interest

Errors From The Press Are Piling Up In The Opening Weeks Of The Trump Administration (Daily Caller)

Journalists can't seem to get their stories straight in the opening weeks of the Trump administration, whether in tweets or in articles where falsehoods have been spread almost daily.

The mistakes have not just been from newer liberal news outlets such The Huffington Post or BuzzFeed, but from legacy media like Reuters, The Washington Post, and The New York Times.

What follows are several botched stories or conflicting reports since President Trump took office.

Read more **here**. Shared by Mark Mittlestadt.

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Journalists, Please - the World Has Enough Activists (National Review)

What does it take to be a journalist in the age of Trump? Do the opposite of what happened last week. On Thursday, Peter Alexander, national correspondent at NBC News, reported (on Twitter, where most reporting happens now) that the U.S. Treasury Department had quietly eased sanctions to allow U.S. companies to do business with the Russian FSB; 40 minutes later, he noted that it was a "technical fix" planned under the Obama administration. The first tweet was retweeted more than 6,200 times, the second a piddling 247.

Read more **here**. Shared by Carl Robinson.

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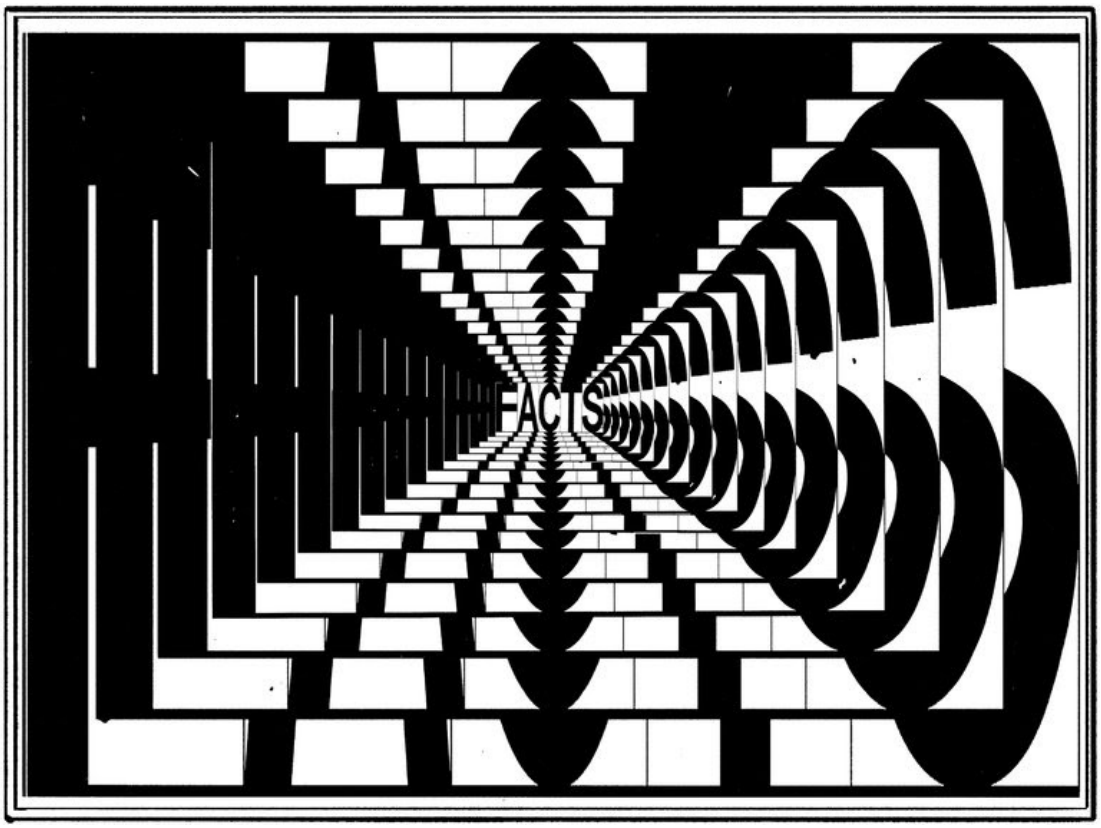
Why Nobody Cares the President Is Lying (New York Times)



By CHARLES J. SYKES

MILWAUKEE - If President Trump's first tumultuous weeks have done nothing else, at least they have again made us a nation of readers.

As Americans grapple with the unreality of the new administration, George Orwell's "1984" has enjoyed a resurgence of interest, becoming a surprise best seller and an invaluable guide to our post-factual world.

On his first full day in office Mr. Trump insisted that his inaugural crowd was the largest ever, a baseless boast that will likely set a pattern for his relationship both to the media and to the truth.

At an event marking Black History Month last week, the president took a detour from a discussion of Frederick Douglass - he described the abolitionist as "an example of somebody who's done an amazing job and is being recognized more and more" - to talk about the press. "A lot of the media is actually the opposition party - they're so biased," he said. "So much of the media is the opposition party and knowingly saying incorrect things."

Read more **here**. Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

-0-

Vanity Fair, New Yorker back out of WH Correspondents' Association events (The Hill)

The New Yorker and Vanity Fair, which host two of the marquee events of White House Correspondents' Association dinner weekend, will not be participating in this year's events.

Vanity Fair will not be co-sponsoring the über-exclusive after-party it traditionally hosts along with Bloomberg, The New York Times reported Friday.

"We've taken a break from the dinner in the past," Graydon Carter, the magazine's editor - who's frequently sparred with President Trump - told the Times. When the paper asked Carter the reason behind the cancellation, he replied "Trump," and "the fish."

Read more **here**. Shared by Robert Reid.

The Final Word

Five Cringe-Worthy Moves That Make You Look Unprofessional (Forbes)

* Insulting, denigrating or slurring a co-worker, customer, vendor or your company.

* Blaming someone else for your mistake.

* Stealing credit for someone else's idea, or inserting yourself into a project or team effort after the fact.

* Hitting on your co-workers or asking them personal questions in a professional setting.

* Complaining about your workload or the projects you're given, especially relative to other people.

Read more **here**.

Today in History - February 6, 2017

By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, Feb. 6, the 37th day of 2017. There are 328 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 6, 1952, Britain's King George VI, 56, died at Sandringham House in Norfolk, England; he was succeeded as monarch by his 25-year-old elder daughter, who became Queen Elizabeth II.

On this date:

In 1788, Massachusetts became the sixth state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1815, the state of New Jersey issued the first American railroad charter to John Stevens, who proposed a rail link between Trenton and New Brunswick. (The line, however, was never built.)

In 1899, a peace treaty between the United States and Spain was ratified by the U.S. Senate.

In 1911, Ronald Wilson Reagan, the 40th president of the United States, was born in Tampico, Illinois.

In 1922, Cardinal Archille Ratti was elected pope; he took the name Pius XI.

In 1933, the 20th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the so-called "lame duck" amendment, was proclaimed in effect by Secretary of State Henry Stimson.

In 1943, a Los Angeles jury acquitted actor Errol Flynn of three counts of statutory rape.

In 1958, British European Airways Flight 609 crashed on takeoff from Munich, West Germany, killing 23 of the 44 people on board.

In 1973, Dixy Lee Ray was appointed by President Richard Nixon to be the first woman to head the Atomic Energy Commission.

In 1987, Wall Street Journal reporter Gerald Seib (syb) was released after being detained six days by Iran, accused of being a spy for Israel; Iran said the detention was a result of misunderstandings.

In 1992, 16 people were killed when a C-130 military transport plane crashed in Evansville, Indiana.

In 1995, the space shuttle Discovery flew to within 37 feet of the Russian space station Mir in the first rendezvous of its kind in two decades.

Ten years ago: Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki (NOO'-ree ahl-MAHL'-ih-kee) complained that a long-awaited Baghdad security operation was off to a slow start, but he also reassured Iraqis that security forces would live up to their responsibilities. Singer Frankie Laine died in San Diego at age 93.

Five years ago: The U.S. closed its embassy in Syria and Britain recalled its ambassador to Damascus in a new Western push to get President Bashar Assad to leave power and halt the murderous grind in Syria. Jeremy Lin of the Knicks scored a career-high 28 points in his first career start as New York beat the Utah Jazz 99-88.

One year ago: Seven GOP Republican hopefuls faced off three days before the New Hampshire primary; Marco Rubio, a first-term senator on the rise in the presidential race, faced a barrage of attacks while Sen. Ted Cruz, fresh off his victory in the Iowa caucuses, also came under withering criticism. A magnitude-6.4 earthquake struck Tainan, Taiwan, killing 116 people. Brett Favre, Ken Stabler, Marvin Harrison, Kevin Greene, Orlando Pace and Tony Dungy were elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Carolina Panthers quarterback Cam Newton won The Associated Press NFL Most Valuable Player award in a landslide.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Rip Torn is 86. Actress Mamie Van Doren is 86. Actor Mike Farrell is 78. Former NBC News anchorman Tom Brokaw is 77. Singer Fabian is 74. Actress Gayle Hunnicutt is 74. Actor Michael Tucker is 73. Producer-director-writer Jim Sheridan is 68. Actor Jon Walmsley is 61. Actress Kathy Najimy is 60. Rock musician Simon Phillips (Toto) is 60. Actor-director Robert Townsend is 60. Actor Barry Miller is 59. Actress Megan Gallagher is 57. Rock singer Axl Rose (Guns N' Roses) is 55. Country singer Richie McDonald is 55. Singer Rick Astley is 51. Rock musician Tim Brown (Boo Radleys) is 48. "Good Morning America" co-host Amy Robach is 44. Actor Brandon Hammond is 33. Actress Alice Greczyn (GREH'-chihn) is 31. Rhythm and blues singer/actress Tinashe is 24.

Thought for Today: "Work is much more fun than fun." - Sir Noel Coward, British actor, dramatist and songwriter (1899-1973).

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.

- "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.

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