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## Connecting - May 07, 2018

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# Connecting

May 07, 2018

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning!

**Mort Rosenblum's** career has gone full circle - or maybe I should say, through a circuitous worldwide route.

He left the University of Arizona as a junior to work at the Daily Journal in Caracas, Venezuela, but returned to Tucson to earn his degree while working at the Arizona Daily Star. And today he teaches journalism there three months of the year.

Then-Phoenix CoB **Fred Moen** helped link him up with the AP's Newark bureau and, well, let me have Mort summarize the rest of his career travels:



Newark 1965-6.  
 NY World Desk, 1966-7.  
 Kinshasa (Central Africa), 1967-8  
 Lagos, 1969-70, (West Africa)  
 Singapore (Malaysia, Indonesia, tours in Vietnam),  
 1970-73.  
 Buenos Aires (Argentina. Uruguay, Paraguay), 1973-  
 76.  
 NY, Edward R. Murrow fellow, 1976-7.  
 Paris (French, North Africa, ex-French Empire), 1977-  
 9  
 Paris, International Herald Tribune editor, 1979-81.

Paris, Special Correspondent, 1981-2004  
 Paris, Free at last.

Mort is the subject of today's Monday Connecting Q-and-A feature, taking time out from his one-man news agency - the Mort Report [www.mortreport.org](http://www.mortreport.org) - to share a delightful report.

Today's issue brings you more Indy 500 memories from those of you who covered the race.

And yesterday being the first Sunday of the month, my Spotlight for my hometown Fort Dodge (Iowa) Messenger appeared in the newspaper on a family steeped in medicine - that of **Mike and Carole Stitt**. The Stitts just joined the Connecting readership, adding another physician to our group - the other being Dr. **Sam Montello** of Kansas City. Between them, thousands of babies were brought into our world.



[Click here](#) for a link to my Spotlight. (And yes, as you can tell from the photo, the Stitts are dyed in the wool fellow Iowa Hawkeyes fans.)

Have a great day - and week!

Paul

## Monday Q-and-A:

# Mort Rosenblum



Mort makes one of his homes on the Almeria, a boat docked at the Concorde on the Seine across from the National Assembly, which he said he acquired "in the mid-1980s from the much-lamented AP Paris news editor who retired to London and then passed on, Paul Treuthardt."

### How did you get started at AP?

At the Arizona Daily Star in Tucson, I always filed copies of my stuff to the Phoenix bureau, angling for a job. (Chief of Bureau) Fred Moen eventually called with a spot in Phoenix if I quit the Star. I did. The spot didn't open. He felt guilty and found me a job in Newark - my first foreign assignment. That was 1965. Newark allowed me to hustle NY executives on days off, and I got assigned to the World Desk. I spoke Spanish and had enough French to fake it.

### Getting abroad?

Starting the overnight, a note in my box asked to see Wes Gallagher. Soon after, I got the full eyebrow-bristle, variety of all kinds of questions. Then a note from Keith Fuller: the General Manager has made his choice for Lisbon, and you're not it. (It was Denny Redmont.) Come see me about other possibilities. I was there the next morning. Fuller asked, "How you'd like to go to Viet Nam?" Sure, I said. Almost an hour later after discussing boots with leech netting, he asked what I'd do with my

apartment. No problem, I said, Barry Kramer will keep it. "Wait," he said. "You're not going to Veet Nam. Kramer is."

Fuller must have seen my knuckles whiten, seizing the edge of his desk, and thought about the 7<sup>th</sup> floor window behind him. Quickly, he blurted, "You're going to Africa." Nothing happened for months. Then Mike Goldsmith was expelled from the Congo, where a mercenary war raged. I got a frantic call to shuttle to Washington for a visa and fly to Brussels for a briefing. Two days later at dawn I landed at Kinshasa, nearly lost my lone suitcase in airport mayhem, and remembered what my sister said about my French: "You'll have to say the guy is dead because you don't know the word for wounded." I was 24 and clueless. But I stumbled onto a big story and managed to get it to Brussels that night despite the drunken censor waving an assault rifle behind as pecked on the telex keyboard.



Interviewing Fidel Castro when he visited France in 1995. Photo/Michel Lipschitz

Interviewing Fidel Castro when he visited France in 1995. Photo/Michel Lipschitz

### **Biggest moment?**

A tough one. But probably that night in Prague, 1989, when a million Czechs jammed into Wenceslas Square to hear Alexander Dubcek, finally released from prison to cry freedom. Everyone in the crowd held up keys and jangled them, a old Czech gesture of good riddance to despots. The man next to me, holding a baby and hugging his wife, translated. At one point, he burst into tears. Me, too.

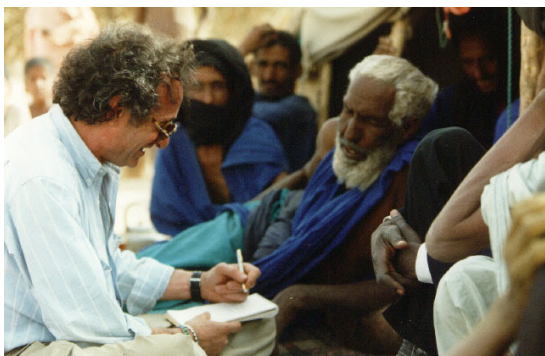
### **Toughest assignment?**

Argentina was a dream job for a footloose carnivore until it wasn't. Kidnappings and bombings brought harsh repression. People began to disappear mysteriously. Then the U.S. embassy "legal attaché" - the FBI guy - asked me to lunch. He'd seen too much torture, condoned by Washington, and wanted to spill the beans. He told about the helicopter lift the military and police used to dump suspects in the ocean, still alive so they'd gasp air and sink. And all the rest. It was a major scoop, but I had no source. Working with Amnesty International in London, and New York editors who trusted my anonymous sources, I got the story onto solid footing. Pretty soon, however, my embassy started calling me to tell me which groups had put me - and other reporters - on death lists.

My wife and I started sleeping at our friends' place across the hall in our building. If our door wasn't blown off during the night, we were safe. Then we realized our host, a high-profile oligarch, was probably on more lists than we were. After another harrowing year, I was offered a Council on Foreign Relations fellowship, and I took it.

### **Most memorable?**

Baudouin Kayembe, my first stringer, died in 1968 in a Mobutu prison, and I got to know and loathe the Congolese kleptlo-despot over the decades. When Joseph Kabila's army moved in from the east in 1997 to finally depose him, I flew to Kinshasa. For two days, it was loony mayhem - rebels and diehard defenders firing blindly, often into the air. But unlike those early days, it was easy to file. I dialed the Foreign Desk on a portable sat phone, ducking behind a market stall hoping no one would spot me or blast randomly in my direction. A young editor kept asking needless questions at a slow pace. Finally, he asked, "What's that noise?" Gunfire, I replied. "Isn't it dangerous?" "Not for you...please hurry up." There's more to say, but it's long story...



### You left AP for a while?

I'd run the Paris bureau for two years, when the International Herald Tribune owners asked me to be editor. That was 1979. In 1981, I took a stand against paid "special sections" - today's "native advertising" - and forced the board to fire me. I called Keith Fuller, who said, "You wanna come home?" Sure, I said. I'd like to cover the Third World.

"What about the first and second," he asked. So I was named Special Correspondent, covering big stories from Paris. On my first trip, to the Middle East in 1981, I happened to be in Syria when Bashar al-Assad's father and uncle shelled the ancient city of Hama, a dissident hotbed. "Breaking news" usually has deep roots.

### Advice to new correspondents?

It's far more dangerous out there today. When I started, you had to be careless or unlucky to come to grief. Now, reporters are often targets. Hang with colleagues who know what they're doing until you're confident you've developed your own senses. If that internal voice says to hold back, listen. But we've got to be clear: risk is part of the job. I'm essentially a coward, but I always kept in mind that if I wasn't willing to go, someone else behind me was. And I hate missing the story.



In thick of it in Sarajevo. Photo/Jerome Delay

### Where is journalism headed?

I worry - a lot. I take pains to teach my students to pry the "I" key off their computers until they earn it. Too many "news outlets" simply push out "content," like foam insulation, around the money-making part of their papers or sites. Whether news is printed on paper, as we knew it, or flashed off people's eyelids, what matters is the message.

## What now?

After leaving AP at the end of 2004, I stayed in France, bouncing between an old boat in Paris that I think did Dunkirk and an olive farm lost in the back hills of Provence. Between writing books, I led a global investigation on ocean collapse for the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and magazine assignments in Asia and Africa. I knock off each Christmas to spend three months back in Tucson, teaching at the University of Arizona.

I now run my own one-man news agency - **the Mort Report** ([www.mortreport.org](http://www.mortreport.org)) It's free, and I earn no salary, but I get to use dirty words, draw conclusions, and call bullshit when I see it. I work with young reporters, who I help train to combine new tools with old values. Expenses are covered, mostly, by generous help from readers - including old AP pals -- who understand the importance of reporting based on a lifetime of firsthand experience.

Mort Rosenblum's email - [mort.rosenblum@gmail.com](mailto:mort.rosenblum@gmail.com)

# Connecting mailbox

## *Wish I knew Libby*

**Cecilia White** ([Email](#)) - I really enjoyed Libby Quaid's colorful, and generous, recollections of her 24-year AP career in Friday's (May 4) "Connecting." It made me wish I knew her. Bestest of luck to you in your next adventures, Libby!

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## *My tribute to Richard Blystone*

## Times returns after long strike; London declared normal again

By **RICHARD BLYSTONE**  
Associated Press Writer

LONDON — How rich life is, now that *The Times* is back.

What other newspaper could have scooped the world Tuesday with the front-page news that the Vatican's representative in London is getting diplomatic status for the first time since Henry VIII broke with Rome in the 16th century?

After nearly a year, a forum in which letter writer Anthony Given of The Croft, Walkern, near Stevenage, Hertfordshire, can deplore bureaucratic indifference to oak wilt.

Once more, glimpses of that fictitious but typical upper-middle-class clan, the Ashbrooke-Pembleton-Frenches, adorning the personal classifieds.

Reborn, the crossword fan's aching need for a nine-letter word that has some obscure connection with the clue: "Devoted many to one furry friend indeed."

The answer is "dedicated," a synonym for devoted, but other clues referred to are within the "de" at the start and the "ed" at the end (indeed: DI (many) is the Roman numeral for 501 and the letters c-a-t represent the furry friend.

It has been a long, dry 11½ months for *Times* devotees while the management of the suspended paper wrangled with unions over staffing, pay and technology.

But once again English commuters, no longer forced to converse with their seatmates, may gratefully submerge their noses in the august paper that combines the quirkiness of an eccentric earl with sheer reading excitement.

The hue of *The Times*' news columns has been distinctly gray for much of its 194 years.

The headline over the obituary of Elvis Presley, "Mr. Presley Dies at 42," has the right tone. A *Times* reporter once distilled the tone into the parody: "Small Earthquake in Chile; not many killed."

But *The Times*' 300,000 readers like it that way.

*Times* columnists sought to reassure readers that nothing important while they were away. Bernard Levin reopened in mid-sentence with the word "moreover," and Philip Howard with "Dicoebamus hesternae die," which he explained is a Latin way to say "As I was saying when I was interrupted."

Taking seriously its role as journal of record, as preserver and embodiment of British tradition, *The Times* printed in its second reborn edition Wednesday a six-page review of "How the world went round while our back was turned."

This first of several catch-up supplements disappointed some by not including the eagerly awaited weather reports for the last 347 days. The first of three obituary supplements arrives Friday.


Seriousness aside, *The Times* is once again a sanctuary for the delicate British sense of eccentricity.

James, we now learn, racked up a 16th straight year as most popular name among British middle-class parents who announced births of boys in *The Times*. Victoria moved up from 15th to first among girls.

The figures for last year, an annual feature in *The Times*' letters, were carefully saved up by Margaret and Thomas Brown, 7 Foxthorn Paddock, Badger Hill, York, and printed Tuesday.

Publication in the letters column is for many Britons the Grail of a lifetime of scribbling. Exchanges on why seagulls make room for others on flagpoles or whether oatmeal should be eaten standing up draw flocks of witty and erudite entries.

Dozens vie for the accolade of reporting the arrival of spring's first cuckoo. Without *The Times* for legitimization, many wonder if he appeared at all this year.



"Last Monday," said a letter from D.J. Connolly, 67 Gossoms End, Berkhamsted, Herts, in Tuesday's edition, "I believe I heard the sound of the first phoenix of the year. Who said it was extinct?"

**Marcus Eliason (Email)** - Allow me to pay this tribute to our fondly remembered Bly by citing an example of his journalism that any editor would kill for: his paean of welcome to *The Times* (of London) upon its resurrection from a nearly yearlong strike.

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## *The Economist remembers Steve Komarow*

JOURNALISTS who become prominent covering wars or politics are generally eulogised for scoops scored or prizes secured. Steve Komarow's four-decade career was most accomplished, but his main achievement was something even rarer in the often cut-throat worlds of Washington bureaus and foreign corresponding. His calmly intense confidence as a reporter, and clear-eyed equanimity as an editor, produced widespread respect with no lasting enmity.

After Mr Komarow died at 61 from brain cancer, tributes focused on the preternatural calm, intellectual range, high standards, low volume and cockeyed grin that secured his stature in all four newsrooms where he played a pivotal role. The last was CQ, part of *The Economist* Group, where he was executive editor from 2015.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Claude Erbsen.



## More of your memories of Indy 500



Indy crew from the '80s - Back, from left: Bob Graves, CX darkroom tech and now AP photo editor in CX; John Epperson, CX photo editor, and Seth Rossman NA stringer. Front, from left: Brian Horton, NY photo editor and veteran of many 500 races; Marilyn Culler, NA stringer helping in darkroom, now in Communication Dept. at DePauw University in



**Indiana; Chuck Robinson, staff photographer, NA, and Vicki Willis, NA stringer working as darkroom and captioning help. She is wife of NS stringer Paul Willis, who took this photo.**

**John Epperson (Email)** - Brian Horton and Chuck Robinson of AP photos had a battle plan all figured out long before the green flag fell.

They would edit film on two light tables, as fast as it came from the darkroom, punching negatives they wanted a print from.

Robinson knew every driver, their car number, engine manufacturer, their chief mechanic, hometown and sponsor in the race. He posted a chart on wall of cars and numbers and had lists of all info he could gather in the months before race day.

The darkroom crew were very busy folks.

Prints would flow out quickly and a stringer or myself would caption them and I would file the wire to NY photo desk and sometimes direct to member papers by long distance for special request photos of drivers from their areas or countries.

Of the 101 Indy races at the Brick Yard....26 winners are from nine other nations, so AP photos would get wide use internationally.

The race is routinely called part of the triple crown of motor sports with the Grand Prix of Monaco and the 24 Hours of LeMans being the others. Indy is the single largest sporting event in the world.

AP photos were always in their own race to capture and transmit important race moments.

Everything at Indianapolis is done to follow tradition. Those were important photo moments. The command to start engines, the parade lap with 33 cars in their starting position, and the pace lap itself.

The wave of the green flag to start race, and all the significant race events the AP sports writers were working on.

Then the moment most wanted by our members, the driver and their car taking the checkered flag.

AP photos would rush to get that checkered flag photo on the wire first.

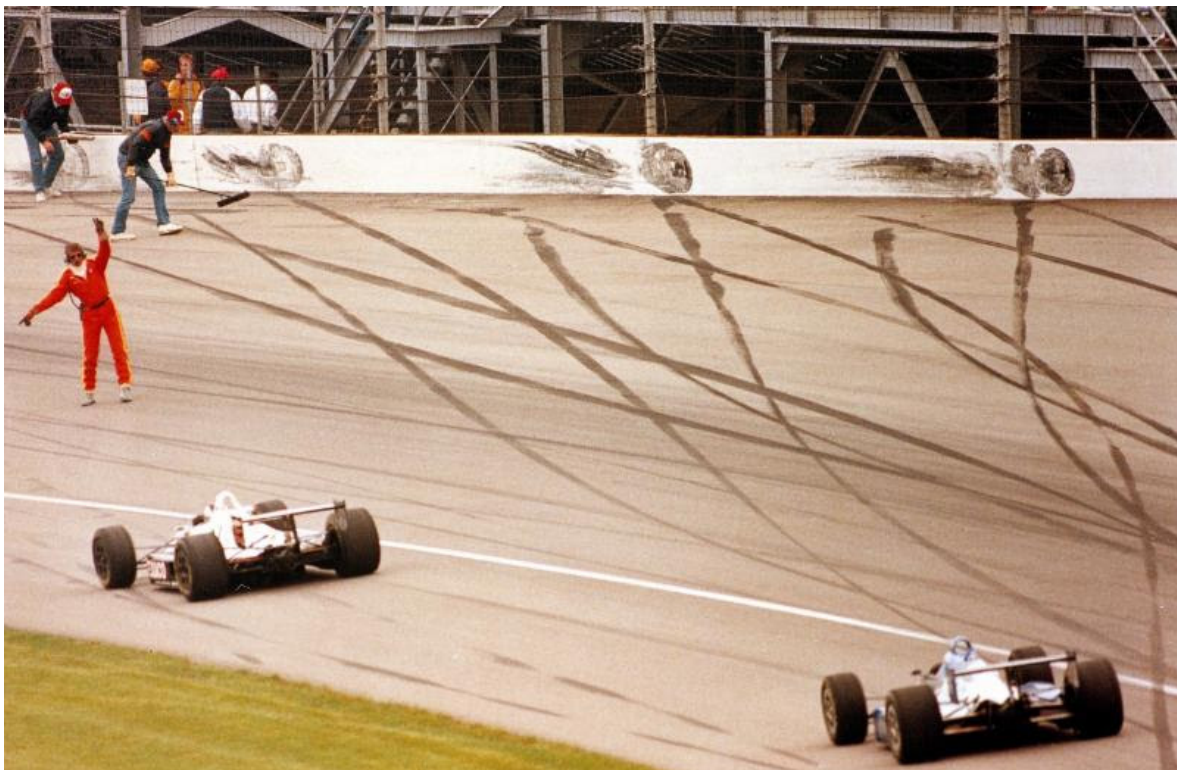
We did it race after race, with Horton and Robinson were always coming up with new ways to win that race for AP, to get our film to the work room first and get the photo moving around the world first, ahead of the other guys next door.

At the end of the day, a long one, we had a few moments to reflect on the day since we started in the traffic jams on West 16th street or Georgetown Road at 5am.

We could all think that we had been witness to one of the sporting world's greatest events.

Then it was back to work editing and transmitting for the next morning.... the first things sports editors were looking for.....the morning openers for that day's PM papers.....as sent to them from AP Photos at the Brickyard, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

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**Amy Sancetta (Email)** - What I remember most about the 1992 Indy 500 was not .043 seconds that separated Al Unser Jr from Scott Goodyear at the finish line for the closest finish in race history, or the fact that pole sitter Roberto Guerrero spun out and crashed on the pace lap, or that 13 cars crashed their way out of the race as well. What I remember most about the 76th running of this annual spectacle was how absolutely frozen I was during the race on this last Sunday in May.

I shot the race from the "crow's nest" - a steel basket that hangs under the roof, above the track and the crowd, in turn 1. The position is accessed climbing up a ladder and through a hole to the roof of the track, shuffling along to another hole with a descending ladder, and clambering down to a small platform below, careful not to drop a lens cap or worse on the fans below.



Amy in the crow's nest.

On Saturday, the weather was actually a little warmer than seasonal - temperatures soared up to 81 degrees, the heavy air resisted any breeze, and an occasional heavy downpour soaked us all.

But something happened overnight. Storms blew through and the temperature dropped like Andretti's foot on the gas pedal. When our AP Photos caravan left for the track, it was 48 degrees. By race time, it never got out of the low 50's and the wind was blowing like crazy. There was fog and rain and wind and cold.

I'd packed sunscreen and polo shirts for race week, but it never occurred to me that I'd need a parka.

Luckily, AP Photo staffer Ed Reinke out of Kentucky had a few extra pieces of random clothing in his car. He was shooting pit row and the fire suit he'd be wearing was warm enough. Ed lent a pair of men's work gloves and a large flannel shirt that smelled a little like the last time he'd been out mucking stalls in his barn at home. I didn't care. The clothing gave me a little protection from the gusty cold wind that battered me all day in my little nest in the sky.

The cold also wreaked havoc on the track. Temperatures were so low that the fat tires of the Indy cars couldn't hold the track. There were skid marks all over the track as cars lost their footing and hit the wall below me. The race became a battle of attrition to see who could survive the harsh and unusual elements.

I was a little popsicle by the time the checkered flag dropped for Unser Jr., and I climbed up, out and over from my perch. But even a popsicle knew she'd seen, and weathered, something extraordinary on the track that day.

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John Epperson ([Email](#)) - From his Indy collection, a press ticket to Indy race in 1986.



And, Chuck Robinson in Indianapolis always had proper idents for all the AP photo staff. This is a number nine credential with attached bronze speedway badge with which AP could go nearly anywhere at the track. This one is for the 71st running in May 1987.

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**Mark Duncan** ([Email](#)) - Photo editor Brian Horton, left, with freelance photographer Mary Ann Carter at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. 1985.



## CDC director accepts pay cut after AP examines his salary



**Dr. Robert Redfield Jr., shown in an undated handout photo, was receiving \$375,000 a year to run the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. AP revealed that he was making almost twice as much as the previous administrator at the agency. He has since agreed to a pay cut. TRACEY BROWN / UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

A small reference to a big number in a Wall Street Journal story about the new director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention caught medical writer Mike Stobbe's attention. It reported that Dr. Robert Redfield's salary was \$375,000.

That seemed like a large sum, much more than previous CDC directors had been paid, thought Stobbe, who has covered the nation's top public health agency for more than 12 years.



His hunch proved correct. His subsequent reporting showed that Redfield's compensation was nearly double that of the previous Trump administration nominee, who resigned after six months, and more than the government's other top health officials.

The scoop - which led Redfield to later ask for a pay cut - nets Stobbe this week's Beat of the Week.

Stobbe has long made it part of his beat work to request - and then record - specific information about every CDC director, including their date of birth, compensation, start date and when they left the agency. He drew from that background when he spotted the salary in the Journal story.

As part of his beat work, Stobbe requests and records specific information about every CDC director, including their compensation.

A quick check of his records showed that Redfield was being paid nearly double the salary of Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, the CDC nominee who resigned after six months. Her pay was \$197,300.

Two CDC directors who Stobbe talked with said Redfield's compensation was significantly more than previous directors and noted that none of them had ever been hired using Title 42, a salary program which was established to attract health scientists with rare and critical skills to government work to fill gaps in expertise.

Hundreds of scientists at the CDC and thousands at the National Institutes of Health were hired under the program. But CDC directors traditionally were not because they are hired to run the agency, not to do specialized research.

Stobbe reported that Redfield was hired under a program to recruit scientists with rare skills, but as agency head, Redfield is not doing specialized research.

Stobbe also discovered that Redfield was making more than his boss, Alex Azar, the secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (\$199,700); Dr. Francis Collins at the NIH (also \$199,700); and Dr. Scott Gottlieb, head of the Food and Drug Administration (\$155,500).

News organizations, such as the New York Times, the Washington Post and The Hill, cited Stobbe's report. Citing the AP story, U.S. Sen. Patty Murray, a Washington Democrat, wrote to Azar demanding to know why Redfield was making so much and whether the Title 42 program was used appropriately.

The new head of the top U.S. public health agency has asked for a pay cut. His \$375,000 annual compensation had been a record. <https://t.co/1FCu2XgVDy>

- AP Health & Science (@APHealthScience) April 30, 2018

A week later, HHS revealed that Redfield would be taking a pay cut at his request, saying the topic had become a distraction. The agency hasn't revealed his new pay level.

For his diligent beat work and eagle eye, Stobbe win's this week's Beat of the Week prize.



## **FOIA reveal: Governor shields ally and agency in alleged harassment case**



**Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds holds a news conference at the Statehouse in Des Moines, Jan. 8, 2018. Repeated FOIA requests by AP revealed documentation that Iowa Finance Authority Director Dave Jamison, fired by Reynolds, had been accused of harassing female employees for years, and that senior agency officials had not reported it. AP PHOTO / CHARLIE NEIBERGALL**

When Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds abruptly fired a longtime friend and political ally last month, she said it was due to "credible" sexual harassment allegations. But her staff said no other information would be available about the behavior of Iowa Finance Authority Director Dave Jamison.

Statehouse reporter Barbara Rodriguez and Iowa City correspondent Ryan J. Foley knew there was more to the story, and after talking with sources they filed FOIA requests for all correspondence and documentary evidence of the allegations that were submitted to the governor's office. After a month, the office told them there were no such records, prompting a rare case where reporting the denial would be newsworthy: that there was no evidence, no correspondence and no investigation into the allegations before Jamison was terminated.

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds' office now says it made a mistake when it said it didn't have a complaint detailing sexual harassment allegations against a longtime ally of the governor who was fired last month. <https://t.co/XcpPLIQkBq>

- AP Central U.S. (@APCentralRegion) April 23, 2018

Hours after that story moved, the governor's office acknowledged they had made a mistake. There was a written detailed complaint against Jamison that it had been shielding. But the office insisted it was a confidential personnel record exempt from FOIA.

The subsequent story by Rodriguez and Foley made numerous front pages on Iowa newspapers, and other members matched their story and credited the AP for breaking the news. Newspapers and public information advocates also weighed in, criticizing Reynolds for not releasing a redacted complaint to shield the victim. As the Quad-City Times in Davenport put it: "Monday's cynical assault on Iowa's transparency law was the political ploy of a first-time governor in re-election mode."

Rodriguez and Foley didn't stop there. They appealed the denial, leading the governor's office to reverse course again and release the document, which immediately caused a firestorm.

It showed that Jamison had allegedly been harassing female subordinates for years with remarks and behaviors that the governor called "disgusting and abhorrent." The document also made clear that senior officials in the agency were aware of his behavior but apparently didn't report it - which led to calls for an independent investigation. The governor initially rejected those calls but as pressure built, she announced she had hired a prominent outside lawyer to conduct such an investigation.

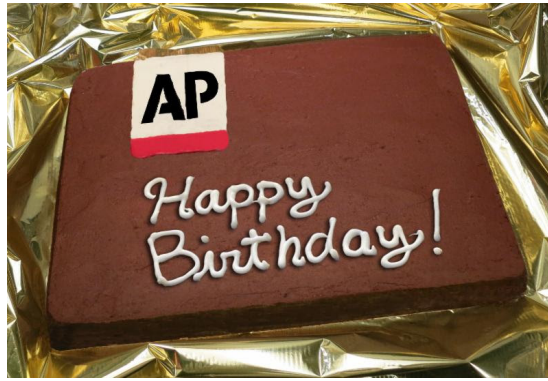
INBOX: Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds orders independent review of state agency where former director/political ally was accused of sexual harassment. This morning she had rejected calls for further investigation. [iapolitics#iagovpic.twitter.com/jytYJh2yff](https://twitter.com/iapolitics#iagovpic.twitter.com/jytYJh2yff)

- Barbara Rodriguez (@bcrodriguez) April 27, 2018

None of which would have happened if Rodriguez and Foley hadn't filed the FOIA and pursued the records after they were denied.

For aggressive reporting that shed light on accusations of sexual misconduct by a public official - including the lack of transparency surrounding the charges - the pair shares this week's Best of the States award.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Mike Feinsilber - [mikefeinsilber@gmail.com](mailto:mikefeinsilber@gmail.com)

Bud Hunt - [budhunt72@gmail.com](mailto:budhunt72@gmail.com)

## Welcome to Connecting



Donna Cassata - [donna.cassata@washpost.com](mailto:donna.cassata@washpost.com)

## Stories of interest

***Opinion: When Southern Newspapers Justified Lynching*** (New York Times)

**By BENT STAPLES**

The Arkansas lynch mob that burned a black tenant farmer at the stake in 1921 observed common practice when it advertised the killing in advance so spectators could mark the grisly event on their calendars. The organizers notified newspapers early in the day that they planned to kill Henry Lowery as painfully as possible, giving editors time to produce special editions that provided the time, place and gruesome particulars of the death to come.

Historians have paid scant attention to the role that the white Southern press played in the racial terrorism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which saw thousands of African-Americans hanged, burned, drowned or beaten to death by white mobs. This issue surfaced in dramatic fashion recently when the nearly two-centuries-old Montgomery Advertiser printed a front-page editorial apologizing for lynching coverage that dehumanized black victims. The apology coincided with the recent opening in Montgomery, Ala., of a memorial to lynching victims, and it sets the stage for a timely discussion of a deeply dishonorable period in Southern press history.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Sibby Christensen.

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***No, Mr. President, Journalists Aren't Elitists*** (New Republic)**By ELIZABETH DREW**

You have a long habit of suggesting that journalists are a bunch of "elitists," a characterization echoed by some in your entourage. Though we realize that this is part of your ongoing effort to delegitimize our efforts to report the truth of what's going on in your presidency, citizens none the wiser may accept your nullification of what we do. It's not even clear to us what you understand about who we are and how we function. This letter, should you read it, is an attempt, in the spirit of your current efforts to bring peace to the world, to sort you and your followers out about us.

Numerous indicators would tell you that we're hardly elitists.

We don't inherit our jobs. People get into the Washington press corps through a lot of hard work elsewhere first-building their skills and their clippings. It's probably the hardest kind of journalism to get into in this country; one cannot do so without a record of excellent work beforehand, often in two or three jobs. Obviously, no one can do that for us. There are no strings to pull. We're all on our own. Yes, a connection-Dad was a star in the business, say, or Mother is a well-known author-might get you in a door, but if you don't have solid past work to show it does you no good.

Read more [here](#). Shared by John Hartzell.

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## ***Buffett surprised rate of newspaper industry decline hasn't slowed***

From the Berkshire Hathaway annual shareholders meeting on Saturday:

Warren Buffett says he's surprised that the rate of decline in the newspaper industry hasn't slowed much in the past five years.

Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway owns a group of more than two dozen small and medium-sized newspapers.

Buffett said Saturday at Berkshire's annual shareholders meeting in Omaha, Nebraska, that the Wall Street Journal, New York Times and Washington Post are likely the only newspapers that can generate enough revenue from their digital products to replace what they lost from the shift away from print.

He says he hopes more daily newspapers can find a way to be economically viable because they are so important to society.

Excerpt from [AP story](#), shared by Adolphe Bernotas.

# **The Final Word**

# ***90% of Travelers Say This Is the Worst Thing You Can Do on an Airplane*** (Money)

By MEGAN LEONHARDT

What's the number one thing that's guaranteed to make everyone around you on an airplane hate your guts?

If you guessed taking your shoes and socks off, you nailed it. Over 90% of people say going barefoot on a flight is a big no-no, according to a recent online survey conducted by Expedia of over 18,000 people across 23 countries. But for those who need to give their feet some breathing room, there is a silver lining: Removing your shoes if you have socks on is ok, but don't go barefoot. And, for the record, it's never ok to use the seatback in front of your as a foot rest.

But as gross as a barefoot seatmate is, the perennial annoyances also make the list of the worst passengers, Expedia found. Over half of people say those who kick the back of the seat (or bump or grab it constantly) are the worst, while smelly passengers also ranked in the top five. Here is their breakdown:

Read more [here](#).

## **Today in History - May 7, 2018**



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Monday, May 7, the 127th day of 2018. There are 238 days left in the year.



**Today's Highlight in History:**

On May 7, 1915, a German U-boat torpedoed and sank the British liner RMS Lusitania off the southern coast of Ireland, killing 1,198 people, including 128 Americans, out of the nearly 2,000 on board.

**On this date:**

In A.D. 558, the original main dome of the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople completely collapsed during an earthquake; Emperor Justinian I ordered that the structure be rebuilt.

In 1763, Pontiac, chief of the Ottawa Indians, attempted to lead a sneak attack on British-held Fort Detroit, but was foiled because the British had been tipped off in advance.

In 1789, America's first inaugural ball was held in New York in honor of President George Washington, who had taken the oath of office a week earlier.

In 1824, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125, had its premiere in Vienna.

In 1939, Germany and Italy announced a military and political alliance known as the Rome-Berlin Axis.

In 1942, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Jonathan Wainwright went on a Manila radio station to announce the Allies' surrender of the Philippines to Japanese forces during World War II.

In 1945, Germany signed an unconditional surrender at Allied headquarters in Rheims (rams), France, ending its role in World War II.

In 1954, the 55-day Battle of Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam ended with Vietnamese insurgents overrunning French forces.

In 1963, the United States launched the Telstar 2 communications satellite.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford formally declared an end to the "Vietnam era." In Ho Chi Minh City - formerly Saigon - the Viet Cong celebrated its takeover.

In 1984, a \$180 million out-of-court settlement was announced in the Agent Orange class-action suit brought by Vietnam veterans who said they'd been injured by exposure to the defoliant.

In 1998, the parent company of Mercedes-Benz agreed to buy Chrysler Corp. for more than \$37 billion. Londoners voted overwhelmingly to elect their own mayor for the first time in history. (In May 2000, Ken Livingstone was elected.)

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush, addressing the Council of the Americas, said Cuba's post-Fidel Castro leadership had made only "empty gestures at reform" as he rejected calls for easing U.S. restrictions on the communist island. Dmitry Medvedev (dih-MEE'-tree med-VYEH'-djev) was sworn in as Russia's president, succeeding Vladimir Putin (POO'-tih).

Five years ago: President Barack Obama and South Korea's new leader, Park Geun-hye (goon-hay), met at the White House, where they projected a united front as they warned North Korea against further nuclear provocations. Twenty-four people were killed by a gas tanker-truck explosion on the outskirts of Mexico City. The Dow Jones industrial average closed above 15,000 for the first time, ending the day at 15,056.20, up 87.31 points. Movie special effects wizard Ray Harryhausen, 92, died in London.

One year ago: French voters elected independent centrist Emmanuel Macron, 39, as the country's youngest president, delivering a resounding victory to the pro-European former investment banker and dashing the populist dream of far-right rival Marine Le Pen. Former President Barack Obama briefly returned to the spotlight as he accepted the annual John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award at the JFK presidential library in Boston.

Today's Birthdays: Rhythm-and-blues singer Thelma Houston is 75. Actress Robin Strasser is 73. Singer-songwriter Bill Danoff is 72. Rock musician Bill Kreutzmann (Grateful Dead) is 72. Utah Gov. Gary Herbert is 71. Rock musician Prairie Prince is 68. Movie writer-director Amy Heckerling is 66. Actor Michael E. Knight is 59. Rock musician Phil Campbell (Motorhead) is 57. Country musician Rick Schell is 55. Rock singer-musician Chris O'Connor (Primitive Radio Gods) is 53. Actress Traci Lords is 50. Actor Morocco Omari is 48. Singer Eagle-Eye Cherry is 47. Actor Breckin Meyer is 44. Rock musician Matt Helders (Arctic Monkeys) is 32. Actress-comedian Aidy Bryant is 31. Actor Taylor Abrahamse is 27. Actor Alexander Ludwig is 26. Actress Dylan Gelula is 24.

***Thought for Today: "When an old man dies, a library burns down." - African proverb.***

## Got a story or photos 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:

- **Second chapters** - You finished a great career. Now tell us about your second (and third and fourth?) chapters of life.

- **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.

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



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