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Connecting - October 11, 2018

1 message

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning!

Connecting's new series of the art of dictation continues today with more of your memories from those days before mobile devices and laptops.

One mentioned by two colleagues as most proficient in the art was **Ed Schuyler Jr.**, AP's national boxing writer from 1970 until his retirement in 2002. He was inducted in 2010 into the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

I look forward to more of your memories.

Have a great day!

Paul

Get Me Rewrite! - Your stories of dictation



JoAnn Loviglio ([Email](#)) - When I started at AP in 1996, cellphones and laptops existed but were not ubiquitous. There was one brick-sized phone and one clunky laptop per buro, and a couple of pagers (remember those?) for folks headed out on assignment.

But at the 123rd Preakness Stakes at Pimlico in 1998, I realized how those tools were a double-edged sword, making our jobs easier in many ways but turning the

skill of dictation into a disappearing act. That realization came after seeing Ed Schuyler Jr. in action.



Ed Schuyler Jr.

Ed was covering the races and I was walking around getting reax for a sidebar. This was the year that a transformer fire knocked out power in Pimlico right before the fifth race. It was sunny and 96 degrees, and temps in Pimlico -- especially in the glass-fronted pressbox -- rose to unbearable levels.

It was in those conditions that I watched Ed pick up the pressbox landline a split second after Real Quiet crossed the finish line and dictate a positively flawless and beautifully crafted story. No pauses, no flipping through notes, no "wait, scratch that," no "could you read that back to me?"

-- a perfect story in one take, no notes other than the horses' numbers in finishing order that he jotted down as they crossed.

I was in awe and it hit me how that kind of skill only comes after years of working without the safety net of cell phones and laptops. After he dictated his story, as my jaw was still on the floor, I didn't know what to say other than, "Is there anything I can help you with?" To which he replied, "There is, kid. If you would be able to find me a cold beer someplace, I'd appreciate it."

I found one concession that had cold beverages in a cooler -- remember, the power was out so beer taps didn't work and refrigerators were kaput. I proudly made my way back to the pressroom in the hot, dimly lit racetrack with the spoils. He only asked for one, but I brought him two.

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Bruce Lowitt (Email) - On June 9, 1973, I took dictation from Ed Schuyler Jr., the AP's superb horse racing and boxing writer. It was the Belmont Stakes which Secretariat won to complete the Triple Crown.

As Secretariat began to pull away from the rest of the field halfway through the mile-and-a-half race, Schuyler began to exclaim, "Holy shit! ... Holy shit! ... Holy shit ..." which he repeated all the way to the end, when Secretariat won by a still-Belmont record 31 lengths.

When Schuyler was ready to begin dictating, I asked him, "How many Holy shits was that? Nine?" Schuyler replied, "Twelve. Ready?" Then he dictated his typically clean and dramatic copy off the top of his head.

The first dictation of consequence I remember taking was on Jan. 17, 1971, Super Bowl V, which Baltimore won, 16-13. The game was tied in the final minute when Craig Morton of Dallas threw an interception. Jim O'Brien of the Colts kicked the winning field goal with nine seconds remaining.

At the final gun, Mike Rathet, the AP's Pro Football Editor, began dictating. I'd type two or three grafs, tear out the sheet, give it to the desk, roll in a new sheet and continue. Rathet was flawless. He rarely paused. I was amazed at how the copy flowed.

When he was finished, I asked him, "How much of that story did you have written down?" He told me none of it, that he working off his notes. I told him it was amazing and asked how he'd learned to put such chaos into order. "A few years on the baseball desk'll do it," he said.

The next day I asked Murray Rose, the Deputy Sports Editor, to put me on the baseball desk when the season started. He did. I was one of two writers each night dealing with half a dozen games or more apiece as they ended, with scores and sometimes leads changing, having to rewrite on the fly from play by play coming from the ballparks.

I did that for a number of seasons and over the years I became a baseball writer, then a pro football writer, then the Pro Football Editor and ultimately a national sports writer covering Super Bowls, World Series, college football and basketball championships and so on.

Thank you, Mike Rathet.

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Walter Putnam ([Email](#)) - There were both triumphs and tribulations in the days of dictating stories to the desk, and apparently none of them came without producing some amount of stress. Late in my career, before retiring from the AP, I often had dreams about the process -- or nightmares, if you will.

Invariably, these involved covering an event such as a news conference and then heading off to find a telephone to get the story in on deadline. After a frantic search I'd locate a phone booth and then discover it was out of order, sending me off on a hunt for another. Finding one, I then learned I didn't have any change and went looking for that. Sometimes, my notes were illegible, or I had left them in the car. Whatever the situation, it always involved a long hike up a hill to resolve, and my legs were so tired that it seemed to take forever. I was still looking for a working phone well past time it would do any good.

As if by magic, the dreams stopped after my retirement in 2009. But stress must have its ways of creeping back because I had one last week, only this time with a more contemporary twist: My laptop wasn't working right.

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Marty Thompson (Email) - In my experience, Linda Deutsch was the champion at dictating a breaking story.

Linda could emerge from a courtroom to dictate a bulletin, pause while her editor moved on to the urgent add, and keep going.

I have often said that three days later you wouldn't change a word of Linda's prose.

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Dave Tomlin (Email) - One of my first news jobs was on the dictation bank at the late Washington Evening Star. We wore old-school operator headsets and typed stories composed on the fly by the distinguished likes of Lyle Denniston at the Supreme Court and Dana Bullen who covered the Senate.

Taking Bullen's dictation was entertaining. On deadline he was a train wreck. Halfway through his ledes he often lost his way and erupted in violent, incoherent profanity, exactly the way they draw it in the funny papers.

When he was done cursing he ordered us to tear up the "carbon book" and roll a new one into the typewriter so his copy looked clean when it went to the desk. These weren't the manufactured triplicate books we later used at AP. They were assembled by us dictationists by hand between reporter calls, so it annoyed us to waste them, but of course we did as we were told.

But it was another story entirely when Bullen called in his overnights. You could hear ice tinkling in a glass and feminine giggling in the background as Bullen's prose spooled out without a pause, complete with punctuation marks.

He went on to run the World Press Freedom Committee, where his intensity served all of us well.

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Jeffrey Ulbrich ([Email](#)) - Like so many of us old farts, I did a fair amount of dictating on deadline back in my newspaper days, and then with AP, dictating breaking stories to the bureau. But what sticks in my mind about those technology-free times is never leaving home or office without checking to make sure I had a few dimes in my pocket. Imagine having a hot story, running to a pay phone only to discover you didn't have a dime? I guess today it's even more difficult to imagine you could make a phone call with a dime! Or to imagine you could find a pay phone!

Connecting mailbox

Horwitz, Klugman named as IU Media School Distinguished Alumni

Two of our Connecting colleagues - AP photojournalist **Richard Horwitz** and Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette editor **Craig Klugman** - were among six people inducted last Friday into the Indiana University Media School's eighth class of distinguished alumni.

It was announced that Horwitz could not be there because of health issues, and his plaque was accepted by Jim Polk and retired AP photojournalist Bob Daugherty. Here are photos from the event, taken by Ann Schertz and shared by Emily Rose Harrison of The Media School. [Click here](#) for a link to a story on the presentation.



From left: Jim Shanahan (Media School Dean), Craig Klugman, Andy Hall (President, Media School Alumni Association)



From left: Jim Shanahan (Media School Dean), Bob Daugherty, Jim Polk and Andy Hall (President, Media School Alumni Association).

Thanks, Duane, I have to go now

Hal Bock ([Email](#)) - My favorite Silent Sam interview subject was Duane Thomas, a running back with the Dallas Cowboys. He simply would not talk to anyone. After the Cowboys won an early Super Bowl, CBS dispatched ex-player Tom Brookshire to interview Thomas postgame.

Brookshire went into a long narrative of Thomas' performance yielding a one-word answer from the running back. "Evidently," he said.

A couple of years later, Thomas did his autobiography and the publisher set up a phone interview for him with me. This should be interesting, I thought. Well, Thomas talked for 45 minutes. I finally said, "Thanks, Duane, I have to go now."

Welcome to Connecting



Sherm Frederick - shermfrederick@gmail.com

Stories of interest

Crown prince sought to lure Khashoggi back to Saudi Arabia and detain him, U.S. intercepts show (Washington Post)



Jamal Khashoggi with his fiancée, Hatice Cengiz. (Courtesy of Hatice Cengiz)

By Shane Harris

The crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman, ordered an operation to lure Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi back to Saudi Arabia from his home in Virginia and then detain him, according to U.S. intelligence intercepts of Saudi officials discussing the plan.

The intelligence, described by U.S. officials familiar with it, is another piece of evidence implicating the Saudi regime in Khashoggi's disappearance last week after he entered the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul. Turkish officials say that a Saudi security team lay in wait for the journalist and killed him.

Khashoggi was a prominent critic of the Saudi government and Mohammed in particular. Several of Khashoggi's friends said that over the past four months, senior Saudi officials close to the crown prince had called Khashoggi to offer him protection, and even a high-level job working for the government, if he returned to his home country.

Khashoggi, however, was skeptical of the offers. He told one friend that the Saudi government would never make good on its promises not to harm him.

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

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Turkish media: Video shows team of alleged Saudi assassins

By AYSE WIETING, SUZAN FRASER and JON GAMBRELL

ISTANBUL (AP) - Two Gulfstream jets carrying 15 Saudis landed at Istanbul's Ataturk Airport before dawn on the day last week that journalist Jamal Khashoggi entered the Saudi Consulate and vanished. The men checked into hotels and left Turkey later that night.

Turkish media, which released surveillance camera video of the men on Wednesday, said they were members of an elite Saudi "assassination squad," sent to kill Khashoggi, a Saudi critic.

Saudi Arabia remained silent at the accusation as the images were seen around the world, raising pressure on the kingdom to explain what happened to the writer, a critic of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Adding to the macabre mystery, a Turkish official told The Associated Press that one member of the team was an "autopsy expert."

Read more [here](#).

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This series is traveling the country to show why local news matters (Poynter)



'Chasing Corruption' director and host Ian Hoppe. (Image courtesy al.com)

By KRISTEN HARE

The 10 newsrooms Ian Hoppe has visited this year - from Jackson, Mississippi, to Carbondale, Illinois, to Los Angeles, California- are all changing.

Some still work from their original buildings. Some have moved. Almost all are smaller.

"But the reporters are still grinding away," said Hoppe. "They don't really need some special spot or a flashy newsroom. They're still grinding and doing their thing."

And that thing, in this case, is local investigative journalism. Now, Hoppe and a team from al.com's Reckon are telling their stories through a video series for Facebook Watch. (Reckon, just a reminder, is al.com's social brand.)

So far, "Chasing Corruption" has brought in more than 800,000 views for the stories of a sneaky sheriff in Kentucky, a vote-suppressing governor in Alabama and a dangerously negligent and well-paid housing official in Illinois.

"My name is Ian Hoppe," the director and host says near the start of the first three videos in the series. "And I'm here to show you why local reporters matter."

Read more [here](#).

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Michael Gerson: Kavanaugh coverage exposed cracks in journalism's foundation

(Washington Post Writers Group)

By MICHAEL GERSON

IN THE RECENT Supreme Court nomination showdown, American institutions underwent a stress test. And we saw the political equivalent of the collapse of Lehman Bros.

The Senate Judiciary Committee - which must work properly for the legal system to work properly - quickly became a writhing heap of serpentine partisanship. The Supreme Court - whose judgments are only imposed through the deference of other institutions - was dragged into the realm of low politics. And the media - the essential lens through which we view all else - was too often perceived as a participant in the drama.

Consider two recent stories in The New York Times. The first was a 13,000-word dissection of Donald Trump's financial history that revealed long-standing habits of deception and corruption. It was newspaper journalism at its best - a serious investment of talent and resources to expand the sum of public knowledge.

Compare this with the Times' expose on a bar fight 33 years ago in which Brett Kavanaugh allegedly threw ice at another patron. Apparently there was no editor willing to say, "What you have turned up is trivial. Try harder." And there was no editor who was sufficiently bothered that one name on the byline, Emily Bazelon, was a partisan who had argued on Twitter that Kavanaugh would "harm the democratic process & prevent a more equal society."

Read more [here](#).

Today in History - October 11, 2018



By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Oct. 11, the 284th day of 2018. There are 81 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 11, 1991, testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Anita Hill accused Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas of sexually harassing her; Thomas re-appeared before the panel to denounce the proceedings as a "high-tech lynching."

On this date:

In 1809, just over three years after the famous Lewis and Clark expedition ended, Meriwether Lewis was found dead in a Tennessee inn, an apparent suicide; he was 35.

In 1884, American first lady Eleanor Roosevelt was born in New York City.

In 1910, Theodore Roosevelt became the first former U.S. president to fly in an airplane during a visit to St. Louis.

In 1958, the lunar probe Pioneer 1 was launched; it failed to go as far out as planned, fell back to Earth, and burned up in the atmosphere.

In 1961, actor-comedian Leonard "Chico" (CHIH'-koh) Marx, 74, died in Hollywood, Calif.

In 1962, Pope John XXIII convened the first session of the Roman Catholic Church's Second Vatican Council, also known as "Vatican 2."

In 1968, Apollo 7, the first manned Apollo mission, was launched with astronauts Wally Schirra (shih-RAH'), Donn Fulton Eisele and R. Walter Cunningham aboard. The government of Panama was overthrown in a military coup.

In 1983, the last full-fledged hand-cranked telephone system in the United States went out of service as 440 telephone customers in Bryant Pond, Maine, were switched over to direct-dial service.

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev opened two days of talks concerning arms control and human rights in Reykjavik, Iceland.

In 1992, in the first of three presidential debates, three candidates faced off against each other in St. Louis: President George H.W. Bush, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton and businessman Ross Perot.

In 2001, in his first prime-time news conference since taking office, President George W. Bush said "it may take a year or two" to track down Osama bin Laden and his terrorist network in Afghanistan, but he asserted that after a five-day aerial bombardment, "we've got them on the run."

In 2002, former President Jimmy Carter was named the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush and foreign financial officials, meeting at the White House, displayed joint resolve in combatting the unfolding financial crisis. Austrian far-right politician Joerg Haider (yorg HY'-dur), 58, was killed in a car accident. Composer and arranger Neal Hefti, who wrote the themes for the movie "The Odd Couple" and the TV show "Batman," died in Toluca Lake, Calif., at age 85.

Five years ago: The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons won the Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts to stop chemical warfare. Tyrese Ruffin, the 2-year-old son of Minnesota Vikings running back Adrian Peterson, died at a South Dakota hospital two days after being admitted with severe head injuries; Joseph Patterson was convicted of second-degree murder in the child's beating death and was sentenced to life in prison. Carlos Beltran hit an RBI single in the 13th inning to lift

the St. Louis Cardinals over the Los Angeles Dodgers 3-2 in the NL championship series opener.

One year ago: The Boy Scouts of America announced that it would admit girls into the Cub Scouts starting in 2018 and establish a new program for older girls based on the Boy Scout curriculum, allowing them to aspire to the Eagle Scout rank. Strong winds fueled wildfires burning through California wine country; the confirmed death toll climbed to 23 as authorities ordered new evacuations. An American woman, Caitlan Coleman, her Canadian husband Joshua Boyle, and their children were freed, five years after they were seized by a terrorist network in the mountains of Afghanistan; officials said the couple and their three children - who'd been born in captivity - were rescued in a dramatic raid orchestrated by the U.S. and Pakistani governments.

Today's Birthdays: Former U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry is 91. Actor Ron Leibman is 81. Actor Amitabh Bachchan is 76. Country singer Gene Watson is 75. Singer Daryl Hall (Hall and Oates) is 72. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., is 68. Rhythm-and-blues musician Andrew Woolfolk is 68. Actress-director Catlin Adams is 68. Country singer Paulette Carlson is 67. Actor David Morse is 65. Actor Stephen Spinella is 62. Actress-writer-comedian Dawn French is 61. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Steve Young is 57. Actress Joan Cusack is 56. Rock musician Scott Johnson (Gin Blossoms) is 56. Comedy writer and TV host Michael J. Nelson is 54. Actor Sean Patrick Flanery is 53. Actor Lennie James is 53. College Football Hall of Famer and former NFL player Chris Spielman is 53. Actor Luke Perry is 52. Country singer-songwriter Todd Snider is 52. Actor-comedian Artie Lange is 51. Actress Jane Krakowski is 50. Rapper U-God (Wu-Tang Clan) is 48. Actress Constance Zimmer is 48. Bluegrass musician Leigh Gibson (The Gibson Brothers) is 47. Rapper MC Lyte is 47. Figure skater Kyoko Ina is 46. Actor Darien Sills-Evans is 44. Actor/writer Nat Faxon is 43. Singer NeeNa Lee is 43. Actress Emily Deschanel is 42. Actor Matt Bomer is 41. Actor Trevor Donovan is 40. Actor Robert Christopher Riley is 38. Actress Michelle Trachtenberg is 33. Actress Lucy Griffiths is 32. Golfer Michelle Wie is 29. Rapper Cardi B is 26.

Thought for Today: "Science is organized knowledge. Wisdom is organized life." - Immanuel Kant, German philosopher (1724-1804).

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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