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Connecting - October 15, 2018

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning!

Jim Reindl's commutes in his AP career took place in some of the nation's largest cities, including Detroit, Chicago and Miami.

Now he climbs aboard his motorcycle each morning, in Timor-Leste in Southeast Asia, and drives 1.6 kilometers to his current job.

He outlines what happened in between in today's Monday Profile.

We also bring you still more of your memories of dictating stories - somewhat of a lost art in today's world of mobile phones and laptops. It's a subject that has resonated like no other in Connecting and if you haven't shared your own story, please do.

My congratulations to fellow Dodge Boy **Mark Mittelstadt** on his weekend honor from the community college that was the springboard for his career in journalism. Linda and I were pleased to be there for the event - escaping Fort Dodge, Iowa, just as the first snow fell Sunday.

I look forward to your contributions as we begin a new week.

Paul

Connecting profile
Jim Reindl



What are you doing these days?

We live in the tiny Southeast Asia island nation of Timor-Leste. I work under contract for USAID and am the Supervisory Development Outreach Communications Officer, which is a long, fancy title for PR Guy. Graca was recently hired as the chef to the United States Ambassador to Timor-Leste. She has the more responsible job of the two of us now, for sure, although of late she is walking the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage trail across northern Spain. It's something she's planned for years and the ambassador was kind enough to let her go do it.

My job is communicating USAID's mission and accomplishments primarily to Timorese audiences. We make a lot of use of Facebook. Earlier this year I completed a movie that I'm pretty proud of, especially since it's gotten a lot of traction over here. It's called "The Sea That Sustains Us" and it's available on YouTube on our USAID/Timor-Leste page. The movie features regular Timorese discussing how ocean plastics pollution affects their lives.

Timor-Leste is a beautiful country. We're in Dili, the capital and by far the largest city in this nation of 1.2 million people. Dili is situated on a coastal plain and is hemmed in by nearby mountains and the ocean. My 1.2 kilometer motorcycle commute to work every day is along the ocean. Not bad. We plan to be here just over one more year and then probably on to Brazil.

How did you get your first job with the AP? Who hired you? What were your first days like?

I graduated from the Kiplinger Program at Ohio State with my masters in journalism in 1982, which was a bit of a recession year for newspapers. I had several interviews with Gannett papers around the country but never clicked with any of them, nor, more importantly at the time, them with me.



I ended up moving back to my folks in the Detroit area to continue looking for work. A friend got me a job cleaning out the old warehouse of the dying film company he worked for so I got my frustrations out by sailing old metal film canisters across the musty room. I knew one had to take a test to join the AP so I called the bureau, explained who I was and asked if I could take the test. Chuck Green was bureau chief and Mike Grazcyk was news editor. A week or so later, I received a letter from Chuck calling me in for an interview but noting that I had missed 11 spelling words (what are dictionaries for, anyway?).

What were your different past jobs in the AP, in order? Describe briefly what you did with each?

I showed up at the Detroit bureau in January 1983 as a newsman thinking the Detroit Free Press would be calling in a few months. At least that's what I was hoping at the time. I learned a tremendous amount from everyone in that bureau then and quickly found I didn't want the Freep to call anyway. In 1985 I was named news editor in Milwaukee under Rick Spratling. In 1987, Jim Wilson gave me the news editor's job in Chicago where I also worked for ACoB T. Lee Hughes. That's where I really learned about managing people. I believe the size of the Illinois staff in those days was around 50.

When Lee went to Milwaukee as CoB in 1990 or so, Jim put me in as ACOB, where I stayed until 1993 when I was named bureau chief in Miami. My opportunity came through Jim's great misfortune to have suffered a terrible car accident on a membership trip. New York put in as acting bureau chief and I guess I acted well enough that Bill Ahearn called me when Miami opened and asked where my application was.

"What application," I asked, not believing New York would think I was ready for Miami.

"You're right," Ahearn groused back. "Christmas s***s in Miami. Now where's your application?"

When I arrived in Miami to replace Gary Clark, I thought I'd seen it all as a newsperson in Chicago but after my first week I realized the news flow was so heavy that the stories we passed would top most state digests any day. In 1997 I was going through a divorce and I told Jim Donna to either get me closer to my kids who were going back to the Chicago area or I'd do it myself. Fortunately, he and New York engineered it for me to go to Indianapolis as CoB and I was there for three years before returning to Chicago as bureau chief.

In 2005, Tom Brettingen offered me a new position as director of major accounts. I was on the corporate staff without having to move to New York. My job was representing AP's interests with our major newspapers and companies, so I worked closely with the New York Times, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, USA Today, and for a while McClatchy. In 2010 I took on the job of Director of Sports Products, a whole other challenge looking for ways to monetize sports coverage.

In 2014, Graca and I decided it was time to take a left turn in our lives. I took a leave of absence from AP with no guarantee of return. We sold all we owned and we joined the Peace Corps and moved to Ghana for two years.

Who played the most significant role in your career and how?

Tough to say as so many people are there along the way to lend a hand if you're smart enough to grab it. Some of my most memorable advice came from Jackie Boyle, who was running the night desk in Detroit when I first joined. She told me that it didn't matter if I made the right decision or the wrong one but I'd better learn to make one when running the desk. I found out during my bureau chief days that blue envelopes from New York could remind you making the right decision is important after all.

If I had to pick one person to focus on I think it would be Rick Spratling. Rick gave me my first management job in Milwaukee and taught me much about being human while being a leader and responsible for things.

Would you do it all over again- or what would you change?

That's an emphatic yes. AP was a great life. I always felt I was part of a larger family, which I've read in Connecting countless times from people filling this space. Proof would come during foreign vacations when AP people would stop their busy lives for lunch or a beer. Now having lived overseas one thing I would do differently would be to join the foreign service. Didn't work out that way for me, but I have no regrets looking back.

What's your favorite hobby or activity?

I'm not a big hobby person. I love music, listening, not playing. I enjoy riding my bicycle (although roads here are mostly awful or involve steep, dangerous climbs). I learned to dive while here. Timor-Leste has the most biodiverse waters in the world and that is NOAA certified.

What's the best vacation trip you've ever made?

The one I'm on. Kidding aside I do feel like I'm on a paid vacation. Weather's nice. People are friendly. Country is peaceful and the politics, while fractured, are not toxic like someplace I know.

For vacations I've paid for I'd say visiting Madagascar while Graca and I lived in Ghana. Amazing place. We traveled across the country by car so we saw it all.



Names of your family members and what they do?

I have two sons, Alex, 27, and Peter, 25. Alex lives in Chicago and Peter in New Orleans. Both are working restaurant jobs for now. Graca's daughter, Mayara, 31, lives in Chicago with our grandson, Davi, 5. She took over Graca's cleaning business when we left in 2014 and is making a go of it.

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Sorry, Thomas Wolfe - but Mark Mittelstadt proves you CAN go home again



Following his induction, this Mark Mittelstadt family photo shows, from left: his brother Chad, mother Marilyn, father Ray, Mark, wife Mary, sister Sara Messerly and her husband Curt.

In 1973, **Mark Mittelstadt** ([Email](#)) left his hometown of Fort Dodge, Iowa, to complete his college education and launch a career in journalism that included 29 years with The Associated Press in Des Moines, Albuquerque, Trenton and New York City.

He and many of his family and friends returned to Fort Dodge this past weekend when he was inducted into the Hall of Fame of Iowa Central Community College, where the seed was sown for his career in journalism.

In New York, Mittelstadt served as AP's editorial liaison with the AP Managing Editors association - a fact noted by Bob Haiman, retired executive editor of the St. Petersburg Times who served as president of APME during that period and today is chairman of the APME Regents.

"One of the most admirable, compelling, attributes of Mark Mittelstadt is that he was able to achieve so much professionally--in that very tough arena---and still remain a superb human being," Haiman said in a letter of support for his nomination, read at the Saturday night ceremony. "I've seen him thrust into virtually every difficult situation of human relations (tension, conflict, competitiveness, jealousy, egomania, anger and fear----and almost always under crushing



Mark Mittelstadt with longtime friend and

deadline pressure! -----and he never faltered, and never failed.

classmate Maureen Powers, who wrote a letter of support on his behalf. (Messenger photo/Hans Madsen)

"When a way had to be found to resolve the seemingly irresolvable, it often was Mark who suggested a way that the Gordian Knot might be cut.

"When large egos were inflamed, it often was Mark who could steer their owners back to the center, and the important work waiting to be addressed.

"When deep feelings were hurt, it often was Mark who was the healer.

"When the questions of ethics were raised---- (or sometimes were NOT being raised!)-----it often would be Mark who reminded everyone in the conversation of the higher principles that they should be honoring, as well their competitive rush to 'get a scoop.'"

[Click here](#) to read a story on the induction ceremony in The Messenger of Fort Dodge.

Just say no to the Kool Aid

Campbell Gardett ([Email](#)) - It was striking to see Carl Robinson's comment on the CJR article ("Kavanaugh and the Fallacy of Cause and Effect") placed in Connecting (in last Friday's issue) next to Mr. Trump's USA Today op-ed piece. Carl remarks that the CJR author seems to be in his own universe. I concur. Mr. Trump's piece was likewise in its own universe. Whatever factoids might be dredged up to support his op-ed's assertions about preexisting coverage issues and health insurance premiums, the presentation is essentially solipsistic.

While one always hopes for better, I myself would give more of a bye to the politician than the press. Surely a big piece of the value proposition for an objective press is the ability to see and the wherewithal to enforce a vigorous distinction between allegations and evidence. The CJR piece seemed to be in denial about the importance of corroborating evidence (so far). The value proposition for a politician in a democracy is a good more complicated. To some extent, a working politician stirs the pot and then reacts to the result. Messy, but often surprisingly effective (assuming the press and others are at work.)

I have been in both places. I have seen (no, I have written) partisan presentations that use highly selected facts to support a pre-made conclusion. I have also experienced how the rules of journalism, however imperfect, protect the writer from leaning too far his or her own way without provable justification. Mr. Trump

obviously goes (way) too far in the one direction. It would be at great peril to everyone for the mainline press to weaken its perhaps-boring but definitely-long-proven tools of resistance against drinking the Kool Aid, of whatever flavor.

Parenthetically, I have to say I've been in a couple of other places as well, and I was struck how neither of them seemed to attract curiosity or yield coverage. One place is the incestuous and self-serving world of Washington-area private schools. How does it happen that children are at crazy, unsupervised parties in zillion-dollar neighborhoods? How can their parents believe, while they are off being *Important*, that they've done what they should by their children because they pay some school 30K a year? Another place is that I've been in that of the wrongly accused "abuser." There's a person who says she believes (has a recovered memory of) me sexually abusing her. I guess I alone can know: it's just not real. I also have a brother in law who went to jail following accusations by his estranged wife and her daughter. I have no way to know for sure, but it is more than possible that revenge was at the root of it. Both of these are areas that might have produced coverage of interest with far-ranging implications - for parenting today, for accusations and standards of proof. I did not see thoughtful coverage of this kind. It must have been somewhere, but I would disagree with CJR that the mainline press was doing its job. (Well, I guess I should say: the job I would like to see it do.)

When evidence is accepted on a tribal or (so-to-speak) "religious" basis, you get the Hundred Years War. The antidote is actually not the call for "civility" that one often hears. The antidote is self-questioning (there's a line in "Man for All Seasons" about that), self-effacement (in my own favorite movie, "Moonstruck," the old Italian patriarch looks up from the table at an awkward moment and says: "Somebody tell a joke"), and self-imposed standards that should not be abandoned.

Just say no to the Kool Aid.

AP Photo of the Day



A resident of Mexico Beach, Fla., sifts through what was her third-floor bedroom while surveying damage from Hurricane Michael on Sunday. | David Goldman/AP Photo

Get me rewrite! Your stories of dictation



Terry Anderson (Email) - I have had recourse to dictating a story many times, occasionally to a teletypist in NY (yes, we once had them, and very reliable they were). Up to the early 80s, only a few network correspondents had them - huge, clumsy things. Too expensive for your basic AP reporter. During the 1980 coup that toppled (and killed) long-time South Korean dictator Park Chung Hee, in the midst of a chaotic office with teletype banging, phones ringing and people shouting, Foreign Editor Nate Polowetzky called in on one line and insisted that, even though our teletype was functioning just fine, "we need it now, Terry, just dictate it to me, wait, here's George Bria, give it to him."

In Beirut, I and the other members of the finest news team I have known frequently found ourselves pleading for the nearest working phone (in a city where phones didn't often work). When the Marine barracks was truck-bombed, killing more than 200 Marines and sailors, Robert Fisk, Bill Foley and I were on the scene in minutes. Surveying the damage and the bodies being laid out, I turned to Fisk and said, "Robert, cover me," rushed back to the car and drove five miles to the Summerland Hotel to find the nearest phone, dictating the bulletin to a radio monitor in the office. The massive explosion had knocked out service for all of south Beirut.

It was only years later (6 years, 9 months to be precise) that I emerged into the world of common cell phones and, wonder of wonders, the Internet - something it took me several weeks to grasp.

Dan Day (Email) - In the summer of 1979, I was an intern at The Milwaukee Journal, where I had a variety of assignments. One of the best was being sent to a huge fire at a tannery in a working-class neighborhood on the city's south side. I tried to keep a low profile as firefighters started evacuating nearby homes.

To my great delight, a guy stuck his head out of one of the windows in one of the homes and said, "Hey, you can use my phone!" He lifted up the lid of a garbage can under the window and stuck the phone inside, the cord hanging down from the windowsill. I used it off and on for a good couple of hours to call the rewrite desk in the city room.

I got a Page One byline, a lesson in the importance of establishing a solid line of communication and the indelible memory of covering a tannery fire using a Princess phone.

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Mike Harris (Email) - Having a good memory helped when dictating stories and, thankfully, I had a very good memory. During the early 70's transition to computers, we would dictate our stories from wherever the assignment took us to the Indianapolis bureau, which sent it on to the control bureau in Columbus.

I was in South Bend, IN, covering a Navy-Notre Dame football game and longtime Indy staffer Steve Herman was taking my dictation in the bureau. The game was awful. Notre Dame led 49-0 at the half. I called Steve and dictated my game story, leaving a couple of blanks for final stats. I then sat back and watched Notre Dame coach Ara Parseghian try his darndest to not embarrass Navy further. The game wound up with that same 49-0 score and I called the bureau with about two minutes left, filled in the blanks and added a couple of sentences.

As the game wound down to the final seconds, I counted down for Steve and as the scoreboard read 00:00, I said, "Okay, send!" I heard a loud expletive from the other end of the phone.

"Everything is gone," Steve said. "Start dictating." After the initial shock, I was able to reconstruct the story very quickly but, of course, that lost time cost me in the ongoing battle with UPI.

Turns out, our big computer in Indy had not been grounded properly. The static electricity would build until it overwhelmed the computer and zapped everything off

the screen. The techs eventually solved the problem by laying down a big metal plate under the computer. But that didn't help the day I lost my game story.

South Bend was also the scene of another major dictation story of mine. I was covering the UCLA-Notre Dame game in January 1974 when the Irish ended the Bruins' record-setting 88-game winning streak with a last-second basket. The Notre Dame students went crazy, rushing the floor and sweeping everything off the court-side table where I was sitting. I grabbed my phone and my notes, ducked under the table and dictated from there. It felt a big surreal, but it worked just fine.

Unfortunately, for the UPI writer, he lost his notes and wound up losing the competitive play by a wide margin.

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Joe McKnight (Email) - There were so many times in 41 years with AP for dictating stories from the field that none really stand out. In December 1965, after a fully loaded Air Force refueling plane crashed into a residential neighborhood in east Wichita, KS, I spent a few minutes at the scene for an initial assessment, then walked about a block where a resident agreed to let me use his phone after I promised there would be no charge against his phone. I called Kansas City, learned the office had a brief report from The Wichita Eagle, and dictated my first update from the scene. It was a Saturday and I've forgotten who was working in KX AP, but I was told the bureau had trouble placing calls to the area because the crash had disrupted phone service. So it was agreed that I would try to keep the phone line open while I went in search of more information. We were fearful, in 1965, that the phone company would disconnect any telephone after a period of silence, so I asked the resident's teen-aged son to take the phone and talk. He said he didn't know what to say. I saw a Bible on a table near the phone, gave it to him and asked him to start reading it to the guy in Kansas City.

We kept the phone connection up for just about eight hours. By then, KX News Editor Bob Gallimore had arrived with staff writer Harry Rosenthal and a photographer. I don't recall when we finally disconnected the call. Rosenthal and I returned to the AP office at the Wichita Eagle and put both our names on the final AMs copy. Harry headed back to KX. I picked up my wife and we went to a pre-planned party for news types. Midway through the party, I got a call from the NY General Desk, looking for a little different twist on the lead. I left the party early, went to the office and wrote what NY asked. Then I went home.

The following week, I received a note from my first AP boss, Lew Hawkins who was working in WX AP, with a tear sheet from the Sunday Washington Post that led page one with our story and my byline.

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Eric Quinones (Email) - I'm enjoying the dictation memories from Connecting readers. My first (and only, as far as I can recall) dictation experience was during my internship in the Indianapolis bureau in the summer of 1994. I covered the kickoff of the Indiana State Fair with veteran photographer Chuck Robinson, who found it hilarious to see the kid from New Jersey trying to navigate his new surroundings. News editor John Strauss had instructed me to call in and dictate a lede for the morning digest, so I found a pay phone and babbled something about "the corn being shucked and the butter being churned" (which John thankfully reshaped into an intelligible lede). I vividly remember how nervous I was in trying to dictate two simple sentences, and how hard Chuck laughed as he watched me scrape a cow pie off the bottom of my only pair of dress shoes.

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Bill Wertz (Email) - Walter Mears and the late Dick Ciccone (who worked for the AP in Chicago before joining the Chicago Tribune) were the best I ever saw at dictation. Their mastery of the art was never more visible than on election nights, when they would dictate updates to the national and Illinois election roundup stories as returns came in and races were won and lost. It was awesome to watch Walter calmly and smoothly call in a 14th lead that meshed perfectly into the 3rd graf of his previous update of a clear and concise election re-cap that kept the focus on the most significant races and developments. (Less proficient reporters were always picking up stories in the 27th graf or worse! Somehow both of them could juggle intricate puzzles in their heads and dictate without hesitation or confusion. A lost art, perhaps, and best appreciated by those who were struggling to match their expertise.

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Jane See White (Email) - I'm surprised no one has remarked that those of us in the New York City Bureau in the late '70s could and usually did call the bureau collect when we phoned in a story. Seriously, lack a dime for the pay phone? Dial O. My other enduring memory of dictating from pay phones in NYC is that virtually every single one of them had "Worship God" etched on the stainless-steel plate below the "dial" (think they were buttons by then). I made a game of it, and I never did find a phone that hadn't been marked with that message.

I also have memories of dictating from private homes (in one home at Love Canal, in New York, a litter of kittens were trying to scale my stockings as I dictated) and from businesses in NYC. Once, when covering a teachers' strike vote in the West Village, I stopped in to a liquor store around the corner from the meeting hall and asked if I could use the phone when a vote came in. The guy at the cash register said that

would be fine, but when I made my mad dash through his door an hour or so later, he reached for his gun. Obviously, he didn't fire.

Finally, raise your hands: How many of you hung "Out of Order" notes on pay phones when you knew there was going to be a crush of users when you needed to call in and start dictating? Everyone? Of course.

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George Zucker ([Email](#)) - The biggest story I ever dictated as it happened was the 1969 return of the first men on the moon. New York sent my story around the world under someone else's byline to avoid changing bylines in mid-cycle.

On July 26, two days after picking up the Apollo 11 crew in the Pacific, the USS Hornet steamed into Pearl Harbor for the astronauts' first landfall since their July 20 moonwalk. I had taken over a phone booth next to the flag-bedecked reviewing stand where the three astronauts, Neil Armstrong, Ed Aldrin and Mike Collins would be welcomed by VIP oratory and Hawaii's own brand of pomp and circumstance - flower leis, ukuleles and hula dancers.

The astronauts would receive a hero's welcome from Admiral John McCain, the four-star Pacific military commander whose son, Navy pilot John McCain, was a prisoner of war in North Korea, Hawaii Gov. John A. Burns and others. I began dictating the historic docking as the big ship inched toward the pier.

Then their gleaming trailer was trucked to Hickam Air Force Base for the flight to Houston. As I drove along in the slow-moving motorcade, I heard my story read back to me on the car radio by a network announcer in New York.

My story moved under of Ralph Dighton's name, AP's ace science writer in Los Angeles. He told me was proud to have his name on it.

Best of the Week

All-formats team overcomes logistics to report devastation, heartbreak and heroism in Indonesia



Indonesian men carry car tires, Oct. 4, 2018, past the Sabuk Nusantara 39 ferry which was swept ashore by the tsunami in Wani village on the outskirts of Palu, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. Some 2,000 people were killed, with many more displaced or missing, in the earthquake and tsunami that struck the region. AP Photo / Dita Alangkara

An enormous story struck quickly on Sept 28 and unfolded at breathtaking speed - a magnitude 7.5 earthquake followed by a tsunami that washed over the Indonesian city of Palu. Communications collapsed and government reports were sketchy, but the few posts on social media provided the first indications of the enormous scope of the disaster.

The AP team shot into action to move cross-format personnel to the hardest-hit areas, texting details for the wire and squeezing out initial images for photos and video. In the days that followed, the breadth of coverage expanded to include rolling live video of rescues, grim portrayals of the retrieval of the dead, and personal stories of those whose homes and neighborhoods were now rubble.

For impressive work across all platforms despite enormous obstacles, the Best of the Week award goes to the following team:

- Jakarta staffers: office manager Elis Salim, reporter Niniek Karmini, photographers Tatan Syulfana, Dita Alangkara and Achmad Ibrahim, business writer Stephen Wright, newsperson Ali Kotarumalos, medical writer Margie Mason, videojournalist Fadlan Syam and senior producer Andi Jatmiko.

- Bangkok staffers: global enterprise writer Todd Pitman, videojournalist Tass Vejpongsa, video editor Jerry Harmer and special events coordinator Keiko Fujino.

- And: Kuala Lumpur videojournalist Syawall Zain, Manila photographer Aaron Favila, Malaysian correspondent Eileen Ng, Beijing facilities coordinator Xiao Wei Gong and Hanoi producer Hau Dinh.

Coverage was launched on multiple fronts - first by reporter Karmini and photographer Syuflana flying in to the closest functioning airport and then scrambling to find someone willing to take them on the eight-hour journey by car to Palu. Once there, their only means of communication was a messaging app. Their first reporting for all formats was then filed from Jakarta while a second wave of journalists, and then a third, were assembled and deployed.

Meticulous planning and coordination across Asia helped to get reporters, photographers, producers and video journalists to the tragic scenes. Office manager Salim constantly checked on flights that would get our teams to Palu, while also supporting the staff in Jakarta.

The whole team operated as one - contributing to all formats and doing what was needed to keep us ahead. Despite communication difficulties, information exchange was abundant between folks on the ground and folks in Jakarta, which allowed a coordinated and organized reporting under very tough circumstances.

Character-driven stories and vivid images kept the AP far ahead of the competition, including the first investigation of the stalled tsunami warning system and live shots for video clients that were unmatched by competitors.

Of particular note was the effort by AP's Global Media Service staffers who worked tirelessly to provide 150 video transmissions for clients - a vital business success that goes hand-in-hand with the AP's commitment to on-the-ground reporting. Important client Australian Channel 7 wrote: "(We) would not have survived without the AP team in Palu. Such an incredible bunch of people. They fed us, made sure we had water, tried to help negotiate drivers and accommodation for us. They went above and beyond."

"(We) would not have survived without the AP team in Palu. Such an incredible bunch of people. They went above and beyond."

Monique Dirksz, Australian Channel 7

Among AP's coverage highlights:

- Karmini and Pitman's story of one survivor who found the bodies of his father and sister locked in a final embrace
- Pitman again with the tragic account of a family frantically searching for a two-year-old boy swept from his mother's arms
- Wright providing for all formats the amazing visual and accompanying narrative of the ferry that was left stranded in a neighborhood of houses

Best of the States

Staffers respond with multiformat report after limo crash kills 20



Barbara Douglas of Danamora, N.Y., reacts, Sunday, Oct. 7, 2018, while talking about four family members that died in Saturday's fatal limousine crash in Schoharie, N.Y. The limousine loaded with revelers heading to a 30th birthday party reportedly ran a stop sign at the end of a highway and slammed into an SUV parked outside a store, killing all 18 people in the limo and two pedestrians, officials and relatives of the victims said. AP Photo / Hans Pennink

The short item that moved on the Associated Press' New York state wire Saturday night about a two-car crash involving a limousine in the upstate town of Schoharie was hardly remarkable. It included the line: "State police said only that the crash happened just before 2 p.m. ... and caused "multiple fatalities."

Then came the shocking update from the State Police the next morning: 20 people were killed in the crash, making it the deadliest traffic incident in the United States in more than a decade.

AP reporter Deepti Hajela, the lone staffer in New York City bureau that Sunday morning, filed the APNewsAlert and began getting people moving across the state and the region for an all-formats reporting effort that broke news and covered every angle of a horrific tragedy.

All-formats reporter Michael Hill dashed from his home outside Albany and made the 45-minute trip to the rural crash scene, where the super-sized stretch limo had plowed through a T-shaped intersection and slammed into a parked SUV outside a popular country store packed with autumn tourists taking in the fall foliage.

Within minutes, he began dictating material for the story and transmitting video of NTSB investigators scouring the crash scene, which still bore the muddy tracks where the limo careened out of control. His videos included interviews with several witnesses and grieving relatives, including a tearful aunt who spoke about four sisters being aboard the ill-fated limo.

Albany statehouse reporter David Klepper, who was celebrating his birthday in Rhode Island, saw the NewsAlert about the crash and immediately got on the phone with his government sources. He quickly sent in the detail that all 18 people aboard the limo were killed, as well two people outside the country store. That moved as a NewsAlert of its own, and put AP out front alone until those numbers were confirmed at a news conference nearly three hours later.

Stringer photographer Hans Pennink, who joined Hill at the scene, began transmitting pictures almost immediately. His shots of friends and relatives embracing each other in their grief, of the flowers placed in the limo's tracks, of the lone limo tire that came to rest in a muddy ditch, and of mourners at a candlelight vigil, got massive play, including on such websites as CNN and MSNBC, and the web and print editions of The New York Times and the Washington Post.

Boston reporter Bob Salsberg, who jumped in to help gather string on the victims, appears to have been the first to confirm from a relative that the group was headed to a brewery for a birthday party. And his work began building a series of vignettes on the victims that would move on the wire with photos and video over the ensuing days.

Through it all, Hajela worked with the reporters to constantly update the story, carefully avoiding mistakes that several other news outlets made, such as repeating incorrect reports that the ill-fated group was a wedding party.

AP avoided the mistakes that other news outlets made, such as repeating incorrect reports that the ill-fated group was a wedding party.

Others who contributed to the effort included Albany sports reporter John Kekis, who scrambled to a State Police news conference, Nicholas Riccardi, the national writer on duty who jumped in to help polish the story; New York City News Editor David Caruso, New York State Editor James Martinez and East Desk editor Jeff McMillan.

Their work set the stage for strong reporting in later cycles that detailed the victims, the shoddy maintenance that should have kept the limo off the road, that the limo driver was not licensed to operate such a vehicle and that the owner of the firm had once been a terrorism trial informant for the FBI. The operator of that firm was charged with criminally negligent homicide.

For outstanding breaking news work that lived up to the highest standards of the AP, Michael Hill, David Klepper, Hans Pennink, Bob Salsberg and Deepti Hajela win this week's Best of the States award.

Stories of interest

This is why so many journalists are at risk today (Washington Post)



Alyssa Edling, center, and Thomas Malia, second from right, both with PEN America, join others as they hold signs of missing journalist Jamal Khashoggi. (Jacquelyn Martin/AP)

By Anne Applebaum

Twelve years ago this month, Anna Politkovskaya, a journalist whose reporting came too close to the truth about Russia's war in Chechnya, was gunned down in the elevator of her Moscow apartment block. One year ago this month, Daphne Caruana Galizia, a journalist whose reporting came too close to the truth about corruption in Malta, was murdered by a car bomb next to her house in Bidnija. Seven months ago, Jan Kuciak, a journalist whose reporting came too close to the truth about the mafia's role in Slovak business, was murdered in his home outside Bratislava.

The murderers in all these cases were contract killers. But that's the only real difference between them and the government-employed hit men who are alleged to have murdered Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a journalist whose reporting came too close to the truth about the hypocrisy of the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman - a man who claims to be a "reformer" but is himself a corrupt oligarch, as well as an authoritarian who jails his critics.

Over the past two decades, there have been dozens, if not hundreds, of similar cases - and there will be more.

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

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My Private Oval Office Press Conference With Donald Trump, Mike Pence, John Kelly, and Mike Pompeo (New York Magazine)

By OLIVIA NUZZI

Around 12:20 p.m. on Tuesday, I was on my way out of the White House after a series of meetings in the West Wing. I was reporting on a question that has hung over this administration for months: How has Chief of Staff John Kelly managed to keep his job in spite of convincing and persistent rumors and reports that the president is unhappy with him, and he is unhappy in his job? I stopped to talk to another reporter, and then I began to walk toward the North Gate. As I walked, I noticed I had a missed call from a Washington number I didn't recognize. It was Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders. She sounded very serious. She asked me if I had left yet. When I said no, she asked me to come back inside, and when she greeted me, she looked very serious. She implied she wanted me to go with her behind a door. I didn't understand, maybe didn't quite hear her. Then, she told me Trump wanted to speak to me.

I walked to the Oval Office. I guessed that the president wanted to disabuse me of any notion that Kelly was about to be fired, or had almost been fired many times before. I was right, but my imagination was too limited. What ensued amounted to a private press conference - featuring a series of special guest stars from the highest echelon of the Trump administration - to try to get me to change my mind.

"I just heard that you were doing a story on ... this stuff," the president said as he came into the Oval Office and sat down at the Resolute Desk. I sat in a chair across from him. Next to me were Sanders and communications director Bill Shine.

Read more [here](#).

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If a Prince Murders a Journalist, That's Not a Hiccup (New York Times)

By **NICHOLAS KRISTOF**

The reports about Jamal Khashoggi, the missing Saudi journalist and Washington Post contributor, whom I've known for more than 15 years, grow steadily more sickening.

Turkey claims to have audiotape of Saudi interrogators torturing Jamal and killing him in the Saudi Consulate. None of this is confirmed, and we still don't know exactly what happened; we all pray that Jamal will still reappear. But increasingly it seems that the crown prince, better known as M.B.S., orchestrated the torture, assassination and dismemberment of an American-based journalist using diplomatic premises in a NATO country.

That is monstrous, and it's compounded by the tepid response from Washington. President Trump is already rejecting the idea of responding to such a murder by cutting off weapons sales. Trump sounds as if he believes that the consequence of such an assassination should be a hiccup and then business as usual.

Read more [here](#).

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Risks, challenges and rewards of international reporting (RTNDA)

By **Maria Gardner Lara, RTDNA Student Newsroom**

A panel of former and current foreign correspondents offered their advice on entering the field at EIJ18 in a session titled "So you want to be a foreign correspondent . . ."

Resources and attention given to foreign news is in decline in the U.S., was the general consensus amongst the panelists, but international reporting can be a rewarding field.

Robert Buckman, a retired professor of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, said those aspiring to be foreign correspondents do not have to travel abroad to begin developing an area of expertise and generating stories for their portfolio.

"There are always opportunities to do a localized international story," Buckman said.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Paul Albright.

Today in History - October 15, 2018



By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, Oct. 15, the 288th day of 2018. There are 77 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 15, 1991, despite sexual harassment allegations by Anita Hill, the Senate narrowly confirmed the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court, 52-48.

On this date:

In 1783, the first manned balloon flight took place in Paris as Jean-Francois Pilatre de Rozier ascended in a basket attached to a tethered Montgolfier hot-air balloon, rising to about 75 feet.

In 1860, 11-year-old Grace Bedell of Westfield, N.Y., wrote a letter to presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln, suggesting he could improve his appearance by growing a beard.

In 1914, the Clayton Antitrust Act, which expanded on the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890, was signed into law by President Woodrow Wilson.

In 1917, Dutch exotic dancer Mata Hari (Margaretha ZelleGeertruida MacLeod), 41, convicted by a French military court of spying for the Germans, was executed by a firing squad outside Paris. (Maintaining her innocence to the end, Mata Hari refused a blindfold and blew a kiss to her executioners.)

In 1928, the German dirigible Graf Zeppelin landed in Lakehurst, N.J., completing its first commercial flight across the Atlantic.

In 1945, the former premier of Vichy France, Pierre Laval, was executed for treason.

In 1946, Nazi war criminal Hermann Goering (GEH'-reeng) fatally poisoned himself hours before he was to have been executed.

In 1976, in the first debate of its kind between vice-presidential nominees, Democrat Walter F. Mondale and Republican Bob Dole faced off in Houston.

In 1989, South African officials released eight prominent political prisoners, including Walter Sisulu.

In 1997, British Royal Air Force pilot Andy Green twice drove a jet-powered car in the Nevada desert faster than the speed of sound, officially shattering the world's land-speed record. NASA's plutonium-powered Cassini spacecraft rocketed flawlessly toward Saturn.

In 2001, Bethlehem Steel Corp. filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

In 2003, eleven people were killed when a Staten Island ferry slammed into a maintenance pier. (The ferry's pilot, who'd blacked out at the controls, later pleaded guilty to eleven counts of manslaughter.)

Ten years ago: Republican John McCain repeatedly assailed Democrat Barack Obama's character and campaign positions on taxes, abortion and more in a debate at Hofstra University; Obama parried each accusation, and leveled a few of his own, saying "100 percent" of McCain's campaign ads were negative. The Philadelphia Phillies beat the Los Angeles Dodgers 5-1 to win the NL championship series 4-1 for its first pennant since 1993. Pop star Madonna and movie director Guy Ritchie announced they were divorcing after nearly eight years of marriage. Actress-singer Edie Adams died in Los Angeles at age 81. Longtime game show host Jack Narz died in Los Angeles at age 85.

Five years ago: Abu Anas al-Libi, an alleged al-Qaida member who was snatched off the streets in Libya, pleaded not guilty in New York to bombing-related charges. President Barack Obama presented the Medal of Honor to William D. Swenson, a former Army captain whose heroic actions in a deadly Afghan battle were captured on video. The Boston Red Sox took a 2-1 lead in the AL championship series as they defeated the Detroit Tigers 1-0. The St. Louis Cardinals beat the Los Angeles Dodgers 4-2 for a 3-1 lead in the NL Championship series. Hans Riegel, 90, who turned little gold bears into a global candy juggernaut - Haribo's gummi bears - over a career that spanned seven decades, died in Bonn, Germany.

One year ago: Actress and activist Alyssa Milano tweeted that women who had been sexually harassed or assaulted should write "Me too" as a status; within hours, tens of thousands had taken up the #MeToo hashtag (using a phrase that had been introduced 10 years earlier by social activist Tarana Burke.) Police in London investigated three new allegations of sexual assault against producer Harvey Weinstein, all made by the same woman. Former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick filed a grievance against the NFL, alleging that he was still unsigned because of collusion by owners resulting from his protests during the national anthem.

Today's Birthdays: Former auto executive Lee Iacocca is 94. Jazz musician Freddy Cole is 87. Singer Barry McGuire is 83. Actress Linda Lavin is 81. Rock musician Don Stevenson (Moby Grape) is 76. Actress-director Penny Marshall is 75. Baseball Hall of Famer Jim Palmer is 73. Singer-musician Richard Carpenter is 72. Actor Victor Banerjee is 72. Former tennis player Roscoe Tanner is 67. Singer Tito Jackson is 65. Actor-comedian Larry Miller is 65. Actor Jere Burns is 64. Movie director Mira Nair is 61. Britain's Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson, is 59. Chef Emeril Lagasse is 59. Actress Tanya Roberts is 59. Rock musician Mark Reznicek (REHZ'-nih-chehk) is 56. Singer Eric Benet is 52. Actress Vanessa Marcil is 50. Singer-actress-TV host Paige Davis is 49. Country singer Kimberly Schlapman (Little Big Town) is 49. Actor Dominic West is 49. Rhythm-and-blues singer Ginuwine is 48. Actor Devon Gummersall is 40. Actor Chris Olivero is 39. Christian singer-actress Jaci (JAK'-ee) Velasquez is 39. Actor Brandon Jay McLaren is 38. Rhythm-and-blues singer Keyshia Cole is 37. Actor Vincent Martella is 26. Actress Bailee Madison is 19.

Thought for Today: "The conventional view serves to protect us from the painful job of thinking." - John Kenneth Galbraith, Canadian-born American economist (born this date in 1908, died in 2006).

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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