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## Connecting - February 22, 2019

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# Connecting

February 22, 2019

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning!

Many of us - over the years - have been asked to contribute our thoughts to memory books for a retiring colleague or one marking a significant AP anniversary. It's a great tradition - and one of the best contributions I've seen came on behalf of St. Louis correspondent **Jim Salter** by his longtime colleague **Jim Suhr** on the occasion of Salter's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the AP. Kansas City news editor **Julie Wright**

presented Salter with a Shutterfly book of memories that included Suhr's memories - featured in today's issue.

A Nieman Lab story was published Thursday on a Women's Media Center report of bylines that found that men continue to report and produce the majority of U.S. news. The study said the gap is particularly egregious at the news wires: 69 percent of AP and Reuters bylines go to men, it said, "by far the biggest gender gap in news media." We bring you that story and a response made to Nieman by AP media relations director **Lauren Easton**, who shared her statement with Connecting.

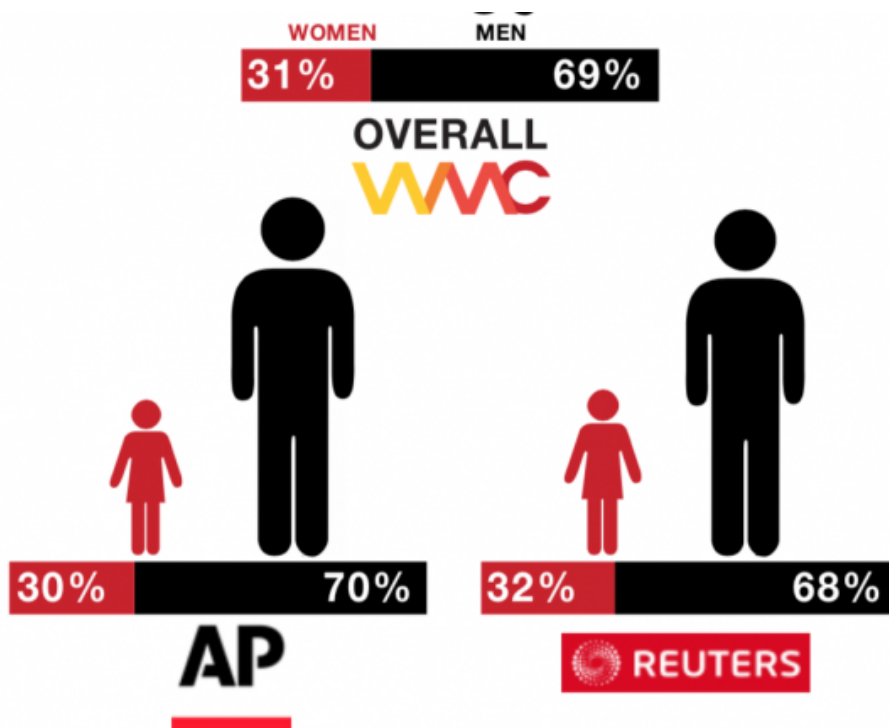
The first responses arrived on Connecting's call for your thoughts on a Columbia Journalism Review story on AP's international reporting structure. We would love to hear from you.

**Finally, this correction:** In a story Thursday on the photo of the sailor kissing a nurse when Japan surrendered, ending World War II, the date of that iconic image was listed as 1949; it should have been 1945. As colleague **Dick Lipsey** noted, many of us owe our existence to the fact that the war didn't continue on for four more years, or any more years. Were my father or father in law alive, they would say Amen to that. Both served in WWII as Army artillery captains and were destined to take part in an invasion of Japan had the surrender not occurred.

Have a great weekend!

Paul

**The state of women in U.S. media in 2019: Still f'ing abysmal - especially at Reuters and the AP**



By LAURA HAZARD OWEN

The dismal factoids in a new report released Thursday by the Women's Media Center go on and on. And on.

While women outnumber men in journalism programs and in colleges, they represent just 41.7 percent of newsroom employees, according to the 2018 diversity survey by the American Society of News Editors. That survey also received a record low number of responses - just 17 percent of the 1,700 organizations surveyed responded.

Men continue to report and produce the majority of U.S. news, and the gap is particularly egregious at the news wires: 69 percent of AP and Reuters bylines go to men, "by far the biggest gender gap in news media."

And men continue to dominate both "hard news" topics (international, politics, crime) and, uh, nearly every other topic as well (weather! social and justice issues! entertainment! religion! business!).

Read more [here](#). Click [here](#) to read the full report. Shared by John Hartzell.

## ***Response from AP***

**Lauren Easton** ([Email](#)) - summarizes what she told Nieman Lab on Thursday:

AP's newsroom is run by a woman, Executive Editor Sally Buzbee, and, unlike any other major news organization, a woman has headed AP's news department continuously since the early 2000s.

Women also hold key news leadership roles across the globe: two of AP's deputy managing editors are women; women head half of AP's cross-format international regions and the U.S. East; women run the AP Washington bureau; women direct our global enterprise, our U.S. video news, and AP's global entertainment coverage.

Plus women comprise half of the AP Management Committee. Click [here](#).

A count of bylines, something AP is working to improve, is not a fair measure of gender diversity and the quality of leadership at the AP.

I would add, too, that the byline study counts only text stories with 500 words or more, which excludes a significant portion of AP's output.

## The AP and its international reporting

**Ed McCullough** ([Email](#)) - During my 35-year AP career through 2016, I worked abroad from 1986 to 2008: 22 years as news editor, bureau chief and then business manager in seven Latin America and European assignments. Great fun as well as hard work.

Long before 2011, AP was slashing foreign news coverage budgets, rotating out long-time CoBs; reorganizing copy filing into worldwide hubs (3), terminating AP-produced, foreign language news wires (Swedish, then Puerto Rico, and French); partnering with media to share news vs. produce AP-own content; ceasing equipment production (Leafdesk), etc.

And as the CJR article notes, also closing foreign bureaus, shrinking the full-time staff head count, cutting benefits, replacing staff with stringers and local hires who sometimes were better, sometimes not - but usually cheaper as always was the salient point.

So was (and is) every AP international news agency competitor. Assuredly for cost reasons, too, not because it's somehow better to cover news from farther away; or task a photographer to write a news story or a reporter to shoot video; or expect local hires routinely to outproduce ex-pats.

We were assigned to provide news in real time, in all formats, to editors who shaped specific products offered to AP clients. That included European (Asian, African) news of interest to non-U.S. media clients, news in Spanish for Latin America and U.S. Hispanic media, etc. Quite expensive (not particularly referring to ex-pats' purportedly bloated compensation) and for decades there was a revenue base to profitably support that. No longer.

That's the main point. Not that AP needs to re-think primarily its foreign reporting. Rather, the company where I happily spent my career needs to re-think, or invent, a business model augmenting B-2-B sales at a time its client base and annual revenue are contracting perhaps irrecoverably; and every international news agency competitor is subsidized by financial services or a government.

AP competitors can afford to lose money on covering news. AP cannot. Worse, do AP clients and Internet news readers care much about that reality? Not enough, I venture to say.

Straziuso's comment in the CJR article is prescient: "I don't think AP's network, in terms of information relay, is globally necessary anymore."

AP's shrinking global footprint is not its biggest problem.

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**Robert Reid** ([Email](#)) - I worked overseas for the AP for 34 years.

The issue of how AP and other major news organizations can operate outside the United States in an era of rapidly diminishing resources is too complicated even for a 3,000-word story. CJR's report was like a trailer - issues raised and addressed to tease interest without satisfying the appetite.

All news organizations are under financial pressure, and all are taking measures to cut expenses. AP isn't the only big organization that's trimming or eliminating packages.

The largest expense in the budget is compensation, including but not limited to salaries. Variable costs - assignments, overtime - are especially difficult to manage in the news business. What avenue does one choose? No longer cover certain types of stories or continue but with fewer journalists doing the work?

Then there is the issue of the relative value of international news, or news from specific regions. You can produce the definitive report from Andorra but if you can't sell it what's the point. Is money better spent covering Donald Trump or Narendra Modi? Covering some countries or stories because it's "the right thing to do" may no longer be possible unless some way can be found to pay the bills.

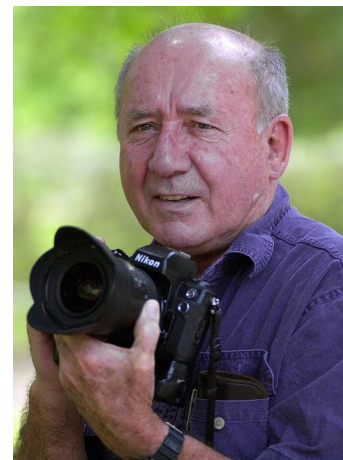
Given all the fiscal realities, it's only natural that AP, as the article said, would be "rethinking foreign reporting."

Other questions come to mind, including whether the current business model and administrative structure are sustainable? What further steps must be taken?

All good questions that went unanswered in the CJR story.

## Memories of former AP Miami photographer Pete Cosgrove

**Robert Meyers** ([Email](#)) - Pete Cosgrove was a great person to work with. He didn't talk loudly but only calmly for the most part. Confident that he had done whatever job he was checking on fully and in the best possible way. My most vivid memory was the call I took from him at the State Photo Center early one day in February 2003. He was calling from the Kennedy Space Center where he was in position to cover the Space Shuttle Columbia landing. His voice shook as he told me "it's not here, we don't know what's happening." The enormity of that took a moment to sink in, and I could not think of anything to say in response but only to get off the phone and relay that information to my colleagues in Washington and New York.



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**Jodie Steck** ([Email](#)) - There are so many former colleagues with whom I've had the privilege to work. Pete was an exception. By far, the gentlest of gentlemen, he

helped me navigate the waters of Florida membership, taught me how to cover both Nascar and Cape Canaveral, and tutored me on patience when dealing with ornery freelancers and fellow photographers. He would give me hell when I deserved it and offer a shoulder when needed and always, always give me strong images...even in the worst situations. Last year, he told me he hadn't taken a picture in years and would be watching Daytona from "the comfort of my home." I hope he had a chance to watch it this year the same way. I know he's going to be lighting that cigar and keeping an eye on all things Florida forever...

## Jim Salter: He was like my brother, he is my friend



St. Louis Correspondent Jim Salter (left) with the late James Finley (center) and Jim Suhr.

**Jim Suhr** ([Email](#)) - During most of my 20 years with the AP, Jim Salter was like my brother. More than that, in a company that carries inherent stress from deadlines and tragedies to cover, he is my friend.

For 14 years in St. Louis, we were what we liked to call the "Jimnasium," first in the cramped quarters of an office in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch building and later on the 19th floor of a downtown high-rise looking out on the Mississippi River.

Looking back, I appreciate that we always were reliable counterparts, often in harm's way. We covered historic flooding. Droughts. Executions. Tornadoes and some of

the Midwest's biggest legal cases. And, of course, Ferguson and all of the powder keg tension that went with what became years of protests, where we took in tear gas and ducked for cover behind vehicles during bursts of gunfire. The Army Corps of Engineers purposely blowing up a levee - something that had never been done before - to relieve pressure on other Mississippi River levees during insane flooding that threatened to inundate a city. We'll always remember that night, given that at the moment we were covering that Navy SEAL Team Six was killing Osama bin Laden.

Through it all, I knew Jim always had my back, as I had his.

And he led by example. Jim was always steady, a counterbalance to my more temperamental ways. When big news events happened - and they did routinely in St. Louis - Jim's calm always was comforting to me and others in the St. Louis bureau. Those numbers of staffers over time would dwindle until it was just Jim and me. And I liked it that way. I think we both did. At times of crises, we were sympatico, with both of us typically working the phones immediately during a breaking news event without ever having to sort out who was calling who. We just did it, to the wonderment and appreciation of our news editors in Kansas City or copy deskers in Chicago and New York. It made life at the AP fun.

As mentioned, Jim was an older brother. We were teammates in adult-league baseball. He'd be my ride when my car failed. He laughed at my office antics, and they were frequent. Like when I tipped over coffee cups on the desk because of my exaggerated gestures. Or when, whether jokingly feeling aggrieved or at serious times of stress, I split my pants kneeling prayerfully like Tim Tebow. He took me to my first colonoscopy, having already done the saintly thing to persuade me to get one in the first place. When Ferguson conflict didn't allow us to go to our homes to sleep, we were bunkmates, each on inflatable mattresses in our offices. And, as brothers, we sleuthed together for the giant rat that had infiltrated our office, always raiding our kitchenette area at night while partial to Jim's peanut butter - the rodent left finger swirls in it - and his almond milk. And again together, we identified the likely suspect. Always kind, he declined to indict.

Chris Clark, who was once our news editor - he oversaw us during Ferguson - and now is my coworker in business life, just told me he vividly remembers Jim's "endurance." Testament to his fitness, Jim seldom complained of fatigue when certain news stories would drain the ordinary reporter. And while Jim was known for his business-like demeanor, Chris recalls his sensitivity when tragedy struck. One example: Jim, dispatched to Joplin in 2011 the night an EF-5 tornado carved a path through the city, eventually killing 162 people, was calling in a NewsNow to Chris from what had been one of Joplin's busiest intersections. But the tornado had



wiped it out, along with most everything around it. And amid the dictation, as Chris recalls, Jim's voice began to crack a bit as he got choked up by the destruction and the disorientation that came with landmarks being wiped off the map.

Chris also recalls that the running joke was that "none of us wanted to trade places with Salter because that meant having to go to Potosi to see condemned inmates go to their death." In the end, I believe Jim witnessed somewhere in the neighborhood of 30 executions, always without complaint about the long hours that duty brought.



**Jim Salter**

All of that said, I strongly remember the day of the September 11th attacks. Jim already was in to work when I got there. I remarked of hearing on the radio that a "small plane" had hit one of the World Trade Center towers. Jim and I were in his office watching CNN when the second plane plowed into the other tower. We had the same look on our faces. We went to work, gathering local reaction.

And we felt blessed that we weren't in the New York, Boston or Washington bureaus. A sentiment that was a standard for us, having pity on other bureaus that had to cover disasters.

A greater being finally had enough of that and gave us Ferguson. Other bureaus told us privately they were glad they weren't us.

For sure, Ferguson was a grind. And at many times, downright scary. But I couldn't imagine having done that without the Jim.

God bless him, and may he get all of the credit in the world for being a template for what a reporter should be.

*(Jim Suhr was an AP newsman in Detroit, St. Louis and Kansas City for 20 years. He is now media relations manager, Corporate Marketing & Communications, for Black & Veatch Corp. in Overland Park, Kansas.*

**Jim Salter's email - [jsalter@ap.org](mailto:jsalter@ap.org)**

# Celebration of Life Set for Julia Versau

A celebration of life is set for Saturday, March 9, in Valparaiso, IN, for longtime Associated Press election stringer and newspaper and broadcast contest coordinator Julia Versau. The memorial, hosted by Versau's children Andrew, Michael and Claire Barton, will be from 1-5 p.m. at the Casa Del Roma Banquet Hall, [712 Calumet Ave., in Valparaiso.](#)

More information and an RSVP link can be found by clicking [here](#).

Versau died Dec. 13, 2018, surrounded by family at her home in Valparaiso after a short battle with cancer. She was 64

Versau was the longtime AP election stringer coordinator for Illinois and the AP newspaper and broadcast contest coordinator for Indiana, Kentucky and North Carolina.

## One journalist's look at opinion in AP copy

**John Wylie** ([Email](#)) - The recent discussion about whether AP copy has too much writer opinion and should stick closer to Jack Webb's famous "just the facts, ma'am", has a good balance, or needs as much or more analysis in today's world has been excellent. Hopefully readers can stand one more contribution.

Having spent almost 50 years in this business, on all sides of the desk (reporter, editor, publisher and often all three at once), here are some thoughts based on the AP story this morning (Saturday) leading the Tulsa World's front page.

Here are the first three paragraphs as published:

*WASHINGTON - Defiant in the wake of a stinging budget defeat, President Donald Trump on Friday declared a national emergency at the U.S.-Mexico border, moving*

*to secure more money for his long-promised wall by exercising a broad interpretation of his presidential powers that is certain to draw stiff legal challenges.*

*In his emergency proclamation, Trump painted a dark picture of the border as "a major entry point for criminals, gang members, and illicit narcotics" and one that threatens "core national security interests." Overall, though, illegal border crossings are down from a high of 1.6 million in 2000.*

*His declaration instantly transformed a contentious policy fight into a foundational dispute over the separation of powers enshrined in the Constitution, spurring talk of a congressional vote to block Trump and ensuring that the president and Democrats will continue fighting over the border wall in Congress, the courts and on the campaign trail.*

No problem with the reporting--all the key elements are there. But another edit would have removed some inadvertent bias flags and sought badly needed attribution for the crucial number. I don't doubt its accuracy, but when you say the President has provided inaccurate information, the reader deserves to know the source of the conflicting data. Here's an edited version.

*WASHINGTON - Countering his budget defeat, President Donald Trump on Friday defiantly declared a national emergency at the U.S.-Mexico border, seeking funds Congress had denied for his promised wall using a broad interpretation of presidential powers he admitted will guarantee a long court fight.*

*Trump's emergency proclamation painted a dark picture of the border as "a major entry point for criminals, gang members, and illicit narcotics" and one that threatens "core national security interests." However, <attribution needed> illegal border crossings are down <-- %> from a 2000 high of 1.6 million.*

*His declaration turned a policy fight into a foundational dispute over the separation of powers enshrined in the Constitution. It spurred talk of a congressional vote to block Trump and ensured that he and Democrats will continue the wall fight in Congress, courts and on the campaign trail.*

What's different? Buzz words are gone--"stinging" (superfluous, anyone who reads the story will draw that conclusion with no prodding), "long-promised" (long is superfluous in the lede but is another trigger word to those who support the President). "stiff legal fight" is switched to long court file and attributed to the President, because he acknowledged the coming battle, explained how he planned to win--and acknowledged that victory was not certain but he hoped it would happen.

Second graf: A number that specific has a specific source, probably INS, the Border Patrol or another agency. Attribution is desperately needed, as is an indication of the size of the decline which for space reasons is best stated as a percentage.

Third graf: "Instantly" is superfluous and a trigger word, as is "contentious" (a fight is contentious by definition).

Some quick word editing also cut enough out of those three graf's that, applied throughout the story the length would have been cut from 26 to 20 inches in the World's measure. I know an executive editor who would have killed for that extra 6" because it would have allowed another national story in an 8-page A section on a Saturday.

Final takeaway: Three bylined AP reporters did great jobs of assembling all the key elements with no errors I could find. But the industry-wide cutback in editing resources showed. That cost newspaper clients 6" or so of valuable space (worth a bit more editing time available before hitting send) but far more critical it left an opening for claims of allowing opinions in a straight news story--credibility our profession can't afford to lose. With three writers working the story, it takes an editor with a fresh overview of the submitted copy to catch such problems--and cutting back in that area is false economy indeed if it costs us credibility.

Thoughts? It has been a fascinating discussion - hope that my contribution is seen as one piece of the big jigsaw puzzle that is today's news business.

## Baseball's spring training is nigh - and evokes memory of first game at age 5

**Mike Harris (Email)** - I'm one of those people who gets excited each year when it's time for pitchers and catchers to report for spring training. I've been a baseball fan since I was about 5 years old. My dad told me he took me to a Cleveland Indians-New York Yankees doubleheader in Cleveland Stadium when I was 5 (1948 - a great year for the Indians). All I remember was legs, hundreds of them on the big ramps to the second deck at the stadium.

But I subsequently became a huge baseball fan, first following the Indians and then, after we moved to Wisconsin, the Milwaukee Braves. My allegiances have changed over the years as we've moved around the country, but I'm still a big fan of the game. And I don't believe there is anything more Americana than spring training.

I was named the AP sports writer in Cleveland in 1975, moving there from Indianapolis. At the time, the Indians were pretty bad and the Cincinnati Reds were the best team in baseball. Norm Clarke was covering the Reds and got to go to spring training each year. I was very jealous. In the winter of 1976, I sent a note to General Sports Editor Wick Temple with a copy to Columbus COB Jim Lagier making a case for a trip to the Indians' spring training base in Tucson. I told them that the newspapers in northeast Ohio were just as interested in the Indians as the rest of Ohio was in the Reds and that I could go to Tucson for a week or so and fill up some notebooks, then spot features throughout the spring.

Much to my surprise and delight, Cleveland correspondent Neil Bibler called me into his office a week or so later and told he I was going to spring training.

"When can I go and how long can I stay?" I asked. "You're going for the whole six weeks," he replied. I was shocked and thrilled.

It was a glorious time. AP rented a two-bedroom, two-bath apartment for me in Tucson and the whole family (our kids were 4 and 3) came along. Nearly all the games were played in the afternoon and the weather was fantastic - a far cry from Cleveland in Feb. and March. I even got to cover a Sugar Ray Leonard fight (spending time with Howard Cosell) during one of my spring training sojourns. It was also a wonderful opportunity to become more familiar with the players, coaches and manager and not just be "The AP guy in Cleveland" when I showed up at Cleveland Stadium. It made a difference to the team that I was there in the spring.

We spent each spring in Tucson from 1977 until I got transferred to NY Sports and the auto racing beat in the fall of 1979. I still consider those days in Tucson among the best memories of a career full of great memories.

## A high school teacher who helped pave way for his journalism career

**Jim Bagby** ([Email](#)) - Her name was Nellie Childs, a no-nonsense but warm-hearted English teacher at Norman (OK) High School. When I signed up for her class as a junior I had no idea she would change my life, or perhaps just give it the kick in the intended director. She also was sponsor of the school newspaper, Tiger Tales, which I read but paid little attention.

Thanks to teachers who taught me to read phonetically, I could spell (my one-year-younger brother did not have the same instructors and although he's smarter than I, he cannot spell well to this day). And a cagey old eighth-grade teacher had introduced us to authors and warned us against reading their more interesting

(racier) novels, so of course we did and got a much broader view of the world. Moreover, I'd always loved to read. I had taken typing as a sophomore. And being the son of a lifelong journalist, I had always written stories - creative but terrible fiction going back to "The Origin of Beards" in the 2nd or 3rd grade.

So Mrs. Childs started me as a reporter on the school newspaper. Awwright! "What shall I write about?" Whatever news you can find. "Oh." I'd been in this school of about 2,000 for three years and had not noticed anything particularly newsworthy outside its perennially dominant sports teams. "Can I cover the Tigers?" No, we have a sports editor. Ugh.

My first story was about the play the drama department was putting on, "The Spy." I even ended up with a minor role after the teacher found me hanging around rehearsals so often. Minor is a grandiose description: I entered in Act I, delivered one line, was shot and lay on the floor as a dead body for the remainder of the act. My theatrical debut AND fodder for my first high school news story, which was not bad, if I do say myself. I had to say, because my copy came back covered in bright red markings. Covered.

OK, Mrs. Childs, so I had not been exposed to the AP Style Manual. Yes, I had been assigned a news article rather than a review or a mixture. Yes, you're right, the play is probably not worth 400 words in a 4-column paper where each column is 10 inches. And the full paper normally runs 8-10 pages depending on - you guessed it - how many ads the students sold. So many lessons in one fell swoop.

Then we sat down and diminutive woman patiently went over every red mark. I nodded a lot, then went to rewrite. I did a lot of nodding and rewriting at the start of that year, then less as the year went on. By the end of the year I was even covering some sports. It was a good year as the basketball team under crotchety, legendary Chet Owens won its second big school title in three years. And the football team came close.

More important to my career, I wrote a football game story and one of my friends on the team, the center, asked me, "What position do I play on defense?" I was caught flat-footed. I was having enough trouble from the press box keeping up with who scored for each side, never taking into consideration those days of the early '60s were when players went both ways. As a linebacker, he showed me where all the two-way guys performed.

That proved invaluable my senior year, when Mrs. Child named me editor of the paper. By now we knew how to count headlines in cold type days: caps take up 1 1/2 spaces, M's and W's take 2, regular letters are 1 while small L's I's and J's are 1/2. All headlines are up and down, no spaces at the end of the line, no prepositions at the end of the line. Try to alternate bold and italic head, as well as type styles, etc.

Lord, I wish newspapers still did that. (OK, we wish there were still more newspapers).

I also was named Tiger Tales sports editor, but sports generally took up only one page of our monthly paper. So obviously features took precedent over timely matter, like game stories. But maybe that helped when The Norman Transcript offered me a part-time sportswriters job that consisted primarily of covering high school sports. More likely I was hired by the Transcript because the award-winning city editor was my dad, Jack Bagby, and he put in a good word - although he always said he didn't.

The year began with the Tigers winning the state football championship. I was tested early when NHS played a Saturday night game on the road and I had to dictate the game story from a phone booth, an experience described in an earlier Connecting. The school year ended with Mrs. Childs recommending me for a McMahon Scholarship, one of 10 awarded annually to the University of Oklahoma School of Journalism by the McMahon Foundation based in Lawton, OK. Yep, that's the same school where the late, great Lew Ferguson is a member of the hall of fame.

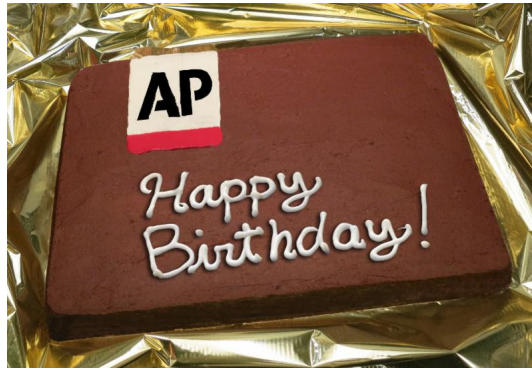
At the time, the scholarship was for \$350. I was the oldest of six children and my parents had always told us all that they could not afford to help us with college money (and we knew about a newspaperman's salary). But they said as long as we lived at home, they would provide room and board. To make a long story a little shorter, that McMahon money, paid by semester, covered my tuition and books. It was renewed for a second year, and I attended OU my first two years, working at least part-time for the Transcript throughout.

And by the end of that time, the sports editor at the Transcript, as a very happy coincidence, was one of my mentors, Mrs. Child's nephew, Jim Weeks.

I later went to work for the Lawton Constitution-Morning Press in Lawton, OK, completed my degree in English at Cameron University there, immediately took the AP test in Oklahoma City, was hired in Kansas City and worked happily here for 34 years.

Thank you, Mrs. Childs.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Dorothy Abernathy - [dabernathy@outlook.com](mailto:dabernathy@outlook.com)

*On Saturday to...*

Warren Levinson - [wlevinson@ap.org](mailto:wlevinson@ap.org)

*On Sunday to...*

Phil Dopoulos - [pdopoulos@gmail.com](mailto:pdopoulos@gmail.com)

## Stories of interest

***A robot commits libel. Who is responsible?***

(Reynolds Journalism Institute)





**By PETER GEORGIEV**

"I will work tirelessly to keep you informed as texts will be typed into my system uninterrupted."

This is how Xinhua News' artificial intelligence presenter announced itself to the global audience at the World Internet Conference in November. Modeled on a real anchor Zhang Zhou, the virtual newsreader is said to be the first of its kind, according to China's state news agency. But signs that automated journalism will soon play a central role in the news media industry have long been there.

For news organizations, algorithms generating compelling narratives are an exciting prospect. Many would have raised an eyebrow when the Associated Press started relying on automation to cover minor league baseball and transform corporate earnings into publishable stories. Fast forward a couple of years and now it seems almost impossible to find a major news outlet that is not experimenting with their own robot reporter.

From a business perspective, that makes complete sense. News bots are convenient, cheap and don't complain when asked to produce an article at 3 a.m. on

a Saturday. Most of all, they are quick. In 2015, NPR's Planet Money podcast set up a writing contest between one of its journalists and an algorithm. Spoiler alert: the algorithm won. It wasn't even close.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Covington teen Nick Sandmann sues the Washington Post for \$250M*** (New York Post)



**By Joe Tacopino**

Covington Catholic High School student Nicholas Sandmann filed a \$250 million defamation lawsuit against the Washington Post on Tuesday, accusing the newspaper of targeting him in "a modern-day form of McCarthyism."

Attorneys for 16-year-old Sandmann - who was filmed in a viral confrontation with a Native American man in Washington, DC - claim the newspaper led a "mob of bullies which attacked, vilified & threatened" an innocent minor.

"Washington Post recklessly ignored basic journalist standards because it was eager to advance its biased agenda against @realDonaldTrump by impugning individuals

perceived to be his supporters," attorney Lin Wood said in a statement.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

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## ***Chicago Police Commissioner Calls Out Media, Stars and Politicians for Pushing Smollett Hoax*** (The Wrap)



"Empire" actor Jussie Smollett leaves Cook County jail following his release, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2019, in Chicago. Smollett was charged with disorderly conduct and filling a false police report when he said he was attacked in downtown Chicago by two men who hurled racist and anti-gay slurs and looped a rope around his neck, a police official said. (AP Photo/Kamil Krzaczynski)

**By JON LEVINE**

Chicago Police superintendent Eddie Johnson called out celebrities, news commentators and even presidential candidates on Thursday for their decision to

amplify coverage of what he said was the "phony attack" against "Empire" star Jussie Smollett.

"The accusation within this phony attack received national attention for weeks," Johnson told reporters during a press conference. "Celebrities, news commentators and even presidential candidates weighed in on something that was choreographed by an actor.

"This announcement today recognized that 'Empire' actor Jussie Smollett took advantage of the pain and anger of racism to promote his career," Johnson continued, adding that the star had staged the attack because he was unhappy with his salary on the Fox show.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

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## ***Coast Guard Officer Plotted to Kill Democrats and Journalists, Prosecutors Say*** (New York Times)



Federal agents said that when they searched the Maryland apartment of Lt. Christopher P. Hasson, they found 15 firearms and more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition, displayed

**in a photo that was included in a court filing. Credit: U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Maryland**

**By Dave Philipps**

A Coast Guard lieutenant and self-described white nationalist who was arrested in Maryland last week was plotting to kill a long list of prominent journalists and Democratic politicians, as well as professors, judges and what he called "leftists in general," federal prosecutors said in a court filing on Tuesday.

Lt. Christopher Paul Hasson, 49, was arrested Friday on gun and drug charges, but prosecutors said in the filing that those charges were just the "proverbial tip of the iceberg."

The filing argued that Lieutenant Hasson should be held until he is tried, describing him as a "domestic terrorist" who intended "to murder innocent civilians on a scale rarely seen in this country."

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

## ***Veteran Globe baseball writer Nick Cafardo dies at 62*** (Boston Globe)

**By Bob Hohler**

Nick Cafardo, the Boston Globe's nationally recognized and widely respected baseball columnist, died Thursday in Fort Myers, Fla. He was 62.

Cafardo's love of baseball and commitment to his craft compelled him to report to JetBlue Park, the spring training home of the Red Sox, on one of his rare days off. He was apparently stricken by an embolism at the park, and members of the Sox medical team were unable to revive him.

Cafardo joined the Globe in 1989, after covering the Sox for the Patriot Ledger. Over the next three decades, he established himself as one of Boston's most prominent sports reporters. He covered the Patriots for the Globe between stints on the paper's

Sox beat, and he authored the 2002 book, "The Impossible Team: The Worst to First Patriots' Super Bowl Season."

Read more [here](#).

## The Final Word

### ***A Growing American Crisis: Who Will Care for the Baby Boomers?*** (Time)

By JAY NEWTON-SMALL

*Newton-Small, a TIME contributor, is the CEO of MemoryWell and author of Broad Influence*

Every day since her husband broke his hip, Beatrice Egger has been afraid. The 91-year-old retired teacher worries when William, 90, a retired principal, is in the shower. She worries when she is helping him get dressed and he unsteadily towers over her. And she worries when he moves from sitting to standing or from room to room. When he falls, which inevitably happens, she can call upon aides at their Issaquah, Wash., retirement home to help get him back up. But they can't help her all the time. So she stays scared.

If they could afford it, Beatrice and William would hire a home care aide to help during the day. That would give Beatrice a safety net, a pair of younger stronger arms to steady William. They know they're lucky that their pensions afforded them life in a retirement community, food and some level of care. But they live in fear that William's next fall will prove fatal and, without his pension, Beatrice might not be able to afford her community; after a lifetime of middle-class jobs, she might be forced into Medicaid.

Read more [here](#).

## Today in History - February 22, 2019



## By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Feb. 22, the 53rd day of 2019. There are 312 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 22, 1997, scientists in Scotland announced they had succeeded in cloning an adult mammal, producing a lamb named "Dolly." (Dolly, however, was later put down after a short life marred by premature aging and disease.)

### On this date:

In 1630, English colonists in the Massachusetts Bay Colony first sampled popcorn brought to them by a Native American named Quadequina for their Thanksgiving celebration.

In 1732 (New Style date), the first president of the United States, George Washington, was born in Westmoreland County in the Virginia Colony.

In 1862, Jefferson Davis, already the provisional president of the Confederacy, was inaugurated for a six-year term following his election in November 1861.

In 1909, the Great White Fleet, a naval task force sent on a round-the-world voyage by President Theodore Roosevelt, returned after more than a year at sea.

In 1935, it became illegal for airplanes to fly over the White House.

In 1959, the inaugural Daytona 500 race was held; although Johnny Beauchamp was initially declared the winner, the victory was later awarded to Lee Petty.

In 1965, former Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, 82, died in Washington D.C.

In 1967, more than 25,000 U.S. and South Vietnamese troops launched Operation Junction City, aimed at smashing a Vietcong stronghold near the Cambodian border. (Although the communists were driven out, they later returned.)

In 1974, Pakistan officially recognized Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan).

In 1980, the "Miracle on Ice" took place in Lake Placid, New York, as the United States Olympic hockey team upset the Soviets, 4-3. (The U.S. team went on to win the gold medal.)

In 1984, David Vetter, a 12-year-old Texas boy who'd spent most of his life in a plastic bubble because he had no immunity to disease, died 15 days after being removed from the bubble for a bone-marrow transplant.

In 1987, pop artist Andy Warhol died at a New York City hospital at age 58.

Ten years ago: "Slumdog Millionaire" won best picture and seven other Academy Awards; the late Heath Ledger won the best supporting actor Oscar for "The Dark Knight." A gas explosion in a coal mine in northern China killed more than 70 miners.

Five years ago: Retired Pope Benedict XVI joined Pope Francis in a ceremony in St. Peter's Basilica creating the cardinals who will elect their successor in an unprecedented blending of papacies past, present and future. Ukraine's former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko (YOOL'-yah tee-moh-SHEN'-koh) left prison as her arch foe, President Viktor Yanukovich, decamped to the country's east, vowing to remain in power. At the Sochi Olympics, Marit Bjoergen became the most decorated female Winter Olympian in history, winning her sixth career gold medal by leading a Norwegian sweep in the women's 30-kilometer cross-country race. Mario Matt of Austria won the men's slalom to become at age 34 the oldest Alpine champion in Olympic history.



One year ago: Defying his supporters in the National Rifle Association, President Donald Trump said the nation should keep assault rifles out of the hands of anyone under 21. Authorities announced that the armed officer who was on duty at the Parkland, Florida school where a shooter killed 17 people never went into the building to engage the gunman. A grand jury indicted Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens (GRY'-tenz) on a felony charge of invasion of privacy for allegedly taking a compromising photo of a woman with whom he had an affair in 2015; Greitens responded that he made a mistake but committed no crime. (He would resign on June 1 while facing potential impeachment over allegations of sexual and political misconduct.) The U.S. women's hockey team won the gold medal at the Winter Olympics in South Korea, beating Canada 3-2 after a shootout tiebreaker.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Paul Dooley is 91. Actor James Hong is 90. Actor John Ashton is 71. Actress Miou-Miou is 69. Actress Julie Walters is 69. Basketball Hall of Famer Julius Erving is 69. Actress Ellen Greene is 68. Former Sen. Bill Frist, R-Tenn., is 67. Former White House adviser David Axelrod is 64. Actor Kyle MacLachlan is 60. World Golf Hall of Famer Vijay Singh is 56. Actress-comedian Rachel Dratch is 53. Actor Paul Lieberstein is 52. Actress Jeri Ryan is 51. Actor Thomas Jane is 50. TV host Clinton Kelly is 50. Actress Tamara Mello is 49. Actress-singer Lea Salonga (LAY'-uh suh-LONG'-guh) is 48. Actor Jose Solano is 48. International Tennis Hall of Famer Michael Chang is 47. Rock musician Scott Phillips is 46. Singer James Blunt is 45. Actress Drew Barrymore is 44. Actress Liza Huber is 44. Rock singer Tom Higgenson (Plain White T's) is 40. Rock musician Joe Hottinger (Halestorm) is 37. Actor Zach Roerig is 34. Actor Daniel E. Smith is 29.

Thought for Today: "Authority without wisdom is like a heavy ax without an edge, fitter to bruise than polish." - Anne Bradstreet, American poet (1612-1672).

## 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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