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Connecting - April 01, 2019

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Connecting

April 01, 2019

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What's a retired AP Pulitzer-winning photographer do on his birthday? Well, if you're Nick Ut of Los Angeles, you make pictures. This sky shot was taken by our Connecting colleague on his 68th birthday Friday.

Colleagues,

Good Monday morning!

April come she will...When streams are ripe and swelled with rain.

How right Simon and Paul were for this April... Click [here](#) for one of the best songs ever. Here's to the new month!



In his 33-year career with The Associated Press, **Larry Blasko** played a major role as the AP underwent a host of technological change - not to mention the company's move into the delivery of advertising, a headquarters move and bureau moves. He was one of those rare individuals who bridged the editorial and technology sides of the company.

His career with the AP is the subject of today's Monday Profile. There are not many of us who worked during the same period who were not impacted favorably by

Larry's work.

Larry spent most of his career in New York. He left in 2004 and is retired from journalism, except for a couple of books. His wife, Helen, is a retired teacher of the multiply-handicapped deaf.

They moved to Libertyville, Illinois, last June, leaving a home in Summit, New Jersey, that they bought when Larry was transferred by the AP from Chicago to New York in 1977. "Yeah, Florida has a better climate than far suburban Chicago," he explained, "but this location has our six grandchildren. Besides, after a 41-year rut, it's good to get new everything, from house to doctors and grocery stores."

I will be taking a few days off this week and while I will publish a Tuesday edition before we take off, there will be no Connecting issues from Wednesday through Friday mornings. If you have interest in being my vacation relief, and publishing the newsletter during my absences, please drop me a note. No technological wizardry is involved, promise.

Keep your submissions coming.

Here's to a great week!

Paul

Connecting profile

Larry Blasko



"We've got a bomb!"

A worried-looking Tom Dygard jumped up from his desk and hurried to the center of the Chicago AP newsroom, followed by the stunned job applicant he'd been interviewing. "Here?" I asked?

"In the computer!" Dygard almost snarled.

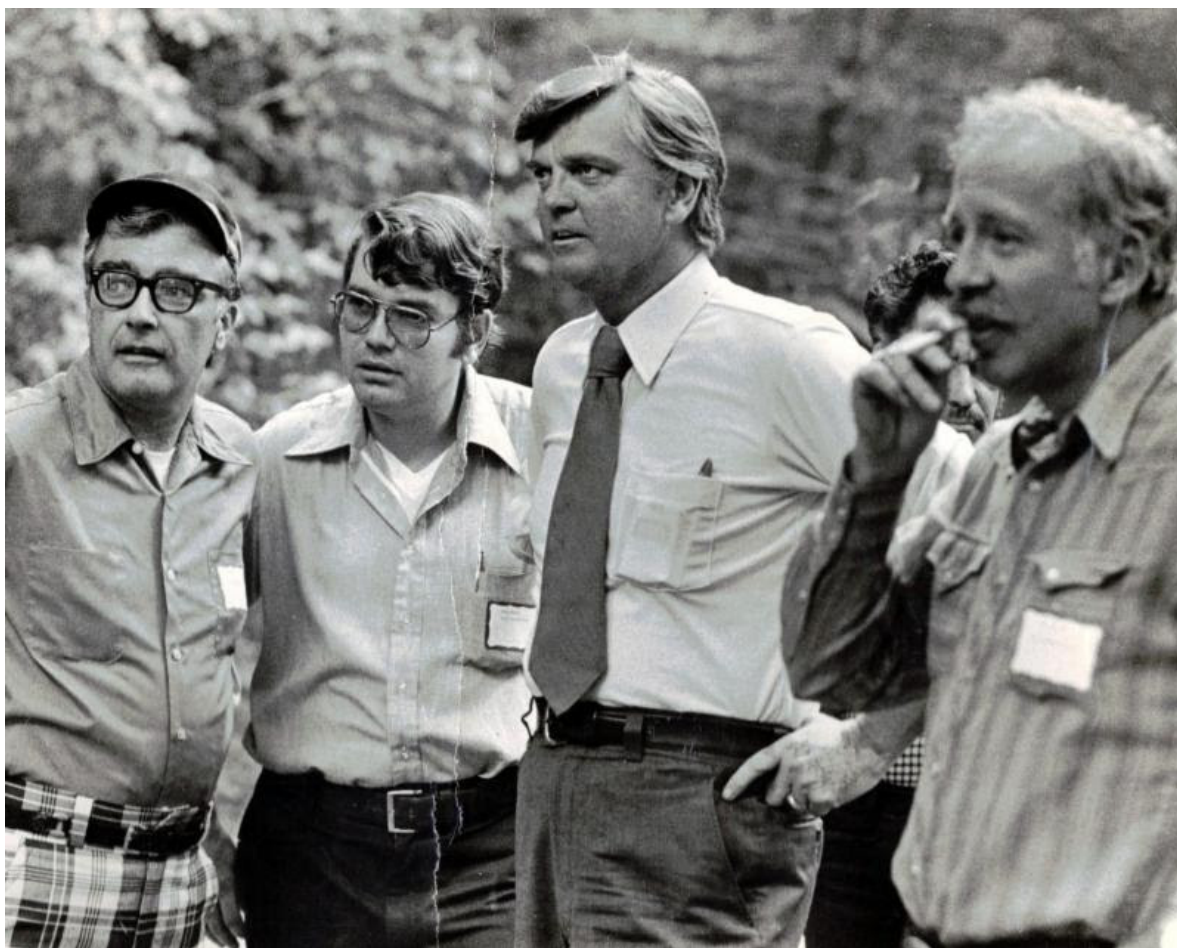
"Shouldn't we leave?" seemed a sensible and responsible reply, which earned me a frown and made me notice that no one else in the busy newsroom seemed bent on flight.

A nearby staffer took pity and explained, "It means the computer we use to send stories is down."

Chicago AP Chief of Bureau Tom Dygard hired me anyway on that late October afternoon for a Nov. 1, 1971, start. At 24, I'd been a managing editor at Chicago's Lerner Home Newspapers, a 400,000-circulation group of tri-weeklies serving the

city's north side and suburbs and left unexpectedly as part of a lesson on what not to say to one's boss.

Chicago (CX then) was a hub bureau providing editing and transmission service to state wires in Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, North Dakota and South Dakota. It also ran the Interbureau Wire service, known as the IB, which distilled national and international content for almost 1,000 smaller AP newspaper members that either couldn't afford separate news, sports and business feeds or felt no competitive need. The computers were Hendrix 5200 terminals for editing and Digital Equipment Corporation PDP8s for text storage and transmission. The majority of the copy still made it to electronic form through Teletype operators, many of whom in addition to flawless typing, were better editors than a greenhorn.



(From left:) AP Chief of Bureau Tom Dygard, Broadcast Editor Larry Blasko, Illinois Gov. Dan Walker and AP General News Broadcast Editor Gerald B. Trapp overlook Illinois AP's first statewide broadcast member station campout convention. (1973 AP Photo)

After a couple years of working on the desk and the IB, including the IB overnight for PMs, I was named Illinois Broadcast Editor. In an effort to make the annual Illinois AP Broadcasters Association meeting something more than a drink-while-it's free festival, IAPB President Dick Westbrook and I hatched an idea -- let's hold the meeting at a Boy Scout campground as a fall overnight family tent-camping event.

Westbrook, then news director of WAND-TV in Decatur, Ill. found a willing Scout camp and we invited Illinois Gov. Dan Walker.

I asked my wife, Helen to arrange lunch for an AP meeting. She said yes, and in retrospect it was probably the press of business that made me forget to clarify that she would be feeding the governor, members of his staff and more than 125 broadcasters in the woods with only a Scout troop to help with cooking and setup.

Thanks to Helen, Westbrook and others, the meeting and format was a big success. It was followed in the next two years with campouts (by then upgraded to cabins) and speakers included Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

In 1975, Tom Dygard made me his assistant. Although the duties were the same and I was moved to the administrative payroll, the title was never assistant chief of bureau. That was because of some dance between Tom and NY Personnel that I never understood, but the assignment and Tom's guidance helped me learn more about membership and staff management. I signed my letters "Larry Blasko, Assistant" and as the staff said in a Goodbye Roast when I was transferred to New York in March of 1977, "we never could figure out what you were assistant to!"

New York and the domestic AP in general was in the throes of a system-wide switch to text-editing systems featuring the AP-designed Mighty Mouse computer system. My new job was an assistant to then-Vice President and Executive Editor Lou Boccardi and my mission was to coordinate the transition from an editorial perspective.

In practice, that meant being part of a Communications team that spent more than a year on the road installing the new computers bureau by bureau and training the staff. The Mouse system was the brainchild of head programmer Jimmy Ho and Blant Kimbell, chief of R&D, and it was a huge success in getting the most editing bang for the least AP buck.



Larry Blasko in 1978
(AP Photo/Suzanne Vlamis)

The savings weren't without pain. Some of the Teletype ops were able to transition to other AP roles. Many weren't and theirs was a sad end to many years and a long tradition of faithful service.

The jolts, joys, jokes and jerks of visiting bureau after bureau ended for me in the spring of 1978 when David L. Bowen, the AP's Vice President and Director of Communications decided he need a deputy director and picked me.

Bowen was brilliant and in many ways a visionary that the AP was lucky to have in a swirl of telecommunications change. He was also not without humor -- my first assignment as his deputy was answering a slew of questioning letters I had sent him about Communications practices!

During the next five years as deputy to Bowen, and later Ron Thompson, these were the major projects in which I was lucky enough to have roles ranging from player to principal:

AP's first nationwide satellite delivery system in response to an AT&T Long Lines rate increase that would have been a crippling financial blow.

The electronic darkroom, then a monster lurking in air air-conditioned cave until it became a desktop commodity.

The Atex computer system, a headquarters-wide text editing and delivery system that started AP's painful escape from its self-imposed Not-Invented-Here stockade.

The CompuServe Experiment, the year-long study of electronic newspaper text delivery involving CompuServe Information Services, then a major online player and 11 AP member papers. The experience and contacts helped AP move into the online world as it began to develop.

I left the Communications Department in the summer of 1983 and spent the next 18 months attached to Personnel (later Human Resources) where I designed, programmed and installed the AP's first staff-tracking computer system. It was a clumsy affair, written in Compiled Basic and running on an MS-DOS desktop with floppy disk backup, but it was way better than the 3 x 5 index cards it replaced.

While that was going on, AP Newsfeatures gave me the opportunity to start a weekly home computing column called "CompuBug" which ran until 2003, and was how I remembered I got into this game to be a journalist.

In November of 1985, our then-new AP President Lou Boccardi announced the creation of a new headquarters department, AP Administrative Services and I was named its first director. Duties ranged from nationwide real estate negotiations and bureau construction to headquarters toilet paper supply and cafeteria practices.

My great good fortune was a wonderful and productive staff and here are the highlights of what we accomplished until I left the department in 1993:

Central and standardized purchasing of AP office supplies and furniture, everything from pencils, pens and such to Steelcase office systems. The change closest to my heart:, the AP-branded Reporters Notebook.

Central and standardized travel/lodging purchase and policies, taking advantage of the tremendous bargaining leverage we had as a worldwide company.

A move to upgrade bureau locations and furnishings at every opportunity.

A lot of energy went into that last one. Domestic AP bureaus were often located in member real estate that members thought unworthy of their own staff-- often with reason-- or in B- to D-grade real estate. One was in the basement next to the Mens Room. Another in a part of town where applicants had their cars stolen while taking AP employment tests.

The rationale for that was it allowed AP staff to be close to members to get carbons on local stories. (That went away when Jimmy Ho and I cooked up electronic carbons while installing the Milwaukee Mouse in 1977.) And we didn't want to seem high-falutin to member publishers who might worry that their then-profit margins were in the low double-digits. Plus, explaining to a Treasury maven that sometimes rents go up was a difficult and thankless task. Slowly it changed.

We upgraded many bureaus, including headquarters itself, and if I had to pick one thing I'm proudest of over my 33 AP years, that would be it. My feeling was that the magnificent people who produce the best news report in the world with the highest honor, honesty and integrity, shouldn't have to do so needlessly in penny-pinching squalor. I want to add that my movement had Lou Boccardi's support -- sometimes through gritted teeth -- but there when it counted.

1993 AdSEND! We were moving the tech center from East Brunswick to new and better quarters in Cranbury, NJ, when at a Cranbury job-site meeting I got a call that Boccardi wanted to talk to me in his office now.

No further information made for an interesting 45-minute ride back to Manhattan. In Lou's office I learned that the AP was thinking about getting into the advertising delivery business to help our members and that I would be part of that team. (My

first contribution was to come up with the name -- AdSEND or Advertising Service for Electronic Newspaper Delivery.)

The basic idea was that we could leverage our satellite network to deliver electronic ads to multiple newspapers in seconds as opposed to hours at best for physical delivery. To do that we would have to convince and educate newspapers and advertisers alike.

In spite of some hassles, including legal, the venture was an initial success.

And then came the internet.

Having taught both newspapers and advertisers to deliver files electronically using Adobe Acrobat, the internet's "free" delivery capability prompted the AP to leave that business gracefully. But it was fun while it lasted.

After that, I served in Business Development as Director of AP Telecommunications, the heir of Dave Bowen's SATNET for third-party copy delivery, and later in charge of security. Finally, I rejoined Administrative Services for AP's move to West 33rd street and in August of 2004, we parted ways.

Larry Blasko's email is - lgbasko@yahoo.com

Connecting mailbox

Rookie mistakes still haunting

Cheryl Arvidson (Email) - I am combining my answer to your questions-One horrid mistake and the second a ridiculous error in judgment. They both occurred in my first year with UPI in Des Moines, fresh out of the University of Iowa.

As probably was the case with every rookie, I started out working overnight and early morning shifts but finally got a day shift and was assigned to cover the Iowa House. I was so new that I didn't know who the representatives were and nobody had name tags or any other means of identification in the committee hearings. So I took a legislative directory with me to a hearing and looked up pictures so I could match the right lawmaker with the quote I was using. Well you can imagine what happened. I

got a call at home on the weekend from a guy named Norman Roorda who I had quoted, mistaking him for LaVern Schroeder. I was of course mortified and asked Rep. Roorda what beyond my profuse apology and a correction I could do. He said, "Don't bother with a correction, it's something I would have said anyway." I couldn't believe-and still can't - that I got off that easy!

The next also involved that legislative assignment and another committee meeting. There was some sort of flap over an allegedly obscene publication at one of the state universities, I believe. The chairman of the committee was going to pass it around and discuss it, and he asked the women in the room to leave. The lone female member left, and so did another young woman reporter and-to my everlasting regret and shame-so did I. I stupidly justified this by thinking we had already seen the publication and written about it so who cared about these old white guys getting their jollies. I still can't believe I left. Excuse?None really. But I was 21, fresh into my first "real" job and it was a time that pre-dated the women's rights and women's liberation movements.Flash forward a few years and I probably would have staged a sit-in, but I didn't protest then,I just went along. Never again!

I have been haunted by these mistakes seemingly forever.

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AP bureaus miss some wonderful people

Denis Gray ([Email](#)) - former AP chief of bureau, Bangkok - I thought David Briscoe did a wonderful piece on the passing of one of AP's "Angels" as he most rightly called them (see Friday's Connecting). Claude Erbsen did not exaggerate the value of these women and some men to the AP. They were a treasure but one that AP leaders decided was no longer in line with their vision of moving the company from a vibrant family-style organization to some kind of yet-to-be-successful corporate entity. So they were fired, some of the with very little ceremony or true thanks for the sacrifices they made. Speaking about some Asian bureaus I know well, operations - and general atmosphere - in those bureaus have decidedly not improved since the ouster of these wonderful people.

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'Manang' Coring was devoted to the AP

Robert Reid (Email) - Manila chief of bureau, 1986-95 - "Manang" Coring was one of those low-profile people, often women, who kept AP's foreign bureaus on the rails. She kept the books, issued the invoices, haggled with the landlord, managed collections (we actually had a subscriber who claimed our check had been cut but it was locked in a desk drawer and the only person with the key was on vacation) and a thousand other essential tasks. She was devoted to the AP.

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Birthday boy Nick Ut and his buddies



Dodi Fromson (Email) - Nick Ut with fellow Pulitzer Prize winners from Vietnam coverage - from left - David Kennerly, Peter Arnett and Nick. Lunch on Sunday in Little Saigon, Orange County, CA. Also there was yours truly (whose late husband, Murray Fromson, first covered the French withdrawal from Vietnam in 1956 for the AP, and later for CBS News, which withdrawal won him and his colleagues the OPC Award. Photo by Dodi Fromson.

Memories of your first airplane flight



Holly Kurtz (Email) - My first flight was on Pacific Southwest Airlines in 1973 from L.A. to Sacramento, where I was a summer intern. The ticket procedures were new to me, so I handed my ticket to the gate agent. Then about 10 minutes into the flight, one of the flight attendants walked down the aisle collecting tickets! Uh-oh. I said I gave it to the gate agent and they were able to track it down. They gave me my "first flight wings" despite the confusion.

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Estes Thompson (Email) - As far as flying, I grew up in an airplane. My first flights were not fancy. My country doctor dad loved flying around southern Virginia, so Pa and I spent lots of time in his classic yellow Piper J-3 (a Cub with a back seat for two and a split window/door that folded up against the wing and down to the stiff fabric fuselage. Pa liked flying with the window open and often handed me his old Leica to lean out and take photos of



somebody's house or a farm field as he banked the plane. We flew from the airport at Danville, VA, because there was no airfield at our town of Chatham. My first commercial flight was on a Piedmont Airlines (later USAir) tail dragger from Tampa to Danville. The steward handed out radish and pickle snacks from a paper plate and the luggage was visible as it strained against restraints in forward compartment. The prop craft was pretty noisy but we understood why the pilot landed unexpectedly in Winston-Salem, NC, because smoke was pouring from the starboard engine. We boarded a plane that wasn't on fire and continued the trip, There might have been a pimento cheese on white sandwich in the trip somewhere.

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Mike Short (Email) - A common element in many of the Connecting accounts is the Douglas DC-3, the workhorse of American aviation after World War II. If you are of a certain age you may also remember flying in them as an AP reporter. The twin-prop, 32-passenger planes were in use all over the world, and about 2,000 are said to be in service still.

My first flight was on a DC-3 in 1948. I was 8 and my brother, Dave, 6. My parents thought it would be fun to fly from Los Angeles to Santa Catalina Island, "26 miles across the sea," as a popular song of the day had it. I think it was my parents' first flight as well. The stewardesses gave Dave and me pins bearing United Airlines wings and invited us into the cockpit after the flight to be greeted by the pilot and co-pilot.

In 1966, when I was filling in for AP political staffers during Ronald Reagan's first campaign for governor of California, a DC-3 carried us around the state to cover a long day of speeches. Lyn Nofziger, a Copley Newspapers veteran who spent years as Reagan's press secretary, knew the value treating the press well. At stops there would often be food, telephones and strong drink. I don't recall any bad weather, but at one point a reporter asked, not entirely facetiously, "Lyn, is this airplane going to land safely?" "Sir," Nofziger replied, "no DC-3 has ever landed safely."

When we returned to the Burbank airport very late that night, we were asked to stay in our seats while the candidate disembarked. Reagan descended the steps alone. Waiting on the tarmac was Nancy, also alone, wearing a white trench coat. This showbiz couple's embrace could have been designed to evoke "Casablanca."

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Mike Tharp (Email) - Something good always seems to happen on my birthday. April 6, 1961--my 16th--was no exception. Each year all the Eagle Scouts in Topeka got to take an airplane ride, if they wished. I was such a groundling that I paid little attention to the kind of airplane it was, other than that it had propellers. The plane circled Topeka a few times. I was mind-melded to the window, watching my town below. Taking off, flying and landing, the noise was unlike any sound I'd ever heard--even louder than the Santa Fe trains I rode because my dad worked for the railroad. While we were aloft, I wrote a poem about the ride. Thankfully, it's lost to history. But something good always seems to happen on my birthday.

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Neal Ulevich (Email) - When I was a mere boy my mother and I set out to visit an aged aunt in Wheeling, WV. The last leg of the journey was aboard a DC-3. The

stewardess asked if I would like to meet the pilot. We marched up to the cockpit and the pilot asked me if I'd like to sit on his lap and fly the airplane. Now many decades later I realize he must have had a cigarette in his left hand, the hand on the control yoke. But I saw only the smoke and assumed the yoke was burning hot. I began to scream. I didn't want to incinerate my hands flying the airplane - that was for adults! Puzzled but still smiling, the pilot bade me return to my seat.

The trauma didn't last. When I was 16 I started sneaking to Waukesha County airport outside Milwaukee for flying lessons, a pursuit my parents surely wouldn't approve of. They did find out however, and my father was suitably enraged by my deceit, although perhaps proud of my chutzpah. Not long after he signed the paperwork necessary for me to solo. I earned my coveted Private Pilot License at 17 and flew until I departed for adventures in Asia which did not include flight. Over the years I handled the stick in an autogyro, Stearman and Waco biplanes and, briefly, the Goodyear Blimp. But I still rue the day I passed up a chance to "fly" a DC-3.

In an uncertain era, expressing certainty is a potent weapon



FILE - In this March 26, 2019, file photo, Actor Jussie Smollett leaves the Leighton Criminal Courthouse in Chicago after prosecutors dropped all charges against him. Smollett was indicted on 16 felony counts related to making a false report that he was attacked by two men who shouted racial and homophobic slurs. (Ashlee Rezin/Chicago Sun-Times via AP, File)

By TED ANTHONY

In the course of a single week, there has been all of this:

"I have been truthful and consistent on every level since day one," actor Jussie Smollett told the world after prosecutors dropped 16 felony counts that accused him of making a false police report about being the target of a racist, anti-gay attack.

"I am highly confident," high-profile lawyer Michael Avenatti said after being accused of trying to extort money from Nike, "that I will be fully exonerated and justice will be done."

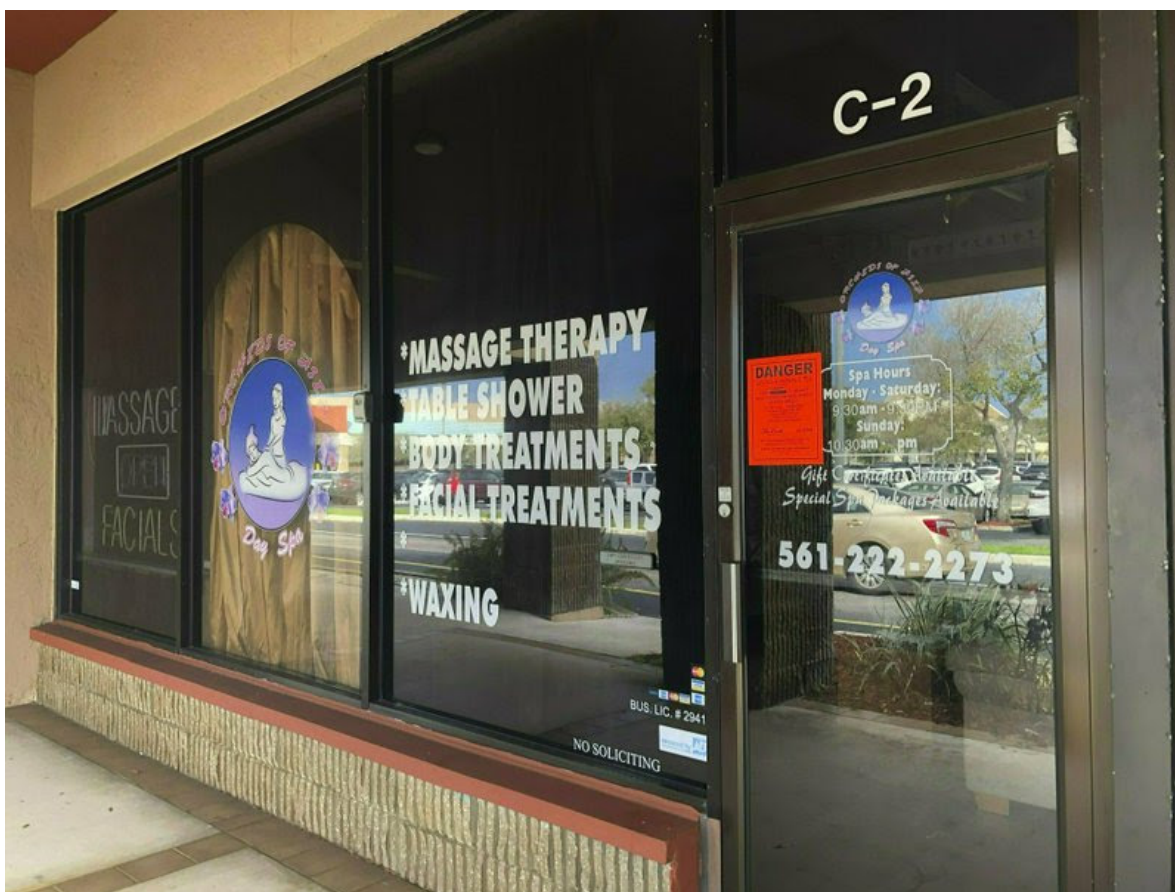
"Complete and total EXONERATION," Donald Trump tweeted after the attorney general's summary of the Mueller report's "principal conclusions" was released. And on Thursday night, before a huge crowd: "The greatest hoax in the history of our country."

Such certainty across the board. Such vigorous, declarative statements - crystallized, workshopped, simplified into sound bites containing a single message: It didn't happen. I didn't do anything wrong. Case closed. End of story. Incontrovertible. Don't question it.

Ever since the first stirrings of national inevitability in the 17th century, ever since the colonists declared independence by citing truths they held to be "self-evident," being definitive has been the American way. But in an age of utter uncertainty such as this, the expression of certainty - robust, sure-of-yourself, no-other-possibility certainty - may be the most powerful weapon of all.

Read more [here](#).

AP Investigation: Florida gets tougher on massage-parlor sex



FILE- In this Feb. 19, 2019 file photo, a sign is posted outside Orchids of Asia Day Spa in Jupiter, Fla. An Associated Press review of state records shows that officers and deputies in Florida have investigated hundreds of massage parlors for illegal sexual activity for years, but the owners and employees usually get off with civil fines and misdemeanor charges, even when there are signs of potential trafficking. (Hannah Morse/Palm Beach Post via AP, File)

By MIKE SCHNEIDER and TERRY SPENCER

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) - When Florida authorities shut down 10 massage spas last month and charged hundreds of men with buying sex, they broke a longstanding pattern of meting out minor charges and punishment for owners, letting patrons off scot-free and turning a mostly blind eye to signs of human trafficking.

An Associated Press review of state records over the past decade shows that while police officers and sheriff's deputies in Florida have investigated hundreds of individual massage parlors within their own counties for illegal sexual activity, it was usually low-level massage therapists who were arrested, while owners mostly were exempted or charged with misdemeanors resulting in fines and probation. Johns usually were not charged at all.

In stark contrast, the investigation announced last month spanned several jurisdictions between Palm Beach and Orlando and focused heavily on the possibility of widespread human trafficking. Several spa owners, most of them women originally from China, were charged with felony racketeering and money laundering and could face years in prison.

Read more [here](#).

Best of the Week

Planning, execution and teamwork deliver outstanding coverage of Mueller report



Special counsel Robert Mueller walks past the White House after attending St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, Sunday, March 24, 2019, two days after delivering his report on Russian interference in the 2016 election, and related issues that included allegations of collusion and obstruction of justice by President Donald Trump and his campaign. AP Photo / Cliff Owen

For weeks, journalists in Washington had been chasing tips that special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 race for the White House was winding down. The probe had shadowed Donald Trump's presidency nearly since its beginning, raising alarming questions about whether his campaign coordinated with Russia.

AP's team that had covered the story every day for nearly two years knew the end of the investigation would be complex: Mueller would alert the Justice Department that he was finished, and Attorney General William Barr would decide how much of the report to make public. And it was unclear how long the process would take and how much information we would get.

But appetite for the story was huge. So, the Washington bureau went to work creating a comprehensive plan for coverage when the report landed and a wealth of content to satisfy our readers and our customers until that moment happened.

Eric Tucker, Justice Department reporter, and Chad Day, Trump investigations reporter, kicked off the coverage with a sweeping narrative of everything that had already been revealed by Mueller in his public indictments. The "Mueller in Plain Sight" story captured the scope of Mueller's investigation and laid the groundwork for his final report.

Speculation reached a fever pitch the week of March 18. Tucker and law enforcement reporter Mike Balsamo alternated shifts at the Justice Department, but each day ended the same: not today, sources would say.

Meanwhile AP photographers and videojournalists started staking out Mueller and Barr. Photographer Andrew Harnik scored a beat with images of Mueller arriving at the Justice Department early Thursday morning, driving himself in a Subaru. It was the first image of the elusive Mueller by a news photographer in more than a year.

Word finally came on Friday afternoon that Mueller's work had ended. Within minutes of moving an alert, the AP sent a series of richly reported stories by the team of reporters who had been at the forefront of AP's coverage for months: Tucker, Day, Balsamo and Congress reporter Mary Clare Jalonick.

On Sunday morning, AP scored another visual scoop when freelance photographer Cliff Owen, who was shooting features across the street from the White House, learned that Mueller was at church nearby. Owen's photos of Mueller exiting historic St. John's church and passing the White House ricocheted around the internet.

Around 3:30 p.m., a Justice Department official handed reporters hard copies of Barr's summary. Tucker, speaking on an open phone line back to the Washington bureau, calmly read off highlights of the report while Balsamo sent full quotes from the report to the group. AP's first alert, that Mueller had not exonerated Trump on obstruction of justice, moved a full 10 minutes before the Washington Post and five minutes before the New York Times.

The video team also provided unmatched live coverage from a wide range of locations in Washington, at Mar-a-Lago in Florida and in New York throughout the weekend.

For their great planning, teamwork and execution, Eric Tucker, Chad Day, Mike Balsamo, Mary Clare Jalonick, Andrew Harnik and Cliff Owen win AP's Best of the Week award.

Best of the States

AP analysis: Partisan redistricting limited GOP losses in 2018 midterms



Kylah Guion, a sophomore political science major at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University in Greensboro, N.C., stands on campus in the middle of Laurel Street, March 19, 2019. Gerrymandering has cut the campus in half, with this street dividing the 6th Congressional District on her left from the 13th District on her right. Both districts are represented by Republicans. "It's hard to explain to students who are

already skeptical about the voting process ... that the state intentionally diluted their power in voting by putting this line back here in between our campus," she says. AP Photo / Allen G. Breed

With two major cases over partisan redistricting coming before the Supreme Court, how could the AP's coverage stand out?

Missouri-based reporter David Lieb of the state government team provided the answer. As he had done after the 2016 elections, Lieb took the results of last year's midterm election and applied a formula called the "efficiency gap" to measure the potential effects of highly partisan map-making on U.S. House races and state legislatures. The efficiency gap, developed at the nonpartisan Public Policy Institute of California and The University of Chicago, measures a party's advantage on a statewide basis.

His finding: Democrats could have done even better last November had it not been for boundaries created by Republicans during the last round of redistricting - otherwise known as "gerrymandering." His analysis showed that Republicans won about 16 more U.S. House seats than would have been expected based on their share of the vote. For state House chambers, the analysis showed that Republicans' structural advantage might have helped them hold on to as many as seven chambers that otherwise could have flipped to Democrats, including some where Republicans won a majority of seats even though Democrats won a majority of the total votes.

Lieb and Data Team editor Meghan Hoyer made the state-by-state findings available to customers and other AP reporters ahead of time and explained them in a webinar so the data could be used for localizations. The resulting story package landed the week before the Supreme Court arguments, and the play was spectacular.

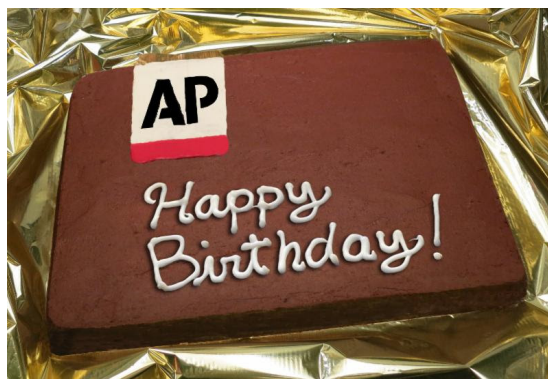
Lieb's national story and various sidebars won extensive play online, including the New York Times, with heavy social media engagement. In print, Lieb's story - or a state sidebar produced by an AP statehouse reporter - ran on more than two dozen front pages, including in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Other papers, including The Detroit News, produced their own staff-written stories, crediting the AP data. In addition, Lieb's analysis was cited in a USA Today op-ed previewing the gerrymandering cases.

The package was complemented by video and photos from national enterprise reporter Allen Breed, based in Raleigh, who traveled to a historically black college in North Carolina, one of the states whose case was before the high court. He showed how Republicans had split the campus during map drawing (literally down the middle of a street) and how that had diluted the votes of the left-leaning student body.

Breed's full-length video ran with the spot stories surrounding the Supreme Court arguments and parts of it were folded into a video graphic produced by New York deputy director for digital graphics Darrell Allen and Minneapolis-based video graphics newscaster Heidi Morrow. Their piece combined Breed's video with a first-person explanation by Lieb and animated graphics to show what gerrymandering is and how it can affect the outcome of elections. It became a key part of the extensive social promotion plan created by Alina Hartounian, the Phoenix-based multimedia coordinator for the beat teams, that propelled the online play. Hartounian was also instrumental in editing Breed's video.

For producing a distinctive multimedia package that made the AP stand out on one of the most important and competitive political topics of the day, Lieb, Hoyer, Breed, Allen, Morrow and Hartounian win this week's Best of the States.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Marcus Eliason - lordcopper@gmail.com

Previewing a new edition of the AP Stylebook

The AP logo consists of the letters 'AP' in a bold, black, sans-serif font, positioned inside a white square. A thin red horizontal line is located directly beneath the white square.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
STYLEBOOK
2019

This edition contains more than
200 new and revised entries

By Lauren Easton

During a panel at the ACES: The Society for Editing national conference in Providence, Rhode Island, on Friday, it was announced that the 2019 AP Stylebook will include new and expanded guidance on race-related terms.

The guidance is immediately available to AP Stylebook Online subscribers and will be included in the new print edition of the Stylebook when it is published on May 29.

The additions include:

A new entry covering the terms "racist/racism."

Guidance not to use "racially charged" or similar terms as euphemisms for "racist" or "racism" when the latter terms are applicable.

Guidance not to use the term "black" or "white" in the singular as a noun, and to limit the use of the terms "blacks" and "whites" as plurals.

The shorthand "Indian" should not be used for "American Indians" or "Native Americans."

Guidance about the gender-neutral term "Latinx."

Previewing the new edition at the ACES conference, Stylebook Editor Paula Froke highlighted a few changes, including that the % sign is acceptable when paired with a numeral in most cases, and accent marks can be used with names of people who request them or are widely known to use them, or if quoting directly in a language that uses them. Those changes take effect next week.

Read more [here](#).

Related...

AP Stylebook update: It's OK to call something racist when it's racist

By Doris Truong, Poynter

American journalists look to the Associated Press as the arbiter of language. Most newsrooms don't have the resources to develop their own style manuals, so the

influence of AP's guidance stretches far beyond its own staff.

Friday's updated entries on race-related issues are an acknowledgment of the topic's growing prominence in American journalism. This new guidance offers journalists clarity and precision as they frame the news for their audiences.

Two things jumped out at me: AP finally agrees that "hyphenated Americans" are a relic. And, when an incident is racist, journalists should say so.

It's seemingly small but significant that AP is eliminating the hyphenated American. The entry for dual heritage says to drop the hyphen in such terms as African American and Asian American. The hyphen dates to the 19th century as a way to distinguish immigrants as "other" and has been a common microaggression for more than a century.

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

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AP says the percentage sign now OK when used with a numeral (that's shift+5)

By Poynter.org

Brace yourselves.

The AP Stylebook says the percentage sign is now acceptable when paired with a numeral in most cases.

On Friday, Stylebook Editor Paula Froke announced the latest round of changes to the grammar bible for journalists at the annual conference for ACES: The Society for Editing. This year's changes are yet another shift toward more common usage.

Here's part of the updated entry:

percent, percentage, percentage points Use the % sign when paired with a numeral, with no space, in most cases (a change in 2019): Average hourly pay rose 3.1% from a year ago; her mortgage rate is 4.75%; about 60% of Americans agreed; he won 56.2% of the vote. Use figures: 1%, 4 percentage points.

For amounts less than 1%, precede the decimal with a zero: The cost of living rose 0.6%

In casual uses, use words rather than figures and numbers: She said he has a zero percent chance of winning.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Ed Williams.

Today in History - April 1, 2019



By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, April 1, the 91st day of 2019. There are 274 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 1, 2003, American troops entered a hospital in Nasiriyah (nah-sih-REE'-uh), Iraq, and rescued Army Pfc. Jessica Lynch, who had been held prisoner since her unit was ambushed on March 23.

On this date:

In 1789, the U.S. House of Representatives held its first full meeting in New York; Frederick Muhlenberg of Pennsylvania was elected the first House speaker.

In 1933, Nazi Germany staged a daylong national boycott of Jewish-owned businesses.

In 1945, American forces launched the amphibious invasion of Okinawa during World War II. (U.S. forces succeeded in capturing the Japanese island on June 22.)

In 1954, the United States Air Force Academy was established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

In 1970, President Richard M. Nixon signed a measure banning cigarette advertising on radio and television, to take effect after Jan. 1, 1971.

In 1972, the first Major League Baseball players' strike began; it lasted 12 days.

In 1976, Apple Computer was founded by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ronald Wayne.

In 1983, tens of thousands of anti-nuclear demonstrators linked arms in a 14-mile human chain spanning three defense installations in rural England, including the Greenham Common U.S. Air Base.

In 1984, Marvin Gaye was shot to death by his father, Marvin Gay (cq), Sr. in Los Angeles, the day before the recording star's 45th birthday. (The elder Gay pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter, and received probation.)

In 1987, in his first speech on the AIDS epidemic, President Ronald Reagan told doctors in Philadelphia, "We've declared AIDS public health enemy no. 1."

In 1988, the scientific bestseller "A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes" by British physicist Stephen Hawking was first published in the United Kingdom and the United States by Bantam Books.

In 1992, the National Hockey League Players' Association went on its first-ever strike, which lasted 10 days.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama, in London for an economic crisis summit, sought to rally the world's top and emerging powers to help cope with a global downturn; chanting protesters clashed with riot police in the British capital. Sixteen people, most of them oil workers, were killed when a Super Puma helicopter crashed into the North Sea off Scotland's northeast coast. In a college baseball blowout, Eastern Kentucky was leading Kentucky State 49-1 when the teams stopped playing after five innings (they also agreed to cancel the second game of a scheduled double-header).

Five years ago: Mocking his critics, President Barack Obama boasted that 7.1 million people had signed up for his health care law, and said "the debate over repealing this law is over." Congress demanded answers from General Motors' new CEO, Mary Barra, on why the automaker had taken 10 years to recall cars with a faulty ignition switch linked at that time to 13 traffic deaths; Barra acknowledged that the company took too long to act.

One year ago: Writer and producer Steven Bochco, known for creating the groundbreaking TV police drama "Hill Street Blues," died after a battle with cancer; he was 74. Authorities said the SUV that had carried members of a large, free-spirited family to their deaths several days earlier may have been driven intentionally off a scenic California cliff; six adopted children were killed along with their parents.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Jane Powell is 90. Actor Don Hastings is 85. Baseball Hall of Famer Phil Niekro is 80. Actress Ali MacGraw is 80. Rhythm-and-blues singer Rudolph Isley is 80. Reggae singer Jimmy Cliff is 71. Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito is 69. Rock musician Billy Currie (Ultravox) is 69. Actress Annette O'Toole is 67. Movie director Barry Sonnenfeld is 66. Singer Susan Boyle is 58. Actor Jose Zuniga is 57. Country singer Woody Lee is 51. Actress Jessica Collins is 48. Rapper-actor Method Man is 48. Movie directors Albert and Allen Hughes are 47. Political commentator Rachel Maddow is 46. Former tennis player Magdalena Maleeva is 44. Actor David Oyelowo (oh-YEHLOH'-oh) is 43. Actor JJ Field is 41. Singer Bijou Phillips is 39. Actor Sam Huntington is 37. Comedian-actor Taran Killam is 37. Actor Matt Lanter is 36. Actor Josh Zuckerman is 34. Country singer Hillary Scott (Lady Antebellum) is 33. Rock drummer Arejay Hale (Halestorm) is 32. Actor Asa Butterfield is 22. Actor Tyler Wladis is 9.

Thought for Today: "The only sin is mediocrity." - Martha Graham, American modern dance pioneer (born 1894, died this date in 1991).

Connecting calendar



June 20 - 25-Year Club Celebration, 5:30 - 8 p.m., AP headquarters, 200 Liberty Street, New York, NY. RSVP by May 10. RSVP online [here](#). Any questions may be directed to recognition@ap.org

August 17 - Albany AP bureau reunion (including other upstate bureaus), 1-5 p.m., Marc and Carla Humbert residence on Tsatsawassa Lake, 68 Marginal Way, East Nassau, NY. Contact: Chris McKnight ([Email](#)).

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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