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Connecting - January 16, 2020

1 message

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Connecting

January 16, 2020

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this the 16th day of January 2020,

What do you like about the AP Connecting newsletter - and how can it be improved?

With the start of the new year and new decade, Ye Olde Connecting Editor would appreciate your thoughts on what could be added, changed or eliminated to make the newsletter a better product. "How can we get better" was a continuing mantra shared by one of my favorite publishers.

From my end, I appreciate greatly the commentary and story shares that you provide - but would love to hear from more of you. Is there anything I can do to help make this happen?

We started 2019 with about 1,350 subscribers from all over the globe and our circulation has grown to nearly 1,500 at the start of 2020 - virtually all of those additions by word of mouth. There are more who read it through the posting of each day's issue on Facebook and LinkedIn. I hope you continue to share word of our newsletter with friends who might have an interest in receiving it. The more voices, the better.

I hope to hear from you and will keep your thoughts private. Meantime, thanks to colleagues **Tad Bartimus** and **Norm Abelson** for their thoughts on what they like about Connecting. They lead today's issue.

Have a great day!

Paul

'Bless your sweet little pea-pickin' heart'

Tad Bartimus ([Email](#)) - You do an amazing thing with Connecting ... you bring to life with a morning click some of our best (and in rare cases, painful) memories of people we love who have left us, places we once traveled (now off limits for another visit, for one reason or another), life-changing events, both historic and personal, to which we bore witness, and both happy and sad personal times we have survived that shaped us a humans as well as journalists.

I am always grateful for my morning Connecting, no matter what kind of emotional whip-saw moments I find there. Reading the huge variety of recollections and also current activities (the coverage of the closing of the Newseum has been a see-saw, thanks Mike Putzel!) and feeling the emotions that accompany them reminds me, almost daily, of how privileged I was to be a member of such a great professional community, how many fantastic memories I can still relive on any "ordinary day"

now, and how lucky I was and still am to have had, and still have, so many lifelong friends in journalism.

As my grandmother back in Missouri used to say, "Bless your sweet little pea-pickin' heart" for your dedication, work and daily CONNECTING gift to more than a thousand of us bound together by your efforts. You win the Pulitzer of our hearts.

Thank you for resuscitating me and my writing

Norm Abelson ([Email](#)) - It was a kind of down time in my life.

Next to writing (and getting published), my greatest joy has come from teaching writing. I had been at it for some 30 years, in classes for elementary, junior high, high school and college students. Also there were community courses at libraries, historical societies and book stores.

During the last couple of decades, I taught memoir writing in the lifelong learning programs at Brandeis University and the University of Southern Maine. But age caught up with me: I no longer had the energy for the travel and preparation. I was still writing every day, but - as my sources disappeared - I had no outlet. It was sort of depressing; and I had no new ideas.

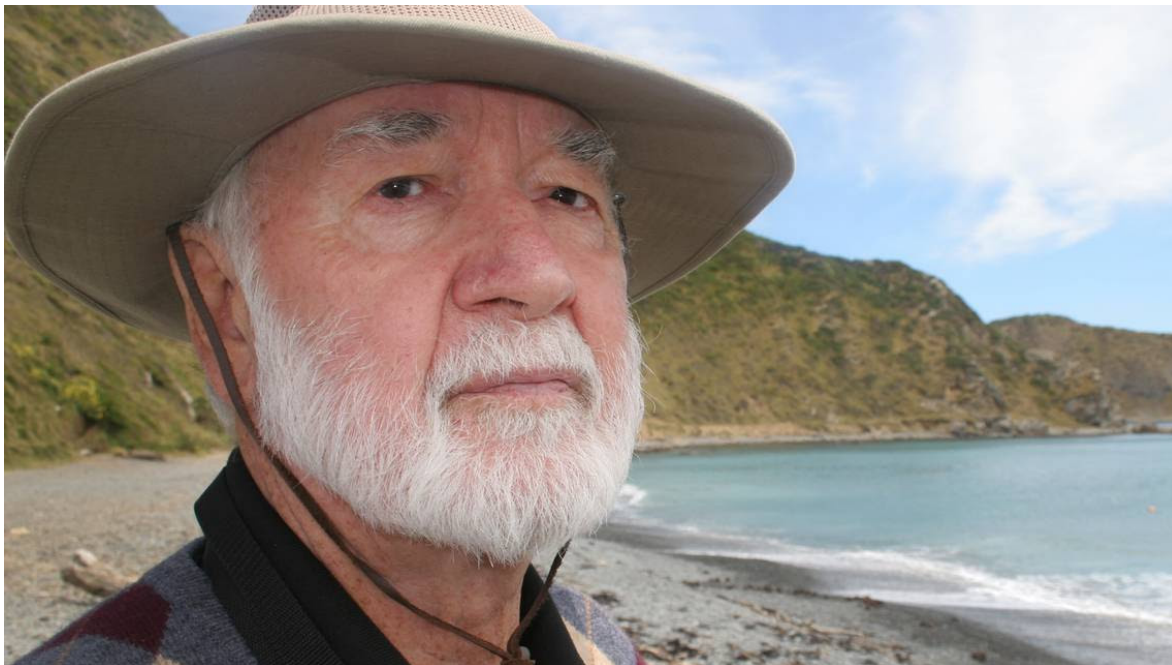
Then a couple of years ago, by chance I came upon three Associated Press style books from the Forties and Fifties, that I'd saved from my reporting days. I mailed them to the AP archives in New York, where I thought they belonged. I got a nice note back from Valerie Komor, Corporate Archives director, telling me she had hooked me up to an on-line newsletter called Connecting.

Talk about being brought back to life! From that day to this, I have read some of the finest, most interesting and diverse writing of my long life. And such wonderful pieces of memoir. In addition, Paul Stevens and Connecting have generously provided me with a new and exciting venue in which to share some of my own memories and thoughts with colleagues I have come to respect and admire.

For resuscitating me and my writing, thank you, Connecting, thank you.

Connecting mailbox

Toasting Bernie with some of the last of my 40-year-old Barbancourt rum from Haiti



Bernard Diederich in Makara Beach, New Zealand, where he grew up. COURTESY / JB DIEDERICH (Published in Miami Herald)

Shirley Christian ([Email](#)) - Dan Sewell's report on the death of my old friend Bernard Diederich in his beloved Haiti aroused my nostalgia for warm, sunny days beside sparkling blue waters when I wasn't half this old.

I first met Bernie walking along the street in downtown Santiago, Chile, while I was AP CoB there in about 1977. However, Bernie's true place in the world wasn't in the temperate zone of deepest South America or his native New Zealand, but in the tropics. That I discovered a couple of years later after I left the AP for The Miami Herald and began to cover Central America and the Caribbean.

Bernie was everywhere in the region, an expert on decades of strongmen and political unrest, as much a part of the scene as Jimmy Buffett. He and his family had moved from Mexico to a sprawling house in Fort Lauderdale, but Time didn't provide him with an office in Miami, so Bernie made himself at home at The Herald when he wasn't island-hopping. He hung out with the five or six of us who covered Latin America for The Herald from a glass-walled office looking across Biscayne Bay out to Miami Beach.

Everyone who traveled with Bernie or ran into him around the region came away with countless Bernie stories and memories -- most of them true, as far as I know. One of his ongoing projects over many years was the care and guidance of the author Graham Greene through at least two books.

They met in Haiti in the early Sixties where Bernie was running an English-language weekly and Greene was looking for his next book. The result was "The Comedians," which eventually became a movie starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. Bernie, I was told on good authority, was the model for the Burton character, who narrated the story.

A couple of decades later Bernie again connected Greene to a book project, this time guiding him through the magical mysteries of Panama. The result was Greene's book on Omar Torrijos, "Getting to Know the General."

For these two books and for being so much a part of those incredible years I'm toasting Bernie with some of the last of my 40-year-old Barbancourt rum from Haiti.

(Click [here](#) for Miami Herald story on his death.)

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Which Times?

Michael Short ([Email](#)) - Tom Kent's recollection of the WQXR death knell (in Wednesday's Connecting) reminded me of a yarn that George Esper used to tell about his time in Vietnam, when a day could be spoiled by a message like this from NY: "Times has (fill in the blank). Where ours?" Once, the Saigon bureau responded: "Which Times? Shreveport? Birmingham? Gettysburg?" (This anecdote comes with no guarantee that the riposte was ever sent.)

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Shooting a candidate

John Willis (Email) - Got a chuckle out of the caption of the second foto in the AP on the job candids in Wednesday's Connecting.

It reads that the video journalist "shoots Democratic presidential candidate..."

Now that would be news! I hope he survived the shooting incident. (chuckle)

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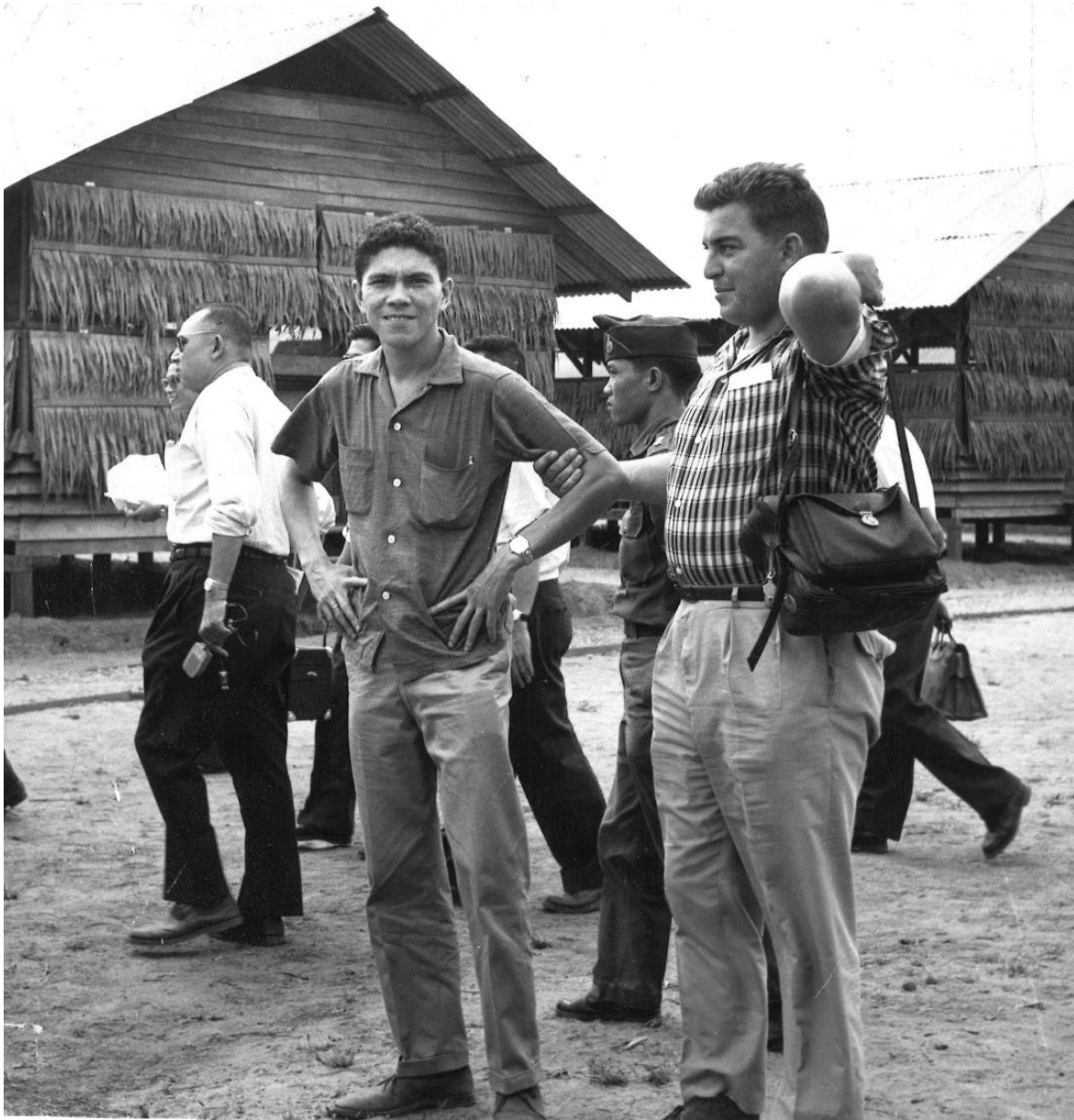
Remount that photo

Richard Horwitz (Email) - The photo on the drum of the old analog ("821") photo transmitter (in Wednesday's Connecting) is not mounted correctly. It should be further to the left, against the white border. And the "v" shaped marker, which tells the transmitter when to turn off, moved to the right. As is, all that would be transmitted would be a two-inch strip of black and the first line of the caption.



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Sharing some images from the past







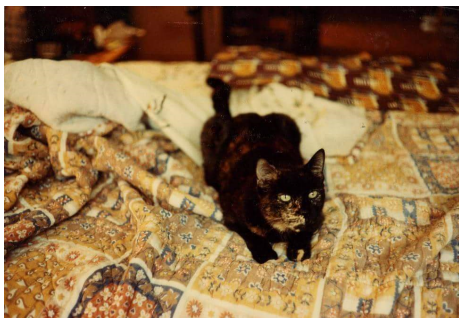
Arnold Zeitlin (Email) - Betty Escoda, the widow of Tony Escoda, a Filipino who in the '60s became the first local to become AP bureau chief in Manila (and also in Malaysia), was inspired by my (Monday) profile to dig up these photos. They show, from top to bottom: Tony with Horst Faas, (2) Stan Swinton (with sash), for many years head of AP's foreign operation, getting an award at Malacanang Palace from then-President Ferdinand E. Marcos. Betty is at the far left. Imelda is at next to Stan. No.3 shows Tony and his sister, Bing, with John Wayne after they arrived in the United States after World War II. No.4 shows Betty at the graves of Benigno and Cory Aquino. Betty now lives in Cebu, the Philippines.

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My cats: I have given them the best life any animal could have, and that is where I get my peace

Joyce Rosenberg (Email) - I was thinking about the subject of losing a pet Monday, the 14th anniversary of losing a lovely tuxedo kitty named Seika. She lived with me and my husband, Marty Sutphin, for a year and a half until Marty passed away, and I had Seika another 5 1/2 years. She was a sweet and gentle girl.

Seika was the second of three cats I have had to make the decision to put down. Each time I have agonized -- not whether to do it, but when. I feel that sparing a cherished animal pain and suffering is a gift we can give them, but I take on perhaps too much responsibility for trying to make my animals' lives, even at the end, as perfect as possible. Each of the three times I have had regrets; I should have done it sooner although none of my cats reached the point of suffering. But animals have a tremendous will to live that shouldn't be controverted, and I learned that from all of them.



This gorgeous tortoiseshell was Mitzi. I had her for 19 years, getting her when I was a teenager and losing her when I was 34. She was always a feisty but very loving girl. From 17 on, she kept getting terribly sick with kidney problems and diabetes and then soaring back to health; her inner strength was amazing. My vet and I would get into half-hour long debates about whether this was the time. And it wasn't, over and over until finally it was clear that yes, it was time. I was just

destroyed by losing that cat, and amazingly, it took me 10 years to get another one, Seika.

She also kept battling back from illness. I force-fed her for over a year because she had no appetite, yet she took the food well, thriving and being able to enjoy life. When she had a debilitating kidney infection at 15 1/2, the vet and I couldn't be sure which way it would go. But she let me know it was time -- even though at 6:30 the last morning, despite being so weak, she woke me for some cuddling.

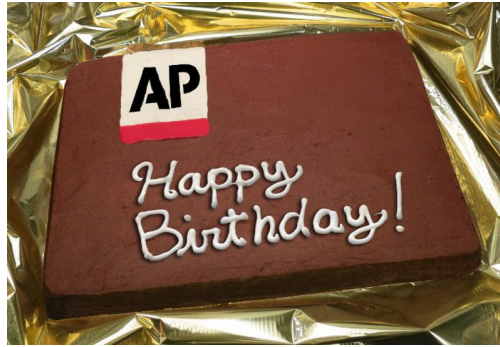
Five months later, I brought home three Snowshoe Siamese kittens, siblings, hoping that they'd live long lives. But Leo, the one in the middle, everyone's best friend whether they were cats or humans, was diagnosed with inflammatory bowel disease at the stunningly young age of 2. He was diagnosed with intestinal lymphoma when he was 7 and died when he was 9. He was an amazing fighter, though, and while very sick had great quality of life. I'm still not sure I shouldn't have put him down sooner, but the vet did tell me he wasn't suffering, that my timing was right. I hope so.



I do know I have no power over any of this, as much as I try to find it. But during all the years I've had these cats, I have given them the best life any animal could have, and that is where I get my peace.

Lizzie and Sebastian, Leo's siblings, will be 14 in March and they have early stage illnesses that do have me worried. I hope to do right by them when the time comes. For now, they are living the good lives they deserve and bringing me joy every day.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



to

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Brian Friedman - bfriedman@sbcglobal.net

Arlene Sposato - raspot1011@aol.com

Stories of interest

Impeachment trial security crackdown will limit Capitol press access (Roll Call)

By Katherine Tully-McManus

The Senate sergeant-at-arms and Capitol Police are launching an unprecedented crackdown on the Capitol press corps for the impeachment trial of President Donald Trump, following a standoff between the Capitol's chief security officials, Senate Rules Chairman Roy Blunt and the standing committees of correspondents.

Capitol Police Chief Steven A. Sund and Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Michael C. Stenger will enact a plan that intends to protect senators and the chamber, but it

also suggests that credentialed reporters and photographers whom senators interact with on a daily basis are considered a threat.

Additional security screening and limited movement within the Capitol for reporters are two issues that are drawing criticism from Capitol Hill media.

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

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Opinion: Impeachment descends into darkness (Washington Post)

By Dana Milbank

Columnist

Under the glare of 61 floodlights, the House voted Wednesday to appoint managers to transmit the articles of impeachment to the Senate. Projectors beamed each lawmaker's name and vote onto a wall for all to see.

And now comes the darkness.

As the long-delayed transfer of the impeachment articles finally got underway, President Trump's allies in the Senate announced extraordinary new restrictions on press coverage of the upcoming trial, shielding senators in unprecedented ways from the prying eyes of the American public.

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

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NPR's sanitizing of Trump's Milwaukee rally shows how he's broken the media (Vox)

By AARON RUPAR

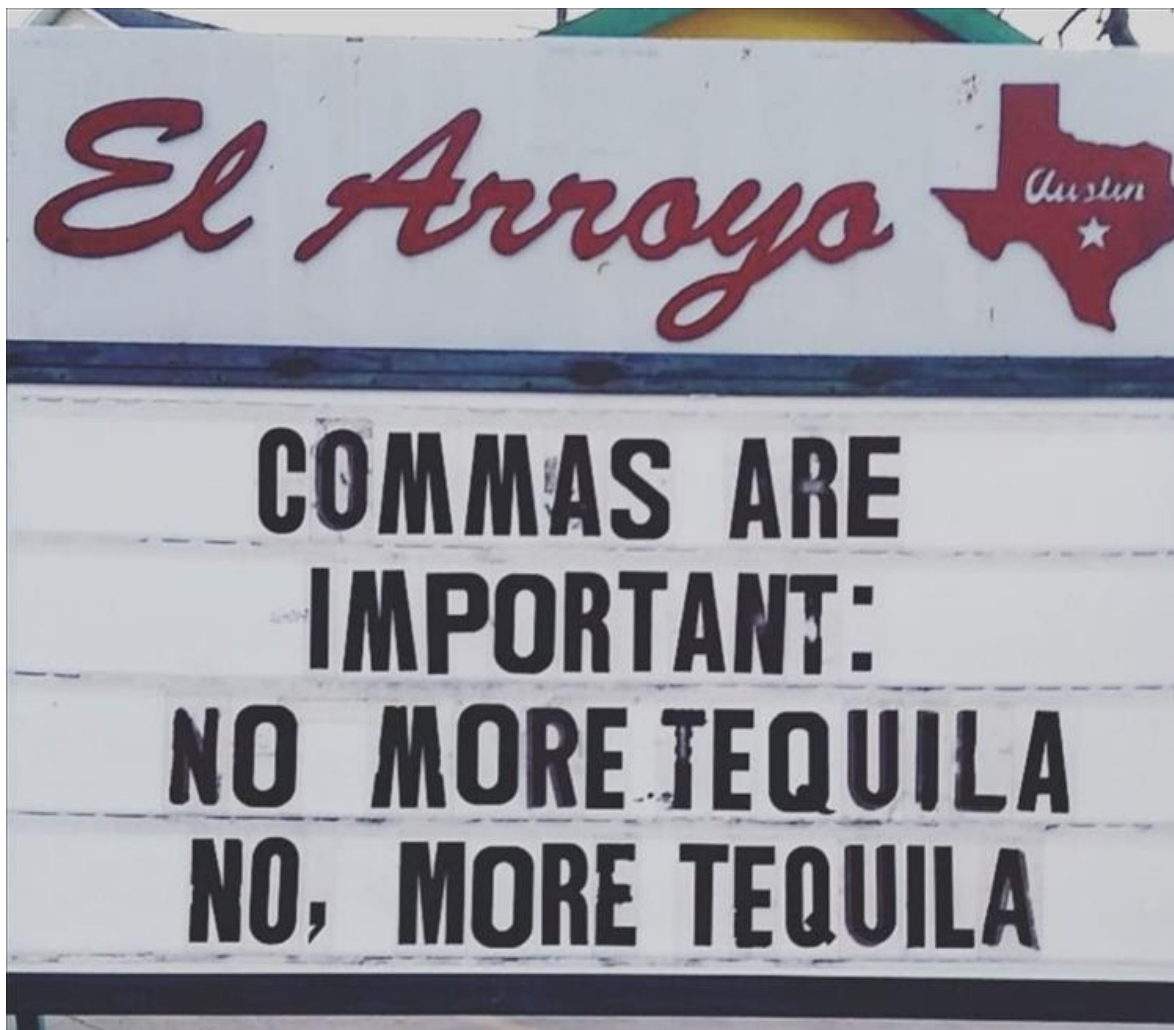
By almost any standard, President Donald Trump's rally on Tuesday evening in Milwaukee was a bizarre affair. The president went on a lengthy tirade about lightbulbs, toilets, and showers; touted war crimes; joked about a former president being in hell; and said he'd like to see one of his domestic political foes locked up.

I tried to capture some of the speech's disconcerting oddness in my write-up of the event. In many ways, the remarks the president made were typical of him. And that provides the media with a challenge: Describing Trump as he really is can make it seem as if a report is "anti-Trump" and that the reporter is trying to make the president look foolish.

But for media outlets that view themselves as above taking sides, attempts to provide a sober, "balanced" look at presidential speeches often end up normalizing things that are decidedly not normal.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Richard Chady.

The Final Word



(Shared by Mark Mittelstadt)

Today in History - January 16, 2020



By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Jan. 16, the 16th day of 2020. There are 350 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 16, 1991, the White House announced the start of Operation Desert Storm to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. (Allied forces prevailed on Feb. 28, 1991.)

On this date:

In 1547, Ivan IV of Russia (popularly known as "Ivan the Terrible") was crowned Czar.

In 1865, Union Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman decreed that 400,000 acres of land in the South would be divided into 40-acre lots and given to former slaves. (The order, later revoked by President Andrew Johnson, is believed to have inspired the expression, "Forty acres and a mule.")

In 1912, a day before reaching the South Pole, British explorer Robert Scott and his expedition found evidence that Roald Amundsen of Norway and his team had gotten there ahead of them.

In 1920, Prohibition began in the United States as the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution took effect, one year to the day after its ratification. (It was later repealed by the 21st Amendment.)

In 1969, two manned Soviet Soyuz spaceships became the first vehicles to dock in space and transfer personnel.

In 1978, NASA named 35 candidates to fly on the space shuttle, including Sally K. Ride, who became America's first woman in space, and Guion S. Bluford Jr., who became America's first black astronaut in space.

In 1987, Hu Yaobang resigned as head of China's Communist Party, declaring he'd made mistakes in dealing with student turmoil and intellectual challenges to the system.

In 1989, three days of rioting began in Miami when a police officer fatally shot Clement Lloyd, a black motorcyclist, causing a crash that also claimed the life of Lloyd's passenger, Allan Blanchard. (The officer, William Lozano, was convicted of manslaughter, but then was acquitted in a retrial.)

In 1992, officials of the government of El Salvador and rebel leaders signed a pact in Mexico City ending 12 years of civil war that had left at least 75,000 people dead.

In 2003, the space shuttle Columbia blasted off for what turned out to be its last flight; on board was Israel's first astronaut, Ilan Ramon (ee-LAHN' rah-MOHN'). (The mission ended in tragedy on Feb. 1, when the shuttle broke up during its return descent, killing all seven crew members.)

In 2004, pop star Michael Jackson pleaded not guilty to child molestation charges during a court appearance in Santa Maria, Calif.; the judge scolded Jackson for being 21 minutes late. (Jackson was eventually acquitted.)

In 2007, Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., launched his successful bid for the White House.

Ten years ago: As precious water and food began reaching parched and hungry earthquake survivors on the streets of Haiti's ruined capital Port-au-Prince, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton met with Haitian President Rene Preval (reh-NAY' preh-VAHL') and promised that U.S. quake relief efforts would be closely coordinated with local officials. Glen W. Bell Jr., 86, founder of the Taco Bell chain, died in Rancho Santa Fe, California.

Five years ago: Anti-terrorism raids across Europe netted dozens of suspects as authorities rushed to thwart more attacks by people with links to Mideast Islamic extremists. The NCAA agreed to restore 112 football wins it had stripped from Penn State and Joe Paterno in the Jerry Sandusky child-molestation scandal and to reinstate the venerated late coach as the winningest in major college football history.

One year ago: As she battled to keep Brexit on track, British Prime Minister Theresa May survived a no-confidence vote in Parliament. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi asked President Donald Trump to postpone his scheduled Jan. 29 State of the Union speech, citing concerns about whether the partially-shuttered government could provide adequate security; Republicans said the move was a ploy to deny Trump the stage. (Trump delivered the speech a week later than scheduled.) A suicide bombing claimed by Islamic State militants killed at least 16 people in northern Syria, including two U.S. service members and two American civilians.

Today's Birthdays: Author William Kennedy is 92. Author-editor Norman Podhoretz is 90. Opera singer Marilyn Horne is 86. Hall of Fame auto racer A.J. Foyt is 85. Singer Barbara Lynn is 78. Country singer Ronnie Milsap is 77. Singer Katherine Anderson Schaffner (The Marvelettes) is 76. Country singer Jim Stafford is 76. Talk show host Dr. Laura Schlessinger is 73. Movie director John Carpenter is 72. Actress-dancer-choreographer Debbie Allen is 70. Rhythm-and-blues singer Maxine Jones (En Vogue) is 61. Singer Sade (shah-DAY') is 61. Pop/rock singer-songwriter Jill Sobule is 61. Rock musician Paul Webb (Talk Talk) is 58. Actor David Chokachi (CHOH'-kuh-chee) is 52. Former Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta is 51. Actor-writer-director Josh Evans is 49. Actor-comedian Jonathan Mangum is 49. Actor Richard T. Jones is 48. Actress Josie Davis is 47. Model Kate Moss is 46. Actor-playwright Lin-Manuel Miranda is 40. Country musician James Young (The Eli Young Band) is 40. Rock musician Nick Valensi (The Strokes) is 39. Actress Renee Felice Smith is 35. NFL quarterback Joe Flacco is 35. Actress Yvonne Zima is 31.

Thought for Today: "I have noticed that the people who are late are often so much jollier than the people who have to wait for them." [-] E.V. Lucas, English writer and publisher (1868-1938).

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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