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## Connecting - January 31, 2020

1 message

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Fri, Jan 31, 2020 at 8:47 AM

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# Connecting

January 31, 2020

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning on this the 31<sup>st</sup> and final day of January 2020.

Got a book in you?

Our colleague **Peter Costanzo**, who heads up the book publishing program at The Associated Press, is currently taking book submissions, so if you've got a biography or memoir you'd like to pitch, feel free to email him directly at [pcostanzo@ap.org](mailto:pcostanzo@ap.org)

Should journalists sacrifice **their right to vote** in primaries to keep their politics private? Or, for that matter, to vote at all?

That was a question posed in a recent Poynter story and one we asked in Thursday's Connecting. We lead with the first responses from your fellow colleagues. Some interesting views are expressed. Feel free to add yours.

Have a great weekend! GO CHIEFS!!!

Paul

## Being a journalist and voting: Are they compatible?

**Mike Holmes** ([Email](#)) - I covered politics and state government in four states during my AP career. During that time, I registered as an independent, didn't vote in primaries - with one exception - and in general elections I didn't vote in races where I would be covering the winner (governor, statewide officeholders, Congress, etc.)

These were personal decisions. For me, it was similar to business reporters not owning stock. I just wouldn't have felt right reporting on someone I'd voted for - or against.

Full disclosure: I did vote in one Republican primary in Texas. That race was for our local sanitary improvement district board. A neighbor ran on a reform slate after the old SID board got caught holding its "public" meetings at expensive restaurants where taxpayers couldn't attend.

He won. I didn't vote in another primary until I retired.

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**Marc Humbert (Email)** - I would never assume to suggest to another person how they should handle the question of party enrollment or not for a journalist. Their choice. And, fortunately no boss ever suggested to me what I should do.

Personally, I made the decision that as a reporter covering government and politics that I should be a "blank" or not registered in a party. Yes, that meant not voting in primaries. But it also meant no pol or reader could accuse me of being a Dem or a Repub or some other brand. A fair trade in my mind. And, perhaps it was one of the reasons I had great sources all across the political spectrum during my more than 30 years with the AP. Can't be sure, but maybe it helped.

I am troubled by the growing appearance of obvious bias I see from reporters on personal social media accounts. I know that if I was still in the game, I wouldn't be giving those I cover any such ammunition with which to question my motives when it comes to what I may include or not in a news story.

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**Lee Mitgang (Email)** - My thoughts on forbidding reporters to vote in primaries because they must declare a party affiliation to do so:

In the current anti-media climate, I get that at least some news outlets feel a need to bend over backwards to demonstrate their "neutrality" in all things they touch. But I strongly disagree with banning reporters from voting in any public election, even those requiring a party declaration in order to participate. In fact, it could have the reverse intended effect: a tacit admission by such news organizations that they buy the pernicious "consider the source" argument of media critics who claim that enrolled Democratic or Republican reporters are incapable of putting their affiliations to the side and cover the issues and candidates with fairness and professionalism. Judge the reporting, not the reporter.

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**Marty Thompson (Email)** - Some of us lived and worked in simpler times, but it was possible a few decades ago for a reporter, or news manager, to keep his or her political persuasion private.

An example is AP's longtime Sacramento correspondent and political writer, the late Doug Willis. Doug kept his political preferences to himself. He covered Democrats and Republicans in office and as they campaigned, at the state and national levels - following Ronald Reagan and Jerry Brown on the road as a national assignment.

He kept any personal preference to himself. I never knew.

His bureau chiefs, Jim Lagier and later me, didn't know. And Jim and I kept our own politics private.

Doug was so strict about it that when his wife was offered a job on a Sacramento project funded by the governor's office, he urged her to say no. She took the job, and Doug got an apartment for the duration of her assignment.

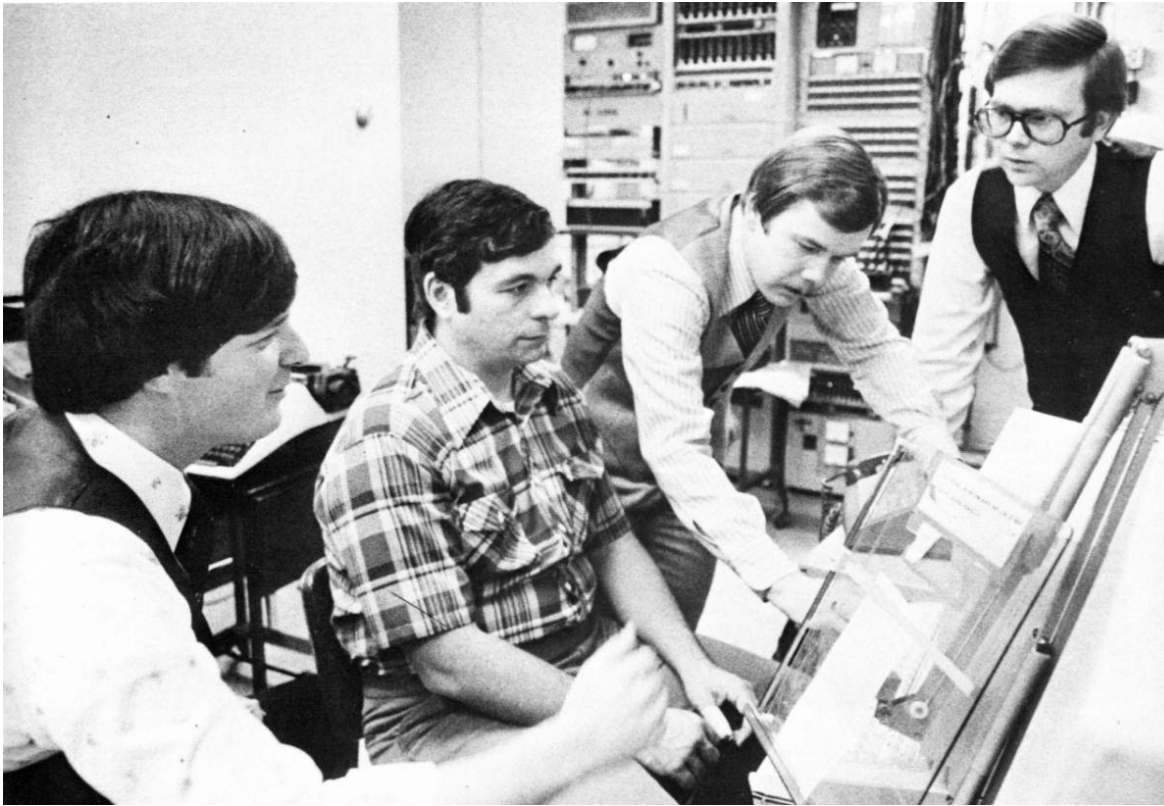
If Doug was registered to vote in a primary, I don't know of anyone digging up a choice. I spent a fair amount of time in Sacramento and occasionally tagged along with Doug to an evening event put on by people from both major parties. The respect he earned was clear from all sides.

The Thompsons came of voting age in Washington state, which had open primaries and so one didn't have to declare an affiliation. When I became Reno correspondent and we went to register to vote, a worker asked which party, and Janet responded, "I beg your pardon?" I don't remember how she answered.

## Tell her story in its own time and its own merits

**Steve Loeper** ([Email](#)) - Regarding the well-intentioned suggestion by former colleague Beth Harpaz that the AP do a complete takeout on Vanessa Nakate (the woman whose image was cropped out in an AP photo), might I suggest that such a move at this delicate time could be perceived as patronizing and a possible misuse of journalism for damage control. AP's editorial efforts in the wake of the shameful crop should continue focusing on the issue itself as it pertains to the company and media as a whole, with Vanessa's voice certainly included in the coverage. But to me, the full story of Vanessa Nakate and her important work should be told in its own time and on its own merits.

## Remember the mouse?

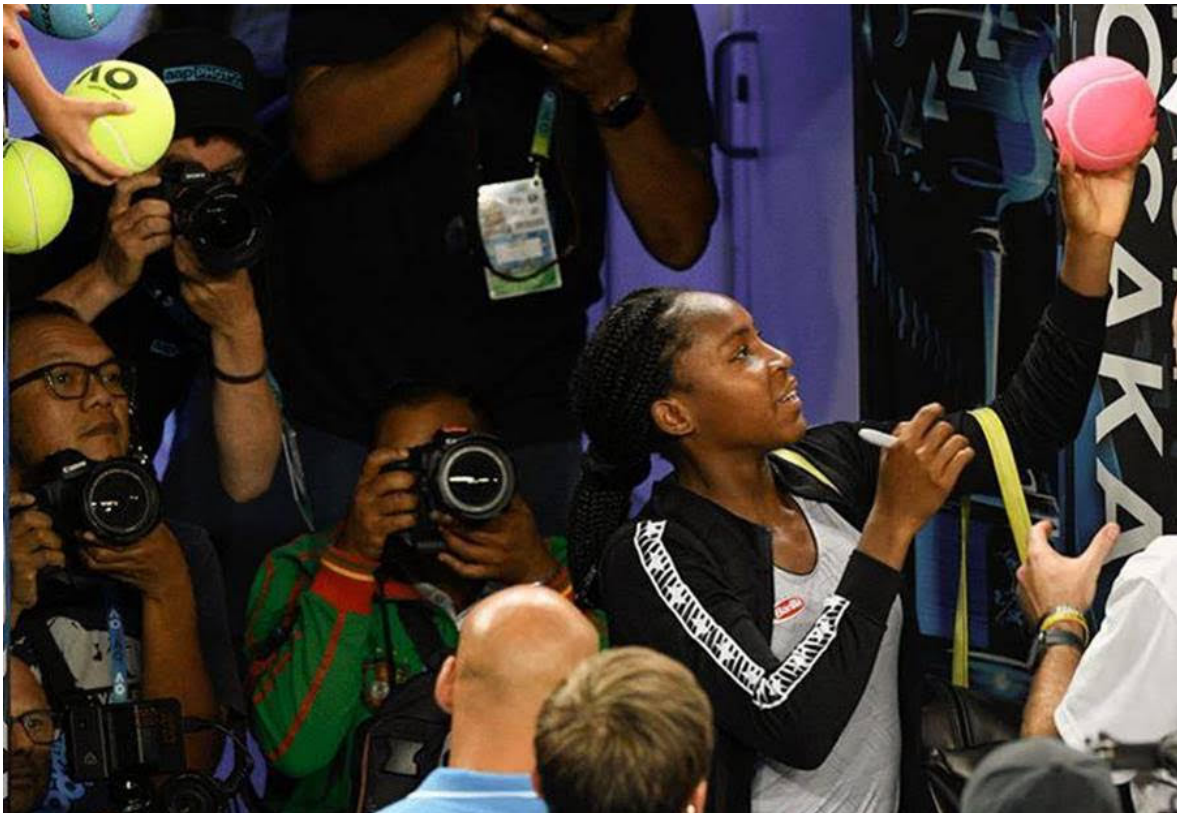


**The new mighty mouse computer link installed at the Little Rock bureau is tested by (from left) Technical Service Manager Dennis Coston from New Brunswick, News Editor Harry King, New York Technology Administrative Assistant Chris Pederson, and Bureau Chief Larry McDermott. Little Rock was one of the last line bureaus to get mouse service, with a Delta Data terminal installed to gain access to a new computer in Dallas. (1979 File Photo/AP Corporate Archives)**

## **Around the AP world**



Photographer Altaf Qadri photographs an elephant bathing in the Ganges River in Patna, India, Jan. 21, 2020. (Photo by Aftab Alam Siddiqui)



Jakarta-based Chief Photographer Dita Alangkara, far left, takes pictures of 15-year-old U.S. tennis star Coco Gauff signing autographs after defeating Venus Williams in

their first round match at the Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia, Jan. 20, 2020.  
(AP Photo/Andy Brownbill)

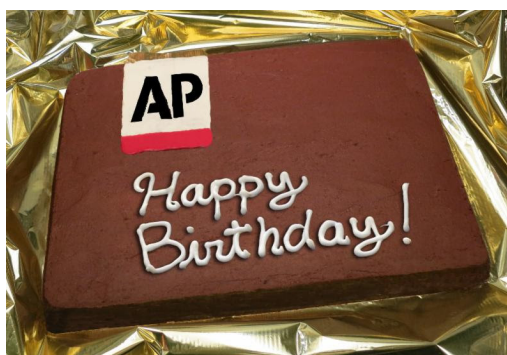


Baghdad-based cameraman Ali Abdul Hassan works from an Iraqi army Mi-17 helicopter during military operations of the Iraqi army's seventh Brigade in Anbar, Iraq, Dec. 29, 2019. (AP Photo/Nasser Nasser)



The Kabul news team poses for a photograph after covering a snowboarding event, Jan. 24, 2020, on the outskirts of Kabul, Afghanistan. From right: senior producer Ahmad Zubair Faizi, video journalist Ahmad Seir Nassiri, photographer Tamana Sarwary, reporter Tameem Akhgar and photographer Rahmat Gul. (AP Photo/Mohammad Kazim)

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



to

Don Deibler - [russd225@gmail.com](mailto:russd225@gmail.com)

## Stories of interest



## ***What Will You Do When the Culture War Comes for You?*** (New York Times)

By CHARLIE WARZEL

The culture war will come for us all.

On Sunday, it came for a Washington Post reporter, Felicia Sonmez.

Nine people were killed in a helicopter crash in Calabasas, Calif., that morning, including the basketball legend Kobe Bryant and his 13-year-old daughter, Gianna. The news rocketed around social media, where mourners shared their heartbreak at the news. As is common with major breaking news, some reports were inaccurate or false, layering anxiety on top of grief.

Into the mix, Ms. Sonmez tweeted the link to a 2016 article from The Daily Beast about a young woman's accusation that Mr. Bryant had raped her in Colorado. Criminal charges against him were dropped in 2004 and a civil suit was settled out of court.

The tweet highlighted the fact that Mr. Bryant's legacy is fraught and complicated, and attracted the attention of fans as well as trolls who bombarded her inbox with abuse and posted her home address online. Ms. Sonmez then posted a selection of the threats she received, without obscuring the names of the people who had sent her hate mail. She slept in a hotel on Sunday night, fearing for her safety at home, she said.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Kevin Walsh.

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## ***Journalist Gwen Ifill Honored With Black Heritage Forever Stamp*** (NPR)



By **VANESSA ROMO**

Gwen Ifill didn't want it to be a big deal.

The legendary journalist knew she'd served as a trailblazer for women and especially a beacon of what is professionally possible for women of color. But in an interview with The New York Times, she said she was eager for the days when it would not seem "like any breakthrough at all" for a black woman to be anchoring a national news program.

And yet, more than three years after her death, Ifill is still making breakthroughs. This time, on a stamp.

Ifill, who died at the age of 61 after battling cancer, will be memorialized on a new U.S. Postal Service Forever stamp. She'll be the 43rd stamp in the Black Heritage series.

It features a photo of her taken in 2008 by photographer Robert Severi. She looks relaxed, her smile reassuring and her gaze direct and friendly. Essentially, the same image she projected into living rooms for decades as the host of some of television's most respected news programs.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Len Iwanski.

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## ***TMZ boss defends breaking news of Kobe Bryant's death*** (AOL)

By **TARYN RYDER**

TMZ founder Harvey Levin is defending his website's decision to break the news of the death of Kobe Bryant. During an interview with LA radio station KNX, Levin said "Kobe's people" gave them the OK to run with the story.

"We dealt with Kobe's people for an hour before we published the story and we were told very clearly that [Vanessa] had been notified," Levin told KNX's In-Depth on Wednesday.

Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva shamed the webloid during a press conference Sunday for its handling of the news. Bryant's helicopter crashed around 9:45 a.m. PT and TMZ published its story at 11:24 a.m. PT.

"I got the tip initially from law enforcement," Levin explained. "Then we talked to Kobe's people and we were dealing with them for an hour before we published the story and they said, 'Go for it.' At a point we were all trying to confirm it and we confirmed it, but they all knew and they said, 'Go for it' and they said she knew."

Read more [here](#). Shared by Adolphe Bernotas.

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## ***AP Exclusive: Woman who says Trump raped her seeks his DNA***



**FILE - This June 23, 2019, file photo shows E. Jean Carroll in New York. Lawyers for Carroll who accuses President Donald Trump of raping her in the 1990s are asking for a**

**DNA sample, seeking to determine whether his genetic material is on a dress she says she wore during the encounter. (AP Photo/Craig Ruttle, File)**

**By JENNIFER PELTZ**

NEW YORK (AP) - Lawyers for a woman who accuses President Donald Trump of raping her in the 1990s are asking for a DNA sample, seeking to determine whether his genetic material is on a dress she says she wore during the encounter.

Advice columnist E. Jean Carroll's lawyers served notice to a Trump attorney Thursday for Trump to submit a sample on March 2 in Washington for "analysis and comparison against unidentified male DNA present on the dress."

Carroll filed a defamation suit against Trump in November after the president denied her allegation, saying he didn't know and had never even met her. Her lawyer, Roberta Kaplan, then had the black wool coat-style dress tested. A lab report with the legal notice says DNA found in skin cells on the outer surface of the sleeves was a mix of at least four people, at least one of them male.

Read more [here](#).

## The Final Word

### ***Dogs Never Die. They are Sleeping in Your Heart.*** (DogHeirs)

This article is a must-read for everyone in the world who loves dogs. All dog lovers who have shared their homes, their hearts and their lives with the most loving, loyal and wonderful of four-legged furry best friends will also, at some point, experience the most heartbreaking aspect of adopting a dog. Saying goodbye. But just read what Ernest Montague wrote here.

Ernest, who describes himself here on DogHeirs as a Pit bull owner, wrote this beautiful article and says, "I wrote this several years ago in memory of Bolo, a black and white Pit Bull who would always go for a walk, right up to the day he died. He might only get 15 feet before he stopped and looked at me and gave me the look: 'I can't go any further. But don't you think for one minute I'm done walking.'"

The experience of losing a dog is a universal one for every pet parent. I hope Ernest's wise words help you, or someone you know, even if just a little.

Read more [here](#).

## Today in History - January 31, 2020



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Friday, Jan. 31, the 31st day of 2020. There are 335 days left in the year.

### **Today's Highlight in History:**

On Jan. 31, 1958, the United States entered the Space Age with its first successful launch of a satellite, Explorer 1, from Cape Canaveral.

### **On this date:**

In 1863, during the Civil War, the First South Carolina Volunteers, an all-black Union regiment composed of many escaped slaves, was mustered into federal service at Beaufort, South Carolina.

In 1865, the U.S. House of Representatives joined the Senate in passing the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution abolishing slavery, sending it to states for ratification. (The amendment was adopted in December 1865.) Gen. Robert E.

Lee was named general-in-chief of the Confederate States Army by President Jefferson Davis.

In 1917, during World War I, Germany served notice that it was beginning a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare.

In 1919, baseball Hall-of-Famer Jackie Robinson was born in Cairo (KAY'-roh), Ga.

In 1929, revolutionary Leon Trotsky and his family were expelled from the Soviet Union.

In 1945, Pvt. Eddie Slovik, 24, became the first U.S. soldier since the Civil War to be executed for desertion as he was shot by an American firing squad in France.

In 1950, President Harry S. Truman announced he had ordered development of the hydrogen bomb.

In 1971, astronauts Alan Shepard, Edgar Mitchell and Stuart Roosa blasted off aboard Apollo 14 on a mission to the moon.

In 1990, McDonald's Corp. opened its first fast-food restaurant in Moscow.

In 2000, an Alaska Airlines MD-83 jet crashed into the Pacific Ocean off Port Hueneme (wy-NEE'-mee), California, killing all 88 people aboard.

In 2001, a Scottish court sitting in the Netherlands convicted one Libyan, acquitted a second, in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. (Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi (AHB'-dehl BAH'-seht AH'-lee ahl-meh-GRAH'-hee) was given a life sentence, but was released after eight years on compassionate grounds by Scotland's government. He died in 2012.)

In 2007, some three dozen blinking electronic devices planted around Boston threw a scare into the city in what turned out to be a marketing campaign for the Cartoon Network TV show "Aqua Teen Hunger Force."

Ten years ago: The annual World Economic Forum concluded a five-day meeting in Davos, Switzerland, with widespread agreement that a fragile recovery was under way but no consensus on what was going to spur job growth. Roger Federer beat

Andy Murray 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (11) for a fourth Australian Open championship. Beyonce became the first woman to win six Grammy Awards in one night; Taylor Swift won four Grammys, including album of the year, for "Fearless."

Five years ago: Bobbi Kristina Brown, the daughter of the late singer Whitney Houston, was found unresponsive in a bathtub at her Georgia townhome and was taken to an Atlanta-area hospital. She died six months later.

One year ago: A day after he lashed out at U.S. intelligence agency chiefs over their assessments of global threats, President Donald Trump reversed course and said that he and the intelligence community were "all on the same page." He said they told him that their testimony at a Senate hearing had been "mischaracterized" by the news media. The polar vortex that brought many cities in the upper Midwest to a standstill marched east, spreading arctic conditions over an area from Buffalo to Brooklyn.

Today's Birthdays: Composer Philip Glass is 83. Former Interior Secretary James Watt is 82. Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands, the former queen regent, is 82. Actor Stuart Margolin is 80. Actress Jessica Walter is 79. Former U.S. Rep. Dick Gephardt, D-Mo., is 79. Blues singer-musician Charlie Musselwhite is 76. Actor Glynn Turman is 73. Baseball Hall of Famer Nolan Ryan is 73. Actor Jonathan Banks is 73. Singer-musician Harry Wayne Casey (KC and the Sunshine Band) is 69. Rock singer Johnny Rotten is 64. Actress Kelly Lynch is 61. Actor Anthony LaPaglia is 61. Singer-musician Lloyd Cole is 59. Actress Paulette Braxton is 55. Rock musician Al Jaworski (Jesus Jones) is 54. Actress Minnie Driver is 50. Actress Portia de Rossi is 47. Actor-comedian Bobby Moynihan is 43. Actress Kerry Washington is 43. Bluegrass singer-musician Becky Buller is 41. Singer Justin Timberlake is 39. Actor Tyler Ritter is 35. Country singer Tyler Hubbard (Florida Georgia Line) is 33. Folk-rock singer-musician Marcus Mumford (Mumford and Sons) is 33. Actor Joel Courtney is 24.

**Thought for Today: "Happiness is not having what you want, but wanting what you have." [-] Rabbi Hyman Judah Schachtel, American theologian, author and educator (1907-1990).**

## 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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