

SHARE:

[Join Our Email List](#)

[View as Webpage](#)



Connecting

October 07, 2020

Click [here](#) for sound of the Teletype



[Top AP News](#)
[Top AP Photos](#)

[Connecting Archive](#)
[AP Emergency Relief Fund](#)
[AP Books](#)

Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this the 8th day of October 2020,

Our colleague **Adolphe Bernotas** calls them Contrarian Grammarian Hints - ones he has assembled over his decades of service as an AP journalist. And with the emphasis on the AP Stylebook and cliches in recent issues of Connecting, he decided it was time to share his treasure trove with his colleagues.

If you're like me, we are glad he did.

Here's to a great day - be safe, stay healthy/

Paul

Contrarian Grammarian Hints

(Assembled during decades in daily, weekly, radio and AP newsrooms)

Adolphe Bernotas (Email) – *retired AP newsman* - Although pitched at Associated Press print and broadcast writers, 99 percent of the list applies to all streamlined, concise, to-the-point writing/editing, told wryly. (“Stylebook” refers to The Associated Press Stylebook. Some of those references probably are out of date).

John Quincy Adams warned against sloppy writing and speaking, that “slovenly language corrodes the mind” and Thomas Jefferson said that “the most valuable of talents is never using two words when one will do.” Yet in my short time as teacher and long time as reporter/editor I found that people can be contrarian; they do the opposite of what’s suggested.

So with Adams’ and Jefferson’s admonitions, but with a bit of irony and tongue in cheek, I offer my version of “Hints from Heloise,” some of which arguably can be challenged.

First, some principles:

- Ignore the Stylebook, dictionary and spell check, especially the AP Spell Check. Express yourself freely.
- Ignore grammar and syntax rules; they hinder thoughtful writing. (A well-known UNH journalism professor is said to have told students to “ignore grammar.”)
- When using (excuse me, “utilizing”) English, use bureaucratic words of Latin origin; avoid the robust, strong, to-the-point, direct, short Anglo-Saxon words. The Romans were the world’s greatest bureaucrats and aping their words will endear you to the bureaucrats and politicians you cover.
- Use the longest words possible and as many words as possible.
- Don’t write in normal human, understandable English, the way you would speak to your grandmother. Use journalese and the argot and jargon of those you cover. (Cops love **“the subject fled on foot”** instead of **ran away** and don’t forget to sprinkle **“unfunded mandates,” “accrued unfunded liability”** and similar legislative, administrative and bureaucratic flatulence and palaver in legislative, government and



especially education stories.) Conversation overheard between grandmothers at Dunkin' Donuts: "Hey, Eunice! You realize the unfunded mandates will produce excessive accrued unfunded liabilities? And what if the interlocal agreement fails and we're stuck with another ad-valorem situation?"

-- Use clichés, especially journalistic clichés ("**firefighters sifted ashes for clues,**" unless you can get pictures of the electric sifters). Other favorites: **full force; full swing; high gear; meme; paradigm; trope; silly season; cobbled** (especially **cobbled together**, does that mean **cobbled cobbled?**); **thick black smoke; beefed up; swing into action; outside the box; push the envelope; sigh of relief; shroud (or blanket) of secrecy; concerned citizens; closure; disturbing details; reeling**. Another is "**went missing**" – **the boy went missing**; is that akin to **the boy went fishing, went swimming?** What is the grammatical/syntactical basis for "**went missing?**"

– Sports is another goldmine of clichés. (Why say **pitcher** when you can say **hurler**; why say **kicked** when you can say **booted?**) There's not enough room here to list more.

– The "**combed**" construction gets extra points: Why say "**rescuers searched the woods for the lost boy,**" when you can say "**rescuers combed the wooded area on foot for the boy who went missing.**" (Remember to get pictures of the heavy-duty industrially rated combs.) Another: "**phones rang off the hook,**" even though the last telephone that hung on a hook was made in 1208. And there's the good old "**the switchboard lit up like a Christmas tree,**" plus the perennial "**it looks like a war zone,**" "**snail's pace,**" "**hear a pin drop,**" "**lucky to be alive**" and the barfpukeworthy "**it's official.**" ("**it's official**" should be an indictable felony).

-- Don't say **concrete block** when you can say **cinder block** (even though cinder blocks were abandoned in the construction industry about 100 years ago).

-- Don't say **cameras flashed** when you can say **flashbulbs popped** (even though flashbulbs haven't been used in cameras in about 60 years).

-- Use as many useless, throwaway words as you can (don't say "Dick and Jane" when you can say "**both** Dick and Jane"; don't say "three cities" when you can say "three **different** cities;" or "three **separate** cities; always put **some** in front of a number even though it is meaningless in front of a number – "Some 35 people were injured").

-- Use the 99-percent useless "actually" construction. Don't say "John drove the car" when you can say "John **actually** drove the car." Adding "actually" before a verb gets extra points.

-- Use the **issue of** construction when a simple noun will do. (Don't say the governor spoke about taxes, when you can say the governor spoke about the **issue of** taxes, [or **subject of**] etc.)

(See The Final Word for more examples)

Understanding the election: Precise polling with AP VoteCast

By Patrick Maks

AP VoteCast, the wide-ranging survey of the American electorate, wasn't built with a pandemic in mind, but in many ways uses the ideal methodology to conduct accurate research about the electorate at a time when more Americans than ever before are expected to cast ballots before Election Day.

AP Director of Public Opinion Research Emily Swanson explains how AP VoteCast works and the importance of transparency in polling:

AP conducted a decade of research on the best way to accurately survey the electorate prior to the launch of AP VoteCast. What did we learn and how did that shape AP VoteCast's creation?

The way that America votes has changed rapidly in recent years. It used to be that the vast majority of Americans who voted went to the polls on Election Day and cast their ballots then and there. In 2016 and 2018, more than 40% of voters voted early – either by mail or by early in-person voting – and that was all before the coronavirus pandemic.

AP VoteCast, which was designed with that shift in mind, meets voters where they are, by conducting AP VoteCast by mail, phone and online, using an approach designed for how America votes today and how it will increasingly vote in the future: early, absentee and by mail. It is no longer the case that going to polling places on Election Day with pencils and clipboards in tow leads to an accurate sampling of the electorate.

How and where are voters contacted? How many people are interviewed?

Read more [here](#).

Connecting mailbox

Oops!

Norm Abelson (Email) - Since clichés are said generally to have originated as well-written, meaningful expressions that become overused and outdated, at what point do they become certifiable clichés, and who makes the decision to brand them?

I haven't got a clue. Oops!

-0-

Applauds new AP guidelines on riot/violence

Kevin Noblet (Email) - I applaud AP's new guidance on use of "riot" and it's preference for "violence" in many circumstances. The distinction is important.

While based in Santiago in the '80s, I regularly covered street protests against the rule of Chilean strongman Augusto Pinochet. These events were frequently marked by violence, with youths hurling stones and chunks of steel at police, and police responding with tear gas and water cannon. It often looked like a chaotic "riot" but there was nothing spontaneous about it nor was it totally out of control. And nor did it negate the political expression of protest.

Pinochet was the standard-bearer for law and order, not unlike Trump now, so of course he portrayed it as riot and anarchy. But most news organizations distinguished between the masses who were peacefully protesting and the fringe mobs (in Chile they were often dubbed "lumpen") who caused damage or attacked police. Those police often didn't wait for violence to disperse crowds and assault people, including journalists.

-0-

AP journalists on the job



Members of the AP debate photo team pose for a photo before the start of the first presidential debate, Sept. 29, 2020, at Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland Clinic, in Cleveland. From left: Julio Cortez, photographer, Baltimore; Pablo Martinez Monsivais, assistant chief of bureau for photography, Washington; J. David Ake, director of photography, New York; Morry Gash, photographer, Milwaukee; and Patrick Semansky, photographer, Washington. (Photo courtesy Doug Mills)



Photographer Richard Drew, left, poses with director Spike Lee, Sept. 28, 2020, in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. Lee interviewed Drew about his “Falling Man” photo for a documentary on 9/11. (Photo courtesy Richard Drew)

Stories of interest

Trump's return means more anxiety for White House reporters

By DAVID BAUDER

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump's return to the White House to recover from the coronavirus seems certain to raise the already heightened anxiety level of the journalists assigned to follow him.

Three reporters have tested positive for COVID-19 in recent days while covering a White House described as lax, at best, in following basic safety advice like wearing masks. Discomfort only increased Monday with news that press secretary Kayleigh McEnany had tested positive.

The image of Trump standing on a balcony and removing his mask after a helicopter dropped him off Monday evening, then turning to enter the White House maskless, could hardly be reassuring to people who work there.

After McEnany's announcement Monday, Fox News chief White House correspondent John Roberts spent part of his afternoon waiting outside an urgent care center for his own test. He had attended McEnany's briefing last Thursday. She didn't wear a mask, and neither did one of her assistants who later tested positive, and Roberts sat near both of them. He tested negative.

Read more [here](#).

-0-

Acting VOA Director Pledges To Protect Newsroom Despite Inquiry Into Reporter (NPR)

By DAVID FOLKENFLIK

The acting director of the Voice of America said Monday night that he would reject any outside or political pressure on his newsroom's coverage following news reports that two pro-Trump political appointees at the VOA's parent agency had investigated the news service's White House bureau chief and accused him of anti-Trump bias.

The investigation of veteran journalist Steven Herman by senior officials at the U.S. Agency for Global Media appears to violate statutory protections for VOA's newsroom from political interference, a so-called legal "firewall." The investigation was first reported by NPR.

Reactions to the report came in a rush on Monday.

Read more [here](#).

-0-

The toll of COVID-19 hits home (Fort Dodge IA Messenger)



Kelby and her grandmother in 2000; at right, Kelby today.

By KELBY WINGERT

I felt my stomach drop the Sunday night my dad called me and told me my grandma — my only living grandparent — had been diagnosed with

COVID-19 after a mass-testing effort at the nursing home where she lived.

“I just talked to her and she isn’t showing any symptoms,” he reassured me.

I breathed a little easier. This could be very bad for her — she already had a history of lung problems. I can’t even count the number of times she’s been hospitalized for pneumonia or bronchitis over my 28 short years of life.

But she wasn’t showing any symptoms of being sick, he said, and I had just talked to her a few days before, on the phone. She was going to be just fine.



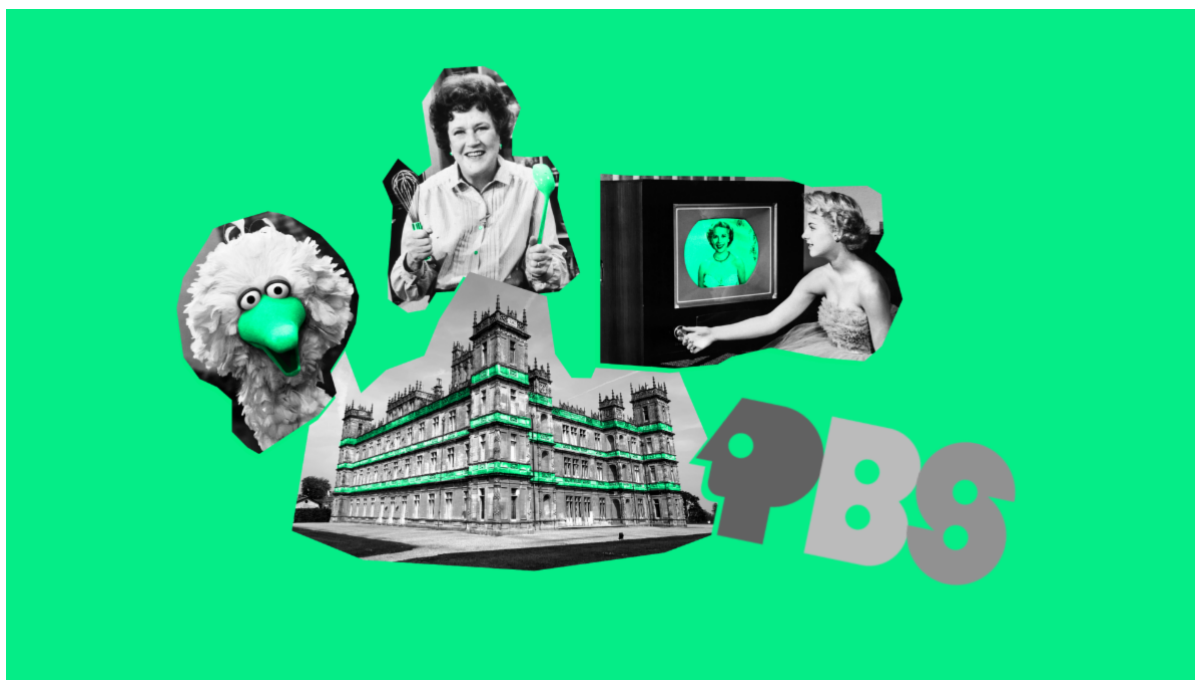
Still, I was mad. I was mad at everyone — even close family members — who I viewed as not taking the novel coronavirus and COVID-19 pandemic seriously. I was mad at everyone I saw around town not wearing masks. I was mad at the man who stood much too close behind me in line at Hy-Vee as I picked up groceries.

And I stayed mad and I stayed hopeful that my grandma would be just fine.

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

-0-

PBS turns 50 (Axios)



By Sara Fischer, Aida Amer, Andrew Witherspoon

Amid a global pandemic and an election year, PBS, the public broadcaster turning 50 on Sunday, faces its most transformative period yet.

The big picture: While PBS is best known for shows like "Sesame Street" and "Downton Abbey," its legacy also includes innovations in technology, like creating closed captioning to make TV accessible to the deaf, and pioneering diversity in television.

Catch up quick: PBS was created in 1969 following the passage of the 1967 Public Broadcasting Act, which established the government-funded Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

"It was a way for our individual stations to create scale," says Paula Kerger, president and CEO of PBS. "It was signed into law by Lyndon Johnson, who was looking at other great public broadcasters around the world, like the BBC, while envisioning what public broadcast could look like in America."

Today, PBS has nearly 330 member stations around the country, many of which were created with the explicit purpose of providing educational programming to local communities.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Jenny Volanakis.

The Final (Contrarian) Word

More examples:

Don't say **relatives** when you can say **next of kin** (another favorite of cops).

Don't say **buy** when you can say **purchase**.

Don't say **same** when you can say **same exact** or **exact same** or **same same** or **exact exact**.

Don't say **use** (verb) when you can say **utilize**.

Don't say **use** (noun) when you can say **usage**.

Don't say **lawyer** when you can say **attorney**.

Don't say **mistake** when you can say **bad mistake** (as opposed to good mistake).

Don't say **lie** (noun) when you can say **fabrication**.

Don't say **guard** when you can say **corrections officer**.

Don't say **skills** when you can say **skill set**.

Don't say **fear** when you can say **fear factor**.

Don't say **proximity** when you can say **close proximity** (as opposed to far proximity).

Don't say **method** when you can say **methodology**.

Don't say **result** when you can say **end result** (as opposed to front result).

Don't say **notice** (noun) when you can say **advance notice** (as opposed to retard notice).

Don't say **wreckage** when you can say **twisted wreckage** (as opposed to neat wreckage).

Don't say **complete** (verb) when you can say **finalize** (see how many words you can produce with an **-ize** ending for extra credit – **prioritize**, for instance).

Don't say **committee** when you can say **task force** (but please list the names of the aircraft carriers, battleships, cruisers, destroyers, frigates submarines and dreadnoughts in the task force).

Don't say **period** when you can say **period of time** or **time period**.

Don't say **time** when you can say **time period**.

Don't say **time** or **schedule** when you can say **time frame**.

Don't say **this time** when you can say **this time around** (as opposed to this time straight).

Don't say **allow** when you can say **give permission**.

Don't say **ATM** or **automated teller machine** when you can say **ATM machine**, which means "automated teller machine machine."

Don't say **several times** when you can say **several occasions**.

Don't say **in 20 minutes** when you can say **in 20 minutes' time**.

Don't say **several** when you can say **a number of** or **a series of**.

Don't say **during** when you can say **during the course of**.

Don't say **public** when you can say **general public** (as opposed to sergeant public) or **public at large** (as opposed to public at small).

Don't say **and** when you can say **and also**.

Don't say **and** when you can say **as well as**.

Don't say **again** when you can say **once again** (as opposed to twice again).

Don't say **unique** when you can say **very unique**.

Don't say **link** (verb) when you can say **link together**.

Don't say **suddenly** when you can say **all of a sudden**.

Don't say **the** when you can say **all of the**.

Don't say **begin** when you can say **initially begin**.

Don't say **get** when you can say **obtain**.

Don't say **rebound** when you can say **rebound back** (as opposed to rebound ahead).

Don't say **reflect** when you can say **reflect back** (as opposed to reflect ahead).

Don't say **rest** (noun) when you can say **remainder**.

Don't say **while** when you can say **while at the same time**.

Don't say **transformed** when you can say **completely transformed**.

Don't say **recorded** when you can say **prerecorded**.

Don't say **sliced** when you can say **presliced**.

Don't say **haven** when you can say **safe haven** (as opposed to unsafe haven; haven includes safe).

Don't say **bulletin** when you can say **special bulletin**.

Don't say **tests** when you can say **battery of tests**.

Don't say **destination** when you can say **final destination**.

Don't say **felon** when you can say **convicted felon** (as opposed to unconvicted felon; although it could be argued unconvicted felon applies to Presidents Nixon and Trump).

Don't say **legislation** when you can say **piece of legislation**.

Don't say **used** when you can say **pre-owned**.

Don't say **first** when you can say **first of all** (as opposed to first of none).

Don't say **innovation** when you can say **new innovation** (as opposed to old innovation); hint: the "nov" in innovation is from the Latin "novus," new.

Don't say **left** side when you can say **left-hand** side (as opposed to left-foot side).

Don't say buried with **military honors** when you can say **full military honors** (as opposed to one-third military honors; "he was buried with three-sixteenths military honors").

Don't say **destroyed** when you can say **completely destroyed**.

Don't say **teacher** when you can say **educator**.

Don't say **cut** (noun) when you can say **laceration**.

Don't say **bruise** (noun) when you can say **contusion**.

Don't say **scrape** (noun) when you can say **abrasion**.

Don't say **revert** when you can say **revert back** (as opposed to revert ahead).

Don't say **lives** (verb) when you can say **resides**.

Don't say **plans** (noun) when you can say **future plans**.

Don't say **plan** (verb) when you can say **plan ahead** (as opposed to plan behind).

Don't say **history** when you can say **past history**.

Don't say **experience** when you can say **past experience**.

Don't say **experience** when you can say **prior experience**.

Don't say **works** (verb) when you can say **is employed**.

Don't say **status** when you can say **current status**.

Don't say **emergency** when you can say **state of emergency** (as opposed to city of emergency).

Don't say **emergency** when you can say **emergency situation**.

Don't say **in** when you can say **in the event of** (why say "in an emergency" when you can say "in the event of an emergency situation?").

Don't say **defunct** when you can say **now defunct**.

Don't say **in** when you can say **in the field of** or **in the area of**. (Why say "John is an expert in poker" or "John is a poker expert" when you can say "John is an expert in the field of poker" or "John is an expert in the area of poker?").

Don't say **statement** when you can say **prepared statement** (as opposed to unprepared statement).

Don't say **countries** when you can say **countries around the world** (as opposed to countries around the moon).

Don't say **try** (verb) when you can say **attempt**.

Don't say **make** when you can say **manufacture**.

Don't say **for** when you can say **for the purpose of**.

Don't say **court** when you can say **court of law** (as opposed to court of food).

Don't say **bonus** when you can say **added bonus**, or **added extra bonus**, or **added free extra bonus**.

Don't say **dog** when you can say **canine** and even better, the constabularily cute **K-9**.

Don't say **sale** when you can say **sales event**.

Don't say **gather** when you can say **gather together** (as opposed to gather alone).

Don't say **join** when you can say **join together**.

Don't say **consensus** when you can say **consensus of opinion** or **general consensus**.

Don't say **my opinion** when you can say **my personal opinion**.

Don't say **average** when you can say **general average**.

Don't say no **way** when you can say no **way, shape or form** or **no way, form or shape**, or no **form, way or shape**, or any other combination.

Don't say **ran** (verb) when you can say **fled on foot**. (A relative of this is **fled the scene**, as if **fled** by itself isn't enough for the cliché).

Don't say **woods** when you can say **wooded area** (The subject fled on foot into the wooded area).

Don't say **money** when you can say **funding**.

Don't say **money** when you can say **monies**.

Don't say **murder** when you can say **brutal murder** (as opposed to kind and gentle murder).

Don't say **is** when you can say **is in the process**.

Don't say **noon** when you can say **12 noon** (as opposed to 11 noon).

Don't say **noon** when you can say **high noon** (as opposed to low noon).

Don't say **midnight** when you can say **12 midnight** (as opposed to 7 midnight).

Don't say **every** when you can say **each and every**, or **every and every** or **each and each** or **every and each**. Better yet, **say every single one** (as opposed to every married two).

Don't say the **House** will vote when you can say the **whole House** will vote (as opposed to the **quarter House**).

Don't say **May** (or any other month), when you can say **month of May** etc. (as opposed to the year of May).

Don't say **case by case** when you can say **on a case by case basis**.

Don't say **daily** when you can say **on a daily basis**.

Don't say **monthly** when you can say **on a monthly basis** (or yearly basis etc.).

Don't say **individually** when you can say **on an individual basis**.

Don't say **suddenly** when you can say **all of a sudden**.

Don't say **affected** when you can say **impacted** (but specify whether bowels or teeth are impacted).

Don't say **after** or **following** when you can say **in the wake of** (but specify whether the wake refers to a funeral or ship).

Don't say **all** when you can say **all the** or **all of the**.

Don't say **continuing** when you can say **ongoing** (if "continuing" follows from "continue" does "ongoing" follow from "ongo"?). The venerable copy editor of the New York Times, Ted Bernstein, is said to have had a rule for writers: "Those who write 'ongoing' will be outgoing the door."

Don't say **said** when you can say **stated**.

Don't say **is** when you can say **is currently** or **currently is**.

Don't say **now** when you can say **at this point in time** or **at this moment in time** or **at present**. Or better yet, **presently** (which, by the way, does not mean now; presently means immediately after now – "The train will arrive presently").

Don't say **when** or **then** when you can say **at which time**, **at which point** or **at the time**.

Don't say **then** or **once** when you can say **at one point in time**.

Don't say **then** when you can say **back then**.

Don't say **now** when you can say **currently**.

Don't say **record** (noun) when you can say **new record**.

Don't say **adage** when you can say **old adage** (as opposed to new adage; adage includes "old.").

Don't say **daylight** when you can say **broad daylight** (as opposed to narrow daylight).

Don't say **part** (noun) when you can say **component**, or better yet, **component part**.

Don't say **found** or **find** when you can say **discovered** or **discover**.

Don't say **imports** when you can say **foreign imports** (as opposed to domestic imports).

Don't say **vista** when you can say **scenic vista**.

Don't say **swap** when you can say **swap out** (as opposed to swap in).

Don't say **before** when you can say **prior to**.

Don't say **life without parole** when you can say **life without the possibility of parole** or **life without the tiniest, teensy-weensy, smallest, no-chance-whatsoever in the whole wide world possibility of parole**.

Don't say **anklet** when you can say **ankle bracelet**, which makes as much sense as "foot hat." (Hint: **bra** in **bracelet** is from the French **bras** for arm.)

Don't say **to** when you can say **in order to**.

Don't say **to** when you can say **in an effort to**.

Don't say **to** when you can say **so as to**.

Don't say **about** when you can say **approximately**.

Don't say **funeral** when you can say **funeral service**.

Don't say **grocery** when you can say **grocery store**.

Don't say **patrol** when you can say **routine patrol**.

Words (often antique, obsolete) that live only in the brains of reporters, rather than normal human beings:

Sprinkle as many **allegedly** and **in connection with** as you can in court and police stories. (Don't say "Jones was **charged in the murder**," when you can say "Jones **was charged in connection with the murder**." By the way, "allegedly" is not necessarily a protection against libel).

Don't say **accuser** (in rape cases) when you can say **alleged victim**, thus implying dishonesty by the accuser.

Don't say **signed** or **wrote** when you can say **inked**. (A thousand years ago a headline writer needed a shorter verb than "sign," or "write," looked in the dictionary and found that the 457th entry was **ink**; cub reporters began to ape the headline writer and **ink** thus established itself in their brains for the rest of their journalism lives. That's how we get the reporter-brain "inked the pact," or "inked a deal," rather than the normal human "signed the contract." This is also how a **legislator** became a **solon**).

Don't say **driver** when you can say **motorist** (unless you're writing about a centenarian recollecting how he and his village queen went motoring in the merry Oldsmobile horseless carriage by the old mill stream in 1910).

Don't say **took** or **taken** to the hospital when you can say **transported** to the hospital – a favorite in police reports. (But be sure to specify whether transport was by UPS, FedEx or other common carrier.)

Don't say took to a **hospital** when you can say took to a **local hospital** (as opposed to a hospital in Uruguay).

Don't say **accident** when you can say **mishap**, especially when there are injuries and deaths. A mishap is when you don't make it in time to the toilet to pee (you also get style points for ignoring the Stylebook entry on **mishap**).

Don't say **investigation** when you can say **probe** (but specify the dimensions of the probe and get a picture of it).

Don't say **investigation** when you can say **full investigation** or **complete investigation** (as opposed to one-third investigation or incomplete investigation: "The governor called for an incomplete, one-third investigation").

Don't say **scheduled** when you can say **slated** (even though blackboards replaced slate in the 19th century).

Don't say **murder** or **killing** when you can say **slaying** (but be sure to specify the name of the dragon slain).

Don't say **unidentified** victim when you can say **unnamed** victim (even though the victim's parents gave him or her a name).

Don't say **fire** when you can say **blaze**. (When was the last time you said to your grandmother, "Hey Grandma, you hear about that blaze downtown?")

Don't say **find** when you can say **locate**.

Don't say **friend**, when you can say **friend of mine** (as opposed to a friend of thine).

Don't say **oriented** when you can say "**orientated**."

Don't say **regardless** when you can say "**irregardless**" (even though such a word doesn't exist some dictionaries too kindly call it "nonstandard").

Don't say **dead** or **died** when you can say **deceased** or **passed**.

Don't say **cause** (noun) when you can say **root cause** (as opposed to branch cause).

Don't say **among** when you can be biblical and say **amongst**.

Don't say **proved** when you can use the obsolescent **proven**.

Don't use the past tense of any verb such as **won** when you can say **were able to win** (especially in sports stories).

Don't say **bystander** when you can say **innocent bystander** (as opposed to guilty bystander).

Don't say **stranger** when you can say **complete stranger** (as opposed to incomplete stranger).

Ignore Stylebook and/or grammar and syntax rules:

(Workbench has two dropdown spell checks – Quick Spell Check and AP Spell Check; never use the AP Spell Check dropdown because it might point out grammatical errors.)

Always say **7 p.m. last night** rather than **7 o'clock last night** or **7 p.m. Tuesday**. (Seven p.m. last night means 7 o'clock last night last night; p.m. [post meridiem, Latin for the time between noon and midnight] means night/evening; a.m. [ante meridiem, Latin for the time between midnight and noon] means morning.)

Never keep verb elements together and put as much distance between them -- especially infinitives -- as you can.

Always use the double possessive. Don't say **governor's friend** or **friend of the governor** when you can say **friend of the governor's**.

Always use incomplete sentences, especially in broadcast ("Good news for residents today").

Ignore the difference among **average**, **mean** and **median**.

Ignore the difference between **among** and **between**. (Hint: **tw** in "between" comes from "**two**.")

Ignore the difference between **farther** and **further**.

Ignore the difference between **amount** and **number**.

Ignore the difference between **continual** and **continuous**.

Ignore the difference between **take** and **bring**.

Ignore the difference between **insure** and **ensure**.

Ignore the difference between **which** and **that**.

Ignore the difference between **who** and **that**.

Ignore the difference between **who** and **whom** (extra points for using **whom** incorrectly).

Ignore the difference between the verbs **lend** and **loan**. (Hint: lend money but loan books).

Ignore the difference between **less** and **fewer**. (Hint: less applesauce but fewer apples).

Ignore the difference between **persuade** and **convince**.

Ignore the difference between **imply** and **infer**.

Ignore the difference between **separate** and **divide**.

Ignore the difference between **eager** and **anxious**.

Ignore the difference between **lie** and **lay**.

Ignore the difference between **effect** and **affect** (noun and verb).

Hyphenate promiscuously, especially adverbs. **Federally-funded** is a good example (extra credit for ignoring Stylebook entry on hyphenation).

Do not hyphenate **second-largest**, **third-oldest** etc.

Always **evacuate** people (and specify brand of laxative administered) rather than evacuate buildings, neighborhoods or people **from** buildings.

Sprinkle as many **heres** and **thises** as you can in your stories, especially in leads. You will get extra points because the **here** entry is one of the most ignored in the Stylebook.

When done with a story, salt it at will with commas (extra credit for ignoring punctuation entry in Stylebook).

Unless you're writing in German, Go nuts capitalizing Nouns willy-nilly.

Go crazy with exclamation points!

Go nuts with random "quotation marks."

Make plurals with the apostrophe (why say **houses** when you can say **house's**).

Ignore the present tense (especially in broadcast stories) and use what grammarians call the “continuous present tense” – why say **hopes** when you can say **is hoping**?

Write as many sentences as you can with indefinite subjects such as **they** and **there**: “They are celebrating in Merrimack tonight” or “There is a celebration in Merrimack tonight.” (**There** gets more points than **they**.)

Always combine **off** and **of** (don't say “the driver took an exit **off** the turnpike,” when you can be awkward and incorrect and say “the driver took an exit **off of** the turnpike,” or “Maple Street runs **off of** Main Street.”)

Never write so that the subject and predicate agree. Always make the verb modify the immediately preceding noun rather than the subject (Also say “**none were**” or “**none have**” even though **none** is a contraction of **no one** and you'd be laughed out of town if you wrote “**no one were**.” If you write, correctly, “**none was**” or “**none has**” you will get demerits.)

Always say **declined comment** (even though English grammar, unlike the grammars of many other languages, does not have declensions) rather than **declined to comment**. (Unless comment [a noun] is offered but is declined, thank you).

-- High-falutin' (but questionable) pronunciations:

Don't say **mayoral** (MAY-or-ull) when you can say (may-ORE-ull). [Candidates who run for mayor are in MAY-or-ull races; those in may-ORE-ull races run for may-ORE'] Same goes for **electoral** and **elector**.

Don't say **program** (PRO-gram) when you can say (PRO-grumm). (Before Western Union dropped telegrams, people who say PRO-grumm used to communicate by TEL-uh-grumm.)

Don't say **pianist** (pee-YAN-ist) when you can feel oh-so-refined and say (PEE-un-ist). (Pee-YAN-ists play pianos; PEE-un-ists play PEE-un-oes; of course they could be persons who pee on ists.)

Don't say between **you and me** when you can say **between you and I** (which sounds more “refined” but is incorrect).

Don't say **accessible** (uck-SESS-ah-bull) when you can say (**uh**-SESS-ah-bull).

Don't say **accessory** (uck-SESS-oar-ee) when you can say (**us**-SESS-oar-ee).

Don't say **etcetera** when you can say “**eckcetera**.”

Don't say **negotiate** (neg-OH-she-ate) when you can be prissy and say (neg-OH-sea-ate). (There is no sea in negotiate, but there is a she.)

Don't say **exquisite** (EX-qwih-zit) when you can say (ex-QWIH-zit).

Today in History - October 07, 2020



By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Oct. 7, the 281st day of 2020. There are 85 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 7, 1996, Fox News Channel made its debut.

On this date:

In 1910, a major wildfire devastated the northern Minnesota towns of Spooner and Baudette, charring at least 300,000 acres; some 40 people are believed to have died.

In 1916, in the most lopsided victory in college football history, Georgia Tech defeated Cumberland University 222-0 in Atlanta.

In 1954, Marian Anderson became the first Black singer hired by the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York.

In 1960, Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy and Republican opponent Richard Nixon held their second televised debate, this one in Washington, D.C.

In 1982, the Andrew Lloyd Webber-Tim Rice musical "Cats" opened on Broadway. (The show closed Sept. 10, 2000, after a record 7,485 performances.)

In 1985, Palestinian gunmen hijacked the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro (ah-KEE'-leh LOW'-roh) in the Mediterranean. (The hijackers shot and killed Leon Klinghoffer, a

Jewish-American tourist in a wheelchair, and pushed him overboard, before surrendering on Oct. 9.)

In 1991, University of Oklahoma law professor Anita Hill publicly accused Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas of making sexually inappropriate comments when she worked for him; Thomas denied Hill's allegations.

In 1992, trade representatives of the United States, Canada and Mexico initialed the North American Free Trade Agreement during a ceremony in San Antonio, Texas, in the presence of President George H.W. Bush, Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney (muhl-ROO'-nee) and Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari.

In 1998, Matthew Shepard, a gay college student, was beaten and left tied to a wooden fencepost outside of Laramie, Wyoming; he died five days later. (Russell Henderson and Aaron McKinney are serving life sentences for Shepard's murder.)

In 2001, the war in Afghanistan started as the United States and Britain launched air attacks against military targets and Osama bin Laden's training camps in the wake of the September 11 attacks.

In 2003, California voters recalled Gov. Gray Davis and elected Arnold Schwarzenegger their new governor.

In 2004, President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney conceded that Saddam Hussein had no weapons of mass destruction as they tried to shift the Iraq war debate to a new issue, arguing that Saddam was abusing a U.N. oil-for-food program.

Ten years ago: New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie canceled construction of a decades-in-the-making train tunnel between New Jersey and Manhattan, citing cost overruns that had ballooned the price tag from \$5 billion to \$10 billion or more. A toxic red sludge that had burst out of a Hungarian factory's reservoir reached the mighty Danube after wreaking havoc on smaller rivers and creeks.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama apologized to Doctors Without Borders for the American air attack that killed 42 people at its hospital in Afghanistan, and said the U.S. would examine military procedures to look for better ways to prevent such incidents. The Congressional Budget Office estimated that the federal government ran a budget deficit of \$435 billion in the just-completed budget year, the smallest shortfall since 2007. Tomas Lindahl of Sweden, American Paul Modrich and Turkish-American scientist Aziz Sanca won the Nobel Prize in chemistry for showing how cells repaired damaged DNA [-] work that inspired the development of new cancer treatments.

One year ago: House Democrats issued subpoenas to Defense Secretary Mark Esper and acting White House budget director Russell Vought as part of the impeachment inquiry of President Donald Trump. First lady Melania Trump called on the makers of

e-cigarettes to stop marketing them to children, saying that they are addictive and dangerous. The New York Yankees completed a sweep over the Minnesota Twins in the American League Division Series and advanced to meet the Houston Astros for the league championship; it was the Twins' 16th straight loss in postseason games, tying the North American major sports record held by the NHL's Chicago Blackhawks.

Today's Birthdays: Retired South African Archbishop and Nobel Peace laureate Desmond Tutu is 89. Author Thomas Keneally is 85. Comedian Joy Behar is 78. Former National Security Council aide Lt. Col. Oliver North (ret.) is 77. Rock musician Kevin Godley (10cc) is 75. Actor Jill Larson is 73. Country singer Kieran Kane is 71. Singer John Mellencamp is 69. Rock musician Ricky Phillips is 69. Russian President Vladimir Putin is 68. Actor Mary Badham (Film: "To Kill a Mockingbird") is 68. Rock musician Tico Torres (Bon Jovi) is 67. Actor Christopher Norris is 65. Cellist Yo-Yo Ma is 65. Gospel singer Michael W. Smith is 63. Olympic gold medal ice dancer Jayne Torvill is 63. Actor Dylan Baker is 62. Actor Judy Landers is 62. Recording executive and TV personality Simon Cowell is 61. Rock musician Charlie Marinkovich (formerly with Iron Butterfly) is 61. Actor Paula Newsome is 59. Country singer Dale Watson is 58. Pop singer Ann Curless (Expose) is 57. Rhythm-and-blues singer Toni Braxton is 53. Rock singer-musician Thom Yorke (Radiohead) is 52. Rock musician-dancer Leeroy Thornhill is 51. Actor Nicole Ari Parker is 50. Actor Allison Munn is 46. Rock singer-musician Damian Kulash (KOO'-lahsh) is 45. Singer Taylor Hicks is 44. Actor Omar Miller is 42. Neo-soul singer Nathaniel Rateliff (Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats) is 42. Actor Shawn Ashmore is 41. Actor Jake McLaughlin is 38. Electronic musician Flying Lotus (AKA Steve Ellison) is 37. MLB player Evan Longoria is 35. Actor Holland Roden is 34. Actor Amber Stevens is 34. MLB outfielder Mookie Betts is 28. Actor Lulu Wilson is 15.

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.

Paul Stevens
Editor, Connecting newsletter
paulstevens46@gmail.com

Visit our website