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# Connecting

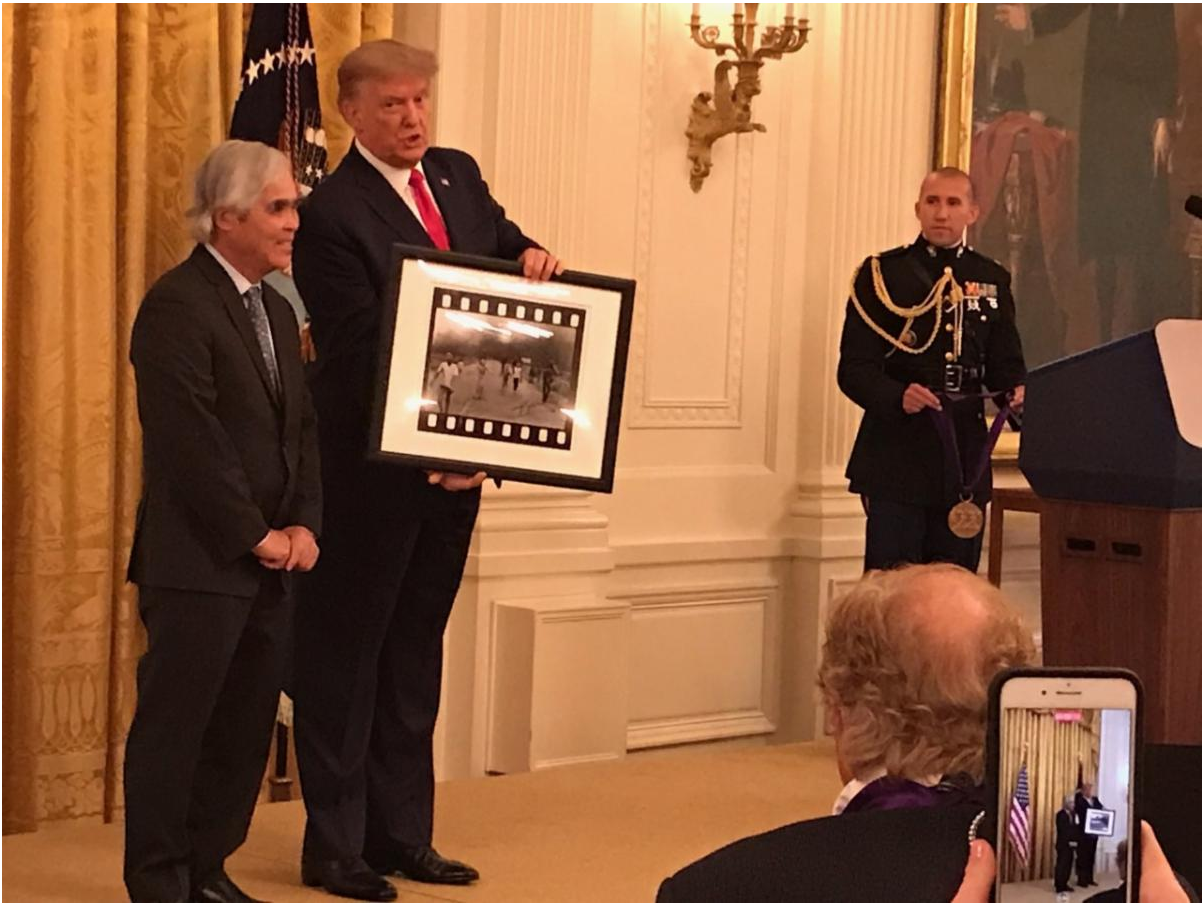
January 14, 2021

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this the 14<sup>th</sup> day of January 2021,

**“Congratulations Nick! You made AP proud.”** – was the message relayed through Connecting on Wednesday night by AP President **Gary Pruitt** to our colleague **Nick Ut** that is echoed by all of us.

Nick is the first journalist to receive the National Medal of Arts, presented to him by President Trump on Wednesday in Washington along with singers Toby Keith and Ricky Skaggs.

Nick retired from the AP in 2017 after a 51-year career, the highlight of which was his Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph from the Vietnam War in 1972 of terrified 9-year-old Kim Phuc running down a country road, her body burning from napalm bombs dropped on her village.



Trump presented the award on the day he was impeached by the U.S. House for a second time. In an interview with Newsweek, which we bring you below, Nick said “I’m sure a lot of people are very upset with me for accepting the medal. But it’s my personal life. I’m an old man now, so I’m happy the president gave me an award. I wanted to be here. For me, it’s more about receiving an award from a president.”

Today's issue brings sad news of the death of **Guy Coates**, a former AP correspondent who covered Gulf Coast hurricanes and civil rights, dodged gunfire during a New Orleans sniper's shooting spree and chronicled the tumult of politics in his native Louisiana for four decades. He died Tuesday at the age of 80.

Connecting would welcome your memories of Guy.

Have a good day – be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

## AP photographer Nick Ut receives National Medal of Arts



### AP News Release

AP photographer Nick Ut, who retired in 2017 after a 51-year career with The Associated Press, Wednesday received the National Medal of Arts at the White House.

He is the first journalist to receive the National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists and arts patrons by the federal government.

The National Medal of Arts is awarded by the President of the United States to individuals or groups who are deserving of special recognition by reason of their outstanding contributions to the excellence, growth, support and availability of the arts in the U.S.

(A short time before he was impeached, President Trump was in the White House East Room presenting the medal to Ut and to singers Toby Keith and Ricky Skaggs.)

Ut, a Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer, is known best for his iconic “Terror of War” picture from the Vietnam War, an image captured in 1972 that helped heighten awareness of the conflict. He was 21 years old when he took the shocking photo of terrified 9-year-old Kim Phuc running down a country road, her body burning from napalm bombs dropped on her village.

Immediately after taking the shot, Ut put down his camera and rushed Phuc to a hospital, where doctors saved her life.

In 1989, Ut and Phuc were reunited in Havana, where Phuc was in medical school. In the years since, the two have become close friends.

Ut was hired by AP in Saigon in March 1966. He replaced his older brother, Huynh Thanh My, who had been working as a photographer with AP and was killed by the Viet Cong in 1965. My was a gifted photographer and had already taught Nick how to use a camera.

After working in Vietnam, Ut did a stint at AP’s Tokyo bureau before relocating to Los Angeles in 1977. There, he shot a wide variety of stories, from earthquakes to fires to celebrities to business to crime until his retirement from AP in 2017.

Ut has won numerous prizes for his pictures, including the Pulitzer Prize in 1973 for Spot Photography — the youngest photographer to win the award — and the World Press Photo Award the same year, all for his photo of the young Kim Phuc. In June 2016, Ut received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Los Angeles Press Club, and Kim Phuc was by his side.

The Associated Press boasts a legacy of iconic photojournalism. The news agency has won 32 Pulitzer Prizes for photography, more than any other news organization.

**Nick Ut’s email is – [nickut72@gmail.com](mailto:nickut72@gmail.com)**

Click [here](#) for link to this story.



## *Well deserved, Nick*

**Hal Buell** ([Email](#)) - Congratulatory messages to Nick Ut for being honored with the National Medal of Arts Award for his 50 years of AP newsphoto coverage have crowded the internet. Nick and his camera traveled across Vietnam battlefields and the star-studded byways of Los Angeles and Hollywood, the opposite ends indeed of the news spectrum, to produce a notable body of photographic work.

That work won many honors – among them the Pulitzer Prize and the World Press Photo of the year, both in 1973, for the iconic photo of a napalm burned child running naked on a Vietnamese highway. The special emphasis of the award honors the true value of the photo -- its durability and its enduring presence that survived the decades since it was made in 1972. The photo is an immediate and lasting reminder even now of the horror that war lays on the innocent, a lasting quality summed by Horst Faas: "It is a picture that doesn't rest."

We add our congratulations to the many that have been made – Well deserved, Nick.

## Nick Ut: Why I Accepted Trump's Medal Of Arts

### Newsweek

The day before photographer Nick Ut was scheduled to receive the Medal of Arts from Donald Trump, another famous soon-to-be medal recipient publicly declined the honor: Bill Belichick, head coach of the New England Patriots and long-time friend of the president. Belichick, who was scheduled to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom the same week that Ut was to be honored, cited the "tragic events" of the Capitol riot as his reason for turning down the award.

Ut, however, was undeterred.

Born in Vietnam and a photographer for AP for more than 50 years until his retirement in 2017, Ut saw the medal ceremony as a highly personal, not political, moment and a capstone to his long and storied career. While he is most famous for his Pulitzer-Prize winning photo of children fleeing a napalm attack—the picture, with a young naked girl screaming in pain at its center, helped change public opinion of the Vietnam War—Ut has also covered wildfires, riots, Hollywood celebrities (a photo of a crying Paris Hilton also became iconic), the O.J. Simpson trial, the Olympics and the Pope. Here is the story of his decision to move ahead with accepting the medal from Trump, despite some friends advising him otherwise, in his own words, as told to Newsweek senior editor Jenny Haward.

Read more [here](#).

# Guy Coates, longtime AP reporter in Louisiana, dies at 80

By KEVIN MCGILL

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Guy Coates, a former Associated Press correspondent who covered Gulf Coast hurricanes and civil rights, dodged gunfire during a New Orleans sniper's shooting spree and chronicled the tumult of politics in his native Louisiana for four decades, died late Tuesday. He was 80.

His wife Jonica said Wednesday that he died at their Baton Rouge home of natural causes.

A graduate of Northeast Louisiana University in his hometown of Monroe, Coates worked stints at the Corpus Christi (Texas) Caller-Times; The Times of Shreveport; KNOE-TV in Monroe; and KSLA-TV in Shreveport. He joined The AP in New Orleans in 1968, where assignments could be mundane — hours on the broadcast rewrite desk — or dangerous.

“He and I almost died together in a near mid-air plane collision during the 1971 campaign,” former four-term Gov. Edwin Edwards said Wednesday in a statement issued through his biographer, Leo Honeycutt. “We laughed about that but much later,” he added, recalling the close call came shortly after takeoff from Natchitoches, Louisiana, during his first campaign for governor.



Coates rode out Hurricane Camille's landfall when the storm devastated coastal Mississippi in 1969 with punishing storm surge and winds later estimated at more than 170 mph (274 kph). It was one of several dangerous storms he covered.

And, in a pre-cellphone era, Coates, desperate to reach a public telephone, dashed across a wide-open downtown New Orleans street in 1973 while a sniper was holed up in what was then the Howard Johnson hotel.

Police officers offered to give him cover. “I bolted across that canyon floor as they sent a stream of lead skyward, like something out of a Grade B Western,” he recalled later, in a first-person AP story.

Read more [here](#). (Photo above taken in 1991.)

## *Memories of Guy Coates*

**Angie Lamoli Silvestry** ([Email](#)) - Kevin took over a difficult task today with the great responsibility of writing the obituary of a colleague, who was a dear friend. It was a difficult task with great honor, as Guy requested it.

Guy was a good man. He was also witty and smart. He was determined, courageous and dedicated. He was a trusted friend. These traits expanded beyond his personal life into his work. His integrity, fairness and capacity to engage and get to the bottom of the story were enviable. But most of all, he adored his wife Jonica and his children.

The Associated Press family in New Orleans is saddened today by his passing. May Jonica, his kids and grandkids find solace in the memories they hold dear, as these are the secret of his immortality and will help dry the tears his physical separation brings.

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● Guy Coates is now AP broadcast news editor at New Orleans. At this moment he was on his assignment in Mississippi.



## hurricane assignment in Mississippi.

1969 photo courtesy of AP Corporate Archives.

**Kent Prince** ([Email](#)) - There are always back-stories when one of the old-school reporters leaves the scene. Guy Coates left enough to fill a book, and McGill's excellent obit didn't have room to include many of them.

Like when Coates was working as night editor in New Orleans and was interrupted regularly by Habeeba, an exotic Bourbon Street dancer who repeatedly stopped by to see him on her way to work. As you can guess, not much got on the wire when she sashayed in.

Or when he found himself comparing cars with David Duke, who apparently admired Coates' Miata. (After retiring, Coates turned to a motorcycle.)

Or when he found himself covering a trashy backwoods rock festival. Or the Lynyrd Skynyrd plane crash. Or a Baton Rouge show by the Sex Pistols.

Back in those days, he was on the floor of the Legislature in his patched jeans and shoulder-length hair. McGill said he regretted not having enough space to wedge in that kind of color.

Coates had his own voice, and his weekly "spotlight" columns took on a life of their own. Supposed to be writing news analysis, he found the constraints shackling and expanded into imaginary conversations with one Jethro Rothschild who could indeed spotlight the foibles of the elected. Editors (and readers) loved it, but the lack of literal seriousness drove NY apoplectic and he had to stop.

He was a good hunter and laughed about shooting at a skeet range in Scotland where he not only didn't hit the targets but said he didn't even see them. The story gave rise to his retirement gift, an AP "award" engraved on an unbroken clay pigeon.

## 'Safest place in Washington' no more. A reporter's disbelief



People shelter in the House gallery as rioters try to break into the House Chamber at the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021, in Washington. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik)

By MARY CLARE JALONICK

WASHINGTON (AP) — I still can't stop watching the videos.

There are so many of them, each with new clues about what happened a week ago today in familiar corners of the sprawling U.S. Capitol complex. Thousands of insurrectionists outside calling for a revolution. Images of broken windows and defaced relics. My own raw footage of the chaos in the House chamber. And of course the heroic Capitol Police officer who appeared to lead a mob away from the Senate doors by himself as they advanced up a staircase I have climbed so many times.

In the last week, I have pored over the images again and again, muting videos if my children are nearby, pausing and rewinding. Finding new details.

I still can't believe it happened. But it did, and the videos are the terrifying proof.



I want to piece it all together, to better understand my own experience that day as hundreds of angry rioters supportive of President Donald Trump stormed the Capitol to protest his defeat in the election. At the time, I was convinced I would be OK even



as I ducked on the floor in the upper gallery of the House chamber with members of Congress and other reporters.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Doug Daniel.

Click [here](#) for a selection of photos taken by AP photographers during the siege of the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

## Social media warriors



This is a makeshift memorial for Brian Sicknick, the Capitol Hill policeman mortally wounded in the Jan. 6 riot. (Photo by Robert Reid)

**Robert H. Reid** ([Email](#)) - Parler is silenced, Twitter is purging, and Facebook and YouTube are being hammered by critics from the left and the right.

The social media world has been thrown in turmoil since the Jan. 6 Capitol Hill riot. Critics accuse Big Tech of allowing its platforms to become virtual dens of conspiracies on a scale the Communist International could only dream of.

Conservative critics accuse those same Big Tech titans of silencing voices on the right.

It all seemed so different 10 years ago when I had the honor to lead AP's crew reporting on the Arab Spring, widely hailed at the time as "the world's first social media revolution."

Back then social media organizers were the good guys. They were the bright boys and girls - conveniently fluent both in English and mathematics - who were using keystrokes and algorithms to outwit the forces of repression and lead the masses to freedom.

Or so it seemed. Truth be told, the role of social media in the Arab democracy uprisings was probably overstated. Nevertheless, we journalists always gravitate to the new and unusual.

So when the Arab Spring revolution spread from Tunisia to Egypt in January 2011, we found something new – social media as a means of stirring the masses.

Tech savvy democracy activists used Facebook and, to a lesser extent, Twitter to exchange ideas, post photos and video and plan rallies.

Those digital warriors built a global following online, which cheered the "dawn of freedom" when the authoritarian regime of President Hosni Mubarak collapsed.

In the euphoria of the moment, pundits in America and Europe crowed that social media had empowered people in ways that dictators and autocrats could never control.

We journalists like to say we are writing the "first draft of history." However, we all know what happens with first drafts.

In the years that followed the "Facebook Revolution," autocrats have learned how to shut down social media platforms or manipulate them to their own advantage.

"You can now create a narrative saying a democracy activist was a traitor and a pedophile," wrote author Anne Applebaum. "The possibility of creating an alternative narrative is one people didn't consider, and it turns out people in authoritarian regimes are quite good at it."

Turns out that social media, like every tool, is only as good or bad as the person who uses it. As gun rights advocates say, "guns don't kill people. People kill people," sometimes with guns.

Or expressed in another way, the free flow of ideas is most palatable when you agree with the ideas.



# Connecting mailbox

*Thanks for featuring Scott's story*



Hundreds of National Guard troops hold inside the Capitol Visitor's Center to reinforce security at the Capitol on Wednesday. J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE / AP

**David Briscoe** ([Email](#)) - I love photographers in general for their work and wide-open eyes and AP photographers in particular — they are some of the best people in journalism. Scott Applewhite gave me some of my happiest and most educational experiences in 15 years of Washington journalism. He always gets “the shot” and makes the reporting better. He’s also a compelling story writer. Thanks for featuring his story in another great and comprehensive issue of Connecting.

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## *Antiquity is no fun*

**Gene Herrick** ([Email](#)) – As a retired AP photographer, you know, I feel like Mr. Antiquity when I read those interesting stories now in Connecting by our AP hero photographers using cameras called Sony a911s.

Gosh, I wish I had had one of those cameras with me when I was an AP War



Correspondent in Korea in 1950. Then we carried the now ancient 4x5 Speed Graphic, which was big, comparatively heavy, wide open to the weather, and using photo film.

No instant, non-film, talking camera to immediately send our pictures.

No, we went to the front and shot war pictures, every day. At day's end we would return from the front, bundle our 4x5 film packs, sit at our little Hermes typewriters, and write all of our captions. We then bundled all together, found some GI to drive us to an airstrip somewhere, and put into a military "Courier" pouch, and then pray some fighter pilot would take the pouch to Japan, and eventually to Tokyo.



There, "Jackson," AP's Mr. Everything, would pick-up the bundles from all of we AP correspondent photographers, drive like everything to his darkroom, process the film, pick out the hot stuff, and take it by jeep to the RCA radio office where they were numbered and transmitted by radio to Washington, or San Francisco. (weather permitting) where they would be handled for the AP Domestic and foreign service.

How fast? If everything worked according to plan, it could take 2-4 days! Compare that to today!

I, for one, stand in awe of today's photo operation.

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*Sunset soother*



**Brenda Smiley** ([Email](#)) - Today's soothing sunset couldn't come at a better time. This was taken from our roof deck in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn. Richard's favorite perch when on harbor patrol.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Mark Thayer - [markthayer411@yahoo.com](mailto:markthayer411@yahoo.com)

## Welcome to Connecting



Bob Harrison - [hcopybob@mchsi.com](mailto:hcopybob@mchsi.com)

## Stories of interest

***New York Post to Staff: Stay Away From CNN, MSNBC, New York Times and Washington Post*** (New York Times)

By Katie Robertson

CNN, MSNBC, The Washington Post and The New York Times are among the news organizations that President Trump has falsely labeled “fake news.” And now articles based on reporting from the four outlets are no longer welcome at Rupert Murdoch’s New York Post, according to three journalists who work there.

High-level editors at The New York Post instructed staff members this week not to use reporting from CNN, MSNBC, The Times and The Washington Post as the sole basis for any Post article, the three journalists said, speaking on the condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation. A Post spokeswoman declined to comment.

It is common practice at The New York Post and its website, [nypost.com](http://nypost.com), to publish articles based entirely on other news outlets’ reporting, without independent confirmation by a Post journalist. The Post is not alone in following this widespread practice, and many news sites have had success by repackaging material from other news organizations. The directive at the Murdoch tabloid was unusual in that it deemed material from certain outlets off limits.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Valerie Komor.

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## ***Twitter CEO defends Trump ban, warns of dangerous precedent***<sub>(AP)</sub>

By DAVID HAMILTON

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey broke his silence with a philosophical Twitter thread defending his company's ban of President Donald Trump as the right decision, although he warned that it could set a dangerous precedent.

When Twitter called out Trump's incitement to violence, Dorsey said the company faced an "extraordinary and untenable circumstance" with respect to public safety. "I believe this was the right decision for Twitter," Dorsey wrote.

But such bans, he said, also point up Twitter's "failure" to create an open and healthy space for what Dorsey calls the "global public conversation." In effect, he suggested, taking extreme steps with public figures actions such as banning Trump highlight the extraordinary power that companies like his can wield — and the collateral damage that such actions can lead to.

The Twitter co-founder, however, had little specific to say about how his platform or other Big Tech companies could avoid such choices in the future.

## **Today in History - Jan. 14, 2021**



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Thursday, Jan. 14, the 14th day of 2021. There are 351 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:**

On Jan. 14, 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and French General Charles de Gaulle opened a wartime conference in Casablanca.

**On this date:**

In 1784, the United States ratified the Treaty of Paris ending the Revolutionary War; Britain followed suit in April 1784.

In 1858, Napoleon III, Emperor of the French, and his wife, Empress Eugenie, escaped an assassination attempt led by Italian revolutionary Felice (fay-LEE'-chay) Orsini, who was later captured and executed.

In 1914, Ford Motor Co. greatly improved its assembly-line operation by employing an endless chain to pull each chassis along at its Highland Park, Michigan, plant.

In 1963, George C. Wallace was sworn in as governor of Alabama with the pledge, "Segregation forever!" [-] a view Wallace later repudiated.

In 1964, former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy, in a brief televised address, thanked Americans for their condolences and messages of support following the assassination of her husband, President John F. Kennedy, nearly two months earlier.

In 1968, the Green Bay Packers of the NFL defeated the AFL's Oakland Raiders, 33-14, in the second AFL-NFL World Championship game (now referred to as Super Bowl II).

In 1970, Diana Ross and the Supremes performed their last concert together, at the Frontier Hotel in Las Vegas.

In 1972, the situation comedy "Sanford and Son," starring Redd Foxx and Demond Wilson, premiered on NBC-TV.

In 1975, the House Internal Security Committee (formerly the House Un-American Activities Committee) was disbanded.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed an accord to stop aiming missiles at any nation; the leaders joined Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk in signing an accord to dismantle the nuclear arsenal of Ukraine.

In 2010, President Barack Obama and the U.S. moved to take charge in earthquake-ravaged Haiti, dispatching thousands of troops along with tons of aid.

In 2013, Lance Armstrong ended a decade of denial by confessing to Oprah Winfrey during a videotaped interview that he'd used performance-enhancing drugs to win the Tour de France.



Ten years ago: In an unprecedented popular uprising, Tunisian protesters enraged over soaring unemployment and corruption drove President Zine El Abdine Ben Ali (ZEEN ehl AH'-bih-deen behn-ah-LEE') from power after 23 years of iron-fisted rule. A funeral was held for U.S. District Judge John Roll, who was among six people killed in the Tucson, Arizona, shooting rampage that wounded Rep. Gabrielle Giffords. The national Republican Party ousted chairman Michael Steele and chose Wisconsin party chief Reince Priebus (ryns PREE'-bus) to lead in the run-up to the 2012 presidential race.

Five years ago: During a Republican presidential debate in North Charleston, South Carolina, Donald Trump and Ted Cruz clashed over the Texas senator's eligibility to serve as commander in chief and the businessman's "New York values." Chicago city attorneys released a grainy 2013 surveillance video showing the fatal shooting of a 17-year-old Black carjacking suspect by a white police officer. Attackers set off suicide bombs and exchanged gunfire outside a Starbucks cafe in Indonesia's capital Jakarta in a brazen assault that left seven people dead. Actor Alan Rickman, 69, died in London. Rene Angelil, 73, singer Celine Dion's husband and manager, died at his suburban Las Vegas home.

One year ago: As House Democrats prepared to send articles of impeachment to the Senate for the trial of President Donald Trump, they released a trove of documents obtained from a close associate of Trump's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, including a handwritten note that mentioned asking Ukraine's president to investigate "the Biden case." Iran said authorities had made arrests for the accidental shutdown of a Ukrainian passenger plane by an Iranian missile. "Jeopardy" viewers saw veteran Ken Jennings beat James Holzhauer and Brad Rutter to capture the \$1 million prize in the fourth night of the show's "Greatest of All Time" tournament.

Today's Birthdays: Blues singer Clarence Carter is 85. Singer Jack Jones is 83. Actor Faye Dunaway is 80. Actor Holland Taylor is 78. Actor Carl Weathers is 73. Singer-producer T-Bone Burnett is 73. Movie writer-director Lawrence Kasdan is 72. Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Maureen Dowd is 69. Rock singer Geoff Tate (Queensryche) is 62. Movie writer-director Steven Soderbergh is 58. Actor Mark Addy is 57. Former Fox News Channel anchorman Shepard Smith is 57. Actor/producer Dan Schneider is 57. Rapper Slick Rick is 56. Actor Emily Watson is 54. Actor-comedian Tom Rhodes is 54. Rock musician Zakk Wylde is 54. Rapper-actor LL Cool J is 53. Actor Jason Bateman is 52. Rock singer-musician Dave Grohl (Foo Fighters) is 52. Actor Kevin Durand is 47. Actor Jordan Ladd is 46. Actor Ward Horton is 45. Actor Emayatzy Corinealdi is 41. Retro-soul singer-songwriter Marc Broussard is 39. Rock singer-musician Caleb Followill (Kings of Leon) is 39. Actor Zach Gilford is 39. Actor Jake Choi is 36. Actor Jonathan Osser is 32. Actor-singer Grant Gustin is 31. Singer/guitarist Molly Tuttle is 28.

## 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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