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## Connecting

March 18, 2021

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### Last glimpses of a long-trusted friend.

Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this the 18<sup>th</sup> day of March 2021,

**Dear Class: In a change of pace from your normal journalism-related assignments, which will resume tomorrow:**

Parting is such sweet sorrow – and no, Juliet, we’re not talking about saying good night to Romeo.

We’re talking about saying farewell to that trusty and (mostly) reliable vehicle that for many of us was an important part of our lives and served us for many years.



For **Jen Stevens**, the wife of Ye Olde Connecting Editor’s first cousin **Patrick Stevens**, that vehicle was a 1988 Jeep Grand Wagoneer. While not an old AP hand, Jen is a writer and a fine one at that, and she shares the story of that farewell and how it impacted their family in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Jen is the Executive Editor at [International Living](#), a monthly magazine devoted to exploring overseas opportunities for good-value travel, living, retirement, and

investment.

Connecting invites you to share your own story of saying farewell to a favorite vehicle. Please accompany it with a photo or two.

**THANK YOU! Norm Abelson ([Email](#))** – into the first days of his 91<sup>st</sup> trip around the sun, sends along thanks to his Connecting colleagues who reached out to him on his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday Tuesday. “Connecting has become such an important and meaningful part of my life. Getting to learn about and know you has been, and continues to be, a pleasure.”

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

**‘The beast had style. Not fashionista style.  
But quirky style.’**



By **JEN STEVENS ([Email](#))**

“The car guy sending the tow truck said it’s a popular car with collectors and it’ll fetch a good bit at auction—so we’ll be happy with what Habitat for Humanity gets,” my husband Pat said.

He looked a little teary. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't.

In a time of so much loss, it feels a little self-indulgent to be wistful about a rust-spotted, 1988 Jeep Grand Wagoneer that gets 6 miles to the gallon and has spent the last 16 years mostly unmoving behind our house.

But our recent donation has brought back memories of more carefree times.

We bought this already-vintage hunk of metal 25 years ago en route to Seattle for my college roommate's wedding. (A gathering, as it happens, of a bunch of newspaper buddies who'd met in the basement offices of *The Trail* at the University of Puget Sound.)

From pay phones across three airports, we negotiated the price with the Nebraska farm wife selling the beast. Nailed it down in Portland, where we'd been re-routed—SeaTac closed for weather—and hauled ourselves to the train station to head north, a plow clearing the rails ahead of us. The trip took hours at a crawl—arguably the most spectacular train ride we'll ever take, the snow hanging impossibly from every branch of every tree, all along the coast.

When we bought this car, we were living on Lancaster Street in Fell's Point in Baltimore. This was pre-gentrification, and we rented a 100-year-old loft for \$550 a month—great view, not much heat.

One day, stopped at a red light on my way to work, the guys in the sedan next to me were waving their arms around wildly and yelling at me.

I thought something was wrong, so I rolled down the window and stuck my head out and they just said, "Lady, what the heck kind of car is that?"

The beast had style. Not fashionista style. But quirky style. Just like Baltimore. I found myself a little lovestruck—by both the city and the car in equal measure.

Surprisingly, she drove like an old Cadillac. She was top of the line—looked like a tank but she was all tricked out with power windows and steering, and you sort of floated on the road, sitting high above everybody else.

A few months after we'd long-distance bought the car, we flew out to Hartington, Nebraska to visit my husband's family and pick it up.

It was in Iowa, headed back east toward Baltimore, that we discovered when the needle says  $\frac{1}{4}$  tank, it's actually empty.

We'd been sitting on the side of the highway for barely three minutes, though, discussing whether it was just out of gas or something worse, when the state trooper pulled up behind us.

Pat hopped in his car with him, they drove to a gas station, and they were back in ten minutes with a red plastic 2-gallon gas can. That did the trick.

Charmed life we led. Still do, really.

That car—“backseat like a living room” my best friend said—served us well for decades.

She made it through the grad-school years in Chicago—driving with remarkable reliability from Wrigleyville to the south side and back—and came with us to Colorado. Not long after we moved here, a storm blew half a tree onto her and a long branch went right through the windshield, the heavy end of it denting the hood where it landed. We had the glass replaced, but it hardly seemed worth fixing the dent.

By then, the electrical was a little tricky. Especially if there was rain. You’d have to lower the driver’s side window and then you could get the radio to turn on. No mechanic could ever figure that one out. Nor could they fine-tune the carburetor to get the idle just right.

I started to fall a little out of love when it became necessary to drop it into neutral at a red light and then keep one foot on the gas and one on the brake and ease it into motion when the light turned green. I’d always stall out and then flood the engine trying to get moving again. Everybody would start honking behind me—I couldn’t take the pressure.

Pat tried to teach me the trick, but I didn’t have a good feel for it. He’d driven a 1967 Chevy pickup with the same issue to high school and so to him it came naturally.

By the time the third kiddo came along, I was pretty comfortable with my minivan.

Still—our woody Wagoneer retained her style. And she looked very, very good with a Christmas tree on top.

So even though her interior rear-view mirror had fallen off, and even though that dent on the front was starting to rust, we kept her insured.

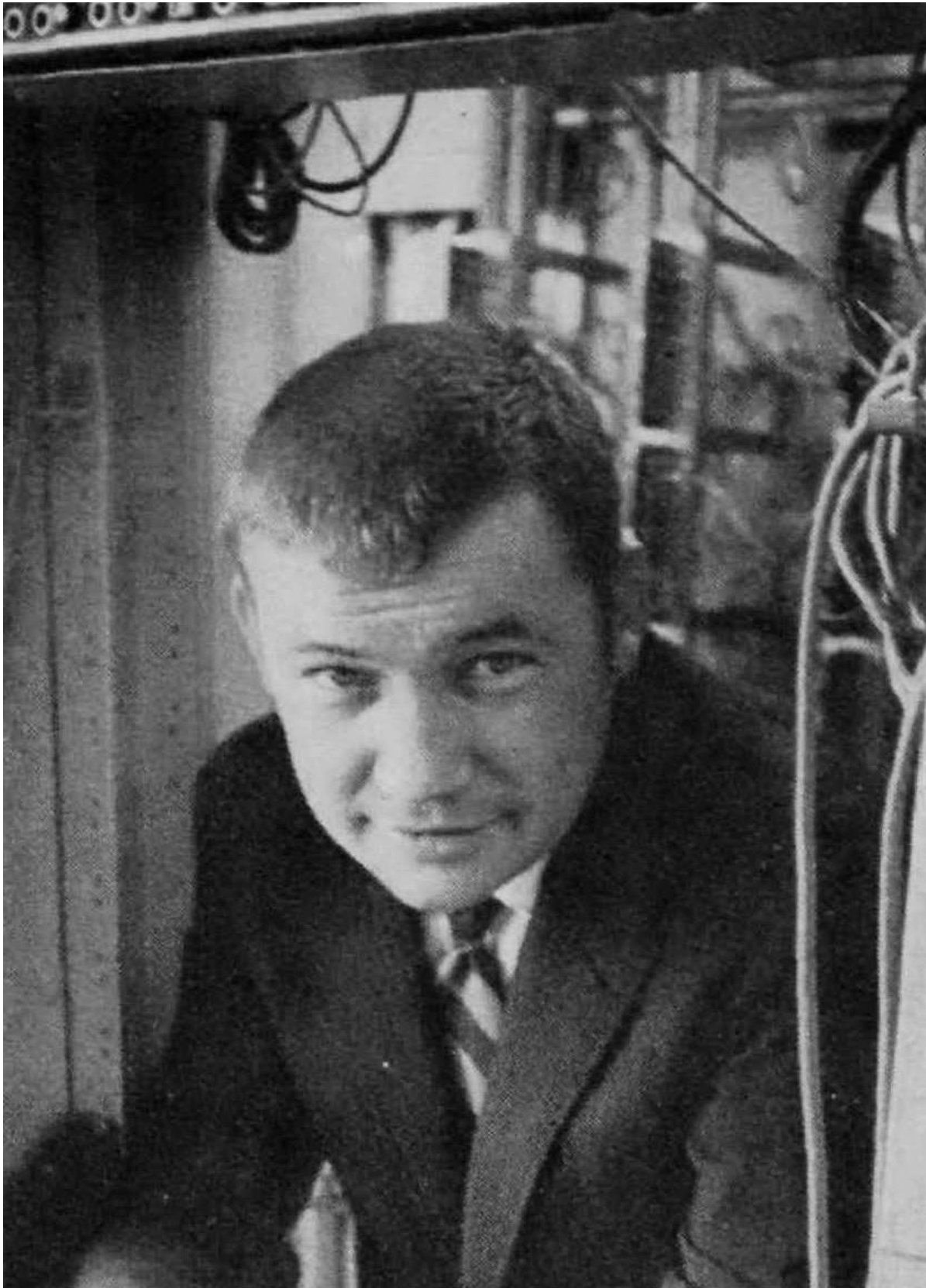
And we’d take her out for a spin each December in the runup to the holidays.

Like an old friend who’s moved away, she will be truly missed.

But we’ll keep talking about her—every time we see her better-preserved twin in a Lands End or a Tommy Hilfiger ad or driving down the road. She will remind us of younger, gentler, more optimistic times.

And Pat will say, inevitably, “Maybe we should have kept her.”

## Fond memories of Art Loomis



Art Loomis, in 1969. Photo/AP Corporate Archives

**Jim Hood** ([Email](#)) - The AP was a complex and often confusing place in the latter decades of the 20th Century. It resembled a blacksmith's shop with its noisy, oily Teletypes clattering away while eerily silent (and equally balky) computer terminals

crept into the scene. It took a strong personality to keep both parts of the equation in balance. It took somebody like Art Loomis.

I first encountered Art when I went to work in the Denver bureau in the mid-70s. Like the radio and TV engineers I had worked with pre-AP, he tended to walk around with a screwdriver and oily rag in his back pocket and a cigarette in his mouth. Things never worked quite right but most days they worked well enough, which was about all you could hope for.

Besides trying to hold things together in the office, the techs also roamed the roads of Colorado and Wyoming, patching up printers and paper tape machines and collecting many priceless anecdotes along the way. Not being of a writerly mind, Art and his crew didn't share any of these with our readers but, even better, regaled us with them at the Sportsman's Inn across the street (that may not have been the name but it was something like that).

We crossed paths many times after leaving Denver, including San Francisco and, I think, Kansas City though it may have been someplace else. Things run together and places get blurry but people like Art are always vivid and memorable.

He was a good guy in a tough job.

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**Peggy Walsh ([Email](#))** - My most vivid memories of Art center on the 1989 earthquake during the hometown World series between the San Francisco Giants and the Oakland Athletics.

In the late 80s, the news and communications offices in northern California were in separate places, Pleasanton and San Francisco.

Art was one of the techs who quickly moved to adjust equipment at member locations when the photo network was disrupted.

Years later we exchanged birthday emails and memories about the quake.

My condolences to Art's friends and family.

## A new installment of family history



**Lori Rose ([Email](#))** – It is a part of AP history, this contraption. And it is part of my family history as well.

It's a telegraph key used to send the dot-and-dash messages of Morse code. My second great grandfather founded the Dodge Institute of

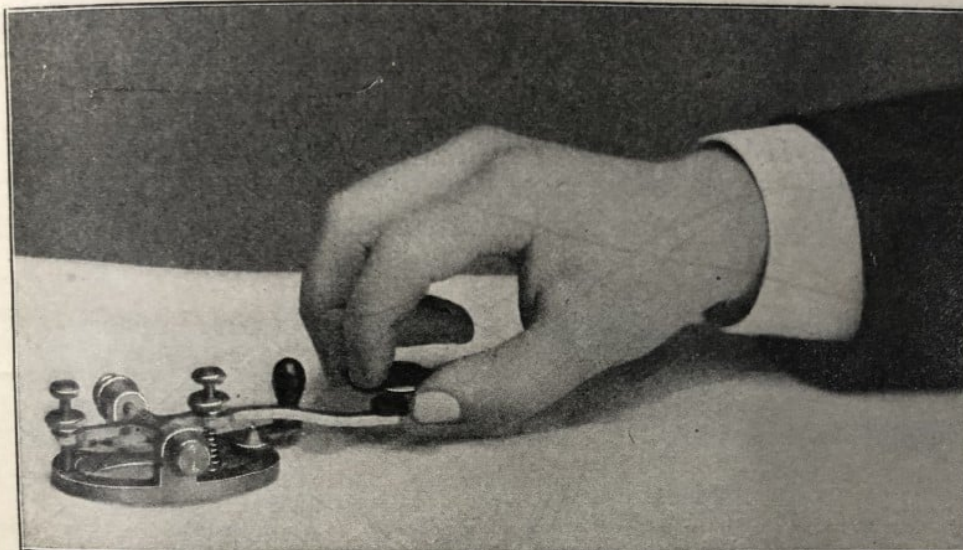


Telegraphy in Valparaiso, Ind., in 1873. It was said to be the largest school of its kind in the Western Hemisphere. The school later provided courses in wireless telegraphy and radio technology and became part of Valparaiso University.

My great grandfather, George M. Dodge, took over as president of the school and wrote a textbook, "The Telegraph Instructor," considered to be "the" textbook on the ins and outs of becoming a telegraph operator, for which, in the words of an advertisement for the school, "wages have never been so high." The ad noted that the training received at the Dodge Institute would lay the groundwork for any number of successful careers. In fact, "many of our most notable public men and captains of industry started their careers at the telegraph key, and attribute their success to the sound business principles acquired there."



part of the key-button with the thumb under the edge, curve the first and second fingers so as to form a quarter section of a circle, partially close the third and fourth fingers but do not allow them to touch the table. Rest the arm on the table at the elbow. The grasp of the fingers and thumb upon the key should be firm but not rigid and should never leave the key (while sending).



### Arm Movement

The wrist should be perfectly limber. The motion should be directly up and down, avoiding all side pressure. The movement should be from the wrist and forearm and not from the fingers; the fingers are used only for a leverage. The fingers, wrist and arm, however, should all move in the same direction.

The downward movement (closing the key) produces the dots and dashes, while the upward movement (opening the key) produces the breaks and spaces.

A dot (.) is made by a single, instantaneous downward stroke of the key. A dash (-) is made by holding the key down as long as it would take to make two dots. A long dash, as used in the letter "l" or the numeral "cipher," should be made by holding the key down as long as it would take to make three and four dots respectively.

The length of a space or a break in a letter that contains the same should be equivalent to one dot, *i. e.*, the letter "o" should require the same time as the letter "s," the letter "c"

His son, my grandfather, was nicknamed "Sparks," owing to the fact he spent his summer vacations during college working as a radioman aboard ships on the Great Lakes (after first graduating from the Dodge Institute.) Though he worked in ad sales for most of his career, he went back to sea as a radio operator during the Vietnam War on a tanker in the Pacific.

Sparks' telegraphy training must have given him an advantage at sleight of hand, as he also was a magician. His tricks surely gave him an edge as an adman - "If you can't sell

'em, confuse 'em."

## *Life as we knew it before the pandemic*



**Bill Winter (Email)** - This was on a practice range at a NE Ohio golf course with my grandson Wes, back in the fall of 2018. Haven't stepped onto a golf course since then, but plan to within a few months. Ah, better days ahead.

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## *More Words We Love To Hate*



**Jim Reindl (Email)** - This pernicious metaphor — to lean in — seems to be reaching saturation levels, especially with journalists. Politicians are “leaning in.” Actors are “leaning in.” Obviously, journalists are leaning WAY in. Apparently, you’re not trying hard enough if you are not “leaning in.” To paraphrase Doc from “Back To The Future,” “Why is everyone leaning in in the future? Is there a problem with the earth’s gravitational pull?”

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## *Beware of light switches that work sideways*

**Joe McGowan (Email)** - The other day you had an item about problems with the old cameras, darkrooms, etc.

In January, 1964, I was based in Miami when shooting broke out between Panamanians and Americans in the Panama Canal Zone. Miami photographer Jim Bourdier (I don't think he is still with us) and I were sent flying to Panama. We checked into a hotel close to the Canal Zone. We went out on the street, watching out for rooftop snipers and I got notes for a story and Jim got plenty of photos. We returned to the hotel room and I worked up my story to call to AP in New York. Jim went into the bathroom, jammed towels and stuff at the bottom of the door to stop daylight and started processing his film. He finished the first tank and was sliding around to drop the film in the second tank. BUT, the light switches in this hotel worked sideways!! Jim hit the first switch accidentally and all the lights came on, ruining his film!

By the way, we had to go into the Canal Zone to get material from the American military. I met a couple of senior officers who had prized horses, but with the problems in Panama City, they could not go over to their regular store and get food for the horses. They told me the name of the store. So, next day, I got a cab to the store and filled the trunk and half of the back seat with bags of horse food. Then I had the taxi drive to the stoplight at the intersection that led into the Canal Zone. The military gate keepers had closed the iron gates and put up piles of bales of hay to stop incoming bullets. I went to a pay phone on the corner and called the gate guards, told them the name and license plate on the taxi. On the next green light the cab driver raced across the intersection while the army guards pulled open the gate. Two bullets from a rooftop Panamanian sniper slammed into the trunk of the cab, fortunately not into the back seat!

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## *Good Times and Bad*

By MORT ROSENBLUM

TUCSON — No privately run enterprise is more vital than the New York Times in an America at war with itself in a world facing authoritarian takeover and climate collapse. But the staid old Gray Lady, made over and flush with cash, is getting out of hand.

People often fault the Times on specious grounds, ignoring its strengths and missing the point of intended objectivity. But recent cases are deeply troubling, in particular the loss of Donald G. McNeil, Jr., a globe-ranging expert on deadly plagues, when he is so badly needed.

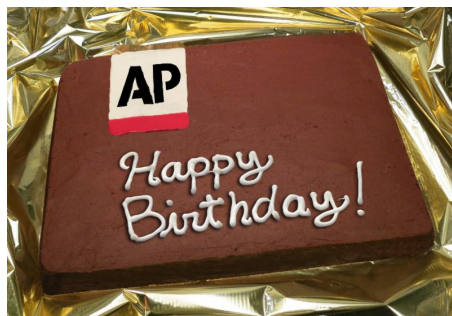
The Times is America's last family-run newspaper of record, with foreign bureaus and a stringer network extending to 150 countries. Its national reporters exposed truth behind a self-obsessed president's false absurdities, financial manipulation and treachery.

At its best, it is stunning. Abroad, stories probe distant societies with words and images to show an inward-looking nation how the other 95 percent live. At home, seasoned hands pry open closed doors to reveal our own domestic failings.

The Washington Post excels at national coverage but is thin beyond American borders. Jeff Bezos has infused it with fresh resources but, with his omnivore obsessions and so much else on his plate, he is no Katharine Graham.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Lindel Hutson.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Heidi Brown - [hbrown@ap.org](mailto:hbrown@ap.org)

## Welcome to Connecting



Ron Fournier - [rfournier@truscottrossman.com](mailto:rfournier@truscottrossman.com)

Tom Shine - [shine@kmuw.org](mailto:shine@kmuw.org)

## Stories of interest

### *Judge warns media at ex-cop's trial of possible removal* (AP)

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The judge overseeing the trial of a former Minneapolis police officer in the death of George Floyd opened court Wednesday by threatening to remove a media pool and shut down a media center over some reporting on the case.

Hennepin County Judge Peter Cahill was visibly angry as he described a pool report that included a reporter's attempts to read notepads at the defense and prosecution tables, as well as describing security on the courthouse floor where the trial is taking place.

“That is absolutely inappropriate,” the judge said of the attempts to read notepads, ordering that any reporters in the courtroom must refrain from doing so. He called reporting on security “completely irresponsible.”

Former officer Derek Chauvin’s trial is taking place under extraordinary circumstances due the pandemic, with plastic shields placed around the courtroom, socially distancing and masks worn most of the time. The trial is being livestreamed, a rarity in Minnesota, and only two journalists are being allowed each day as pool reporters.

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

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## ***Covid Relief Bill Throws Lifeline to Transform Local News*** (Nieman Reports)

By CRAIG FORMAN

With the passage of the \$1.9 trillion Covid relief bill, Washington is not only providing help to families, schools, states, and local government; it is throwing a lifeline to the imperiled local news business as well.

The legislation provides economically disrupted industries from transportation to manufacturing much-needed pension relief to help keep their retirement plans solvent. Millions of workers and retirees are covered by such plans, some of which would soon run out of money without this federal support.

No industry or retirees need help more urgently than America’s community newspapers, weighed down by underfunded pension liabilities. Pension relief will allow titles from The San Diego Union Tribune and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette to the Amherst (MA) Bulletin and The (Schenectady, NY) Daily Gazette crucial breathing room to pursue a sustainable digital business model, as they evolve toward a future beyond print.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mike Feinsilber.

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## ***Biden to hold first news conference March 25*** (Politico)

By NICK NIEDZWIADK

President Joe Biden will hold his first formal news conference on March 25, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Tuesday.

While the president has periodically taken questions from reporters, Biden has been under increased fire from conservative news outlets — as well as some political allies — for waiting longer than some predecessors to hold a media availability after taking office.

Should the March 25 date hold, Biden will have gone more than two full months without holding a news conference to start his tenure. Recent past presidents have typically done so within their first month as a good-faith gesture toward the free press.

The White House is stepping up its media presence as part of an effort to promote the recently enacted \$1.9 trillion stimulus package and tout the continual progress in scaling up coronavirus vaccinations. On Tuesday, Biden traveled to Pennsylvania, and other emissaries are also spreading out across the country as part of a planned blitz.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***OPINION: Associated Press goes to bat for Andrew Cuomo with one of the dumbest defenses yet***

(Washington Examiner)

by Becket Adams, Commentary Writer

We have a top contender already for the stupidest sentence committed to writing this year by a member of the press.

It's only March.

The Associated Press published a report this weekend explaining the effort by New York Democrats to get New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo to resign over allegations he sexually harassed multiple women.

However, after the report's first three paragraphs, this gobsmackingly absurd sentence appears in its fourth: "Republicans have seized on the scandal to try to distract from Biden's success tackling the coronavirus pandemic and challenge his party's well-established advantage with female voters."

Yes, the Associated Press really rolled out the tired "Republicans pounce" cliché in honor of Cuomo. You know, the cliché in which newsrooms attempt to distract from a damning Democratic scandal by focusing on how it is really just an occasion for Republicans to try something sneaky.

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

## **Today in History - March 18, 2021**





## By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, March 18, the 77th day of 2021. There are 288 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On March 18, 1963, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Gideon v. Wainwright*, ruled unanimously that state courts were required to provide legal counsel to criminal defendants who could not afford to hire an attorney on their own.

### On this date:

In 1910, the first filmed adaptation of Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*, a silent short produced by Thomas Edison's New York movie studio, was released.

In 1911, Irving Berlin's first major hit, *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, was first published by Ted Snyder & Co. of New York.

In 1922, Mohandas K. Gandhi was sentenced in India to six years' imprisonment for civil disobedience. (He was released after serving two years.)

In 1925, the Tri-State Tornado struck southeastern Missouri, southern Illinois and southwestern Indiana, resulting in some 700 deaths.

In 1937, in America's worst school disaster, nearly 300 people, most of them children, were killed in a natural gas explosion at the New London Consolidated School in Rusk County, Texas.

In 1940, Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini met at the Brenner Pass, where the Italian dictator agreed to join Germany's war against France and Britain.

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order authorizing the War Relocation Authority, which was put in charge of interning Japanese-Americans, with Milton S. Eisenhower (the younger brother of Dwight D. Eisenhower) as its director.

In 1965, the first spacewalk took place as Soviet cosmonaut Alexei Leonov went outside his Voskhod 2 capsule, secured by a tether.

In 1974, most of the Arab oil-producing nations ended their 5-month-old embargo against the United States that had been sparked by American support for Israel in the Yom Kippur War.

In 1996, rejecting an insanity defense, a jury in Dedham, Massachusetts, convicted John C. Salvi III of murdering two women in attacks at two Boston-area abortion clinics in December 1994. (Salvi later committed suicide in his prison cell.)

In 2017, Chuck Berry, rock 'n' roll's founding guitar hero and storyteller who defined the music's joy and rebellion in such classics as "Johnny B. Goode," "Sweet Little Sixteen" and "Roll Over Beethoven," died at his home west of St. Louis at age 90.

In 2018, Vladimir Putin rolled to a crushing reelection victory for six more years as Russia's president.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama demanded that Moammar Gadhafi halt all military attacks on civilians and said that if the Libyan leader did not stand down, the United States would join other nations in launching military action against him. At a massive demonstration against Yemen's government, snipers fired on protesters and police blocked an escape route; dozens were killed, including children. Former Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher died in Los Angeles at 85. Princess Antoinette of Monaco, the late Prince Rainier III's oldest sister and a prominent advocate for animal rights, died at 90.

Five years ago: A jury in St. Petersburg, Florida, sided with ex-pro wrestler Hulk Hogan, awarding him \$115 million in compensatory damages in his sex tape lawsuit against Gawker Media. (Three days later, the jury awarded \$25 million in punitive damages; Gawker, which ended up going bankrupt, finally settled with Hogan for \$31 million.) Police in Brussels captured Europe's most wanted fugitive, Salah Abdeslam, who was the prime suspect in the deadly 2015 Paris attacks. North Korea ignored U.N. resolutions by firing a medium-range ballistic missile into the sea.

One year ago: The US and Canada agreed to temporarily close their shared border to nonessential travel. Describing himself as a "wartime president," President Donald Trump said he would invoke emergency powers to let the government steer production of needed medical supplies by private companies. Trump signed a \$100-billion aid package to boost testing for the coronavirus and guarantee sick leave to workers who become ill. As fears of a prolonged recession caused by the virus took hold, the S&P 500 sank 5%; the Dow shed more than 1,300 points and had lost nearly all of the big gains posted since Trump's inauguration.

Today's Birthdays: Composer John Kander is 94. Nobel peace laureate and former South African president F.W. de Klerk is 85. Actor Brad Dourif is 71. Jazz musician Bill Frisell is 70. Singer Irene Cara is 62. Alt-country musician Karen Grotberg (The Jayhawks) is 62. Movie writer-director Luc Besson is 62. Actor Geoffrey Owens is 60. Actor Thomas Ian Griffith is 59. Singer-songwriter James McMurtry is 59. TV personality Mike Rowe is 59. Singer-actor Vanessa L. Williams is 58. Olympic gold medal speedskater Bonnie Blair is 57. Actor David Cubitt is 56. Rock musician Jerry Cantrell (Alice in Chains) is 55. Rock singer-musician Miki Berenyi (ber-EN'-ee) is 54. Actor Michael Bergin is 52. Rapper-actor-talk show host Queen Latifah is 51. Former

White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus (ryns PREE'-bus) is 49. Actor-comedian Dane Cook is 49. Country singer Philip Sweet (Little Big Town) is 47. Rock musician Stuart Zender is 47. Singers Evan and Jaron Lowenstein are 47. Actor-singer-dancer Sutton Foster is 46. Rock singer Adam Levine (Maroon 5) is 42. Rock musician Daren Taylor (Airborne Toxic Event) is 41. Olympic gold medal figure skater Alexei Yagudin is 41. Actor Adam Pally is 39. Actor Cornelius Smith Jr. is 39. Actor Duane Henry (TV: "NCIS") is 36. Actor Lily Collins is 32. Actor-dancer Julia Goldani Telles is 26. Actor Ciara Bravo is 24. Actor Blake Garrett Rosenthal is 17.

## 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](mailto:paulstevens46@gmail.com)

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