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Connecting

April 02, 2021

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning on this the 2nd day of April 2021,

Today marks the first anniversary of the death of **Anick Jesdanun**, deputy technology editor for The Associated Press who died in New York City of coronavirus-related complications. Click [here](#) for the remarkable story our colleague **Ted Anthony** wrote at the time of Nick's death at 51 years of age. RIP, Nick.

I am proud to say I knew and worked with **Paul Simon** during my AP career. No, not that singer guy who paired up with a guy named Art. THE AP Paul Simon!

Paul said he had "to grit my teeth a few times when, as COB I'd call a publisher and the first reaction from a gatekeeper when I said "Paul Simon calling for xxx" was to laugh."

Congratulations to Paul on his retirement Thursday after 48 years in the working world – 21 of those years with the AP in Los Angeles, Dallas and Omaha. Paul joined the AP in LA in 1979, served as Dallas news editor in 1985-86, Los Angeles ACOB in 1986-89 and Omaha chief of bureau in 1989-2000.

Thanks to my friend for sharing some thoughts on his career – and all our best on the new chapters that await Paul and his wife **Debbie**. If you've got a favorite memory of working with Paul, please send it along.

News on Pulitzers: The Pulitzer Prize Board has decided to postpone the 2021 award winners' announcement. Originally scheduled for Monday, April 19, 2021, the Prizes in Journalism, Books, Drama and Music now will be announced on Friday, June 11, 2021 at 1 p.m., via video stream at Pulitzer.org. Click [here](#) to read more.

Happy Easter Sunday - and happy Passover. Have a great weekend – be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

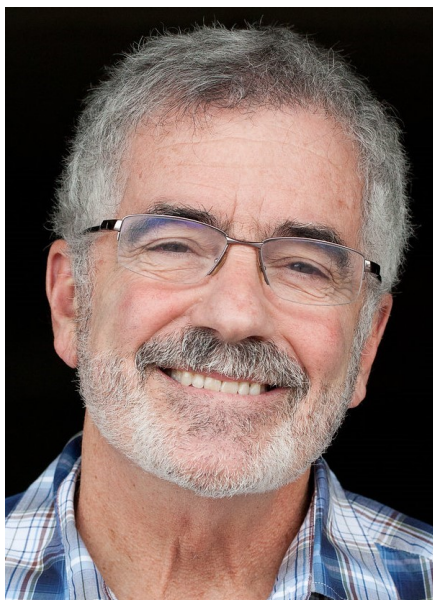
End of a working career as Paul Simon tour ends and he turns a 'page'



Paul, Debbie and MochaLatte, a 6-year-old Labmariner they rescued five years ago. They adopted a year-old Border Collie. Pongo, two months ago. The picture was on a hike in a state park last fall, not long after they lost their 17-year-old Border Collie Katie.

Paul Simon (Email) - The first few waking hours on April Fool's Day brought a variety of emotions: Uncertainty because this was my first day of retirement after 48 years in the working world; sadness over the heart attack death of our office manager a day earlier; then exhilaration, because tennis awaited me later this sunny morning unfettered by any work concerns.

My career path was linear for 27 years and then a bit circuitous since 2000. After six years with a newspaper in Ventura, CA, and 21 years with the AP in Los Angeles, Dallas and Omaha, I became adventurous. Over the past 21 years, I worked for a variety of online startups and social media companies, created and managed an internal wire service at the Denver Post and since November 2015 directed a campus within the Osher Lifelong Learning Institution at the University of Denver (OLLI at DU) where I also taught courses in history, visual arts and public affairs (and became somewhat of a Zoom expert!) I also served a year as governor of the Colorado-Wyoming Optimist District. And there were three years running carts and retrieving range balls at a golf course – ending a few years ago when my wife wisely pointed out the nonsense of a hobby job providing free golf when I had no time to play.



Our marriage, approaching 21 years, prospered in the past year of pandemic-driven isolation. As my wife Debbie launches a three-year divestiture of her geriatric care management and guardianship business, plenty of travel awaits us, including an RV trip to the Oregon coast with our two dogs in May. We eagerly anticipate eventually visiting my son and his family in Berlin, although Germany very much remains in lockdown and we will miss the granddaughter's third birthday in June. My marathoning days are long gone, but I stay active biking and playing tennis and volleyball. We're fully engaged with dogs and our two cats, and we enjoy the achievements of my daughter, a talented, in-demand tattoo artist who lives here in the Denver area.

For a boy from a small town in Southern California, working for the AP was an enriching and rewarding experience that still evokes vivid memories of stories (I told Clayton Moore in 1980 that Jay Silverheels had died) and colleagues. I have the deepest respect for the institution and the contributions of so many tremendous journalists. Let's double the pay of our invaluable "Connecting" editor to keep the updates coming!

Pruitt's account of 'withering numbers' of attacks on AP's election system stunning

Mark Mittelstadt (Email) - AP President and CEO Gary Pruitt's comments to a cybersecurity workshop last week, and recounted in Tuesday's Connecting, that the company's election platforms had come under attack in "withering numbers" in 2020 were simply stunning.

While most of the news the past four years was whether Donald Trump had colluded with the Russians to impact the 2016 election and then reports from the FBI and elsewhere that operatives were trying to disrupt U.S. election systems leading up to last year's elections, most attention was on computers in state and federal governments and big tech social media. There was virtually no mention, as I recall, that foreign actors from around the world -- Pakistan, Taiwan, the Russian Federation and elsewhere -- were trying to subvert the work of the de facto vote reporting source for news media and others in the United States and around the globe, The Associated Press. To get a call from Jeh Johnson, then head of Homeland Security, that he and President Obama had identified AP as "the single point of failure on election night" had to have sent chills up Pruitt's back. I am hopeful AP and others will report more on this story, at least as much as they feel they can without compromising security.

Meanwhile, kudos and congratulations to Gary Pruitt and AP's team of IT and cybersecurity specialists for seemingly navigating the attempted hacks and for carrying out election night (and later) vote-counting and reporting operations that at least from the outside appeared to come off without a hitch.

Roy Williams – Great coach, a better man



Dennis Conrad (Email) - My favorite memory of [retiring North Carolina basketball Coach Roy Williams](#) is this supportive smile he gave as he honored the fight for life of my late grandson Luka (3-4-2014 to 12-1-2015), who passed away at the University of

North Carolina children's hospital after a July 2015 bone marrow transplant from an anonymous German donor failed to prove a lifesaver. Great coach. A better man.

This beautiful [article](#) ran in the Raleigh News-Observer about Luka and it tells the story.

A stunt I remember well

Paul Colford ([Email](#)) - This wasn't an April Fools' Day stunt, but could have been:

[From NPR](#), April 13, 2011:

AP Kills Story Based On Fake Press Release About GE's Taxes

Thirty-five minutes after reporting that "facing criticism over the amount of taxes it pays, General Electric announced it will repay its entire \$3.2 billion tax refund to the US Treasury on April 18," The Associated Press just moved this "urgent kill" bulletin.

Associated Press Sent to Doghouse Over Coverage of Biden 'Doggie Doo' Incident: 'This Isn't News' (The Wrap)

By Lindsey Ellefson

Journalists and media observers were not into the Associate Press' coverage of dog poop spotted in the White House Wednesday, and they made that quite clear on Twitter.

Wednesday afternoon, the Associated Press published a wire article headlined, "Ruh roh! Biden pooch drops doggie doo in White House hallway." Then, the venerable news agency tweeted the piece out to its over 15 million followers, and that's really where the trouble began.

At press time Thursday, the AP's "doggie doo" tweet had a mere 712 retweets, but it had over 5,300 quoted retweets, meaning people were adding their opinions to the tweet at a much higher rate than they were just promoting it as it is. It also had over 5,600 direct replies.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Linda Deutsch.

AP adds 2 reporters to cover injustice

By Lauren Easton

With funding from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, AP has added two reporters to cover issues of injustice.

Annie Ma, based in Charlotte, North Carolina, will cover leadership, funding and access in education, as well as what is taught in classrooms, to show the impact of inequity and the efforts to address it.

She will explore how COVID-19 has disrupted education and the evolution of classrooms in the post-pandemic era.

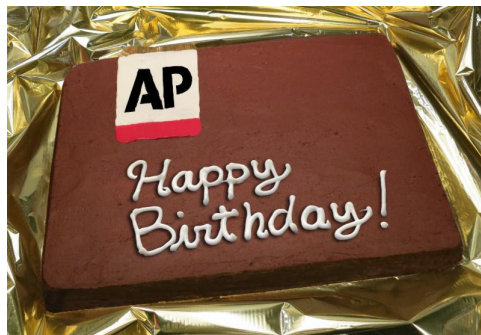
Ma joins AP from The Charlotte Observer, where she was an education reporter.

Reporter Drew Costley, based in Washington, will focus on equality, justice and fairness in science and the environment.

He will cover the effects of climate change, pollution and environmental degradation on different communities, and how science and medicine is serving — or failing to serve — people of all backgrounds.

Costley previously wrote about climate and the environment, science, health, technology and internet culture for OneZero and Future Human.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



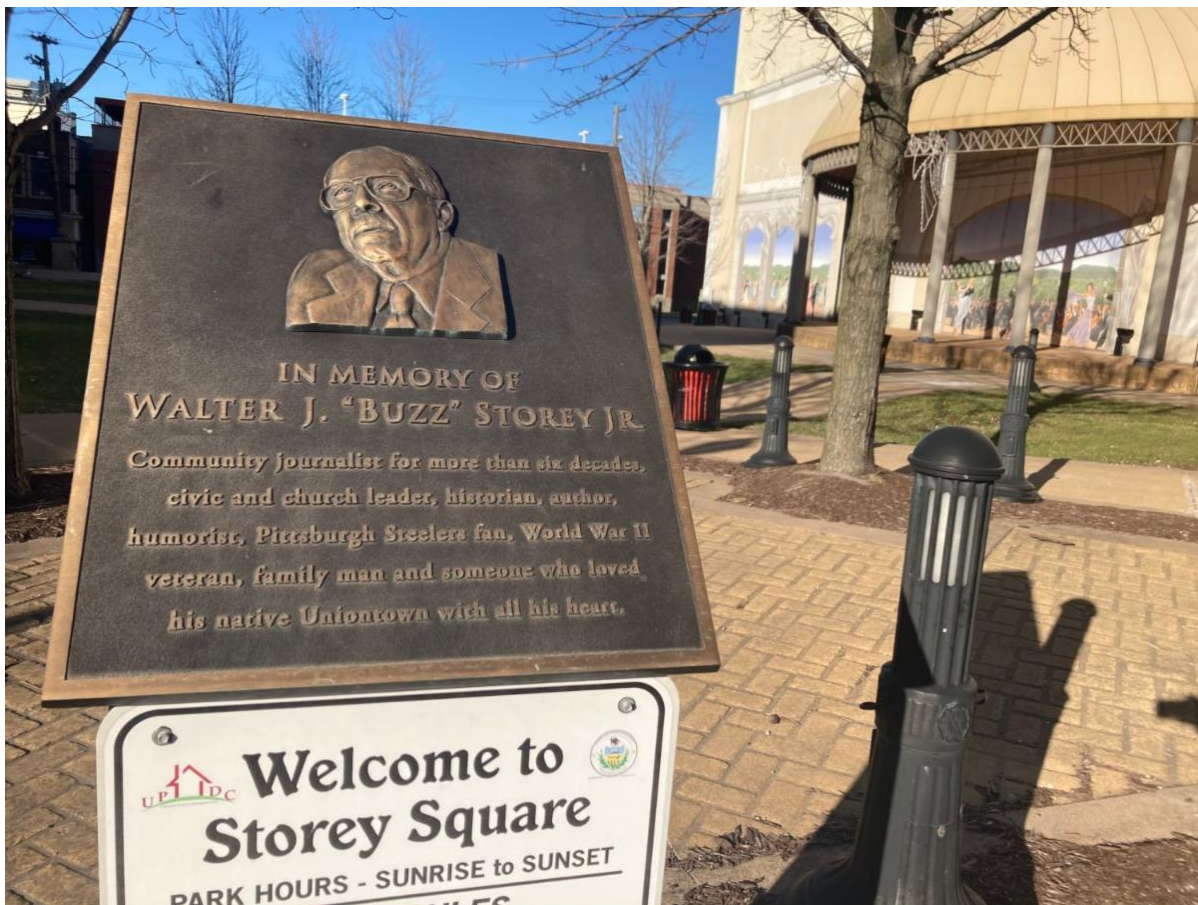
Amanda St. Amand - mandystamand@gmail.com

On Saturday to...

Charles Rex Arbogast - carbogast@ap.org

Stories of interest

Looking back at a day when small-town newspaper editors could be heroes (Poynter)



A plaque for local newspaper editor Walter "Buzz" Storey in Storey Square in Uniontown, Pennsylvania. (Photo: John W. Miller)

By: John W. Miller

The monument on Main Street in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, that caught my eye was not for a quarterback or soldier.

This gritty industrial community of 10,000 in Southwestern Pennsylvania named its central square after a newsman.

"Community journalist for more than six decades," says a plaque for Walter "Buzz" Storey, introducing Storey Square.

This is who a newspaper editor could be in small-town America: a hero.

And that's the missing piece in the conversation about rebuilding local journalism and its artisanal truth-gathering practices with the holy superpower to defang conspiracy theories, rebuild shared narratives and make democracy possible.

To trust the work of journalists they don't know, Americans need to see journalists they do know making phone calls, knocking on doors and printing corrections when they screw up.

"It's one thing to look at a TV and say 'national media sucks,' it's another to look a journalist who you actually know in the eye and say that," John Isner, co-host of the popular West Virginia-based Appalachia podcast told me. Without local journalism,

he added, “the connection of rural America and national-level news is forever fragmented.”

Read more [here](#).

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\$10 Flea Market Leica Lens Sells for \$50,000 in Under 24 Hours (PetaPixel)

By JARON SCHNEIDER

A rare, collapsible version of the Meyer Primoplan 5cm f/1.9 LTM Leica M39 mm RF — valued at \$50,000 — was listed for less than a day before the seller received a private offer to purchase it. Just a few months before, it was scooped up at a flea market for just \$10.

While the sale is pending, it shows just how hot the market is for rare, vintage Leica collectibles.

Jean-Louis Beek who runs the vintage camera shop Cameratique says that the lens was purchased about three months ago in South Africa at a flea market, where it was picked up for a “what is equivalent to \$10.”

“The new lucky owner then advertised it on a local online auction webpage where a photographer recognized what it was and purchased it for a substantial amount more. He then on-sold to me,” Beek explains. “I then brought it to the international market where it will probably end up in the hands of a high-end collector.”

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

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How The Cincinnati Enquirer captured the big picture one day at a time in 2020 (Poynter)



Photojournalist Amanda Rossmann edits video footage for the documentary '2020: The Year That Revealed Us' while working from the Cincinnati Enquirer office. (Photo by Meg Vogel/Cincinnati Enquirer)

By: Kristen Hare

Last year, journalists at The Cincinnati Enquirer wanted to document the big picture of the pandemic. They had no idea just how big that picture would get. Like all of us, they were living it one day, and one story, at a time.

Journalists followed Nina Salzman, a 7-year-old suddenly going to school at her dining room table; Donna Kinney, a cancer survivor who lived alone and wrote letters to stay in touch; the Rev. Damon Lynch Jr. and other faith leaders working to connect with their communities in dark times, and so many others.

It's easy to forget how life pivots around small things, said Amy Wilson, Enquirer Media's storytelling coach. But last year, at a time when we were all stuck in our own little worlds, "it was good to see all the other little worlds."

At the end of last year, the Enquirer published "Holding On", a narrative, and "2020: The year that revealed us," a 50-minute documentary. They weave together all those small worlds as the world itself shut down and changed with the pandemic.

Twenty-five reporters and photographers worked on it.

Read more [here](#).

The Final Word



Shared by Bob Daugherty.

Today in History - April 2, 2021



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, April 2, the 92nd day of 2021. There are 273 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 2, 1792, Congress passed the Coinage Act, which authorized establishment of the U.S. Mint.

On this date:

In 1865, Confederate President Jefferson Davis and most of his Cabinet fled the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, because of advancing Union forces.

In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress to declare war against Germany, saying, "The world must be made safe for democracy." (Congress declared war four days later.)

In 1932, aviator Charles A. Lindbergh and John F. Condon went to a cemetery in The Bronx, New York, where Condon turned over \$50,000 to a man in exchange for Lindbergh's kidnapped son. (The child, who was not returned, was found dead the following month.)

In 1968, "2001: A Space Odyssey," the groundbreaking science-fiction film epic produced and directed by Stanley Kubrick and starring Keir Dullea and Gary Lockwood, had its world premiere in Washington, D.C.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter signed into law a windfall profits tax on the oil industry. (The tax was repealed in 1988.)

In 1982, several thousand troops from Argentina seized the disputed Falkland Islands, located in the south Atlantic, from Britain. (Britain seized the islands back the following June.)

In 1986, four American passengers, including an 8-month-old girl, her mother and grandmother, were killed when a terrorist bomb exploded aboard a TWA jetliner en route from Rome to Athens, Greece.

In 2002, Israel seized control of Bethlehem; Palestinian gunmen forced their way into the Church of the Nativity, the traditional birthplace of Jesus, where they began a 39-day standoff.

In 2003, during the Iraq War, American forces fought their way to within sight of the Baghdad skyline.

In 2005, Pope John Paul II died in his Vatican apartment at age 84.

In 2007, in its first case on climate change, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency*, ruled 5-4 that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases were air pollutants under the Clean Air Act.

In 2019, former federal prosecutor Lori Lightfoot won the runoff election for Chicago mayor, becoming the first Black woman and the first openly gay person to lead the nation's third-largest city. Police near Los Angeles arrested a man they said had fatally shot rapper Nipsey Hussle and evaded authorities for two days; police said the two men knew each other and had some sort of personal dispute in the hours before the rapper was killed.

Ten years ago: Highly radioactive water leaked into the sea from a crack at Japan's stricken nuclear power plant; meanwhile, earthquake-tsunami survivors complained that the government was not paying enough attention to victims.

Five years ago: Mormon leaders meeting in Salt Lake City called on church members to practice tolerance despite political differences, providing guidance at a conference amid a presidential campaign between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton that was marked by harsh rhetoric and bickering.

One year ago: The number of confirmed coronavirus cases worldwide passed the 1 million mark, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. The captain of a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier facing a coronavirus outbreak was fired after widely distributing a memo pleading for help; Navy Secretary Thomas Modly said Capt. Brett Crozier had demonstrated "poor judgment" in a crisis. (Modly himself would resign days later after facing a backlash over his harsh criticism of Crozier in remarks to the ship's crew.) The government said more than 6.6 million Americans had applied for unemployment benefits in the preceding week, doubling a record high set just a week earlier.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Sharon Acker is 86. Actor Dame Penelope Keith is 81. Actor Linda Hunt is 76. Singer Emmylou Harris is 74. Actor Sam Anderson is 74. Social critic and author Camille Paglia is 74. Actor Pamela Reed is 72. Rock musician Dave Robinson (The Cars) is 72. Country singer Buddy Jewell is 60. Actor Christopher Meloni is 60. Singer Keren Woodward (Bananarama) is 60. Country singer Billy Dean is 59. Actor Clark Gregg is 59. Actor Jana Marie Hupp is 57. Rock musician Greg Camp is 54. Actor Roselyn Sanchez is 48. Country singer Jill King is 46. Actor Pedro Pascal is 46. Actor Adam Rodriguez is 46. Actor Michael Fassbender is 44. Actor Jaime Ray Newman is 43. Rock musician Jesse Carmichael (Maroon 5) is 42. Actor Bethany Joy Lenz is 40. Singer Lee Dewyze (TV: "American Idol") is 35. Country singer Chris Janson is 35. Actor Drew Van Acker is 35. Actor Briga Heelan (TV: "Great News") is 34. Actor Jesse Plemons is 33. Singer Aaron Kelly (TV: "American Idol") 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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