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## Connecting

May 04, 2021

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Colleagues,

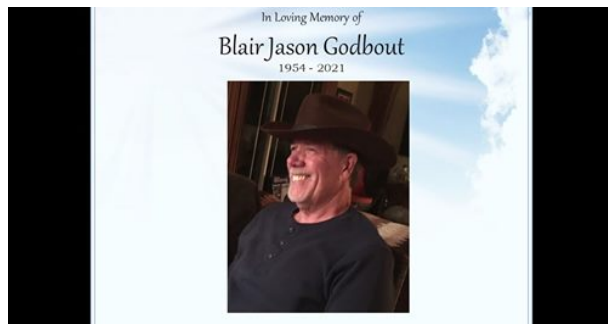
Good Tuesday morning on this the 4<sup>th</sup> day of May 2021,

Congratulations to our colleague **Nick Ut** ([Email](#)), who reports that the “From Hell to Hollywood” documentary feature film has been invited to the Rising Sun Film Festival in Japan for its Asian Premiere, in November.

The documentary tells the story of Nick’s Pulitzer Prize-winning photo, “The Terror of War,” that is credited with helping bring an end to the Vietnam War. Ut was just 21 when he shot the photo in 1972 of children running from the scene of a napalm attack. (A book, From Hell to Hollywood: The Incredible Journey of AP Photographer Nick Ut,” by Hal Buell was recently released.)



A photo-montage tribute to the late **Blair Godbout**, a photo editor in the AP's Los Angeles bureau for 24 years, has been produced by his wife **Sheri Malone**. Blair died March 19 after a long battle with Alzheimer's Disease, which led to his early retirement from AP in 2013. You can view the tribute [here](#).



We lead today's issue with more tributes to **Bob O'Meara**, longtime AP Milwaukee newsman and news editor who died last week.

Here's to a great day – be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

## Remembering Bob O'Meara



**Gene Herrick** ([Email](#)) - I was transferred to Milwaukee in 1951, and there met and knew a quiet gentleman named Bob O'Meara.

Bob was a handsome fellow, who just went about his news business so quietly that one might not know he was there. This is in comparison to four others, Bill Weekes, the bureau chief with the great memory of baseball statistics, and bridge hands, Dion Henderson, then a general news writer, who often had his famous dog art his side, and who later became Bureau Chief, Chris Edmonds, sportswriter, and me. Chris and I were the worst because we were often shouting about our expense accounts.

O'Meara – not a word.

Chris and I were always wrapping our legs around our typewriters – an event that would send Weekes into a hissy fit. He would take a big stick and hit the bottoms of our feet. On day, AP President and General Manager Frank Starzel was visiting. He sat at a desk and put his feet upon the desk. Weeks ran over with his stick and told Starzel that he didn't allow feet on a desk. Starzel immediately took his feet down, and we all looked aghast. Bob O'Meara smiled silently.

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**Dave Skidmore (Email)** - Bob was immensely kind to me when I arrived in the Milwaukee bureau just before Easter 1983. I was 26 and had just spent two days driving from Bethlehem, Pa., the city of my first job in journalism. I knew no one in Milwaukee and Bob invited me to share Easter dinner with his family. Colleague Helen Mitternacht remembers Bob as the cool in the bureau to Bureau Chief Dion Henderson's fire. He demonstrated that once when I groused at him for rewriting my lede on a profile of Milwaukee's controversial police chief, Harold Breier. It took me about 15 minutes to calm down and realize that Bob's lede, which pulled a few descriptive details from the body of my story, was immensely more compelling than the flat lede I had written. Bob took my grousing in stride. He didn't, of course, get a byline as news editor --- but without his deft touch, I am sure my story wouldn't have made it onto the A-wire.

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**Sonya Zalubowski (Email)** - Oh, my, so sad to hear of the deaths of two AP Milwaukee stalwarts, Bob O'Meara and Tim Curran. I remember both with great affection and admiration for their kindness and dedication to the AP. Our office was small and crammed with teletype noise, ringing phones and broken furniture (try a broken desk leg supported by the yellow pages) during my two-year stint there in the early 70s but the camaraderie of our little crew overcame it all. Dion Henderson was a great leader but sometimes gruff. His desktop bore a toy cannon aimed at us. O'Meara provided the calm demeanor that neutralized any angst. And, Tim, with that twinkle in his eye was always looking for ways to show some perspective on our hectic lives. The phones would ring and ring, who would get stuck with taking the daisy cheese wheel quotes of the day? This was Wisconsin after all. Finally, kudos to fellow Milwaukee staffer Jim Carlson for his fine obit and Kathy Curran for her heartfelt remembrance of Tim.

## On to a fourth career?

**David Speer (Email)** - I'm retiring from what I consider to be my third career - senior director of marketing and communications for the Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas. (My first career: AP - 1980 to 1997. Second: Better Homes and Gardens family of magazines.)

Maybe I'll find a fourth.

## Speer to Retire After 10 Years at Walton College

### University of Arkansas News

David Speer, a U of A alumnus and former managing editor of the Fayetteville newspaper, is retiring after 10 years as the director of marketing and communications at the Sam M. Walton College of Business at the U of A.

Speer's last official work day is May 31.



"David has been a huge asset to Walton College over the last 10 years," said Matthew Waller, dean of the Walton College. "When he came to Walton College, he brought a tremendous amount of experience as a leader, writer, editor and photographer. Those skills are evident in our events, website, social media, press releases and more. While we soon won't see him every day on campus, his work still proudly stands. He will be missed."

Speer earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with a dual major in English and journalism from the U of A in 1975 and was a master's student and graduate assistant in the U of A English department in 1976-78.

"I couldn't imagine a better ending for my working career than doing it at the University of Arkansas," Speer said. "The university has been so important to me personally since I first came for freshman orientation in 1971, and it has been an honor to come back and contribute to this great institution over the past 10 years."

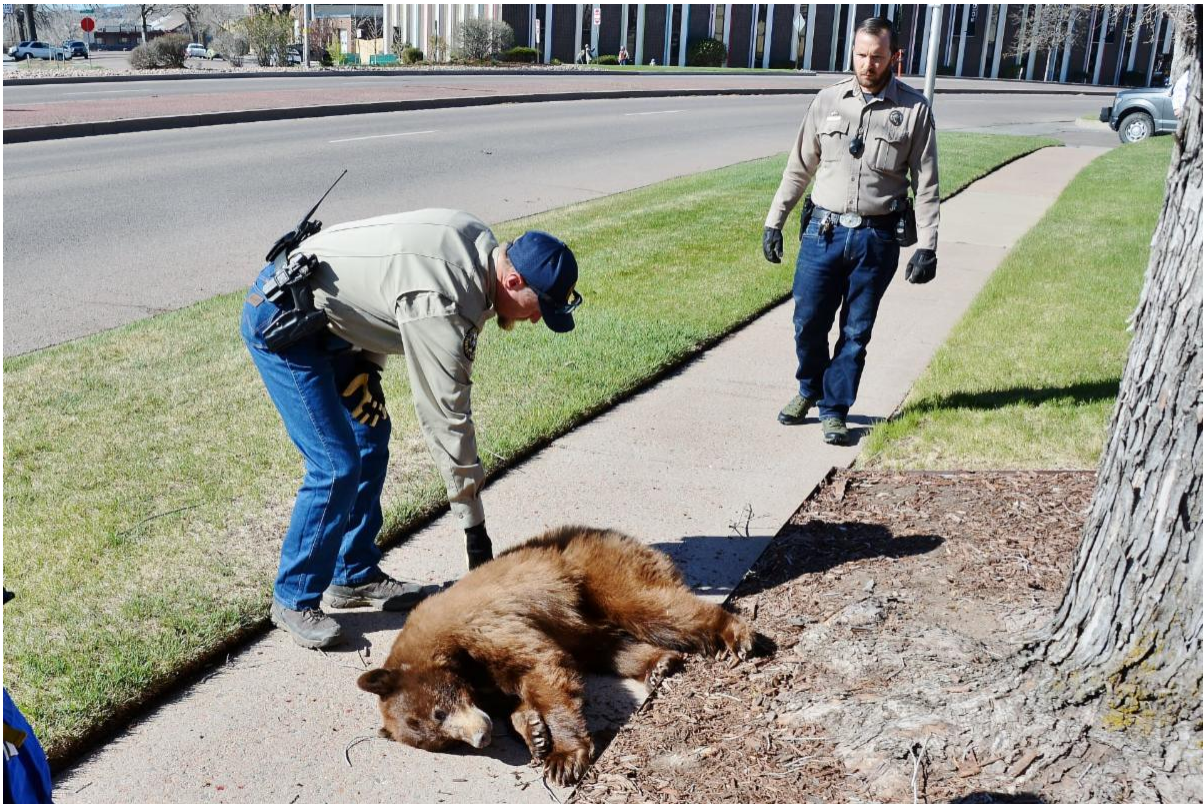
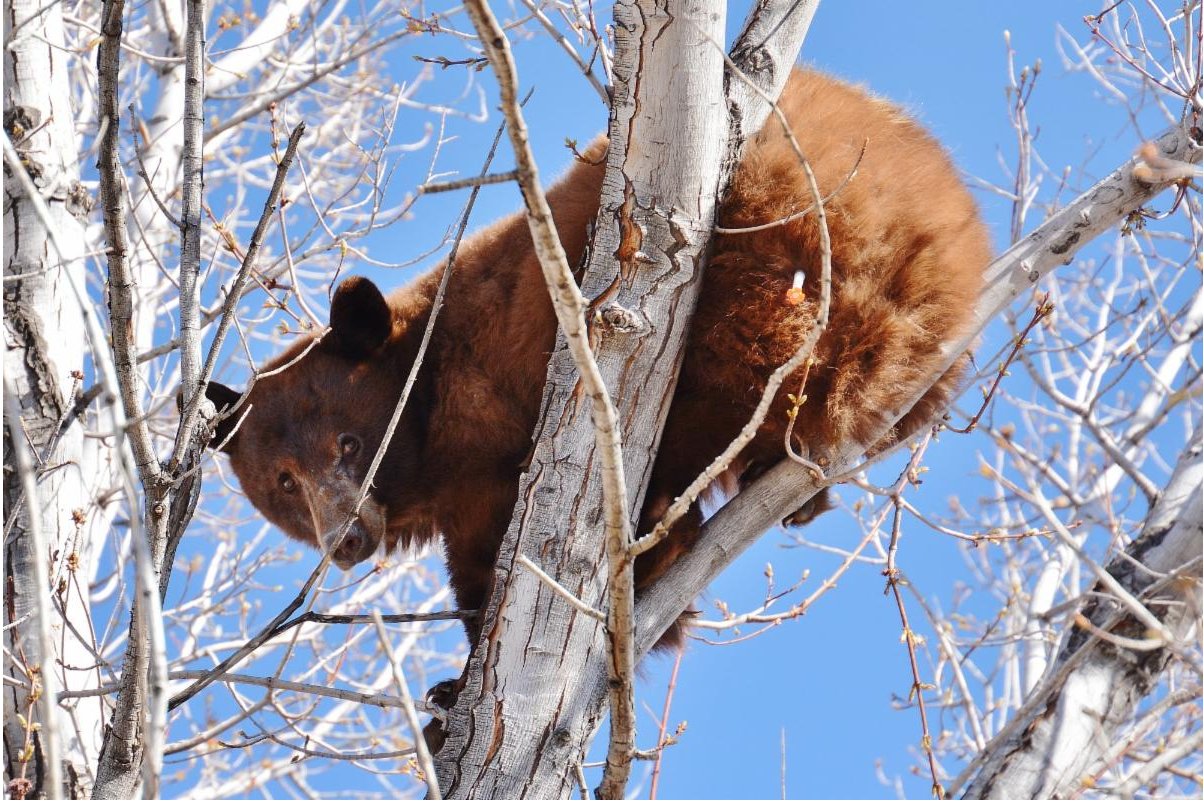
In addition to serving in several different positions, including managing editor at the Northwest Arkansas Times, Speer worked for other publications in Northwest Arkansas and with the Associated Press as news writer in Jackson, Mississippi, and Little Rock before being promoted to correspondent in Iowa City, Iowa, in 1986 and then to Iowa news editor in Des Moines in 1988.

After his AP career, Speer became an editor at Meredith Corp. in Des Moines, working on Better Homes & Gardens Special Interest Publications home, garden and lifestyle magazines, winding up as an e-commerce manager of the BH&G garden club and a branded online garden store.

Read more [here](#).



# Just another day at the office







Colorado Parks and Wildlife photos by Bill Vogrin

**Bill Vogrin** (Email) – *public information officer, Southeast Region, Colorado Parks and Wildlife* - Just another day at the office. This 3-year-old sub-adult boar showed up on the east side of downtown Colorado Springs, just being a bear and minding its own business, and climbed a tree.

But the tree was next to a busy four-lane road across from a TV station and down the road from a newspaper. The news media attracted a crowd with their live-streaming broadcasts and social media posts.

So our Colorado Parks and Wildlife officers were forced to remove the bear.

CPW officers hate to put hands on any bear because it gives the animal a "strike." If we ever encounter the bear again, it will be euthanized.

We prefer to let them leave on their own. But the media attention and crowd made that impossible. It would never come down with people gathered around.

So CPW officers darted the bear. It fell from the tree and we hauled it off to a remote mountain location where it can live the wild life. Hopefully it will never cross paths with humans again.

*(Bill Vogrin started with AP in Kansas City in May 1981, the day after graduation from the University of Kansas. He transferred to Topeka in December 1981, then was named Peoria correspondent in 1987 where he stayed until 1994 when he joined the Colorado Springs Gazette.)*

# Sale of AOL, Yahoo harken back to first steps onto internet

**Mark Mittelstadt** ([Email](#)) - News of Verizon's sale of once-pioneering tech platforms AOL and Yahoo to a new management company brought back memories of the first tentative steps onto what we today know as the internet.

My first "online" account was through CompuServe Information Service, eventually just CompuServe. The company was the first to offer internet connectivity, with some limitations. At the encouragement of our late colleague, Paul Shane, of AP's Management Information Service, I signed up for one of the early accounts. CompuServe accounts were numbers, not names; I can't recall mine but was told years later the relatively small few digits made it one of the very early accounts.

The connection was by dial-up, with the attendant annoying modem bings and buzzes and the occasional glitch or dropped connection. Graphically CompuServe was not much to look at. But it did offer a relatively rich level of content, including a range of list-servs where a customer could find postings of specific interest. I joined a popular one for soccer referees called socref-l (the l indicating listserv.)

In the early 1990s you could not buy a computer or printer without also receiving an installation diskette for CompuServe, then soon after Yahoo! and a new much more attractive platform America Online, or just AOL. As those sites grew and added features, instead of a diskette you received a CD that would auto-load those sites. Still, for most people, the connection was dial-up.

I continued with CompuServe for many years but gradually migrated to AOL, which exploded in popularity. AOL's entry into the PC market in 1991 marked the beginning of the end for CIS. AOL charged \$2.95 an hour versus \$5.00 an hour for CompuServe. CompuServe phased out most of its services in the early 2000s. I continue to have an AOL email account but haven't looked at it for years; I have no idea whether it still is active or accessible.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s Yahoo branched out into a variety of speciality services that were of value to companies and others. Fundraisers extensively used Yahoo People Finder and Yahoo Finance to research potential donors.

For the most part AOL and Yahoo have been left in the dust as other, more robust platforms have emerged, particularly those catering to special interests and political leanings.

## More Nick Ut photos from border





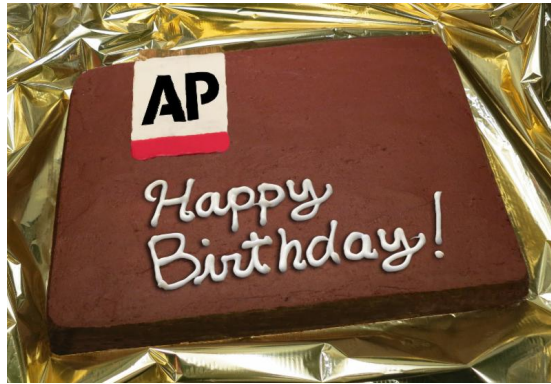




**Nick Ut ([Email](#))** - I just came back from weekend at US Border, my eyes see many groups arriving near US border, hundreds. Before I leave US border patrol told me many more group come in San Luis , Arizona.

Yuma County Sheriff's deputy helps little girl get in the car with her family from Venezuela. A group of over 40 illegal immigrants from all parts of the world are rounded up for processing near the San Luis, Arizona area of the U.S./Mexican border.

# Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Patricia Casillo - [pcasillo@ap.org](mailto:pcasillo@ap.org)

## Stories of interest

*Los Angeles Times hires ESPN's Kevin Merida as new editor* (AP)



This image released by ESPN shows Kevin Merida in Bristol, Conn., on Jan. 12, 2016. The Los Angeles Times said Merida will be its new executive editor. Merida has run ESPN's The Undefeated site, which deals with issues on race and culture along with



**sports. He's had extensive newspaper experience, including 22 years at The Washington Post. (Joe Faraoni/ESPN Images via AP)**

**By DAVID BAUDER**

NEW YORK (AP) — The Los Angeles Times on Monday said that Kevin Merida, who built ESPN's The Undefeated into a multi-media presence and spent a lengthy career in newspapers before that, will be its new executive editor.

Merida, 64, is being challenged by the newspaper's owners, Patrick and Michele Soon-Shiong, to speed its transition into a digital news leader.

"Kevin possesses a clear understanding of the rigor necessary for independent journalism and how to translate that journalism to multiple platforms," the newspaper's owners said in a statement. "He also shares our passion for the unique opportunity we have to build the L.A. Times into a media enterprise with a distinct West Coast point of view."

Merida is moving to Los Angeles from Washington, where he spent 22 years at the Washington Post before joining ESPN in 2015. He also worked at the Dallas Morning News and Milwaukee Journal. The Post is searching for its own new leader following the retirement of Marty Baron.

Merida replaces Norman Pearlstine, who stepped down late last year.

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

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## ***Colorado Sun with National Trust purchases 24 Front Range newspapers*** (The Colorado Sun)

**By Larry Ryckman**

I have an exciting announcement for you today: The Colorado Sun is now part owner and operator of 24 suburban newspapers in the Denver metro area.

The Sun has partnered with a new nonprofit called the National Trust for Local News, which is using this endeavor with us as a pilot project to show that local and national funders can collaborate with local journalists to keep newspapers in local hands.

All too often these days, hedge funds are the first ones in line to buy newspapers, and no one wanted to see that happen. News is too important to be left to absentee owners who care only about double-digit profits, not the journalists and the communities they serve.

Together, The Sun and the National Trust have purchased Colorado Community Media, which has 24 weekly and monthly newspapers serving eight counties including and surrounding Denver. Some of these newspapers are more than 100 years old (the Golden Transcript alone is 153 years old), and they range from Castle Rock to

Brighton, Evergreen to Arvada, Parker to Denver's Washington Park and beyond. Check out the new site [coloradonewsconservancy.com](http://coloradonewsconservancy.com) for further details. You'll also see a full list of newspapers later in this column.

Read more [here](#). Shared by John Lumpkin.

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## ***Washington Post, New York Times, and NBC News Retract Reports on Giuliani*** (CNN)

By OLIVER DARCY

New York (CNN Business) The Washington Post, The New York Times, and NBC News on Saturday issued significant corrections, retracting earlier reporting that said Rudy Giuliani had been directly warned by the FBI that he was the target of a Russian disinformation campaign.

The stories came out after Giuliani's office and residence were raided by the FBI on Thursday. The searches were linked to a criminal probe of the former mayor's business dealings in Ukraine and resulted in the seizure of several communications devices.

"An earlier version of this story, published Thursday, incorrectly reported that One America News was warned by the FBI that it was the target of a Russian influence operation," read the correction by The Post, which first reported the news. "That version also said the FBI had provided a similar warning to Rudolph W. Giuliani, which he has since disputed."

"This version has been corrected to remove assertions that OAN and Giuliani received the warnings," the correction added.

Read more [here](#).

## **The Final Word**

### ***The girl in the Kent State photo: She was only 14. Here's how her life turned out*** (Kansas City Star)

By Patricia McCormick

Last May, when Mary Ann Vecchio watched the video of George Floyd's dying moments, she felt herself plummet through time and space — to a day almost exactly 50 years earlier. On that May 4 afternoon in 1970, the world was just as riveted by an image that showed the life draining out of a young man on the ground, this one a black-and-white still photo.



Mary Ann was at the center of that photo, her arms raised in anguish, begging for help.

That photo, of her kneeling over the body of Kent State University student Jeffrey Miller, is one of the most important images of the 20th century. Taken by student photographer John Filo, it captures Mary Ann's raw grief and disbelief at the realization that the nation's soldiers had just fired at its own children.

The Kent State Pietà, as it's sometimes called, is one of those rare photos that fundamentally changed the way we see ourselves and the world around us. Like the image of the solitary protester standing in front of a line of tanks in Tiananmen Square. Or the photo of Kim Phuc, the naked Vietnamese girl fleeing the napalm that has just incinerated her home. Or the image of Aylan Kurdi's tiny, 3-year-old body facedown in the sand, he and his mother and brother having drowned while fleeing Syria.

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

## Today in History - May 4, 2021



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Tuesday, May 4, the 124th day of 2021. There are 241 days left in the year.

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

On May 4, 1961, the first group of "Freedom Riders" left Washington, D.C. to challenge racial segregation on interstate buses and in bus terminals.

### **On this date:**

In 1626, Dutch explorer Peter Minuit landed on present-day Manhattan Island.

In 1776, Rhode Island declared its freedom from England, two months before the Declaration of Independence was adopted.

In 1886, at Haymarket Square in Chicago, a labor demonstration for an 8-hour work day turned into a deadly riot when a bomb exploded.

In 1932, mobster Al Capone, convicted of income-tax evasion, entered the federal penitentiary in Atlanta. (Capone was later transferred to Alcatraz Island.)

In 1942, the Battle of the Coral Sea, the first naval clash fought entirely with carrier aircraft, began in the Pacific during World War II. (The outcome was considered a tactical victory for Japan, but ultimately a strategic one for the Allies.)

In 1945, during World War II, German forces in the Netherlands, Denmark and northwest Germany agreed to surrender.

In 1959, the first Grammy Awards ceremony was held at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. Domenico Modugno won Record of the Year and Song of the Year for "Nel Blu Dipinto Di Blu (Volare)"; Henry Mancini won Album of the Year for "The Music from Peter Gunn."

In 1968, the Oroville Dam in Northern California was dedicated by Gov. Ronald Reagan; the 770-foot-tall earth-filled structure, a pet project of Reagan's predecessor, Pat Brown, remains the tallest dam in the United States, but was also the scene of a near disaster in February 2017 when two spillways collapsed, threatening for a time to flood parts of three counties in the Sierra Nevada foothills.

In 1970, Ohio National Guardsmen opened fire during an anti-war protest at Kent State University, killing four students and wounding nine others.

In 1998, Unabomber Theodore Kaczynski (kah-ZIHN'-skee) was given four life sentences plus 30 years by a federal judge in Sacramento, California, under a plea agreement that spared him the death penalty.

In 2006, a federal judge sentenced Zacarias Moussaoui (zak-uh-REE'-uhs moo-SOW'-ee) to life in prison for his role in the 9/11 attacks, telling the convicted terrorist, "You will die with a whimper."

In 2010, a Pakistani-born U.S. citizen was charged with terrorism and attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction in the botched Times Square bombing. (Faisal Shahzad (FY'-sul shah-ZAHD') later pleaded guilty to plotting to set off the propane-and-gasoline bomb in an SUV and was sentenced to life in prison.)

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama said he had decided not to release death photos of Osama bin Laden because their graphic nature could incite violence and create national security risks. Officials told The Associated Press that the Navy SEALs who'd stormed bin Laden's compound in Pakistan shot and killed him after they saw him appear to lunge for a weapon. Los Angeles Clippers forward Blake Griffin was named the Rookie of the Year, becoming the NBA's first unanimous choice for the award in 21 years.

Five years ago: The last man standing in Donald Trump's path to the Republican presidential nomination, Ohio Gov. John Kasich (KAY'-sihk), ended his campaign. Sipping filtered city water to show it was again drinkable, President Barack Obama



promised to ride herd on leaders at all levels of government until every drop of water flowing into homes in Flint, Michigan, was safe to use.

One year ago: New York state reported more than 1,700 previously undisclosed coronavirus deaths at nursing homes and adult care facilities. The Supreme Court heard arguments by phone and allowed the world to listen in live for the first time. The U.S. Senate convened for the first time since March. California Gov. Gavin Newsom, one of the first governors to impose a statewide stay-at-home order, announced that some businesses could reopen by week's end. Struggling fashion brand J.Crew became the first major retailer to file for bankruptcy protection since the start of the pandemic. Former Miami Dolphins coach Don Shula died at 90; he'd won more games than any other NFL coach. Colson Whitehead won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction for "The Nickel Boys," about a brutal Florida reform school during the Jim Crow era; it was his second consecutive Pulitzer-winning novel, following "The Underground Railroad."

Today's Birthdays: Katherine Jackson, matriarch of the Jackson musical family, is 91. Jazz musician Ron Carter is 84. Pulitzer Prize-winning political commentator George Will is 80. Pop singer Peggy Santiglia Davison (The Angels) is 77. Actor Richard Jenkins is 74. Country singer Stella Parton is 72. Actor-turned-clergyman Hilly Hicks is 71. Irish musician Darryl Hunt (The Pogues) is 71. Singer Jackie Jackson (The Jacksons) is 70. Singer-actor Pia Zadora is 69. Rhythm-and-blues singer Oleta Adams is 68. Violinist Soozie Tyrell (Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band) is 64. Country singer Randy Travis is 62. Actor Mary McDonough is 60. Comedian Ana Gasteyer is 54. Actor Will Arnett is 51. Rock musician Mike Dirnt (Green Day) is 49. Contemporary Christian singer Chris Tomlin is 49. TV personality and fashion designer Kimora Lee Simmons is 46. Sports reporter Erin Andrews is 43. Singer Lance Bass ('N Sync) is 42. Actor Ruth Negga is 40. Rapper/singer Jidenna is 36. Actor Alexander Gould is 27. Country singer RaeLynn is 27. Actor Amara (uh-MAH'-ruh) Miller is 21. Actor Brooklyn Prince (Film: "The Florida Project") is 11.

## 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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