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## Connecting December 09, 2021

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Colleagues:

Good Thursday morning on this Dec. 9, 2021.

Today's Connecting includes AP's obituary for Tom Jory, longtime head of AP election information, and more of your remembrances. We're told the obit was delayed because of Tuesday's AWS crash, which prevented transmission of much of AP's non-urgent copy. Connecting also includes an update on the outage.

Meantime, Ye Old Editor, Linda and friends are enjoying their pre-Christmas trip to Washington, D.C., and Colonial Williamsburg.

Thanks for all of your contributions the last couple of days.

Stay well.

Peg  
pcoughlin@ap.org



## Tom Jory, AP editor who led vote-count, dies at 77



**By JERRY SCHWARTZ**  
**The Associated Press**

Tom Jory, an editor who played a vital role in one of The Associated Press' most crucial functions — counting the vote for U.S. elections — has died. He was 77.

Samantha Deutsch, Jory's daughter, said he died Monday at Manhattan's Lenox Hill Hospital of complications after surgery for a broken hip suffered in October.

In the course of a 40-year career, Jory served the AP in a wide array of positions. To each, he brought an easygoing nature that masked an extraordinary intelligence and a boundless capacity for work.

Mike Silverman, a former AP managing editor, recalled Jory's "spiky sense of humor, his fierce loyalty to his friends, family and the AP, his utter lack of pretension and intolerance for anyone who displayed it, and the dignity with which he took on whatever challenges life threw at him."

Jory first became involved in AP elections work in 1981. He helped build a databank that collected news and information about political candidates, issues and campaigns. In 1985, he helped design and implement AP's first nationwide tabulations computers.



Jory worked with the News Election Service, a media consortium responsible for tallying election results, and its successor, the Voter News Service.

VNS failed spectacularly in 2000, leading the television networks, but not the AP, to declare Florida for George W. Bush prematurely, and was plagued by technical problems in 2002. So in 2004, AP went it alone. It was the only organization collecting, tabulating and reporting the results. Jory supervised a team of more than 50 AP staffers who built a system that could follow 6,860 races, updating them more than 171,00 times. And it worked.

"I felt very comfortable," Jory said. "We'd done more testing, we were more sure of our data, we were more sure of our delivery."

Walter Mears, former AP executive editor and Washington bureau chief, said Jory "made the election system work. ... On any list of underrated AP stalwarts he ranked near the top. His low-key style made him easy to ignore because he quietly got things done."

Jory was a native Californian — he grew up in Martinez, and his family had lived in the state for generations. He attended California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo and the University of California at Berkeley, and worked at the Contra Costa Times in Walnut Creek and KPIX radio in Oakland before joining the AP in 1968.

He worked for the AP in Montgomery, Alabama, and Atlanta before being promoted to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, correspondent and Columbus, Ohio, news editor.

In 1974, he transferred to New York and the national desk, then known as the General Desk. Over time, he took on administrative and other responsibilities, including a weekend package of arts and entertainment stories for which he wrote a television column.

Throughout, he was a driving force behind weekly AP softball games in Brooklyn's Prospect Park, generally followed by brunch near his home in Brooklyn Heights.

Jory is survived by his wife of nearly 55 years, Carol; his daughter Samantha and her husband David; and his grandchildren, Matthew and Annika.

He continued his work for the AP after his 2009 retirement, helping to process collections for the organization's archives. But he found time to attend all of his grandchildren's sports and dance events, and to help a friend start and run a business: a jukebox restoration and rental service in Brooklyn.

## Remembering Tom Jory

**Tom Curley** ([Email](#)) - Tom Jory is to be admired for many traits. Perhaps above all was his leadership. He built a terrific and loyal team. He instilled in them AP's highest values, especially accuracy and integrity. It was a delight to observe Tom and team on election nights and how well they communicated with each other under extraordinary time constraints and pressures. They displayed great job knowledge and precision. They knew the whole world was watching and that the networks would be quick to throw AP under the bus if there were any misstep. Still, they could laugh even when exhausted or in the face of upheaval, and every election night produced some of that - often out of nowhere. Tom deserved better performance from his other love, the New York Giants.

**Evans Witt** ([Email](#)) - It is indeed sad to hear about Tom. He and I worked together for years on the AP Election Systems. Then I vanished into the online and polling worlds and Tom soldiered on, helping transform our early steps in an evolving, start-of-the-art system.

It is hard to comprehend today, amid the internet and super computers in our hands, that computerizing the AP's tallies of votes in elections across the nation was a hard slog. It was not an

authorized, budgeted project. Starting in the early 1980s...using the AP stock market computers to tally the votes on President, Senate, House and governor (featured in the first Election issues of USA Today)...and growing in 1985 to a dispersed system of state/regional computers to tally the votes on all the races that the AP wanted to cover...was quite the journey. There were months living in Richmond in 1985, installing the first systems, learning how each state did everything a little bit differently. With Jimmy Ho, Daniel O'Callaghan and Rich Schmeltz leading the state on the technology for the states, every day was a challenge.

The national election systems continued to evolve with the help of computer gurus like Rob Friedman. I am sure I have forgotten to mention lots of folks who were key to making the Election Systems the success they are today.

When you see vote returns on Election Night, remember Tom and the many AP folks who made it possible.

**Dan Day (Email)** - Tom Jory was a fantastic colleague, and I mourn his passing. Tom, the master of the "master blaster," was an incredibly patient and helpful guide to building election databases. He calmly answered the endless stream of questions I had for him over what was or wasn't delivered on a 300-baud modem connected to a phone line in the Omaha bureau or in my basement.

I fondly remember one cold winter week when I drove down to the Kansas City bureau for election system training. After a full day of number crunching, Tom and I decided it was imperative that we drive out to Royals (now Kauffman) Stadium, pulling into a vast, vacant parking lot. We sat in the car for a good while, engine and heater running, talking baseball and looking forward to Opening Day.

Building an election system of reliability and integrity, Tom contributed mightily to the AP and to the public good. I didn't think I could appreciate that more than I did at the time, but I do.

**Chris Connel (Email)** - Tom was as devoted to AP as anyone could possibly be, but part of what endeared him to friends were his passions outside work -- family first, of course, but also his favorite bookstore in Brooklyn Heights, where he spent Saturdays behind the cash register. A man of many parts.

**Tammalene Mitman (Email)** - Ron Fournier said it right. "Rest in peace, Tom. All precincts have reporting and your memory now lives in us."

My memory is of a tall, soft-spoken man with an easy way about him and a ready grin. I loved it when Tom and Tim (Gallivan) came to town.

They had to come to the Concord bureau, of course, to oversee our preparations for New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation presidential primary.

This was back in the '80s. I was the confidential secretary and de facto election center coordinator. We would rent vacant retail space on Main Street (Tom would refer to it as "Votes 'R Us") and hire friends and family to take calls and type in results. Our stringers were our members — all the radio and TV stations and newspapers in the state, just about. Meanwhile, back in the bureau a few blocks away, the staff would be reading and writing, all stray surfaces covered with provisions previously procured and provided by their trusty secretary.

Oh, the stories we could tell of election night! The things that went wrong. The things that went right. What a privilege it was to be part of it all.

My favorite memory of Tom, though, doesn't come from an election night, but from an earlier prep visit he and Tim were scheduled to make. They were to arrive, as I recall, on a Thursday or

Friday. My bureau chief, Jon Kellogg, told me to tell them that we weren't quite ready for their visit, and that they should plan on coming up early the next week.

Unbeknownst to me, my COB (whom I later married) had secured tickets to a Red Sox game from the Boston Bureau. It would be my first trip to Fenway - could it have been a World Series game? I think it was.

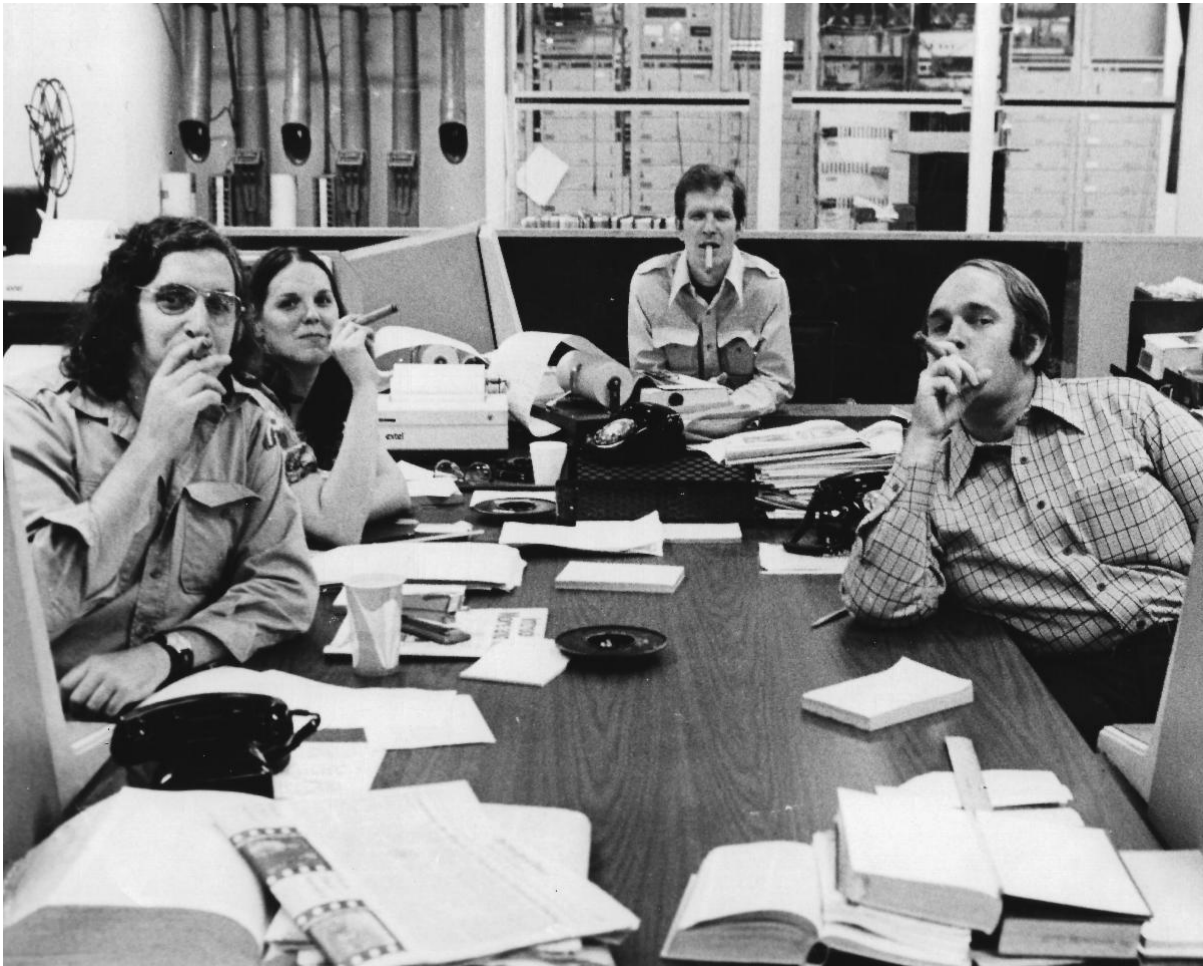
Anyway, the view of the ballpark from the grandstand was marvelous. Until I happened to glance down, and who should be walking up the stairs toward our section but Tom and Tim!

Well. We were collectively shamed, just a wee bit, I guess. A very wee bit. We all took advantage of the Boston bureau's spare tickets that night!

**Will Wingfield (Email)** - I believe we were all deeply moved when we learned of Tom's passing and send condolences and best wishes to the family in another crazy holiday season.

Tom gave me a shot at building the Texas database in the summer of 1990. I guess it turned out okay, because ammunition kept getting supplied for helping election developers, bureaus and state election coordinators under his guidance over the years. He really meant it when he said to call with any questions, and took the time to walk me through one needed prompt sequence four times on that first confusing day. The quote goes something like, "This is elections. If you have a question, ask it."

Tom was patient, careful with instructions, and wrote in English about our working with the various technologies we encountered. Status updates were always welcome, good news or bad, but he did impose word-count limits on me. Tom stayed calm through the crises and paid attention to our opinions from the field. He seemed masterful at sorting and balancing concerns and needs from across the company and our partners, among our clients and with the national and state agencies with which we work. Tom's example provided a standard we can only try to emulate. The light from that beacon does not dim. Thank you, Tom.



**Virginia Sherlock (Email)** - I was saddened to read of the death of Tom Jory this week. I recently had to retrieve photos from the good ole days of my AP career (1972-1980) and found this photo taken at The AP General Desk at 50 Rockefeller Center in about 1975 featuring Tom Jory (on the right), Walter Stovall (center), Dave Goldberg (on the left) and me (just one of the "boys") smoking cigars at our CRTs. These three men were among the most stalwart supporters of the women who filed a lawsuit against The AP in 1974 to bring diversity to the news organization.

## Explainer: What caused Amazon's outage? Will there be more?

By **MATT O'BRIEN** and **FRANK BAJAK**  
The Associated Press

Robotic vacuum cleaners wouldn't start. Doorbell cameras stopped watching for package thieves, though some of those deliveries were canceled anyway. Netflix and Disney movies got interrupted and The Associated Press had trouble publishing the news.

A major outage in Amazon's cloud computing network Tuesday severely disrupted services at a wide range of U.S. companies for hours, raising questions about the vulnerability of the internet and its concentration in the hands of a few firms.

### HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

Amazon has still said nothing about what, exactly, went wrong. The company limited its communications Tuesday to terse technical explanations on an Amazon Web Services dashboard and a brief statement delivered via spokesperson Richard Rocha that acknowledged the outage

had affected Amazon's own warehouse and delivery operations but said the company was "working to resolve the issue as quickly as possible." It didn't immediately respond to further questions Wednesday.

The incident at Amazon Web Services mostly affected the eastern U.S., but still impacted everything from airline reservations and auto dealerships to payment apps and video streaming services to Amazon's own massive e-commerce operation.

Read more [here](#).

## **AP, Voice of America, ProPublica among National Press Club Journalism Awards winners**

(The National Press Club)

By **WILL LESTER**

Voice of America won a National Press Club Journalism Award for coverage of the Trump administration's attempts to redirect and censor VOA coverage. ProPublica won awards for consumer news and political news. Those news outlets were just two among a host of winners for outstanding coverage of events in 2020.

The Club's awards announcement event will be held online on Jan. 6 at 6:30 p.m. The program will be streamed on [press.org](http://press.org) and our YouTube channel, and will be free of charge to anyone who wants to watch.

ProPublica won the Lee Walczak Award for Political Analysis for its coverage of Trump administration efforts to interfere with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to downplay the impact of COVID-19.

VOA won the Arthur Rowse Award for Press Criticism-broadcast award for its coverage of the pressure on itself — a difficult assignment.

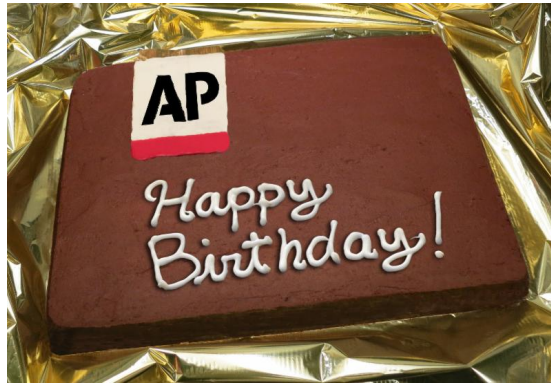
Among the many winners: The Associated Press coverage of abuses at Asian palm oil plantations won for consumer journalism, and Kaiser Health News and The Guardian won the Joan M. Friedenberg Online Journalism award for their coverage of the exhausting experience of health care workers amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

A winner of the Ann Cottrell Free Animal Reporting Award was a yearlong investigation by Los Angeles Times reporters exposing fraud by a celebrity animal protection activist. Shared by Bill McCloskey.

Read more [here](#).

## **Connecting wishes Happy Birthday**





Howard Goldberg - [newsdigits@gmail.com](mailto:newsdigits@gmail.com)

Jim Willis - [savewave@gmail.com](mailto:savewave@gmail.com)

## Stories of interest

### *Jamal Khashoggi: France releases Saudi man held over journalist's murder*

French prosecutors have released a Saudi man held in connection with Jamal Khashoggi's murder after concluding he was a victim of mistaken identity.

Khaled Alotaibi, 33, was arrested at an airport in Paris on Tuesday on the basis of a warrant issued by Turkey.

A Saudi Royal Guard with the same name and age is listed in US sanctions as a suspect in the 2018 killing inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey.

Khashoggi, a US-based Saudi journalist, was a critic of the Saudi government. Saudi prosecutors said he was killed in a "rogue operation" by a team of agents sent to persuade him to return to the kingdom.

But a UN investigator concluded that Khashoggi was "the victim of a deliberate, premeditated execution" and said there was credible evidence that high-level Saudi officials, including Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, were involved. The crown prince denied playing any role.

Read more [here](#).



# Celebrating AP's 175th

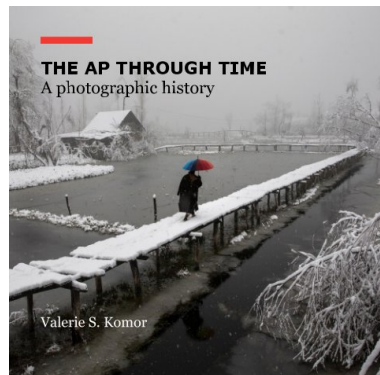
## AP store for 175th, vintage merchandise



The AP has created a store with 175th anniversary merchandise available for purchase, as well as items branded with some of AP's most historic logos.

Click [Here](#).

## AP Through Time: A Photographic History



AP Through Time: A Photographic History" - created by Director of Corporate Archives, Valerie Komor, is a keepsake commemorating AP's 175th year. Small in size (6 ¾ x 6 ¾ in.), it is organized chronologically in eight segments that trace the broad outlines of AP's development from 1846 to the present: Beginnings, Evolution, New Century, Modernity, Expansion, One World, Speed, and Transformation. Click [here](#) to view and make an order.

## Today in History - Dec. 9, 2021



## By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Dec. 9, the 343rd day of 2021. There are 22 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 9, 2014, U.S. Senate investigators concluded the United States had brutalized scores of terror suspects with interrogation tactics that turned secret CIA prisons into chambers of suffering and did nothing to make Americans safer after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

### On this date:

In 1911, an explosion inside the Cross Mountain coal mine near Briceville, Tennessee, killed 84 workers. (Five were rescued.)

In 1917, British forces captured Jerusalem from the Ottoman Turks.

In 1958, the anti-communist John Birch Society was formed in Indianapolis.

In 1962, the Petrified Forest in Arizona was designated a national park.

In 1965, "A Charlie Brown Christmas," the first animated TV special featuring characters from the "Peanuts" comic strip by Charles M. Schulz, premiered on CBS.

In 1987, the first Palestinian intefadeh, or uprising, began as riots broke out in Gaza and spread to the West Bank, triggering a strong Israeli response.

In 1990, Solidarity founder Lech Walesa (lek vah-WEN'-sah) won Poland's presidential runoff by a landslide.

In 1992, Britain's Prince Charles and Princess Diana announced their separation. (The couple's divorce became final in August 1996.)

In 2000, the U-S Supreme Court ordered a temporary halt in the Florida vote count on which Al Gore pinned his best hopes of winning the White House.

In 2001, the United States disclosed the existence of a videotape in which Osama bin Laden said he was pleasantly surprised by the extent of damage from the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

In 2006, a fire broke out at a Moscow drug treatment hospital, killing 46 women trapped by barred windows and a locked gate.

In 2013, scientists revealed that NASA's Curiosity rover had uncovered signs of an ancient freshwater lake on Mars.

Ten years ago: The European Union said 26 of its 27 member countries were open to joining a new treaty tying their finances together to solve the euro crisis; Britain remained opposed. A jury in New Haven, Connecticut, condemned Joshua Komisarjevsky (koh-mih-sahr-JEV'-skee) to death for killing a woman and her two daughters during a night of terror in their suburban Cheshire home. (The other defendant in the case, Steven Hayes, had also been condemned to death; both punishments were changed to life in prison after Connecticut abolished the death penalty in 2015.) A fire at a hospital in Kolkata, India, claimed the lives of at least 93 people.

Five years ago: The White House said President Barack Obama had ordered intelligence officials to conduct a broad review of election-season cyberattacks, including the email hacks that rattled the presidential campaign and raised fresh concerns about Russia's meddling in U.S. elections. South Korean lawmakers impeached President Park Geun-hye over an explosive corruption scandal, a stunning and swift fall for the country's first female leader.

One year ago: The U.S. government and 48 states and districts sued Facebook, accusing it of abusing its market power in social networking to crush smaller competitors. (A federal judge dismissed the lawsuits in June 2021; federal regulators filed a revised complaint in August.) Commercial flights with Boeing 737 Max jetliners resumed for the first time since they were grounded worldwide nearly two years earlier following two deadly accidents; Brazil's Gol Airlines became the first in the world to return the planes to its active fleet. NASA named the 18 astronauts — half of them women — who would train for its Artemis moon-landing program.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Dame Judi Dench is 87. Actor Beau Bridges is 80. Football Hall of Famer Dick Butkus is 79. Actor Michael Nouri is 76. Former Sen. Thomas Daschle, D-S.D., is 74. World Golf Hall of Famer Tom Kite is 72. Singer Joan Armatrading is 71. Actor Michael Dorn is 69. Actor John Malkovich is 68. Country singer Sylvia is 65. Singer Donny Osmond is 64. Rock musician Nick Seymour (Crowded House) is 63. Comedian Mario Cantone is 62. Actor David Anthony Higgins is 60. Actor Joe Lando is 60. Actor Felicity Huffman is 59. Empress Masako of Japan is 58. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., is 55. Rock singer-musician Thomas Flowers (Oleander) is 54. Rock musician Brian Bell (Weezer) is 53. Rock singer-musician Jakob Dylan (Wallflowers) is 52. TV personality-businessperson Lori Greiner (TV: "Shark Tank") is 52. Actor Allison Smith is 52. Songwriter and former "American Idol" judge Kara DioGuardi (dee-oh-GWAHR'-dee) is 51. Country singer David Kersh is 51. Actor Reiko (RAY'-koh) Aylesworth is 49. Rock musician Tre Cool (Green Day) is 49. Rapper Canibus is 47. Actor Kevin Daniels is 45. Actor-writer-director Mark Duplass is 45. Rock singer Imogen Heap is 44. Actor Jesse Metcalfe is 43. Actor Simon Helberg is 41. Actor Jolene Purdy is 38. Actor Joshua Sasse is 34. Actor Ashleigh Brewer is 31. Olympic gold and silver medal gymnast McKayla Maroney is 26. Olympic silver medal gymnast MyKayla Skinner is 25.

## 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**

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