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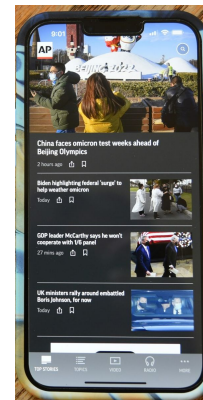
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Connecting

July 29, 2022

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning on this July 29, 2022,

28 July 1965

Whether you served in Vietnam or were among the journalists who covered the conflict, that date has deep meaning. Actually, it does for most all of us.

It was the date of a news conference in which President Lyndon Johnson announced that “we are in Viet-Nam to fulfill one of the most solemn pledges of the American Nation” and that “We will not surrender and we will not retreat.”

From that point on, the United States was all-in to fighting and winning the war in Vietnam.

Our colleague **John Carland**, who served as a historian with the Office of Secretary of Defense’s Historical Office, shares an essay as our lead story today that was compiled

from his many years of research into the war.

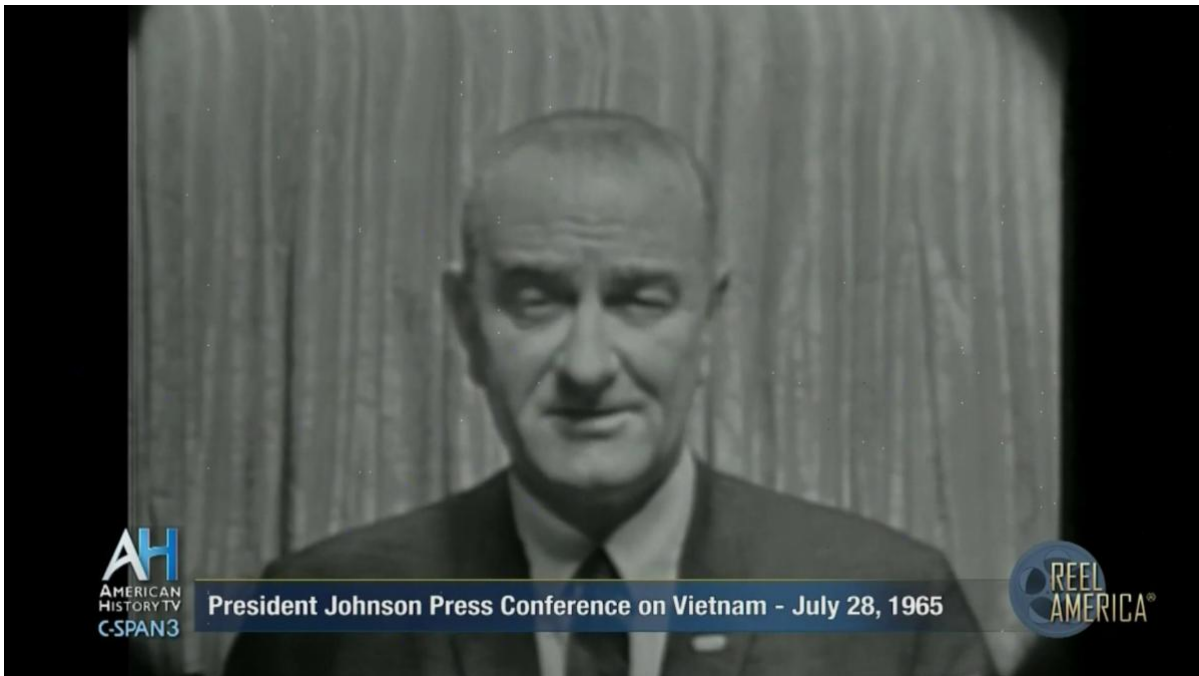
Our colleague **Francesca Pitaro** shares a profile of Oliver Gramling, who bequeathed his estate to finance awards for AP staffers – the Gramling Awards.

TIME AWAY: The mountains are calling, and Ye Olde Editor and his Ye Young Wife are heeding the call for some time with friends in Colorado. Connecting will return to your mailbox next Wednesday morning.

Have a great weekend – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

28 July 1965



[John Carland](#) - This day in history. July 28, 1965.

By May 1965, the situation in South Vietnam had so deteriorated that its military was losing the equivalent of a battalion a week. The U.S. Commander in Vietnam, General William C. Westmoreland, concluded that American combat troops had to enter the conflict as combatants, or else South Vietnam would collapse within six months.

He made his famous 44 battalion request on 7 June, stating that “I see no course of action open to us except to reinforce our efforts in SVN [South Viet Nam] with additional U.S. or third country forces as rapidly as is practical during the critical weeks ahead. Additionally, studies must continue, and plans developed to deploy even greater forces, if and when required, to attain our objectives or counter enemy initiatives.” This request became the vehicle for major discussions by Johnson and his senior policy advisors at the State Department, Department of Defense, the National Security Council, and the Central Intelligence Agency over the next several weeks.

In late July, Johnson made his decision and at a press conference on July 28 announced that “we are in Viet-Nam to fulfill one of the most solemn pledges of the American Nation. Three Presidents—President Eisenhower, President Kennedy, and your present President—over 11 years have committed themselves to help defend this small and valiant nation.” He then said that General Westmoreland had told him what he needed and that “we will meet his needs.” Later in the press conference, he said, “We will not surrender and we will not retreat.” Finally, to drive home America’s steadfastness, Johnson maintained, in a seldom-quoted part of his statement, that “we are going to continue to persist, if persist we must, until death and desolation have led to the same [peace] conference table where others could now join us at a much smaller cost.” To put actions to his words he ordered that day the *1st Cavalry Division*, *Airmobile*, and other units to Vietnam, with more to follow.

The United States was at this point fully committed in an open-ended way to winning the war. George Herring, author of *America’s Longest War*, called this press conference statement by President Johnson, “the closest thing to a formal decision for war in Vietnam.”

From July 25 on the United States was, at least as long as Johnson remained President, irrevocably committed to fighting the Vietnam War to the end. Thus, the date represents the overwhelming commitment of the United States to winning the war. It represented the moment when the United States completed its transition from advice and support to direct military intervention. President Johnson and others often characterized the U.S. military goal as one of convincing the enemy that he could not win, but without a doubt this was only a less warlike way of saying the United States was in the war to win it, whatever winning might turn out to mean.

(Excerpted from John Carland’s essay, “When did the war in Vietnam start for the United States?” Prepared in Historical Office of the Secretary of Defense, June 27, 2012.)

AP’s Oliver S. Gramling (1904-1992)

As nominations for the 2022 Gramling Awards draw to a close, we remember Oliver Gramling



Oliver Gramling studies AP dispatches from abroad, Aug. 24, 1942. (AP Photo/Harry Harris)

[Francesca Pitaro](#) – *AP Corporate Archives* - Oliver Gramling's legacy at the AP spans more than 40 years. During that time, Gramling developed and launched AP radio, composed two volumes of AP history, and created and funded the Oliver S. Gramling awards.

Gramling joined the AP in 1923 as a newsman in Tallahassee, Florida. His career moves took him up the ranks to Pittsburgh bureau chief and membership executive in New York. Gramling's "AP: The Story of News," was a best-seller when it was published in 1940, and it remained the only available history of AP for more than 60 years. In 1942, he wrote "Free Men are Fighting," covering the early years of World War II, in collaboration with AP foreign correspondents. The written recollections he solicited are preserved in the Corporate Archives.

In 1941, Gramling was named assistant general manager for broadcasting with responsibility for the newly formed Press Association, Inc. (PA), an AP subsidiary created to manage the use of AP news for broadcast purposes. AP's foray into radio news began in the 1930s but met heavy resistance from members who worried about competition from radio stations. With the popularity of radio on the rise, the board approved granting associate membership to radio stations in 1946. The first group of 496 radio members was elected on October 3, 1947.

Gramling, who was known as a talented salesman, once remarked: "Ain't much use to make it if nobody's buying it." Together with PA's General Manager William McCambridge, Gramling expanded radio programming to include features and dramatizations, mirroring AP's print Newsfeatures service. They also developed PA's "Special Assignment" which sounds something like a current-day podcast. The program, as described in the April 1946 AP World, "...dramatizes the unusual experiences, the exciting experiences, the heart-breaking and the heart-warming experiences of reporters in covering the news."

When Gramling left his post in the broadcast news service in 1962 there were 2,371 radio members. That number had jumped to 6,000 at the time of Gramling's death in 1992.

Gram, as he was affectionately known, continued to work part-time for the AP until taking full retirement in 1969. He died on May 9, 1992. Gramling bequeathed his estate to the AP to provide cash awards to AP staff. The first Oliver S. Gramling Awards were distributed in 1994.

(See The Final Word for more...)

My adventures with Burl

[Mark Thayer](#) - I first met Burl Osborne in late 1965 or early 1966 when he was Spokane Correspondent passing through Salt Lake City en route to see renowned Kidney Transplant doctor Thomas Starzl, a relative of AP General Manager Frank Starzel.

We really got to know each other when he succeeded Al Dopking as Chief of Bureau in Columbus where I was the Regional Membership Executive. Each year the RMEs compete for "Salesman of the Year" and I was in the thick of it with Arlan Schlagel in Minneapolis. I had a long-planned vacation for the end of the year and we agreed to stop selling on December 15 or thereabouts. Burl asked what was pending and after I left went out to secure new contracts with radio stations in Akron and Dayton. No One. No One was a scrappier fighter than Burl Osborne when it came to winning the play in the news report or winning the Membership of a newspaper or broadcaster.

When the Cleveland Plain Dealer went on strike AP's Wire Service Guild employees honored the picket line. So Burl and I joined Correspondent Neil Bibler, who slept in the bureau, in staffing the correspondence inside the newspaper building. The NBC-owned TV station was a great help feeding us stories as the competing Cleveland Press was owned by Scripps Howard and not an AP Member.

It was my good fortune to meet (Burl's wife) Betty long before they were married. I seem to remember being involved in placing marbles inside the hubcaps of their getaway car at the wedding. We had townhouses in the same condo complex and shared many a meal together. My family knew some of California's early winery families and when I would return to Ohio from California it would be with a case of fine wine which we quickly shared.

When the Guild negotiated Leaves of Absence for staff, management was afforded the same perk. So I signed up, bought a car and headed out on a nine-month road trip. By then Burl and Betty were in Dallas. I arranged to have lunch with Betty and (son) Jonathan with Burl joining us for dinner. Jonathan was quite impressed that my car, a Nissan Maxima, talked - saying such things as "door is open" or "key is in the ignition." Burl had just taken a delivery of a two-seater Mercedes and when he came home, Jonathan wanted to know "Daddy, why doesn't your car talk?"

Always fun to be around, quick to quip, and loyal to friends and business associates.

Jeff Baenen: A Storied Career

[Jeff Baenen](#) - Kristin Johnson at the Minnesota State University Moorhead Foundation wrote a nice story about me and my new scholarship.

By Kristin Johnson
Minnesota State University/Moorhead

Growing up, Jeff Baenen was an avid Marvel Comics reader, which inspired his desire to write. "I knew I just wanted to see my work published," he said.

As the oldest of five children, the Jamestown, N.D. native was the first of his siblings to go to college. In 1973, he enrolled as an English major at Minnesota State University Moorhead, but was quickly talked into mass communications by another student who explained all the options the major had to offer. He decided on a dual newspaper and broadcast focus. "It was a great choice," he said.

Jeff found his place in the department, writing for The Advocate newspaper, being a DJ for the campus radio station and taking part in theater. These experiences helped shape him and get the most out of his time at MSUM.

Read more [here](#).

My photos of actor Tony Dow



[Reed Saxon](#) - The AP has finally moved its obituary of Tony Dow. My photos from 2012 are getting a lot of play as they were probably more recent than a lot of photos out there. They also show his creative and artistic side.

He and his wife Lauren were the nicest people. She told me Tony had "absolutely no ego" and that came through loud and clear. He was very generous with his time, and Lauren happily held my reflector until she finally said her arms were getting tired.

A couple of photos from the AP Images archive are included here. Unfortunately, as I no longer have unfettered access to the archive, they have watermarks.

The Mort Report: Exorcising the Churnalism Curse

By [Mort Rosenblum](#)

SANTA BARBARA—In this enclave of California good life, I fed eight quarters into a box for a “newspaper” best suited to wrap fish off the nearby boats. Then it hit me. This was where I first began watching American dailies abandon their vital mission.

In 2000, a rightwing socialite with big bucks and an ego to match bought the venerable Santa Barbara News-Press from the New York Times and gutted it like a sea bass. It was a limited cause célèbre at the time, but it foreshadowed what is now destroying America.

Nothing matters more to a democracy in a world on the brink than a daily dose of reliable news prioritized by skilled editors from their own staffs but also news agency correspondents near ground truth. Voters need to know how — and why — reality over the horizon shapes their lives.

Read more [here](#).

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Walter Rastetter](#)

On Saturday to...

[David Briscoe](#)

On Sunday to...

[Randi Berris](#)

[Jocelyn Noveck](#)

[Tony Winton](#)

On Monday to...

[Delores Barclay](#)

[Mike Goodkind](#)

On Tuesday to...

[Dave Berry](#)

[Doug Rowe](#)

Stories of interest

Shut Down by the Kremlin, Independent Russian Media Regroup Abroad (Wall Street Journal)

By Evan Gershkovich

RIGA, Latvia—Tikhon Dzyadko greeted the audience of TV Rain, once Russia's main independent television channel, with a trademark phrase, just like he had countless times before.

"In Moscow, it is twenty zero-zero," he said at the start of the channel's 8 p.m. news program. "Over the next two hours we will tell you the main news of the day."

But this time, Mr. Dzyadko, TV Rain's editor-in-chief, wasn't in Moscow. He was speaking from Riga, Latvia's capital city, where the channel relaunched operations last week, more than four months after it was forced off the air by Russian authorities.

In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Kremlin adopted legislation punishing the dissemination of false information about the activities of Russia's armed forces with up to 15 years in prison. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said at the time that the law was needed because of "the absolutely unprecedented information war that was unleashed against our country."

Read more [here](#). Shared by Bill Sikes.

-0-

Powerbrokers: How FPL secretly took over a Florida news site and used it to bash critics (Miami Herald)

By SARAH BLASKEY

When Florida Power & Light faced a spate of bad publicity and political blowback, a small but ambitious news website called the Capitolist sprang to the public utility's defense.

Taking aim at foes of FPL's proposed rate hikes and controversial attempts to buy Jacksonville's public utility, the Capitolist savaged the critics, impugning their motives and suggesting they were part of "dark money" schemes.

"Documents suggest Florida's largest companies are secretly sabotaging effort to protect power lines from hurricane damage," declared the headline of one such article from 2019.

Behind the scenes, FPL executives were back-slapping. Unbeknownst to readers, the article — which promoted legislation to reimburse the multibillion-dollar utility for undergrounding power lines — wasn't published simply because the Capitolist was staunchly conservative and pro-business as editor Brian Burgess had proudly announced when he founded the publication in 2016.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Richard Chady.

-0-

The Center for Journalism & Democracy at Howard University Announces Executive Director

Sholnn Z. Freeman

WASHINGTON — The Center for Journalism & Democracy at Howard University has named Kali-Ahset Amen, Ph.D., as its inaugural executive director. Amen will be responsible for operationalizing the vision put forward by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones, who is founding the center. The center is set to launch late Fall.

Amen had previously served as managing director of the Billie Holiday Center for the Liberation Arts in Baltimore, where she worked to advance its mission of preserving, documenting and disseminating Black Baltimore's history and culture. She was also an assistant research professor of sociology at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

The Center for Journalism & Democracy is devoted to bolstering the field of investigative journalism in the service of multiracial democracy. Hannah-Jones, the Knight Chair in Race and Journalism at the Cathy Hughes School of Communications, has called attention to the need for historically informed investigative journalism that meets with urgency the threats to our democracy and for broader representation among the nation's investigative reporters.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Richard Chady.

-0-

Minnesotans still rely on newspapers as their most trusted source of local information (Timberjay)

Newspapers around Minnesota have been making a point in recent days, and we're joining that chorus in a full-page advertisement that appears in this week's edition. At a time when so much has been written about the imminent demise of newspapers, a recent statewide survey in Minnesota found that the vast majority of Minnesotans still regularly rely on newspapers, either in print or digital, to stay informed about their community.

We suspect that the percentage of regular newspaper readers is even higher in small towns and rural parts of the state, where residents are more community-focused than in larger cities. Despite all the changes in how we access information today, most newspapers still remain the most credible source of local news and information.

At the same time, we've reported regularly over the past few years about the closure of some longstanding newspapers in our region. Newspapers in Two Harbors, International Falls, Hibbing, Warroad, and Chisholm have disappeared, while the Duluth News-Tribune has gone from daily to twice-weekly.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Al Cross.

-0-

Column: Big Tech is steamrolling America's Newspapers (National Newspaper Association)

Opinion by Brett Wesner / National Newspaper Association

Google and Facebook have enormous economic and political power in society — especially over the news industry. Many ask if they have played a role in the misinformation that erodes our free press and plagues our democracy.

Google and Facebook have a duopoly of the distribution of digital news content, which drives people to their platforms where they make money. The platforms hoard critical data and use clever tactics, such as reframing stories in rich previews, to keep

users on their sites — siphoning off the advertising revenue that small and local publishers need and weakening their ability to be rewarded for their own content.

Google and Facebook generated \$4 million in U.S. advertising revenue every 15 minutes during the first quarter of 2022. That amount could fund hundreds of local journalists in every state in the country.

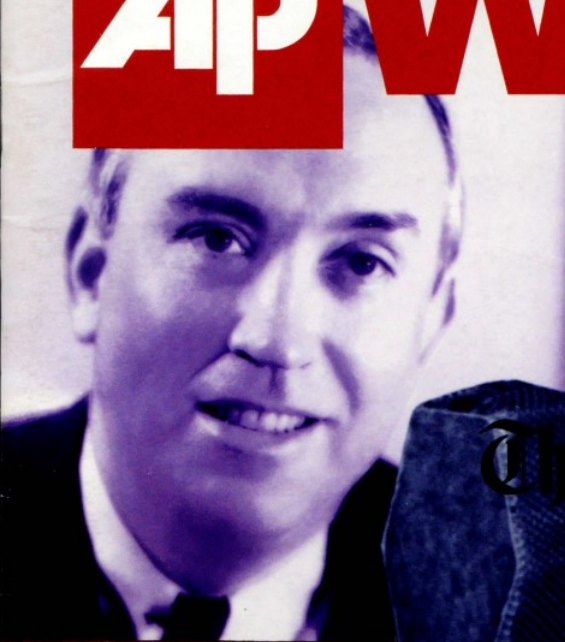
Read more [here](#). Shared by Paul Albright.

The Final Word

More on Oliver Gramling...

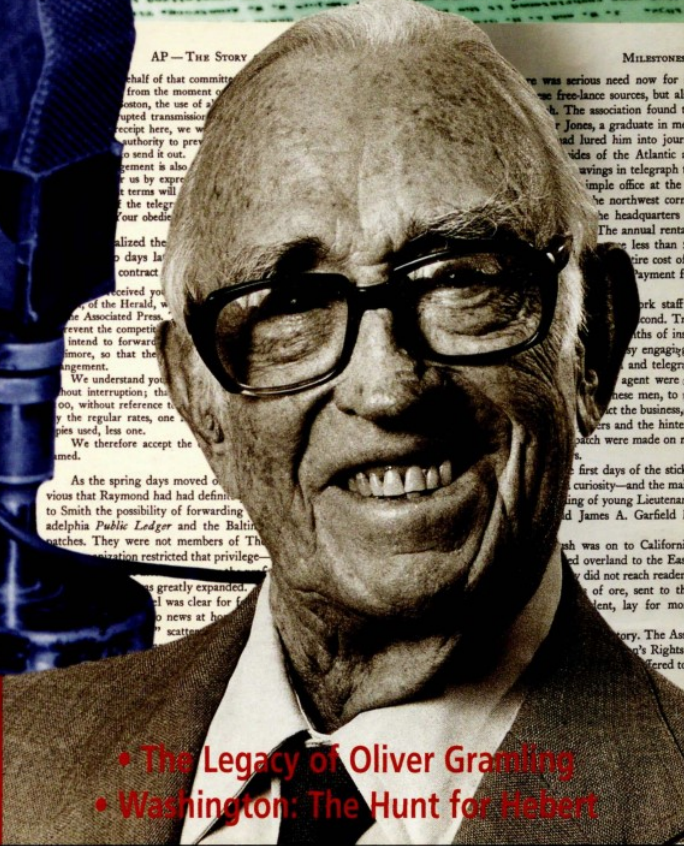
AP World

Fall 1997



The Macon Telegraph

AP
The Story of News
OLIVER GRAMLING



AP — THE STORY

MILESTONES

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- ♦ The Legacy of Oliver Gramling
- ♦ Washington: The Hunt for Habert

"CUE-IN"



PA Starts a New Feature Service in Sound and Gives Radio a Revolutionary New Method of Recording

A NEW transcription service for radio stations corresponding to AP Newsfeatures for newspapers has been started by PA.

PA also has developed a revolutionary new recording technique called "Cue-In" and is using it in two of the four programs in the transcription service. So simple that one wonders at its not having been conceived before, the "Cue-In" technique involves leaving blank spaces on recordings so that a local station can cue its own announcer into an otherwise transcribed program. Thus even the smallest local station can air a show in which a member of its own staff interviews Elissa Landi or Fritzie Zivic, for instance.

The transcription service provides an ideal medium for PA's expansion into the "sound" feature field. PA's transcription programs, instead of being on paper as are AP Newsfeatures, are put on records. This has many advantages, among them the fact that a program can be fitted readily into the station's schedule at an hour best suited to the listening habits of the station's audience and to the time zone in which the station is located.

PA's first "Special Assignment" transcription dramatizes the adventures of reporter Leo Dolan in uncovering circumstantial evidence which convicts a man for murder. But the doomed man continues to protest his innocence so vigorously that Dolan has misgivings. And when there are other developments seemingly in the "murderer's" favor, Dolan begins to fear that he is helping to send an innocent man to the chair. Dolan makes a frantic effort to halt the execution, but in vain. Broken in spirit, the reporter is handed a "death" note from the condemned man, written just before the execution. It contains a confession and acknowledgment that Dolan was right in the first place.

AP, newspaper and radio reporters in every section of the country are invited to send contributions for use on "Special Assignment." The only thing needed is a 250-word outline of the plot—even a single dramatic incident might fill the bill. PA will ask for additional details as necessary. PA will pay for each such outline used as the basis of a "Special Assignment" show. Outlines should be cleared through your department head or chief of bureau, to Oliver Gramling, Press Association, Inc., 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York.



Featuring Carol Bruce (at mike) Elissa Landi and others.

The transcription project is a corollary of the policy AP has followed for years with its member newspapers—a policy of providing well-rounded, balanced and complete service.

SINCE PA entered the radio field in 1941 PA experts have studied, planned and tested to see what could be done with dramatics in the radio news field. Each year for the past four years PA has produced a year-end transcription, a dramatization of outstanding news of the year.

It was only after General Manager William McCambridge and Assistant General Manager Oliver Gramling were convinced they had evolved a truly "big time" service that the decision was made to enter the radio feature field.

To handle the project, a department known as AP Radio Productions was created. Paul Girard is producer. A former program director of WBAL, Baltimore, Girard joined PA in 1941. He returned to PA recently after almost two years in the army.

Director of the transcribed shows is Alexander Leftwich, Jr., who has been producer of such successful programs as Milton Berle's "Let Yourself Go", "America's Town Meeting of the Air", "Sumner Welles Forum", "Blue Network Concert Hall", Paul Whiteman's "Hall of Fame", Guy Lombardo's "Musical Autographs", and the Ed Wynn show.

THE writing staff is headed by four experienced scripters—Louis M. Heyward, Margaret Miller, Rafael Hayes, and James Beach.

Heyward has written scripts for "American School of the Air", "Suspense", "Exploring the Unknown", and other well known air shows. While in service, he produced and directed 76 Army shows.

Margaret Miller formerly was an instructor in radio news writing at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and in private life is Mrs. Paul White, wife of the CBS director of news. She wrote numerous successful dramatized documentaries during the war, and has scripted such programs as "Report to The Nation", "Radio Reader's Digest", and "Dateline."

Rafael Hayes, another former service man, has done script-writing for some of radio's top programs, among them "Cavalcade of America" and "Words at War." Hayes, incidentally, also is a magazine writer whose by-line has appeared in the Saturday Evening Post and other publications.

Beach formerly was with the CBS "Workshop" as a writer of dramatized programs.

The four transcribed programs are: *Star Time*, *Sports Star Special*, *Special Assignment* and the *Cliff Edwards Show*. Each runs 15 minutes. The Cliff Edwards Show provides a daily broadcast Mondays through Fridays. The others are once-a-week.

STAR TIME, using "Cue-In," is a program in dramatized form presenting prominent personalities in the news—from stage, screen, radio, art, science, literature, public life, all fields. The first two completed programs, for instance, starred actresses Elissa Landi and Carol Bruce.

Sports Star Special, likewise using "Cue-In," features personalities from the Sports World "Who's Who." The first two programs have for their headliners the Clown Prince of Baseball, Al Schacht, and Former Welterweight Champion Fritz Zivic.

Special Assignment is expected to prove especially popular with the professional news man. It dramatizes the unusual experiences, the exciting experiences, the heart-breaking and the heart-warming experiences, of reporters in covering the news. Each episode will follow a thread of fact or circumstance, highlighting the adventures, ingenuity and enterprise of the men and women whose lives are dedicated to covering the news. Each program, complete in itself, will be introduced by AGM Gramling, with the dramatizations enacted by foremost radio talent.

THE Cliff Edwards Show, as its title indicates, features the inimitable performer playing and singing all-time American musical favorites. PA-scripted continuity ties each show into the preceding one and the one that follows.

On the first announcement of the transcription service more than 400 stations immediately expressed keen interest and more than 300 requested audition discs.

All four shows are available for use on any radio station. They may be obtained, either individually or as a package of four.

CLIFF EDWARDS SHOW



Inimitable performer playing and singing all-time American favorites.

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT



Dramatizing reporters' adventures. Left to right, Alexander Leftwich, Paul Girard and Oliver Gramling.

SPORTS STAR SPECIAL



Lefty Gomez, Al Schacht, Fritz Zivic and many more.

Images courtesy of AP Corporate Archives

Today in History – July 29, 2022



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, July 29, the 210th day of 2022. There are 155 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 29, 1981, Britain's Prince Charles married Lady Diana Spencer in a glittering ceremony at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. (The couple divorced in 1996.)

On this date:

In 1890, artist Vincent van Gogh, 37, died of an apparently self-inflicted gunshot wound in Auvers-sur-Oise, France.

In 1914, transcontinental telephone service in the U.S. became operational with the first test conversation between New York and San Francisco.

In 1921, Adolf Hitler became the leader ("fuehrer") of the National Socialist German Workers Party.

In 1957, the International Atomic Energy Agency was established. Jack Paar made his debut as host of NBC's "Tonight Show."

In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the National Aeronautics and Space Act, creating NASA.

In 1967, an accidental rocket launch on the deck of the supercarrier USS Forrestal in the Gulf of Tonkin resulted in a fire and explosions that killed 134 servicemen. (Among the survivors was future Arizona senator John McCain, a U.S. Navy lieutenant commander who narrowly escaped with his life.)

In 1968, Pope Paul the Sixth reaffirmed the Roman Catholic Church's stance against artificial methods of birth control.

In 1980, a state funeral was held in Cairo, Egypt, for the deposed Shah of Iran, who had died two days earlier at age 60.

In 1986, a federal jury in New York found that the National Football League had committed an antitrust violation against the rival United States Football League. But in a hollow victory for the U-S-F-L, the jury ordered the N-F-L to pay token damages of only three dollars.

In 1994, abortion opponent Paul Hill shot and killed Dr. John Bayard Britton and Britton's escort, James H. Barrett, outside the Ladies Center clinic in Pensacola, Florida. (Hill was executed in Sept. 2003.)

In 1999, a former day trader, apparently upset over stock losses, opened fire in two Atlanta brokerage offices, killing nine people and wounding 13 before shooting himself to death; authorities said Mark O. Barton had also killed his wife and two children.

In 2016, former suburban Chicago police officer Drew Peterson was given an additional 40 years in prison for trying to hire someone to kill the prosecutor who put him behind bars for killing his third wife.

Ten years ago: Standing on Israeli soil, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney declared Jerusalem to be the capital of the Jewish state and said the United States had "a solemn duty and a moral imperative" to block Iran from achieving nuclear weapons capability. At the London Olympics, Dana Vollmer of the United States set a world record to win the 100-meter butterfly in 55.98 seconds. Yannick Agnel rallied the French to the gold medal in the 4x100-meter freestyle relay in 3 minutes, 9.93 seconds, pulling ahead of American star Ryan Lochte on the final lap.

Five years ago: U.S. and South Korean forces conducted joint live-fire exercises in response to North Korea's second launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile; experts said the North Korean launch showed that a large portion of the United States was now within range of North Korea's arsenal.

One year ago: With teammate Simone Biles watching from the stands, American Sunisa Lee won the gold medal in women's all-around gymnastics at the Tokyo Games; she was the fifth straight American woman to claim the Olympic title in the event. (Biles withdrew from the event, which she was favored to win, to focus on her mental well-being.) President Joe Biden announced sweeping new pandemic requirements aimed at boosting vaccination rates for millions of federal workers and contractors. Former Sen. Carl Levin, a Democrat who was a powerful voice for the military during his career as Michigan's longest-serving U.S. senator, died at 87. The Detroit Pistons selected Oklahoma State's Cade Cunningham with the No. 1 pick in the NBA draft.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. Nancy Kassebaum-Baker is 90. Actor Robert Fuller is 89. Former Sen. Elizabeth H. Dole is 86. Actor Roz Kelly is 80. Rock musician Neal Doughty (REO Speedwagon) is 76. Marilyn Tucker Quayle, wife of former Vice President Dan Quayle, is 73. Actor Mike Starr is 72. Documentary maker Ken Burns is 69. Style guru Tim Gunn is 69. Rock singer-musician Geddy Lee (Rush) is 69. Rock singer Patti Scialfa (Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band) is 69. Actor Kevin Chapman is 60. Actor Alexandra Paul is 59. Actor/comedian Dean Haglund is 57. Country singer Martina McBride is 56. Rock musician Chris Gorman is 55. Actor Rodney Allen Rippey is 54. Actor Tim Omundson is 53. Actor Ato Essandoh is 50. Actor Wil Wheaton is 50. R&B singer Wanya Morris (Boyz II Men) is 49. Country singer-

songwriter James Otto is 49. Actor Stephen Dorff is 49. Actor Josh Radnor is 48. Hip-hop DJ/music producer Danger Mouse is 45. Actor Rachel Miner is 42. Actor Kaitlyn Black is 39. Actor Matt Prokop is 32. Actor Cait Fairbanks is 29.

Got a story or photos to share?

Connecting is a daily newsletter published Monday through Friday that focuses on retired and former Associated Press employees, present-day employees, and news industry and journalism school colleagues. It began in 2013 and past issues can be found by clicking [Connecting Archive](#) in the masthead. Its author, Paul Stevens, retired from the AP in 2009 after a 36-year career as a newsman in Albany and St. Louis, correspondent in Wichita, chief of bureau in Albuquerque, Indianapolis and Kansas City, and Midwest vice president based in Kansas City.



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:

- **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.
- **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?

- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.

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