

SHARE:

[Join Our Email List](#)

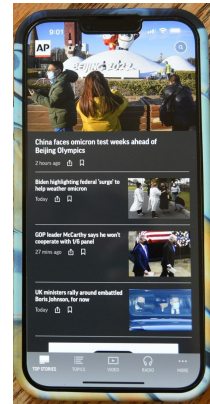
[View as Webpage](#)



# Connecting

Feb. 21, 2023

Click [here](#) for sound of the Teletype



[Top AP News](#)  
[Top AP Photos](#)  
[AP Merchandise](#)

[Connecting Archive](#)  
[AP Emergency Relief Fund](#)  
[AP Books](#)



President Joe Biden walks down a corridor to his cabin on a train after a surprise visit with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Monday, Feb. 20, 2023, in Kyiv. Biden took a nearly 10-hour train ride from Poland into Kyiv. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)



President Joe Biden sits on a train with National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan as he goes over his speech marking the one-year anniversary of the war in Ukraine after a surprise visit with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Monday, Feb. 20, 2023, in Kyiv. (AP Photo/ Evan Vucci)



**President Joe Biden walks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at St. Michael's Golden-Domed Cathedral on a surprise visit, Monday, Feb. 20, 2023, in Kyiv. (AP Photo/ Evan Vucci)**

Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this Feb. 21, 2023,

It is a story of mystery and intrigue. Not fiction. One in which AP played a major role.

### **Sneaking a president from DC to Kyiv without anyone noticing**

That was the headline of [an AP story](#) by Evan Vucci, John Leicester and Zeke Miller published Monday with the lead:

*KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — President Joe Biden's motorcade slipped out of the White House around 3:30 a.m. Sunday. No big, flashy Air Force One for this trip — the president vanished into the darkness on an Air Force C-32, a modified Boeing 757 normally used for domestic trips to smaller airports.*

*The next time he turned up — 20 hours later — it was in downtown Kyiv, Ukraine.*

*Biden's surprise 23-hour visit to Ukraine on Monday was the first time in modern history that a U.S. leader visited a warzone outside the aegis of the U.S. military — a feat the White House said carried some risk even though Moscow was given a heads-up.*

There were two members of the press traveling with Biden in Ukraine: AP's **Evan Vucci** for photos (pictured at right) and the Wall Street Journal's **Sabrina Siddiqui** for text. Siddiqui filed a fascinating pool report, released by the White House Press Office and

obtained by Connecting, that you can read in today's The Final Word. Vucci's obligation as pool photographer was to share his photos with the rest of the press corps. The two were scheduled to be the regular 13-member White House pool that always travels with the president.

Vucci and Siddiqui were with Biden on his plane to Ramstein, Germany, and on to an airport near the Polish border, then a drive to the train station, then a long train ride to Kyiv, then five hours in Kyiv, another train ride back to Poland, a motorcade to the airport, and a flight to Warsaw.



The AP had a Kyiv reporter in the mix. The AP team in Kyiv got a call on Sunday night and was told to have a reporter at the Intercontinental Hotel early on Monday morning for a presser with an unidentified "VIP" (who of course turned out to be Biden.) **John Leicester**, on assignment for AP in Kyiv, was part of the local pool that was stood up by the White House in Kyiv since the whole White House press corps couldn't be there.

**CONGRATULATIONS to the AP team that won the 2022 George Polk Award for War Reporting:** Videojournalist Mstyslav Chernov, photographer Evgeniy Maloletka, video producer Vasilisa Stepanenko and reporter Lori Hinnant of the Associated Press have won the award for War Reporting for sharing horrific narratives and images during the siege of Mariupol. The only journalists from a Western news organization in the besieged city once the bombardment began, Chernov, Maloletka and Stepanenko hid from the Russians until friendly troops could escort them to safety in a harrowing escape through 15 enemy checkpoints. Ukrainian authorities credited the AP reporting with saving many lives by helping to open a humanitarian corridor for people to leave.

Click [here](#) for full list of winners announced Monday.

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

## Memories of educator Del Brinkman

**Ann Brill** – dean, *William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Kansas* - Del was a wonderful man, educator, and role model. Truly one of the kindest and most talented people I ever met. I have heard him referred to as a "dean's dean" for the leadership and help he gave many deans. I was so grateful for his wisdom and humor. I'm grateful to his family and friends for establishing the scholarship in his name at KU. His legacy and name will live on for the many students that scholarship will help.



**Ed Williams** – *journalism professor emeritus, Auburn University* - I never worked with Del Brinkman, but I'm glad that my path crossed his. He was a role model to me nearly 40 years ago when I was a young assistant journalism professor at Auburn University. I was 30 years old and in my first year of teaching journalism at Auburn when I received a fellowship to spend two weeks at Indiana University's Ernie Pyle School of Journalism, where I rubbed elbows with seasoned journalism educators from different places, far from my home state of Alabama. I was a rookie journalism professor, and it was inspiring to me to spend time rubbing elbows with Dean Brinkman and others, who were willing to take the time to answer my questions and build me up. In his quiet, competent way, he inspired me that a newspaperman can become a respected journalism professor.

## Ken Peters was fine with a 'bye-bye party' – and Los Angeles staffers delivered



Former and current Los Angeles AP staffers who attended the memorial for AP sportswriter Ken Peters on Sunday in Chino Hills, Calif. From left, Richard De Atley, Beth Harris, Michelle DeArmond, John Nadel, John Antczak, Andrew Dalton, Linda Deutsch and Reed Saxon, who surround a circa 1980s photo of Ken. Harris, Antczak and Dalton are current AP Los Angeles staffers. DeArmond is an administrator in the Riverside University Health System. The rest are retired. (Reed Saxon photo by remote-control selfie)

**Linda Deutsch** - It had been three years since Ken Peters left us. A long time to wait for a celebration of his life. But Covid fears had prevented anything more contemporaneous, and the time just didn't seem right until now. February would be Ken's 80th birthday, His 50th anniversary with his beloved wife, Cathy, and the third anniversary of his passing. The legendary Los Angeles sports writer who covered multiple Olympics and Super Bowls in his 35 years with the AP was known for his poetic prose. But during his illness, he left simple instructions for his family.

"Dad's adios wishes," he wrote. "A simple cremation (only) no viewing, no services no nothing but into the furnace and out the other side. If you want to have a bye bye party, a wake of sorts since it can serve as a kind of chapter-ender for folks please do."

And so on Sunday, Feb. 19, nearly 100 family, friends and AP colleagues traveled to Chino, Calif. where his family put on the kind of party Ken would have loved. His daughter, Ashley, who took over as director of the event, worried about whether people would remember her dad well enough to attend after so much time had passed. She need not have been concerned. It was a full house when we all gathered at a scenic equestrian center with a big barn perfect for hosting important events. It was one of Ken's favorite places, not far from where he and Cathy raised their son, Justin, daughters Ashley and Tara and hosted countless family parties. The room was arrayed with pictures, awards and lots of memorabilia from Ken's native Georgia. A video was running with photos including many AP parties over the years. Guests were treated to sandwiches, drinks and two luscious cakes — one inscribed for Ken's 80th birthday and one for the 50th anniversary. We all sang happy birthday.

But the highlight was the speeches. Cathy Peters told the story of her love-at-first sight romance with Ken who proposed just days after they met and the joy they found in their three children. She spoke of their many trips to foreign lands which Ken continued after his retirement. The man we knew as a gifted sports writer was also a dedicated family man who put his wife and children above everything. We found out he was also a big fan of musical theater and took the whole family to see "Les Miserables" several times. When the song "One More Day" was played, there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

John Nadel and I spoke for the AP contingent which was joined by other journalists retired from the LA Times and the San Gabriel Valley Tribune where Ken worked in his youth. John, who covered sports with Ken, remembered Ken's grace under pressure, never flustered by a deadline or a breaking story. I remembered his kind and sweet nature which so many speakers recalled. And I revealed that he had "a second family," his AP colleagues. I gave voice to our anguish that Ken had to suffer through an auto immune disease which paralyzed him in his last years. Among those who came back to honor him was the nurse who helped his family care for him in those difficult times. He was her favorite patient. Even then, his wife said, he was grateful for every day that he was alive. I suggested that the musical most descriptive of Ken's life was the 1950s romantic production called: "The Most Happy Fella."

Summing up, I quoted a favorite maxim from Henry David Thoreau: "What wealth it is to have such friends that we cannot think of them without elevation." Ken will always be remembered as that kind of friend.

Click [here](#) for the wire obituary for Ken Peters.

## A shindig for Denne Freeman that he would have loved



Photo by Ken Capps

**Jaime Aron** - Family, friends and fans of Denne H. Freeman gathered on Sunday to celebrate his life. Combine the people, the laughter and the Tex-Mex buffet, and it was exactly the kind of shindig our old pardner would've loved.

We passed the mic to share stories, plus read more that were emailed by folks who couldn't make it. The tales painted a portrait of a funny, happy, sweet man who was dang good at his job.

As we were wrapping up, Judy (Denne's widow) told me that, the night before, she'd returned to their favorite casino for the first time in quite a while. (Pre-pandemic, they were regulars.) Judy said she knew Denne was definitely with her on this visit. How'd she know? She found a \$100 bill on the floor. She mentioned a few other subtle things that have happened since his death that she considers signs that he's watching out for her.

Meanwhile, on the way to the event yesterday, I was thinking that we should've had a soundtrack of songs Denne loved. The first song I thought of was "On the Road Again." Because while Denne had several stories about hanging out with Willie Nelson in the '70s, a favorite was the backstory of how that song came to be. Well, driving home from the event, guess what song came on my radio.

Thanks to John Lumpkin for co-hosting the event, and to all the current/past AP folks who joined us in person or with their memories.

Click [here](#) for the wire obituary for Denne Freeman.

## Your memories of covering Jimmy Carter

**Frank Aukofer** - When Jimmy Carter was president in the late 1970s, I was a reporter in the Washington bureau of The Milwaukee Journal. Many of the correspondents, regardless of their beats, papers or wire services, were routinely invited, with their spouses or guests, to the annual White House Christmas party for Washington reporters and editors.

At one of these elegant parties in the East Room, Rosalynn Carter arrived to dance with the men, who soon started tapping on their colleagues' shoulders to cut in. I was one of them and had a brief and pleasant whirl around the room with this most pleasant lady.

A bit later, Carter himself appeared and started dancing with the women correspondents and guests of male correspondents. Again, the way to do it was to tap him on the shoulder to cut in—and that's what the ladies did.

I encouraged my wife, Sharlene, to take her turn, noting that it would produce a delightful memory of having danced with the president of the United States. I even offered to tap him on the shoulder for her. She was more than reluctant.

"If you tap him on the shoulder," she said, "you're dancing with him."

-0-

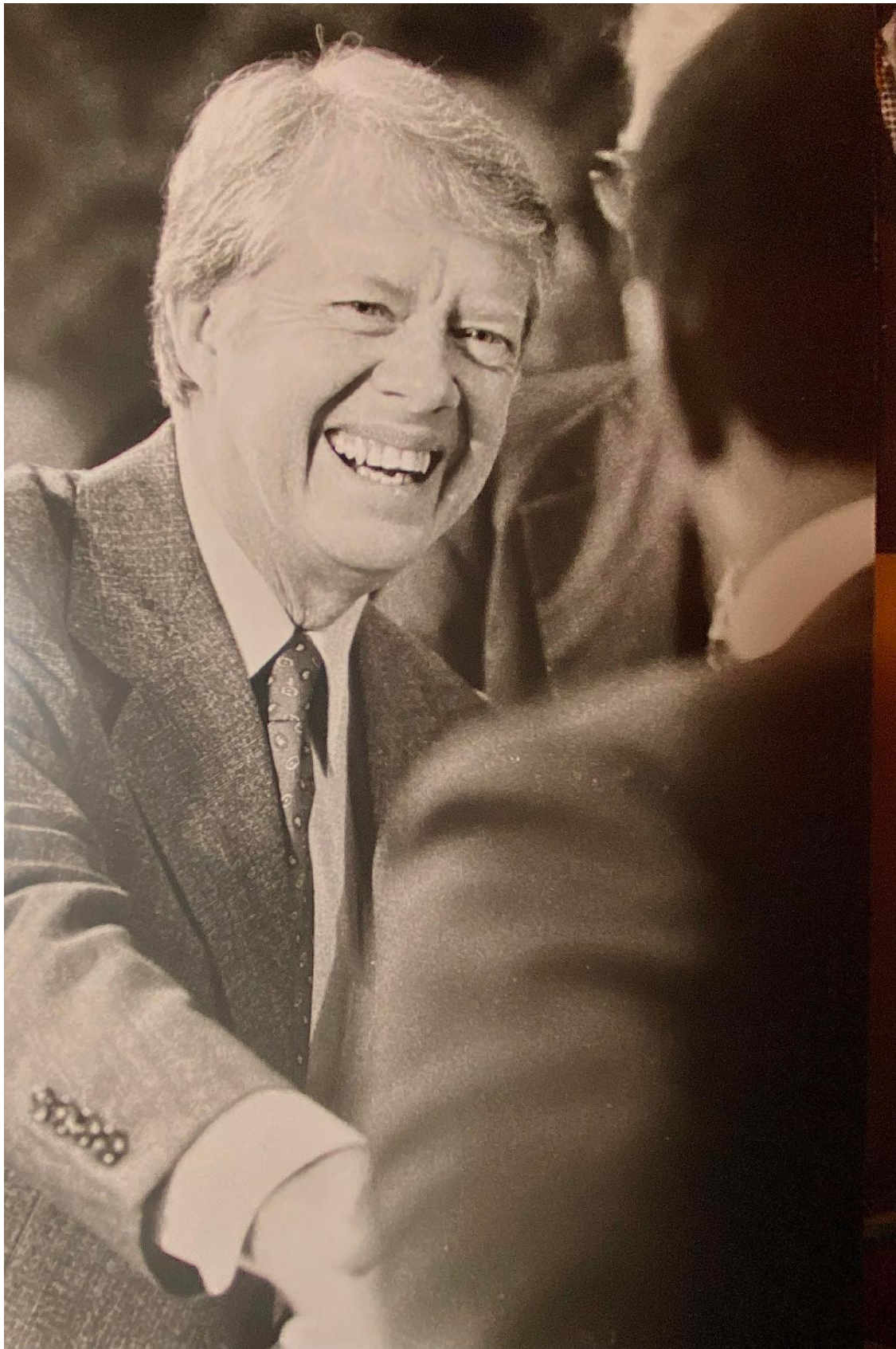




**Dennis Conrad** - A framed photo near me as I watch the news about former President Carter in his final days is an AP Wirephoto from 1976 when the then-presidential candidate met with Maine Sen. Edmund S. Muskie in Plains, Ga., as he weighed making him his running mate. I had been a volunteer in 1972 presidential candidate Muskie's HQ as a college freshman and kept the photo as a souvenir from my first journalism job at a small Florida daily. Although Muskie never became vice president, he was Carter's last secretary of state.

The photo also reminds me of my father's final journey. Days before the 1980 general election, I got word while in Poland for a planned months-long stay there that I needed to return to the States because my father had been hospitalized. When I got there, I learned he had been diagnosed with cancer and he might only have months left. On Election Day, I drove him home from the hospital but with a slight detour so he could cast his vote for Jimmy Carter's re-election. He couldn't stand the thought of Ronald Reagan as president. Months later, dad was dead, two weeks before his 65th birthday. As luck would have it, I would get to see Jimmy Carter in person and that was while on an AP assignment from the Cleveland bureau about a half dozen years later. No big news that day but it was nice to see him. And it has been nice to watch him seemingly get better with age during a long life of good works. Thanks for being good, Jimmy. Just plain good.

-0-



**Jimmy Carter during a prevention for the president with Democratic Party leaders in Denver 1980 (photo by John Epperson/ Longmont Daily Times-Call)**

-0-

**Joe Frazier** – Jimmy Carter apparently liked being an observer in foreign elections and showed up a few times during my years in Central America to observe democracy in action in a region not yet famous for it.

The one clearest was in Panama, probably in 1989, when strongman Manuel Noriega was running for president in what i recall was a pretty turbulent election campaign. It was evening and Carter and his staff had spent a long hot day at polling places doing whatever it was observers did, I never quite figured that one out.

Anyway we wound up back at his headquarters in a very nice hotel. We got into the elevator, I looked to my left and there was Jimmy and a couple of staff I knew from Atlanta. They were going on and on about how well things were playing out.

He didn't know (nor did we) that across town as we spoke, Noriega's thugs were rounding up boxes of uncounted ballots and burning them. The next day, I think, Noriega declared himself the winner. It took an American invasion to dislodge the pockmarked old bastard.

Carter served as an observer frequently and selflessly and always brought along a sense of legitimacy with him as best I remember. Time plays tricks.

But Panama retaught an old lesson: In Latin America. things often weren't what they seemed to be.

-0-

**Hoyt Harwell** - An airborne news kfc aboard Air Force One en route to European tour. Maybe not a great President, but certainly the most decent and honorable. Our country should be proud to have had him in the WHU. As AP's then-State Department correspondent, I was privileged to have covered him on many of his foreign trips.

-0-





**Mike Holmes** - As the Des Moines bureau's Iowa caucus reporter, I drew the assignment when President Carter and his family took a Mississippi riverboat vacation in August 1979. It was less glamorous than it sounds.

Unlike the AP's White House reporters, Des Moines photographer Bob Jarboe and I didn't get a stateroom aboard the Delta Queen. Instead, we drove 350 miles down the river from McGregor in the northeast corner to Keokuk in the southeast, where we turned over shore patrol duty to an AP staffer from the St. Louis bureau.

Carter was a jogger, and when the riverboat stopped to pass through a lock on the river, he'd hop off and go for a sunrise run. Bob and I were there to record it. Carter would give a speech, covered by AP's big guns. Bob and I would stay behind to get local reaction.

At each stop, when it was time for his passengers to reboard, the Queen's captain would signal with a toot of the boat's whistle. In Dubuque, he hit the whistle and -- I guess steam hadn't reached full pressure yet -- it sort of honked with a loud "blaaaatttt." Carter's press secretary, Jody Powell, laughed down from the upper deck



and pointed to ABC's White House correspondent. "That was for you, Donaldson!" he shouted at the always combative Sam.

-0-



**Keith Myers** - During a visit to Kansas City in 1980, President Jimmy Carter had a little fun with George Brett of the Kansas City Royals. Brett was the talk of the town that summer as he chased a .400 batting average. At right was Missouri senator Tom Eagleton.

-0-



[Greg Nokes](#) - An airborne news kfc aboard Air Force One en route to European tour. Maybe not a great President, but certainly the most decent and honorable. Our country should be proud to have had him in the WHU. As AP's then-State Department correspondent, I was privileged to have covered him on many of his foreign trips.

-0-



## Dan Sewell, then Atlanta-based Southeast Regional reporter, Interview at the Carter Center, October 1997.

[Dan Sewell](#) - My connections to Jimmy Carter came in a variety of forms over the years.

First was in 1976, the year the one-term Georgia governor was a surprise winner of the Democratic primary to take on Republican Gerald Ford in November.

I had been a fan of Arizona congressman Mo Udall for the Democratic nomination and was wary about Carter's qualifications and personality for being president.

As editor of The Post, the student newspaper at Ohio University, I made the call to endorse Eugene McCarthy, the former Minnesota U.S. senator who had been a strong critic of the Vietnam War. He was running as an independent.

Ohio was expected to be a close state, and that McCarthy endorsement triggered a strong reaction from Ohio Democrats, concerned other college newspapers might follow. One official called it "blatant idealism," which I thought was what college campuses were meant for. Popular Lt. Gov. Dick Celeste, a future governor, sent op-ed columns to the state's other college newspapers criticizing the endorsement and McCarthy.

As it turned out, Ohio was one of the closest states in Carter's election. Carter won by only 11,000 votes and 49%, with McCarthy finishing third with 58,000 votes, a nearly spoiling 1.4%.

Next was in 1988, when Atlanta was hosting the Democratic National Convention and Washington COB Sandy Johnson sent me from Miami to cover the Florida delegation. I got there early and connected with former Miami news editor Matt Bokor, then the Atlanta assistant chief of bureau, for dinner.

We wound up sitting near Jimmy and wife Rosalynn. I went over to their table, complimented Rosalynn, and told Jimmy he was missed in Washington. "Not enough," he replied with a grin. I didn't identify myself as a reporter.

I didn't realize I nearly wound up getting wrestled to the ground by the Secret Service. An agent told Matt I should have asked before approaching the table.

In the late 1990s I was the Southeast Regional Reporter based in Atlanta and interviewed Carter in that role a few times. Before a reunion of his 1976 "Peanut Brigade" campaign volunteers, I asked him what he thought about being called the "greatest Ex-President" for his work to promote peace, democracy, and global health and his Habitat for Humanity work.

"I'd like for you to take the 'ex' off that," Carter replied, flashing that big trademark grin.

In another conversation, I told Carter I had seen him (a future Nobel Peace Prize laureate) stand up and boo the umpiring crew in Atlanta the night before as they took

the field before the 1997 National League Championship Series game 6 that the Marlins would win to clinch the series.

The game before, the Marlins' Livan Hernandez set a postseason record with 15 strikeouts, helped by Eric Gregg's generous strike zone. "Worst umpiring I've ever seen," Carter said, unrepentant.

One last connection: when I was with The Cincinnati Enquirer, my Local News editor Rick Green was a big Carter fan, adopting Carter's "Why Not the Best?" slogan for his staff and recognizing outstanding effort with his "Golden Peanut" award. I told a Carter Center staffer about this and when Green was promoted to managing editor of the Palm Springs newspaper in 2004, he got a personally signed letter of congratulations from Carter, noting "I know your colleagues at The Cincinnati Enquirer will miss your 'Why Not the Best?' entreaty and Golden Peanut award."

Hoping Jimmy will have an easy passage.

-0-

**Nancy Shulins** - I was still at my first newspaper job in my hometown of Claremont, NH, when Jimmy Carter came to campaign for the 1976 primary. He attended a coffee at somebody's home, an event that was notable for its lack of fanfare, nearly nonexistent entourage, and sparse turnout. There was one TV camera, probably from WMUR in Manchester, as befit a candidate still largely known (to those who knew of him at all) as Jimmy Who. His persona underwhelmed the neighbors who'd ventured out to get a look at him, myself included. With the cameras running, he said a few words about why he was running for president. He was earnest and folksy and decidedly unpresidential. Then the cameras stopped and I saw something I'd never seen before, something that still gives me chills when I think about it. The lights were turned off, but Jimmy Carter remained lighted. He had an aura that lit him up from within.

-0-





[Neal Ulevich](#) - Former President Jimmy Carter made a private visit to Beijing in June, 1987. I covered the airport arrival and took my son Jake to see a (former) US president. Completing the modest receiving line Carter walked over to Jake and they talked for a few moments about growing up in China.

## Arkansawyer?

[Linda Sargent](#) - The article about what to call people from Alabama and your response about Arkansan vs. Arkansian immediately brought to mind Ernie Deane, one of my favorite journalism professors at the University of Arkansas. He preferred the term "Arkansawyer" and I remember he pushed for that usage whenever possible. For years, he wrote "The Arkansas Traveler" column for the Arkansas Gazette.

I found a 2007 article in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette in which writer Donald Harington is quoted as saying "all literate Arkansawyers for many years have preferred calling themselves that." He cited John Gould Fletcher, Vance Randolph, Ernie Deane and Neil Compton, the newspaper said.

## Using 'lede'

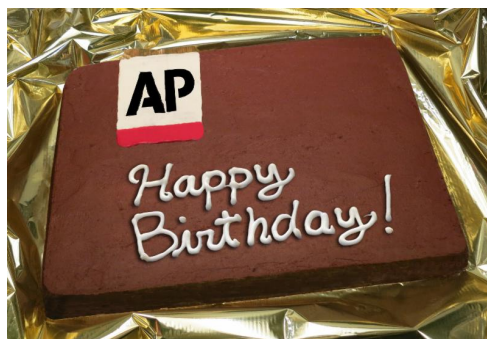


[Michael Weinfeld](#) - I thought it was interesting that the closed caption for the movie "She Said" used the correct spelling of lede. Appropriate for a movie about the New York Times reporters who broke the Harvey Weinstein story...

## More reporterspeak

[Ed Tobias](#) - One more for my friend Adolphe Bernotas's latest reporterspeak list: "went missing." I always thought that "disappeared" was just fine.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Susan Clark](#)

[Mark Duncan](#)

[Lew Wheaton](#)

# Stories of interest

## ***Drama of McCarthy's election may open House to more cameras*** (AP)

By DAVID BAUDER

NEW YORK (AP) — The difference between a government-controlled camera that followed a climactic moment in Rep. Kevin McCarthy's election as House speaker and one operated by a C-SPAN journalist was like a fuzzy black-and-white picture contrasted with sparkling, clear color.

In one, McCarthy strides up an aisle in the House chamber and disappears from view. A few people in the front turn to see where he's going. After a minute, and some audible gasps, everyone stands to watch what the camera doesn't show.

C-SPAN captured the entire scene, including the exasperated McCarthy's tense, finger-pointing conversation with Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., and a GOP colleague held back from lunging at Gaetz.

Some in Congress and C-SPAN are seizing on that moment to ask that the House floor be more fully open to cameras in the interest of transparency. There's been tangible movement in that direction.

Read more [here](#).

-0-

## ***Medford, Oregon: As one paper dies, another begins all in a few weeks.*** (Editor and Publisher)

### **An "E&P Reports Vodcast with Mike Blinder**

The Medford, Oregon Mail Tribune can trace its roots back to 1909 when the morning Medford Mail and afternoon Tribune merged under the Putnam family, creating what the paper claimed to be "The largest printing and publishing establishment in Southern Oregon."

It was decades later that this venerable brand would begin a journey of "swap and sale," moving from Down Jones/ Ottaway ownership to Rupert Murdoch's News Corp., to Newcastle Investment Corp. (an affiliate of Fortress Investment Group) and later merging into the growing Gatehouse Media Group.

Gatehouse sold the Mail Tribune in 2017 to media businessman Steven Saslow and its sister paper, the Ashland Daily Tidings, for \$15 million. Saslow then reportedly secured

financing from the right-wing-centered Sinclair broadcast group that same week, according to public records obtained by Jefferson Public Radio.

Read more [here](#).

-0-

## ***After 50 years in professional journalism, Al Tompkins is retiring*** (Poynter)

**By: Kelly McBride**

Al Tompkins is known throughout the world of broadcast journalism as a bulldog of a reporter and a teacher with a relentless enthusiasm and work ethic.

He's spent 25 years working in local broadcast newsrooms of Kentucky and Tennessee and 25 years teaching professional journalists at Poynter.

After 50 years of making the news and teaching others how to make the news, Tompkins is retiring. Although he promises to do the occasional teaching gig, for the first time in his adult life, he will not have a full-time job in journalism.

March 31 will be his last day as a full-time faculty member at Poynter. Although he'll retain the title of faculty and occasionally step in to teach workshops on a contract basis, Tompkins says this is really it, he's actually retiring.

Read more [here](#).

## **The Final Word**

### ***Pool report on President Biden's trip to Ukraine***

Pool report released by White House Press Office, from Sabrina Siddiqui, Wall Street Journal:

**TRAVEL POOL REPORT #6: POTUS has left Ukraine**

**From: "Siddiqui, Sabrina"**

**Feb. 20, 2023**

President Biden has left Ukraine and is back in Poland.

Your pooler will have more specifics soon, but is sending this report since more details can be shared about the president's movements leading up to this point.

After his departure from the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv, President Biden's motorcade pulled up to the Kyiv-Pasazhyrsky railway station just before 1 p.m. and departed the Ukrainian capital city just under 10 minutes later by train.



Biden had arrived at the same central Kyiv railway station at 8 a.m. in the morning following a roughly 10-hour overnight ride originating from Przemyśl Główny in Poland.

AP's Evan Vucci was able to capture some photos of Biden on the train out of Kyiv that will be pooled. Your pooler was not allowed to be present for those photos, which were taken just after we departed from Kyiv.



Now that we've addressed the many questions and suspicions around how Biden got in and out of Ukraine, your pooler will start from the beginning and share more details about the movements that had remained under embargo for security reasons and until Biden was safely headed to Warsaw.

### **'The president is going to Kyiv'**

Your pooler and the AP's Evan Vucci were summoned to a private meeting on Friday in White House communications director Kate Bedingfield's office, with WHCA President Tamara Keith also in attendance. We were informed that President Biden would be traveling to Kyiv and that we would be the only two journalists in the travel pool. Tam has already sent an email out explaining the process.

Your pool was sworn to secrecy about the trip and told to look out for an email containing instructions for an early Sunday morning departure from Andrews Air Force Base. The subject line would read: "Arrival instructions for the golf tourney."

That email arrived just after 3 p.m. EST on Saturday and told your pool to report to Andrews between 2 a.m. and 2:15 a.m. EST Sunday.

### **Departure from Andrews**

Pool arrived unilaterally at Andrews and was swept at 2:15 a.m. As mentioned in an earlier report, your pool's phones were taken by agents and not returned until our arrival at the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv more than 24 hours later.

Your pool was driven to an Air Force C-32 often used to fly into smaller airports during domestic travel. Prior to its surreptitious departure, the plane sat in the dark next to a hanger with the shades drawn and away from the tarmac where it is typically parked for presidential travel.

Your pool did not see Biden board the plane. We were already on board when an overhead announcement at 3:40 a.m. EST noted the president was en route and roughly 20 minutes out. A subsequent overhead announcement at 4:00 a.m. stated that Biden had arrived.

Air Force One departed from Andrews at 4:15 a.m. EST.

From here on out, please be advised that timestamps are in local time and the time changes one hour from our starting point in Poland to our destination of Kyiv.

### **Arrival in Ramstein**

AF1 touched down at Ramstein Air Base in Germany at 5:13 p.m. local time Sunday under slightly overcast skies to refuel after an approximately seven-hour flight.

During the flight over, Jen O'Malley Dillon, Annie Tomasini and Jake Sullivan each stopped by for a brief hello but did not speak in an official capacity, hold an OTR or share any details of the trip.

The plane remained with its shades down for the duration of its time on the ground, which lasted roughly an hour and 15 minutes. Your pool remained in the back press cabin the entire time and did not see Biden at any point during the flight or stop in Ramstein.

AF1 was wheels up again at 6:29 p.m. after the sun had set and the skies were dark.

### **Arrival in Rzeszów**

AF1 landed at the Rzeszów-Jasionka Airport at 7:57 p.m. Sunday.

As you may recall, Biden traveled to Rzeszów last year and met at the airport hangar with U.S. troops who were in Poland at the time, as well as humanitarian workers and his Polish counterpart, Andrzej Duda.

The airport was clear upon Biden's arrival Sunday. Your pool did not see Biden deplane or get into his vehicle and was quickly ushered toward an SUV for press. The president's motorcade began rolling at 8:12 p.m. on a roughly one-hour drive along a fairly empty eastbound highway.

Your pooler counted at least 20 cars in the motorcade but advises you confirm the number with officials. The motorcade consisted of a mix of minivans, SUVs and suburbans and did not use sirens to avoid drawing attention.

### **Train from Przemyśl Główny**

Biden's motorcade arrived at the Przemyśl Główny train station at approximately 9:15 p.m.

It was relatively quiet at this time of night with a handful of people milling about outside the station and the stalls seemingly all closed.

The motorcade pulled directly up to a train that was mostly purple two large strips at the bottom from its exterior and large square windows with the shades mostly drawn. A handful of the train cars were blue with a yellow stripe along the middle and were reminiscent of the trains that have brought refugees into Poland from Ukraine.

Biden was dropped directly in front of his train car and your pool once again did not get a glimpse of the president.

Your pool was escorted to its own train car and put in separate sleeper cabins, each of which contained four single bunkbed-style beds. Your pooler was told by a security officer that the train had approx. eight cars, including the engines. Most of the train was occupied by a heavy security presence.

A small group of passengers awaiting a separate train on the opposite side of the tracks were huddled in conversation and occasionally glanced over, but it was unclear if they could make out any of the activity unfolding before them.

The train was rolling from Przemyśl Główny at 9:37 p.m. Your pooler was told by an agent on board that the train crossed the border into Ukraine at roughly 10:00 p.m. but is in the midst of confirming.

Much of the journey occurred in the dark and so there was little visible beyond streetlights and the shadows of buildings in the distance. There was no interaction between your pool and White House staff traveling with the president throughout the 10-hour journey, nor any sightings of Biden on his favorite mode of transport.

There were a handful of stops, at least once to pick up additional security, along the way. It was not always clear what prompted the stops, most of which were brief, and your pool was isolated from the staff on board.

### **Arrival in Kyiv**

As the train carrying President Biden approached Kyiv, the sun had risen and views from the window largely consisted of graffiti walls, barren winter trees and a colorful assortment of brick homes — many of them in pastel colors.

The train came to a stop at the Kyiv-Pasazhyrsky station at roughly 8:00 a.m. local time. The area around the platform had been cleared and U.S. ambassador to Ukraine Bridget Brink awaited Biden and his staff in chilly outdoor conditions.

Jake Sullivan and Jen O'Malley Dillon got off the train and were followed by Biden minutes later at 8:07 a.m. As mentioned earlier, the president's first words after stepping off the train were: "It's good to be back in Kyiv."

The motorcade, which again was a mix of SUVs, minivans and armored vehicles, was rolling from the train station at 8:18 a.m. en route to Mariinsky Palace. Along the way, the motorcade passed Kyiv's Independence Square, or Maidan, the site of major demonstrations in 2013-2014.

You know the rest from Kyiv already. But as a reminder, the president's stops consisted of:

- Meeting with President Zelensky at Mariinsky Palace
- Walkabout with Zelensky at St. Michael's Cathedral
- Stop at U.S. Embassy in Kyiv

As mentioned above, Biden departed Kyiv by the same train just before 1:10 p.m.



The ride was long and uneventful. The train crossed the border back into Poland shortly after 8 p.m. local time (note time change from Kyiv).

The train arrived at the Przemyśl Główny at 8:45 p.m. Once again, your pool did not see Biden get off the train or get into his car.

Motorcade was rolling at 9 p.m.

More to come...

## *And, finally, this tweet from Sabrina Siddiqui*

@SabrinaSiddiqui

Thanks for the kind words, everyone. I was kind of a wreck going into this trip thinking about traveling without my baby girl for the very first time -- and that's when I thought we were just going to Warsaw! Glad Sofia's mama will have a pretty cool story for her one day.

## Today in History - Feb. 21, 2023



Today is Tuesday, Feb. 21, the 52nd day of 2023. There are 313 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 21, 1975, former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and former White House aides H.R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman were sentenced to 2 1/2 to 8 years in prison for their roles in the Watergate cover-up (each ended up serving 1 1/2 years).

### On this date:

In 1437, James I, King of Scots, was assassinated; his 6-year-old son succeeded him as James II.

In 1885, the Washington Monument was dedicated.

In 1911, composer Gustav Mahler, despite a fever, conducted the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall in what turned out to be his final concert (he died the following May).

In 1964, the first shipment of U.S. wheat purchased by the Soviet Union arrived in the port of Odessa.

In 1965, minister and civil rights activist Malcolm X, 39, was shot to death inside Harlem's Audubon Ballroom in New York. (Three men identified as members of the Nation of Islam were convicted of murder and imprisoned; all were eventually paroled. The convictions of two of the men were dismissed in November 2021; prosecutors said new evidence had undermined the case against them.)

In 1972, President Richard M. Nixon began his historic visit to China as he and his wife, Pat, arrived in Beijing.

In 1973, Israeli fighter planes shot down Libyan Arab Airlines Flight 114 over the Sinai Desert, killing all but five of the 113 people on board.

In 1992, Kristi Yamaguchi (yah-mah-GOO'-chee) of the United States won the gold medal in ladies' figure skating at the Albertville Olympics; Midori Ito (mee-doh-ree ee-toh) of Japan won the silver, Nancy Kerrigan of the U.S. the bronze.

In 1995, Chicago adventurer Steve Fossett became the first person to fly solo across the Pacific Ocean by balloon, landing in Leader, Saskatchewan, Canada.

In 2019, teachers in Oakland, California, went on strike in the latest in a wave of teacher activism that had included walkouts in Denver, Los Angeles and West Virginia.

In 2020, a temporary truce between the United States and the Taliban in Afghanistan took effect, setting the stage for the two sides to sign a peace deal the following week.

Ten years ago: Opposition activists said at least 31 people were killed in a car bomb attack in Damascus near the headquarters of the ruling Baath party and the Russian Embassy. Drew Peterson, the Chicago-area police officer who gained notoriety after his much-younger fourth wife, Stacy Peterson, vanished in 2007, was sentenced to 38 years in prison for murdering his third wife, Kathleen Savio.

Five years ago: The Rev. Billy Graham, a confidant of presidents and the most widely heard Christian evangelist in history, died at his North Carolina home at age 99. A week after the Florida school shooting, President Donald Trump met with teen survivors of school violence and parents of slain children; Trump promised to be "very strong on background checks" and suggested he supported letting some teachers and other school employees carry weapons. Thousands of protesters swarmed the Florida state Capitol, calling for changes to gun laws, a ban on assault-type weapons and improved care for the mentally ill. The NBA fined Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban \$600,000 for saying he had recently told some of his players that "losing is our best option." (The Mavericks had one of the league's worst records, putting them in position to land a high draft pick.)

One year ago: Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered forces to “maintain peace” in separatist regions of eastern Ukraine, hours after the Kremlin recognized the area’s independence. The announcement raised fears that an invasion was imminent. (It would come three days later.) British Prime Minister Boris Johnson scrapped the last domestic coronavirus restrictions in England, including the requirement for people with COVID-19 to self-isolate. Italy’s Mount Etna roared back to spectacular action after months of relative quiet.

Today’s birthdays: Actor Gary Lockwood is 86. Actor-director Richard Beymer is 84. Actor Peter McEnery is 83. Film/music company executive David Geffen is 80. Actor Tyne Daly is 77. Actor Anthony Daniels is 77. Tricia Nixon Cox is 77. Former Sen. Olympia J. Snowe, R-Maine, is 76. Rock musician Jerry Harrison (Talking Heads) is 74. Actor Christine Ebersole is 70. Actor William Petersen is 70. Actor Kelsey Grammer is 68. Singer/guitarist Larry Campbell is 68. Country singer Mary Chapin Carpenter is 65. Actor Kim Coates is 65. Actor Jack Coleman is 65. Actor Christopher Atkins is 62. Actor William Baldwin is 60. Sen. Mark Kelly, D-Ariz., is 59. Rock musician Michael Ward is 56. Actor Aunjanue Ellis is 54. Blues musician Corey Harris is 54. Country singer Eric Heatherly is 53. Rock musician Eric Wilson is 53. Rock musician Tad Kinchla (Blues Traveler) is 50. Singer Rhiannon Giddens (Carolina Chocolate Drops) is 46. Actor Tituss Burgess is 44. Actor Jennifer Love Hewitt is 44. Comedian-actor Jordan Peele is 44. Actor Brendan Sexton III is 43. Singer Charlotte Church is 37. Actor Ashley Greene is 36. Actor Elliot Page is 36. Actor Corbin Bleu is 34. Actor Hayley Orrantia is 29. Actor Sophie Turner is 27.

## 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!

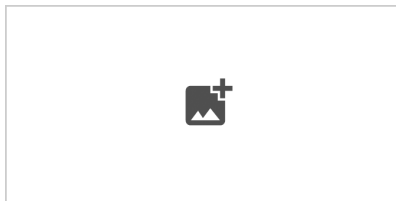


Here are some suggestions:

- **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.

**Paul Stevens**  
Editor, Connecting newsletter  
[paulstevens46@gmail.com](mailto:paulstevens46@gmail.com)



Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for? (Audience) Why should they care? (Benefit) What do I want them to do here? (Call-to-Action)

Create a great offer by adding words like "free" "personalized" "complimentary" or "customized." A sense of urgency often helps readers take an action, so think about inserting phrases like "for a limited time only" or "only 7 remaining"!

Connecting newsletter | 14719 W 79th Ter, Lenexa, KS 66215

[Unsubscribe stevenspl@live.com](mailto:stevenspl@live.com)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by paulstevens46@gmail.com powered by





Try email marketing for free today!