



# 2009

## WHNPA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

### BOB DAUGHERTY



PHOTO BY TOM ANGELL

Born in a three-room wooden house in rural Kentucky, Bob Daugherty didn't pick up a camera until high school. The son of a sharecropper, he shined shoes for spare money during childhood. It was the camera that gave him a new window on the world. "It was love at first sight," he said, "and I never looked back." A long way from helping his father on a tobacco farm, Daugherty made it to the nation's capital to capture images at key moments in White House history, including the Watergate scandal, the first Middle East peace talks at Camp David and Richard Nixon's groundbreaking visit to China.

Daugherty started out taking photos for \$1 an hour in high school. A few years after high school, he joined The Indianapolis Star. The AP recognized his skills, and he landed at the Indianapolis AP bureau in 1963. He was shipped three years later to the Washington bureau, where he quickly earned his reputation.

One Saturday in March 1968, he was pushing the White House press office to let him take a photo of President Lyndon Johnson writing a speech. The president was planning a televised address the next day. The office initially denied Daugherty but finally relented. Daugherty and a UPI photographer swooped into the Cabinet Room on the Saturday afternoon to catch sight of Johnson with his collar open and tie loosened, looking wilted — an image forever linked to the Johnson administration and the subsequent speech in which he announced he would not seek re-election.

Daugherty's perseverance and foresight continued to pay off. His favorite photo is one he took of President Jimmy Carter during what was expected to be a routine motorcade to a town hall in Kentucky in 1979. Daugherty gambled on staying with Carter while most of the media drove ahead to the school auditorium where the president would speak. Carter surprised everyone by leaving his limousine during the crowded motorcade route.

"He slid up over the windshield on the top of the car and at one point was practically laying flat on the roof," Daugherty said. "You must stay alert when you're with the president. You must be prepared."

Daugherty was also swift. He had to be in the days when different cameras were needed to make color or black and white photos. Timing was key to capture multiple images of Carter clasping hands with the Egyptian president and Israeli prime minister after the two country's

peace treaty signing in March 1979.

"It was maddening," Daugherty said about switching cameras. "It happened pretty fast. One second in photography is an eternity."

The photos, almost identical in color and black and white, became arguably the definitive picture of the peace agreement. Soon after, Daugherty became the bureau's chief photographer. By 1991, he was the AP's assistant chief of bureau for photos in Washington. Around that time, he had photographed about 10 presidents, from Dwight D. Eisenhower to Bill Clinton.

By 1997, he was director of the AP's State Photo Center in Washington, where he acted just as fast. Shortly after the shuttle Columbia disintegrated over Texas in February 2003, a Texas newspaper alerted the AP to a cardiologist in the area who had taken the most detailed photos of the disaster. Major publications were scrambling to get the photos. Daugherty naturally stepped up as the AP's pitch man and scored the deal.

"It was on nearly any front page you could find in the world the next day," he said.

Daugherty, who has been married to Stephanie Hoppes Daugherty for 46 years, was given AP's top award for a staffer, the Oliver S. Gramling Achievement Award. The White House News Photographers Association is pleased to present Daugherty with its 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award.