

For Immediate Release

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Associated Press To Carry Bloggers' Coverage of Libby Trial

Wire service partners with Media Bloggers Association to put bloggers' coverage of high-profile trial of former Cheney aide on more than 600 newspapers' websites.

WASHINGTON DC, January 23, 2006 – The Associated Press has partnered with the Media Bloggers Association to distribute its members' coverage of the trial of Lewis "Scooter" Libby, former chief of staff for Vice President Dick Cheney, to the news organization's member websites, the news agency announced today.

The U.S. District Court in Washington D.C. has provided the MBA with credentials for two media seats at the Libby trial, which started Jan. 16 with jury selection. With jury selection now completed, the trial began in earnest with opening arguments today.

Libby is accused of perjury, obstruction of justice and lying to the FBI during its investigation of the leak of the identity of former CIA operative Valerie Plame to journalists. His trial is expected to last four to six weeks.

Twelve members of the Media Bloggers Association are sharing the two media seats on a rotating basis. Blogger coverage of the trial is available on the bloggers' individual web sites and also collected on the MBA's website.

The AP's decision to carry the bloggers' Libby trial coverage is another milestone in the emergence of grassroots-generated journalism, says Robert Cox, president of the Media Bloggers Association.

"The AP's decision to redistribute MBA-bloggers' coverage of the Libby trial to its members websites means that bloggers' coverage of the trial will be available to the readers of more than 650 newspapers' websites nationwide and around the world," said Cox. "This is a great step forward in the relationship between news bloggers and the mainstream media."

The MBA, which has about 1,000 members, is covering the trial from the overflow Media Center, which is equipped with video, allowing viewing of the trial, and Wi-Fi (wireless internet access), allowing the MBA to wirelessly syndicate a real-time feed of blogger coverage of the Libby trial.

The MBA is currently rolling out new standards and programs designed to increase the journalistic skills of bloggers through training about legal and ethical obligations, and setting voluntary ethics standards and editorial policies such as how to handle corrections. The MBA is developing partnerships with other organizations for MBA members who adopt the voluntary standards.

About the Media Bloggers Association

The Media Bloggers Association (www.mediabloggers.org) is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to promoting, protecting and educating its members; supporting the development of "blogging" or "citizen journalism" as a distinct form of media; and helping to extend the power of the press, with all the rights and responsibilities that entails, to every citizen.

More information about the MBA coverage of the Scooter Libby Trial can be found by visiting ScooterLibbyTrial.com.

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