It's 12:15 a.m. Friday and I'm just getting around to my column. Not the best scenario but it happens.
Being a journalist/editor encompasses a lot of territory and many decisions are made as phones are ringing, people are asking questions and others are waiting for articles to place on pages — deadlines, deadlines, deadlines. Some turn out good, some OK and some are regretted. None are made maliciously or with the intent to harm.

We also follow the AP Stylebook when writing articles. It is the "how-to" guide for most journalists.

One thing that has come to my attention: the average person doesn't know nor probably cares about journalistic etiquette. Rules that seem simple and make perfect sense to us and are followed because they are rules may not seem correct or logical to others. Trust me, there are even some that don't make sense to us, either.

For instance, when a dateline — the first thing you read in a story and tells you where the event happened — is in Ohio, the state is removed. It is "supposed" to be understood the event happened in the state of the person reading the story; therefore, you don't need to tell them where they are. They are supposed to know.

When relating places of interest outside the state, the state is included in the first reference and dropped in subsequent mentions. For example: "John Doe was raised in Greenville, N.M." The following references to his hometown are just Greenville, even though there is a Greenville in nearly every state. Some would say mentioning the state again wouldn't hurt. True. But it takes up space and space is precious in a newspaper. The more space you save, the more room you have for more news. That's what it's all about.

Another rule is: time, date, place: "The Kiwanis will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Eagles Lodge." Forever and ever, amen.

There are rules for just about everything. The months of March, April, May, June and July are never abbreviated. Numbers one through nine are spelled out and 10-infinity are actual

numbers. The first reference to an ordained minister is “the Rev. So and So” and subsequent references are just “Rev. So and So.”

I won’t bore you with any more AP Stylebook rules and the like. Heck, I don’t even want to talk about them. When I have a question, I pull it out and check myself. There’s one on every desk in the newsroom.

We also have the luxury of making some of our own policies, standards and practices. They just need to be consistent so we can tell people “this is the way we do it” and it’s that way every time.

What I guess I want you to know is there is a method to our madness. Even though sometimes it is madness.

Editor’s note: It’s a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World is a 1963 American comedy film produced and directed by Stanley Kramer about the madcap pursuit of $350,000 in stolen cash by a diverse and colorful group of strangers. The ensemble comedy premiered on Nov. 7, 1963. The star-studded cast included: Spencer Tracy, Sid Caesar, Milton Berle, Ethel Merman, Mickey Rooney, Jimi Backus, Jimmy Durante, Peter Falk, Jerry Lewis, Don Knotts too many more to mention. It was right up my dad’s alley with car chases and crashes — his favorite.