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Connecting - August 25, 2016

1 message

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Thu, Aug 25, 2016 at 9:06 AM

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Connecting

August 25, 2016

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Top AP news
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AP Essentials *(Purchases benefit The AP Emergency Relief Fund)*

Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning!

We lead with announcement by the AP of the new AP News app - AP News.

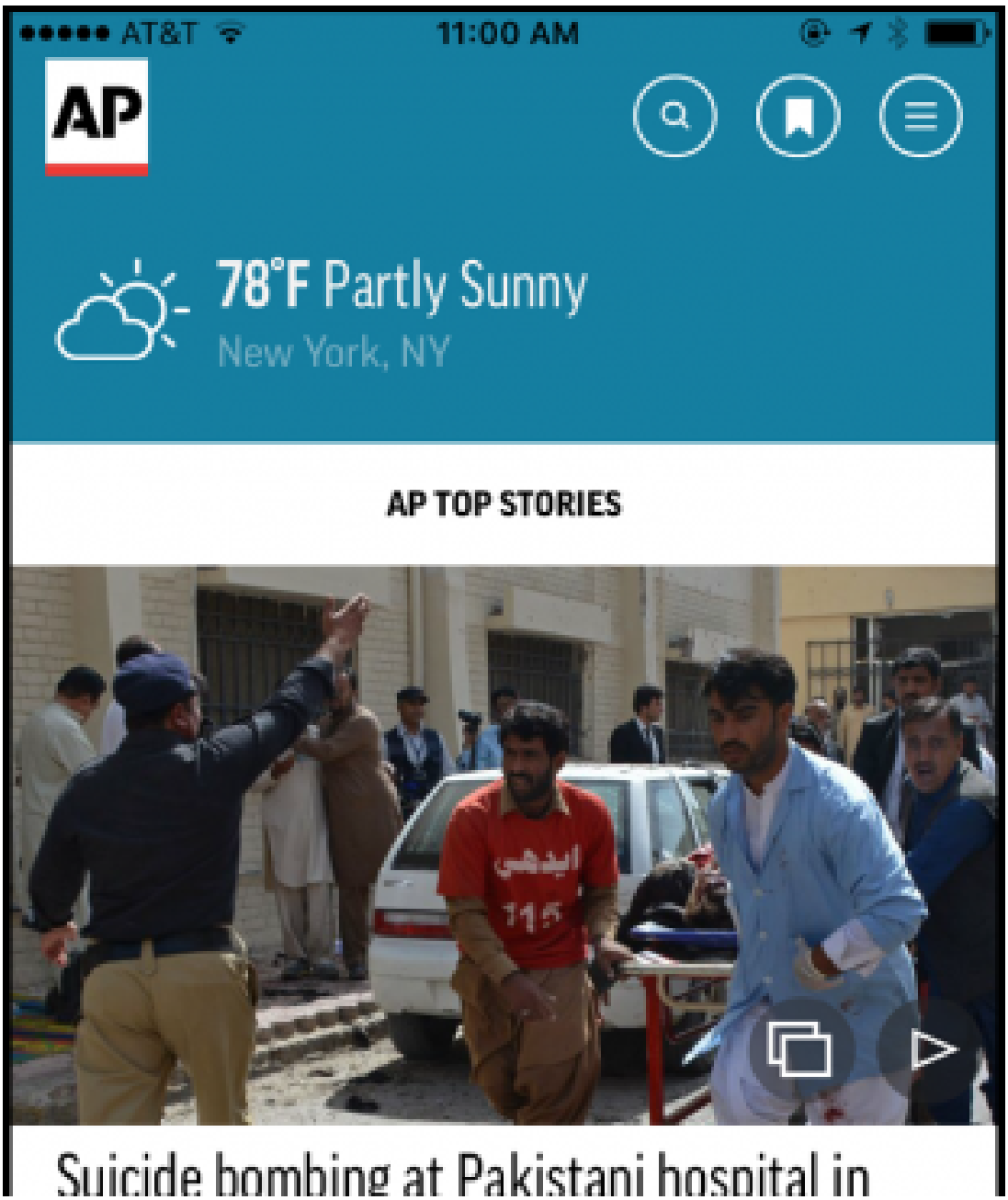
The Associated Press is in the news this week with controversy over a major AP report that raised serious ethical questions over ties between the State Department

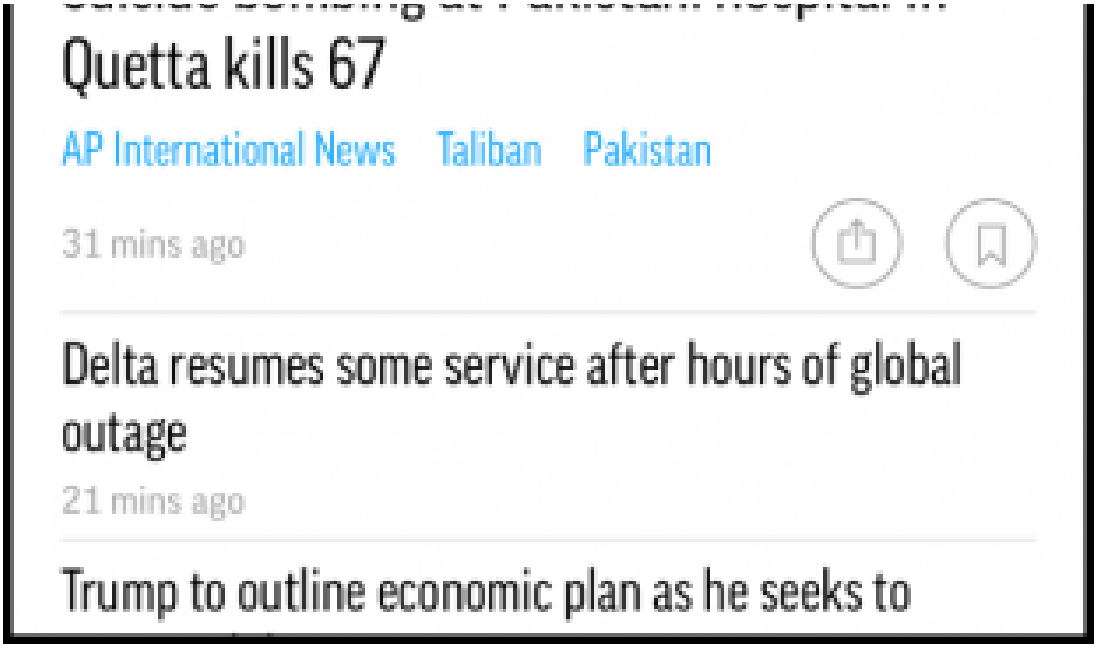
under Hillary Clinton and her family's charitable organization, with Clinton's team arguing that the AP data was woefully out of context.

Connecting brings you a story on the allegations, the AP's response and a response to the AP response.

Paul

Stay connected with the new AP News app





By LAUREN EASTON
The Associated Press

There's a new offering from The Associated Press available in the App Store: AP News.

The free app lets users personalize their news experience in a big way so they can stay on top of breaking stories of special interest to them. They can do this by customizing their news feed, choosing to follow specific topics and newsmakers as they appear in developing stories- whether it's Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan or Beyonce- and setting up news alerts by subject.

Easier workflow allows for more AP video. Users will also find curated pages by topic, including politics and sports, shareable collections and more local content from AP member news organizations. Moreover, the app seamlessly transitions users to members' websites for this local coverage, giving the outlets a traffic benefit.

"There are a lot of news products on the market, but AP News is really built for you, the user," says AP's global director of mobile, Michael Boord.

He describes the features of AP News in this video.

AP News is currently available for iOS users. You can download it here.

Tell us what you think about AP News by sending an email to info@ap.org. Write the word "app" in your subject line.

Click here for a link to this story that includes the video mentioned above.

AP's Bombshell Clinton Foundation Report Comes Under Scrutiny

By MICHAEL CALDERONE
The Huffington Post

Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign fired back Wednesday after a major Associated Press report raised serious ethical questions over ties between the State Department under Clinton and her family's charitable organization, with Clinton's team arguing that the AP data was woefully out of context.

The AP found that of the 154 meetings Clinton held with private officials (i.e., those not in the domestic or foreign governments), 85 of those were with people who "gave money - either personally or through companies or groups - to the Clinton Foundation."

The finding set off a round of criticism aimed at Clinton for blurring ethical lines and granting access to friends and high bidders. But in the hours that followed, questions began to mount about the presentation of the AP story.

The AP got called out for a misleading (and widely shared) tweet accompanying the report that made it appear that half of all Clinton's meetings - not just those with private officials - had taken place with foundation donors. Vox's Matthew Yglesias challenged the broader thrust of the AP's story even further, arguing that the AP framed its findings as more scandalous than they warranted. Though Yglesias acknowledged that potential links between Clinton's State Department and the candidate deserved scrutiny, he argued that donors who apparently received preferential access actually deserved it and were pushing unobjectionable, noble causes.

Click here to read more. Shared by Bill Beecham.

AP statement on Clinton Foundation donors

Vice President and Director of Media Relations Paul Colford issued this statement Wednesday, adding background information about AP's report on contact between Hillary Clinton and donors to the Clinton Foundation during her tenure as secretary of state.

The Associated Press' reporting relied on publicly available data provided by the State Department about Hillary Clinton's meetings, phone calls and emails, cross-referenced against donor information provided by the Clinton Foundation and its related charities on its websites.

As AP wrote, our reporting was based on Mrs. Clinton's calendars covering the entirety of her tenure as secretary of state and on more detailed schedules of meetings and phone calls covering roughly half that period. AP first requested Mrs. Clinton's calendars and schedules in 2010 and again in 2013 but was unsuccessful. AP then sued the State Department in federal court to obtain the schedules it has received so far. AP expects to receive the remaining files before Election Day and will continue to examine them and report on their contents.

AP has been transparent in how it has reported this story. It focused on Mrs. Clinton's meetings and calls involving people outside government who were not federal employees or foreign diplomats, because meeting with U.S. or foreign government officials would inherently have been part of her job as secretary of state.

We focused on Mrs. Clinton's meetings and calls involving those people outside her duties as secretary of state whom she chose to include in her busy schedule.

This reporting was done by the same AP investigative team that discovered Mrs. Clinton's private email server and traced it to her basement in Chappaqua, New York, and whose reporting last week resulted in the resignation of Donald Trump's top campaign strategist. AP has been examining issues facing the presidential candidates and will continue to do so.

Click here for a link to this response, shared by Paul Colford.

Vox: The AP's defense of its bad Clinton Foundation story is also bad

By MATTHEW YGLESIAS
VOX.com

Paul Colford, vice president and director of media relations at the Associated Press, issued a statement Wednesday afternoon defending AP's reporting on Hillary Clinton's meetings with Clinton Foundation donors, which has been widely criticized (by me, for example) for some deeply misleading framing.

The AP reported, with much heavy breathing and insinuation, about Clinton holding meetings as secretary of state with people who had also donated money to the Clinton Foundation. It did not, however, appear to uncover anything at all improper resulting from these meetings. And it used to some questionable math to make the meetings seem much more common than they were.

The initial article was bad, and while the defense of the article usefully clarifies a key point, it is also bad.

Click here to read more. Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

One of first alerts to attack on American University in Kabul comes from AP photographer

Afghan security forces rush to respond to a complex Taliban attack on the campus of the American University in the Afghan capital Kabul on Wednesday. "We are trying to assess the situation," President Mark English told The Associated Press. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

A Washington Post story:

KABUL - Gunmen stormed the American University of Afghanistan here Wednesday evening after setting off a powerful explosion nearby, sending panicked students scrambling for safety on the highly guarded campus in the Afghan capital.

Early Thursday, Kabul police reported that the gun battle had ended shortly before dawn, with all attackers killed. They said 11 people had died in the campus assault, including seven students, and that 30 more people had been injured.

In the story:

One of the first alerts about the attack came from Massoud Hossaini, a Pulitzer-winning photojournalist from the Associated Press who was inside the campus at the time. At 7:23 p.m. local time, he tweeted, "Help we are stuck inside AUAF and shooting followed by explo this may be my last tweets."

But the AP bureau chief in Kabul, Lynne O'Donnell, tweeted soon afterward that all her staff members were safe, and Hossaini deleted his tweets. Other Twitter users on and off campus sent a flurry of emotional messages after the explosion, which was loud enough to be heard across the capital. Many friends and relatives sought news or tried to console and reassure one another.

Click here for a link to this story. Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

Connecting mailbox

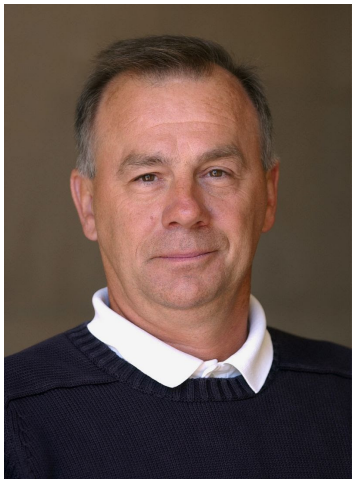
A sobering realization

Marty Thompson (Email) - Lynn Sherr's lead hit home here (see Wednesday's Connecting). Janet and I thought about it and realized that, like Lynn, both of our mothers were born before women had the right to vote. Sobering.

-0-

Celebrating the life of Mark Chellgren

Susan Wyman (Email) - Bones (as longtime AP Kentucky statehouse reporter Mark Chellgren was known) was remembered Wednesday morning as a top-notch journalist, a good-times parrothead, an avid golfer, a world traveler, a warm friend, a beach and sailing fanatic, a great storyteller, a collector of Hawaiian shirts (there were 37 ironed and ready to go in his closet), oh, and a collector of lovely women.



About three dozen family members (some clad in their brother's island shirts), friends, golfing buddies, and former press corps colleagues swapped stories and looked at a low-tech photo board at an Ashland, Kentucky, funeral home before a Methodist minister stepped in to make it official.

It was not the raucous party Bones might have planned. When someone suggested cranking up the Jimmy Buffet tunes playing softly in the background, the funeral director (I don't think they call them morticians anymore) apologized and said with a shrug, "This is, after all, a funeral home."

Bones had moved back to Ashland from Key West a few years ago and was living with a sister at the family home out on Ranch Road where they grew up. He still enjoyed golf, but had curtailed his travel.

Family members told us that Bones had had some health problems, including cardio issues and maybe some mini-strokes, but had declined to get medical help.

"He could be pretty stubborn," his sister Susan told us.

There was a family history of early cardio deaths, and that's what happened to Bones Saturday night. He had a massive heart attack in his bedroom, the same bedroom he had as a kid.

"Yep, he had come home," Susan said.

Some press corps folks who were there that some of you might know: Chuck Wolfe (AP), Jack Brammer (Lexington Herald-Leader), Ferrell Wellman (WAVE, KET, WLEX).

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Connecting sky shot - over the Baltic Sea

New Connecting member **Mike Tsukamoto** (**Email**) shares this U.S. Air Force photo, which carries this caption:

A U.S. Air Force B-52 Stratofortress leads a formation of aircraft including two Polish air force F-16 Fighting Falcons, four U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons, two German Eurofighter Typhoons and four Swedish Gripens over the Baltic Sea, June 9, 2016. Deployed forces are working in tandem with naval forces to enhance flexibility and interoperability with participating NATO allies and partner nations by conducting a series of realistic, combined flying training including air defense, maritime awareness and support to amphibious operations during Baltic Operations 2016. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Erin Babis)

Mike, who is photo editor for Air Force Magazine, once worked as a photo stringer for the AP in Honolulu, working mostly with then-CoB Howard Graves, and spent 32 years with Gannett - 23 at USA Today.

He notes for fellow photographers: The photo was shot by Senior Airman Erin Babis from the boom operator's position on a KC-135 tanker, 434th Air Refueling Wing, Grissom Air Reserve Base, Indiana, using a Nikon D4 with a 24-70 2.8 lens set at 58mm. Exposure was 1/1000 sec at f4. All aircraft were on a NATO exercise over the Baltic Sea, operating out of Powidz Air Base, Poland.

AP BEST OF THE STATES

Cross-format AP coverage of Louisiana flooding

Daniel Stover, 17, moves a boat of personal belongings from a friend's flooded home in Sorrento, La., on Saturday. ***Max Becherer/AP***

By JOHN DANISZEWSKI

Many media were slow to respond to the historic flooding in Louisiana this month, but not The Associated Press. AP journalists provided timely, perceptive and poignant spot and enterprise stories from the very first hours of the torrential rains.

Aggressive cross-format coverage by a staff focused on stories of real people were key to covering the disaster. In text, the reporters included New Orleans administrative correspondent Rebecca Santana; Baton Rouge correspondent Melinda Deslatte; and newsmen Mike Kunzelman in Baton Rouge and Kevin McGill in New Orleans. Freelance photographer Max Becherer and video journalists John Mone of Houston, and Josh Replogle of Miami rounded out AP's team on the ground.

Conditions were tough. Staffers had to navigate flood waters and closed roadways. When it wasn't raining it was hot and muggy. Replogle waded through chest deep waters with his camera clutched above his head to get a shot of a family returning to their home for the first time and finding their cat alive. Becherer drove through darkness to connect with the National Guard in Livingston Parish, spent half a day riding through precariously high waters with the Guard and then slept in the back of his truck.

Deep South Editor Jim Van Anglen coordinated among staff and the regional desk to ensure AP had a clear focus each day - something that allowed AP to move the story line forward instead of just reacting to the news.

AP journalists covered the heart-wrenching stories of those caught in the rising waters, weaving those into the harder news. They framed coverage each day around reporting threads, drawing on experience gained from covering other major disasters such as Hurricane Katrina. One piece focused on how a so-called 1,000-year storm caught everyone by surprise. Another was about the housing crisis to come as residents sought places to stay; and yet others detailed the gruesome problem of caskets being unearthed and the searches of homes for survivors.

One story recounted the hellish summer the city of Baton Rouge has endured following the shooting death of a black man by police, the subsequent ambush of three law enforcement officers and now the flooding. In spite of those difficulties, the story struck an unexpectedly encouraging note as people talked about how the flooding caused them to come together.

"This is a lovely, surprisingly hopeful step-back story," Marjorie Miller, vice president and director of global news and enterprise, wrote to the staff.

"You have had a summer of pain, too, covering these awful stories. And it was great that you could see this light in such dark days."

In other highlights, Deslatte was one of the few reporters to fly with the governor when he surveyed thedamage by air - a request she knew to make because she'd covered Katrina and knew how important those helicopter trips were. Other reporters soon began putting in similar requests.

Becherer alone on the ground over the weekend arranged for editors to contact the people he photographed by telephone so they could be interviewed, part of the crucial teamwork that allowed AP to deliver stories rich in detail _ such as a story about the struggles of one small church congregation.

Mone and Replogle covered the return of evacuees whose homes had been destroyed; family members searching for the caskets of loved ones, swept away from cemeteries by the high waters; and a makeshift animal shelter set up by volunteers to save rescued pets. An example: http://bit.ly/2bZqam2

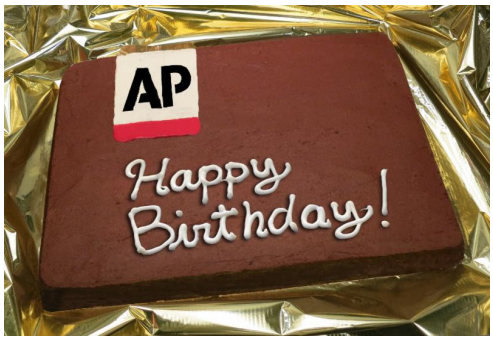
Deslatte also found time during the week to also help score a sports scoop on the NBA moving its all-star game to New Orleans next year.

AP's flood coverage played strongly in all corners of Louisiana and beyond. Play included hundreds of thousands of total engagements and thousands of Tweets. Mesfin Fekadu's exclusive (http://apne.ws/2ba4Wlq) about Taylor Swift donating $1 million to relief efforts alone garnered 240,000 engagements/6,000 Tweets. Becherer's photos made many front pages, including The New York Times. Among his photos: http://n.pr/2bvjoEe

For their grit, stamina and creativity in setting the news agenda on a major story, Santana, Deslatte, Kunzelman, McGill, Becherer, Mone and Replogle share this week's $300 Best of States prize.

(Shared by Valerie Komor)

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Joe McKnight - jbmatap@aol.com

Reid Miller - mizunga@yahoo.com

Welcome to Connecting

Adriana Wiersma - awiersma7@gmail.com

Mike Tsukamoto - mtsukamoto@afa.org

Stories of interest

Hillary Clinton's press conference problem, explained (Vox)

In a presidential election cycle when the media has felt unusually free from the conventional constraints of "both sides" reporting, mostly to Donald Trump's detriment, there is one issue where the mainstream press has been willing to take the gloves off against Hillary Clinton: press conferences.

Specifically, Hillary Clinton does not hold press conferences. That doesn't mean she doesn't speak to the press - she's done lots of interviews - but she doesn't stand up, on or off camera, in front of the traveling Clinton campaign press corps and take questions in an unscripted setting. She sits down with selected journalists for formal interviews, but doesn't engage in on the record give-and-take with the slew of campaign reporters whose jobs are to follow her around every day. And you can tell from the subtext of these complaints that she's not exactly popping by the back of the bus to shoot the breeze off-the-record style, either.

It frustrates the people who cover her on a daily basis. Beyond that, political reporters tend not to view it as an interesting campaign tactic, but instead as a kind of affront to American democracy. USA Today's David Colton deems it "worthy of concern" on par with Donald Trump's total lack of financial disclosure.

Click here to read more. Shared by Mike Holmes.

-0-

Want to become a better writer? Follow these 7 steps, and look for new tools every day (Poynter)

By ROY PETER CLARK

Somewhere in a deep corner of my files, there is a single piece of paper with just a few words on it that changed my life as a writer and teacher.

It was presented in 1982 to a seminar of writers gathered around a table in a decrepit bank building that served as the original home of what was to become the Poynter Institute. The presenter was Donald Murray, a professor at the University of New Hampshire and writing coach at The Boston Globe and Providence Journal.

Murray argued that good writing sometimes felt like magic to the reader, especially if the reader was also a writer. But magical thinking was not healthy for writers. Better to think of good writing as a craft, a set of tasks and habits, a number of steps, a process.

I remember thinking "OK, wise old man with a white beard, what are those steps? What is that process?"

Murray's original process looked something like this:

Idea

Collect

Focus

Draft

Clarify

Five easy pieces to the writing process.

Click here to read more.

Today in History - August 25, 2016

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Aug. 25, the 238th day of 2016. There are 128 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 25, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed an act establishing the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior.

On this date:

In 1718, hundreds of French colonists arrived in Louisiana, with some settling in present-day New Orleans.

In 1825, Uruguay declared independence from Brazil.

In 1921, the United States signed a peace treaty with Germany.

In 1944, during World War II, Paris was liberated by Allied forces after four years of Nazi occupation. Romania declared war on former ally Germany.

In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a measure providing pensions for former U.S. presidents and their widows.

In 1960, opening ceremonies were held for the Summer Olympics in Rome.

In 1975, the Bruce Springsteen album "Born to Run" was released by Columbia Records.

In 1981, the U.S. spacecraft Voyager 2 came within 63,000 miles of Saturn's cloud cover, sending back pictures of and data about the ringed planet.

In 1989, Voyager 2 made its closest approach to Neptune, its final planetary target.

In 1998, retired Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell died in Richmond, Virginia, at age 90.

In 2001, Mette-Marit Tjessem Hoiby (meh-tay mar-it shes-em hoy-bee), a single mother and former waitress, married Norway's Crown Prince Haakon (hoh-uh-kahn) in Oslo. Rhythm-and-blues singer Aaliyah (ah-LEE'-yah) was killed with eight others in a plane crash in the Bahamas; she was 22.

In 2009, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy died at age 77 in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts, after a battle with a brain tumor.

Ten years ago: A college student's checked luggage on a Continental Airlines flight that had arrived in Houston from Buenos Aires, Argentina, was found to contain a stick of dynamite, one of six security incidents that day that caused U.S. flights to be diverted, evacuated or searched. Joseph Stefano, who wrote the screenplay for Alfred Hitchcock's "Psycho," died in Thousand Oaks, California, at age 84.

Five years ago: Fifty-two people were killed in a fire at a casino in the northern Mexican city of Monterrey that was allegedly targeted by a drug cartel. The New York Yankees became the first team in major league history to hit three grand slams in a game, with Robinson Cano, Russell Martin and Curtis Granderson connecting in a 22-9 romp over the Oakland Athletics.

One year ago: French authorities formally opened a terrorism investigation into a foiled attack four days earlier; a prosecutor said minutes before he slung an assault rifle across his chest and walked through a high-speed train, suspect Ayoub El-Khazzani of Morocco watched a jihadi video on his cellphone.

Today's Birthdays: Game show host Monty Hall is 95. Actor Sean Connery is 86. Actor Page Johnson is 86. TV personality Regis Philbin is 85. Actor Tom Skerritt is 83. Jazz musician Wayne Shorter is 83. Movie director Hugh Hudson is 80. Author Frederick Forsyth is 78. Movie director John Badham is 77. Filmmaker Marshall Brickman is 77. Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal is 74. Rhythm-and-blues singer Walter Williams (The O'Jays) is 73. Actor Anthony Heald

is 72. Rock singer-actor Gene Simmons is 67. Actor John Savage is 67. Country singer-musician Henry Paul (Outlaws; Blackhawk) is 67. Rock singer Rob Halford is 65. Rock musician Geoff Downes (Asia) is 64. Rock singer Elvis Costello is 62. Movie director Tim Burton is 58. Actor Christian LeBlanc is 58. Actress Ashley Crow is 56. Actress Ally Walker is 55. Country singer Billy Ray Cyrus is 55. Actress Joanne Whalley is 55. Rock musician Vivian Campbell (Def Leppard) is 54. Actor Blair Underwood is 52. Actor Robert Maschio is 50. Rap DJ Terminator X (Public Enemy) is 50. Alternative country singer Jeff Tweedy (Wilco) is 49. Actor David Alan Basche (BAYSH) is 48. Television chef Rachael Ray is 48. Actor Cameron Mathison is 47. Country singer Jo Dee Messina is 46. Model Claudia Schiffer is 46. Country singer Brice Long is 45. Actor Eric Millegan is 42. Actor Alexander Skarsgard is 40. Actor Jonathan Togo is 39. Actor Kel Mitchell is 38. Actress Rachel Bilson is 35. Actress Blake Lively is 29. Actor Josh Flitter is 22.

Thought for Today: "History is the sum total of the things that could have been avoided." - Konrad Adenauer, German statesman (1876-1967).

Got a story to share?

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:

- 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?

- 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.

- **Life after AP** for those of you who have moved on to another job or profession.

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

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