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## Connecting - August 25, 2017

1 message

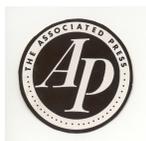
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Fri, Aug 25, 2017 at 8:45 AM

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# Connecting

August 25, 2017

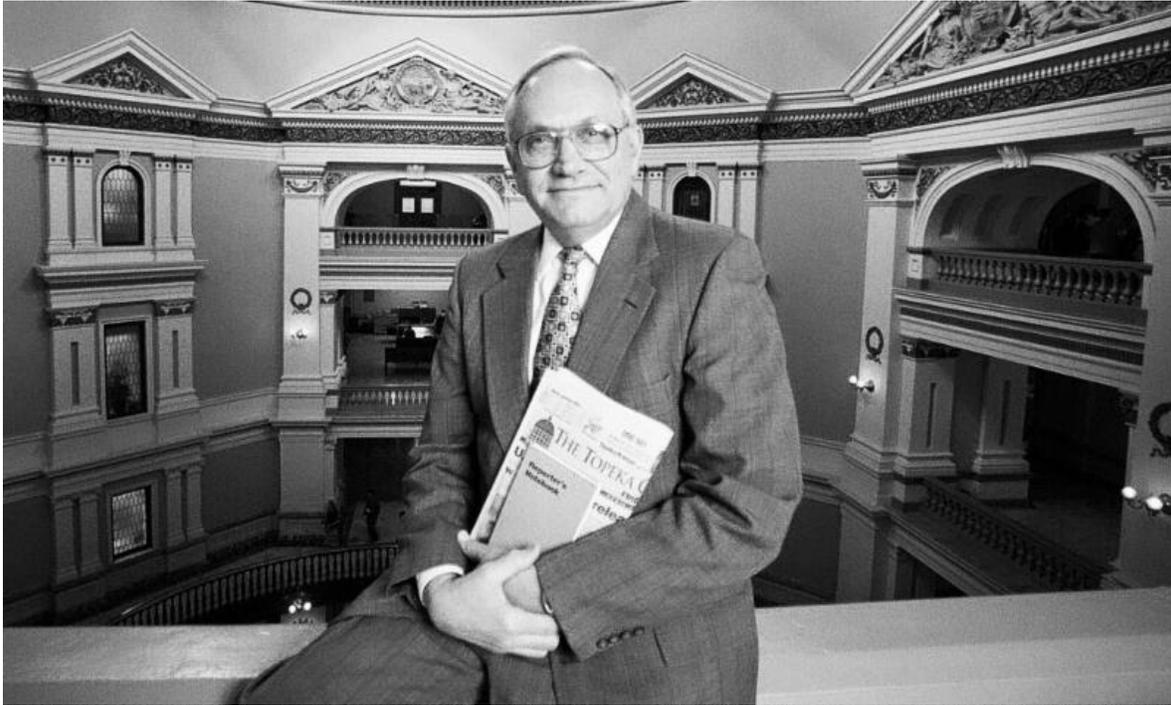
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## Lew Ferguson: Journalist and Mentor



Colleagues,

Good Friday morning!

It is with sadness that I bring you news of the death of **Lew Ferguson**, one of the most distinguished journalists ever to carry an Associated Press byline and a mentor to scores of young journalists - including one, **Sally Buzbee**, who has risen to the top news position in the news cooperative.

Lew died Thursday night at the Oklahoma Heart Hospital in Oklahoma City at the age of 83. He had suffered two serious heart attacks in March.

I was privileged to work with Lew in his role as Topeka correspondent and mine as Kansas City chief of bureau. We frequently traveled Kansas together on visits to members to get their pulse on politics and state government - and he claimed, correctly I suppose, that we never passed a Dairy Queen without stopping for a snack.

Our friendship continued after his retirement in 1999, when I was privileged to help host a retirement party that included dignitaries and colleagues and friends, and we continued to stay in touch when he and his wife Sue moved back to their native Oklahoma.

Just a week ago, Lew wrote to say he would be attending the AP Midwest reunion in Kansas City next month and that he had made a hotel reservation. In that note, he mentioned that he had had a "pleasant surprise" in a visit from former Topeka newsman **Barry Massey** and his wife Mary. Barry was among scores of journalists who learned from Lew, and excelled in his own statehouse correspondency, in Santa Fe.

He was the first AP boss for **Sally Streff Buzbee**, a University of Kansas journalism graduate who started her Associated Press career in Topeka as a legislative relief newswoman, later serving as Cairo chief of bureau, Washington chief of bureau and since last November, as executive editor of The Associated Press.

Lew will be missed. Connecting will let you know when services will be held. If you'd like to share a favorite memory of Lew, please send it along.

Paul

## Lew Ferguson dies at 83: Excelled as statehouse journalist and as mentor to many young journalists



Many who he mentored were at Lew Ferguson's induction into the Kansas Newspaper Hall of Fame in 2012. From left, John Hanna, Rochelle Olson, Kia Breaux, Peg Coughlin, Lew, Paul Stevens, Kent Zimmerman, Barry Massey, Bill Vogrin and Libby Quaid. (Kansas Press Association photo)

Lew Ferguson, who devoted most of his 42-year journalism career to coverage of Kansas government and politics for The Associated Press, died on Thursday at the age of 83.

His death at the Oklahoma Heart Hospital in Oklahoma City was confirmed by his daughter Diane Ferguson. Ferguson had suffered two serious heart attacks in March.

As statehouse correspondent in Topeka for 29 years, he was a reporter, editor and supervisor who trained scores of young writers for AP and member newspapers. The native Oklahoman was inducted into the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame in 2009 and Kansas Newspaper Hall of Fame in 2012.

Lewis LeRoy "Lew" Ferguson was born Jan. 9, 1934, on a farm in rural Kay County, Okla., that his grandfather, John S. Ferguson, claimed in the Cherokee Strip land rush of 1893. Both sets of his grandparents came to Oklahoma from Kansas.

He attended the University of Oklahoma on McMahon Foundation scholarships, earning a bachelor's degree in 1956 and a master's degree in 1964, both in journalism. He was named OU's outstanding graduate of 1956 by Sigma Delta Chi, the professional journalism society. He also was named a distinguished alumnus of OU's Herbert School of Journalism (now the Gaylord College) in 1996.

Lew returned to Ponca City, after graduate school and a stint in the Army as an officer commissioned out of OU's ROTC, to work two years (1958-60) as sports and wire editor of his hometown Ponca City News. In June 1958 he married Sue Thomson, an OU graduate and Ponca City native. They observed their 50th anniversary in 2008.

He joined the AP in Oklahoma City in June 1960, then was sent to Sioux Falls, S.D., as his first permanent duty station. He covered the 1961 session of the South Dakota Legislature, piquing his interest in government and political reporting.

Ferguson transferred in 1962 to AP's Minneapolis bureau to become its sports writer. In 1968, he was named the bureau's first fulltime sports writer. After covering the baseball Twins, pro football Vikings and University of Minnesota sports for seven years, Ferguson transferred in October 1968 to the Kansas City bureau as Big 8 Conference sports editor. He was on AP's coverage teams for the 1965, 1980 and 1985 World Series and the 1970 Super Bowl.

Declining a transfer to AP's New York sports staff, Ferguson chose to accept appointment as correspondent in charge of AP's Kansas Statehouse bureau in June 1970. He spent nearly three decades directing AP coverage of the Legislature, state government and courts, including 29 legislative sessions, six governors, 16 election cycles and nine national political conventions, five Republican and four Democratic.

He received the Kansas City Star's first Fred Moen award as outstanding AP staffer in Kansas and Missouri in 1992, and was recipient of the Kansas Supreme Court's prestigious Justice Award in 1993 for his coverage of the Kansas courts, the only working reporter ever so honored.



**Lew and Alf Landon - regular lunchmates for years**

When Ferguson retired from the AP in June 1999, a veritable Who's Who of Kansas politics attended his retirement party in Topeka. In addition to Governor Bill Graves and former U.S. Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker, in attendance were U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, Kansas Supreme Court Chief Justice Kay McFarland, state Insurance Commissioner Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh, former Gov. Bob Bennett and former Attorney General Vern Miller, as well as many Kansas newspaper people.

Kassebaum Baker told the gathering that Ferguson used to have lunch weekly with her late father, Alf Landon, the 1936 Republican presidential nominee.

"Perhaps the most gratifying reward a person can have is to be recognized by peers and colleagues at the end of a long and satisfying career," Ferguson said at his retirement party.

In retirement he served a four-year term on the Kansas Board of Regents (2001-05) as an appointee of Governor Graves and two years on the Washburn University Board of Regents. He also wrote a biography of the late U.S. District Judge Tom VanBebber for the federal courts.

Ferguson and his wife, Sue, a reading teacher for 21 years in Topeka, moved back to their native Ponca City in 2005 after having lived 37 years in Kansas. They are parents of Dr. Diane M. Ferguson, an internist practicing medicine in Torrance, Calif., and Dr. John M. "Mike" Ferguson, a professor of organic chemistry at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond. Diane is a graduate of the KU Medical School. They are grandparents of Abby and Todd Ferguson and Helena DuGard.

## ***Remembering Lew - and his 'Finishing School for Boy and Girl Reporters'***

**Libby Quaid** ([Email](#)) - AP-Washington newswoman - Lew Ferguson was a public servant through and through. I say "public servant" because he believed so completely in the role journalism plays in American democracy. He believed not only in his own responsibility to report the news, but also in his responsibility to teach younger people why it is vital and how to do it.

Sure, Lew set a good example. But working for him in the AP's Topeka bureau wasn't just about watching him and his colleagues do the job. The reason we all called it (the legislative relief gig) "Lew Ferguson's Finishing School for Boy and Girl Reporters" was because he handed us real stories to cover, right off the bat, when we were fresh out of college. The more you wanted to write, the better. And then he'd sit down to go over your copy with you before sending it to Kansas City: "Let's whip this pony home!"

My memory of that time is still clear, though it was more than 23 years ago, because of the impact of those few months of helping to cover the Statehouse. John Hanna strode in each morning with a hearty, "Lewis!" Lew always answered, "John David." And if you, the legislative relief, scooted in with only moments to spare before 9 a.m., you got the side eye: "Cutting it close, aren't you?"

That he was a willing mentor doesn't mean he was always a sweetheart. You can ask anyone who worked the desk in the Kansas City bureau about being on the receiving end of a Lew Ferguson phone call with Topeka copy stuck in the queue. But what did that teach the newbie in the room with Lew? Advocate for your story. Stick around to make sure it gets on the wire, and once it does, that it looks like it's supposed to. And while you're at it, don't get yourself on the receiving end of a tirade from Lew.

Lew had already been in Topeka for nearly 25 years by the time I met him. How did he never burn out? I think he loved learning. He would seem tickled if you told him something he didn't know, or wanted to debate him on an issue. He liked learning

from anyone - he had spent years having regular lunches with Alf Landon and Karl Menninger. He had regular lunches with Elon Torrence and other retired journalist colleagues, too. And it was clear from his talk about family that Lew loved learning from his professor son, Mike, and his doctor daughter, Diane - Lew stuck to a somewhat strict, heart-healthy diet that he said Diane insisted on.

And even at that stage in his career, Lew got a kick out of man-on-the-street interviews. I remember him, while covering a Ku Klux Klan rally at the Statehouse on a Saturday in January, rushing in with good quotes from people there to protest the rally. I learned another pro tip from Lew, who had covered sports in Minnesota: Pens freeze. Bring a pencil when it's below 32 degrees.

I'm so grateful to be an alumna of Lew's. I couldn't have had a better or more lasting introduction to reporting.

## Connecting mailbox

### *Michelle Morgante joins NPR*

**Michelle Morgante** ([Email](#)) - I'm joining NPR as the deputy managing editor for NPR West. I'm part of a team of deputy MEs who drive NPR's news coverage across departments and platforms. The other DMEs are based at NPR's headquarters in Washington. I'll be working a swing shift from NPR West in Culver City, which will allow me to ensure NPR stays on top of news developing in the late afternoons and evenings, and is prepared for next-day coverage plans.

It's a bit of a return, for me, to "radio" (NPR is much more than the radio broadcast, of course): I started out as a radio host in college at UC Santa Barbara before I decided I should get some writing experience and joined the student newspaper, which led to my two-decade career with the AP and, for the last couple of years, with a McClatchy daily in central California.



I'm thrilled to be joining the NPR team and especially excited to be helping lead news coverage from the West, which I know well. My years at AP had me working from San Diego, Denver and Portland - as well as my assignments in Florida, Minnesota, Michigan, NY and Mexico.

I'm in Washington for the next few weeks for training and had my first day on Monday, just in time to be part of the NPR team enjoying the eclipse.

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## ***Anyone know whereabouts of Art Greenspan?***

**Cliff Schiappa** ([Email](#)) - David Rees, director of the Pictures of the Year International contest, is trying to contact Art Greenspan. He was an AP photographer who covered the Viet Nam War in 1969. If anyone knows how to reach Mr. Greenspan, would you please share his contact information with me [schiappa@aol.com](mailto:schiappa@aol.com). Thank you!

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## ***More of your eclipse photos, stories***



**Susan Ragan** ([Email](#)) - Dara Tom, retired from AP in San Francisco, watches the solar eclipse, at Susan Ragan's farm in Oregon, with her daughter Marianne Mah, 10.

There were 15 people in my horse pasture for the event, including several reporters from other agencies.

***AND...***



**Ron Heflin** ([Email](#)) - You have probably had enough stories and photos of the recent eclipse. So if you choose to pass on this one I will understand. We set up at the Trout Lake YMCA Camp near Potosi, Missouri. Did anyone ever have a byline out of that small town?

Here is a snap of totality and a link to a 2:33 video with a time-lapse in the middle.

The YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/XLzZbMlgyDI>

## **Opinion: We're Journalists, Mr. Trump, Not the Enemy**

By **NICHOLAS KRISTOF**

**New York Times**

Sigh. If only President Trump denounced neo-Nazis as passionately and sincerely as he castigates journalists.

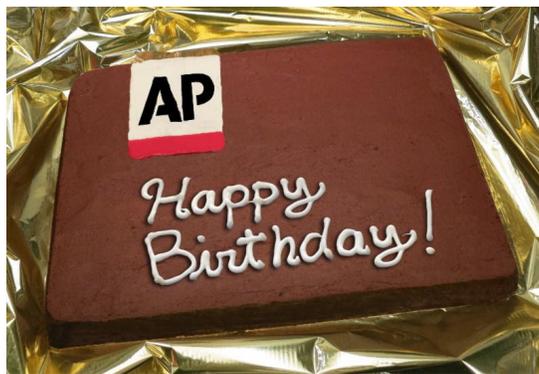
What could be an easier task than distancing oneself from Nazis or violent white supremacists? Yet Trump manages to make it infinitely complicated - and then get distracted by self-pity and excoriate reporters for committing journalism. The key strain of his sulfurous speech in Phoenix on Tuesday was an extended attack on "dishonest" reporters (including at "the failing New York Times").

Look, we in journalism deserve to have our feet held to the fire. We make mistakes all the time, and too often we are superficial, sensationalist, unfair, defensive or diverted by shiny objects. Critics are right that we in the national media are often out of touch with working-class America, and distressingly often, we are lap dogs instead of watchdogs.

Yet for all our failings, journalism remains an indispensable constraint on power. Trump has systematically tried to delegitimize the institutions that hold him accountable - courts, prosecutors, investigators, the media - and that's the context for his vilification of all them, for we collectively provide monitoring that outrages him.

Read more [here](#).

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



to

**Joe McKnight - [jbmatap@aol.com](mailto:jbmatap@aol.com)**

**Reid Miller - [mizunga@yahoo.com](mailto:mizunga@yahoo.com)**

***On Saturday to:***

**Dan Day - [daniel.a.day1@gmail.com](mailto:daniel.a.day1@gmail.com)**

**Jane See White - [whitejsee@yahoo.com](mailto:whitejsee@yahoo.com)**

***On Sunday to:***

**Charlie Monzella - [cmonzella@comcast.net](mailto:cmonzella@comcast.net)**

## **Stories of interest**

***Robert E. Lee and the legacy of an inconvenient name*** (Poynter)

**By ROY PETER CLARK**

If your name is Robert Lee these days - whatever your middle initial - you stand to be the brunt of somebody's joke. "Hey, Bobby," some wag will exclaim across the workplace, "after lunch we're going to the parking lot and tear down your statue."

Since I bear the name Roy Clark - shared with a famous country singer - I have a dog in this fight. (More about that later.)

The inspiration for this reflection is the news, much ridiculed since Tuesday, that ESPN was moving one of its young announcers - Robert Lee - from coverage of the University of Virginia's football game in Charlottesville on Sept. 2. Long associated with higher education and Jeffersonian democracy, Charlottesville now bears the burden of a deadly confrontation with White supremacy.

Robert Lee, not to be confused with ESPN veteran Bob Ley, happens to be Asian-American. According to Wikipedia, Lee (also spelled Li) "is the second most common surname in China, behind only Wang. It is one of the most common surnames in the world, shared by 92.76 million people and more than 100 million worldwide." We can extrapolate from this data that our chances of running into a Lee - maybe even a Bob Lee - in our daily travels are pretty damn good.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***These are the 10 most popular mobile apps in America*** (Recode)

Between smartphones and tablets, Americans spend more than half of their digital media consumption time - 57 percent - in apps, according to comScore's annual U.S. mobile apps report. That's about the same as a year ago - evidence that the dramatic shift to mobile has now leveled out in the U.S.

These are the winners, according to comScore, as measured by their penetration of the U.S. mobile app audience:

Read more [here](#).

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## **The Final Word**

### ***7 Things to Disinfect When You Walk Into Your Hotel Room*** (tripsavvy)

What's the first thing you do when your family gets to your hotel room? Several recent studies suggest it might be a good idea to pull out a package of antibacterial wipes and give your room a quick once-over.

At least four investigations since 2012 have used microbiological testing to reveal that hotel rooms-even those that have been cleaned by housekeeping staff-typically contain zones where germs thrive.

Don't assume that paying more means you'll get a cleaner room. A 2016 hotel hygiene study by TravelMath focusing on three-, four-, and five-star hotels revealed that the more luxurious four-star and five-star hotel rooms tended to be dirtier than less luxurious three-star hotels.

Want to keep your family healthy on vacation? Before you let your gang kick back and relax, wipe down these surfaces:

Read more [here](#).

## Today in History - August 25, 2017



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Friday, Aug. 25, the 237th day of 2017. There are 128 days left in the year.

### **Today's Highlights in History:**

On August 25, 1967, the Beatles boarded a train in London bound for Bangor, Wales, to attend a conference on transcendental meditation led by the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi; the visit was cut short two days later when the group got word of the death of their manager, Brian Epstein. George Lincoln Rockwell, founder of the American Nazi Party, was shot to death at a shopping center in Arlington, Virginia; former party member John Patler was convicted of the killing. Actor Paul Muni, 71, died in Montecito, California.

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

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 1997, former East German leader Egon Krenz was convicted of manslaughter in the deaths of citizens trying to flee to the West during Cold War; he was sentenced to 6 1/2 years' imprisonment. (Krenz was released in 2003 after serving less than four years.)

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

Ten years ago: The government of Greece declared a nationwide state of emergency as the death toll from wildfires rose to at least 49. Bombs blamed on Islamic extremists killed at least 43 people at a park and a street-side food stall in Hyderabad, India.

Five years ago: Neil Armstrong, 82, who commanded the historic Apollo 11 lunar landing and was the first man to set foot on the moon in July 1969, died in Cincinnati, Ohio. A huge explosion rocked Venezuela's biggest oil refinery and unleashed a ferocious fire, killing at least 42 people. Alpha and long-shot Golden Ticket finished in a historic dead heat in the \$1 million Travers Stakes at Saratoga Race Course.

One year ago: Hillary Clinton said that Donald Trump had unleashed the "radical fringe" within the Republican Party, dubbing the billionaire businessman's campaign as one that will "make America hate again"; Trump rejected Clinton's allegations, defending his hard-line approach to immigration while trying to make the case to minority voters that Democrats had abandoned them. The bodies of two nuns, Sisters Margaret Held and Paula Merrill, both 68, were found in their home in Durant, Mississippi; a suspect has been charged with capital murder. Actor Marvin Kaplan, 89, died in Burbank, California.

Today's Birthdays: Game show host Monty Hall is 96. Actor Sean Connery is 87. Actor Page Johnson is 87. TV personality Regis Philbin is 86. Actor Tom Skerritt is 84. Jazz musician Wayne Shorter is 84. Movie director Hugh Hudson is 81. Author Frederick Forsyth is 79. Movie director John Badham is 78. Filmmaker Marshall Brickman is 78. Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal is 75. Rhythm-and-blues singer Walter Williams (The O'Jays) is 74. Actor Anthony Heald is 73. Rock singer-actor Gene Simmons is 68. Actor John Savage is 68. Author Martin Amis is 68. Country singer-musician Henry Paul (Outlaws; Blackhawk) is 68. Rock singer Rob Halford is 66. Rock musician Geoff Downes (Asia) is 65. Rock singer Elvis Costello is 63. Movie director Tim Burton is 59. Actor Christian LeBlanc is 59. Actress Ashley Crow is 57. Actress Ally Walker is 56. Country singer Cyrus (AKA Billy Ray Cyrus) is 56. Actress Joanne Whalley is 56. Rock musician Vivian Campbell (Def Leppard) is 55. Actor Blair Underwood is 53. Actor Robert Maschio is 51. Rap DJ Terminator X (Public Enemy) is 51. Alternative country singer Jeff Tweedy (Wilco) is 50. Actor David Alan Basche (BAYSH) is 49. Television chef Rachael Ray is 49. Actor Cameron Mathison is 48. Country singer Jo Dee Messina is 47. Model Claudia Schiffer is 47. Country singer Brice Long is 46. Actor-writer-director Ben Falcone is 44. Actor Eric Millegan is 43. Actor Alexander Skarsgard is 41. Actor Jonathan Togo is 40. Actor Kel Mitchell is 39. Actress Rachel Bilson is 36. Actress Blake Lively is 30. Actor Josh Flitter is 23.

***Thought for Today: "No matter what accomplishments you make, somebody helps you." - Althea Gibson, American tennis champion (born this date in 1927, died 2003).***

# Got a story or photos 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:

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

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8/30/2017

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