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Connecting - December 12, 2017

1 message

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Connecting

December 12, 2017

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning!

Got a story in you?

Our Connecting colleague **Peter Costanzo** ([Email](#)) shares the following:

Attention current and former AP reporters: Amazon Publishing recently announced a new program it is launching for Prime members called "[Amazon Original Stories](#)"

The AP is participating in this program, currently with two stories slated for release in 2018 and Peter Costanzo who heads up AP's book publishing effort is looking for more. These are 10,000-word non-fiction stories that AP pitches to Amazon for its consideration. If you have an intriguing short story to pitch, then please feel free to submit a brief description to pcostanzo@ap.org using the subject line, AMAZON ORIGINALS.



Have a great day!

Paul

Myron Belkind interviewed by one of his students on his 42-year career with AP

Editor's Note: Myron Belkind ([Email](#)) has devoted his Life After AP following his retirement in 2004 to teaching news writing and reporting at George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs.

Each term, his students cover a mock news conference that Belkind holds to discuss journalism issues. This term Elizabeth Power, a sophomore from the San Francisco Bay area, focused her story on Belkind's 42-year AP career and his second career at GWU, now in its 13th year. Here is her article, as she submitted it:

News Conference Assignment

By Elizabeth Power

After 42 years with The Associated Press, Myron Belkind provides a wealth of knowledge, insight, and advice for the new generation of journalism students sitting around the long black conference table in the basement of George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs.

"For me, this teaching experience has been, and continues to be, as exhilarating and professionally satisfying as were my four decades with the AP, mostly as a foreign correspondent," Belkind asserts.



That statement carries significant weight coming from a man who served as bureau chief in New Delhi, London, and Tokyo. Throughout his career, Belkind covered stories ranging from Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's State of Emergency to the eradication of smallpox to the death of Princess Diana.

Belkind credits his eighth grade English teacher, the late Doris Govan, for inspiring his interest in journalism as the faculty adviser to his junior high school newspaper, The Short Circuit. But it was his mentor at Ohio State University, the late George Kienzle, who encouraged him to get a master's degree from Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism so that he could one day teach.

"When you're a bureau chief, you're trying to inspire your writers to do quality journalism and that's what I do with this class," Belkind explains to his students. "You're my news bureau in many ways, and I run the class the way I would run bureaus in New Delhi, London, and Tokyo."

Belkind's goal is for his students to master the basic techniques of news writing so they can write stories on par with those found in The Washington Post and The New York Times. However, he finds the format of two 75-minute classes per week limiting and would prefer to adopt the three-hour format of his course over the summer.

"I am confident that the change would mean that SMPA 2110W could be conducted in a more professional, 'real-life' manner equivalent to working on a daily newspaper or a news agency because there would be time for more writing assignments under deadline pressure," he elaborates. "Ideally, there might even be opportunities to send the students out on assignment and return and write their stories the same day."

Belkind sees teaching news writing and reporting as perhaps more essential today than ever before. In a time when the president of the United States regularly refers to the news as the "fake news media" and tweeted that the nation's news media are

the "enemy of the American people," Belkind emphasizes the importance of reporting the news in a responsible and accurate manner.

"The foundation of my course is to teach the importance of accuracy," he affirms.

Despite President Trump's attacks on journalists, Belkind is optimistic about the future of journalism. He cites The Washington Post's recent milestone of 1 million digital subscribers as a sign that people today care about quality journalism, especially after years of declining readership. Furthermore, new digital news platforms are providing additional job opportunities for journalists. He often sees young journalists at the National Press Club who work for organizations like Politico that did not exist a few years ago. Young people today are also more aware of the news due to the constant stream of information available on their mobile devices.

"There are more opportunities for you and your generation to read news not as I did in Cleveland with the morning paper, the afternoon paper, and the evening news, but throughout the day. And I think that helps your generation be more tuned to the news, which I think makes you more informed about what's happening in the world," he tells his students.

The world of journalism has certainly changed since Belkind began his career. But the 77-year-old takes pride in his ability to constantly adapt the course to these changes.

"I view each class as a new experience and I'm fortunate to be able to teach a class regarding a profession that is alive and changing every minute with breaking news."

Connecting mailbox

Remembering the late John Hillery

Jon Wolman (Email) - When I started working with John Hillery, he'd go out on assignment in his hot orange sports car which we all lusted after. It was a burden for John to live up to the image he had created for himself but that didn't stop him from trying.

And...

Ed Breen ([Email](#)) - A small floodtide of memories Monday morning reading of the departure of John Hillery.

What a time and place the Indiana Daily Student, Ernie Pyle hall -- and Nick's - were in those days, even for those of us who were outsiders. We would journey into Bloomington to hang out at the cool kids table.

It was all built around the boyish charm of Will Counts and the courtly manners of John Ahlhauser, complementary personalities who created a sort of Kodak edition of Camelot, even for those of us who were disciples of Jim Geladas or Rich Clarkson or Chuck Scott.

Young Mr. Horton in those days was generally believed to have lived one entire year in the IDS darkroom, with no other source of food and shelter. Clothing was that god-awful green parka.

Hillery and Fulton and Goldsmith and Dave Snodgress and Ms. Eisert and Michel du Cille (I've got some overlapping generations here, but never mind). And I'm overlooking so many.

The goal for most was to get the attention of either Bill Strode in Louisville or Bob Gilka, who was the gatekeeper just outside of heaven.

Lots of folks hangin' 'round the dorm: Baumann, Moss, Mary Ann Carter (note her credit line on the photo of Hillery Monday). Dave Repp. He'd burn a roll of film just walking to the parking lot. (Bob) Daugherty had already moved on to Washington by then.

Will-and-John - like they were a secular version of the triune god. And kindly Jack Backer was thinking all along about how to display those pictures. He wanted type on the page, too. He and Wilson Hicks' book and Cliff Edom's gang out in Missouri (but they were a tad snooty for we Hoosiers).

Sorry; just one of those inescapable little journeys...

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His letter to editor defends AP objectivity

Henry Bradsher (Email) - Last week a letter from a woman who identified herself as a realtor in New Orleans was published in The Advocate, south Louisiana's dominant newspaper. She started off by saying "I am a conservative... The Advocate does an admirable job in balancing its op-ed page.

"Much more objectionable to me are the AP news service articles which are supposed to be objective news reports, but which always betray an anti-Trump and anti-conservative bias. The only good thing about them is that the bias is so blatant that it is ineffective to any thoughtful person."

Yesterday The Advocate published my letter with its required identification, in my case being "retired journalist." The paper headlined the letter "Don't blame AP for the reality of the news." I wrote:

"Shoot the messenger" is the classic act of blaming the bearer of bad news. That describes the recent letter accusing The Associated Press of "always betray[ing] an anti-Trump and anti-conservative bias." The writer, a self-described conservative, apparently does not want to learn anything that goes against her ideology. But the public need more information than conservative media are often willing to admit exists. The AP objectively reports the news, good and bad.

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Meeting up of two longtime friends from their New York days



David Liu ([Email](#)) and his wife recently visited **John Brewer** ([Email](#)) in Port Angeles, Wash.

This photo was taken of these two longtime friends and AP alums after a reflective Sunday brunch at Lake Crescent Lodge in Olympic National Park, just west of Port Angeles.

Liu retired in 2005 after almost 38 years with AP as an executive in New York Purchasing and in Newspaper Membership (where he oversaw AP's foreign-language newspaper clients in the United States, most of which he signed up).

Liu also was a key player in efforts that finally allowed AP to open a permanent bureau in Beijing in 1978.

As a Fulbright Scholar in 2007-2008, Liu taught at the People's University in Beijing. He now works with educational institutions in the U.S. and China.

Brewer, retired publisher of a daily and weekly newspapers in the Port Angeles area, crossed paths with Liu many times over Brewer's AP career as COB in Seattle and Los Angeles and as a general executive in Newspaper Membership.

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The story of a belt buckle with inscription: Newsmen...Truth, Justice and the American Way

Jim Spehar ([Email](#)) - I hadn't been with the AP long, less than a year, when I ended up spending Christmas not with my bride of four years at our home in the mountains west of Denver but instead with Gerald Ford and his family in Vail. Ford had succeeded the disgraced Spiro Agnew a few months earlier after Agnew resigned as Vice President.

The Ford family had long spent the holiday at their condo in Vail. With his ascendancy to the second highest office in the land, the condo wouldn't do and it was arranged for the Fords to spend Christmas in a larger borrowed home.

Apparently the AP's national political crew had better things to do than travel to Colorado so, after some discussion, it fell to the Denver broadcast editor to provide onsite coverage. When I arrived at rented quarters in Vail, it was apparent it'd be a different sort of stay. Denver photographer Bob Scott had commandeered the tub/shower in our single shared bathroom for use developing his film. Showers were not to be had during our stay.

There wasn't much to report...a daily briefing followed by skiing Vail's runs with the Vice President and his family. My main contribution was reporting on the gifts the Fords exchanged after sharing the slopes with siblings Jack and Susan Ford on Christmas Day. Adept editing by Denver news editor Rob Dalton turned that into more of a story than the topic deserved.

A lasting memento was the belt buckle the assembled news corps designed. Crafted in bronze by Vail jeweler Dan Telleen, it read "Newsmen...Truth, Justice and the American Way." Several were ordered for others in the AP, John Willis mentioned his a few months ago on Connecting, after seeing me wear mine. My original is now in the custody of my son, who's a video editor for the CBS affiliate in Salt Lake City.

AP: Rohingya methodically raped by Myanmar's armed forces



In this Nov. 22, 2017, photo, F, 22, who says she was raped by members of Myanmar's armed forces in June and again in September, cries as she speaks to The Associated Press in her tent in Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh. (AP Photo/Wong May)

By KRISTEN GELINEAU

UKHIA, Bangladesh (AP) - The soldiers arrived, as they often did, long after sunset.

It was June, and the newlyweds were asleep in their home, surrounded by the fields of wheat they farmed in western Myanmar. Without warning, seven soldiers burst into the house and charged into their bedroom.

The woman, a Rohingya Muslim who agreed to be identified by her first initial, F, knew enough to be terrified. She knew the military had been attacking Rohingya villages, as part of what the United Nations has called ethnic cleansing in the mostly Buddhist nation. She heard just days before that soldiers had killed her parents, and that her brother was missing.

This time, F says, the soldiers had come for her.

Read more [here](#).

AP to name breakthrough entertainers of 2017



Fans cheer before a performance at the Rock in Rio music festival in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Sept. 16, 2017. (AP Photo/Leo Correa)

By **LAUREN EASTON**

For the first time on Tuesday, The Associated Press will name its Breakthrough Entertainers of the Year. The inaugural list comprises eight artists, including newcomers who made a splash in 2017 as well as more established entertainers who found success this year.

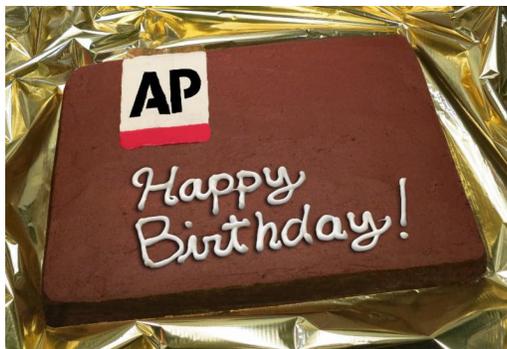
AP Global Entertainment and Lifestyles Editor Nekesa Mumbi Moody shared key criteria that shaped the list.

What did editors look for in determining who broke through in 2017?

There were plenty of stars that had huge moments in 2017, but we were looking at artists who had previously been under the radar who made a flourish this year. That included new faces and a few established artists who had a signature moment that propelled them to new heights.

Read more [here](#).

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Carole Feldman - cfeldman@ap.org

Dave Zelio - dzelio@ap.org

Welcome to Connecting

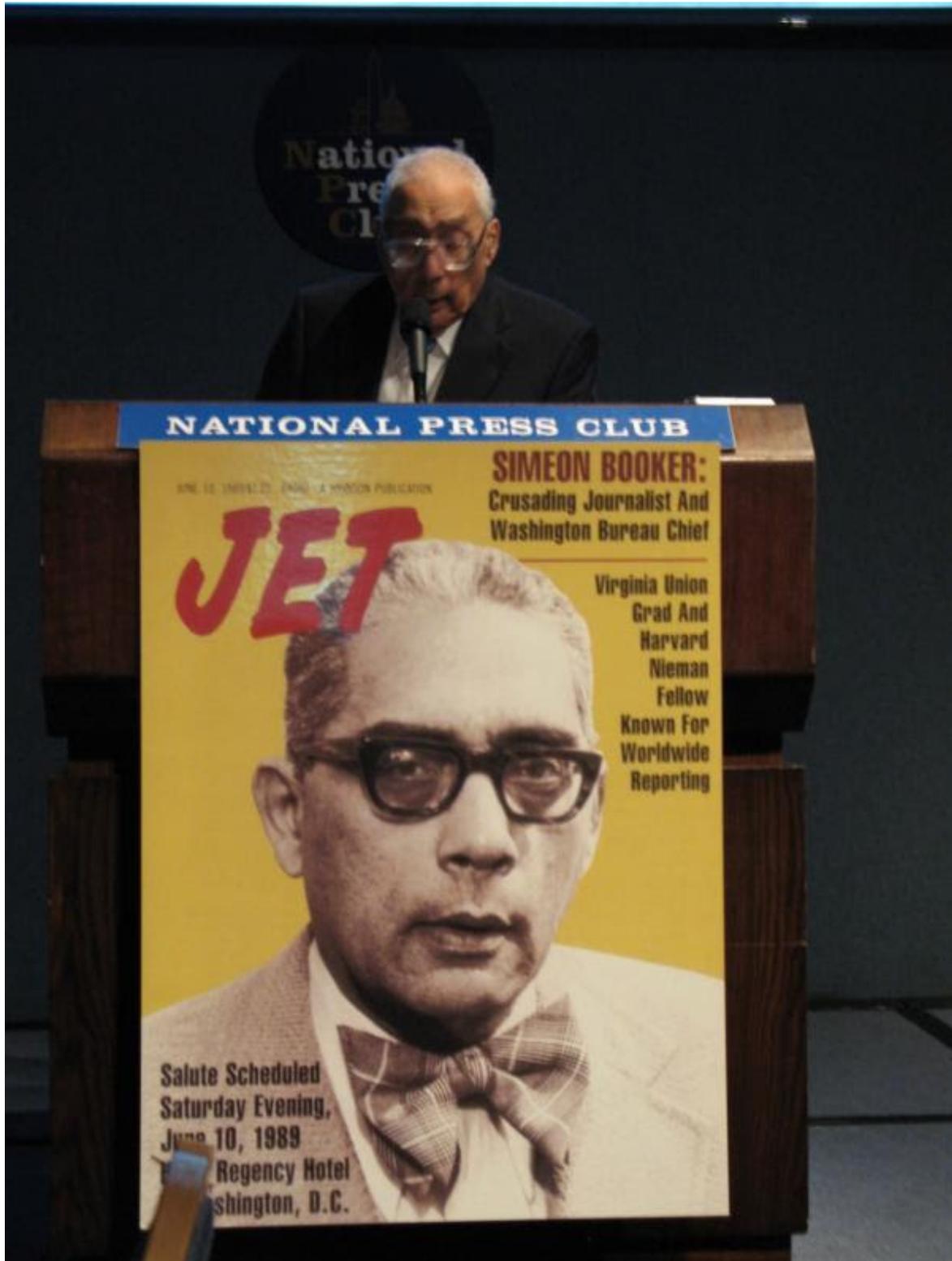


Steve Hindy - shindy@brooklynbrewery.com

David Liu - davidliusr@yahoo.com

Stories of interest

A reporter who stood up to far worse than journalists get from Trump (Washington Post)



Simeon Booker speaks at podium at his retirement party. (Hamil R. Harris/The Washington Post)

By EUGENE ROBINSON

The great Simeon Booker, one of the bravest journalists of our time, faced dangers far worse than a petulant president's social media feed. Booker refused to be cowed - and ultimately helped change the nation. His life's work should be a lesson to us all about the power of truth to vanquish evil.

Booker died Sunday at 99. At the height of his career, few could have imagined he would live so long.

As Washington bureau chief for Chicago-based Johnson Publications, publisher of the newsweekly *Jet* and the monthly magazine *Ebony*, Booker went to the Deep South to cover the most tumultuous events of the civil rights movement - life-threatening work for an African American journalist.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Richard Chady.

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Paper Tiger - Why the media shouldn't be distracted by Trump's attacks on them (New Republic)

By ALEX SHEPHARD

Here is a very short history of Donald Trump's long-standing war on the press: He has called reporters "dishonest," "crooked," "lying," "scum," "disgusting," "crazy," and "bad." He has blacklisted news organizations and thrown reporters out of political rallies. "Good job," he told Corey Lewandowski, his campaign manager, after Lewandowski forcibly ejected reporter Michelle Fields from an event, leaving her bruised. Trump has vowed to revise libel laws to make it easier to sue media companies-"Believe me, if I become president, oh, do they have problems," Trump told his supporters-and he has suggested jailing journalists who print classified information. In July, he tweeted a video of himself body-slammng a man with a CNN logo superimposed on his face. The media, Trump has said, "is the enemy of the American people."

These attacks are vile, and they have begun to undermine one of this country's key democratic institutions. Recent polling suggests that nearly half of all Americans believe the media invents stories about Trump. Even more disturbingly, Trump's anti-media crusade is making the job of reporting an increasingly dangerous one. Journalists are facing years in prison for covering the protests during Trump's inauguration. At his rallies, reporters have been attacked with anti-Semitic slurs, alongside chants of "CNN sucks!" And in May, Greg Gianforte, then a Republican congressional candidate in Montana, attacked Guardian reporter Ben Jacobs, who was simply asking him a question about health care. Such developments led the U.N. high commissioner for human rights to warn in August that freedom of the press is "under attack from the president." Trump's statements, he said, could be interpreted as an incitement to violence against journalists.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Sibby Christensen.

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What if Trump apologized for his, ahem, mistakes, just like the 'fake' news media? (USA Today)

By JILL LAWRENCE

President Trump in the last few days has demanded that reporters at ABC, CNN and The Washington Post be fired for committing "fake news." The offenses ranged from incorrect dates on ABC and CNN stories that made them seem more significant than they were, to a photo that the Post's David Weigel incorrectly said was evidence of a less than "packed" crowd at Trump's speech in Pensacola, Fla., on Friday.

Trump demanded an apology and a retraction from Weigel on Saturday afternoon. Three minutes later, Weigel tweeted: "Sure thing: I apologize." He said he had deleted the photo and explained, "Was confused by the image of you walking in the bottom right corner." Apparently that wasn't good enough; an hour later Trump tweeted: "FAKE NEWS, he should be fired."

Here's a thought experiment. What if Trump acted more like the media? ABC News made the most egregious error, imposed a four-week suspension on the offending reporter, and issued the most fulsome, contrite apology. That's the model most appropriate for Trump. So, imagine:

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mike Holmes.

Today in History - December 12, 2017



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Dec. 12, the 346th day of 2017. There are 19 days left in the year. Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights, begins at sunset.

Today's Highlights in History:

On Dec. 12, 1917, during World War I, a train carrying some 1,000 French troops from the Italian front derailed while descending a steep hill in Modane (moh-DAN'); at least half of the soldiers were killed in France's greatest rail disaster. Father Edward Flanagan founded Boys Town outside Omaha, Nebraska.

On this date:

In 1787, Pennsylvania became the second state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1897, "The Katzenjammer Kids," the pioneering comic strip created by Rudolph Dirks, made its debut in the New York Journal.

In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt nominated Oscar Straus to be Secretary of Commerce and Labor; Straus became the first Jewish Cabinet member.

In 1925, the first motel - the Motel Inn - opened in San Luis Obispo, California.

In 1937, Japanese aircraft sank the U.S. gunboat Panay on China's Yangtze River. (Japan apologized, and paid \$2.2 million in reparations.)

In 1946, a United Nations committee voted to accept a six-block tract of Manhattan real estate offered as a gift by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to be the site of the U.N.'s headquarters.

In 1947, the United Mine Workers union disaffiliated from the American Federation of Labor.

In 1963, Kenya became independent of Britain.

In 1977, the dance movie "Saturday Night Fever," a Paramount Pictures release starring John Travolta, premiered in New York.

In 1985, 248 American soldiers and eight crew members were killed when an Arrow Air charter crashed after takeoff from Gander, Newfoundland.

In 1997, Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, the international terrorist known as "Carlos the Jackal," went on trial in Paris on charges of killing two French investigators and a Lebanese national. (Ramirez was convicted, and is serving a life prison sentence.)

In 2000, George W. Bush became president-elect as a divided U.S. Supreme Court reversed a state court decision for recounts in Florida's contested election.

Ten years ago: Republican presidential rivals gathered in Johnston, Iowa, called for deep cuts in federal spending in a debate remarkably free of acrimony. President George W. Bush vetoed a second bill that would have expanded government-provided health insurance for children. Ike Turner, the rock pioneer and ex-husband of Tina Turner, died in San Marcos, California, at age 76.

Five years ago: North Koreans danced in the streets of their capital, Pyongyang, after the regime of Kim Jong Un succeeded in firing a long-range rocket in defiance of international warnings. Pope Benedict XVI sent his first tweet from his new

account; it read, "Dear friends, I am pleased to get in touch with you through Twitter. Thank you for your generous response. I bless all of you from my heart."

One year ago: Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker Paul Ryan endorsed investigations into the CIA's belief that Russia had meddled in the November election to help Donald Trump win, a claim the president-elect called "ridiculous."

Today's Birthdays: Former TV host Bob Barker is 94. Basketball Hall of Famer Bob Pettit is 85. Singer Connie Francis is 80. Singer Dionne Warwick is 77. Rock singer-musician Dickey Betts is 74. Hall of Fame race car driver Emerson Fittipaldi is 71. Actor Wings Hauser is 70. Actor Bill Nighy (ny) is 68. Actor Duane Chase (Film: "The Sound of Music") is 67. Country singer LaCosta is 67. Gymnast-turned-actress Cathy Rigby is 65. Author Lorna Landvik is 63. Singer-musician Sheila E. is 60. Actress Sheree J. Wilson is 59. Pop singer Daniel O'Donnell is 56. International Tennis Hall of Famer Tracy Austin is 55. Rock musician Eric Schenkman (Spin Doctors) is 54. Rock musician Nicholas Dimichino (Nine Days) is 50. Author Sophie Kinsella is 48. News anchor Maggie Rodriguez is 48. Actress Jennifer Connelly is 47. Actress Madchen Amick is 47. Actress Regina Hall is 47. Country singer Hank Williams III is 45. Actress Mayim Bialik is 42. Model Bridget Hall is 40. Actor Lucas Hedges (Film: "Manchester by the Sea") is 21. Actress Sky Katz (TV: "Raven's Home") is 13.

Thought for Today: "Experience has taught me that the only cruelties people condemn are those with which they do not happen to be familiar." - Ellen Glasgow, American author (1874-1945).

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.

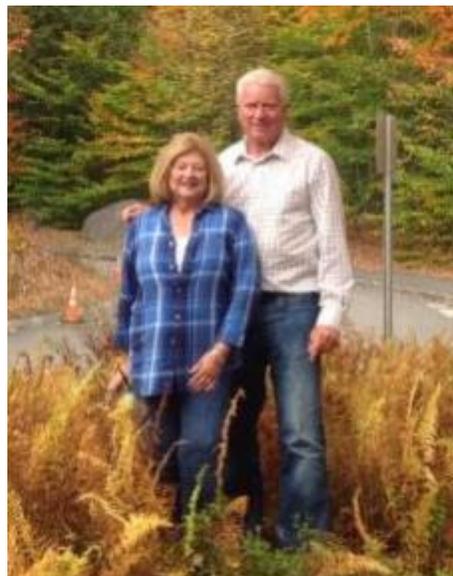
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.

- **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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