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# Connecting - March 15, 2018

1 message

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# Connecting

March 15, 2018

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning!

We lead today's Connecting with a subject near and dear to every AP retiree's heart - the AP pension program.

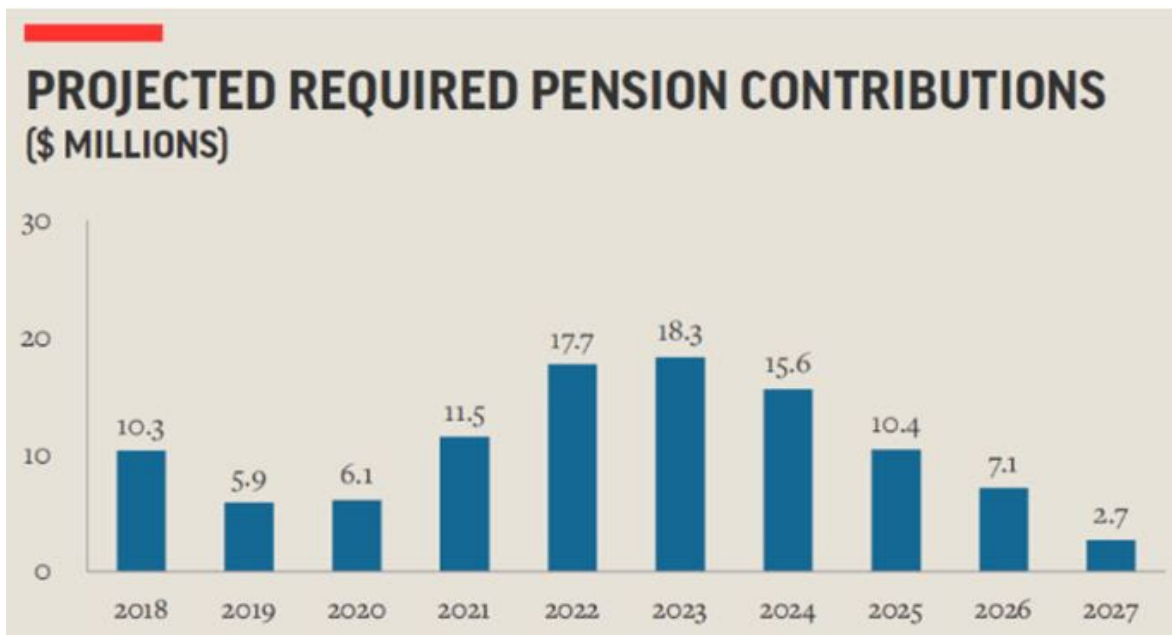
# A review of AP's pension funding

**Jessica Bruce**, AP senior vice president for Human Resources and Corporate Communications, shares the following:

At a recent Town Hall meeting at the AP, CEO **Gary Pruitt** reviewed the state of AP's pension funding. We thought that information would be of interest to many readers of Connecting.

In 2012, due in part to the financial crisis, AP's pension plans were underfunded by approximately \$400 million. After making significant contributions well above the levels required by law, AP's pension plans are currently funded at about 85%, leaving only approximately \$100 million to be contributed in the future.

In 2018, AP plans to contribute \$20 million to the pension fund, almost twice the amount required by law. The chart below shows the projected minimum required contributions through 2027.



AP plans on contributing approximately \$20 million annually over the next five years --- higher amounts than required and expects to have the pension fully funded early in the next decade.

AP pension funds are invested stocks and bonds through index funds. Currently the investments are allocated 50% to stocks and 50% to bonds. As the plan's funded level increases, the proportion of assets in stocks decline and the proportion in bonds increases. This investment strategy coupled with the AP's accelerated

funding plan will get the pension fully funded by the early 2020s, which will put the AP on strong financial footing for the future.

If you have questions about your pension benefit with the AP, please reach out to **Sue Gilkey**, AP's Global Director of Employee Benefits at [sgilkey@ap.org](mailto:sgilkey@ap.org) or at (212) 621-1727.

Thanks to Jessica and Gary Pruitt for this update.

Paul

## How he got that shot: Sometimes you just get lucky.



AP Photo/Andrew Harnik

From Poynter Morning Media Wire

AP photographer Andrew Harnik was covering Rex Tillerson after the Secretary of State had found out, via the internet, that he was fired. As Tillerson's news

conference ended on Tuesday, Harnik got this shot of the departing official in the hallway outside, an image that has been widely shared on social media.

But what was Harnik thinking? Did he have that "Exit" sign in his head the whole time?

Harnik, in an email, told us he got a notion near the end of the press conference:

"I remembered a day a little over a year ago when former Secretary John Kerry was finishing up his term. I had run into him in the hallways as he moved between network interviews. Though Tillerson isn't one to give interviews like Kerry did, it still occurred to me that I might be able to get images of Tillerson as he walked back up to his offices.

"As his speech concluded, I walked brusquely straight out the door. Sure enough, he and his aides were already turning down the hallway making their way right for me.

"As Tillerson reached the end of the hallway I moved next to the wall and photographed him with a zoom lens and framed him with his reflection in the marble on the wall. Once I was back to my computer, I saw the exit sign hanging above him."

Instantly, he knew that would be the photo.

## Connecting mailbox

### ***A proposal to analyze fairness and truthfulness in the media - by the AP, retirees and others***

**Lyle Price** ([Email](#)) - Further re the fairness doctrine subject, as raised last week by the former Oklahoma bureau chief Lindel Hutson:

The concept of fairness is admirable and something I believe that AP at its best has long cherished. I am doubtful that the principle can be successfully (and, consistent

with the First Amendment, perhaps shouldn't be) applied to outright commentary - as distinct from news content. But I do believe that steps ought to be taken in regard to examining the truthfulness and fairness of the likes of the basically one-sided, hour-long commentaries which characterize MSNBC and Fox non-news content. To my mind, such opining serves to harden the polarization between Right and Left and weaken the spirit of compromise and fair play necessary for the success of a democratic republic. (I will leave a discussion of outright news reporting for another time; but despite a slip-up here and there, I fail to see current news standards as being a problem, despite trumped-up proclamations in regard to "fake news" and the "drive-by media.")

What I dearly would like to see is the spirit of the fairness doctrine revived in an ongoing daily or weekly summation and analysis. What I suggest is an undertaking by logical thinkers with their BS Detectors in good working order, the objective being to present a side-by-side comparison of major partisan views being expressed in the media - especially in the case of diametrically opposed opinions on a subject (or of two or more different sets of alleged facts). I'd suggest a focus on TV and radio material ranging from Rush Limbaugh to NPR. It wouldn't hurt to include print columnists and editorials, although I view them on average as being more civilized or yawn-provoking than upsetting.

Any analysis of the fairness and truthfulness in the above situations ought to be undertaken by honest brokers. I'd nominate the AP to weigh in if not lead such an undertaking, assisted (or even led by) retirees such as on the Connecting line and by journalism professors and their students. As a former national officer of the Wire Service Guild, I would even favor granting immunity from overtime rules for working journalists to donate off-duty time on a volunteer basis.

Yes, I am aware of some truth-detecting efforts undertaken by the likes of the AP, NYT, and some journalism schools. But what I have in mind is something on a much larger and more coordinated scale. And I would propose that the findings also be circulated on a widespread basis, such as on AP wires and the Internet. The findings also would likely be welcome on the many city and regional sites set aside for government and/or the public. Amy Goodman's program, for instance, is on my regional channel in the Seattle area. I am aware, of course, that aside from obtaining trained and perceptive and objective staffers to do all this that the administration and financing would be a considerable challenge.

But as a former oft-time political reporter of major political campaigns and of daily legislative events at statehouses in California and Washington state for either AP or newspapers, I am convinced the cacophony on radio and TV is leaving much of the public with a distorted and one-sided view of things. And that the antagonism and uncivility so often expressed is ill-suited for the well-being of a democracy.

My thanks to the Oklahoma Bureau Chief emeritus for raising this issue.

**(Connecting welcomes your thoughts on this proposal by Lyle Price former AP staffer in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento, 1964-1976.)**

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## ***Connecting sky shot - Mill Creek, Washington***



**Ken Fields** ([Email](#)) - I carry my camera with me on my walks and recently took a photo of an interesting cloud formation which was reflected in the water of a preserved wetlands near Mill Creek, WA.

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***An AP story nicely displayed***



**Al Cross (Email)** - spotted and shared the fine play of a story by Josh Boak AP Economics Writer. [Click here](#) to read the story.

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***Four corners, four furballs***



**Bonnie Riehl** - Four corners, four furballs. Don't even THINK of asking me how many furballs are UNDER the bed!!

## Connecting new-member profile - Dan Wakin

**Dan Wakin** ([Email](#)) - At The New York Times, I have only just surpassed my AP tenure of 17 years, now clocking in at 18 seasons in Times Square. Not sure if that means anything. Jim Donna, at whose memorial I reconnected with wonderful colleagues, gave me my first job ever: vacation relief clerk on the city desk during a summer in college. I stayed on after graduation and passed through the Newark bureau (four delicious years covering federal courts); Foreign Desk; Rome; and Johannesburg as news editor. At the Times, I started in Continuous News, a recently formed desk of 5-6 people aimed at updating the paper's website, which at the time generally stayed static once the report was dumped on line around midnight. How absurdly quaint.





**Dan Wakin** (Photo/Chang W. Lee)

I went on to Metro, did night rewrite and religion there and took up an esoteric but fabulous beat in Culture -- classical music -- which landed me on the front page more than anyone could expect. Entered editing ranks five years ago as a deputy editor in Culture and now work on strategy for increasing our non-U.S. audience as deputy editorial director for the NYT Global department.

My wife is the AP veteran Vera Haller, who has worked for Reuters, the Washington Post, WSJ and LA Times and is a professor of journalism at Baruch College. Our two sons, one in and one just out of college, show disturbing interests in media as a profession. I still play the clarinet seriously and in the same touch football/softball game I joined in the late 1980s. My book, "The Man With the Sawed-Off Leg and Other Tales of a New York City Block" (Arcade) came out in January.

## History is a Paradox

**Gene Herrick** ([Email](#)) - History is a paradox, it doesn't give a hoot - it just records mankind's idiotic behaviors and beliefs.

Way back when, the United States fought for its freedom. Following its founding as a country, immigrants from all corners of the world arrived seeking their dream of freedom, and a chance for a life that was open to one's ability and drive.

That may be true, but not for one race of immigrants - people of color. They were, and have been called, Negroes, African-Americans, Black, indentured servants, and yes, slaves.

In 1619 a Dutch boat addressed our shores and deposited approximately 20 people of African descent.

There were many, many boats to follow. Immediately, the people of this country, mostly white, and mostly in the Deep South, decided these people of color were inferior, with fewer brains, uneducated, and less than human. That underlying belief generally reigns even today.

In 1955, a 14-year-old black boy from Chicago, named Emmitt Till, visited relatives in one of the "darkest" parts of Mississippi. He made a mistake by whistling at two white women. For that indiscretion, he was brutally murdered. The defendants were found innocent, of course. That event was actually the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement.

That historic moment was quickly followed by a woman, Autherine Lucy, being kicked out of the University of Alabama, after only a week there. She was black.

In early February, 1956, in Montgomery, Alabama, a black lady - Rosa Parks - was arrested for not moving to the black section of a public bus. At the same time, a young black preacher was also arrested and jailed. That man was The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Those four incidents brought forth indignation, public demonstrations, and quickly Dr. King became the leader of the non-violent movement, which took pride in its passive and peaceful marches. The movement quickly spread, and actually brought about many changes in the black battle for equal treatment.

That progress, although not always peaceful because there were those who stood by the old beliefs about slavery and the blacks needed to be subservient, made headway until Dr. King was assassinated in Memphis, in 1968. It was a great loss for the black people of this country, as the movement seemed to stall out.

Today, we have another movement which seems to be gathering speed, and by an unsuspecting group.

Today the country seems awash in mass killings. Individuals and small groups, and using bombs, and guns of mass destruction, are killing their fellowman. All sorts of people are being slaughtered - whites and blacks, Italians, Germans, Jews, Scandinavians, and others. However, black people are not the primary offenders. Most are whites of all description and age, and mental acuity.

Typically, politics, and the battle of irrationality, takes over. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents jump into the fray and show their biased selves in solving the problem. So many of them are beholden to the National Rifle Association and their gigantic power of the donated dollar bill support.

However, the recent slaying, murder, assassination of 17 children and adults in a Florida school may have changed the path of history. Oh yes, the politicians, and the NRA, and the President of the United States, continue their ambivalent ploy of indecision, and fear of correcting an ages-long problem of saving their butts for possible, and hopeful, re-election. Concern, and action, to help correct a national problem of indignation, and disgrace, is beyond their ego-power.



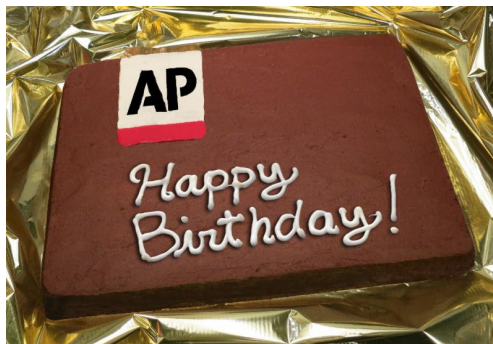
**Students hold up signs during a rally for gun control outside of the U.S. Capitol on March 14. One month after the Parkland shooting in Florida, high school students and activists across the country participated in walkouts and protests to call on Congress to act on gun control legislation. AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana**

However, as they say, a movement is afoot. A powerful movement which will probably change the Washington ego, do-nothings, is afoot nation-wide. The hopefully inexperienced, and naïve young school-aged children - black, white, Indian, Cuban, Mexican, and other nationalities, are creating their own powerful movement to create the change of law in this country - something the president, Congress, and state governments are failing to do. This group of nationwide youngsters, are demonstrating en masse across the country, and crying for change, especially Gun Control. When they publicly speak they do so with every ounce of adult being. Their movement is not a childish prank, but a serious movement to force their adult leaders to do something worthwhile.

Would not The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., killed by a gun, Rosa Parks, Autherine Lucy, and Emmitt Till, killed by a gun, be proud, hopeful, and maybe envious of today's young people? They probably also hope for the success that they were not able to complete.

Yes, history is a paradox.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Jack Limpert - [jlimpert@washingtsonian.com](mailto:jlimpert@washingtsonian.com)

## Stories of interest

***A source emailed me his life's work. Then, he ended his life*** (CJR)

By GREGORY KORTE

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This piece is co-published with USA Today. Gregory Korte serves as a White House correspondent for the paper.*

I WAS CRASHING ON DEADLINE when the emails started flowing into my inbox. Hope Hicks, the White House communications director - who had been with President Trump since long before he announced his candidacy - had just unexpectedly resigned.

I got confirmation of Hicks's departure at 4:36pm. A minute later, I started getting a flood of emails from P.S. Ruckman Jr., a political science professor who taught at Northern Illinois University and Rock Valley College. In 10 emails containing 65 spreadsheets, he was sending his entire data set of more than 30,000 presidential pardons and commutations.

The first email said simply, "Would want you to have this and use freely."

I had already gotten nine of the emails before I noticed them, but I immediately recognized that this was the data set-the one that made him such an essential expert on any story about presidential pardons. It was data I had often asked him to share, unsuccessfully, and now here it was, unsolicited, and out of the blue.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Bob Woodward defends journalistic objectivity in the era of Trump*** (Vox)

By ERIC ALLEN BEEN

"There's that delicate line between being very aggressive and working hard on something and trying to smoke out what's hidden," the renowned Washington Post journalist Bob Woodward told me about the unfolding Trump-Russia scandal. "Still, something is always hidden."

Woodward, along with the reporter Carl Bernstein, famously helped expose the Watergate scandal, which, of course, brought down a president. That project has been called "maybe the single greatest reporting effort of all time." And parallels have been drawn between abuses of power and cover-ups in Richard Nixon's White House and some of the actions - actual or alleged - by Donald Trump's administration. But in interviews, Woodward has urged the public to cool its expectations that a major Trump-Russia bombshell is coming.

Woodward, who shared two Pulitzer Prizes at the Washington Post and has written 18 best-selling books, is now an associate editor at the paper, where he has worked for more than 40 years.

Read more [here](#).

# Today in History - March 15, 2018



## By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, March 15, the 74th day of 2018. There are 291 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On March 15, 1493, Italian explorer Christopher Columbus arrived back in the Spanish harbor of Palos de la Frontera, two months after concluding his first voyage to the Western Hemisphere.

### On this date:

In 44 B.C., Roman dictator Julius Caesar was assassinated by a group of nobles that included Brutus and Cassius.

In 1767, the seventh president of the United States, Andrew Jackson, was born in the Waxhaw settlement along the North Carolina-South Carolina border.

In 1820, Maine became the 23rd state.

In 1917, Czar Nicholas II abdicated in favor of his brother, Grand Duke Mikhail Alexandrovich, who declined the crown, marking the end of imperial rule in Russia.

In 1922, Sultan Fuad I proclaimed himself the first king of modern Egypt.

In 1937, America's first hospital blood bank was opened at Cook County Hospital in Illinois.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied bombers again raided German-held Monte Cassino.

In 1956, the Lerner and Loewe musical play "My Fair Lady," based on Bernard Shaw's "Pygmalion," opened on Broadway.

In 1964, actress Elizabeth Taylor married actor Richard Burton in Montreal; it was her fifth marriage, his second. (They divorced in 1974, remarried in 1975, then divorced again in 1976.)

In 1977, the U.S. House of Representatives began a 90-day closed-circuit test to determine the feasibility of showing its sessions on television. The situation comedy "Three's Company," starring John Ritter, Joyce DeWitt and Suzanne Somers, premiered on ABC-TV.

In 1985, the first internet domain name, [symbolics.com](http://symbolics.com), was registered by the Symbolics Computer Corp. of Massachusetts.

In 1998, CBS' "60 Minutes" aired an interview with former White House employee Kathleen Willey, who said President Bill Clinton had made unwelcome sexual advances toward her in the Oval Office in 1993, a charge denied by the president. Dr. Benjamin Spock, whose child care guidance spanned half a century, died in San Diego at 94.

Ten years ago: A construction crane, 19 stories tall and attached to an apartment tower under construction on Manhattan's East Side, broke away and toppled like a tree onto buildings as far as a block away, killing seven people. China's legislature re-appointed Hu Jintao (hoo jin-tow) as president, giving him a second five-year term.

Five years ago: The Pentagon announced it would spend \$1 billion to add 14 interceptors to an Alaska-based missile defense system, responding to what it called faster-than-anticipated North Korean progress on nuclear weapons and missiles. The chief of Syria's main, Western-backed rebel group marked the second anniversary of the start of the uprising against President Bashar Assad by pledging to fight until the "criminal" regime was gone. Canadian Patrick Chan won his third title at the World Figure Skating Championships in London, Ontario.

One year ago: President Donald Trump, speaking in Ypsilanti, Michigan, announced that his administration would re-examine federal requirements governing the fuel efficiency of cars and trucks, moving forcefully against Obama-era environmental regulations that Trump said were stifling economic growth; Trump then flew to Nashville to lay a wreath at the tomb of President Andrew Jackson. For the second time, a federal court blocked President Trump's efforts to freeze immigration by refugees and citizens of some predominantly Muslim nations. The Federal Reserve raised its benchmark interest rate for the second time in three months, increasing its key short-term rate by a quarter-point to a still-low range of 0.75 percent to 1 percent.

Today's Birthdays: Musician DJ Fontana is 87. Former astronaut Alan L. Bean is 86. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is 85. Actor Judd Hirsch is 83. Jazz musician Charles Lloyd is 80. Rock musician Phil Lesh is 78. Singer Mike Love (The Beach Boys) is 77. Rock singer-musician Sly Stone is 75. Rock singer-musician Howard Scott (War; Lowrider Band) is 72. Rock singer Ry Cooder is 71. Actor Craig Wasson is 64. Rock singer Dee Snider (Twisted Sister) is 63. Actor Joaquim de Almeida is 61. Actress Park Overall is 61. Movie director Renny Harlin is 59. Model Fabio is 57. Singer Terence Trent D'Arby (AKA Sananda Maitreya) is 56. Rock singer Bret Michaels (Poison) is 55. Rhythm-and-blues singer Rockwell is 54. Actor Chris Bruno is 52. Rock singer Mark McGrath (Sugar Ray) is 50. Actress Kim Raver is 49. Rock musician Mark Hoppus is 46. Country singer-musician Matt Thomas (Parmalee) is 44. Actress Eva Longoria is 43. Rapper-musician [will.i.am](#) (Black Eyed Peas) is 43. Rock DJ Joseph Hahn (Linkin Park) is 41. Rapper Young Buck is 37. Actor Sean Biggerstaff is 35. Rock musician Ethan Mentzer is 35. Actor Kellan Lutz is 33. Actress Caitlin Wachs is 29.

***Thought for Today: "Life's meaning has always eluded me and I guess it always will. But I love it just the same." - E.B. White, American author and humorist (1899-1985).***

## 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.

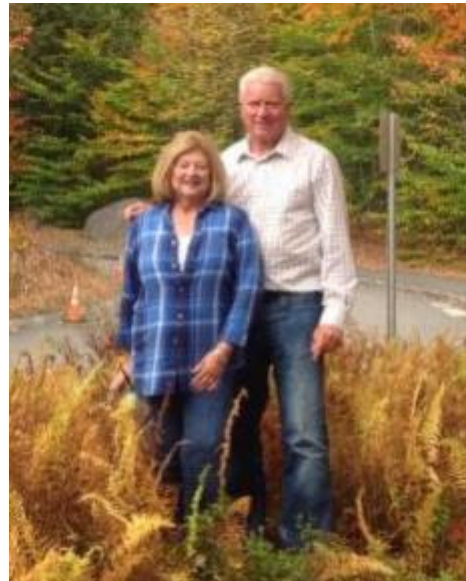
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.

- **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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