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#### Connecting - March 23, 2018

1 message

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# Connecting

March 23, 2018







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Colleagues,

### Good Friday morning!

What's it like to be an AP foreign correspondent these days? Connecting colleague **David Beard** (**Email**) did a Q&A with **Aya Batrawy**, born in Cairo, raised in Central Florida and now based in Dubai, for Poynter's Morning MediaWire and it leads today's issue.

In it, Aya notes, "I also learned that you have to hustle to make it as a foreign correspondent. To really establish yourself, you will have to work late and on weekends, cancel dinners with friends, reschedule trips to see your family back home and maybe even miss important weddings and graduations of friends and family to stay ahead because the news doesn't wait and it doesn't take a day off."

Our Connecting family includes many who are or once were AP foreign correspondents and I would love to hear your thoughts on the experience.

First responses are in on your thoughts about remaining a part of Facebook, and they are featured in today's issue. I hope you will weigh in with your own feelings about the issue.

Ye Olde Connecting Editor admits to mining his Facebook account for stories and photos you post that might interest a more select audience - Connecting readers - and the latest occurred today when **Claudia DiMartino** posted the photo above of **Hal Buell** cleaning about a foot of snow off her car, at their condo complex in Douglaston, New York.

"I'm strong enough to clear the snow from my car, but he's good enough to do it for me. I love that guy," she tells her Connecting colleagues.

Have a great weekend!

Paul

# Want to be a foreign correspondent? She's got some heartfelt advice to offer



AP correspondent Aya Batrawy (Photo by Andrew Lih)

#### By DAVID BEARD

#### Poynter MediaWire

How has foreign correspondence changed over the years? I asked Aya Batrawy, an Associated Press correspondent based in Dubai whose responsibilities extend into Saudi Arabia and other parts of the Arabian Peninsula. Over emails and an outdoor dinner in Dubai's lively Jumeirah Beach area, Batrawy talked about lessons learned in nearly a decade in the region.

# Aya, what skills should you have before landing in a place like the AP in Dubai?

The first skill I would emphasize is the ability to be a good listener and to truly be open-minded when covering a different region, country, culture and society than your own. It's essential. If a journalist can avoid seeing events through an "American lens" or the tropes associated with Orientalist writing on the Middle East, it will show in the kinds of stories, angles and questions you ask. People you interview will pick up on your efforts to be respectful of these differences and you will get the right story and the story right. Immersing yourself in the local culture, getting out of the comfy expat bubble and being able to read the local news or watch debate programs in the local language also helps immensely.

Having strong writing skills to convey complex issues in an entertaining and informative way is also important, regardless of the medium you are using to tell the story. Having technical skills to shoot photos and video is definitely a plus, but also being able to think about a story in all formats - how can it be told not only through writing, but visually through video and photos - is necessary.

#### Read more here.

# Your thoughts on #DeleteFacebook

## Why I quit Facebook

**Gene Herrick** (Email) - I am probably one of a few people who have quit Facebook. Being a long-time retired AP photographer/newsman, and having the values of non-involvement with organizations that might challenge my journalistic neutrality, I was talked into joining Facebook, bur quickly realized that this was not my communication form.

I even put in a lot of false personal background info, but suddenly I started receiving messages to join my Facebook. I didn't even know these people! I wouldn't have minded ignoring them, but I was afraid they might be friends of my friends, and I didn't want to hurt people's feelings.

Thus I fought the battle to unsubscribe. I'm not sorry.

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## Do I have a Facebook account? Yes, but...

**Doug Pizac** (Email) - I'm rather a private person who likes to share, but with those on a one-on-one or small group basis with items of interest specific to them or all of us. Doing so makes what I impart special versus throwing it out there like spam. Putting one's life on public view for the world to see in my mind is like taking selfies -- narcissistic in nature. The quality of many good friends that are contacted personally far outweighs hundreds/thousands of likes by people I have never heard of and will have a near zero chance of ever meeting.

Do I have a Facebook account? Yes. But it is devoid of any personal, professional and business information on me -- no photo, no education or work history, no trove of friends, no likes, etc. Blank. All the "sharing" choices in the settings are turned off. What is personal to me is private. And I treat my friends' privacy the same way out of respect; and the same with my clients.

It appears that I have chosen correctly what with the way Cambridge Analytica -- and probably others -- use the social networks to glean information about not only subscribers but their friends too without any of their permissions. Before photography I started out in college as a mathematics/computer science major where I learned about database management, extraction techniques, analysis, trending, etc. Back then the application of such knowledge was used for banking and corporate sales tracking. But as social media began I knew these techniques would eventually evolve to track people personally; and I was right. Nowadays divorce attorneys, insurance companies, law enforcement, etc. routinely scrub through social networks looking for cheating spouses, fraud claims, criminal actions, etc. We're already familiar with how stupid people post their illegal and immoral actions online that come back to bite them with being arrested.

As to Cambridge Analytica, it was only a matter of time before the practice came out and it is probably being done by others too in one form or another. And if not, it will be whether legally or illegally because there is one driving force behind it all -- money, a LOT of money.

And while I have you, there is another information leak that all of us need to be aware of -- your computer and cell phone apps, games, etc. -- that ask for what I see as unnecessary information. Take a close at the small print in what you're giving up before downloading a free or paid app. For something like Google Maps it naturally wants and needs your GPS information and internet access for accurate mapping. But others want and get access to your contacts, call history, IMs, email, photos on your cell, and other resources when you accept the download even though the developer should have absolutely no need for this other than what I see as gleaning and selling of your personal information to brokers. These types of rights grabs are most prevalent with "free" apps. How else can they make money other than embedded advertising? Think about it. There is money in personal information, a LOT of money. It is a whole industry in itself nowadays. Just remember, nothing is free when you're turning over personal information to a company that shouldn't need it for the product/service you're getting.

On a side note, look at the TOS's of the social networks you're using. For example, when you post your words and photos to Twitter you're giving it a worldwide, non-exclusive, royalty free license (with the right to sublicense) to distribute in any and all media, and authorizes Twitter to let others do the same. The key wording here is "right to sublicense" which means you're allowing the social network and others to sell and charge clientele for use of your photos whereupon you don't get a penny in return or even have a say so on who can use your imagery. The worst thing you can do is post high-res files when only 300 pixel sizes are needed on a phone. Or at least watermark them like AP does with its apimages.com site.

So why do I have a Facebook account? Simple, to not just access the pages of friends on occasion if they say look at their site, but mainly to look for misuse of my images that were not properly licensed and to vet people and companies looking to

do business with me. I have not only sent cease/desist orders and invoices to abusers, but have turned down jobs from those who I found not to be all that truthful with me from what I discovered about them on their social media platforms. Ethics and morals are or should be more important than the money when it comes to one's reputation and wanting to sleep well at night.

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## His presence on Facebook is due to his job

**Jim Reindl** (Email) - As always, Ted Anthony's piece on social media, Facebook in particular, is an entertaining, thoughtful read (see Thursday's Connecting). There's no way to argue with it (other than Def Leppard being my spirit animal) and no reason to, either.

Obviously, though, it's a choice. I made mine to disable my account a month or more ago, before the latest ethical breach by Facebook (you can hardly call selling or making available highly personal data a "data breach' as CNN keeps insisting). I would delete my account but need to keep it since I am an administrator on our USAID/Timor-Leste Facebook account.

Truth-in-advertising, social media is incredibly important in the business or organizational world. As small as Timor-Leste is, Facebook is the dominant social media platform here and a convenient and effective way for us to tell the Timorese about the assistance the American people are providing their country.

Personally, though, I'm done. No more reading Trump rants, pro or con. No more pictures of plates, pans and bowls of food. No more "dogs rolling logs" photos. No memes. No GIFs. No 10-cent philosophical messages in multi-colored hues. True, no more little humorous insights into the humanity of my friends. But let's face it, I had 400 "friends" and I can count pretty easily to the number that encompasses both of us actually caring about the other.

I long ago realized that entry into the digital universe meant giving up a lot of your privacy. But you know, Facebook started 14 years ago and our country, young as it is, is 228 years older than that. We all managed to stay in touch with those we love somehow during those "lean." non-digital years.

So, carry on Facebook users. Tweet away. Instagram your morning oatmeal. You'll get no argument from me. But if you do want to argue, call me or email me. I'll be busy figuring out who my spirit animal is.

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# Even if you're not on Facebook, you can't escape

**Peggy Walsh** (Email) - Re the discussion about "leaving" Facebook. Even if you're not on FB you can't escape. This New York Times video outlines the scope. Using your best judgement (judgment) is your best hope.

**Click here** to read the Times' story, "Want to #DeleteFacebook? You Can Try", by Brian X. Chen, which begins:

In the wake of news that the Facebook data of 50 million people was obtained by Cambridge Analytica, a political data firm, many users are mulling whether it is time to leave the social network. Even a co-founder of WhatsApp, which Facebook bought for \$16 billion in 2014, declared that it was time to delete Facebook.

But while deleting your account is as simple as clicking on a few buttons, Facebook may be too ubiquitous to truly quit. For one, it would probably be inaccurate to say you have removed Facebook from your life just by leaving the site. Chances are you still use WhatsApp, the largest messaging app in the world, or Instagram, the most popular photo-sharing app. Facebook owns both.

Keep in mind that Facebook isn't the only company capable of collecting your information. One big culprit: Web trackers, like cookies embedded into websites and their ads. They are everywhere, and they follow your activities from site to site.

# **Connecting mailbox**

## From 'Wish I Said That Department'

**Jim Spehar** (Email) - From the "Wish I said that" department, courtesy of the annual journal from the alma mater of both yours truly and my son, who's now a video editor for the ABC affiliate in Albuquerque.

"Is terrorism the greatest threat to our country or recession? I suggest to you today that the quickest, most direct way to ruin a democracy is to poison the information. Those are the stakes we have to address." - CBS anchor Scott Pelley, accepting the 2016 Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism at Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communications

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## On Harry Cabluck and Rich Oppel

John Lumpkin (Email) - shares these posts:

The tributes to Harry Cabluck were wonderful to read. In "six degrees of separation or less," the staff in my first job at the Fort Worth Star-Telegram in the late '60s included Harry and brother Jerry. It was the first I ever heard of a camera maker named Leica. Of course, Harry was AP photo editor in Dallas when I returned to Texas as CoB in 1982. He had an impossible job navigating the three separate major newspaper wars in Dallas, Houston and San Antonio and their pursuit of "outs" and of prospects of withholding basic spot photos. We prevailed IMO, though Harry - I love this, being Harry - sometimes was less diplomatic than his CoB, as Hal Buell can appreciate. Whether it was his forcefulness or my "good cop," we got the photo. The stories about the Franco Harris catch and the Carlton Fisk homer are legendary, but, in the latter days of his career as Austin AP photographer, he took the same transcendent shots of George and Laura Bush because of the same attributes - position, equipment and exposures - but that was also aided by another non-technical talent, the preparation and knowledge of the subjects. Laura was looking for Harry in a parade and found him - nudging her husband to turn the same way. Case closed.

#### And...

Another example of AP domestic bureau chiefs of days gone by being selected for their journalism credentials in face of issues - Rich Oppel (named recently to fill the editor-in-chief's position at Texas Monthly.)

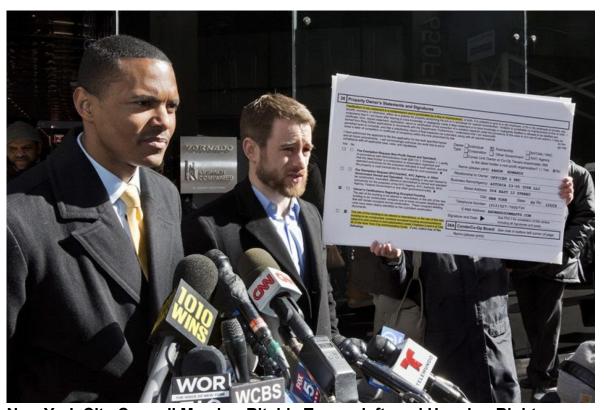
Rich was editor of the Austin American-Statesman during my Texas CoB tenure. He was exacting as far as the AP relationship was concerned about what his newspaper needed from AP, based on his prior knowledge of what CoBs could and could not do.

Inside Cox (the owner at the time), he was an AP advocate on larger issues, for sure.

There are examples (I'll not cite them, but know first- and second-hand of them) of former AP staffers being somewhat contrary in their subsequent roles as "members" but Rich was not one of them.



# AP Exclusive: Kushner organization routinely filed false NYC housing documents



New York City Council Member Ritchie Torres, left, and Housing Rights Initiative Executive Director Aaron Carr address a news conference outside Kushner Cos. headquarters in New York, March 19, 2018. The pair called for an investigation into a report by AP and a tenants' rights watchdog that Jared Kushner's family real estate company routinely filed false paperwork

# declaring it had zero rent-regulated tenants in dozens of buildings it owned in New York when it actually had hundreds. AP PHOTO / RICHARD DREW

It started with a tip about tenants being harassed at a cluster of New York apartment buildings owned by Jared Kushner's family.

Bernard Condon, a New York-based business writer, began reporting the story last year, visiting buildings in Astoria, Queens, interviewing the tenants, many of whom were reluctant to go on the record. A few did, and they told similar stories of being subjected to loud construction at all hours, dust, rodents, lead paint in the air and heat suddenly shut off in the winter. Then, some were approached with offers of money to get them to move so the company could install higher-paying renters.

But the tip did not truly begin to take shape and make sense until a tenant advocate source told Condon he had discovered that Kushner Cos. had filed false paperwork for two buildings elsewhere in the city that made it easier to harass tenants without notice during construction. Condon asked the advocate about other buildings, including the ones in Queens.

The source came back with startling news: Kushner Cos. had filed paperwork saying it had zero rent-regulated tenants in buildings throughout the city when, in fact, it had hundreds.

Condon's exclusive, exposing the falsehoods, earns the Beat of the Week.

After receiving the initial tip, Condon staked out Kushner's buildings for two days. He talked to a local barber, a dry cleaner on the corner, the mail deliverer, and tenants walking in and out the front door. He got inside one and copied names on mailboxes and called and emailed them back in the office. He eventually spoke to more than three dozen tenants, many who described a campaign of harassment.

Condon staked out Kushner's buildings for two days and pored over tax documents.

One of the rent-regulated tenants who lives on Social Security checks and odd jobs described constant drilling in the middle of the night, rats and hallways filled with lumber, sawdust and plaster. Within a few weeks, someone knocked on her door and offered her at least \$10,000 to leave the building. She refused and sued. She won a year's worth of free rent and a new refrigerator.

Condon, a member of a team that has been examining conflicts in the Trump family businesses, pored over dozens of tax documents that showed there were more than 300 rent-regulated units in Kushner buildings. All the false paperwork claiming there were none were signed by a Kushner employee, including sometimes the chief operating officer.

If the Kushner Cos. had disclosed those rent-regulated tenants, it could have triggered stricter city oversight of construction crews by the city, including possibly unscheduled "sweeps" on site by inspectors to keep the company from harassing tenants.

Condon's story won widespread play.

AP Exclusive: Kushner Cos. filed false NYC housing paperwork, reports @BernardFCondonhttps://t.co/WszZTbvWqn

- darlene superville (@dsupervilleap) March 19, 2018

It was No. 1 on AP Mobile, generating thousands of shares, comments and debate on social media. It also appeared in The New York Times, The Washington Post, New York Post and New York Daily News.

The next day, the New York attorney general and the mayor said the matter warranted attention, and a New York City council member held a news conference in front of the Kushner headquarters to launch his own investigation, saying the matter could ultimately be referred to law enforcement.

For dogged reporting that shined a light on the business ethics of a company led by the president's son-in-law and trusted adviser, Condon wins this week's \$500 prize.

# **Connecting wishes Happy Birthday**



To

On Sunday to ...

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Mary Pennybacker - pennybacker@comcast.net

# Stories of interest

Newsonomics: Is Tronc about to go on the market? (Nieman)

By KEN DOCTOR

It almost sounds like a riddle: What's a Tronc without the L.A. Times?

As the Tronc sale of the Times and the San Diego Union-Tribune finalizes, now most likely in mid-April, the next question arises: What becomes of Tronc? Its eight remaining titles own an impressive history and still play important roles in their cities: the Chicago Tribune, The Baltimore Sun, the Hartford Courant, the Orlando Sentinel, the Sun-Sentinel in South Florida, the New York Daily News, The Morning Call in Allentown, Pa., and The Daily Press in Newport, Virginia. But Tronc as a company appears at sea. Sensing "blood in the water," several media banker firms are now actively looking for would-be buyers, several top newspaper executives

have confirmed to me this week. While Tronc itself hasn't announced any "strategic review" or the hiring of its own banker for a would-be sale, more than a half-dozen industry sources noted to me that Tronc's recently changed circumstances point in that direction. They expect more definitive indications of a Tronc-for-sale sign this spring. When asked for comment, Tronc said, "We don't comment on industry speculation from unnamed sources. We are focused on executing our plan for digital transformation to benefit our subscribers and shareholders."

Read more here.

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# Opinion: Trump Hacked the Media Right Before Our Eyes (New York Times)

#### By ROSS DOUTHAT

Let's get one thing straight: I am not a fan of Facebook. I'm confident that social media is a cancer on our private lives and a source of derangement in our politics. I take it for granted that the tech barons are acquiring the power to tilt elections, and that they'll be happy to play handmaidens to tyrants soft and hard so long as they can monetize our data. I take a certain mordant pleasure in watching Mark Zuckerberg and his minions scapegoated for the political failures of late-Obama-era liberalism.

But the liberal establishment's fixation on Facebook's 2016 sins - first the transmission of fake news and now the exploitation of its data by the Trump campaign or its appendages - still feels like a classic example of blaming something new because it's new when it's the old thing that mattered more. Or of blaming something new because you thought that "new" meant "good," that the use of social-media data by campaigns would always help tech-savvy liberals and not their troglodytic rivals - and the shock of discovering otherwise obscures the more important role that older forms of media played in making the Trump era a reality.

Read more here. Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

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# An "Ashamed" Fox News Commentator Just Quit The "Propaganda Machine" (BuzzFeed)

#### By TOM NAMAKO

A retired United States Army lieutenant colonel and Fox News contributor quit Tuesday and denounced the network and President Donald Trump in an email to colleagues.

"Fox has degenerated from providing a legitimate and much-needed outlet for conservative voices to a mere propaganda machine for a destructive and ethically ruinous administration," wrote Ralph Peters, a Fox News "strategic analyst."

"Over my decade with Fox, I long was proud of the association. Now I am ashamed," he wrote.

Peters, who was also a heated critic of Barack Obama's foreign policy, once described him as having been "date raped" by Vladimir Putin. He didn't respond to an email about his missive.

Read more here. Shared by Bob Daugherty.

# Today in History - March 23, 2018



#### By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, March 23, the 82nd day of 2018. There are 283 days left in the year.

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

On March 23, 1775, Patrick Henry delivered an address to the Virginia Provincial Convention in which he is said to have declared, "Give me liberty, or give me death!"

#### On this date:

In 1792, Joseph Haydn's Symphony No. 94 in G Major (known as the "Surprise" symphony because of an unexpected crashing chord in the second movement) had its first public performance in London.

In 1806, explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, having reached the Pacific coast, began their journey back east.

In 1914, the first installment of "The Perils of Pauline," the silent film serial starring Pearl White, premiered in the greater New York City area.

In 1933, the German Reichstag adopted the Enabling Act, which effectively granted Adolf Hitler dictatorial powers.

In 1942, the first Japanese-Americans evacuated by the U.S. Army during World War II arrived at the internment camp in Manzanar, California.

In 1956, Pakistan became an Islamic republic.

In 1965, America's first two-person space mission took place as Gemini 3 blasted off with astronauts Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom and John W. Young aboard for a nearly 5-hour flight.

In 1968, UCLA defeated North Carolina, 78-55, to win college basketball's NCAA championship.

In 1973, before sentencing a group of Watergate break-in defendants, Chief U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica read aloud a letter he'd received from James W. McCord Jr. which said there was "political pressure" to "plead guilty and remain silent."

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan first proposed developing technology to intercept incoming enemy missiles - an idea that came to be known as the Strategic Defense Initiative. Dr. Barney Clark, recipient of a Jarvik permanent artificial heart, died at the University of Utah Medical Center after 112 days with the device.

In 1998, "Titanic" tied an Academy Awards record by winning 11 Oscars, including best picture, director (James Cameron) and song ("My Heart Will Go On").

In 2003, during the Iraq War, a U.S. Army maintenance convoy was ambushed in Nasiriyah (nah-sih-REE'-uh); 11 soldiers were killed, including Pfc. Lori Ann Piestewa (py-ES'-tuh-wah); six were captured, including Pfc. Jessica Lynch, who was rescued on April 1, 2003.

Ten years ago: A roadside bomb killed four U.S. soldiers in Baghdad, pushing the overall American death toll in the five-year war to at least 4,000. Vice President Dick Cheney visited the West Bank, where Palestinian leaders asked him to pressure Israel to halt settlement construction and voiced other complaints. The Seattle-based fishing trawler Alaska Ranger sank in the Bering Sea, killing five crew members; 42 others survived. Al Copeland, founder of the Popeyes Famous Fried Chicken chain, died near Munich, Germany, at age 64.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama concluded a four-day visit to the Middle East as he marveled at the beauty of one of the region's most stunning sites, the fabled ancient city of Petra in Jordan. Pope Francis traveled from the Vatican to Castel Gandolfo south of Rome to have lunch with his predecessor, Benedict XVI. Boris Berezovsky, 67, a self-exiled and outspoken Russian tycoon who'd had a bitter falling out with Russian President Vladimir Putin, was found dead at his home in Ascot, England.

One year ago: Abandoning negotiations, President Donald Trump demanded a make-or-break vote on health care legislation in the House, threatening to leave "Obamacare" in place and move on to other issues if the next day's vote failed. (Trump and GOP leaders ended up pulling their bill when it became clear it would fail badly.) The Republican-led Senate confirmed President Donald Trump's pick to be U.S. ambassador to Israel, 52-46, ignoring objections from Democrats that David Friedman lacked the temperament for such an important diplomatic post.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Mark Rydell is 89. International Motorsports Hall of Famer Craig Breedlove is 81. Singer-producer Ric Ocasek is 69. Secretary of State

Rex Tillerson is 66. Singer Chaka Khan is 65. Actress Amanda Plummer is 61. Actress Catherine Keener is 59. Actress Hope Davis is 54. Actor Richard Grieco is 53. Country musician Kevin Griffin (Yankee Grey) is 53. Actress Marin Hinkle is 52. Rock singer-musician Damon Albarn (Blur) is 50. Actress-singer Melissa Errico is 48. Rock musician John Humphrey (The Nixons) is 48. Bandleader Reggie Watts (TV: "The Late Late Show With James Corden") is 46. Actor Randall Park is 44. Actress Michelle Monaghan is 42. Actress Keri Russell is 42. Actress Anastasia Griffith is 40. Gossip columnist-blogger Perez Hilton is 40. Actress Nicholle Tom is 40. Country singer Paul Martin (Marshall Dyllon) is 40. Country singer Brett Young is 37. Actor Nicolas Wright is 36.

Thought for Today: "A man who fears suffering is already suffering from what he fears." - Michel de Montaigne (MEE'-shel duh mohn-TEHN'), French essayist (1533-1592).

# 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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