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Connecting - April 10, 2018

1 message

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Connecting

April 10, 2018

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning!

How would you like to work in New York?

Over the years, many an AP staffer has heard those words in one form or another - in the end, a compliment, of course, that the work she or he was doing in a bureau was worthy of promotion to headquarters. A big lifestyle change as well, for better or worse.

Our late colleague **Tom Baldwin** heard those words when he was a Philadelphia staffer in the 1970s - and he told in a delightfully written article for AP World back then how it affected him. Today's issue leads with his story, published in early 1977. (Tom's life was remembered in last Friday's Connecting.)

Connecting would welcome your own story about making the move to New York, or not. What went into your decision, how did it work out, any regrets that you did or did not heed the call, anyone who mentored you there, any amusing anecdotes? I look forward to hearing from you.



Finally, my apologies for leaving you hanging on the same bridge ledge as the two goats in Monday's Connecting story about their rescue. I neglected to provide a link. [Click here](#) to learn their fate in the well-told NPR story. My baaaaahhhhhddddd! (I know, sheep baah, goats bleat, but I couldn't resist...)

Have a great day!

Paul

NEW YORK, NEW YORK



Broadcast Metro wire editor Mike Collins scans a newspaper in the late 1970s in the AP newsroom at 50 Rockefeller Plaza.

By TOM BALDWIN

AP World 1977 No. 1

"New York? Hell no!"

And I slammed down the phone.

The Rumor Mill, that bulletin circuit that AP types feed on, had struck again.

"They want you to go to New York. The call will come tomorrow."



These were dark words. Voices from the Rumor Mill sound like spies passing microfilm.

I thought, "Why me?" There I was on a rainy March afternoon, sitting by the fire in my backwoods home in the pastoral Pennsylvania countryside, waxing my fly fishing gear because trout season was one page away on the calendar - and now this.

New York City.

Tom Baldwin, 1980

Hell, I don't want to go to New York. I don't need an 8 per cent sales tax or a 50-cent bus fare. I don't need July days that are so hot the streets steam, or wintry rains when every cab in town is busy. I don't want to pay \$300 for a closet apartment. I don't want the crowds and the sirens all night, and air that's so foul that pigeons gag.

I pulled a beer from the ice box and turned over in my mind the argument I would use to tell AP to bug off. No way. I wasn't going to New York.

One week later, on a sunny but cold morning, 13 million people were on their way to work in the City of New York. I was one of them. With a shine on my shoes and a fresh crease in my only suit, I strode into the lobby at 50 Rockefeller Plaza. At the elevator. I met Sports Editor Wick Temple. In the coffee shop, I waited in line with general desk supervisor Nick Tatro. Walking past the switchboard I nodded to ("uh oh") Wes Gallagher.

Outwardly, these people struck me as normal, not like I had expected. I thought perhaps my reservations about New York and its folk are overstated.

Indeed, there is a magic in New York City. People say "There is no place like New York." And they are correct. Other places, people go to bed at night.

New York is always "on", always popping. If you're a newcomer and not used to this conviviality, it brings out the bumpkin in you.

Like one night after work when a posse of us were walking across Rockefeller Center. It was midnight and we were bound for a midtown inn for refreshment. I spotted a man in formal wear and a lady in a gown. They were ducking into a chauffeured limousine in front of NBC.

"Would you look at that," I remarked.

Jim Donna, a general desk editor, smiled. He understood. There had been a time when he too had arrived in New York with coal dust in his pockets.



50 Rockefeller Plaza

"Hey Baldwin," he said. "This is New York."

I got the message. It had been provincial of me to take special notice of elegant people and their elegant automobile in New York City.

It has been said, "Anything you want, you can get it on the streets of New York."

True.

-- There is a place in the West Village where, if your taste is fashion runs to the glittery, you can buy a suit made entirely of pop tops from beer cans.

-- If you ski, go to 1740 Broadway. There's a map in a window there with ski conditions from across the nation.

-- On East 53rd Street there is an art gallery that will sell you an oil painting of a naked lady for \$90. The painting is three inches high and two inches across.

-- At [1410 Sixth Avenue](#) you can buy a marble telephone.

-- In a window at 46th and Fifth there is a picture of one of the kinds of Siam. And there's a letter the king wrote offering two elephants to President Abraham Lincoln. "Our political jurisdiction," Abe wrote back to the king, "does not reach a latitude so low as to favor the multiplicity of the elephant."

Anything you want, get it in New York.

When I was working in New York I avoided trying to ride the subways because they confused me and I got lost too often.

"The Garden? Easy," said sports writer Fred Rothenberg. "Take the 'D Train.'"

What's a 'D Train?

"Yankee Stadium's not far. Get the 'Lex.'"

What's a "Lex?"

New Yorkers always have lots of pennies in their pockets. This is because the sales tax is so awkward your change never lands square on a nickel.

And New Yorkers are big tipplers. Once I went to a ball game at Shea Stadium and everyone was tipping the usher. The usher did not take us to our seats or even show us where they were. He pointed us in the general direction.

But after awhile, the newcomer learns that when someone tells you he's a "New Yorker," it means he grew up in Cedar Rapids and moved to Manhattan three months ago.

Besides, there is only one genuine New Yorker. He is Tom Kelly, the news editor of the AP's New York City bureau. AP has other staff members who are from New York. But they at least left the city at one time or another. Kelly never leaves. If he did, New York City might fall apart.

Kelly knows every cop in town. And if he doesn't know all the City Hall big-shots, he at least knows their secretaries. One time Kelly's car was towed. It cost him a dime for a phone call and a short wait before a police wrecker wheeled around the corner with Kelly's car hiked onto the winch. The tow truck lowered his car into the precise spot from where it had been towed earlier in the day. Kelly didn't have to go to a pier in Brooklyn and hassle over the tow. One phone call. That's class.



AP newsroom at 50 Rock in 1955. (Photo courtesy AP Corporate Archives)

I never wanted to go to New York with AP, but I'm glad I did.

I got to meet Ed Dennehy in the flesh. And I got to meet all those voices, some frightening and some friendly, at the other end of a phone call to the general desk. I got to meet the guy from sports who so many times on the Philadelphia overnight had saved my whiskers, Shelly Sakowitz.

"I got to learn and use great terms like "mensch," "gnosh," "chutzpah."

I got to find that the best juke box in the world - it even has hymns - is located inside a bar at 51st Street and Second Avenue. On sunny days I got to watch the dazzling women who shop Fifth Avenue. And late at night I delighted to the wit of "Fitz," a 48th Street mixologist.

New York? Hell no. Never turn it down.

Speaking of New York headquarters...



Stephen Hart ([Email](#)) - I am in the process of moving and in my packing I came across this print. I'm not sure if I've shared it before.

The rest of the story, thanks to our colleagues **Valerie Komor** and **Francesca Pitaro** of AP Corporate Archives:

The photo shows the 1940 unveiling of the bas-relief sculpture titled News above the main doorways into AP's headquarters at 50 Rockefeller Center. And this second photo (at right) shows AP General Manager Kent Cooper, Nelson Rockefeller, and Isamu Noguchi at the unveiling of plaque designed by Noguchi at 50 Rockefeller Plaza on April 29, 1940.



Excerpted from the Rockefeller Plaza blog:

Our news now comes in 140-character bursts and animated-gif listicles, and journalists can't catch a break, but the almighty power of the reporter is beautifully immortalized on the facade of 50 Rockefeller Plaza. The grandiose bas-relief sculpture titled News, by famed Japanese-American artist Isamu Noguchi (1904-1988), stands above the entrance to what was originally the Associated Press Building. (The building's anchor tenant is now Bank of America; the Associated Press, the wire service that continues to provide its services digitally and otherwise, relocated out of Rockefeller Center in 2004). Unveiled in 1940, News depicts five newsmen getting the scoop through traditional, analog methods: with a camera, over the wire, on the telephone, via a teletype machine and with good ol' pen and paper.

The story of how News came to be is as fascinating as the piece is powerful. And even more amazing is Noguchi's personal history. Now known primarily for his mid-century-modern coffee tables and lamps, in his early years he studied sculpture with Constantin Brancusi, created theater sets for Martha Graham, befriended Buckminster Fuller and Alexander Calder, had an affair with Frida Kahlo and willingly placed himself in a Japanese internment camp during WWII, all while creating portraits, pottery, sculpture, furniture, fountains, parks, plazas and other public designs.

Read more [here](#).

Connecting mailbox

Former OKC staffers in Bangkok



Lindel Hutson ([Email](#)) - Former Oklahoma City AP staffers pose in Bangkok. Pat Casey (left) worked in Oklahoma City and New York while David Longstreath spent most of his AP career also in Oklahoma City. The occasion was an exhibition of photography by Longstreath, who now lives in Thailand.

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A remarkable wire story on marathoner with dwarfism



AP Photo/Steven Senne

Bill Kole ([Email](#)) - As a member of the Greater Boston running community, I get a steady stream of "awesome" in my social media feeds. This fellow's personal story is compelling. The text, photos and video really seem to have resonated with people. It speaks to a deeply felt human need to be inspired, if only because any given news cycle is just so damned depressing.

Coincidentally, I just became aware of this MSN effort to get [feel-good stories](#) in front of us. The cynic in me doubts much will come of it, but my inner optimist is cheering them on:

'Don't run,' docs said; marathoner with dwarfism defied them

By WILLIAM J. COLE

SALEM, Mass. (AP) - Most marathoners take 35,000 steps to reach the finish line. John Young needs 80,000.

The high school math teacher from Canada is part of a rare and spirited breed of athlete: those who've overcome the daunting challenges of dwarfism to conquer the

26.2-mile (42.2-kilometer) distance.

Many endure not just the usual rigors of training but cruel taunts from onlookers - "Hey, check out the midget" - as they put in their miles.

But Young, who lightheartedly refers to himself as an LP ("little person"), has become an inspiration to others with dwarfism - and his accomplishments have won him respect and admiration around the globe.

Read more [here](#).

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Nick Ut receives Lifetime Achievement Award



Nick Ut ([Email](#)) received the Lifetime Achievement Award From The Press Photographer Association Greater Los Angeles. He is shown Saturday night with

two AP Los Angeles staffers - Reed Saxon (left) and Mark Terrill.

Welcome to Connecting



Matt Curry - cpcwaxpastor@gmail.com

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Stories of interest

Newsonomics: The Denver Post's protest should launch a new era of "calling B.S." (Nieman)

By KEN DOCTOR

What are we to make of The Denver Post's "extraordinary display of defiance"? As the paper's editorial board, led by Chuck Plunkett, fired a fusillade of public protest on Sunday - publishing six pages decrying the paper's owner, to the social congratulations of the news world - we may have reached a new point in local American journalism's descent into oblivion.

Despite almost a decade of newsroom cuts, which have left no more 25,000 journalists in the more than 1,300 dailies across the country, journalists have been

remarkably accepting of their buyouts and layoffs. We haven't seen the kinds of mass strikes or work actions that have happened from time to time in Europe. We've seen instead an acquiescence to what's been seen as the inevitable toll of digital disruption. Sadness, rather than spirited action, has marked the trade. That's understandable, in part: No one wants to risk the lifeline of a paycheck for what may be futile protest. Only when the Niemöllerian logic kicks in do we see such stands as the Post's.

By standing up for themselves and the value of their work, the Post's journalists stand up for their community. "The Post has been an integral part of progress in Colorado," recently resigned editor Greg Moore wrote in one of the Post's audacious pieces. "It helped the community heal after fires, floods, and unspeakable gun violence. It explained how we were changing politically and demographically, and it exposed corruption and malfeasance. It has provided a window and a mirror to help us become a better community." And by standing up for their community, they stand up for themselves. This is the relationship that must be renewed. The loss here isn't in mere journalism jobs; it's in community knowledge and self-government.

Read more [here](#).

AND...

Denver Post runs photo of wrong ballpark in Coors Field Guide (NBC)

By Craig Calcaterra

It's pretty rough out there in the newspaper industry. Papers have closed and consolidated and thousands of reporters, photographers, editors and support staff have been laid off. Some of this is due to the changing media landscape. Some of it is due to private equity buying up papers and stripping them of assets to turn a quick buck. It's a bad, bad time all around.

The Denver Post is not immune to that. Indeed, the Post is among the hardest hit papers, recently letting a couple dozen people go. Not because it was getting beat by online media or 21st century news tastes - indeed, the Post was turning a profit and winning awards - but because a hedge fund wasn't making quite as big a profit it wanted to see and likely wants to milk the paper for more. The idea in these sorts of transactions is to maximize return, after all, not to deliver news and information to the populace. To the hedge fund, a newspaper is no different than a shoe store or a toy store or a gun manufacturer.

The folks who run the Post are likely telling everyone that, despite all of this, things are just fine and that the paper is shipshape and Bristol fashion. Of course, if that were the case, they would not have put out a big, splashy "Ultimate Visitors Guide to Coors Field" feature today that . . . shows Citizens Bank Park in Philly:

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

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That Politico article on "news deserts" doesn't really show what it claims to show (Nieman)

By JOSHUA BENTON

Sunday afternoon, Politico came out with a "special report" on the relationship between the strength of local newspapers and support for Donald Trump in the 2016 election. "Trump thrives in areas that lack traditional news outlets," the headline said:

An extensive review of subscription data and election results shows that Trump outperformed the previous Republican nominee, Mitt Romney, in counties with the lowest numbers of news subscribers, but didn't do nearly as well in areas with heavier circulation.

Politico's findings - which put Trump's escalating attacks on the media in a new context - were drawn from a comparison of election results and subscription information from the Alliance for Audited Media, an industry group that verifies print and digital circulation for advertisers. The findings cover more than 1,000 mainstream news publications in more than 2,900 counties out of 3,100 nationwide from every state except Alaska, which does not hold elections at the county level...

That gives new force to the widely voiced concerns of news-industry professionals and academicians about Trump's ability to make bold assertions about crime rates, unemployment and other verifiable facts without any independent checks. Those concerns, which initially were raised during the campaign, were largely based on anecdotes and observations. Politico's analysis suggests that Trump did, indeed, do worse overall in places where independent media could check his claims.

I have a lot of sympathy for those who argue that the decline of local newspapers has led to a decline in government accountability, political engagement, and a host of other democratic ills. There's been a fair amount of academic research supporting the claim; I've always liked this 2009 Princeton study that used a nifty natural experiment to show that after the closure of the Cincinnati Post in 2007, "fewer candidates ran for municipal office in the suburbs most reliant on the Post, incumbents became more likely to win re-election, and voter turnout fell." I've long written about the platform-worsened decline of local news and the alarming concentration of our journalistic resources in New York and Washington.

But this study doesn't really show what people are claiming it does. The underlying argument might be true, but the data the authors are using doesn't prove their case. Here are a few of the issues I have with it.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

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Department Of Homeland Security Compiling Database Of Journalists And 'Media Influencers' (Forbes)

By MICHELLE FABIO

In today's installment of "I'm Not Terrified, You Are," Bloomberg Government reports on a FedBizOpps.gov posting by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with the relatively benign-sounding subject "Media Monitoring Services."

The details of the attached Statement of Work, however, outline a plan to gather and monitor the public activities of media professionals and influencers and are enough to cause nightmares of constitutional proportions, particularly as the freedom of the press is under attack worldwide.

And "attack" is not hyperbolic.

Every day, journalists face serious consequences including physical violence, imprisonment and death. A few days ago, the Committee to Protect Journalists launched its annual Free The Press campaign to raise awareness about imprisoned

journalists throughout the world. On May 3, UNESCO will once again mark World Press Freedom Day "to inform citizens of violations of press freedom - a reminder that in dozens of countries around the world, publications are censored, fined, suspended and closed down, while journalists, editors and publishers are harassed, attacked, detained and even murdered."

Read more [here](#). Shared by Robert Kimball

AND....

Is Homeland Security Working to Compile a Database of Journalists and Bloggers? (Snopes)

On 3 April 2018, a solicitation for services posted by the United States Department of Homeland Security appeared on the U.S. Federal Business Opportunities website - a system that allows private contractors to bid on providing goods or services to the United States government. That solicitation (displayed in full below), titled "Media Monitoring Services," seeks a contractor to create a searchable database of information about journalists, social media "influencers," and media outlets:

Services shall enable [the DHS's National Protection and Program's Directorate] to monitor traditional news sources as well as social media, identify any and all media coverage related to the Department of Homeland Security or a particular event. Services shall provide media comparison tools, design and rebranding tools, communication tools, and the ability to identify top media influencers.

A draft of the solicitation sets out the broad requirements the DHS has for the contractor's digital product, but the one that has garnered the most press has been "Task Five: Media Engagement," which requires the contractor to provide:

24/7 Access to a password protected, media influencer database, including journalists, editors, correspondents, social media influencers, bloggers etc.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Kent Prince.

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13 J-school deans and chairs issue letter of concern to Sinclair (Poynter)

By AL TOMPKINS

Deans and department chairs from 13 universities sent a letter of protest Friday afternoon to the Sinclair Broadcast Group, condemning the company for forcing anchors at its nearly 200 stations to read a statement accusing other news outlets of publishing "fake news."

The letter, addressed to Sinclair Executive Chairman David. D. Smith was signed by the head of journalism schools at the University of Maryland, Syracuse University, Louisiana State University, University of Georgia, University of Mississippi, Temple University, Ohio University, University of Arizona, University of Southern California, University of California-Berkeley, University of Illinois, The George Washington University and Morgan State University.

The letter includes this passage:

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

The Final Word

Millennials destroyed the rules of written English - and created something better (Mashable)

By RACHEL THOMPSON

The spelling and grammar rules do not apply on the Millennial Internet™.

That's because millennials have created a new rulebook for a variant of written English unique to social media. A rulebook which states that deliberately misspelled words and misused grammar can convey tone, nuance, humour, and even annoyance.

Dr Lauren Fonteyn, English Linguistics lecturer at University of Manchester, told Mashable "something exciting" is happening with the way that millennials write, and it goes far, far beyond our proclivity to use acronyms and "like."

Fonteyn says millennials are "breaking the constraints" of written English to "be as expressive as you can be in spoken language." This new variant of written English strives to convey what body language, and tone and volume of voice can achieve in spoken English.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Michael Rubin.

Today in History - April 10, 2018



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, April 10, the 100th day of 2018. There are 265 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 10, 1968, "In the Heat of the Night" won best picture of 1967 at the 40th Academy Awards; one of its stars, Rod Steiger, was named best actor while Katharine Hepburn was honored as best actress for "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner."

On this date:

In 1790, President George Washington signed the first United States Patent Act.

In 1866, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was incorporated.

In 1912, the British liner RMS Titanic set sail from Southampton, England, on its ill-fated maiden voyage.

In 1925, the F. Scott Fitzgerald novel "The Great Gatsby" was first published by Scribner's of New York.

In 1932, German President Paul Von Hindenburg was re-elected in a runoff, with Adolf Hitler coming in second.

In 1947, Brooklyn Dodgers President Branch Rickey purchased the contract of Jackie Robinson from the Montreal Royals.

In 1953, the 3-D horror movie "House of Wax," produced by Warner Bros. and starring Vincent Price, premiered in New York.

In 1971, a table tennis team from the United States arrived in China at the invitation of the communist government for a goodwill visit that came to be known as "ping-pong diplomacy."

In 1978, Arkady Shevchenko, a high-ranking Soviet citizen employed by the United Nations, sought political asylum in the United States.

In 1981, imprisoned IRA hunger striker Bobby Sands was declared the winner of a by-election to the British Parliament.

In 1998, the Northern Ireland peace talks concluded as negotiators reached a landmark settlement to end 30 years of bitter rivalries and bloody attacks.

In 2010, Polish President Lech Kaczynski (lehk kah-CHIN'-skee), 60, was killed in a plane crash in western Russia that also claimed the lives of his wife and top Polish political, military and church officials.

Ten years ago: The U.S. Board on Geographic Names officially renamed Squaw Peak in Phoenix Piestewa (py-ES'-tuh-wah) Peak, in honor of Army Spc. Lori Piestewa, who was killed in Iraq in 2003 and posthumously promoted from the rank of Private First Class.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama proposed a \$3.8 trillion budget that would raise taxes on smokers and wealthy Americans and trim Social Security benefits for millions. The financially beleaguered U.S. Postal Service backedpedaled on its plan to end Saturday mail delivery. Robert Edwards, 87, a Nobel Prize winner from Britain whose pioneering in vitro fertilization research led to the first test tube baby, died near Cambridge, England.

One year ago: Justice Neil Gorsuch took his place as the newest addition on the bench of the Supreme Court, restoring a narrow conservative majority. Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley (R) resigned rather than face impeachment and pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor campaign violations that arose during an investigation of his alleged affair with a top aide. The New York Daily News and ProPublica won the Pulitzer Prize for public service for uncovering how police abused eviction rules to oust hundreds of people, mostly poor minorities, from their homes; Colson Whitehead's novel "The Underground Railroad" won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Max von Sydow is 89. Actress Liz Sheridan is 89. Football Hall of Famer John Madden is 82. Reggae artist Bunny Wailer is 71. Actor Steven Seagal is 66. Folk-pop singer Terre Roche (The Roches) is 65. Actor Peter MacNicol is 64. Actress Olivia Brown is 61. Rock musician Steven Gustafson (10,000 Maniacs) is 61. Singer-producer Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds is 60. Rock singer-musician Brian Setzer is 59. Rock singer Katrina Leskanich (les-KAH'-nich) is 58. Actor Jeb Adams is 57. Olympic gold medal speedskater Cathy Turner is 56. Rock musician Tim "Herb" Alexander is 53. Actor-comedian Orlando Jones is 50. Rock musician Mike Mushok (Staind) is 49. Singer Kenny Lattimore is 48. Rapper Q-Tip (AKA Kamaal) is 48. Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens is 44. Actor David Harbour is 43. Blues singer Shemekia Copeland is 39. Actress Laura Bell Bundy is 37. Actor Harry Hadden-Paton is 37. Actress Chyler Leigh is 36. Pop musician Andrew Dost (fun.) is 35. Actor Ryan Merriman is 35. Singer Mandy Moore is 34. Actor Barkhad Abdi (BAHRK'-hahd AHB'-dee) is 33. Actress Shay Mitchell is 31. Actor Haley Joel Osment is 30. Actress Molly Bernard (TV: "Younger") is 30. Country singer Maren Morris is 28. Actor Alex Pettyfer is 28. Actress-singer AJ (AKA Amanda) Michalka (mish-AL'-kah) is 27. Actress Daisy Ridley is 26. Singer-actress Sofia Carson is 25. Actress Audrey Whitby is 22. Actress Ruby Jerins is 20.

Thought for Today: "What is more unwise than to mistake uncertainty for certainty, falsehood for truth?" - Cicero, Roman orator, statesman and philosopher (106-43 B.C.)

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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