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Connecting -- August 03, 2018

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Colleagues,

Happy Friday. Chris Connell here as Paul and Linda take a well deserved respite.

We begin with a grace note that reminds us of a kinder, gentler era when relations between politicians and the press were not so fraught. Among the congratulations and well wishes that Mike Graczyk received on his retirement Tuesday was this missive from a fellow Houstonian, the 41st president of the United States:



GEORGE BUSH

July 27, 2018

Dear Mike,

A very reliable source — okay, he's usually reliable, but no one is perfect — informed me of your retirement from the Associated Press after 45 years. I simply wanted to add my very best wishes to you and your family.

Take it from me: retirement doesn't hurt one bit. You might even want to take up skydiving.

You can and should take pride in your career, Mike, because you set the bar high in your profession — and you never backed off. I always respected your professionalism, and certainly appreciate the innate sense of fairness you always seemed to treat Barbara and me.

Good luck in whatever lies ahead, but make sure you have fun, too.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Bush".

**Mr. Mike Graczyk
Associated Press
Houston Bureau
Houston, Texas**

If there are, indeed, a thousand points of light across America, I'd wager there are 10,000 people and perhaps many more who cherish a personal note they received from the 94-year-old former president. Mike is now among them. His retirement also made the [front page](#) of the Dallas Morning News where David Tarrant traced Mike's entire career, not just his frequent trips to the Huntsville prison. Among the colleagues who gathered in the Dallas bureau at the July 31 sendoff organized by News Editor Kim Johnson were former Dallas bureau chief John Lumpkin and another retired AP writer extraordinaire, Mike Cochran.



Kim Johnson presents Mike his 45-year career certificate. Photo courtesy AP's Tony Gutierrez

Who's the people's enemy? Depends on whom you ask

Ivanka Trump, the president's daughter and adviser, distanced herself from her father's branding the news media the enemy of the people. "I've certainly received my fair share of reporting on me personally that I know not to be fully accurate, so I have some sensitivity around why people have concerns and gripe, especially when they're sort of targeted," she told an [Axios forum](#) Thursday at the Newseum. "But no, I do not feel that the media is the enemy of the people."

A short while later, her father tweeted, "They asked my daughter Ivanka whether or not the media is the enemy of the people. She correctly said no. It is the FAKE NEWS, which is a large percentage of the media, that is the enemy of the people!" And later at a campaign rally in Wilkes Barre, Pa., he decried "the fake, fake, disgusting news." Two days earlier at another Trump rally in Tampa, Fla., supporters jeered the press corps and cameras at the back of the room, raising [concerns](#) that the president's rhetoric could provoke violence against reporters and crews. CNN's White House correspondent Jim Acosta, a particular object of the rally-goers' scorn, clashed anew with White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders and [stomped out](#) of a White House briefing when Sanders declined to echo Ivanka Trump's sentiments.

To J-School or Not to J-School?

In a [Nieman Lab report](#), Marlee Baldrige, poses a question that has sparked more than a few late night discussions in newsrooms and bars: Do you need to go to journalism school to become a journalist? She tells the stories of eight, mostly young journalists who didn't. Baldrige, a University of Missouri graduate, said she herself always assumed a journalism degree was a must, which is what she also heard from professors, employers and alumni. She adds, "clearly plenty of people are taking this advice: The number of new graduates with a degree in journalism or a related field (though the related fields are broad) is on the rise even as many journalism jobs vanish."

A 'Man of Letters'

Stephen Meyers had one of those jobs that vanished a few years ago and, after a fruitless search, he wound up as a "man of letters" which is to say, a mail carrier in scenic Fort Collins, Colo. He writes about his experience and "what I learned about America, and myself" for CityLab, an Atlantic Media publication on urban life. It is a fond look back for Meyers, now again a reporter. "No one is ever *upset* to see their mail carrier, you know? This was so foreign to me, as a journalist who was used to being less warmly received," he writes. After sharing his experience on Twitter, "I received dozens of comments from readers who shared their nostalgia and affection for this beloved and embattled American institution." Read [more](#).

A street journalist paid a price

IndyWeek, an alternative newspaper in North Carolina's Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill Triangle, is out with a first-person account by free-lance journalist Aaron Cantú about his legal ordeal after he was among 234 people arrested and charged with felonies from a window-breaking protest in downtown Washington on the day of Donald Trump's inauguration. After failing to win any convictions, the government dropped charges against the last defendants in July. "It didn't matter that I presented myself as a journalist ... or that I only carried a sandwich and a notebook," said Cantu, now with the Sante Fe Reporter. Read what IndyWeek billed as "[his true story of conspiracy in Trump's America](#)." (Submitted by Richard Chady).



Brenda Smiley (Dick Pyle's widow) shared her snap of the New York harbor at sunset on Aug. 1, espied from her Carroll Gardens rooftop in Brooklyn. Lady Liberty is at left on the horizon.

We're No. 1 ...

The AP, that is, when it comes to figuring out which are the best squads in college football.

For the 83rd year, AP member sports writers and broadcasters will choose the Top 25 each week, starting with preseason prognostications on Aug. 20, followed by favorites to make the AP All America team. Read [here](#) how the selection process works.

In AP news off the gridiron, the news cooperative named Paul Haven, former bureau chief in Pakistan and Afghanistan and in Cuba, as its global director of top stories. Outgoing director Kristin Gazlay and her deputy, Jerry Schwartz, will become senior editor at large and editor at large respectively. Here's the [scoop](#).

This isn't funny

A sign of the times? The Robesonian newspaper in North Carolina is dropping its Sunday color comics and blames the spike in newsprint prices after the Trump administration imposed tariffs on imports of Canadian paper products. The 6,200-circulation paper will still carry a page of black-and-white funny strips. Here's AP's [story](#). (Spotted by Adolph Bernotas)

My "Career" Before Journalism

By Paul Albright

Since I started my journalistic career at age 16 (as a newspaper copy boy), I did not have much opportunity for previous employment. For some reason, my parents would not approve of my early morning delivery of Denver's *Rocky Mountain News*, and I had the usual teenager's hatred of yard work (paid or unpaid).

I did spend two high school summers as a caddy at a couple fancy country clubs in Denver (Cherry Hills and Lakewood). Caddying for the pros and the hackers and often lugging two bags of golf clubs for 18 holes, I picked up one life lesson that I have tried to follow as the decades pile up:

"Keep your eye on the ball until it comes to a complete stop. Mentally mark that location as you proceed, whether it be down the fairway or the rough."

Connecting sends birthday wishes to:

August 3:

Brad Brooks - bjb2105@gmail.com
Ben Curtis - bcurtis@ap.org
Jim Hood - jimhood44@gmail.com

Aug. 5:

Dawn Kitchell - dawnkitchell@gmail.com
James Rowley - rowleyjim9@gmail.com

And if your birthday wishes to Dolores Barclay bounced back on Aug. 1, it's because we bungled her address. It is tobibar@gmail.com.

Today in History

Today is Friday, Aug. 3, the 215th day of 2018. There are 150 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 3, 1936, Jesse Owens of the United States won the first of his four gold medals at the Berlin [Olympics](#) as he took the 100-meter sprint.

On this date:

In 1492, Christopher Columbus set sail from Palos, Spain, on a voyage that took him to the present-day Americas.

In 1807, former Vice President Aaron Burr went on trial before a federal court in Richmond, Virginia, charged with treason. (He was acquitted less than a month later.)

In 1914, Germany declared war on France at the onset of World War I.

In 1921, baseball commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis refused to reinstate the former Chicago White Sox players implicated in the "Black Sox" scandal, despite their acquittals in a jury trial.

In 1943, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. George S. Patton slapped a private at an army hospital in Sicily, accusing him of cowardice. (Patton was later ordered by Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower to apologize for this and a second, similar episode.)

In 1958, the nuclear-powered submarine USS Nautilus became the first vessel to cross the North Pole underwater.

In 1966, comedian Lenny Bruce, whose raunchy brand of satire and dark humor landed him in trouble with the law, was found dead in his Los Angeles home; he was 40.

In 1972, the U.S. Senate ratified the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union. (The U.S. unilaterally withdrew from the treaty in 2002.)

In 1980, closing ceremonies were held in Moscow for the Summer Olympic Games, which had been boycotted by dozens of countries, including the United States.

In 1981, U.S. air traffic controllers went on strike, despite a warning from President Ronald Reagan they would be fired, which they were.

In 1987, the Iran-Contra congressional hearings ended, with none of the 29 witnesses tying President Ronald Reagan directly to the diversion of arms-sales profits to Nicaraguan rebels.

In 1994, Arkansas carried out the nation's first triple execution in 32 years. Stephen G. Breyer was sworn in as the Supreme Court's newest justice in a private ceremony at Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist's Vermont summer home.

Ten years ago: Nobel Prize-winning Russian author Alexander Solzhenitsyn died near Moscow at age 89. Al-Qaida confirmed the death of a top commander (Abu Khabab al-Masri), apparently in a U.S. airstrike in Pakistan; he was accused of training the suicide bombers who'd killed 17 American sailors on the USS Cole in 2000. At least 145 people were killed in a stampede of pilgrims at a remote mountaintop Hindu temple in India.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama's trade representative, Michael Froman, vetoed a yet-to-be-enacted ban on imports of Chinese-made Apple iPads and iPhones, overruling the U.S. International Trade Commission and dealing a setback to rival South Korean electronics company Samsung. Zimbabwe's electoral panel declared that longtime President Robert Mugabe had won re-election by a landslide.

One year ago: Senators introduced two bipartisan bills aimed at protecting Special Counsel Robert Mueller from being fired by President [Donald Trump](#). (Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said the effort was unnecessary, and that he wouldn't let the legislation reach the floor.) West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice said he was switching parties to join the Republicans, a move that came as President Donald Trump visited his increasingly conservative state.

Today's Birthdays: Football Hall of Fame coach Marv Levy is 93. Singer Tony Bennett is 92. Actor Martin Sheen is 78. College and Pro Football Hall of Famer Lance Alworth is 78. Lifestyle guru Martha Stewart is 77. Singer Beverly Lee (The Shirelles) is 77. Rock musician B.B. Dickerson is 69. Movie director John Landis is 68. Actress JoMarie Payton is 68. Actor Jay North (TV: "Dennis the Menace") is 67. Hockey Hall-of-Famer Marcel Dionne is 67. Actor Philip Casnoff is 64. Actor John C. McGinley is 59. Rock singer-musician Lee Rocker (The Stray Cats) is 57. Actress Lisa Ann Walter is 57. Rock singer James Hetfield (Metallica) is 55. Rock singer-musician Ed Roland (Collective Soul) is 55. Actor Isaiah Washington is 55. Country musician Dean Sams (Lonestar) is 52. Rock musician Stephen Carpenter (Deftones) is 48. Hip-hop artist Spinderella (Salt-N-Pepa) is 47. Actress Brigid Brannagh is 46. Actor Michael Ealy is 45. Country musician Jimmy De Martini (Zac Brown Band) is 42. NFL quarterback Tom

Brady is 41. Actress Evangeline (ee-VAN'-gel-een) Lilly is 39. Actress Mamie Gummer is 35. Olympic gold medal swimmer Ryan Lochte is 34. Country singer Whitney Duncan is 34. Actor Jon Foster is 34. Actress Georgina Haig is 33. Singer Holly Arnstein (Dream) is 33. Actress Tanya Fischer is 33. Pop-rock musician Brent Kutzle (OneRepublic) is 33. Rapper D.R.A.M. is 30.

Thought for Today: "Many of us spend half of our time wishing for things we could have if we didn't spend half our time wishing." - Alexander Woollcott, American critic (1887-1943).

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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