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Connecting - January 11, 2019

1 message

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Connecting

January 11, 2019

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning!

The editor-in-chief of Mother Jones, **Clara Jefferey**, came to the support of the AP in a remarkable 31-part Twitter thread after a much-criticized @AP Politics tweet Wednesday that awkwardly promoted a Fact Check on the government shutdown.

That tweet was reported along with a Washington Post story in Thursday's issue of Connecting.

Our colleague **Sylvia Wingfield** ([Email](#)) spotted and shared [@ClaraJefferey's](#) Twitter thread that supported the AP while still taking issue with that particular "bad tweet." Click [here](#) to view the thread. Here are some excerpts:



Clara Jefferey

Beginning:

1/ After joining in the pile-on for [@AP_Politics](#) bad tweet, I want to back up and explain what [@AP](#) is, how vital it is to world-wide journalism, the strains that it is under and how they are representative of the greater journo crisis. If I mess any point up, please lmk...

2/ First, the [@AP](#) is a non-profit. It is not trying to meet insane shareholder demands. It is there to continue it's particular, insanely hard and important mission even as the news gets tougher to report and pay for.

3/ What is that mission? Well the AP has reporters and editor and photojournalists and videographers all over the world, and if every part of the country. It is, along with the BBC, one of the biggest most vital news gathering entities out there.

4/ Most of your local papers, radio stations, TV stations depend on the AP for national coverage, certainly international coverage, and local/state coverage. They supplement whatever those news orgs do (or don't) do.

5/ The [@AP](#) is a "wire service." Basically their reporters cover the news wherever and "wire" that to their desks, those stories are assembled and edited and put out to their subscribers--ie all those other news orgs.

6/ Some of that "copy" winds up in the paper with an AP byline. Look at almost any paper in America's foreign coverage, you'll notice the AP. But it also helps tons of things you don't see. Reporters and editors at those client news orgs use it to help their own work.

7/ And, as I learned when I attended a year-long intensive seminar with other news executives, it also does a ton of crazy stuff I had no idea about. Minute by minute

updates to stories, earnings reports, sports stuff, etc etc.

8/ It also has journalists in all the most remote, most dangerous, most war-torn places. It does heroic work there. BUT IT ALSO in many cases is almost only the thing still keeping an eye on statehouses and regional housing boards or whatever.

And ending:

30/ Yes, hold media accountable for its mistakes. But try and consider if it's a momentary lapse or a systemic one, and what in either case, might help rectify. Journalists are just people, and some of the hardest working straightest arrows in the business work for the AP.

31/ And if you're not spending at least as much as your cable bill on good news-gathering institutions, you're part of the problem. We're all doing a lot more, with a lot less. Support media you care about, you'll be even worse off when it is gone. -30-

Have a great weekend!

Paul

More memories of 1969 strike against AP

Strike led to more agreeable, productive bargaining sessions

Richard Olive ([Email](#)) - 50 years since the AP strike! Amazing. I was 26 (do the math) and in my second year in the Kansas City bureau when we walked out. It was cold on Grand Avenue outside The Kansas City Star building, and we were definitely resentful of the very few colleagues who crossed the line. (I'm thinking fondly of the late Jerry Sullivan, who had seven kids--but too gracious on the picket line to cast any aspersions on a certain unnamed editor who justified his scabbing because of the financial burden on his one-child family.)

A half-century later I cannot recall the issues of those long-ago negotiations, but, in retrospect, I believe the big hurt that was put on the AP in 1969 made subsequent bargaining sessions much more agreeable--and productive. I served on the negotiating committee in 1975 and, in the 1980 negotiations, as administrator of the Wire Service Guild on leave from the AP, was chief negotiator of the talks. To that point, the AP had always threatened that, absent an agreement by midnight, December 31, they would put the financial squeeze on the Guild and refuse to collect our membership dues. We were prepared for that and the membership came through in spades by mailing their dues to the Guild office in New York. FOR FIVE MONTHS! As bargaining dragged on, the AP withdrew one contract take-away after another until coming up against our resistance to regional differentials, which AP wanted to address the disparate cost-of-living differences between the hinterlands and the big-city bureaus.

Again, the details and all the issues on the table are vague 37 years later, but we came to a strike deadline which had us so close to settlement that the clock "was stopped" to hammer out a deal. (I still remember a picture of Madge Kelly of AP Photos in New York, sitting in a telephone booth at 50 Rockefeller Center for hours to learn for the night shift whether there was an agreement or a walkout.) With the settlement, the AP paid premium dollars for geographic differentials--with record percentage wage increases.

I suspect that, on the heels of the 1969 strike, the AP believed those mo-fos were crazy enough to walk again.

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Colleagues on line believed it was coldest January in New York history

Michael Putzel (Email) - Like Hal Bock and others, I was assigned picket duty corresponding with my shift, which was working the overnight on the Cables Desk, formally named the Foreign Desk by that time. I haven't fact-checked this, but my colleagues on the line and I believed it was the coldest January in New York history. True or not, I remember my fingers got so stiff it was almost impossible to hold the stick of the picket sign while walking an oval path around the entrance to 50 Rock. At that hour, there wasn't much foot traffic in or out of the building, but when someone from management or a nonstriking staff member was spotted, we jeered through frozen lips. I had worked for The Gazette in Charleston, West Virginia, where the United Mine Workers union was among the most powerful institutions in the state and crossing a picket line was regarded as the highest form of treachery.

When the strike ended, I was told by fellow Guild members that the head of the AP local of the Communications Workers of America, who had taken his punchers out to

honor our strike, was left sitting in a courtroom in Washington waiting for a hearing on a claim of unfair labor practices by the AP. The Guild leadership, it was said, had failed to inform him the hearing had been postponed. Steaming in anger, he walked out of the courthouse and ordered his members to return to work. That's all it took for our strike to collapse.

As I remember it, the Guild settled for a raise of about 50 cents a week and our birthdays off, an ignominious defeat that left many of us bitterly angry at our colleagues who didn't walk.

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Only four days into AP, she still walked the picket line

Cynthia Rawitch ([Email](#)) - I had been working for The AP for four days when the strike was called and union reps advised me that if I walked out, it was unlikely they could protect my job. Despite that, I did walk the picket line daily. The daughter of a union organizer whose District 65 union card was #7, there was no way for me to cross that line. A photo of me in my sandwich board hangs in my office, paired with a photo of my father in his sandwich board in 1933. I was not fired, and worked for AP for three more years before going into 42 years of journalism education.

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Strike stories spark memories of Madge Kelly Stager

Dennis Whitehead ([Email](#)) - The stories of the 1969 strike brought to mind story that will be of interest to readers, especially women who joined the AP after the late 70s - Madge Kelly Stager.

When I arrived at the New York photo desk as an intern from Ohio University, Madge was the one given the task of showing Bruce Pomerantz and me the ropes - pity poor Madge.

Madge passed away in 2015 - click [here](#) for AP story and [here](#) for Connecting story. Sadly, neither story cites her successful legal action against the AP about the position of women on the photo desk and within the organization.



I don't know any of the details on what Madge did as it was legend by the time I arrived and the details have faded with time.

I checked with an old AP colleague who said that Madge and Pat Conroy filed a lawsuit against the AP claiming (my paraphrase) that the AP was preventing women from advancing on the photo desk. I know Madge was working in the photo library at the time and I'll guess Pat was, as well.

Their successful action in the late 70s opened the doors for many women - to the benefit of the AP.

It would be an interesting look-back at Madge, Pat and long-term meaning of their lawsuit, ideally written by a woman who worked/works on the photo desk or by someone with better knowledge than I about the story. Is there anyone out there who might do so?

Memories of Murray Fromson sparked by Hollywood Foreign Press donation to journalism

Linda Deutsch (Email) - Seven months ago, former AP newsman and lifelong journalist Murray Fromson died after a long illness. His obituaries mentioned many accomplishments including his service with the AP and his role in founding the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. Those watching the Golden Globe awards on Sunday night saw the announcement that the Hollywood Foreign Press Association was donating \$1 million to the committee and \$1 million to another non-profit (see Connecting 1/10).

Murray's daughter, Aliza Ben-Tal, who was watching the awards at her home in Tel Aviv. Shared this personal story on Facebook. What a marvelous way to honor the memory of our special colleague. Here's what she wrote:

"Unbelievable. I'm moved beyond words.

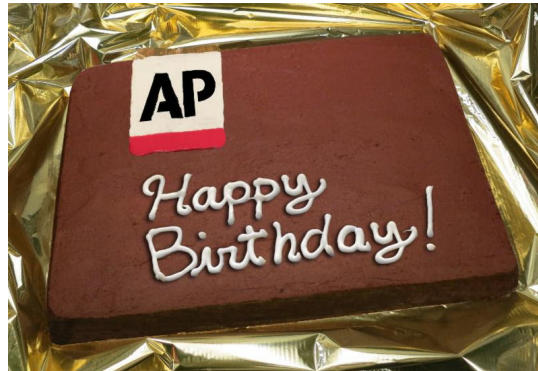
Fifty years ago in the coming year, my father, the late former CBS News correspondent and USC Prof. Murray Fromson, saw that then Atty. General John Mitchell was closing in on journalists as the Nixon Administration's paranoia grew about the coverage of the Vietnam War and the press' contact with the Black Panthers, Weatherman's Underground and others in pursuit of the story. My father, who at the time was based in the CBS News Midwest bureau of Chicago, covering the Conspiracy Trials, was livid and invited Tony Lukas of the New York Times for breakfast at our Chicago home. He told Tony that he would rather go to jail than provide the government with his outtakes, notes or otherwise reveal his sources. That conversation was the genesis of the Reporters Committee, which they established together with journalists and legal experts whom they recruited for a meeting shortly thereafter at Georgetown University. The Reporters Committee has done tremendous work defending journalists over the decades. My dad would've been so proud. "

Purring to differ with Ollie...



Bandit and Dillon, owners of our Connecting colleague Julie Inskeep ([Email](#)) of Fort Wayne, Indiana, beg to differ with my Ollie's opinion (in Thursday's edition) that the Chiefs will win Saturday's NFL playoff game with the Indianapolis Colts. No guarantee, however, that they won't sleep through the game... Meantime, Ollie still looking for a tailgate BBQ invite.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Brian Horton - hortonmmail@gmail.com

Walter Mears - wmears111@gmail.com

On Sunday to...

Hilmi Toros - wordsmithsailor@hotmail.com

Stories of interest

Condoned by Trump, press attacks hit local reporters hard (CJR)

By MATTHEW KASSEL

DOUGLAS BURNS, a fourth-generation journalist, is co-owner of the Daily Times Herald in Carroll, Iowa, a newspaper that has been in his family since 1929. He writes a regular column, "Taking Note," for the Times Herald editorial page, and he has covered politics in the Midwest since the late '80s, with a focus on rural issues. He's a fixture in his community.

None of that seemed to matter last October, when Burns arrived at a Trump rally in Council Bluffs, about two hours southwest of Carroll. Burns was there to report on an ethanol-use announcement of particular concern to farmers, and yet he was treated as if he had ulterior motives. Along with other reporters, he was locked in a media pen at the back of the arena and forbidden to speak to members of the crowd, many of whom he knew. Burns couldn't use the bathroom without an invigilator from Trump's team following along to make sure he didn't interact with anyone. "It was like visiting hours in a prison," Burns, 49, tells me.

His demoralizing experience was just one of a number of instances during the midterms and beyond in which local reporters with longstanding community ties were shunned, spurned, harassed, and otherwise treated with disdain by elected officials. As President Trump's press bashing continues unabated, such incidents seem to suggest his example is being taken up at the local level.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Carol Riha.

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Myanmar court rejects appeal of jailed Reuters reporters



In this combination file image made from two photos, Reuters journalists Kyaw Soe Oo, left, and Wa Lone, are handcuffed as they are escorted by police out of the court in Yangon, Myanmar Sept. 3, 2018. A court in Myanmar on Friday, Jan. 11, 2019 rejected the appeal of two Reuters journalists

convicted of violating the country's Official Secrets Act during their reporting on the country's crackdown on Rohingya Muslims, and maintained the seven-year prison terms they were sentenced to last year. (AP Photo/Thein Zaw, File)

By AUNG NAING SOE

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) - A court in Myanmar on Friday rejected the appeal of two Reuters journalists convicted of violating the country's Official Secrets Act during their reporting on the country's crackdown on Rohingya Muslims, and maintained the seven-year prison terms they were sentenced to last year.

Judge Aung Naing said in his ruling that lawyers for the men failed to submit enough evidence to prove their innocence.

The conviction of Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo has drawn condemnation from rights groups, Western governments and global press associations and has raised questions about press freedom in Myanmar as it transitions from a decades of military rule.

The men were convicted for having government documents in their possession. They were arrested on Dec. 12, 2017, in the country's main city, Yangon, immediately after having a meal to which police officers had invited them.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Adolphe Bernotas.

-0-

People older than 65 share the most fake news, a new study finds (The Verge)

By CASEY NEWTON

Older Americans are disproportionately more likely to share fake news on Facebook, according to a new analysis by researchers at New York and Princeton Universities. Older users shared more fake news than younger ones regardless of education, sex, race, income, or how many links they shared. In fact, age predicted their behavior better than any other characteristic - including party affiliation.

The role of fake news in influencing voter behavior has been debated continuously since Donald Trump's surprising victory over Hillary Clinton in 2016. At least one study has found that pro-Trump fake news likely persuaded some people to vote for him over Clinton, influencing the election's outcome. Another study found that relatively few people clicked on fake news links - but that their headlines likely traveled much further via the News Feed, making it difficult to quantify their true reach. The finding that older people are more likely to share fake news could help social media users and platforms design more effective interventions to stop them from being misled.

Read more [here](#).

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Breaking news that isn't breaking, readers who aren't reading: Some 2019 predictions about social media (Nieman)

By JOSHUA BENTON

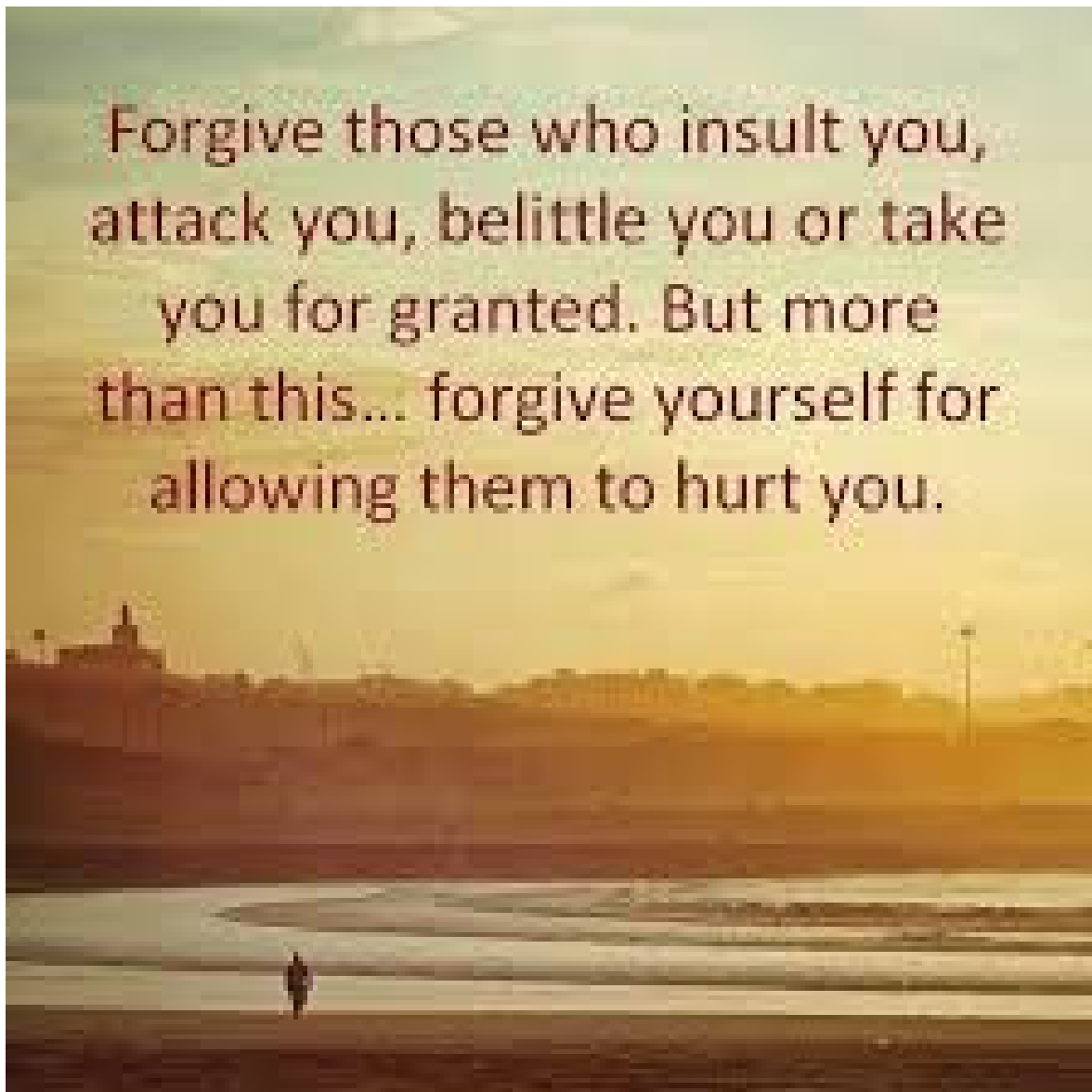
Our end-of-year "Predictions for Journalism" package has grown and grown and grown since its first iteration back in 2011. For the 2019 iteration, we published more than 200, and it's possible I am literally the only person alive to have read all of them.

So over the next few days, we'll be running what I'm calling Prediction Playlists - collections of predictions centered around a particular theme. Hopefully they'll give you a point of entry into what can be an intimidating pile of #content. Today's theme: the platforms - social media, aggregators, and all the other tech intermediaries that connect (and stand between!) journalists and their audiences.

The big question, as it has been for years, is how much effort publishers should invest in Facebook, Twitter, Apple News, SEO, and every other tech-company-controlled platform that offers a huge potential audience but also a loss of control? After a terrible year for Facebook, some think it's time for a significant reevaluation.

Read more [here](#).

The Final Word



Today in History - January 11, 2019



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Jan. 11, the 11th day of 2019. There are 354 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 11, 1913, the first enclosed sedan-type automobile, a Hudson, went on display at the 13th National Automobile Show in New York.

On this date:

In 1861, Alabama became the fourth state to withdraw from the Union.

In 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed the Grand Canyon National Monument (it became a national park in 1919).

In 1935, aviator Amelia Earhart began an 18-hour trip from Honolulu to Oakland, California, that made her the first person to fly solo across any part of the Pacific Ocean.

In 1939, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and Lord Halifax, the British foreign secretary, met with Italian leader Benito Mussolini in Rome.

In 1963, the Beatles' single "Please Please Me" (B side "Ask Me Why") was released in Britain by Parlophone.

In 1964, U.S. Surgeon General Luther Terry issued "Smoking and Health," a report which concluded that "cigarette smoking contributes substantially to mortality from certain specific diseases and to the overall death rate."

In 1977, France set off an international uproar by releasing Abu Daoud, a PLO official behind the massacre of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

In 1978, two Soviet cosmonauts aboard the Soyuz 27 capsule linked up with the Salyut 6 orbiting space station, where the Soyuz 26 capsule was already docked.

In 1989, nine days before leaving the White House, President Ronald Reagan bade the nation farewell in a prime-time address, saying of his eight years in office: "We meant to change a nation and instead we changed a world."

In 1995, 51 people were killed when a Colombian DC-9 jetliner crashed as it was preparing to land near the Caribbean resort of Cartagena - however, 9-year-old Erika Delgado survived.

In 2003, calling the death penalty process "arbitrary and capricious, and therefore immoral," Illinois Gov. George Ryan commuted the sentences of 167 condemned inmates, clearing his state's death row two days before leaving office.

In 2010, Miep Gies (meep khees), the Dutch office secretary who defied Nazi occupiers to hide Anne Frank and her family for two years and saved the teenager's diary, died at age 100.

Ten years ago: In a rare Sunday session, the Senate advanced legislation that would set aside more than 2 million acres in nine states as wilderness. A passenger ferry sank in a storm off Indonesia's Sulawesi island, killing at least 230 people. The movie "Slumdog Millionaire" won four Golden Globes, including best drama; the late Heath Ledger won best supporting actor for "The Dark Knight" while Kate Winslet received two acting awards for "Revolutionary Road" and "The Reader." Theater and movie director Tom O'Horgan died in Venice, Fla., at age 84.

Five years ago: Former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, 85, died eight years after a devastating stroke left him in a coma. Alex Rodriguez was dealt the most severe punishment in the history of baseball's drug agreement when an arbitrator ruled the New York Yankees third baseman was suspended for the entire 2014 season as the result of a drug investigation. Gracie Gold won her first U.S. figure skating title at the

championships in Boston; Charlie White and Meryl Davis won a record sixth straight U.S. ice dance title.

One year ago: Walmart announced that it was boosting its starting salary for U.S. workers and handing out bonuses, on the same day the company confirmed it was closing dozens of Sam's Club warehouse stores. President Donald Trump was quoted as having used bluntly vulgar language during an Oval Office meeting with lawmakers while asking why the U.S. would accept more immigrants from Haiti and African countries rather than places like Norway. Edgar Ray Killen, a 1960s Klan leader who was convicted decades later in the slayings of three civil rights workers, died in prison at the age of 92.

Today's Birthdays: Former Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien (zhahn kray-tee-EHN') is 85. Actor Mitchell Ryan is 85. Actor Felix Silla is 82. Movie director Joel Zwick is 77. Country singer Naomi Judd is 73. World Golf Hall of Famer Ben Crenshaw is 67. Singer Robert Earl Keen is 63. Actress Phyllis Logan is 63. Musician Vicki Peterson (The Bangles) is 61. Actress Kim Coles is 57. Actor Jason Connery is 56. Former child actress Dawn Lyn (TV: "My Three Sons") is 56. Contemporary Christian musician Jim Bryson (MercyMe) is 51. Rock musician Tom Dumont (No Doubt) is 51. Movie director Malcolm D. Lee is 49. Singer Mary J. Blige is 48. Musician Tom Rowlands (The Chemical Brothers) is 48. Actor Marc Blucas is 47. Actress Amanda Peet is 47. Actor Rockmond Dunbar is 46. Actress Aja Naomi King is 34. Actress Kristolyn Lloyd is 34. Reality TV star Jason Wahler is 32. Pop singer Cody Simpson is 22.

Thought for Today: "If you are ruled by mind you are a king; if by body, a slave." - Cato, Roman statesman and historian (234 B.C.-149 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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