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Connecting - February 05, 2019

1 message

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Connecting

February 05, 2019

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning!

Connecting has received word that our colleague **Bill Beecham**, retired AP Salt Lake City bureau chief, has been seriously ill.

His friend **Robert Kuesterman** - former Salt Lake City newsman - said Bill was at University Hospital through December and is now at a rehabilitation and nursing care facility. He also has memory and cognition problems, possibly due to anoxia, and they just recently have started to improve. He previously did not want his problems known, but now welcomes contact.

If you would like to drop a note to Bill, who is offline for now, you can send your greetings through Robert at - robertk@xmission.com

We bring you a story on the death of **Jim Dietz**, former Getty and AP journalist, from his hometown newspaper, the Capital Gazette of Annapolis, in which we learn a memorial fund will be established in Jim's honor and that a life celebration will be held in New York in mid-March. As we learn more details, we will share with you.

Connecting has received the first two replies to our call for your memories of high school journalism experiences and how they impacted your career. We lead with them in today's edition. I am working up my own thoughts from my editorship of the Tri-Crown of St. Edmond High School in Fort Dodge, Iowa - and encourage you to join me in sending along your own thoughts.

Have a good day!

Paul

High school journalism - and how it affected your career

Tom Kent ([Email](#)) - Working for my junior high school paper, I remember learning how to "flop" a photo. You never want the person in a headshot to be looking off the page, I was told, so you simply flop the photo so they're looking at the article that concerns them. I was impressed by this "inside" journalistic trick ... until, when I eventually got to AP, I realized all the ethical problems.

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Bill Winter ([Email](#)) - A "student teacher" from Arkansas State University often was brutally critical in her assessments of student writings in my senior English class at Jonesboro (AR) High School. Atop the first page of one of my class writing

assignments that had come under her review, though, I found the following handwritten note that had a real impact on my thinking about a career in journalism:

"When you grow up, Mr. Winter, if you do not become a writer I will, after I die, come back to haunt you. And, Mr. Winter, please know that there is nothing more disconcerting than having a fat ghost hanging around."

A year later, despairing of ever being able to handle college chemistry classes, I changed my major from pre-med to journalism, that caring teacher's note being a real inspiration for the change. I shall forever be in her debt.

AP Photo of the Day



Pope Francis attends an Interreligious meeting in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, on Monday, Feb. 4, marking the first papal trip ever to the Arabian Peninsula. | Andrew Medichini/AP Photo

R&R Tehran Style - A Scoop I Missed

Bryan Brumley (Email) - News that AP was filming video about the escape from Tehran of Americans not captured during the 1979 seizure of U.S. diplomats brought to mind a plane ride I made out of the Iranian capital on Jan, 25, 1980, a couple of months into the crisis. And unlike the movie *Argo*, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards did not chase us down the runway. Their mistake.

Early in my journalism career, 1976-77, I worked as a free-lancer in Tehran, learning some Farsi and lots about Iranian history and culture.

I'd known Iranian students when I was a history and language major at the University of Texas a few years before that, and what they and their parents were saying gave me an inkling there'd be an upheaval there soon. So I headed off and worked for the local English-language *Tehran Journal*, and picked up strings for other Western publications. I left in October 1977, and within a couple of years had worked my way to the AP Cables desk in New York, the only Farsi speaking American at 50 Rock, as far as I knew. Foreign Editor Nate Polowitzky took a chance and sent me into Tehran a few weeks after Students Following the Imam's Line seized the U.S. Embassy there, Nov. 4, 1979, holding 52 Americans hostage.



Iranian students hold raised fists in the air and set fire to an American flag on Monday, November 5, 1979 a day after the occupation of the American Embassy in Tehran. AP Photo

Before I left the United States, a source in Washington told me that several Americans had avoided capture at the embassy and were at large in Tehran. In retrospect, I suppose I filed this in the "too dangerous" folder of my brain and gave it little further thought for the next couple of months. Several American and British journalists that I had known from my earlier Tehran days were accused of espionage

and were held for what turned out to be years in Evin Prison. Caution was the byword.

In Tehran, I joined chief of bureau Sandy Higgins, Steve Hindy, Maureen Johnson and the legendary Peter Arnett, all with far more overseas experience than myself.

My Farsi came in handy, as did my knowledge of Iranian history and the geography of the city, especially the small alleys, or kuchehs, around the embassy, a block-size compound where I had visited previous Ambassadors Richard Helms and William Sullivan during quieter times.

A couple nights after my arrival, we drove at breakneck speed through the traffic-choked streets of Tehran, following the Rev. William Sloane Coffin Jr. and other U.S. clergymen who had been invited into the occupied American Embassy to perform Christmas services. This was before cell phones, and after they entered the compound, I was running down one narrow walled kuche, headed for a nearby payphone that I'd known from my days as a free-lancer. As I dashed around a corner, I surprised a patrol of Revolutionary Guards, who leveled their weapons at me. They may have been more scared than I was, which was very. But I had to get the news to the wire. So I mustered my Farsi, explained who I was, then made my way as calmly as I could the few blocks to the phone. The bureau was glad for the update.

The hostage crisis was precipitated by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and other conservative clerics, who were trying to force out more moderate democratic elements. The French-educated Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan resigned in protest after the students seized the embassy. The power play, known as the Second Revolution, had thrown the nation into deeper turmoil, and disrupted international relations, all but consuming the Presidency of Jimmy Carter.

The ayatollahs exploited the Western media for a time, using the coverage to their advantage. But they tired of the pesky American press and ordered us out of the country just before a presidential election scheduled for January 25. AP told its journalists to comply with the order. An old friend working at the Iranian Ministry of Enlightenment assured me it was "nothing personal," and indeed I had the chance to visit about 15 years later.

As the AP reporters and photographers prepared to fly home, Canadian Press agreed to send its energy correspondent Doug Long and photographer Peter Begg to replace us. The day before I was due to leave Tehran, I took Doug and Peter up to the Canadian Embassy to meet Ambassador Ken Taylor. We noted that security was exceptionally tight at the embassy, but wrote that off to the general tension in the city. The ambassador offered Doug and Peter a bottle of Canadian Club whisky, a rare treat in the Islamic Republic, which banned that and other Satanic beverages.

They turned down the bottle, perhaps figuring they'd have another chance to visit the ambassador and wet their whistles Their mistake.

I left the next day on a British Airways flight, delayed by a heavy snow falling on the city. Across the aisle from me were two security guards who I recognized from the Canadian Embassy, prominently displaying maple leaves on the lapels of their black leather jackets. In response to my queries, they assured me they were headed for London for "some R&R."

That made sense until I picked up the paper in London the next morning and learned that the Canadians secretly had evacuated their embassy along with six Americans who had avoided capture at the U.S. compound and hid out with Ken Taylor.

I guess this falls into the missed scoop category. Sorry Nate, my mistake. But frankly, I was glad we all made it out safely.

Former Annapolitan, photojournalist Jim Dietz dies at 53

By Danielle Ohl

Capital Gazette, Annapolis

Give Jim Dietz a problem, and he would solve it for you.

Buying a new car? Electricity issues? The finer points of small-batch craft bourbon making? Dietz was your guy.

Dietz, 53, a former Annapolitan and Baltimore Sun photo editor, died Wednesday morning in Atlanta, where he was set to support Super Bowl LIII coverage for Getty Images. One of his favorite assignments, Dietz has worked the National Football League's championship game on and off for the last 20 years.



There is no official cause of death, but Dietz complained of chest pain the morning he died.

While Dietz was a photographer and photo engineer by trade, he was so much more. A furniture maker, he could tell you when and where and how a table was made just by looking at it. A mechanic, he was known to tinker with his old car or tell you how to fix yours. A food aficionado, he could cure meats, distill his own alcohol and craft a lasagne bolognese.

A father and partner, he instilled in others the same creativity and passion he brought to his own work, those close to him said.

"He would do anything for anybody with a smile and an infectious laugh," said Diane Turner, Dietz's partner of four years. "We lost one of the good ones."

Read more [here](#).

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Jim Dietz - what a great person he was

Robert Meyers (Email) - I had the pleasure of working with Jim Dietz for most of the 10 years of the State Photo Center in Washington, D.C. Jim was a problem solver par excellence with an incredible knowledge and a great sense of humor. He has passed away far too young. I mourn with his two daughters and hundreds of colleagues. He could trouble-shoot major systems as well as turn his attention to little things. It took him less than a day to find an instant way of changing all caps text to lower case, an innovation that saved inestimable amounts of time. Rigging an analogue to digital converter to enable frame grabbing from broadcast news. He was very generous and instructive in teaching me how to create a perfectly timed slideshow with music that I presented at an Iowa state AP members meeting. He was good company. He gave me a ride home from Philadelphia after that 2000 Republican National Convention in his Audi. I remember laughing most of the way in the early morning darkness as we got away after all the work was done. What a great person he was.

AP sponsors its 24th annual Florida Legislative Planning meeting



From left: Jim Baltzelle, Ian Mader, Brendan Farrington.

Bill Kaczor (Email) - The Associated Press sponsored its 24th annual Florida Legislative Planning Meeting in Tallahassee last week. The meeting is held about a month or so before the start of every legislative session, which usually begins in early March (sometimes it is moved up to January for reasons that include redistricting) and lasts for two months.

The meeting is the brainchild of former Tallahassee Correspondent Brent Kallestad, now retired. It initially was designed for members' editors and reporters to meet with AP staffers to discuss our plans for covering the Legislature. It began as a low-key, informal event held in the press conference room at the old Florida Press Center, later demolished to make way for a park atop an underground parking lot. Brent recalls that only about a dozen people attended the first meeting. AP provided bag lunches. In the second year, however, then-Gov. Lawton Chiles attended, giving reporters and editors a chance to hear from and question the state's chief executive.



It has since morphed into a major news event that gives the AP high visibility across Florida including a statewide telecast by public TV's Florida Channel. The AP logo is displayed behind the speaker's podium to ensure no one forgets who is sponsoring the event.

As the meeting grew, larger venues were obtained. For the past several

Gary Fineout and Brendan Farrington. years it has been held in the public space-observation deck on the top floor of Florida's 22-story Capitol, offering a panoramic view of the Tallahassee area. Lunch is now a catered affair with sandwiches, sides and soft drinks, etc.

In addition to newly elected Gov. Ron DeSantis, last week's speakers included the three members of Florida's unique elected state Cabinet (attorney general, chief financial officer and agriculture commissioner), as well as the Florida House speaker, Senate president and minority leaders of each chamber. Barbara Petersen, head of the Tallahassee-based First Amendment Foundation, a media-backed open-government advocacy organization, annually speaks about legislation that could help or hurt public access to records and meetings. Last week, she also outlined the refusal of some law enforcement agencies to release details about crimes, including the identities of suspects as well as victims, as the result of a new state constitutional amendment on victims' rights.

While that's been the typical lineup of speakers, in election years it also has included candidates for statewide offices.



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis

In addition to Tallahassee Correspondent Brendan Farrington (who emceed the meeting) and reporter Gary Fineout, the AP was represented by two Miami-based staffers, Jim Baltzelle, and Florida News Editor Ian Mader. Jim, a former Miami bureau chief who now serves as AP's regional media representative, has been a fixture at the meetings since he first began attending as a Florida newspaper editor. You can read Gary's account of the meeting [here](#).

Sadly, though, it was one of Gary's last stories for the AP. In what came as a surprise to many, two days later he disclosed he was leaving the AP to take a job with Politico. Speaking for myself, I believe AP will miss Gary's Florida government expertise. Turnover, though, is a fact of life in our business and others. AP always seems to find able replacements for those of us who have left.

Although I've been retired for almost six years now, I try to get back for the meetings as they give me a chance to catch up with former colleagues including Brent. They also fulfill my urge to get back into the middle of things, which quickly seems to fade away until another year passes.

Connecting sky shot - Ship Bottom, New Jersey...



Ducks look for dinner among the melting ice floes on Barnegat Bay in Ship Bottom, N.J., on Long Beach Island Monday, Feb. 4, 2019. Warming temperatures made for open water on the bay, which had been frozen over during last week's cold snap. (Photo by Brian Horton)

...And Los Angeles



A rainbow after rain in Los Angeles all week, taken by Nick Ut looking from his house window early morning. Nick believes the rainbow means good luck for the Vietnamese Tet New Year on Tuesday.

Past tools of the journalism trade



Ed Williams ([Email](#)) - My pica stick and scaling wheel. And that may be my first scaling wheel -- more than 40 years old probably. 12 points equal one pica, six picas equal 1 inch. I guess that doesn't mean much to folks nowadays.

AP adds 2 journalists to 2020 reporting team

Washington Bureau Chief Julie Pace announced Monday the addition of two political reporters to cover the 2020 presidential campaign in Iowa and New Hampshire.

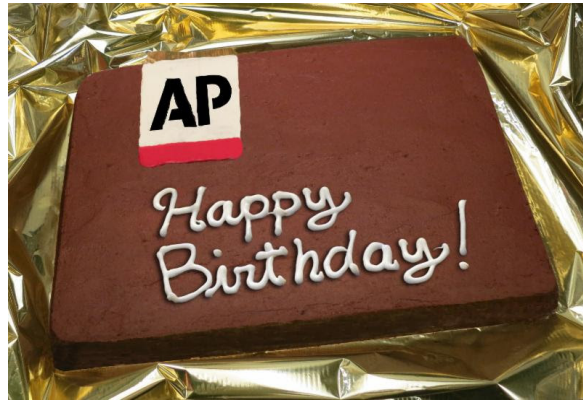
Here is her memo to staff:

As the 2020 campaign kicks off, we're expanding our team of journalists covering the election across the country. I'm happy to announce that Alexandra Jaffe is joining the AP as a political reporter based in Iowa and Hunter Woodall is our new political reporter based in New Hampshire. Both will report to U.S. Political Editor Steven Sloan.

Alexandra comes to AP from "Vice News Tonight," the nightly news show on HBO, where she was a political correspondent covering national and state politics and policy. She's no stranger to presidential politics. She spent the 2016 election as an embed for NBC News, covering Marco Rubio and Donald Trump's campaigns. Prior to that, Alex covered Congress and the 2014 midterms for CNN's digital politics team and The Hill newspaper.

Hunter joins AP from The Kansas City Star, where he's covered state government and politics in Kansas and Missouri. His reporting has detailed transparency issues, secrecy within state government and the impact of Donald Trump's presidency on a state level. Hunter was a member of The Star's reporting team recognized as a finalist for the 2018 Pulitzer Prize in Public Service. He graduated from the University of Missouri with degrees in history and journalism. Alexandra and Hunter start on Feb. 25. They'll spend a few days in Washington before heading to Iowa and New Hampshire.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Richard Boudreaux - richardboudreaux@gmail.com

Mike Doan - mdoan96@yahoo.com

Stories of interest

Meet the Guardian of Grammar Who Wants to Help You Be a Better Writer (New York Times)



Benjamin Dreyer's 23,600 followers on Twitter, which he calls "the agora of the 21st century," know him for his snappy language-related interventions. Credit Credit Vincent Tullo for The New York Times

By Sarah Lyall

With his finely tuned editing ear, Benjamin Dreyer often encounters things so personally horrifying that they register as a kind of torture, the way you might feel if

you were an epicure and saw someone standing over the sink, slurping mayonnaise directly from the jar.

There is "manoeuvre," the British spelling of "maneuver," for example, whose unpleasant extraneous vowels evoke the sound of "a cat coughing up a hairball," Dreyer says. There is "reside," with its unnecessary stuffiness. ("You mean 'live'?") There is the use of quotation marks after the term "so-called," as in "the so-called 'expert,'" which just looks stupid.

And there are the words Dreyer currently dislikes most, even more than he dislikes "munch" and "nosh" and other distasteful eating-adjacent terms. Sitting recently in his book-crammed office at Penguin Random House, where he is vice president, executive managing editor and copy chief for Random House - a division within the larger company - Dreyer scribbled "smelly" and "stinky" on a card and slid it speedily across the desk, as if the card itself was emitting a foul stench. "I can't say them out loud," he said.

Read more [here](#).

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Gannett rejects takeover offer from MNG/Digital First Media (USA Today)

By Philana Patterson, USA TODAY

Gannett Co. said Monday that its board has unanimously rejected an unsolicited proposal to be acquired by media company MNG Enterprises Inc., also known as Digital First Media, saying the proposal undervalues the company and the board doesn't believe the offer is credible.

MNG on Jan. 14 offered to buy Gannett for \$12 a share in cash, which at the time was a 23 percent premium above its most recent closing price of \$9.75 a share. Gannett shares rose as high as \$11.99 a share on Jan. 14, but closed Monday at \$10.97, down 2.2 percent for the day.

"After careful review and consideration, conducted in consultation with its financial and legal advisers, the Gannett board concluded that MNG's unsolicited proposal undervalues Gannett and is not in the best interests of Gannett and its

shareholders," the company said in statement. "In addition, Gannett does not believe MNG's proposal is credible."

Read more [here](#).

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McClatchy offers buyouts to 10 percent of staff (Poynter)

By Tom Jones

Even more troubling media news, or so it would seem.

Just hours after Vice Media announced it was slashing 10 percent of its staff, McClatchy CEO Craig Forman sent an email Friday to about 10 percent of the newspaper chain's employees, offering voluntary buyouts. The 10 percent represents about 450 employees.

But, according to the Miami New Times, Forman stressed that the buyout is optional. What wasn't immediately known was what would happen if less than 10 percent accepted the buyout. The deadline to accept a buyout is Feb. 19.

Read more [here](#).

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What Super Bowl?



Super Bowl? What Super Bowl?



PATRICKS EL, NAME D

Super Bowling

In the Super Bowl game, NFL teams compete for the Vince Lombardi Trophy. The game is held in a neutral location and is the most-watched event in American sports.



BOBBIETT BOWLS

NFL parties all Super Sunday

Starting with a half-hour pre-game show, Super Bowl Sunday is a day of celebration for fans. The game is held in a neutral location and is the most-watched event in American sports.



(Shared by Mark Mittelstadt)

The Final Word



(Shared by Paul Albright)

Today in History - February 5, 2019



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Feb. 5, the 36th day of 2019. There are 329 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 5, 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proposed increasing the number of U.S. Supreme Court justices; the proposal, which failed in Congress, drew accusations that Roosevelt was attempting to "pack" the nation's highest court.

On this date:

In 1917, Mexico's present constitution was adopted by the Constitutional Convention in Santiago de Queretaro. The U.S. Congress passed, over President Woodrow Wilson's veto, an act severely curtailing Asian immigration.

In 1918, during World War I, the Cunard liner SS Tuscania, which was transporting about 2,000 American troops to Europe, was torpedoed by a German U-boat in the Irish Sea with the loss of more than 200 people.

In 1958, Gamal Abdel Nasser was formally nominated to become the first president of the new United Arab Republic (a union of Egypt and Syria which lasted until 1961).

In 1971, Apollo 14 astronauts Alan Shepard and Edgar Mitchell stepped onto the surface of the moon in the first of two lunar excursions.

In 1983, former Nazi Gestapo official Klaus Barbie, expelled from Bolivia, was brought to Lyon (lee-OHN'), France, to stand trial. (He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison -- he died in 1991.)

In 1988, the Arizona House impeached Republican Gov. Evan Mecham (MEE'-kuhm), setting the stage for his trial in the state Senate, where he was convicted of obstructing justice and misusing state funds allegedly funneled to his Pontiac dealership.

In 1989, the Soviet Union announced that all but a small rear-guard contingent of its troops had left Afghanistan.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed the Family and Medical Leave Act, granting workers up to 12 weeks unpaid leave for family emergencies.

In 1999, Former heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson was sentenced in Rockville, Md., to a year in jail for assaulting two motorists following a traffic accident (he ended up serving 3 1/2 months).

In 2001, four disciples of Osama bin Laden went on trial in New York in the 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa. (The four were convicted and sentenced to life in prison without parole.)

In 2002, A federal grand jury in Alexandria, Va., indicted John Walker Lindh on ten charges, alleging he was trained by Osama bin Laden's network and then conspired with the Taliban to kill Americans. (Lindh later pleaded guilty to lesser offenses and was sentenced to 20 years in federal prison.)

In 2008, more than 80 tornadoes began touching down in the midwestern and southern U.S.; the deadliest of the twisters claimed 57 lives. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, a guru to the Beatles who introduced the West to transcendental meditation, died at his home in the Dutch town of Vlodrop; he was believed to be about 90.

Ten years ago: Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg underwent surgery for pancreatic cancer. USA Swimming suspended Olympic gold medalist Michael Phelps for three months after a photo showing him inhaling from a marijuana pipe became public.

Five years ago: A U.N. human rights committee denounced the Vatican for adopting policies that it said allowed priests to rape and molest tens of thousands of children over decades. CVS Caremark announced it would pull cigarettes and other tobacco products from its stores. The state of Texas executed Suzanne Basso for torturing and killing Louis "Buddy" Musso, a mentally impaired man she'd lured to suburban Houston with the promise of marriage.

One year ago: Stocks took their worst loss in six and a half years, with the Dow Jones industrial average plunging more than 1,100 points. Jerome Powell was sworn in as the 16th chairman of the Federal Reserve. Former sports doctor Larry Nassar received his third long prison sentence, 40 to 125 years, for molesting young athletes at an elite Michigan gymnastics club. President Donald Trump accused Democrats of being "un-American" and perhaps "treasonous" for not clapping during his State of the Union address a week earlier.

Today's Birthdays: Baseball Hall of Famer Hank Aaron is 85. Actor Stuart Damon is 82. Tony-winning playwright John Guare (gwayr) is 81. Financial writer Jane Bryant Quinn is 80. Actor David Selby is 78. Singer-songwriter Barrett Strong is 78. Football Hall of Famer Roger Staubach is 77. Movie director Michael Mann is 76. Rock singer Al Kooper is 75. Actress Charlotte Rampling is 73. Racing Hall of Famer Darrell Waltrip is 72. Actress Barbara Hershey is 71. Actor Christopher Guest is 71. Actor Tom Wilkinson is 71. Actor-comedian Tim Meadows is 58. Actress Jennifer Jason Leigh is 57. Actress Laura Linney is 55. Rock musician Duff McKagan (Velvet Revolver) is 55. World Golf Hall of Famer Jose Maria Olazabal is 53. Actor-comedian Chris Parnell is 52. Rock singer Chris Barron (Spin Doctors) is 51. Singer Bobby Brown is 50. Actor Michael Sheen is 50. Actor David Chisum is 49. Country singer Sara Evans is 48. Country singer Tyler Farr is 35. Neo-soul musician Mark Shusterman (Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats) is 34. Actor-singer Darren Criss is 32. Actor Alex Brightman is 32. Actor Henry Golding is 32. Rock musician Kyle Simmons (Bastille) is 31. Actor Jeremy Sumpter is 30. Drummer Graham Sierota (Echosmith) is 20.

Thought for Today: "Many excellent words are ruined by too definite a knowledge of their meaning." - Aline Kilmer, American poet (1888-1941).

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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