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# Connecting - June 19, 2019

1 message

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# Connecting

June 19, 2019

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this the 19<sup>th</sup> day of June 2019,

We lead today's Connecting with first responses to our call for your stories on encountering danger while on the job. Reading these, I hope, will spur you to share your own.

We also bring you more stories in our series on How I Got Into Journalism and news of the release of a book by colleague **Glen Johnson** on his work with John Kerry.

Connecting will take the next two days off as Linda and I travel to New York to attend the 25-Year Club celebration on Thursday night . This newsletter will return to your Inbox next Monday so continue sending in your contributions through the rest of the week.

Have a great rest of the week.

Paul

## Encountering danger while on the job



**Jerry Harkavy (Email)** - Close encounters with death or danger are rare to nonexistent for staffers at the AP office in Portland, Maine. During the few times we might find ourselves at a standoff at a crime scene, police keep reporters well out of the line of fire. The biggest hazard during my 41-year career came early on from paper cuts and those menacing spikes that festooned our desks and were used to park notes to which we might need to refer later.

The exception that proved the rule unfolded in the summer of 1977 when tinder-dry woods caught fire in Baxter State Park, in the shadow of the state's highest mountain, Katahdin. For more than a week, we sent reporters and photographers to the northern Maine fire that was being followed by newspapers throughout the country.

To supplement the main story, we'd always aim for an interesting sidebar. On a busy Sunday, while crews from throughout the region were battling the flames, I talked my way onto a flight on a single-engine de Havilland Beaver that was diving to treetop level to release water onto the smoky evergreens.

The pilots had been working long hours and would swoop down to a river or pond to refill their water tanks. After I hopped aboard, the pilot filled his tank from the West Branch of the Penobscot River and began his ascent, only to get caught in a sudden wind shift. The plane failed to respond to the controls and hurtled toward a stand of trees before the pilot guided it toward the riverbank, where the pontoons, the wing and the nose bore most of the impact.

The pilot and I were unscathed but scrambled out of the plane for fear that the nearly 100 gallons of fuel might explode. We saw the fuel spill into the river but it never caught fire. As I wrote in the first-person story that I filed late that afternoon after an hour's drive to Millinocket - this was in the days before cellphones - there wasn't enough time to be scared.

I later learned that the plane, acquired from the military, was declared a total loss. I also gained an appreciation for why the sturdy Beavers are so popular among bush pilots in Alaska.

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**Jim Hood** ([Email](#)) - You asked for our most death-defying experiences. Mine are fairly tame but for what it's worth...

I didn't have many encounters with death or danger in my AP days. In fact, AP was rather a relief from my earlier experiences as intrepid small-town newspaper editor and all-news radio reporter.

I've previously told of being pinned down by rifle fire from an elderly woman who was seemingly offended when the local sheriff and I dropped by with a warrant of some kind. It wasn't long after that little adventure that I encountered another episode of ill temper while making my way home one night after an evening's socializing.

As I passed through the less than bustling downtown in Murphysboro, Ill., I came upon a fleet of police cars haphazardly parked in front of the courthouse, lights flashing, their occupants taking cover behind anything they could find.

The only person in a vertical position was a deputy sheriff known somewhat inappropriately as "Slim." He was standing in the middle of the street, thumbs hooked in his gunbelt, which was adorned by the two Colt 45s that were his trademark. Slim was glaring up at the roof of a rundown building across the street from the courthouse. Its primary tenant was the kind of bar that is across the street from every courthouse.

"What's going on?" I asked one of the local cops who appeared to be trying to crawl into his cruiser's tire. This particular officer was not especially fond of me so in retrospect his answer is understandable though perhaps not laudable.

"Go ask Slim. He's running the show," he said.

So I sauntered out to Slim and asked what was up. As I did so, I heard the by-then familiar "zing" as hot lead flew past and kicked up bits of asphalt from the street behind me.

"Some sumbitch up there is shootin' at us," Slim said. "I'm about to go up there and put his lights out."

That sounded good to me and I dived for the nearest police car as Slim set off calmly across the street, entering through a door beside the bar entrance that led to apartments on the next few floors.

Nothing happened for a while. "Just wait," one of the cops said. Sure enough, a few seconds later there was what sounded like a fusillade of cannon fire. Slim had let loose with his big Colts.

Slim soon reappeared, literally as the smoke cleared, and the rest of us went bravely into the bar, where the initial calls for help had originated. Inside were three or four -- I've forgotten the exact number -- of locals who minutes before had been guzzling beer but were now lying dead on the floor.

It was your typical Saturday night barroom massacre and I considered myself lucky to be there. For one thing, my stupidity notwithstanding, I was not among the dead.

For another, I got some good photos and the story I phoned in to AP got great play in the next day's Chicago Tribune, which was always looking for stories from the somewhat bloodthirsty and ill-behaved downstate area.

My other youthful though slightly perilous adventures included being thrown off a building while covering an antiwar dust-up in Tucson. That earned me a night in the hospital and a tape recorder that came out of it worse than I did. The most grievous injury I suffered was from a cantaloupe that struck me in the face as I covered a Cesar Chavez rally near Yuma. The guy who threw it apologized and said he was trying to hit Chavez, as I had already speculated. (This was before everybody hated the press).

In Memphis, two National Guardsmen also apologized as they whacked me with their clubs in the rioting that surrounded the sanitation workers' strike that, in turn, led to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. I thought it was nice of them and have always had a warm spot in my heart for Memphis, a town that maintained its civility even while beating hell out of its visiting protestors and news people.

Anyway, after all that, broken chairs and bad coffee in the Denver AP bureau looked pretty good.

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**Doug Pizac (Email)** - In 1995 I was dispatched to Montana to do a story on the Freemen with Helena reporter Tom Laceky prior to the 81-day standoff that began in '96. Before heading out to their ranch we checked in with the local sheriff who warned us to be careful and plan on being stopped by them; they had already confiscated equipment from other photographers including a TV camera. We gave the sheriff our return ETA so if we were late he should come looking for us.

Tom and I headed out, stopping along the road in front of the house a good distance away to take a look and make some images. I had to use a long telephoto just to see someone standing in the doorway. We hopped back in our car and sped out when we noticed some men heading to their pickup trucks. While we stayed on the county roads -- which the Freemen didn't recognize as government owned -- we were intercepted by those taking shortcuts across private land. They blocked the road with their trucks and had guns drawn forcing us to stop.

After we got out to talk one of the Freeman went into the back of our car and took my camera bag. When I objected they told us that if we didn't leave immediately they would arrest us and hold us at the compound. That's when I learned Tom was nuts which I soon realized was actually wily. He told our potential captors to go ahead and arrest us as we would love to talk to those back at their headquarters



including their leader. That threw them for a loop since they didn't want anyone within their confines. Now catching on to Tom's tactics I insisted they return my cameras or we would follow them back to the ranch and if we didn't return by such and such a time the sheriff would come looking for us.

One of the men handed back by gear but insisted on keeping the film. I put the bag in the car to turn my back on him while I rewound the two bodies. I then pocketed the film and handed over two unexposed rolls instead whereupon they then let us go. When we checked back with the sheriff and told him what happened he grinned at our resourcefulness and told us we were lucky.

It was only when I enlarged my film that I realized that the man in the doorway was pointing a high-powered hunting rifle at us.

## Why I became a journalist

**Carolyn Carlson** ([Email](#)) - As a child, I was a voracious reader and had a vague idea that I'd like to be a writer when I grew up. As I got older, it dawned on me that I would probably want a regular paycheck from my writing, which wasn't going to be likely if I wrote children's books, which had been my original idea at age 7. By age 11, it occurred to me that maybe writing for a newspaper would provide a steady income.

Shortly after having this brainstorm, I entered the 7th grade in a middle school that had its own monthly newspaper called the Guy Phillips News. Each English class at each grade level assigned one student to be a reporter for the newspaper and I was all over that. By the 9th grade, I was enrolled in a journalism class being offered as an elective. Those of us in that class edited the contributions submitted by all these reporters, wrote the headlines and designed the layouts for each edition of the paper.

I attended my 50th high school reunion recently and found displayed the Oct. 28, 1965, edition of the Guy Phillips News which included a story announcing my assignment as a 9th grade reporter -- my maiden name was Carolyn Stewart and you'll find me on the next to the last line.

Frankly, I didn't save any of those papers. In fact, I don't remember a single story that I wrote for the Guy Phillips News. All I know is that the experience hooked me on journalism. I took two more journalism classes in high school, majored in it in college, and spent the next 50 years as a reporter or a journalism educator.

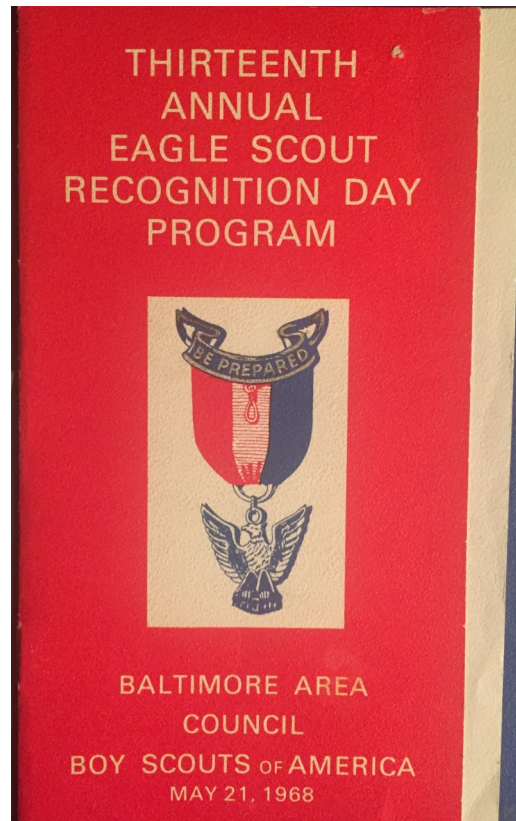
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**David Tirrell-Wysocki (Email)** - Apologies to Mike Tharp (Tuesday's issue), for basically stealing his lead, but I became a journalist because I became an Eagle Scout.

As in Mike's case, each year in Baltimore, all Eagle Scouts from the previous year were part of an Eagle Scout Recognition Day. After spending a day shadowing someone in a field we might want to enter, scouts and sponsors attended a recognition banquet.

It was 1968. I was 16 and had no idea what I wanted to be. I'd already grown through cowboy and astronaut stages, so I picked TV/Radio announcer. I figured I'd go to a TV station, meet Bozo the Clown and other celebrities and have an interesting day.

Instead, I was paired with News Director Lou Corbin at WFBR radio. At first, I was disappointed. No Bozo the Clown? That changed in a minute, as Mr. Corbin led me into a studio, had me read a news story about NASA's hopes to land on the moon the next year, then interviewed me about becoming an Eagle Scout. I still have the tape. There I was, shaky voice and Baltimore accent, (mispronouncing all the O's) being interviewed by a guy whose booming voice would blow you away from the radio.



Then, we jumped into a cab to cover a story. Don't remember the story. Didn't matter. I was hooked.

Mr. Corbin and I stayed in touch. He was excited and offered encouragement as I became news director of Boston University's campus radio station and a news writer at WEEI, Boston's all-news radio station. He died before I graduated and landed my first on-the-air gig at WKNE in Keene, NH. I was so thankful for his guidance and friendship.

It was the intro to the world of radio news with Lou Corbin that started me on a career that included a newspaper, three radio stations and almost 32 years with the AP, where I grabbed every opportunity to file stories to AP Radio.



After moving to Concord, N.H., I established an Eagle Scout Recognition Day in my area so other scouts might have the opportunity I had to learn about potential professions.

## A call from John Kerry led to fascinating assignment - and now a book

**Glen Johnson** ([Email](#)) - I'd spent nearly 30 years as a daily reporter - including two stints at the AP, both in Boston and Washington - when I got a surprising phone call in 2013 while I sat at my desk in The Boston Globe newsroom.



Senator John Kerry was on the other end of the line, and he said our conversation could be lost to posterity if I objected to what he was about to say to me. We could return to our regular reporter-subject relationship, he promised.

I decided to listen, and what he said intrigued me: he wanted to know if I'd be interested in filling a communications role on his incoming State Department team.

I wasn't looking for a job, but having achieved many professional goals by age 50, I thought I'd regret not taking the opportunity Kerry outlined. He explained he wanted me to travel the world with him, be in the room when he made "big decisions," and keep him in touch with our mutual hometown of Boston.

I decided to go for it, and away we went - quite literally. During the next four years, his penchant for face-to-face diplomacy took us to 91 countries on all seven continents. We spent over four months in the air while traveling over 1.4 million miles.

I had the chance to see him fail in his Middle East peace efforts, succeed in reaching a nuclear arms deal with Iran, and bring an unexpected focus to climate change, a problem I saw firsthand transcended national borders. I also witnessed the difficulties of negotiating with the Chinese, and the Russians lay the predicate for their 2016 election interference.

Each time I came home, I was bombarded with questions from friends and family. Some were about the mechanics of the job, such as who pays for what and what type of airplane we used. Others were about diplomacy, seeking a peek behind the curtain for bilateral or multilateral negotiations.

When my presidential appointment ended on Jan. 20, 2017, I decided to answer them by writing my first book. Next month, Disruption Books of Austin, Texas, will release "Window Seat on the World," my take on 21st century diplomacy as illustrated by events during the four years I spent as a diplomat.

I thought this mixture of politics, history, and color from a former AP colleague might be of interest to Connecting readers. The book is now available for pre-sale on Amazon and other e-tailers. It will be released July 9.



If you'd like to pick up a copy, you can click through links listed on Disruption's publicity page for the book: <http://disruptionbooks.com/books/Window/>

## AP names Michael Tackett deputy Washington bureau chief

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Associated Press on Tuesday named Michael Tackett, an award-winning journalist, as deputy bureau chief in Washington, directing coverage of the White House, Congress and politics.

The appointment was announced by Julie Pace, AP's chief of bureau in Washington.

"Mike cares deeply about asking the big questions about American politics and government, and telling the story of presidential campaigns not just from Washington, but from the places that ultimately decide elections," Pace said.



**Michael Tackett**

Tackett joins the AP from The New York Times, where he has worked as a political reporter and deputy Washington editor. He previously served as Bloomberg News' managing editor and Washington bureau chief, and as Washington bureau chief and political writer at the Chicago Tribune. He's covered six presidential campaigns.

He is also author of "The Baseball Whisperer," a nonfiction book about a summer collegiate baseball team in Iowa. The book was a finalist for The Casey Award, which honors the best baseball book of the year.

Tackett graduated from Indiana University at Bloomington with a degree in journalism and political science. He has a law degree from The John Marshall Law School in Chicago. His wife, Julie Carey, is the Northern Virginia Bureau Chief for NBC4 in Washington. They have two children.

Click [here](#) for a link to this story. Shared by Lauren Easton.

## AP Investigation: Many US jails fail to stop inmate suicides



**Melany Zoumadakis clutches a photo of her daughter, Tanna Jo Fillmore, on Friday, April 26, 2019, in Salt Lake City. Fillmore killed herself in the**

**Duchesne County Jail in 2016, after repeatedly calling her mother, saying she was being denied her prescription medicines that had stabilized her. Her mother has filed suit. (AP Photo/Rick Bowmer)**

**By SHARON COHEN and NORA ECKERT**

The last time Tanna Jo Fillmore talked with her mother, she was in a Utah jail, angry, pleading and desperate. She'd called every day that past week, begging for help.

I need my medicine, she demanded.

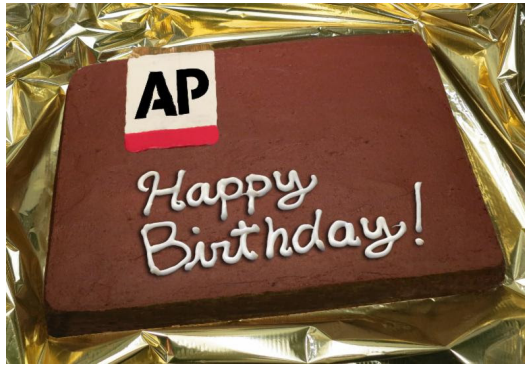
I have to get out of here! she screamed.

Fillmore was in the Duchesne County Jail on a charge of violating probation in a drug case; she had reportedly failed to report a change of address. At 25, she'd struggled with mental illness for years, but Xanax and hyperactivity medication had stabilized her. Now, she told her mother, the jail's nurse was denying her those pills - and she couldn't take it any longer.

That November day, she phoned her mother, Melany Zoumadakis, three times over an hour. In their final conversation, Fillmore's voice was raw with rage. She blamed her mom, a nurse herself, for not doing more. She threatened to kill herself, warning that if she did: "You're going to be the worst mother in the world." Then she hung up.

Read more [here](#).

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



to

Dennis Anderson - [denis.anders@hotmail.com](mailto:denis.anders@hotmail.com)

Jim Baltzelle - [jbaltzelle@ap.org](mailto:jbaltzelle@ap.org)

*On Sunday to...*

Ike Flores - [ikeflores@msn.com](mailto:ikeflores@msn.com)

## Stories of interest

***UN expert urges probe of Saudi prince over Khashoggi killing***





**FILE - In this Dec. 15, 2014 file photo, Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi speaks during a press conference in Manama, Bahrain. An independent U.N. human rights expert investigating the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi is recommending an investigation into the possible role of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, citing "credible evidence." (AP Photo/Hasan Jamali, File)**

**By JAMEY KEATEN and AYA BATRAWY**

GENEVA (AP) - An independent U.N. report into the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi said Wednesday there is "credible evidence" to warrant further investigation into the possible role of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and suggested sanctions on his personal assets.

The scathing probe is likely to further harden opinion against the crown prince in Washington and other Western capitals, where critics say an operation of this magnitude would have required the powerful prince's knowledge and involvement.

The 33-year-old Saudi prince, who continues to have the support of his father, King Salman, denies any involvement in the killing, and the kingdom has blamed rogue Saudi agents for carrying out the operation. U.S. President Donald Trump has defended U.S.-Saudi ties in the face of international outcry after the Oct. 2 slaying.

Read more [here](#).



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## ***FROM THE NEWSROOM: A new way to support the Missourian and local news***

**By RUBY BAILEY**

The Missourian has a unique mission: To serve the community of Columbia, to train future journalists and to serve as a laboratory for the news industry.

Today the Missourian launches an experiment in the latter role.

Revenue is declining across the industry as advertising dollars shrink, and new revenue streams are necessary to sustain quality journalism. XeePay, an alternative method of paying for journalism that we are launching today, relies on small but easy-to-offer donations.

You will begin seeing the request for donations on some stories this week as we begin rolling it out on our website.

The questions and answers below explain more about how XeePay works and how it aligns with the Missourian's mission and funding.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Scott Charton.

## **Today in History - June 19, 2019**



## By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, June 19, the 170th day of 2019. There are 195 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On June 19, 1865, Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War was over, and that all remaining slaves in Texas were free - an event celebrated to this day as "Juneteenth."

### On this date:

In 1775, George Washington was commissioned by the Continental Congress as commander in chief of the Continental Army.

In 1868, "Tales from the Vienna Woods," a waltz by Johann Strauss "the Younger," was first publicly performed by Strauss' orchestra.

In 1917, during World War I, King George V ordered the British royal family to dispense with German titles and surnames; the family took the name "Windsor."

In 1934, the Federal Communications Commission was created; it replaced the Federal Radio Commission.

In 1938, four dozen people were killed when a railroad bridge in Montana collapsed, sending a train known as the Olympian hurtling into Custer Creek.

In 1944, during World War II, the two-day Battle of the Philippine Sea began, resulting in a decisive victory for the Americans over the Japanese.

In 1952, the U.S. Army Special Forces, the elite unit of fighters known as the Green Berets, was established at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The celebrity-panel game show "I've Got A Secret" debuted on CBS-TV.

In 1953, Julius Rosenberg, 35, and his wife, Ethel, 37, convicted of conspiring to pass U.S. atomic secrets to the Soviet Union, were executed at Sing Sing Prison in Ossining, New York.

In 1964, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was approved by the U.S. Senate, 73-27, after surviving a lengthy filibuster.

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a Louisiana law requiring any public school teaching the theory of evolution to teach creation science as well.

In 2006, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice warned North Korea it would face consequences if it test-fired a missile thought to be powerful enough to reach the West Coast of the United States.

In 2017, Otto Warmbier a 22-year-old American college student died in a Cincinnati hospital following his release by North Korea in a coma after more than a year in captivity.

Ten years ago: New York Times reporter David S. Rohde and Afghan reporter Tahir Ludin escaped from militant captors after more than seven months in captivity in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Texas billionaire R. Allen Stanford was indicted and jailed on charges his international banking empire was really just a Ponzi scheme built on lies, bluster and bribery. (Stanford was sentenced to 110 years in prison after being convicted of bilking investors in a \$7.2 billion scheme that involved the sale of fraudulent certificates of deposits.)

Five years ago: President Barack Obama announced he was dispatching 300 U.S. military advisers to Iraq to help quell a rising insurgency. Rep. Kevin McCarthy of California won election as House majority leader as Republicans shuffled their leadership in the wake of Rep. Eric Cantor's primary defeat in Virginia. Gerry Goffin, 75, a prolific and multi-dimensional lyricist who with his then-wife and songwriter

partner Carole King wrote such hits as "Will You Love Me Tomorrow," "(You Make Me Feel Like) a Natural Woman," "Up On The Roof," and "The Loco-Motion," died in Los Angeles.

One year ago: The United States said it was pulling out of the United Nations' Human Rights Council, a day after the U.N. human rights chief denounced the Trump administration for separating migrant children from their parents; U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley cited longstanding U.S. complaints that the council was biased against Israel. Koko, a western lowland gorilla who was taught sign language at an early age as a scientific test subject and eventually learned more than 1,000 words, died at the Gorilla Foundation's preserve in California's Santa Cruz mountains at the age of 46. New York mayor Bill de Blasio said as of Sept. 1, police would start issuing summonses to people caught smoking marijuana in public rather than arresting them.

Today's Birthdays: Pop singer Tommy DeVito (The Four Seasons) is 91. Actress Gena Rowlands is 89. Hall of Fame race car driver Shirley Muldowney is 79. Singer Elaine "Spanky" McFarlane (Spanky and Our Gang) is 77. Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi is 74. Author Sir Salman Rushdie is 72. Actress Phylicia Rashad is 71. Rock singer Ann Wilson (Heart) is 69. Musician Larry Dunn is 66. Actress Kathleen Turner is 65. Country singer Doug Stone is 63. Singer Mark DeBarge is 60. Singer-dancer-choreographer Paula Abdul is 57. Actor Andy Lauer is 56. Rock singer-musician Brian Vander Ark (Verve Pipe) is 55. Actor Samuel West is 53. Actress Mia Sara is 52. TV personality Lara Spencer is 50. Rock musician Brian "Head" Welch is 49. Actor Jean Dujardin is 47. Actress Robin Tunney is 47. Actor Bumper Robinson is 45. Actress Poppy Montgomery is 44. Alt-country singer-musician Scott Avett (The Avett Brothers) is 43. Actor Ryan Hurst is 43. Actress Zoe Saldana is 41. Former NBA star Dirk Nowitzki is 41. Actor Neil Brown Jr. is 39. Actress Lauren Lee Smith is 39. Rapper Macklemore (Macklemore and Ryan Lewis) is 37. Actor Paul Dano is 35. New York Mets pitcher Jacob DeGrom is 31. Actor Giacomo Gianniotti is 30. Actor Chuku Modu (TV: "The Good Doctor") is 29. Actor Atticus Shaffer is 21.

**Thought for Today: "Exuberance is better than taste." - Gustave Flaubert, French author (1821-1880).**

## Connecting calendar



**August 17** - Albany AP bureau reunion (including other upstate bureaus), 1-5 p.m., Marc and Carla Humbert residence on Tsatsawassa Lake, [68 Marginal Way, East Nassau, NY](#). Contact: Chris McKnight ([Email](#)).

## 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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