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Connecting - December 27, 2019

1 message

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning on this the 27th day of December 2019,

I hope your Christmas and Hanukkah holidays have been great.

So, you now work or once worked for the AP? The Anonymous Press, as some call it. Maybe the grocery chain? Oh yeah, that company that does the sports polls?

We bring you responses to Connecting's call for comment to **Skip Foreman's** lament in Tuesday's edition on how many people outside the news business have no idea what the AP is. Not too late for your own story.

Early next week, we will remember those colleagues whom we lost during the past year. If you would like to send a memory of any of them who died in 2019, please share with me over the weekend.

Have a great weekend!

Paul

So you work for the AP - what's that?



An AP bureau?

Norm Abelson - A couple of my non-journalist buddies thought it hilarious to ask if I was bagging groceries at the A&P, which had a supermarket directly across the street from the State House. Yeah, the AP office was more than a half-mile distant from the Capital building.

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Kathryn Baker - Some people think AP is some kind of government agency. I was working the Sunday desk in the Capitol buro in Austin solo when a redneck-sounding guy called and said, "Do y'all want to buy a copperhead snake?" I said, "Um, no," and he said, "I guess I'll just turn it loose then!"

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Jeff Barnard - Picking up on Skip Foreman's complaint about so many people giving back a blank stare when he said he was from AP, I had similar experiences in 32 years covering rural Oregon. I found many had heard of UPI. I think the I at the end was some sort of memory trigger. So I often explained that we were like UPI, but older, bigger and better. And we survived because we were a non-profit cooperative and not trying to make a profit. Sorry UPI colleagues.

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Michael Bass - I feel Skip's pain. My first (non-internship) AP job was in Nashville, and I remember attending a friend's party at Vanderbilt University and trying to impress a woman there by telling her I work for the AP, only to hear her reply: "Like, what, in the produce department?"

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Chuck Burton - I had a journalist in North Carolina ask me one time "what exactly is AP?"

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Doug Crews - Unfortunately, the question I sometimes get is, "What's a newspaper?" And it makes me boil.

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Tim Dahlberg - A few of us were having a sit down with Mike Tyson back in the day and one introduced himself to Mike by saying he was from UPI. Mike got a scowl on his face and said "One of your trucks ran over my dog."

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Tom Eblen - The summer after my sophomore year at Western Kentucky University, I got my first of two "vacation relief" gigs in the Louisville bureau. I mostly worked nights, so would use mornings and afternoons to catch up on chores such as laundry. While at a laundromat one day, an older lady asked me where I worked. "I'm working this summer for the A.P.," I proudly told her. "Oh, that's nice," she replied. "I buy all my groceries there."

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Simon Griffiths - I've mentioned to some millennials that I started out as a photographer stringing for AP & UPI and they tend to cock their head like a dog.

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Mike Harris - When people ask me what AP is, I tell them it's the world's largest news gathering agency. Some believe me.

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Bill Kaczor - In the football crazy South, I found the best way to explain The Associated Press to those who don't immediately grasp it is to tell them we are the ones who do the AP college football poll. That usually works.

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Mike McPhee - In Boston in 1976, playwright John Guare took me to meet Catherine Huntington, the first woman to produce Eugene O'Neil in the Provincetown Playhouse. She was elderly but still quite elegant and lovely. John said, "And this is Mike McPhee, who's breaking into the AP in Boston." She smiled, then looked at me, then said, "Oh wonderful, but why...why...are you trying to break into the A&P?"

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Sue Mosher - I got the grocery store (A&P) response from a grad school classmate (Rutgers - economics) when I was working nights at 50 Rock in the late 1970s.

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Jay Reeves - I typically explain that I work for the AP that does the college football poll and news, not the store.

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Paul Stevens - I occasionally wear my AP shirt to tennis matches - one with AP emblazoned in orange (er, PMS 180) on front - and some of my 'mates immediately think I was an Advanced Placement child once upon a time. NOT! (I successfully hid from our kids the mediocre high school grade cards that my mom saved for me.)

And...

While I never covered AP - aka, Adrian Peterson, star running back at Oklahoma and then with the Vikings and now the Redskins, I understand he is ambivalent about being called "AP" or "AD" - for All Day and his great work ethic

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Michael Weinfeld - I certainly understand Skip Foreman's frustration at having to explain that the AP is not a newspaper, but it's even worse when you work for AP

Broadcast and people ask in what paper they can read your stories. I would carefully explain that I wrote for the Broadcast Wire, which was where radio and television stations got their news. They would then ask what time they could hear me on the radio or see me on TV. That led to a further explanation that my taped or live reports could be heard on hundreds of radio stations, but I couldn't say when they would air, or when they might hear a TV anchor read a broadcast story I'd written. Finally, I'd give up and tell them they could look for my byline on the newspaper stories I wrote based on my radio interviews.

What is lost if photos are pulled to save subject's pain?



Photo by John Filo

By Abdon Pallasch

Gateway Journalism Review

(CONNECTING EDITOR'S NOTE: Former AP photographer John Filo ([Email](#)), now with CBS News, is a Connecting colleague.)

Imagine if the world had never seen that photo of a young Mary Ann Vecchio screaming out in raw emotional pain over the body of Jeffrey Miller, shot dead moments earlier by National Guardsmen at Kent State University in 1970.

Student journalist John Filo's iconic, Pulitzer-winning photo arguably helped hasten the end of the Vietnam War.

The protest at Kent State on May 4, 1970, was just one of many protests around the country as President Richard Nixon appeared to be moving the war into Cambodia. But the senseless killing of four protesters and the visceral anguish that gushes from Vecchio's pleading face in that photo were among the forces that helped crystalize Americans' opposition to prolonging the losing battle in Vietnam that had cost so many lives.

David Crosby showed Neil Young the photo and within weeks Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young's Ohio anti-war anthem was climbing to No. 14 on the charts: "Tin soldiers

and Nixon coming. We're finally on our own. This summer I heard the drumming.

Four dead in Ohio."

Young told VH1 it was Filo's compelling photo of Vecchio that inspired the song:

"That girl leaning over the other kid in a pool of blood, and a look of, 'Whaaa? What?

How could this have happened?' You know it's shock ... grief," Young said.

"It's up to historians to decide whether it helped end the war," said Jerry Lewis,

professor emeritus of sociology at Kent State who dodged bullets that day as a

young professor. "It helped bring awareness to the tragedy of the war because Kent

State is Middle America."

Read more [here](#).

New-member profile: Lee Brown

Lee Brown ([Email](#)) - is the long-time assistant news director at WYFF 4, the NBC affiliate in Greenville, SC. Lee has spent his entire television career at WYFF 4 and will be retiring in January on his 44th anniversary with WYFF 4. Through the years, Lee has been a reporter, assignment editor, and managing editor before taking on his current duties as assistant news director. He has also been executive producer of WYFF 4's quarterly news magazine program, "Chronicle."

Lee spent several years on the Associated Press Broadcast advisory board in South Carolina, including a year as president of the board. He has also served on the Board of Governors of the National Television Arts and Sciences - Southeast and the Board of Directors of RTDNA of the Carolinas (including two years as president).



Lee is a graduate of the School of Journalism at the University of South Carolina.

Connecting mailbox

Lighting of the Menorah - with a special guest



Each year since 2005, Myron Belkind ([Email](#)) has officiated at the celebration marking the Lighting of the Menorah on the first night of Hanukkah at the Watergate South apartments in Washington D.C. This year, on December 22, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was among the more than 60 residents who attended and heard Myron tell the story of Hanukkah before the menorah, in the background, was lit. Photo shows, from left, Justice Ginsburg, Myron and his wife Rachel and their daughter Yael.

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A career highlight - Page One play in The New York Times

Bob Moen ([Email](#)) - who recently retired from the AP - As for my career, the New York Times actually put my story on the 1997 Grand Forks flood on its Sunday front page - above the fold. While out of date these days, it was pretty neat back then. Someone in NY sent me the front page with a note that the older guys in the bureau at that time couldn't remember the last time the Times put an AP story on its front page. Don't know if it ever happened again since 1997.

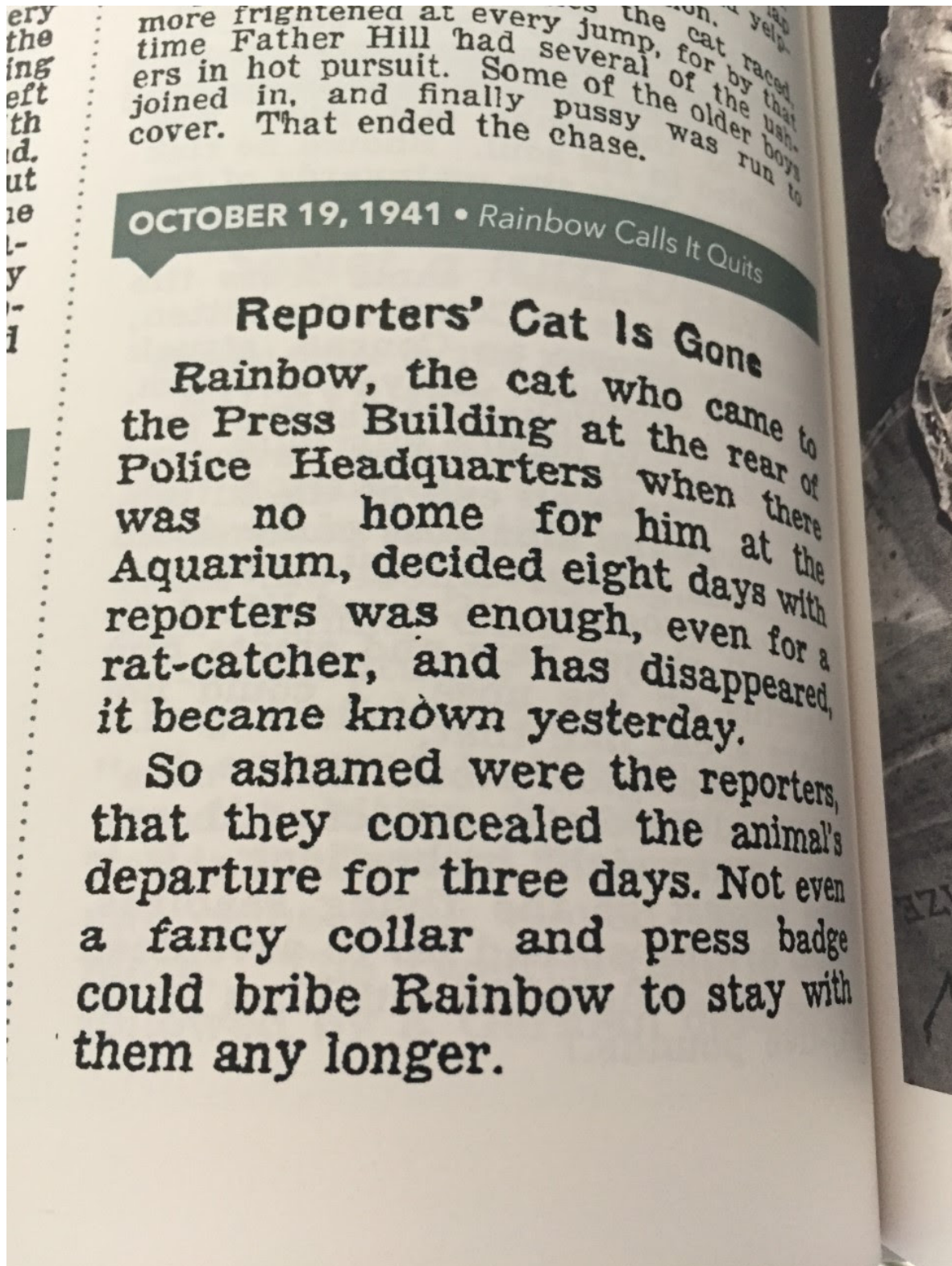
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CD or not to CD?

Norm Abelson ([Email](#)) - In last Tuesday's Connecting, a page from Wirespeak shows the Cleveland AP bureau two-letter designation as CD and the Concord, N.H., designation as CR. During my way-back years (1953-1964) as a newsman at the Concord office, we always used the CD code. What was Cleveland's code then? When did it change? Or has my memory betrayed me.

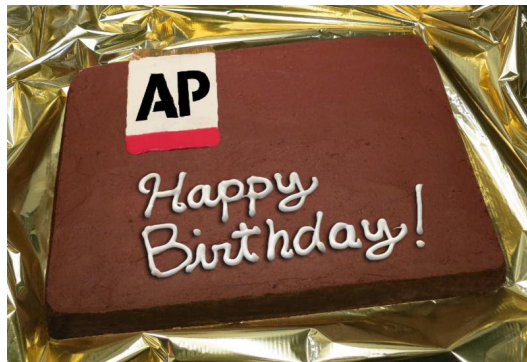
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Eight days with reporters was enough



Mike Holmes ([Email](#)) - From a collection of old New York Times stories.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Greg Halling - ghalling66048@gmail.com

Scott McFetridge - smcfetridge@ap.org

Eric Pullet - mrgeno1227@gmail.com

On Sunday to...

Arlon Southall - arlonsouthall@aol.com

Connecting mailbox

Set to close, Kingsville Record gets 11th-hour reprieve (San Antonio Express-News)

By JOHN MacCORMACK

KINGSVILLE - When the news broke in late November that the 113-year-old Kingsville Record was sinking in red ink and would soon fold, some in this proud, close-knit South Texas city reacted with grief and anger.

"I think it's a damned shame and an embarrassment. It's sad for our community," exclaimed Dianne Leubert, a member of the City Commission. "It's not just the paper. It's your lifeline. It's your information. It's something as simple as your school kid winning an award or an obituary."

Readers in Bishop, just north of Kingsville, reacted just as darkly.

"I'm heartbroken. I was born and raised in Kingsville, and I grew up with that paper," Bishop Mayor Tem Miller said. "Anytime we had something major on our agenda, they were here to cover it. They did a good job, and it was never negative."

It appeared certain that Kingsville's community voice and watchdog would fall silent - until an improbable, last-minute rescue.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Susana Hayward, who wrote: "Here's a bit of good journalism news, written by my husband, John MacCormack, who still covers Texas for the E-N, several years past retirement."

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Ghost papers and news deserts: Will America ever get its local news back? (Washington Post)

By Jonathan O'Connell

First they started showing up thinner than before. Then they were printed on smaller paper, with local columns replaced by more out-of-town news. Then in some places, especially rural and down-on-their-luck parts, newspapers stopped showing up altogether.

Since the Internet arrived in earnest 25 years ago, almost nobody - not the savviest investment bankers, the most well-meaning editors, local entrepreneurs or generous philanthropists - has figured out a sustainable way to continue producing local news.

America lost a quarter of its journalists from 2008 to 2018, the vast majority of them covering local issues, according to University of North Carolina professor Penny

Muse Abernathy. Newsrooms lost at least 3,800 jobs in 2019 alone.

She estimates the country has lost 2,100 newspapers since 2004, 70 of them dailies. She has begun referring to about 1,000 surviving titles as "ghost papers" because of their painfully thin staffs and reporting. She has dubbed places with few or no reporters as "news deserts." "There is a dearth of local news at all levels," she said.

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

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The Christmas Eve Confessions of Chuck Todd (PressThink)

By JAY ROSEN

'Round midnight on Christmas eve, Rolling Stone posted a short interview with Chuck Todd, host of "the longest running show on television," NBC's Meet the Press.

Its contents were explosive, embarrassing, enraging, and just plain weird.

Three years after Kellyanne Conway introduced the doctrine of "alternative facts" on his own program, a light went on for Chuck Todd. Republican strategy, he now realized, was to make stuff up, spread it on social media, repeat it in your answers to journalists - even when you know it's a lie with crumbs of truth mixed in - and then convert whatever controversy arises into go-get-em points with the base, while pocketing for the party a juicy dividend: additional mistrust of the news media to help insulate President Trump among loyalists when his increasingly brazen actions are reported as news.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Peg Coughlin.

The Final Word

The Storyteller Who Listened (AramcoWorld)

By Rami G. Khouri

"One thing I've tried to do in covering the Arab world is never to tell someone they're wrong. Instead, I've tried to listen and to understand."

These words journalist Anthony Shadid wrote in April 2003 in accepting the annual George Polk Award for Foreign Reporting. He was 34 years old, an Arab American from Oklahoma City, and he wrote them from Baghdad, where weeks earlier he had begged his editors at The Washington Post to allow him to remain to cover the us invasion even as most global media personnel evacuated.

His focus in Iraq was on Iraqis-in homes, neighborhoods and workplaces. "Our responsibility as journalists to cover events is to witness historic events and bring meaning to them, to see how they impact ordinary people," Shadid later recalled.

The next year, he would receive a Pulitzer Prize in International Reporting, the first Arab American to achieve the honor. He would earn a second in 2010 for work at The New York Times. Two years after that, crossing the mountains between Turkey and Syria, he would suffer a fatal allergic reaction to horsehair.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Paul Albright.

Today in History - December 27, 2019



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Dec. 27, the 361st day of 2019. There are four days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 27, 2001, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld announced that Taliban and al-Qaida prisoners would be held at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

On this date:

In 1822, scientist Louis Pasteur was born in Dole, France.

In 1831, naturalist Charles Darwin set out on a round-the-world voyage aboard the HMS Beagle.

In 1904, James Barrie's play "Peter Pan: The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up" opened at the Duke of York's Theater in London.

In 1945, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were formally established.

In 1949, Queen Juliana of the Netherlands signed an act recognizing Indonesia's sovereignty after more than three centuries of Dutch rule.

In 1958, American physicist James Van Allen reported the discovery of a second radiation belt around Earth, in addition to one found earlier in the year.

In 1968, Apollo 8 and its three astronauts made a safe, nighttime splashdown in the Pacific.

In 1979, Soviet forces seized control of Afghanistan. President Hafizullah Amin (hah-FEE'-zoo-lah ah-MEEN'), who was overthrown and executed, was replaced by Babrak Karmal.

In 1985, Palestinian guerrillas opened fire inside the Rome and Vienna airports; 19 victims were killed, plus four attackers who were slain by police and security personnel. American naturalist Dian Fossey, 53, who had studied gorillas in the wild in Rwanda, was found hacked to death.

In 1994, four Roman Catholic priests [-] three French and a Belgian [-] were shot to death in their rectory in Algiers, a day after French commandos killed four radicals who'd hijacked an Air France jet from Algiers to Marseille.

In 1995, Israeli jeeps sped out of the West Bank town of Ramallah, capping a seven-week pullout giving Yasser Arafat control over 90 percent of the West Bank's 1 million Palestinian residents and one-third of its land.

In 2002, A defiant North Korea ordered U.N. nuclear inspectors to leave the country and said it would restart a laboratory capable of producing plutonium for nuclear weapons; the U.N. nuclear watchdog said its inspectors were "staying put" for the time being.

Ten years ago: Iranian security forces fired on Tehran protesters, killing at least eight and launching a new wave of arrests.

Five years ago: North Korea blamed its recent internet outage on the United States and hurled racially charged insults at President Barack Obama over the hacking row involving the movie "The Interview." Mehmet Ali Agca (MEH'-met AH'-lee AH'-juh), the Turkish gunman who shot and wounded John Paul II in 1981, laid white flowers on the saint's tomb in St. Peter's Basilica.

One year ago: LeBron James was selected as The Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year for the third time, after reaching the NBA Finals for the eighth consecutive year. Richard Overton, the nation's oldest living world War II veteran who was also believed to be the oldest living man in the U.S., died in Texas at the age of 112. President Donald Trump tweeted that the shooting death of a California police officer, allegedly by a man who was in the country illegally, showed the need for a border crackdown.

Today's Birthdays: Actor John Amos is 80. Rock musician Mick Jones (Foreigner) is 75. Singer Tracy Nelson is 75. Actor Gerard Depardieu is 71. Jazz singer-musician T.S. Monk is 70. Singer-songwriter Karla Bonoff is 68. Rock musician David Knopfler (Dire Straits) is 67. Actress Tovah Feldshuh is 66. Journalist-turned-politician Arthur Kent is 66. Actress Maryam D'Abo is 59. Country musician Jeff Bryant is 57. Actor Ian Gomez is 55. Actress Theresa Randle is 55. Actress Eva LaRue is 53. Wrestler and actor Bill Goldberg is 53. Actress Tracey Cherelle Jones is 50. Bluegrass singer-musician Darrin Vincent (Dailey & Vincent) is 50. Rock musician Guthrie Govan is 48. Musician Matt Slocum is 47. Actor Wilson Cruz is 46. Singer Olu is 46. Actor Masi Oka is 45. Actor Aaron Stanford is 43. Actress Emilie de Ravin is 38. Actor Jay Ellis is 38. Christian rock musician James Mead (Kutless) is 37. Rock singer Hayley Williams (Paramore) is 31. Country singer Shay Mooney (Dan & Shay) is 28. Actor Timothee Chalamet is 24.

Thought for Today: "Man has an incurable habit of not fulfilling the prophecies of his fellow men." [-] Alistair Cooke, Anglo-American journalist and broadcaster (1908-2004).

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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