

Connecting - February 25, 2020

1 message

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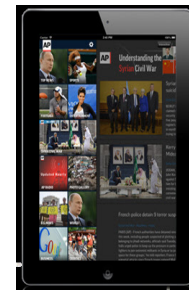
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Connecting

February 25, 2020

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this the 25th day of February 2020,

Barbara King Lord's profile in Monday's Connecting prompted this note from our colleague **John Dowling** ([Email](#)) -

I was Barbara's deputy from 2000 to 2005, and I'm quite sure no one learned more from her in that span than I did - about journalism, leadership, teaching, treating colleagues and others with kindness, warmth and respect. I could go on. I've always been grateful that she let me find my own way in the job and make my own mistakes - plenty of them. I'm sure she bit her tongue until it was sore.

Almost all AP journalists I met, at all levels and locations, wanted to do good work and grow in their craft. Barbara's presence and the substance of her work told them that AP supported those aspirations. That was an incredibly powerful motivator for people doing an often demanding and difficult job. I wish that was better understood within AP.

Thinking of launching a startup newspaper? You'll get some good ideas in an interview in today's issue with **Kelsey Ryan**, a veteran newspaper journalist who is doing just that - launching The Beacon in Kansas City. Our colleague **Julie Doll** provides her insight with a Q-and-A.

Have a great day!

Paul

Launch of online, nonprofit journalism startup focusing on investigative reporting



Julie Doll ([Email](#)) - The Kansas City area is home to a new journalism startup, The Beacon.

The online, nonprofit was founded by Kelsey Ryan, an investigative journalist who has worked at the Joplin Globe, Wichita Eagle and Kansas City Star.

While at the Star, she was on the investigative team that was named a 2018 Pulitzer Prize finalist in Public Service for the paper's series on government transparency in Kansas.

Ryan grew up in Newton, Kansas, and graduated from Emporia State University where she was editor of her college paper, The Bulletin.

The Beacon is phasing in its operations with soft launch operations now, and Ryan expects to be fully launched sometime this summer.

I asked Ryan to answer some questions about her nonprofit enterprise.



Kelsey Ryan

What kind of journalism will The Beacon do?

The Beacon will focus on in-depth reporting - no breaking crime-of-the-day stories or regurgitated press releases. We want to find stories that aren't being told and write about issues in a revelatory way. A lot of what we're hearing from people in the community is that stories they see lack context and depth. So maybe it's an explainer piece. Maybe it's an investigation. Or a good narrative. Depth doesn't have to mean long - just thorough. Meaty.

We've also really honed in on potential solutions journalism angles, which a lot of people are craving in our current political climate.

We're starting with a phased soft launch through our newsletter. Those stories are coming from freelance journalists. Varying topics and styles, combined with information about our upcoming events and ways to be part of this process. We're now starting to get stories coming in to be edited and I'm happy with what I've seen so far. And we are still accepting freelance applications.

Geographically, we are covering both Kansas and Missouri. And we're conducting a series of community engagement listening sessions and surveys that will help inform our beat coverage moving forward. We know for sure that we will have a health and environment reporter starting full time this summer through the Report for America program. But our other beats are still being determined, which is the exciting part. We really want to see what the community thinks and combine that with our knowledge of the gaps. We want buy-in from folks, and radical transparency around our processes.

What are your major sources of support?

Three-fourths of our funding so far is from grants. We've been very lucky as a startup to have the support of several local philanthropies, including the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Enid and Crosby Kemper Foundation, the Francis Family Foundation and the Gattermeier Foundation.

But none of the fundraising would have been possible if Emily Bradbury, the executive director of the Kansas Press Association, hadn't told me about fiscal sponsorship - something I'd never even heard about. It's essentially a way to fast-track the incubation of new nonprofits. The Kansas Newspaper Foundation (a 501(c)(3) offshoot of the Kansas Press Association) has been our fiscal sponsor almost since Day 1, which meant I could go out and legitimately fundraise and obtain grants, which is much harder without a 501(c)(3) status. This allowed me more than a year of runway for fundraising ahead of the launch, which is helpful since grant cycles for some organizations can last up to a year. I was then able to do more research about who to reach out to for grants and start establishing those relationships early. From this process, I've learned you have a much better chance of having a grant accepted by meeting with program officers and having a chance to build trust and share a vision. Only one of the funds we've received so far - the Google News Initiative Innovation Challenge - was a "cold call" application where I didn't talk first to someone there before applying. Everything else was built on sourcing and in-person interactions.

It's also important to note that the foundations don't tell us that they will only fund stories about X or with a certain point of view. I looked at their missions and where they may align with us. Editorial independence is something we talk about a lot. Luckily, other nonprofit news organizations have paved the way for us in terms of separating church and state, so we're following guidelines from the American Press Institute and best practices from the Institute for Nonprofit News.

We're also exploring corporate sponsorships and what that can look like. When we launch, we will really ramp up memberships.

After spending about 18 months conceiving of and launching The Beacon, are you more convinced or less convinced that nonprofit journalism is the way to go?

I'm even more convinced now. I really went back and forth on how to incorporate the organization. But ultimately I'm glad we went this direction. Grant funding. A board of directors for governance. Hopefully more trust. These are things that would look very different from an organizational perspective if we had done a for-profit entity where I was a sole owner. We have a structure where I also have accountability, and our finances will be transparent.

But the biggest thing I stress to people is that, ultimately, "nonprofit" is just a tax status. It's not in and of itself a business plan or strategy in the long term. You still have to think about revenue. You still need diversification of that revenue in order to thrive. To me, it's a means to getting launched and properly funded with professional

journalists from Day 1. We couldn't get grants without going this route. I don't think we'd be nearly this far along financially without this method.

I also think that the nonprofit route can shift the attitude of how journalism is perceived in a community. We want to engage with people. We look at journalism as a public service. We are mission-centric. And we believe that if you have a good mission and deliver a quality product, people will see that.

Do you see The Beacon as competition to legacy media?

Depends on how you look at it, I guess. We aren't competing for ad dollars. We aren't trying to be all things to all people - no opinion section or sports. We aren't selling subscriptions - memberships will come with more perks than just reading the already free product since we're doing events and more engagement with the community.

As far as the content goes, we don't want to be duplicative. We want to fill the gaps. What are the stories that aren't being told? Where are things falling through the cracks? What are the big picture stories that no one else has pieced together? How can we deliver this information in a new way?

Maybe it's competition, but I don't really look at it that way. I don't scour over the day-to-day operations of other news organizations. But there are big shifts happening and major news organizations filing for bankruptcy. Those are things that will have an impact on our local news ecosystem and we can't just ignore that.

Some legacy media will disappear. Hopefully there's an infrastructure in place to tell important stories when that happens. I want The Beacon to be part of that infrastructure. I want to build something that lasts, and is nimble enough to shift with the times and technology over the years.

How do you see The Beacon growing over the next five to 10 years?

First, we've got to launch! There will be growing pains. We won't get everything right the first time. We will make tweaks to the product and get community feedback along the way. And I'm sure we'll make our share of mistakes.

But my hope is that after our hub is established in Kansas City, we can start exploring a "hub and spoke" model. The old newspaper bureau system was really effective, but it was one of the first things newspapers cut when times got hard. I want to explore re-activating the bureau system for a digital-only publication. We can use our internal data to track membership growth. If we see a spike somewhere, that can help inform our business as to whether we should invest in a full-time reporter there. Can we get more grants or corporate sponsorships from there? Can we justify it financially? It's exciting to think of the opportunities in our region for

scaling up. And it can really help those communities that don't have a local news source anymore.

I also want us to explore partnerships with other media organizations. How can we pool resources? There are some awesome media collaborations happening in other parts of the country. We could do that here. We can have more co-publishing and cross-promotion and partnering across different mediums. It's exciting to think of possibilities. Not everyone wants to play. But some folks do. So let's try new things.

There are a lot of journalists and interested community members talking about starting online endeavors, or other forms of digital services or even paper products, in their communities. What advice would you give them?

If you can find a way to make a paper product sustainable, kudos to you. It's much cheaper to start online, and that's the direction the world is going, so I would encourage that. The biggest thing is to look for gaps - what isn't being covered and why? Is it something there is a demand for in your community? Is it duplicative of other resources already available?

It's also a matter of how much time and energy you want to invest in something. It's a lot of work. It's a big learning curve if you're a journalist. There's a lot of back-end, foundational stuff you have to consider depending on what you're creating: media liability insurance, legal incorporation and structure, human resources, payroll, etc. More than I ever imagined. But it doesn't mean it can't be done. You just have to put on your journalist hat and find the best experts and resources to do it. Admit when you don't know or understand something. Be organized and strategic.

And lastly, don't be afraid to ask others for help. The nonprofit journalism community is very collaborative. I was lucky that folks from other organizations were so generous with their time and would tell me what worked for them and what didn't. They helped with budget questions. And there are membership organizations specifically geared toward this: Institute for Nonprofit News and Local Independent Online News (LION) Publishers, which has both for-profit and nonprofit members. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. Learn from what others have done.

What are the biggest challenges the Beacon has faced? What are the big challenges that you can see in the road ahead?

The biggest challenge is and will continue to be funding. While we are using grants as startup capital for The Beacon, we don't want to be reliant on them forever. Ultimately, we need a membership model to diversify and sustain our work. I was skeptical about this model working - a free core product sustained by memberships - until I looked under the hood at other nonprofit news organizations and saw that it can and does work in other markets.

But it takes time to build a membership base, and you need a wide funnel of potential members before you can hit a number of people willing to pay to subsidize

the entire operation. This will be the biggest challenge - getting the word out and convincing folks they should pay. It's working in other markets, with some having memberships as low as \$5 a month. I'd like to see that work here. While that kind of revenue likely wouldn't support a large legacy operation, we're much leaner and all of the funding stays local, so the math is better for us. More than three-fourths of our budget is allocated to directly supporting the journalism through salaries and benefits for staff.

Another challenge will be expectations. Some folks I've spoken with think the solution is just re-creating their old newspaper - what they're familiar with - that has sports and comics and an editorial page. That's not what we're doing. They can find sports and comics and opinions all over the internet. But what they can't find as much of is thorough, in-depth reporting on a local and regional level. I use The Texas Tribune as a prime example of what we hope to be able to achieve. We can't be all things to all people. But we can provide quality stories and accountability journalism, and do that well for Kansans and Missourians.

If you'd like to reach out to Kelsey, her email is - kelsey@thebeacon.media

Interviewed Medal of Honor Iwo Jima veterans at launch of second Navy ship named for battle



Bill Kaczor ([Email](#)) - While I was the Pensacola correspondent I had an opportunity to interview some of the Iwo Jima veterans when the second Navy ship to be named after the battle was commissioned at Pensacola Naval Air Station in 2001. Among them were two of the three then-surviving Iwo Jima Medal of Honor winners. I interviewed the third by telephone. The Medal of Honor was awarded to 27 Marines and sailors - 13 posthumously - which was the most for any single World War II operation.

Joe Rosenthal's epic picture of the second flag-raising on Mount Suribachi is the most enduring image of the battle, but one of the six Marines who put up the first, although much smaller, flag said that was the banner that got the most reaction from the embattled Marines. "That's when the island came alive," Charles W. Lindberg told me. "The troops down below started to cheer. The ships' whistles went off."

About 1,000 Iwo Jima veterans rode aboard the amphibious assault ship during its short trip from Pascagoula, Mississippi, where it was built, to Pensacola. Among them were Medal of Honor winners Hershel Williams and Jacklyn "Jack" Lucas. Williams said he was crawling toward enemy bunkers with a flame-thrower strapped to his back when he saw the first flag go up. "Our spirits were very low because we had lost so many men and made so little gain," he said. "The whole spirit changed." His most vivid memory, though, was of machinegun bullets bouncing off the steel flame-thrower. "It was just rat-ta-tat-tat," he told me. "There are some things about that action that are just like a daydream. They don't even seem real to me." Williams received the Medal of Honor for using that flame-thrower to knock out seven bunkers in four hours.

Lucas was the youngest service member to be awarded the Medal of Honor during World War II. He had forged his mother's signature on a consent form to join the Marines when he was just 14. A few days after his 17th birthday two grenades landed in his trench during a firefight. He grabbed them. One never went off. The other one exploded after he had pushed it into the volcanic ash under his body. His action saved the lives of three other Marines who were in the trench with him. "It blew me on my back and punctured a couple holes in me," Lucas said. "I still carry the scars."

I got former Navy corpsman George E. Whalen on the phone at his home in Utah. He won the Medal of Honor for repeatedly going to the aid of injured Marines although he also had been wounded. "These people were my buddies," he told me. "I just felt it was my responsibility to do that. The Marines' motto is Semper Fidelis - faithful always - and I think most of them would be the same way."

After the war, Whalen joined the Army and retired as a major. Lucas received a medical discharge, then finished high school and college before he, too, joined the Army in 1961, serving five years as a paratrooper and reaching the rank of captain.

Also attending the ceremony was artist Felix DeWeldon, who sculpted the Marine Corps Memorial based on Rosenthal's photo. It is inscribed with the words "Uncommon Valor," which also is the ship's motto. They are taken from Adm. Chester Nimitz, who said that at Iwo Jima "Uncommon valor was a common virtue."

Connecting mailbox

Whither goest, Fargo?

Peggy Walsh ([Email](#)) - I had to laugh reading Marty Meltzer's comment (in Monday's Connecting) about Reid Miller threatening to send him and others to Fargo. The late Carl Bell, COB in Atlanta, used to do the same thing. I wonder if COBs of that era got "Fargo" lessons. And what was the threat for Fargo staffers?

Iwo Jima photo in Times crossword



Activity depicted in a famous
2/23/1945 photograph ... and in
three of this puzzle's answers

Dan Elliott ([Email](#)) - Joe Rosenthal's Iwo Jima photo was also commemorated in Monday's New York Times crossword. Here's a screenshot:

***AP'ers with 139 years of total AP service
gather for lunch***



130 years of AP service gathered for lunch in Sarasota earlier this month. From left to right George Arfield (14), Reid Miller (43) Claude Erbsen (43) and Pauline Jelinek (30), Reid's wife. George, Pauline and Reid live in Sarasota. Claude was visiting from New York.

AP PHOTOS: A corps of women covering the Weinstein trial



New York Post reporter Rebecca Rosenberg, left, New York Times reporter Jan Ransom, second from left, Fox News field producer Marta Dhanis, third from left, and freelance reporter working for Vulture magazine Victoria Bekiempis, right, go over their notes at the end of the day in Harvey Weinstein's rape trial, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, in New York. Courtroom artist Jane Rosenberg is seen in the background. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

By MARY ALTAFFER

NEW YORK (AP) - Much of what the world has seen and heard about Harvey Weinstein's rape trial has come from a core group of women journalists - the regulars at the Manhattan courthouse who would be there reporting regardless of whether a celebrity was involved.

Down in the cramped press room, they've squeezed together to offer other reporters a place to work. They've put their natural journalistic competitiveness aside to go through their notes to ensure they're accurately quoting testimony, despite the courtroom's shoddy sound system and the constant wail of sirens outside.

Laptops in hand, they've repeatedly made the trek from the courthouse gallery to the hallway to file breaking news updates. During lulls, they've turned the adjacent women's bathroom into a lounge and a news bureau, making calls, jotting notes and taking time for themselves to recharge.

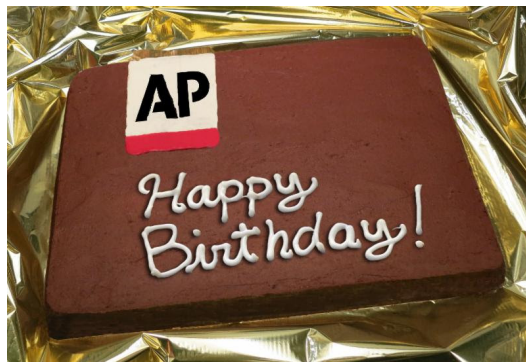
Click [here](#) to view more photos. Shared by Sibby Christensen.

Two at Florida reunion still drawing AP paychecks



The only two at the AP Florida staffers reunion over this past weekend who are still active AP staffers. Marty Crutsinger (left), formerly Miami and Tallahassee, now economic writer in Washington, and Dan Sewell, Cincinnati correspondent.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



to

Susan Brady Boyle - sbrady@ap.org

Julie March - jmarch@ap.org

Welcome to Connecting



Jim Carrier - jimcarrier@msn.com

Barry Shlachter - bshlachter@yahoo.com

Stories of interest

We have entered the Trump Unbound era - and journalists need to step it up. (Washington Post)

By Margaret Sullivan

Media columnist

When Donald Trump was elected, the media spent months figuring out how to cover a far-from-ordinary presidency.

Some will argue that many journalists never rose to that challenge - that they normalized Trump at every turn and never successfully conveyed to the public a clear and vivid picture of how he has toppled democratic norms and marched the country toward autocracy.

To be sure, they made adjustments.

Big Journalism began to call a lie a lie. It began to call racism by its name. It began to offer fact-checking in real time.

In other words, journalists adapted - within the framework of their tried-and-true beliefs.

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

-0-

Berkeley's California Typewriter, star of documentary, closes shop (Berkeleyside)

By CIRRUS WOOD

Sometimes even a feature-length documentary isn't enough to save a business. After 70 years servicing manual and electric typewriters, printers and business machines in Berkeley, California Typewriter is shutting down. The San Pablo Avenue shop is set to fully close by March 31.

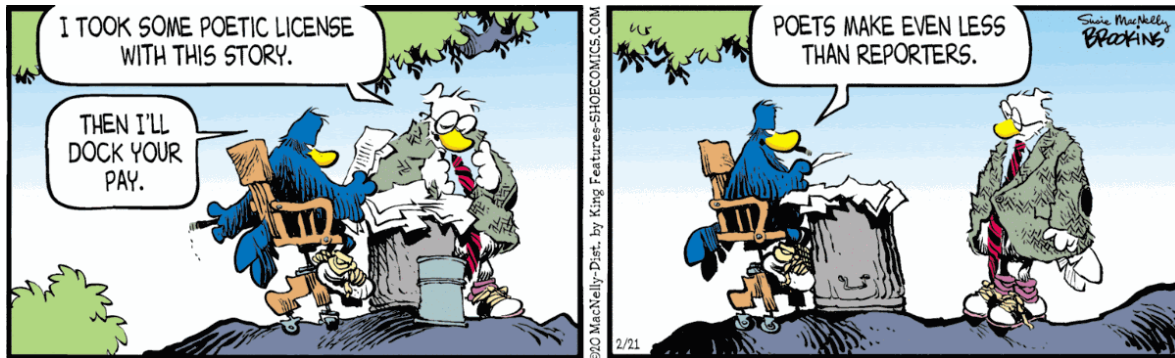
The storefront has not maintained regular hours since January, when a banner announcing the shop's closing appeared on the side of the building. For potential customers, it's been catch-as-catch-can while owner Herbert Permillion and his daughters, Candy Permillion and Carmen Permillion, negotiate a timeline on the vacancy and the sale of the property and of the business.

"I enjoyed it while it lasted," said Permillion, who began working in machine repair in 1967 as a technician for IBM selectrics, and for several decades was the repairman for UC Berkeley, which at the time was an IBM campus. Permillion purchased California Typewriter from the previous owner in 1981 and moved the business to the present location, [2362 San Pablo Ave.](#) (at Chaucer Street), in 1986. He and his daughter Candy co-own the current storefront property, which includes an attached apartment. Carmen occupies the apartment, which will be included in the eventual sale.

Permillion began considering closing the business around a year ago. He cites declining sales as a big factor. "I don't think it was making as much off the street as it could have been," he said. But it was also something he felt ready to move on from, likening it to a relationship that had run its course.

"[We] had a lot of time together, and now we're separating," he said. "We've got more bridges to cross."

The Final Word



(Shared by George Arfield)

Today in History - Feb. 25, 2020



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Feb. 25, the 56th day of 2020. There are 310 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 25, 1964, Muhammad Ali (then known as Cassius Clay) became world heavyweight boxing champion as he defeated Sonny Liston in Miami Beach.

On this date:

In 1793, President George Washington held the first Cabinet meeting on record at his Mount Vernon home; attending were Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of War Henry Knox and Attorney General Edmund Randolph.

In 1836, inventor Samuel Colt patented his revolver.

In 1862, Nashville, Tennessee, became the first Confederate state capital to be occupied by the North during the Civil War.

In 1901, United States Steel Corp. was incorporated by J.P. Morgan.

In 1913, the 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, giving Congress the power to levy and collect income taxes, was declared in effect by Secretary of State Philander Chase Knox.

In 1954, Gamal Abdel Nasser became Egypt's prime minister after the country's president, Mohammed Naguib, was effectively ousted in a coup.

In 1964, Eastern Airlines Flight 304, a DC-8, crashed shortly after taking off from New Orleans International Airport, killing all 58 on board.

In 1986, President Ferdinand Marcos fled the Philippines after 20 years of rule in the wake of a tainted election; Corazon Aquino assumed the presidency.

In 1991, during the Persian Gulf War, 28 Americans were killed when an Iraqi Scud missile hit a U.S. barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

In 1994, American-born Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein opened fire with an automatic rifle inside the Tomb of the Patriarchs in the West Bank, killing 29 Muslims before he was beaten to death by worshippers. At the Winter Olympics in Norway, Oksana Baiul (ahk-SAH'-nah by-OOL') of Ukraine won the gold medal in ladies' figure skating while Nancy Kerrigan won the silver and Chen Lu of China the bronze; Tonya Harding came in eighth.

In 2007, "The Departed" won best picture at the Academy Awards; its director, Martin Scorsese, won an Oscar on his sixth nomination.

In 2018, China's official news agency said the country's ruling Communist Party had proposed scrapping term limits for China's president, appearing to lay the groundwork for Xi Jinping to rule as president beyond 2023. (China's rubber-stamp lawmakers approved that change on March 11.)

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama convened a health care summit with Democrats and Republicans; after a day of debate and disagreement, the president concluded the talkfest with a bleak assessment that an accord might not be possible. In Vancouver, the Canadian women beat the United States 2-0 for their third straight Olympic hockey title. Americans Billy Demong and Johnny Spillane finished 1-2 in a Nordic combined race. Yuna Kim of South Korea won ladies' figure skating.

Five years ago: Secretary of State John Kerry fielded dozens of questions from House Foreign Affairs Committee members worried about what Iran could get in a deal being negotiated to block its ability to make an atomic weapon.

One year ago: R&B star R. Kelly pleaded not guilty to allegations that he sexually abused four people dating back to 1998, including three underage girls. The Trump administration announced new sanctions on allies of Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro as it struggled to find new ways to boost his opponent. Responding to director Spike Lee, who had used an Oscars acceptance speech to urge mobilization for the 2020 election, President Donald Trump tweeted that Lee did a "racist hit on your President."

Today's Birthdays: Actress Ann McCrea is 89. Actor Tom Courtenay is 83. Former CBS newsman Bob Schieffer is 83. Actress Diane Baker is 82. Actress Karen Grassle is 78. Former talk show host Sally Jessy Raphael is 78. Former professional wrestler Ric Flair is 71. Humorist Jack Handey is 71. Movie director Neil Jordan is 70. Rock singer-musician/actor John Doe (X) is 67. Rock musician Dennis Diken (The Smithereens) is 63. Rock singer-musician Mike Peters (The Alarm; Big Country) is 61. Comedian Carrot Top is 55. Actress Veronica Webb is 55. Actor Alexis Denisof is 54. Actress Tea (TAY'-ah) Leoni is 54. Actress Lesley Boone is 52. Actor Sean Astin is 49. Singer Daniel Powter is 49. Latin singer Julio Iglesias Jr. is 47. Rhythm-and-blues singer Justin Jeffre is 47. Rock musician Richard Liles is 47. Actor Anson Mount is 47. Comedian-actress Chelsea Handler is 45. Actress Rashida Jones is 44. Country singer Shawna Thompson (Thompson Square) is 42. Actor Justin Berfield is 34. Actors James and Oliver Phelps ("Harry Potter" movies) are 34. Actress Jameela Jamil is 34. Rock musician Erik Haager (Carolina Liar) is 33.

Thought for Today: "Hero-worship is strongest where there is least regard for human freedom." [-] Herbert Spencer, British philosopher (1820-1903).

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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