



# Connecting

February 28, 2020

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning on this the 28<sup>th</sup> day of February 2020,

His U-Haul truck packed to the gills and his car in tow behind it, our son and his friend (and his beloved cat Frankie headed off Thursday on the first leg of a 1,350-mile journey to Los Angeles for a new job and new chapters in their lives. Happiness mixed with tears accompanied them.

It reminded Linda and me of our first - and only - similar journey with a U-Haul truck, packing our belongings in the fall of 1973 after completing grad school at the University of Kansas and making a similar (1,310 miles) journey from Lawrence to Albany, N.Y., for my first job as a newsman in the Albany bureau. With our faithful pooch Chauncey, of course. Once there, we located in an apartment complex north of the city



recommended to us by a present-day Connecting colleague, **Doug Kienitz**, then state editor, who lived there.

Got a favorite story of your own to share about Adventures in Moving to a new - or as in my case, first - job? Moves are and were the norm in the AP for many of us. Share it with Connecting.

In the lead article in today's issue, colleague **Mark Mittelstadt** writes that in the midst of the fear and misinformation on the coronavirus outbreak, Associated Press' fair, accurate and complete coverage is needed more than ever. Click [here](#) for a Virus Outbreak page in AP News containing AP stories and photos relating to the virus outbreak. And if you have a story to share regarding the virus, please send it along.

Have a great weekend!

Paul

## **AP journalism needed now more than ever in coverage of COVID-19 coronavirus**



**A cleaner sanitizes a wagon on a regional train, at the Garibaldi train station in Milan, Italy, Friday, Feb. 28, 2020. Authorities**

**are taking new measures to sanitize trains and public transportation after the COVID-19 virus outbreak. (AP Photo/Luca Bruno)**

**Mark Mittelstadt** ([Email](#)) - People have relied on The Associated Press for fair, accurate and complete coverage of world news for its 174 years. I cannot imagine a story in recent history more in need of AP's journalism prowess than the global outbreak of COVID-19 coronavirus.

So many voices on the internet, on cable, over broadcast airwaves and in print are pushing messages of impending disaster, global decline, financial implosion, questionable prevention measures that is difficult for the average news consumer to know who or what to believe.

What exactly is coronavirus? How does COVID-19 differ from other forms of coronavirus, such as SARS or MERS? Did President Trump soft-pedal the severity of the outbreak and the threat to the United States in order to save his presidency? Is it prudent for any political leader to try to ease worries and avoid widespread panic in the face of global crisis? Is this country, as he suggested, the most-prepared to deal with a pandemic? By what metric? Will this eventually, as some have suggested, simply run its course and decline?

Are the purported threats of widespread illness and disruption, voiced by some, legitimate or wildly overblown? Is it fair, and historically consistent, for opposing parties to try to politicize the spread of such a virus in a time of crisis? What about the demands for billions of U.S. tax dollars to fight coronavirus? What would \$2.5 billion buy? \$4 billion, as suggested by congressional Republicans? \$8 billion or more demanded by Democrats? What is the likelihood that lawmakers will attempt to lard up such a spending request with their own pet projects and agendas, most not related in any way to combating spread of the disease in the United States and abroad? Give us the deep details of any spending proposal.

Are industries in the United States and around the world ramping up production of drugs and other products that would help to staunch the spread of COVID-19? What global political and social changes are required?

What steps can the average person take to avoid becoming infected? We've been told to wash hands frequently and to cough or sneeze into a handkerchief or a sleeve. Should we avoid crowds? Is it still OK to shake hands with friends? Strangers? Is it wise to cancel travel or major events such as concerts, conventions, the summer Olympics? What will be the enormous financial impact to those sectors and particularly the people

who work in them? Do surgical masks -- already missing from store shelves -- work to prevent acquiring the disease? Are common household cleaners such as bleach or Lysol effective?

There are a multitude of other questions about COVID-19. I believe AP is singularly positioned to ask them, get the answers and share this much-needed information with a worldwide audience.

## **AP decides not to declare Iowa caucus winner after recount**

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Iowa Democratic Party on Thursday released updated results of the Iowa caucuses after the completion of a recount requested by the campaigns of Bernie Sanders and Pete Buttigieg.

In the new results, Buttigieg has 562.954 state delegate equivalents and Sanders has 562.021 state delegate equivalents out of 2,151 counted. That is a margin of 0.04 percentage points.

The Associated Press has reviewed the updated results and will not call a winner, given remaining concerns about whether the results as reported by the party are fully accurate. The Feb. 3 caucuses were beset by technical glitches that led to a delay in reporting the results, inconsistencies in the numbers and no clear winner.

The party plans to certify the results on Saturday. At that point, the caucuses will formally end, and no further changes to the results will be made.

Read more [here](#).

## **Connecting mailbox**

### ***In praise of Gene Herrick***

**Peggy Walsh** ([Email](#)) - I dearly hope that Gene Herrick keeps delivering his sermons (see Thursday's Connecting). His contributions to

Connecting are among my favorites. His memory is phenomenal, sense of humor spot on and he has a wonderful way of reminding me of the great part of working for the AP.

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## ***Punishment for hitting AP president in chest?***

**Bill Winter** ([Email](#)) - While bureau chief in Louisville in the '70s, I arranged a tennis match with visiting AP President Keith Fuller and two execs from the Louisville newspapers. During one rally, I slammed the ball in Fuller's direction, hitting him on the chest. Keith lost his balance and fell to the court. As he slowly regained his feet, he looked at me and said in a dead-serious tone: "Winter, you're gonna' love Fargo!"

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## ***Former AP corp comm director headed for UVA***





**Dan Day and Wendell Collins**

**Dan Day** ([Email](#)) - Here's a photo of Wendell Collins ([Email](#)) and me taken recently at the home of a Princeton colleague. The occasion was a gathering to wish Wendell well as she prepares to take on a new role as director of development for the School of Data Science at the University of Virginia.

For the past 14 years, Wendell has been director of corporate relations at Princeton's Bendheim Center for Finance. I've been fortunate to work with Wendell here at Princeton the last eight years, and was fortunate to

have worked with her from the West Coast when she was director of corporate communications at AP.

Her Princeton colleagues will miss her! She begins her new role March 16.

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## ***Date set for Denne Freeman honor***

**Doug Kienitz** ([Email](#)) - Retired Texas AP sportswriter and golfer  
Denne Freeman will be among eight honored during the Texas Sports Hall of Fame ceremony May 30.

Several former AP staffers-Tom DeCola and me among others-- will be dining with the elite gathering of Texas sports figures.

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## ***AP's St. Louis bureau no longer downtown for first time in century and half***



**Last view from downtown AP St. Louis bureau before move to suburbs**

**Jim Salter** ([Email](#)) - After more than a century and a half, the AP has left downtown St. Louis.

Effective Thursday, the AP's now one-writer, one-photographer office relocated to Clayton, a St. Louis suburb and the county seat for St. Louis County. The St. Louis bureau had five employees when it moved from the Post-Dispatch building to a downtown St. Louis office building in 2011. No longer requiring a 1,400-square office space, the bureau now operates out of a much smaller office just a couple of blocks from the county government center, justice center and courts.

St. Louis had 856,000 residents in 1950 and may drop below 300,000 when the 2020 Census is official. Meanwhile, St. Louis County and neighboring counties like St. Charles and Jefferson have grown substantially. So, the AP is, in a sense, following the trend of outward migration.

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***Polishing up former reporting skills to cover Bernie Sanders rally***





**Bob Lewis (left) and Ledyard King of GNS.**

**Bob Lewis** ([Email](#)) - My first actual reporting assignment in more than six years covering the Bernie Sanders rally in Richmond as a freelance assignment for The Virginia Mercury (an independent, nonprofit online news organization in Richmond covering state government and policy.) I donned my media credentials lanyard for the first time since October 2013 and got out there again - a strange, poignant yet remarkably comfortable exercise. It was great to be back "on the beat" again. It seemed both new, after all the years away, but so familiar, fitting and welcoming - like a favorite old leather jacket. And it was so wonderful to see so many of my old colleagues and friends like Ledyard King of Gannett News Service, Laura Vozella of the Washington Post, Bill Fitzgerald of CBS6 and my trusty AP staff mate and photographer nonpareil Steve Helber, who shot this pic of Ledge and me. I filed my story from the event venue and will have a follow-up with my Monday column in The Mercury.

King and I have a Fran Mears connection. He was hired at GNS by Fran when she was GNS managing editor, and I was AP's Evansville correspondent when Fran was Indianapolis news editor. I adored her. Nobody was better motivating, leading and teaching a newsroom than Fran.

## ***1980 Florida News Explosion***

**Bill Kaczor** ([Email](#)) - Dan Sewell was right about Florida having a news explosion in 1980 (see Thursday's Connecting). As the new kid on the block, it was quite an initiation into The Associated Press. I joined the AP's Tallahassee Bureau in February of that year.

Less than three months in, I was dispatched to the western Florida Panhandle to help cover the failed attempt to rescue U.S. hostages from Iran. Five of the eight service members killed in that attempt were based at the Panhandle's Hurlburt Field, headquarters for Air Force special operations. I covered memorial services held in the community and at the base and then returned in December to do a year-ender on Hurlburt's role in the rescue attempt after the hostage crisis was named second on the AP's top 10 list of stories for the year. The election was No. 1.

About a week after the last memorial service, I was on a plane headed for Orlando only because I couldn't get a flight to Tampa due to the bad weather that had contributed to the collision of a freighter with the Sunshine Skyway Bridge over Tampa Bay. By the time I drove a rental car to Tampa through a driving rainstorm it was too late to contribute to the first-day coverage. The next day, though, I got an exclusive helicopter ride with Gov. Bob Graham as he surveyed the fallen bridge. Fifty-eight people died as a result of the collapse. I made my biggest contribution to the coverage, though, after getting back to Tallahassee and going through the files of the state Board of Pilot Commissioners along with Bill Sloat, a Tampa Tribune reporter. Bill found a letter from one of the commissioners, R.E. Schaefer, and handed it to me. Schaefer, himself a harbor pilot from Pensacola, had written two months earlier that a catastrophe could occur if the board failed to start cracking down on incompetent pilots. I had found my lede. Sloat, though, led his story with the board's failure to discipline Tampa's pilots, but when my story hit the wire, his editors had him match my lede.

A couple weeks after that I was with Graham again as the governor toured riot-scarred Miami. I thought he might get us injured or worse as people threw rocks at his motorcade and he poked around in burned out buildings.

Things kind of quieted down for me until September when I was sent to Pensacola to help cover an appearance by Republican presidential candidate Ronald Reagan. I wrote about how Reagan was cheered by a handful of black people in a sea of about 4,000 white faces after noticing a sign saying "Black Americans for Reagan." "God bless you, and God

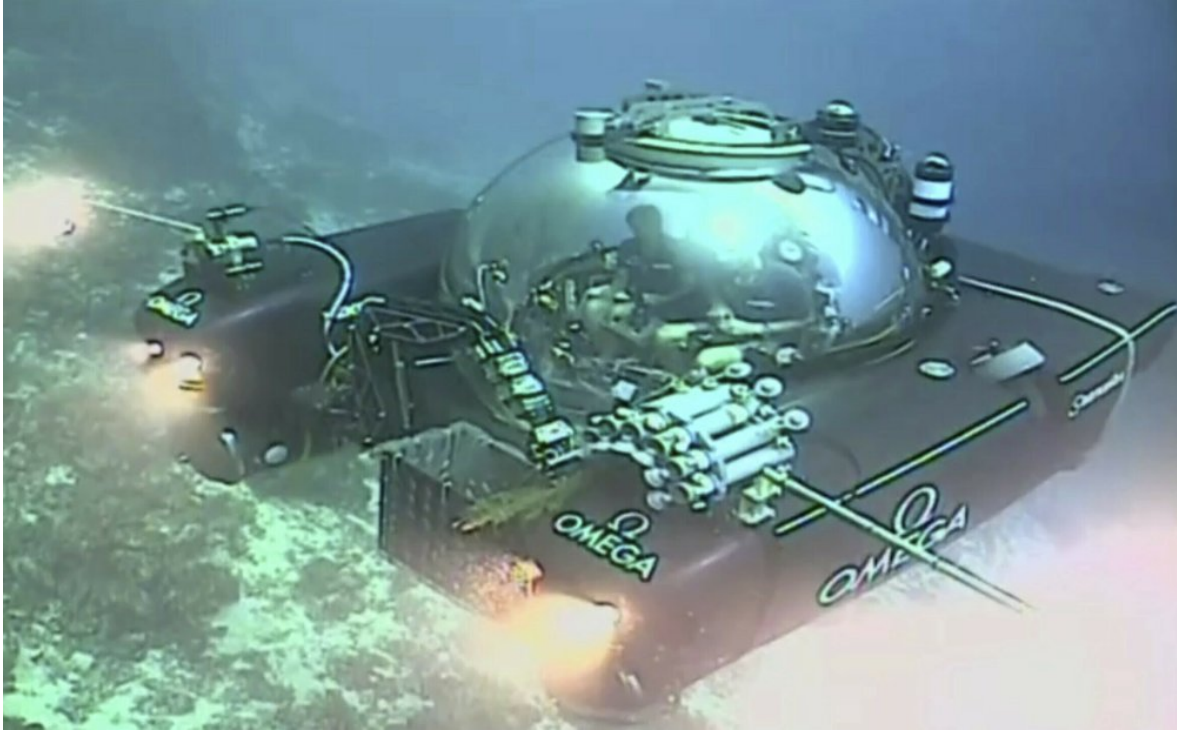
bless those who brought that sign and, by golly, it shows that you can't fool all of the people all of the time," Reagan said.

On election night, I and just about every other AP staffer were involved in the year's biggest story although my job that night was covering state issues rather than Reagan's victory over Jimmy Carter.

Later in November, I wrote the most unusual story of my career to say nothing of the year. I had served as foreman of a jury and then wrote a first-person account of our deliberations. The case involved a lawsuit on behalf of a young boy who broke his neck and was rendered a quadriplegic when he jumped off a rope swing into a stream at a camp operated by the state Division of Forestry. We ordered the state to pay the boy a \$1 million lump sum. The verdict, though, still needed approval from the Legislature so when the claims bill eventually came up for a vote I recused myself from the coverage.

One final thing, though, I must correct my friend Dan, who wrote that four of the top 10 AP stories in 1980 had emerged from Florida. Indeed, the Cuban-Haitian refugee influx and boatlift, which Dan so ably covered, tied for 10th place with the MGM hotel fire. The top nine, in order, were the election, the Iran hostage crisis, the economy, the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan, Mt. St. Helens, anti-Soviet events in Poland, John Lennon's murder, earthquakes in Italy and the Iran-Iraq war, according to Dave Goldberg's Top 10 story. The Iran hostage crisis did have a Florida element, though. The Miami riots and Abcam, which had a Florida connection with U.S. Rep. Richard Kelly getting arrested, were among the next 10 stories. The bridge disaster didn't even beat out "Who Shot J.R.," the resumption of the draft, the "Miracle on Ice" and satellite pictures of Saturn among other stories to make the top 20.

## **AP wins RTS Television Journalism Award for news technology**



**An image taken from video issued by Nekton shows a submersible from the vessel Ocean Zephyr during a descent into the Indian Ocean off Alphonse Atoll near the Seychelles, March 12, 2019. (Nekton via AP)**

The Associated Press has won the Royal Television Society's Television Journalism Award for News Technology for its groundbreaking transmission of broadcast-quality live video from the depths of the Indian Ocean.

AP shares the award with Sky News, which collaborated with AP on the mission and joined the news agency on board the Nekton research vessel in the Seychelles.

The award was announced on Wednesday during the RTS Television Journalism Awards in London.

Cutting edge optical technology allowed AP to send live footage of a deep sea scientific mission through the waves without cables to hundreds of broadcasters and digital publishers across the globe in March 2019.

"AP has long been a pioneer in this field and is constantly innovating. This project allowed us to transport viewers to a vast hidden expanse of ocean that mankind has never previously explored, which was truly remarkable," said Sandy MacIntyre, vice president and director of key news initiatives. "It is an honor for the Royal Television Society to recognize AP's live broadcasting milestone with a Television Journalism Award for news technology."



## AP staffers at work, around the world



Boston-based video journalist Rodrique Ngowi films Democratic presidential candidate and former South Bend, Ind., Mayor Pete Buttigieg at a campaign event, Feb. 10, 2020, in Plymouth, N.H. (AP Photo/Matt Rourke)



AP Entertainment staff pose for a photo at the Oscars, Feb. 9, 2020, in Los Angeles. From top left: GMS Head of Special News Events Nico Maounis, reporter Amanda Meyers, video editor Brooke Lefferts, reporter Marcela Isaza, Global Entertainment and Lifestyles Editor Nekesa Moody and reporter Beth Harris. (Photo courtesy Nico Maounis)



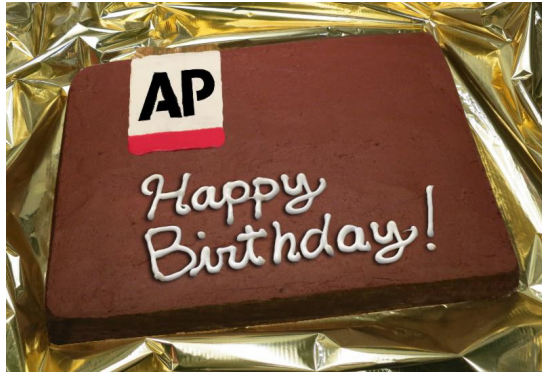


Ohio-based AP staffers gather to celebrate the retirement of Cincinnati-based reporter Lisa Cornwell, fourth from left, Feb. 12, 2020, in Columbus, Ohio. Cornwell spent 30 years with AP, all in the state. From left: Reporters John Seewer and Andrew Welsh-Huggins; sports reporter Mitch Stacy; Cornwell; news editor Christina Paciolla; reporters Mark Gillispie, Kantele Franko and Dan Sewell; statehouse correspondent Julie Carr Smyth; regional sales director Eva Parziale; and sports reporter Joe Kay. (Photo courtesy Dan Sewell)



Video journalist Nadine Achoui-Leasge, left, and reporter Amira El Masaiti, center, interview a fisherwoman in Belyounech, Morocco, Feb. 12, 2020. (AP Photo/Mosa'ab Elshamy)

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



*On Sunday to...*

**Melinda Smith - [mablardsmith@gmail.com](mailto:mablardsmith@gmail.com)**

**John Wylie - [lakeleader@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lakeleader@sbcglobal.net)**

## Welcome to Connecting



**Kelly Lipp - [Kellyelipp@gmail.com](mailto:Kellyelipp@gmail.com)**

## Stories of interest



***The Newseum still exists. One of its next exhibits is in a hotel suite.*** (Washington Post)



**The Hamilton Hotel has partnered with the Newseum for a pop-up show on women's suffrage in one of the hotel's suites. It opens March 12. (Andre Chung/for The Washington Post)**

**By Peggy McGlone**

Goodbye \$450 million glass-and-steel palace on Pennsylvania Avenue. Hello ... a one-bedroom hotel suite on K Street?

The Newseum has three new exhibits on the 19th Amendment opening over the next few weeks, the first since it closed its doors Dec. 31. Pop-up shows at Washington's two airports and an immersive display in a 12th-floor suite at the Hamilton Hotel offer the first glimpse of its future.

The suffrage-themed displays represent a significantly diminished footprint for the long-struggling museum of journalism, which last year sold its building, laid off 88 employees and moved the remaining staff of about 40 to New Jersey Avenue NW.

While on a small scale, these partnerships illustrate how the Newseum plans to emerge from its downsizing to deliver programs that celebrate

the importance of the First Amendment.

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

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## ***Arizona's largest newspaper quits candidate endorsements***

PHOENIX (AP) - The Arizona Republic, which drew global attention in 2016 for endorsing a Democrat for president for the first time in its history, will stop endorsing candidates for public office, newspaper leaders wrote Wednesday.

Executive Editor Greg Burton and Editorial Page Editor Phil Boas explained in a column that research by the Phoenix-based newspaper, Arizona's largest, showed readers find endorsements alienating and "blur the way they view our news stories."

The editors wrote that many readers don't see the sharp line that news organizations draw between their neutral news stories and their opinion content.

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

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## ***NJ.com removing comments from site on Thursday***

**By Kevin Whitmer**

Twenty-four years ago, we launched New Jersey Online in the middle of a crippling snowstorm. Today, we're known as NJ.com and we are the largest news and information site in New Jersey, averaging more than 1 million unique visitors each day.

Back in 1996, public forums - aka message boards - were a big part of our appeal. People had things to say and our site was a place for all comers, whether the topic was gardening secrets, high school sports or town gossip.

Over time, message boards gave way to site comments that traveled directly with stories. Our commenting platform also has evolved, from heavily moderated by our experts to rarely moderated to machine moderated. At the same time, the often positive spirit of commenting steadily declined and we moved our resources elsewhere as the commenting audience continued to shrink.

Today, only about 2% of NJ.com's total audience reads our comments and only 0.03% posts comments.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Margy McCay.

## Today in History - Feb. 28, 2020



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Friday, Feb. 28, the 59th day of 2020. There are 307 days left in the year.

### **Today's Highlight in History:**

On Feb. 28, 1953, scientists James D. Watson and Francis H.C. Crick announced they had discovered the double-helix structure of DNA.

## **On this date:**

In 1844, a 12-inch gun aboard the USS Princeton exploded as the ship was sailing on the Potomac River, killing Secretary of State Abel P. Upshur, Navy Secretary Thomas W. Gilmer and several others.

In 1917, The Associated Press reported that the United States had obtained a diplomatic communication sent by German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann to a German official in Mexico proposing a German alliance with Mexico and Japan should the U.S. enter World War I. (Outrage over the telegram helped propel America into the conflict.)

In 1942, the heavy cruiser USS Houston and the Australian light cruiser HMAS Perth were attacked by Japanese forces during the World War II Battle of Sunda Strait; both were sunk shortly after midnight on March 1 with a total loss of more than 1,000 men.

In 1975, 42 people were killed in London's Underground when a train smashed into the end of a tunnel.

In 1983, the long-running TV series "M-A-S-H" ended after 11 seasons on CBS with a special 2[1/2]-hour finale that was watched by an estimated 121.6 million people.

In 1988, the 15th Olympic Winter Games held its closing ceremony in Calgary, Alberta.

In 1993, a gun battle erupted at a religious compound near Waco, Texas, when Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents tried to arrest Branch Davidian leader David Koresh on weapons charges; four agents and six Davidians were killed as a 51-day standoff began.

In 1996, Britain's Princess Diana agreed to divorce Prince Charles. (Their 15-year marriage officially ended in August 1996; Diana died in a car crash in Paris a year after that.)

In 2005, In Santa Maria, California, the prosecution and defense gave opening statements in the sexual molestation trial of Michael Jackson, who was later acquitted.



In 2013, Benedict XVI became the first pope in 600 years to resign, ending an eight-year pontificate. (Benedict was succeeded the following month by Pope Francis.)

In 2014, delivering a blunt warning to Moscow, President Barack Obama expressed deep concern over reported military activity inside Ukraine by Russia and warned "there will be costs" for any intervention.

In 2018, Walmart announced that it would no longer sell firearms and ammunition to people younger than 21 and would remove items resembling assault-style rifles from its website. Dick's Sporting Goods said it would stop selling assault-style rifles and ban the sale of all guns to anyone under 21.

Ten years ago: Sidney Crosby scored the winning goal in overtime to give Canada a 3-2 victory over the United States in the final event of the Vancouver Olympics. Canada earned its 14th gold medal, the most by any country at any Winter Olympics. The American silver was the 37th medal won by the United States at these games, also the most by any country at any Winter Olympics. (The U.S. won the medals race for the first time since 1932.)

Five years ago: Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro announced his country would shrink the size of the U.S. Embassy staff, limit the activities of U.S. diplomats and require American tourists to apply for visas, saying that "gringo" meddling had forced him to adopt the series of restrictive measures. An Egyptian court declared Hamas a "terror organization," further isolating the rulers of the Gaza Strip. Death claimed NFL player and coach Tom Bettis at age 81; baseball player Alex Johnson at age 72; and basketball player Anthony Mason at age 48.

One year ago: Talks between President Donald Trump and North Korea's Kim Jong Un collapsed after the two sides failed to bridge a standoff over U.S. sanctions; the two leaders' motorcades roared away from the summit site in the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi within minutes of each other. The Philadelphia Phillies signed free agent Bryce Harper to a 13-year, \$330 million deal that was, at the time, the largest contract in baseball history. (Mike Trout of the Los Angeles Angels would break that record weeks later.) Pianist, composer and conductor Andre Previn, whose work extended through Hollywood, jazz and classical music, died at his New York home; he was 89.

Today's Birthdays: Architect Frank Gehry is 91. Actor Gavin MacLeod is 89. Singer Sam the Sham is 83. Actor-director-dancer Tommy Tune is 81. Hall of Fame auto racer Mario Andretti is 80. Actor Frank Bonner is 78. Actress Kelly Bishop is 76. Actress Stephanie Beacham is 73. Writer-director Mike Figgis is 72. Actress Mercedes Ruehl is 72. Actress

Bernadette Peters is 72. Former Energy Secretary Steven Chu is 72. Actress Ilene Graff is 71. Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman is 67. Comedian Gilbert Gottfried is 65. Basketball Hall of Famer Adrian Dantley is 65. Actor John Turturro is 63. Rock singer Cindy Wilson is 63. Actress Rae Dawn Chong is 59. Actress Maxine Bahns is 51. Actor Robert Sean Leonard is 51. Rock singer Pat Monahan is 51. Author Daniel Handler (aka "Lemony Snicket") is 50. Actress Tasha Smith is 49. Actor Rory Cochrane is 48. Actress Ali Larter is 44. Country singer Jason Aldean is 43. Actor Geoffrey Arend is 42. Actress Melanie Chandra (TV: "Code Black") is 36. Actress Michelle Horn is 33. MLB relief pitcher Aroldis Chapman is 32. Actress True O'Brien is 26. Actress Madisen Beaty is 25. Actress Quinn Shephard is 25. Actor Bobb'e J. Thompson is 24.

**Thought for Today: "Three things in human life are important: the first is to be kind; the second is to be kind; and the third is to be kind." [-] Henry James (1843-1916).**

## 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.

**Paul Stevens**  
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