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Connecting

July 15, 2020

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Drew Middleton, Associated Press correspondent, is shown in his uniform passing the sandbagged Associated Press building in London on Oct. 24, 1939. (AP Photo)

Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this the 15th day of July 2020,

Today is Federal Tax Day – the deadline for filing your federal tax returns – extended by three months by the coronavirus pandemic.

Today's Connecting brings more of your stories on the life you share (or once shared) with your partner – and another series on your favorite restaurant.

The images of The Battle of Britain and the Blitz from colleague **Francesca Pitaro** of AP Corporate Archives was well received. (Including one more today at top of page.)

One colleague, **Bob Seavey** ([Email](#)), said “the photos and narrated film of Britain's struggle - as well as how the AP fared - were still vivid and compelling, despite the passage of 80 years.”

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy and be happy.

Paul

Connecting series:
Oh, the places you'll go - with that special person you met

Tom and Sophie (with thanks to Molly!)



Celebrating our 37th at the edge of Long Island Sound.

Tom Kent ([Email](#)) - AP - and Molly Gordy in particular - get the credit for my marriage. In 1978, when I was based in Brussels, I helped engineer Molly's defection from UPI to AP. Three years later, when I returned to APNY from Moscow, Molly was working there and did me the ultimate return favor: she invited me to a party to meet a woman she'd decided I should marry. Sophie, a French-Québécoise-American, was a McGill linguistics graduate and French teacher, visiting from Montreal. I was captivated and we spent the whole evening talking, mainly in Russian and French. Afterward, like an idiot, I didn't call her, because I thought I could hardly compete from NY with the social opportunities such an amazing person must have right in Montreal. But Molly was still intent on her project. The next summer Sophie was planning a trip to Madrid. Molly told her I would be there running AP's coverage of the World Cup. Sophie called me at the press center, and we had lunch. When I got back to NY, she came down from Montreal and we dated briefly – briefly in the sense that we had two dates before she moved in. We celebrated our 37th wedding anniversary this month. Thank you, Molly!

-0-

John and Sigrid



John Marlow ([Email](#)) - It's surprising what a good cup of coffee can do to change your life!

My AP career started in the fall of 1958 as a part timer in the Albuquerque bureau taking and collecting high school football scores and writing short leads on the top 10 teams. The AP bureau was on the third floor of the Albuquerque Journal building and the Journal editorial offices were on the second floor. AP had a big coffee urn in the storage room/photo lab and the women's editor of the Journal, Sigrid Holien, would make several trips to the AP office every day to fill up her coffee mug because she

couldn't stand the vendor machine coffee in their break room. I only worked the football shift on Friday nights but got to see her occasionally on her visits to the coffee urn. After the football season I worked broadcast shifts on weekends. I finally asked her out for dinner for a Saturday night then later had to call her to ask for her address so I could pick her up. She said I could pick her up at the office because she worked Saturday nights putting out the Sunday women's section. My plans for a nice leisurely dinner at an elegant restaurant turned into a tuna-stuffed tomato for her and a burger for me at a nearby diner as she only had half an hour for her dinner break. When I took her back to the office, I asked her if she would like to have a drink after work, she accepted and so we resumed "the date." My part-time work eventually became a full time AP job and the occasional dinner date became some steady dating. We were married in December 1960 two days after Christmas.

In 1961 I was assigned to the Santa Fe bureau to help cover the state Legislature and in late 1961 transferred to the bureau permanently when Ike Flores was transferred to, I think, the World Desk in New York and later became AP correspondent in Cuba. Sigi grew up in Santa Fe and was delighted with the transfer since her parents still lived there. She had interned at the Santa Fe New Mexican while in J-school and Tony Hillerman, managing editor of the New Mexican at the time before becoming a famous author of mystery novels. asked Sigi to take over the education beat at the paper and put together a weekly education page. In 1966 I was transferred back to Albuquerque as state editor and in 1968 became an AP Regional Membership Executive for the broadcast department for Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. I had been in New York for training and was sent to Milwaukee to work with then RME Paul Clifford without getting back to Albuquerque. With our son, Ted, not yet a year old and Sigi pregnant with our daughter, Anne, she managed to get the house packed, affairs in Albuquerque settled and flew to Milwaukee to begin a string of AP moves that didn't quit until my retirement 32 years later. In 1971 it was off to Indianapolis, where I was assigned as new editor for COB Joe McGowan, succeeded him in 1975 and in 1978 was named news editor for Washington state in Seattle.

In all those moves, never a complaint from Sigi as she packed up the kids, got the household goods aboard moving van after moving van, and made a new home in a place we had never seen before. No complaints, either, over all the meals delayed for hours because of breaking news that had to be covered, holidays worked because of staff schedules, anniversary dinners postponed because of out-of-town meetings, children's birthday parties absent "Daddy" because of membership visits. In Seattle, she became very interested in calligraphy, won awards for some of her multimedia work in calligraphy and for several years did the calligraphy for the AP awards certificates for Washington state. One of her pieces of calligraphy hangs on the wall in front of me now, the quote from Mark Twain: "There are only two forces that can carry light to all corners of the globe...the sun in the heavens and the Associated Press down here." Can't get much more devoted to AP than that! On election night the last few years we were in Seattle she served as an election supervisor in the bureau call center.

For my 25th anniversary with the AP I was allowed to select a gift from the AP gift list and choose a beautiful Waterford bowl. I asked Seattle AP COB Jim Wilson to present it to Sigi at the staff anniversary party to show that in almost all of those 25 years she

was as much a part of AP as I was. We didn't get to 50 years with the AP as I retired in 2000. But we did get to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary in 2010. Sadly, by then she was in the early stages of Alzheimer's and complications from that dreadful disease took her life in 2015, one month and four days before our 55th wedding anniversary.

No-Zoom Zone

Noreen Gillespie, AP's deputy managing editor for U.S. News, shared the following Tuesday with AP news staff:

In a world where all interaction happens via videoconference, we have different ways of describing it.

Overzoomed.

Exhausted.

My Outlook is blocked all day.

Overscheduled.

Audio-only today.

With so much time meeting while we're all working apart, there's often little time for actually digging down and doing the work. Let's change that.

For the next two weeks, the U.S. News staff, the data team and collaborating departments are experimenting with a "no-zoom zone." This is an hour a day where as a community, we agree to block off time in which we will not schedule group zoom calls. This hour was decided by surveying leaders of several teams and jointly discussing what made the most sense.

* Please try and keep this hour blocked off for the next two weeks, even if it's hard. Of course, if there's a major breaking story, we're still a news agency and must respond.

* Try to reduce real-time comms during this hour: use a scheduled Slack message or email, rather than pinging someone. Try to keep this time for head-down work (editing, thinking, writing, administrative work -- whatever isn't getting done otherwise) or for time to step away from the keyboard.

* Be creative during this time period about alternate ways to have meetings even outside of the no-Zoom zone. Google docs for individual brainstorming, Slack chats, or Slack polls and emoji counts can be a good way to take the temperature of a team quickly.

Our hope is that this hour provides time for in-focus work, thinking, or even walking outside. Use it how you need to. We'll survey everyone near the end of the

experiment to see how it worked, and get your feedback to refine it. And many thanks to the teams that had discussions scheduled in this time block that are rescheduling to help test this idea.

The Big Picture: Caveat Lector

By MORT ROSENBLUM ([Email](#)) – in his blog, Mort Report

WAUWEEP, Arizona — The young guy at the helm wasn't thinking about a raging pandemic, a raving president, or anything else beyond submerged logs and sand bars as we flashed past spectacular rock formations on Lake Powell. That morning, his wife said she was leaving him.

Sparing him questions, I reflected instead on a conversation in Paris with a visiting editor pal as we watched flotsam drift down the Seine through the heart of a city that has seen so much during its 2,000 years.

Americans once saw news as a lake, he said. With a sense of its shape and depths, they shared a common idea of reality when the water suddenly got rough. News is now a river. People see only what floats by if they happen to be watching, with little thought to its origin or import.

If black type suddenly screams, "China Invades Taiwan," it is too late to react. Stories that matter are part of a continuing process that confounds headlines. Reporters on the ground, permanently in place with solid sources, need to watch closely as ripples build into waves.

We need correspondents to warn us of smoldering conflicts ready to flare into flame and runaway pathogens leaders try to hide. We need local reporters to expose authorities who betray our trust and erode the underpinnings of democracy. But we're losing both.

Read more [here](#) .

Connecting series: Your favorite restaurants

The Fireplace Restaurant



Rick Cooper ([Email](#)) - My parents first took me there (718 NJ-17, Paramus, NJ) when it first opened in 1956 before the days of McDonald's and Burger King when a burger was a burger.

Over the years it became a high school hangout for kids from Northern Bergen County (NJ). It evolved from a burger joint to a full family eating place serving not only burgers but ribs, chicken and pizza too.

Four generations of Coopers have enjoyed eating in a true family restaurant.

Sadly, with NJ Governor Murphy's latest executive fiat prohibiting indoor dining the Fireplace announced it was closing.

Hopefully the Fireplace will come back once this pandemic hysteria passes.

-0-

Peter Luger's



Bruce Lowitt ([Email](#)) - Peter Luger's, in Brooklyn, has great steaks but it is burned into my memory because of a moment I turned into one of my favorites stories, which I wrote for the St. Petersburg Times in 1994, eight years after I'd left AP Sports in New York, and is included in my 2016 book "The Game Isn't Everything":

YOU HAVE TO GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

I was staring at the bill. I can't tell you how much it was for, but I can tell you it was for a hell of a lot more than I had.

We were in Basin Street East, the late lamented jazz joint in midtown Manhattan. She'd had too much to drink. So had I. Not that we were drunk, or even giggly, but I was a naive 20 and she was 19 and we'd never been taught that alcohol in a New York City nightclub attacks your wallet faster than it hits your reflexes.

Mr. Big Shot had borrowed dad's car for the evening and ...

Oh, great. If I can't pay the check, how am I supposed to get the Plymouth out of the parking lot?

"Umm ... Carole?"

I whispered those three little words that mean so much.

"You got money?"

She did - enough for the tab and part of the parking lot, anyway. I could take care of the rest of the parking and if we took the Brooklyn Bridge home (the long-but-free way) instead of the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel, I could leave the waiter some semblance of a tip instead of stiffing him altogether.

I'd had to borrow money from my date. In 1962 this was not cool. I was determined never, ever to submit to such embarrassment again.

I would get myself a credit card.

Thumbing through a magazine, I found a Diner's Club application. I filled it out, giving my correct age, my occupation (college student), my residence (living with my parents in Brooklyn; I commuted by subway to Long Island University) my income (none), and so on.

It didn't take long for Diner's Club to respond with a form letter which, in several paragraphs, to advise me, "Are you serious? Get lost!"

Well, who needed Diner's Club? There were other credit card companies out there – Carte Blanche, American Express. They wouldn't mind extending me a little credit, would they?

Just to make sure, I, umm, fudged a bit on the American Express application.

No, let me rephrase that. I lied through my teeth.

I added 10 years.

Occupation: I owned my own fraternity supply company. (Well, I had once made a paddle as part of my initiation into Tau Delta Phi at LIU.)

Residence: I owned my own home. (Okay, my brother and I were in the will.)

Income: I figured thirty-something-thousand sounded about right. (I did give my real bank account; I just added a zero to my balance.)

Was there anything honest in the application?

My name.

How long would it be before the vigilant American Express researchers found me out? And what would they do? Besides turning me down, I mean. Report me to the feds? To my bank? To my parents?

The card arrived a few weeks later. Unbelievable? I had slipped through the cracks of their credit check, or else they didn't care who else had their card.

This was cause for celebration. I called Carole. I was going to repay her kindness by taking her to dinner, a special dinner, and if the bill came to more paper than I had in my wallet, so what? I had plastic.

Peter Luger's is one of the great steak joints in the world, maybe the greatest. Back then I knew it only by reputation. I'd never been there. I couldn't afford it; not even close.

But I'd read about it and Playboy had declared it to be one of the greats, and if Hugh Hefner said so ...

The restaurant is in Williamsburg, a generally decrepit, dangerous part of Brooklyn. It hasn't changed much since the '60s. A member of the staff will escort you from and to your car. Fatally wounded patrons are not good for business.

I dressed for the occasion, suit and tie, and picked up Carole in the Plymouth. She, too, understood the importance of the occasion and wand was dressed accordingly. This was going to be special.

It was. The porterhouse was everything I imagined, the sliced tomatoes and onions perfect. The mood. The company.

The check.

I didn't even flinch at the numbers. I was a card-carrying member of American Express. With a practiced flourish, I placed it upon the check. The waiter would be suitably impressed.

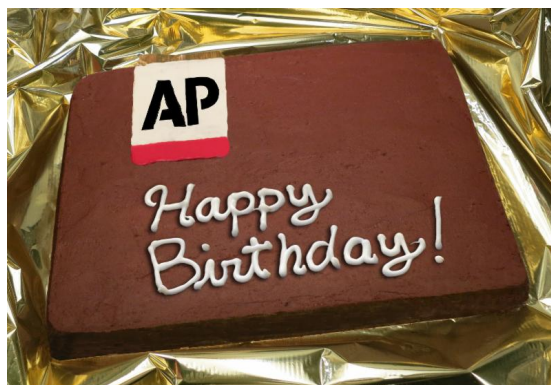
"I'm sorry, sir," he said, "but we don't accept any credit cards but our own."

I had to borrow money from Carole to get us out of the restaurant.

She never went out with me again.

But the imprint on my credit card still reads: MEMBER SINCE 62.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Diane Parker - dparker@ap.org

Welcome to Connecting



Bobby Horton - bhorton1@yahoo.com

Paul Logothetis - pglogothetis@gmail.com

Stories of interest

U.S. Catholic bishops respond to A.P. report on church use of Paycheck Protection loans (America - The Jesuit Review)

By KEVIN CLARKE

An investigation conducted by The Associated Press reported on July 10 that as the coronavirus pandemic created an unprecedented economic calamity across the nation, the ministries, parishes, schools and chanceries of the U.S. Catholic Church received more than \$1.4 billion in loans from the Small Business Administration through the Paycheck Protection Program. That forgivable loan program was created

by Congress as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act passed in March.

According to the report, Congress had made religious entities eligible to receive federal S.B.A. assistance for the first time as the pandemic lockdown threatened to cut millions of employees off from their weekly paychecks. The A.P. report raised hackles among church critics and concerns among the faithful.

This evening the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a response.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, the chair of the bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, reminded critics in a statement: "The Paycheck Protection Program was designed to protect the jobs of Americans from all walks of life, regardless of whether they work for for-profit or non-profit employers, faith-based or secular" and that the U.S. Catholic Church "is the largest non-governmental supplier of social services in the United States."

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

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Times editor resigns, saying she was harassed for her ideas

By DAVID BAUDER

NEW YORK (AP) — Bari Weiss, an opinion editor at The New York Times, quit her job on Tuesday with a public resignation letter that alleged harassment and a hostile work environment created by people who disagreed with her.

Andrew Sullivan, another prominent journalist who expressed concern that a "woke" culture is crowding out dissenting opinion, similarly announced his resignation from New York magazine.

Sullivan is a conservative columnist and Weiss is considered conservative by some, although she labels herself a centrist.

"Intellectual curiosity is now a liability at The Times," said Weiss, who was also a writer at the newspaper.

Read more [here](#) .

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Newsonomics: The McClatchy auction ends not with a bang, but only more whimpers (Nieman)

By KEN DOCTOR

It lacked a good villain like Michael Ferro, and its conclusion was mostly foregone. But along the way, the drama of McClatchy's bankruptcy was compelling enough to deserve some attention — even if only a few reporters, the best by far paid by McClatchy itself, paid much attention to it.

There were attempts at theatrics. Would thousands of retirees have their pensions saved? Would mustache-twirling Alden Global Capital tie McClatchy's properties to the railroad tracks as its train rounded the corner? And, most intriguing of all, would the Knight Foundation bet \$300 million-plus of its \$2 billion-plus in assets on trying to revive an old newspaper company?

That last possibility came and went without public acknowledgment, but down the road it may look like a retrospective tipping point in the disappearance of the American daily press.

In the end, any drama was distilled down to a moment of awkward comedy: Passionate supporters of a vibrant free press rooting for what they hoped would be the less damaging hedge fund to come out on top.

Read more [here](#).

The Final Word

Think You've Seen the Subway? Not Like This You Haven't (New York Times)



The caverns underneath Grand Central Terminal are part of the East Side Access project, which will extend the Long Island Rail Road to Grand Central.

By David Gonzalez/Photographs by Patrick Cashin

Patrick Cashin has climbed the steep cables to the top of the Throgs Neck Bridge, where peregrine falcons circled above. The birds were a bonus. He was there to photograph electricians working on one of the towers as the staff photographer for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which operates the bridges, tunnels and transit system for New York City and several surrounding counties.

“You’re like in the center of the earth, when they were still cutting the rock and blasting for the East Side Access Tunnel,” said Mr. Cashin, who recently retired. “The camera gives you a false sense of security. I got to go to the top of a lot of bridges. I went to highest point of the city and the deepest.”

His 20 years with the M.T.A. has included some of the city’s most challenging and harrowing times: the attacks on the World Trade Center, Superstorm Sandy, train derailments and the coronavirus pandemic. But it also includes moments of awe and beauty, and behind-the-scenes peeks at parts of the system most New Yorkers never get to see.

Read more [here](#) . Shared by Cliff Schiappa.

Today in History - July 15, 2020



By The Associated Press

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

Editor, Connecting newsletter

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