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## Connecting August 31, 2020

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning on this the 31<sup>st</sup> and last day of August 2020,

Today's Connecting brings you sad news of the death of our colleague **Bill Neikirk**, who worked for the AP in Kentucky, Louisiana and Washington, D.C., during the years 1961-74, before joining The Chicago Tribune's Washington bureau.

His nephew **Mark Neikirk** shares thoughts about Bill, along with his obituary. Mark is executive director of the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement

at Northern Kentucky University.

Friday's Connecting brought you an account of AP's coverage of the devastating Hurricane Katrina, told through the eyes of three colleagues who were part of that coverage.

Colleague **Bill Winter** ([Email](#)) wrote to say that issue was “extraordinary. The various reports of the difficulties faced by The AP and other organizations in trying to get a grasp on the unbelievable carnage wrought by Katrina made for inspiring, and emotional, reading. Thank you, and thanks to all those who shared their stories about great journalists just putting their heads down and doing their jobs.”

AP archivist **Francesca Pitaro** ([Email](#)) called the Katrina issue “amazing. It’s so moving to hear those stories and important to have them now be part of the historical record” – a reminder to us all that each issue of Connecting is archived by the New York Archives department to preserve the memories you all share and keep them open to further generations.

At the time of the 1963 civil rights march on Washington, our colleague **Linda Deutsch** ([Email](#)) was a teen-age summer intern at the Perth Amboy Evening News in New Jersey and had just completed her sophomore year at Monmouth College. She proposed to her editor that the newspaper cover the march. He said fine, you can go, but it would be on your dime. She shares this story that LAObserved did on her experience in a story published 50 years after the march. Click [here](#) to read.

Have a great week – be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

## **Bill Neikirk, veteran Washington journalist with AP and Chicago Tribune, dies at 82**



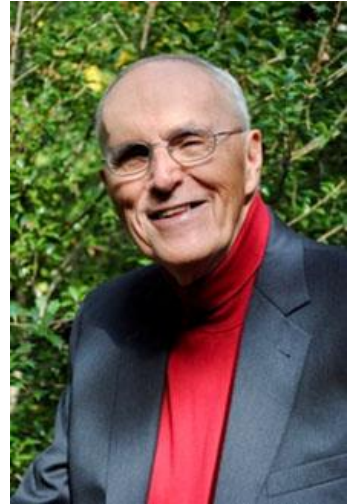
**PHASE 4: The AP economics team talks over the price controls announcement: From left, R. Gregory Nokes, Robert A. Dobkin, Bill Neikirk.**

1973 photo, courtesy AP Corporate Archives

**WILLIAM R. NEIKIRK** Bill Neikirk of Arlington, Virginia, a longtime Washington-based journalist who covered the White House and the economy for the Associated Press and the Chicago Tribune, died August 27 after a long illness. He was 82. Born in rural Irvine, Kentucky, he joined the AP's Washington Bureau in 1969 after having worked for the wire service in Louisville, Lexington, and Frankfort, Kentucky, and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He moved to the Tribune's Washington bureau in 1984. Read more of his obituary [here](#).

**Mark Neikirk** ([Email](#)) – I have been blessed to be part of a tremendous family, including being the nephew of Bill Neikirk, who passed away August 27 after a long, long battle with a cruel illness that took away his ability to communicate.

Cruel especially because he was a journalist of the first caliber, first for the Associated Press and then for the Chicago Tribune. He was among the first journalists to carve out economics as a beat -- something routine in journalism now. He was my mentor professionally but first and foremost the finest of uncles. Four months after his older brother, my Dad, died of cancer, Bill and his wife, Ruth, sat at the foot of my bed all night after my own cancer surgery -- and it was about as joyful as a post-op experience could be.



All of my cousins (and in a family with 10 sons and two daughters, there are a LOT of cousins) knew Uncle Bill as the family member who always asked about us, always listened, always cared. I didn't need a second father. But I had one, and he was, in every sense of the word, a grace to me and to my family.

Bill's life was taken, as best doctors can tell, by Lewy body dementia, the hideous disease that got national attention after Robin William's death. There is nothing good about it, but there was tremendous good in seeing how a family's love survived it. You could not witness two sweethearts dearer to one another than Bill and Ruth -- who sat an example to all of us.

In Bill's [obituary](#), please note the scholarship fund set up at the University of Kentucky for a journalism student of Kentucky's mountain region, our family's home. All gifts graciously received in Bill's memory and so that another kid from the mountains will grow up to contribute as Bill did. Click [here](#) for a link to the scholarship fund.

## New Orleans AP alums stage video reunion





**New Orleans AP  
1970s video reunion**

**Janet McConnaughey...**

**Kevin McKean (Email)** - If you were a young reporter trying to learn journalism back in the day, you could hardly find a better spot than the New Orleans bureau of The Associated Press – or so I felt after working there for three exciting years in the 1970s. And that feeling was confirmed when we pulled together nearly a dozen other veterans from that era, including long-time New Orleans News Editor Kent Prince, to reminisce by video last month.

This Zoom-based reunion turned out to be a treat. Besides Prince and his wife Faye, the event snagged current or former AP folks like Joe Bonney, retired senior editor at the Journal of Commerce; Jim Hood, a former AP broadcast exec and now serial entrepreneur; St. Louis Post Dispatch veterans Peter Hernon and Tim O’Neil; current New Orleans AP staffer Janet McConnaughey; longtime Albuquerque staffer Matt Mygatt and David Steinberg, who still writes for the Albuquerque Journal; Unitarian minister Mary Ganz; and myself, who went on from AP to work at Money, PC World and Consumer Reports magazines, among others. (See screen capture photo.)

Much of the talk centered on the amazing veterans we learned from. They included Bill Crider, who’d been shot in the back covering the integration of the

University of Mississippi, and photographer Jack Thornell, who later won a Pulitzer for his photo of James Meredith – the student who'd broken the color line at Ole Miss – writhing in pain after being shot on a march in 1966. [<https://gohighbrow.com/the-shooting-of-james-meredith>]

There was also much complaining about the technology of the day, which included those early Hendrix CRTs that would lose every word you'd written if your knee happened to bump the on/off switch that stuck down improbably right underneath. When sports writer Austin Wilson lost yet another story to this monster one day, Prince took a claw hammer and pried the switch off the machine – leading the tech department to report an “unauthorized field modification” that nevertheless remained.

Then there were the members. O'Neil recalled coming in a few minutes late one Monday morning after the bureau had been briefly unmanned, and finding three phone lines lit up with radio disk jockeys pleading for the chicken price report. “Turned out all the little stations had a feed store that sponsored it,” O'Neil explained.

But there were also memories of the real news of the day, which ranged from Louisiana's genial, dapper Governor Edwin Edwards, who later spent eight years in prison on federal racketeering charges, to tragedies like the sniper attack from the roof of the Downtown Howard Johnsons in 1973 that killed 10 (about which Hernon later wrote a book, “A Terrible Thunder: The Story of the New Orleans Sniper”), to natural disasters like the deadly hurricanes charging through the Gulf this week.

But perhaps the most poignant recollections were about how welcoming the bureau felt to us then-youngsters. “It sounds corny to say it, but it was not just that there were so many great journalists in New Orleans but that they respected and cared for each other in ways that were unique,” said Mary Ganz, who went on to the San Francisco Examiner and then left journalism to work with the homeless. “I can't think of another place I worked that was quite like it.”

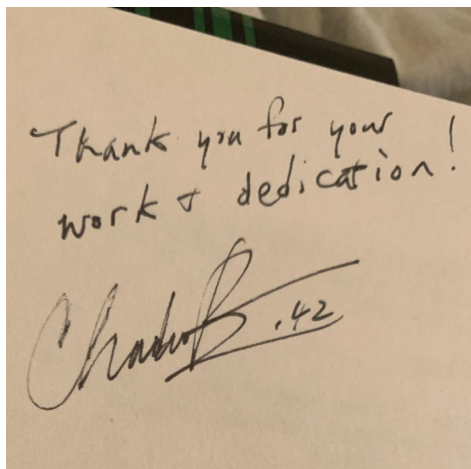
If other APers want help organizing such a gathering, I'm going to hang onto my paid Zoom account that lets you stay connected longer than the 40 minutes allowed for free users. Just drop me a note at [kevin at mckeanmedia dot com](mailto:kevin@mckeanmedia.com).

# Here's the story behind this Chadwick Boseman photo



**Jesse Holland (left) and Chadwick Boseman**

**Jesse Holland** ([Email](#)) - By the time I met Chadwick Boseman, I'd already entered the world of Disney and Marvel. I had already written the Star Wars: The Force Awakens-Finn's Story and my second novel, Black Panther: Who Is the Black Panther?, had just come out. Boseman was out promoting Marshall, which was directed by Reginald Hudlin. The two of them had been at Howard University the day before, and I had scheduled to have them into the D.C. bureau for an interview, knowing the Black Panther movie was coming out. (I'm told that AP Video deletes video that is more than six months old. Too bad.)



You could see how tired Boseman was as he and Hudlin talked about their experiences filming *Marshall*. But Boseman was a trooper, staying and answering every question I had. Luckily for me, I was prepared and I had copies of my novel that I gave him and Hudlin (R. Hudlin wrote the definitive updated origin of the Black Panther that I adopted for my novel.) Now as a journalist, we're supposed to be objective, so I never felt right about asking for autographs or photos from the people I met on the job. I made an exception for Boseman. I had him sign my novel for me, figuring that getting an autograph from Black Panther in my Black Panther novel would be cool for me. And he agreed without blinking an eye. And then I asked for a photograph, which he also agreed to without a second thought. I never got to talk to him again, even though I saw him at the 50th annual NAACP Image Awards, where I got a nomination for my Black Panther novel. I will always remember his graciousness and his professionalism, and will miss seeing him on the screen.

*(Jesse Holland is an assistant professor of journalism in the School of Media and Public Affairs at George Washington University. He worked for the AP for 25 years, starting as an intern in the Columbia, South Carolina bureau, then serving there as a legal reporter and statehouse reporter. After an assignment in Albany, he worked in the Washington bureau from 2000-2019 primarily as a Race & Ethnicity reporter.)*

## **Only two times in my career I asked for an autograph**





**Doug Pizac** ([Email](#)) - In addition to a collection of prints from back in the film days, there were only two times I asked for an autograph during an assignment in my 30+ years with AP. The first was back in 1987 when I covered Clayton Moore, aka the Lone Ranger, getting his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. He was my childhood hero.

The second was a spur of the moment opportunity at a MLB playoff game with the Seattle Mariners in 2000. I was sent from Salt Lake City to Seattle to cover the series because Elaine Thompson was out of town, and Barry Sweet had left the company and his replacement didn't have much playoff wire experience.

During one of the games I was stationed in the inside first base photo well next to a TV camera. Seated in the front row prime seats next to me were Bill and Melinda Gates. We ignored each other until I noticed that Bill was chatting with his wife and the people behind him, not paying much attention to the game. Seeing that a particular right-handed player was coming to the plate who had a habit of letting pitches bounce foul off his bat, I told the Microsoft founder that he needed to pay more attention for foul balls. This was many years before netting protected this section of seats.

He thanked me for the advice and continued chatting. Two pitches later a foul ball off the player's bat rocketed straight at Gates, hitting the top of the padding right in front of him. A few inches higher it would have struck his chest, and a little bit higher his face. The impact with the pad produced a loud thud that startled everyone, including Bill who realized my suggestion needed to be heeded seriously -- and he paid attention to right-handed batters the rest of the game.

As to the ball, it rolled into my photo well. Under this very unique circumstance I asked him to sign the ball that could have sent him to the hospital, and he readily agreed.

That encounter also paid off a couple years later when I began covering the annual media mogul conference in Sun Valley, ID, each 4th of July week. Business leaders such as Warren Buffet, Rupert Murdoch, Sumner Redstone, Meg Whitman, etc. attended, including Bill Gates who was the Holy Grail for photographers to get a picture of as he avoided the media as much as he could. When I saw him I reintroduced myself as the one who saved him from getting hit by the baseball. He remembered, thanked me again, and started cooperating with my need to make his picture and would occasionally tip me off on what he would be doing later for exclusives.

Because of that baseball, I was able to scoop Reuters, Bloomberg, Getty and other photographers who tried to photograph the billionaire. They could never figure out how I would come up with my pictures of him each year.

## **On Connecting memories of Hurricane Katrina, 15 years later**

**Tim Dahlberg ([Email](#))** - Reading Dan Sewell's account (in Friday's issue) of our days in New Orleans reminded me how long it's been since I shared an RV with 20 other people, and the beautiful night I actually got to sleep on the bed of the RV instead of the floor. It also reminded me of two AP treasures who are no longer with us.

Dave Martin was more than just a photographer, though he was awfully good at that, too. It was Dave who got the RV, parked it on Canal Street and somehow made the logistics work for what became our headquarters, hotel and office space. That we could never get the microwave to work wasn't Dave's fault, and we pretty much subsisted on cold food until one night we were treated to plates of jambalaya, as Dan mentioned. Dave was fantastic at logistics, but just as good at making everyone feel at home in what became our home for the better part of a week.

Mary Foster knew everything and everyone in New Orleans and was a friend from past sports experiences. She spent the first days of Katrina riding out the storm in the Superdome, covering the evacuees there in a first-person story. She didn't flinch, though, when I arrived and asked her to help me find out about Vera, whose body was under a makeshift tomb of bricks and debris on a flooded street. Spray painted on the tarp covering her were the words ``Here lies Vera. God help us." Mary and I found Vera's husband a few blocks away and, standing shirtless in a driveway, he smoked a cigarette and told us the story about how she left to go to the store and never came back. Mary also hooked me up with a policewoman who took me inside the darkened Superdome, where the stench was overwhelming, and I remember the toilet in owner Tom Benson's luxury suite overflowing with human waste.

Many other stories from New Orleans, of course, including some pitched battles with editors in New York who didn't quite understand why Jim Litke and I, a couple of sports columnists, were in a disaster zone covering news. But I'll leave those for another day.

It was a remarkable and sobering experience, but what was most remarkable was how AP people from around the country came together to do what we do under the most difficult of circumstances. The AP has always truly been a family, and it was especially true in a sweltering RV jammed with staffers in dire need of sleep, showers and hot food.

**Bill Kaczor ([Email](#))** - Eleven months after Hurricane Ivan devastated Pensacola, where I was correspondent, and a month after Hurricane Dennis did more damage, I was bracing for Katrina. Almost the entire Florida Panhandle had been in the “cone of uncertainty” on tracking maps, but Katrina missed us. I've always said I'd much rather cover other people's disasters than my own, so I was happy to pitch in. During the first few days I did that without leaving Pensacola, where the naval air station served as a staging area for helicopters flown in from across the country. From there they made daily trips to New Orleans and other stricken communities to rescue stranded residents and deliver supplies. I interviewed crew members when they returned to Pensacola three days after landfall. They told me they had to leave some people behind because they were running low on fuel and daylight. It was too dangerous to fly at night and difficult to find survivors. “There’s a lot of people still in the houses who don’t have the ability to get out,” Navy Lt. Bryce Kammermeyer told me. “You don’t see a lot of people on the roofs like you did two days ago, but there’s still many people because you see them at night with their flashlights.”

Then I wrote about two pilots who got into hot water for making rescues instead of returning to Pensacola immediately after completing supply runs to Pascagoula and Gulfport in Mississippi. They had picked up a Coast Guard radio call saying helicopters were needed for rescues in New Orleans. They were out of radio range of Pensacola and unable to contact their commander, so they decided on their own to join in the rescue effort. One crew plucked people off rooftops. The other chopper hovered over an apartment building where more than a dozen survivors had been stranded. After returning for another pickup, two crew members went into the building and led a couple blind people to the helicopter. When the pilots returned to Pensacola, their commanding officer praised them for making the rescues but also criticized their failure to immediately get back because more supplies were waiting to be delivered. A Navy spokesman, though, insisted the pilots had been “counseled” rather than “reprimanded.” He also denied that one of the pilots had been punished by being temporarily assigned to oversee a kennel, saying it was common for officers to have secondary duties.

Six days after landfall, I got a chance to ride along with a Navy chopper crew. We flew from Pensacola to the small naval air station in New Orleans to refuel before beginning our search for survivors. By that time most people who wanted to get out had already been picked up. The air, though, still was filled with helicopters. Our four-man crew lowered bottled water to people who wanted to remain in their homes but several hours went by before they found anyone in need of rescue. Finally, our HS-60 Seahawk joined a line of helicopters hovering over a school yard, a small dry island surrounded by flood waters. National Guard troops were dropping off survivors there after rescuing

them with trucks and boats. The school yard was big enough for just one helicopter at a time to land. When our turn came, the crew quickly stuffed five adults, three children and their belongings into a space about the size of a minivan. Seating was limited because the Seahawk was designed for anti-submarine warfare so much of the cabin space was taken up by electronic gear. The survivors had to sit on the floor. We took them to Louis Armstrong International Airport where people were being flown out of the hurricane-stricken area. One of the crew, Petty Officer 2nd Class Chas Dearie, spent most of his childhood in New Orleans before his family moved to Lake Charles. He still had relatives in New Orleans, but they had evacuated before the storm. "That white thing, that's my old house," Dearie said over the intercom as we flew over a mostly submerged neighborhood, where little more than roofs could be seen sticking out of the water. He also spotted the homes of his grandmother, aunts and uncles. "They're all under water," Dearie said. The crew then saw a group of six people signaling for help. Petty Officer 2nd Class Evan Ramirez was lowered to the bed of a pickup truck just above the water level. He was hoisted back up with a survivor six times and then twice more with a bag of their possessions and a dog.

It was my first trip back to New Orleans since covering the annual National Hurricane Conference there a few months earlier. One of the topics at the conference was the massive flooding that New Orleans could expect from a hurricane like Katrina turned out to be. Some experts also criticized the decision to incorporate FEMA into the new Department of Homeland Security, contending that move had hampered the agency's ability to respond to disasters because the department was more focused on terrorism.

Back in Pensacola, I wrote about the impact that thousands of Katrina refugees were having on the Florida Panhandle. Some stayed for a few weeks or months while others became permanent residents. They bought or rented some of the last few remaining homes, condos and apartments in a real estate market already stressed due to population growth and demand from local people who had lost their homes to Ivan and Dennis. "There's no affordable housing," Milton real estate broker-appraiser Phil Jones told me. "I feel sorry. It's just not there." Many Ivan victims were still living in FEMA trailers at the time.

The influx also led to overcrowding in Panhandle schools. About 6,000 evacuees were enrolled in schools across Florida, about half of them in the Panhandle, nearly a month after the storm hit. "When we welcome them with open arms after everything they've been through, they start crying," Destin Middle School principal Sherri Houpp told me. Her school took in 130 Katrina refugees who had arrived with little more than what they were wearing. Townspeople responded by donating clothes, shoes, toiletries, book bags and



school supplies. Guidance counselors and school psychologists were on alert to assist evacuees. One child burst into tears several times and told a Destin Middle School classmate, "They're all gone," even though his family and friends had survived without injury.

We still keep running into Katrina refugees who have permanently settled in the Panhandle. They include my cardiologist, who tells me that my heart is in pretty good shape despite all the disasters I've been through both home and away. I can't tell you exactly how many hurricanes and tropical storms I've covered, but the figure is in double-digits.

## Connecting mailbox

### ***Cecilia White and her motorized friends***

**Peggy Walsh** ([Email](#)) - Only Cecilia White could tell the amazing story of her three (and a half) four wheeled friends (See Friday's Connecting).

Cecilia is one of the most creative and caring people I've worked with. The books and cards she created from clippings of words and pictures along with her amazing imagination brightened my time at the AP and the New York Times.

Her love of animals is legendary and I am one of hundreds she has consoled on the loss of a pet.

In the 35 years since we met she hasn't changed a bit.

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### ***Socially distanced tailgate lunch***



AP photo editors Jacqueline Larma, left, of Philadelphia, and Bill Sikes, of Boston, enjoy a socially distanced tailgate lunch after returning Canon photo equipment to the AP Technical Center, Thursday, Aug. 27, 2020, in Cranbury, N.J. (AP Photo/Bill Sikes)

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## ***A streak of lightning***



A streak of lightning passes behind President Trump as he walks off Air Force One at Joint Base Andrews, Md. following a campaign rally in Londonderry, NH. (Photo by Doug Mills, New York Times ([mills@nytimes.com](mailto:mills@nytimes.com)) – and a Connecting colleague)

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## ***The Grammar Bar***

**David Briscoe** ([Email](#)) - I heard that because of all the chaos at Jim Cook's Grammar Bar, a squad of off-duty caps walked in and YELLED AT THE BARTENDER.

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## ***Ulevich breakfast bar***



**Neal Ulevich ([Email](#))** - Ulevich puts on a decent breakfast buffet, but with COVID there is no seating, only take-out. Squirrel scores sunflower.

## Celebrating the past





**People march to the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. Julio Cortez/AP**

**Gene Herrick** ([Email](#)) - Last Friday thousands of people gathered in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, and surrounded the reflection pool to honor a speech given 57 years earlier.

There are, seemingly, hundreds of speeches given in that honored spot in the Capitol, and by honored people. What was this one all about?

We need to go back to the year 1929, to January 15, in Atlanta, Georgia. What happened that day? A little boy was born. So what? Lots of babies were born that day in Atlanta, and around the world. This little boy was black. Being born black in the Deep South, what with all of the anti-black organizations abounding, had heavy limitations on the chances of this little boy ever amounting to anything, or anybody. This little baby was born. The father was a Baptist preacher. This little boy studied hard, got a doctorate, preached with his father, and then stretched out to become a preacher in the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama in 1954. This little black boy, now a preacher, started a life that propelled him into history.

This former little boy, now a black preacher came alive, demonstrated an inner power that propelled him into world history. He was a beloved follower of an



India holy leader Mohandas Gandhi, and his beliefs in life.

That little black boy, now a thinking man and preacher was Martin Luther King, Jr., who became the oratory and virtual leader of the Civil Rights Movement in 1956. It came immediately after a black woman, Rosa Parks, had a dispute over her seating in a Montgomery City bus, was arrested, fingerprinted and sent to jail. It became a national news and picture story. I know because I covered it for The Associated Press. King was arrested, fingerprinted, and charged at the same time. I took pictures of both events. I covered Dr. King for some time, including his assassination in Memphis, Tennessee in Sept. 1968.

Martin Luther King, Jr., had a voice that shook the rafters. Not only was it commanding, but his messages were spellbinding. He gave many historic speeches, and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

The huge crowd Friday in Washington was to honor Dr. King, and specifically his speech entitled "I Have A Dream." Following are some quotes from that speech:

"There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. \*\*We cannot be satisfied as long as the negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-hood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: "For Whites Only."\*\* We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until "justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

**"I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. And some of you have come from areas where your quest -- quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.**

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

"And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when *all* of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual:

*Free at last! Free at last!*

*Thank God Almighty, we are free at last"* (From Dr. Martin Luther King's speech , " I Have A Dream." )

That little black boy did have a dream, and he expressed it loud and clear for the world to hear. But, has it changed anything in these trying and painful political times?

Times where more black people are being killed on the streets, where demonstrators, and seeming police brutality is at an all-time high?

What would a sermon/speech today by Rev. King sound like? What would he say?

## ***Best of the Week***

# **Viral photo captures mood, fears, threats in pandemic-dominated 2020**



**Flames from the LNU Lightning Complex fires burn around a sign for a senior center in unincorporated Napa County, Calif., Aug. 18, 2020. The blaze went on to destroy multiple homes near Lake Berryessa as fire crews across the region scrambled to contain dozens of wildfires sparked by lightning strikes. AP PHOTO / NOAH BERGER**

For many observers, a wildfire image sums up the 2020 we are living.

A single wildfire photo by freelance photographer Noah Berger, on assignment for the AP, captured so much: irony, danger and fear amid the worst pandemic to hit the U.S. in more than a century.

The photo, of a sign surrounded by flames, was among AP's most downloaded images of the month. It resonated so much around the world that Berger was asked by numerous outlets to talk about how he came to shoot it.

To understand why, it's worth considering what the sign says. First, it identifies a center for seniors, the demographic that has been most impacted by the coronavirus. Second, it implores people to wear a mask, practice social distancing and stay safe. Finally, it invites people to "Come join us." All of that while nearly engulfed in flames.

Read more [here](#).

## *Best of the States*

# From the front line to the home front, behind the scenes with COVID nurses



AP photo/Jae C. Hong

With exclusive access, AP followed nurses both at work in a Los Angeles-area COVID ward and at home with their families, revealing the conflicts they face to care for sick and dying patients during the pandemic.

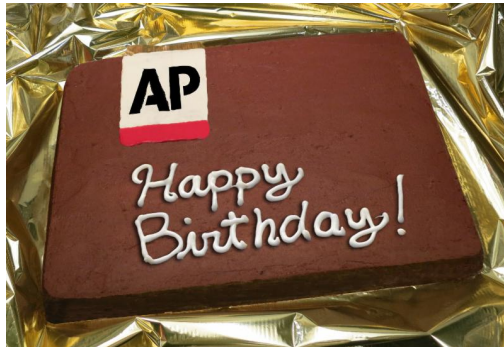
Los Angeles photographer Jae Hong wanted to tell the story of the nurses.

He knew that on the front lines of the battle against coronavirus, nurses spend long hours covered in layers protective equipment, caring for sick and dying patients who are separated from their families.

Then the nurses go home, taking with them the fear of spreading the virus to their own loved ones.

Read more [here](#).

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

John Dowling – [jdowlingchicago@gmail.com](mailto:jdowlingchicago@gmail.com)

Dana Fields – [farceide@aol.com](mailto:farceide@aol.com)

Ellen Nimmons – [enimmons@optonline.net](mailto:enimmons@optonline.net)

Nancy Shulins – [nshulins@mindspring.com](mailto:nshulins@mindspring.com)

Jeff Ulbrich – [jeulbrich@hotmail.com](mailto:jeulbrich@hotmail.com)

## Stories of interest

***Belarus cracks down on journalists, 2 AP staff deported***

By JIM HEINTZ



MOSCOW (AP) — Belarus, shaken by three weeks of massive protests against its authoritarian president, on Saturday cracked down hard on the news media, deporting some foreign journalists reporting in the country and revoking the accreditation of many Belarusian journalists.

Two Moscow-based Associated Press journalists who were covering the recent protests in Belarus were deported to Russia on Saturday. In addition, the AP's Belarusian journalists were told by the government that their press credentials had been revoked.

"The Associated Press decries in the strongest terms this blatant attack on press freedom in Belarus. AP calls on the Belarusian government to reinstate the credentials of independent journalists and allow them to continue reporting the facts of what is happening in Belarus to the world," said Lauren Easton, the AP's director of media relations.

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

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## ***"It Doesn't Feel Like Real Baseball": The Surreal Scene in the COVID-Era Yankee Stadium Press Box*** (Vanity Fair)

By TOM KLUDT

"I used to love going to the ballpark," Michael Kay, the New York Yankees longtime TV play-by-play announcer, lamented recently. This was almost halfway into Major League Baseball's abbreviated 60-game season, and before the recent NBA, WNBA, and MLB strikes over police brutality had recast the return of professional sports in this COVID-plagued year. But even then, a day at the stadium was proving to be something of a bummer or, in the best of circumstances, uncanny.

"You had people milling about outside, shouting for autographs," Kay said. "It's all the trappings. You're smelling the popcorn being popped, you're smelling the hot dogs, you know, the buzz of the workers. It's just not there. It's really sad."

Kay has company in those sentiments.

“It doesn’t feel like real baseball,” said Marly Rivera, the Yankees beat reporter for ESPN.

Read more [here](#).

# Today in History - August 31, 2020



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Monday, Aug. 31, the 244th day of 2020. There are 122 days left in the year.

## **Today’s Highlight in History:**

On August 31, 1997, Prince Charles brought Princess Diana home for the last time, escorting the body of his former wife to a Britain that was shocked, grief-stricken and angered by her death in a Paris traffic accident earlier that day.

**On this date:**

In 1881, the first U.S. tennis championships (for men only) began in Newport, Rhode Island.

In 1888, Mary Ann Nichols, believed to be the first victim of “Jack the Ripper,” was found slain in London’s East End.

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an act prohibiting the export of U.S. arms to belligerents.

In 1969, boxer Rocky Marciano died in a light airplane crash in Iowa, a day before his 46th birthday.

In 1972, at the Munich (MYOO’-nik) Summer Olympics, American swimmer Mark Spitz won his fourth and fifth gold medals in the 100-meter butterfly and 800-meter freestyle relay; Soviet gymnast Olga Korbut won gold medals in floor exercise and the balance beam.

In 1980, Poland’s Solidarity labor movement was born with an agreement signed in Gdansk (guh-DANSK’) that ended a 17-day-old strike.

In 1986, 82 people were killed when an Aeromexico jetliner and a small private plane collided over Cerritos, California. The Soviet passenger ship Admiral Nakhimov collided with a merchant vessel in the Black Sea, causing both to sink; up to 448 people reportedly died.

In 1989, Britain’s Princess Anne and her husband, Capt. Mark Phillips, announced they were separating after 15 years of marriage.

In 1992, white separatist Randy Weaver surrendered to authorities in Naples, Idaho, ending an 11-day siege by federal agents that had claimed the lives of Weaver’s wife, son and a deputy U.S. marshal. (Weaver was acquitted of murder and all other charges in connection with the confrontation; he was convicted of failing to appear for trial on firearms charges and was sentenced to 18 months in prison but given credit for 14 months he’d already served.)

In 1994, the Irish Republican Army declared a cease-fire. Russia officially ended its military presence in the former East Germany and the Baltics after half a century.

In 1996, three adults and four children drowned when their vehicle rolled into John D. Long Lake in Union, South Carolina; they had gone to see a

monument to the sons of Susan Smith, who had drowned the two boys in Oct. 1994.

In 2005, New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin reported “a significant number of dead bodies in the water” following Hurricane Katrina; Nagin ordered virtually the entire police force to abandon search-and-rescue efforts and to instead stop increasingly hostile thieves.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama ended the U.S. combat mission in Iraq, declaring no victory after seven years of bloodshed and telling those divided over the war in his country and around the world: “It is time to turn the page.”

Five years ago: President Barack Obama, opening a three-day visit to Alaska, painted a doomsday scenario for the Arctic and beyond if climate change wasn’t dealt with quickly: entire nations submerged underwater, cities abandoned and refugees fleeing in droves as conflict broke out across the globe. The State Department released roughly 7,000 pages of Hillary Rodham Clinton’s emails, including about 150 emails that were censored because they contained information deemed classified. Frazier Glenn Miller, a white supremacist who admitted killing three people at two suburban Kansas City Jewish sites, gave jurors in Olathe, Kansas, a Nazi salute after they convicted him of murder and other charges for the shootings. (The same jury sentenced Miller to death.)

One year ago: A gunman carried out a shooting rampage that stretched ten miles between the Texas communities of Midland and Odessa, leaving seven people dead before police killed the gunman outside a movie theater in Odessa. Defending champion Naomi Osaka ended the U.S. Open run by 15-year-old Coco Gauff, defeating the teen 6-3, 6-0 in the third round. Hurricane Dorian bore down on the northern Bahamas with howling winds and surging seas, forcing some evacuations and hotel closures.

Today’s Birthdays: Actor Warren Berlinger is 83. Rock musician Jerry Allison (Buddy Holly and the Crickets) is 81. Actor Jack Thompson is 80. Violinist Itzhak Perlman is 75. Singer Van Morrison is 75. Rock musician Rudolf Schenker (The Scorpions) is 72. Actor Richard Gere is 71. Actor Stephen Henderson is 71. Olympic gold medal track and field athlete Edwin Moses is 65. Rock singer Glenn Tilbrook (Squeeze) is 63. Rock musician Gina Schock (The Go-Go’s) is 63. Singer Tony DeFranco (The DeFranco Family) is 61. Rhythm-and-blues musician Larry Waddell (Mint Condition) is 57. Actor Jaime P. Gomez is 55. Rock musician Jeff Russo (Tonic) is 51. Singer-composer Deborah Gibson is 50. Rock musician Greg Richling (Wallflowers) is 50. Actor

Zack Ward is 50. Golfer Pádraig (PAH'-drig) Harrington is 49. Actor Chris Tucker is 48. Actor Sara Ramirez is 45. Rhythm-and-blues singer Tamara (Trina & Tamara) is 43.

# 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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