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Connecting September 21, 2020

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning on this the 21st day of September 2020,

The death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on Friday evoked fond memories from several Connecting colleagues of the remarkable person who became only the second woman to serve on the nation’s highest court.

Today’s issue also brings you sad news of the death of **Steve Stibbens**, who worked as an AP photographer in Vietnam (after a brief stint in the Mobile, Alabama, bureau) in the late 1960s. His time with the AP was brief but he left a lasting impression. Our colleague **Joe Galloway**, who worked for UPI in Vietnam said, “He was a good friend and great company in a foxhole or a watering hole in Vietnam and elsewhere.”

The family of **Bob Kuesterman**, longtime Intermountain West overnight editor based in the AP’s Salt Lake City bureau, who died Sept. 13 of pancreatic cancer, provides his

colleagues with his obituary as published in The Salt Lake City Tribune and Deseret News. Click [here](#).

Connecting will publish today and Tuesday, and then take the rest of the week off as Linda and I are getting away for a few days. Look forward to your contributions and if they don't run Tuesday, they will appear when I return.

Have a great week – stay safe and healthy.

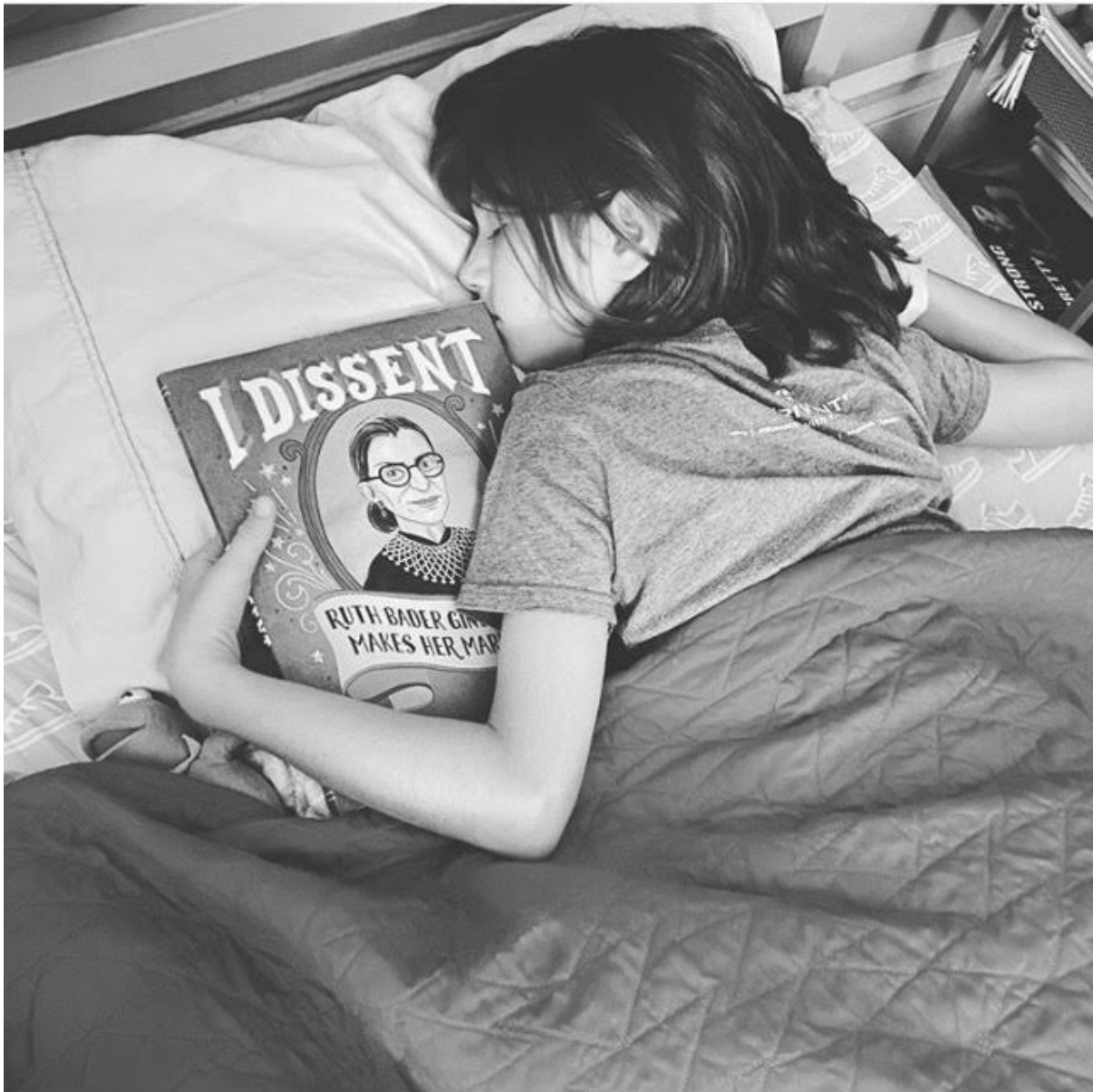
Paul

Your memories of RBG

Richard Carelli (Email) - Well, the political storm once again has visited the Supreme Court. I don't do politics on Facebook, but allow me a very personal note about a personal note: I covered the Supreme Court for AP for 24 years, retiring from that job in September 2000 to join the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. My mom died shortly thereafter. I had covered Justice Ginsburg and had some dealings with her, but she was not one of the justices I knew well. About a week after my mom's death, I received this hand-written note from the justice: "Dear Mr. Carelli, Even when one is fully grown, the death of a parent is a loss like no other. But you have the fortitude to carry on, thriving in your life and work. May you continue to seek the joys of being alive, as your mother would have willed. With sympathy, RBG."

This champion of women's rights was one nice lady.

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Kathy Curran ([Email](#)) - This little girl from Brooklyn, NY, our granddaughter, Grace Curran, cried herself to sleep Friday night.

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(Photo L-R: Rosyla (Steve's wife); Carol (Malcolm's wife); Steve and Malcolm (foreground: Malcolm and Carol's 'Diva' – Front Royal's most famous Main Street four-legged visitor)

Steve Herman ([Email](#)) - Intrigued by a recent Connecting item from Malcolm Barr (former AP correspondent in Honolulu and Washington, D.C.), I reached out to him to learn more about his post-AP escapades with local journalism in rural Virginia, his dog rescue campaigns and a horseracing syndicate (about which he authored a book '1,000 to 1: Claiming, Breeding and Racing Thoroughbreds on a Shoestring – and Beating the Odds'). Malcolm also revealed a side gig decades ago at VOA, my current employer.

We agreed to meet for a 'Yappy Hour' with wives and canines on Front Royal's historic Main Street this past Friday night, which I was hoping would be devoid of breaking news as I'd be 70 miles from the White House. Just after our smiles for a group photo, an AP bulletin flashed on my cell phone notifying us that SCOTUS Justice Ginsburg had died.

BBC World TV rang quickly asking if I could appear live (preferably from the White House) to discuss how the associate justice's death would affect the election. With no time to get back to Washington, I went on air via Skype on a slow-speed internet connection from our bedroom in a Warren County B&B -- sitting on the floor so that the mid-19th century fireplace was centered as the live shot backdrop. My elocution was smoother than usual, likely due to having imbibed a couple of Virginia craft beers during the Yappy Hour.

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Marty Steinberg ([Email](#)) – Here is the obituary I wrote on RBG for CNBC:

[Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg dies at age 87](#)

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the pioneering Supreme Court justice who became the second female on the nation's highest court, the leader of its liberal wing and a pop culture icon known as Notorious R.B.G., died Friday night. She was 87.

Ginsburg died surrounded by her family at her home in Washington, D.C., due to complications of metastatic pancreatic cancer, the court said.

Steve Stibbens, AP photographer in Vietnam, dies at 83

Paul Harrington ([Email](#)) - The retired ranks of the Marine Corps and the Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association have lost a fighter and I have lost a friend. GySgt Steve Stibbens hung up his award-winning camera this afternoon, September 20, in Dallas, Texas. His heart gave out on him after 83 years.

Steve was the first Marine Combat Correspondent to cover the Vietnam War. He was assigned to the Pacific Stars & Stripes then. The daily serviceman's newspaper began carrying Steve's bylined reports from Vietnam in 1963. Colonel Donald Dickson, Editor-Publisher of Leatherneck Magazine, presented Stibbens the Bronze Star Medal with Combat V for his coverage of the war for Stripes. From Stripes, Stibbens went to Leatherneck Magazine. When the Marines landed in Da Nang in March 1965, Steve was quick to follow. Photos he made then and on two later trips for the magazine won for him the title "Military Photographer of the Year" in 1964 and 1965 in judging by DoD, Nikon, the University of Missouri School of Journalism and the National Press Photographers Association.



A portrait of a war-weary Army soldier was recognized later as "President's Choice" in a contest judged by President Lyndon Johnson. Steve left the Corps in 1966 and returned to Vietnam for The Associated Press. (Photo above right taken in 1967.) Later, Stibbens re-enlisted in the Reserves and retired from the Corps with 20 years service. His beloved wife, Lucy, of 51 years, passed in 2010. He leaves behind one daughter, Nancy, AKA Suzy. May he Rest In Peace.

Goodbye, dad



Nancy Stibbens (Email) - I always told my Dad that he was the luckiest man I'd ever met. Going through my dad's papers, I'm reminded what a charmed life he led. He always loved traveling, and he seems to have circled the globe at least three times. I found travel vouchers for the Philippines, Tahiti, Reykjavik, most of Germany, and of course, Southeast Asia, and that was just for the Marines. I found menus from fancy restaurants, odd, questionable, souvenirs from the lavish parties at the Paris Air Shows, and ash trays from everywhere. I found his notification of being first in his journalism class, every certificate he had ever been awarded in the Marines, including one for his Bronze Star (which he always attributed more to a stellar recommendation than to his own merits). I also found every letter exchanged between him and my mom while he was overseas, and a slew of my childish drawings. I found every Christmas card anyone ever sent him. Mostly, I found pictures. Pictures of my mom, the love of his life. Pictures of me, playing dress up, first in my mom's clothes, later in my own. Pictures of all the many critters we have had in our lives. Finally, pictures of him with his friends, some famous, many not, but all all of whom were deeply cherished. I have pictures too, of him, grinning from ear to ear, always excited just to see what each new day would bring, delighted just to be in good company. Those I keep in my heart.

Remembering Steve Stibbens



Photo by Steve Stibbens

Former and current AP staffers in front of the old AP office in what used to be Salgon are, from left: Kim Robinson, wife of Carl Robinson; Barry Kramer; Edith Lederer; Richard Pyle; Carl Robinson, and

Jurate Kazickas.

Edie Lederer ([Email](#)) – I met Steve Stibbens at the old Hotel Phnom in Phnom Penh in 1993 at the start of a trip that AP's Pulitzer Prize winning photographer Horst Faas and I put together while we were both based in AP's London bureau - to return and see post-war Vietnam and Cambodia.

Steve had been an AP photographer in old Saigon after working for Stars and Stripes in the 1960s, and he remained very close to Horst. Steve and Horst and my friend Sarah Monks, a former news editor at the South China Morning Post, and I spent four fabulous days visiting Angkor Wat and the surrounding temples, then returned to Phnom Penh and drove to the Vietnamese border where AP's Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Nick Ut met us with a van and driver. We went to old Saigon first, then drove up Highway 1 to the port city of Danang, Vietnam's ancient capital at Hue and on to Hanoi.

It was a magical trip and Steve was terrific company. Even after going into public relations, he retained his love for photography. Horst, who was AP's European photo editor, had given up snapping pictures - but he bought a new Canon camera for the occasion and was back doing what he loved best _ shooting photos - including images of the same ancient bas relief battle scenes he had once photographed at Angkor Wat with Larry Burrows of LIFE, before bullets pockmarked Cambodia's most famous temple complex.

As late as 1993, sporadic Khmer Rouge gunfire could still be heard in the not-so-distant jungle and skull-and-crossbone warnings of land mines were everywhere. Horst nonchalantly waved at our driver to press on to a temple that was more remote. The driver paled and flatly refused. Horst was exasperated but Steve, Sarah and I sympathized with the driver. This, after all, was meant to be a holiday!

It was quite a group - three photographers and two reporters. One memorable and funny moment for me was stopping for lunch in a roadside café near Nha Trang on Highway 1 when a young Vietnamese boy, maybe 11 or 12, heard us speaking English and came over to ask if we could explain the subjunctive to him (he was eagerly learning from "Voice of America in slow English")! Immediately, Steve, Horst and Nick got up and fled to the men's room leaving Sarah and I struggling to put on English teacher hats.

As a result of that trip, Horst and I decided to hold a reunion in old Saigon on April 30, 1995, the 20th anniversary of the end of the war, for the reporters, photographers and TV crews that covered the conflict. Horst, Nick, Steve and I went to the reunion and I remember reminiscing with all of them over drinks about our crazy road trip, down even crazier highways.

I remained in touch with Steve and I know that at one point he was planning to write a book about Horst. I found an email from him in 2016 telling me: "New discoveries of

a city in Cambodia that is older than Angkor Wat... Bests" with a link. Sarah Monks just sent me an email saying "he was truly a lovely, gentle man." Indeed he was, and I am certain that in that great newsroom in heaven he and Horst are together again, cameras in hand, ready for action.

Your memories of the Overnight

Special thanks to Boston overnight editor Jimmy Callagero

Norm Abelson (Email) - Thanks to a sometimes sleepy overnight editor, I got my first chance to write at The Associated Press.

It was the early 1950s and I was still pretty new as the swing-shift copy boy at The AP Boston bureau. Covering for the other copy boys on their time off meant that I worked different hours each day – or night. Usually, after my shift I would stay on through the next one, as a learning experience, asking questions, listening to how the editors handled incoming stories, and then reading their copy.

After working a night shift, I would frequently hang around for the overnight. The overnight editor, Jimmy Callagero, was a heck of a nice guy and a willing mentor. He would take the time for writing instruction and to help train me in the AP style. After a while, he'd let me answer a call and, if the story was minor, take the notes and write a brief piece. What a thrill when I first saw my copy on an AP wire.

Occasionally, when Jimmy hadn't gotten enough sleep during the day, he'd take a doze on a desktop. He told me he trusted me to decide whether an incoming item was important enough to rouse him. Otherwise the story was mine. I was kind of nervous at first, but giving me that responsibility made me feel I was on my way to becoming an AP writer.

Years later, when I was manning the AP office in Concord, N.H., alone, I had confidence I could handle whatever story came my way. Thanks to all the staffers who helped me hone my skills. With a special thank you to Jimmy.

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Still perplexed on off-hours of overnight editors

Henry Bradsher (Email) - In the early '40s, I enjoyed a weekly radio program called "I Love a Mystery," starring Jack, Doc, and Reggie, using theme music by Sibelius, his

"Slow Waltz" (music that stuck in my memory but whose name I only learned decades later).

But now I'm perplexed by, rather than loving, the mystery of what AP overnights do on their nights and days off.

As reported last Thursday, when overnight duties came up in Connecting in 2017, I reported my own switch to staying up days and sleeping nights on my weekends. And I wondered what others did. But no replies then.

So last Thursday, I asked again. And on Friday there were a number of Connecting reminiscences by people who had worked the overnight. But still no answers to my question. A mystery. Should I love it?

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Watching overnight roundup read by Bill Tush and his canine sidekick Rex

Carolyn Carlson ([Email](#)) - Reading Peggy Walsh's item about the Atlanta overnight shifts and the stalwart Mike Barron, who handled the weekday early for my two decades in the bureau, brought back a lot of memories.

I worked my share of weekend overnights and subbed for Mike when he went on vacations. Mike wrote the best carryover notes, hands down, and the busier he was, the funnier they were. I wish someone had compiled a book of them because they were classic.

As for my overnight experiences, I can't seem to think of any big stories that broke. I remember trying to sleep, unsuccessfully, on a two-seater couch in the lobby.

But that was always after 3 a.m. when I would make sure to watch Ted Turner's Superstation WTBS, where Bill Tush would read the Georgia broadcast overnight roundup with his co-anchor Rex, a German Shepard wearing a shirt and tie. It was a live show with just Bill, the dog, a camera operator and a producer operating the controls.

Tush sat at a desk with a print out in front of him and would make hilarious satirical commentary as he read. When he would stumble over some awkward wording, he'd look at the camera and complain that it should have been written better, and even offer some editing suggestions. The dog would agree with a bark. And he'd move on.

I always wondered if anyone besides me was watching, but it turned out he had a cult of drug-addled followers. They followed him to a comedy show called Tush in 1980 and the news show went defunct, to my sorrow.

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Working the overnight on that infamous day in Dallas

Joseph Carter ([Email](#)) - Six decades past, I was Dallas overnight editor for now defunct UPI responsible for the daily overnight feed of worthy news from a half dozen states. My hours were 10 p.m. until 6 a.m.

On November 22, 1963, Division Editor Jack Fallon authorized overtime pay for me to be back-up reporter for Merriman Smith, who was UPI's lone person travelling with President Kennedy during the campaign swing. My hidden bonus was to be a steak luncheon where the President would speak.

During the overnight, as was usual during JFK's campaign swing across Texas, and was customary I did a final rewrite, edited and filed the main lead copy under Smith's byline. Then I wrote and posted another yarn about Texas politics under my byline.

I joined the White House press corps at Dallas' Love Field, finding it logistically impossible to back-up in Fort Worth where JFK and the campaign spent the night. I watched Mrs. Kennedy and JFK descend from Air Force One, made contact with Smitty who handed me a short side-bar piece about JFK calling Texas Jack Garner, the ex-vice president.

Knowing the anti-Democrat anger that recently had boiled in Dallas, I nudged close to the President as he walked the crowded fence line witnessing nothing untoward.

Aboard the White House press bus with Smith and three others in a "pool" car ahead, we all heard the three gun shots that, no doubt, instantly killed JFK and wounded Governor John Connally. My recollections about those six seconds, the hours and days that followed are in an e-book that few have read and recently paid me a 5-cent royalty from Amazon.

By the time I clocked off from my November 21-22 overnight trick, the time was 5 p.m. I was back at the desk at 10 p.m. beginning a wretched period of journalistic efforts to trace, investigate and double check all rumors and the curdling facts that, beyond doubt in my view then and now after following the subject for six decades, that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone. I still harbor grief that such a crime could happen in America committed by such a low-brow dude.

At the time I was too busy to consider its worth, I never was able to find a copy of that UPI A-wire copy filed overnight November 21-22, 1963. Small loss compared with the harbored grief that lingers knowing that such a crime happened in America committed by such a low-brow dude.

PS: For those interested: At the time, I was paid top scale \$160 a week—or \$4 an hour. Overtime was \$6. Smith got a Pulitzer. Fallon, who wrote the breaking story leads, I or others who massively contributed to the main lead, were not mentioned in the award.

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Under the glowering eye of Harris Jackson

Tom Fenton ([Email](#)) - Piling on Harry Dunphy's memories of the overnight, the most vivid thing for me was working the foreign desk (aka cables and the international desk) under the sometimes glowering eye of Harris Jackson. If you missed a chance to work with Harris, you missed an experience. Harris was a larger than life figure, literally, heavy in the extreme with a deep and often sarcastic southern drawl. He might have been the only staffer at AP that would go out for lunch, come back with a big beer and plop it on the desk. Yet he had such a way with copy I think the suits were bound to overlook any shortcomings.

The foreign desk ran 24 hours a day, processing wire copy pouring in from around the globe. Some of this was generated by stringers in third world countries with rudimentary English. Harris would set the story priorities for the shift, and often it would amount to updating a previous story for the PMs cycle. Harris would glance at the incoming copy, write the file number on a slip of paper and pass it across the desk to one of the minions. We would work the copy – which was often quite rough -- and return the slip to Harris indicating we were done with it.

Then we waited.

When Harris got around to reviewing our effort, he would watch the file slowly unfold on his screen and more often than not he would begin shaking his head. Then he would either throw the slip back at the staffer with a sarcastic comment or – if it wasn't too bad -- tear into it. I was told of one incident that when he finished shaking his head, he told the staffer: "If people liked to read the way you write, the 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' would be a best seller today instead of Jacqueline Suzanne's 'Six Times Tonight.'" After some weeks on the desk fewer slips and comments got thrown back at me and a lot less time was spent on a final fix of whatever I worked. I felt like I learned more from those months on the desk with Harris than any grad school writing course or daily newspaper reporting job. He truly had a skill for making copy clear, colorful and concise. And he was fast.

A proud moment for me came one night about halfway through the overnight when Harris looked up from his screen, pushed a pile of slips at me and said, "I'm leaving. The desk is yours."

Rest in peace Harris. You were the product of a different time but you taught much to many of us.

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More memories of Harris Jackson

Joe Frazier ([Email](#)) - Oh My God.

The overnight, also called The Early, was the bane of many, and how many battle-scarred (bottle-scarred sometimes) veterans of the foreign desk could ever forget Harris Jackson, who spent more than 20 years on the shift by choice?

Most of us rotated on and off - an ordeal nobody liked much but Harris did.

He could be a bully and owned a disapproving scowl that could tame tigers and God help you if you were female.

We would hand over a carefully worked wire-ready (we thought) workup on incoming foreign offering and watch his head shake in disgust as he would write the whole thing through, snout to tail. His impatient exasperated exhale was almost a trademark.

It was easy to dismiss him as just another desk-bound copy butcher with no idea of the world but he earned his stripes in Southeast Asia. I don't recall him talking about in much. It would have been in the 1950s.

I remember a night when some Asian copy made a reference to the Bandung Conference in Indonesia in the 1950s convened to rebuild Asia as the colonial era closed down.

Harris dove into it with something approaching glee.

Someone asked him how he knew so much about Bandung.

He lowered his glasses on his nose a notch and said, simply, "I was there."

I left the desk in 1979 for the start of a long run in Mexico and Central America where memorable characters, good and awful, were ten a penny but through all of it I never forgot the overnight and Harris Jackson.

My god, could anyone?

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Life on the Overnight in two acts

Carl P. Leubsdorf (Email) - Life on the Overnight (in two acts): when I arrived in the New Orleans bureau in June 1960, I was immediately assigned to the Overnight, the traditional assignment for the most junior staffer. But as luck would have it, I only remained the bottom guy on the totem pole for one week, replaced there by another new arrival, the late Ben Thomas. A later stalwart of NY Sports, he actually liked the overnight. So I moved up to the 7a-330p shift or occasionally 330p-midnight, both suitable for a young single guy to have a social life.

A couple of years later, when I arrived in the Washington Bureau, I discovered there was a job lower than the overnight, a 530p-2a shift where your job was to answer queries from AP members seeking marchers for some story on one of their rival outfits. The only good things about it was that the hours enabled one to have some sort of life and you to learn a lot about departmental sources from the wonderful Sid Roberts, the veteran in charge of the operation. But I yearned to do more writing, which made the overnight look pretty good. So after four months there, I was able to get myself "promoted" to the Overnight, four nights 1030p-7a and Saturday night from 1-9am. Like Larry Margasak, lots of early morning nap time, useful for someone who by then had a house full of small children. The hope, of course, was that something big would break at 1 am, enabling you to do something that got the attention of the boss. No such luck. In 15 months, the only such "breaking news" came when President Johnson was rushed to the hospital three days after his inauguration. But that was the night we got advance copies of the new budget, So the bureau was filled with more senior staffers. It took me 15 more months to make my escape. Never missed a minute of it.

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Overnight shift led to me meeting my husband

Diane Palguta (Email) - Leaving work at 7 am after an overnight shift, I discovered my car had been hit. There was a note on the windshield from a police officer. I called the telephone number on the note and found out three parked cars on that street had been hit by a drunk driver. My car was smashed on the passenger side but at least I could drive home and get some sleep. Dealing with multiple court appearances, forms, and the body shop, I learned a lot about insurance, the court system, and received an unexpected bonus. After the case ended, the deputy prosecutor and I went on a date. We married a couple of years later. I received only part of the dollar amount of restitution that the judge ordered, but being happily married since 1985, having two children, and a grandchild are nothing to sneeze at. Like my mother said, good can come from bad.

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Wake-up call from the early editor? No second month for you

Dan Sewell ([Email](#)) - Loving these overnight shift stories. Through nearly four decades with AP, I have so far avoided doing that shift except for a few times when the regular was out sick.

However, as a young news editor in Miami, I quickly learned not to encourage the EE (Early Editor) to call me at home with all questions - just if there was big breaking news.

We didn't have anyone who wanted to do that shift, so I scheduled a monthly rotation. But the ones who kept waking me up with things that could have waited or the General Desk could have answered didn't get assigned a second month.

Also, the old Miami bureau's Biscayne Boulevard location became increasingly a hub for drug activity. John-Thor Dahlburg, who went to become an international correspondent, was on the EE one night when there were two shootings in our parking lot.

And, my Harris Jackson story: Doing a temporary stint on the Cables desk, I watched one of the supervising editors ask Harris: "Don't you think our members might want something more on that story?"

Harris snapped: "They want what I decide to give them!"

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Happy overnight workers are born, not made

Doug Tucker ([Email](#)) - I am retired, master of my own schedule, and writing this at 3:50 a.m.

You think I wasn't a natural for the overnight shift?

Those may have been the happiest 11 months of my 42-year AP career. Night after night in that sprawling office on the third floor of the historic Kansas City Star building, I filed the broadcast wire while the remarkable Wes Cook, KC's Mr. Overnight, looked after everything else.

I absolutely loved driving home at 8 in the morning while the rest of the workaday world came at me bleary-eyed from the opposite direction. Worker bees sipped coffee at the red light, dripping a drop onto their front while yearning for just one more hour

of sleep. But for the rest of the morning and all afternoon and evening I was a free man. It didn't matter how much I slept during the day. All I needed was an hour or so right before leaving for work and I was locked and loaded.

Many years later I read about circadian rhythm and people having different sleeping and waking cycles. The midnight-to-eight shift came as naturally to me as his golf swing came to Sam Snead. I suspect the same is true for everyone who enjoys working hours that make "normal" folks wacky.

Happy overnight workers are born, not made.

Best of the Week

With fast filing and powerful visuals, AP owns coverage of fires in Greek migrant camp



AP Photo/Panagiotis Balaskas

When an overnight blaze swept through Greece's biggest refugee camp on the Mediterranean island of Lesbos, AP was quicker and better than the competition in getting the story, producing cross-format coverage that stood out, even as much of the world media flocked to the chaotic scene.

Derek Gatopoulos, AP's veteran text reporter based in Athens, launched the coverage after spotting Twitter posts about the fire in the middle of the night. Realizing the situation was serious, he woke colleagues in other formats and wrote a quick story that moved just after 3 a.m. in Greece, about 20 minutes ahead of the competition.

Gatopoulos stayed up through the night filing updates until bureau chief Elena Becatoros and Athens reporter Nicholas Paphitis took over the mainbar in the morning. Meanwhile, senior video producer Theodora Tongas and chief photographer Thanassis Stavrakis in Athens worked with Lesbos-based freelancers Vangelis Papantonis and Panagiotis Balaskas to get the first images out, while editors in London and the U.S. hunted for user generated content.

AP was far ahead of its major video competition. AP had filed its fifth video edit by the time one of its main competitors had its second. AP's 15 edits in the first 24 hours combined for spectacular play.

Read more [here](#).

Best of the States

Putting a human face to the numbers: A waiter made homeless by the pandemic



Jeff Lello, who has been living out of his van since being laid off during the pandemic, in Orlando, Fla., Aug. 21, 2020. PHELAN M. EBENHACK

A waiter's story of desperation vividly illustrates how the pandemic economy has impacted the most vulnerable workers.

Since the pandemic took hold in America earlier this year, the economic impact has been huge, with millions laid off or underemployed and struggling to make ends meet. While myriad stories have covered this, few have been able to capture how the chilling trickle-down effect is changing lives.

Enter Kelli Kennedy. The Florida reporter produced a compelling story with heartbreaking detail on one man's struggle with the devastating economic effects of the coronavirus shutdowns. Orlando resident Jeff Lello lost his waiter job, ended up homeless and briefly lived in a tent in the woods. Kelli heard about Lello in early July while reporting on Florida's unemployed and their glitches in receiving state and federal aid, and tried to make contact. He was difficult to track down and once reached, canceled several interviews before finally going forward.

Read more [here](#).

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Grey Montgomery – grey.montgomery@gmail.com

Karol Stonger – karol.stonger@gmail.com

Stories of interest

***'Remember Hanging Chads? That's Play-doh':
Election Night may be just the beginning of the real
2020 drama***

By JOE POMPEO
Vanity Fair

In the wee hours of November 8, 2000, Ron Fournier was practically chained to his desk in the Associated Press's Washington bureau on K Street, working his sources within the Al Gore and George W. Bush campaigns. He was putting together the wire's lead election-night story, which needed to be rushed out as soon as Bush or Gore was declared the 43rd president of the United States.

The pressure in the room was palpable. The AP had been calling elections since before the Civil War, and clients around the world paid good money for its coverage. An army of stringers was spread out all over the country, phoning in results to the mothership as county officials transmitted them. Whenever a state's general election winner was confirmed, someone would scurry over to where Fournier and his editor were sitting and hand them a certified piece of paper with the lucky candidate's name on it. Before Fournier had received enough of those tallies for the AP to herald the next president's coronation, however, they got scooped: the nail-biter in Florida had just tipped the scales, and the networks called the election for Bush.

There was a problem, though—one of Gore's field directors reached out to the AP claiming that Florida's count looked screwy. Several editors huddled around a desk and stared at the numbers. They came to the same conclusion: the AP could not yet make a call on Florida. Fournier picked up the phone and started dialing anyone and everyone he knew in the Gore campaign to find out if Gore had already conceded. He had, but before sunrise, the concession was rescinded. And so began the infamous Florida recount, a battle that would make its way up to the Supreme Court, inspire an HBO political thriller, and shake the nation's confidence in our electoral system.

Two decades later, on the morning of November 4, journalists may very well look back on the fraught, divisive, Democracy-testing saga of Bush v. Gore with wistful nostalgia. "It's gonna make 2000 look like an election for high school class president," Fournier told me of this year's presidential grudge match. "2000 will look awfully quaint." As CBS News president Susan Zirinsky put it, "Remember hanging chads? Oh my God, that's Play-Doh!"

Read more [here](#). Shared by Francesca Pitaro.

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College newspaper reporters are the journalism heroes for the pandemic era (Washington Post)

By Elahe Izadi

In New York, it was the Washington Square News that first reported a covid-19 outbreak in a college dorm. In Gainesville, Fla., the Alligator is the newspaper that has been painstakingly updating a map of local cases. And the Daily Gamecock alerted the public to the ways that University of South Carolina officials were withholding information about covid-19 clusters.

While the pandemic economy has devastated the local news business, there remains a cadre of small newspapers that are more energized than ever, producing essential work from the center of the nation's newest coronavirus hot spots.

Those would be college newspapers, whose student journalists have been kept busy breaking news of campus outbreaks, pushing for transparency from administrators and publishing scathing editorials about controversial reopening plans.

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

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Vile social media attacks target Pakistani women journalists

By KATHY GANNON

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The Committee to Protect Journalists on Friday condemned relentless social media attacks on women journalists in Pakistan — vicious assaults that have threatened rape and even death.

The attacks often follow instances of public criticism of the ruling party, led by Prime Minister Imran Khan, a former celebrity cricket player who turned to politics later in life and whose following includes legions of young people.

Criticism had focused on Khan's handling of the coronavirus pandemic. Pakistan has reported over 304,00 cases of the virus, including 6,408 deaths. The numbers have been declining since June, with fewer than 400 new cases reported on most days and as testing has increased.

The relentless trolling and mounting complaints from women journalists prompted CPJ's Asia program coordinator Steve Butler and senior Asia researcher Aliya Iftikar to warn that those spewing abuse online of Pakistani women journalists are often fans of the ruling party.

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

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Judge rules on scope of testimony in newspaper shooting case

By BRIAN WITTE

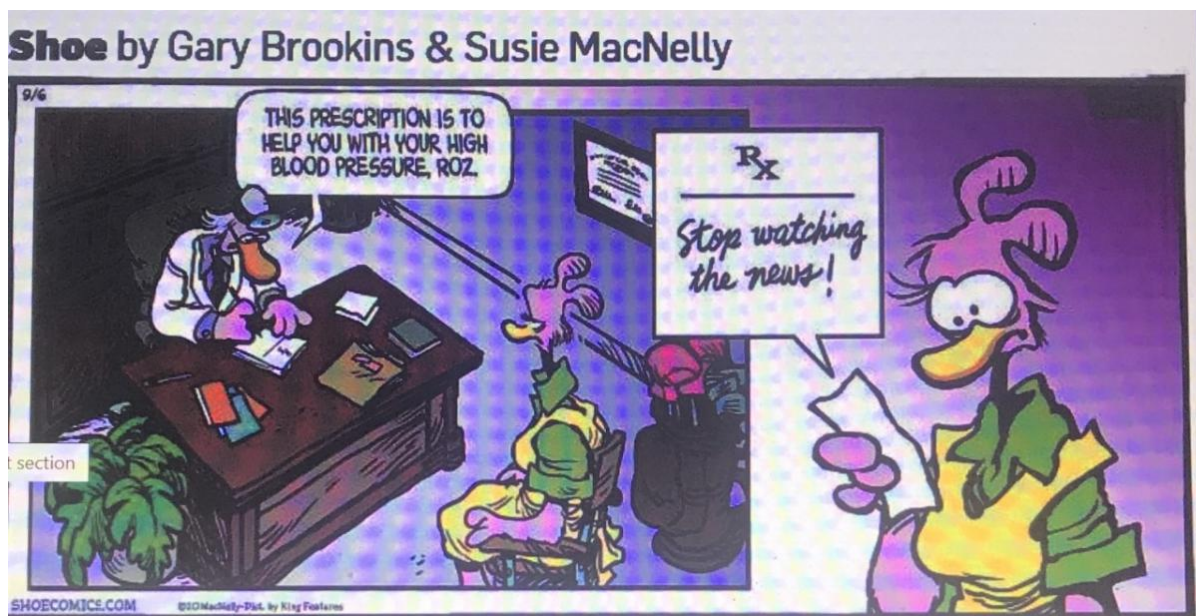
ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — A psychiatrist retained by prosecutors in the sanity phase of a trial for a man who killed five people at a Maryland newspaper isn't barred by law from testifying about whether he believes the gunman was criminally responsible, but he can't directly compare him to other mass shooters in an FBI report, a judge ruled Friday.

Judge Laura Ripken ruled at a pretrial hearing that Dr. Gregory Saathoff can testify before a jury about his findings relating to the criminal responsibility of Jarrod Ramos, even though Saathoff has not examined him in person.

The judge ruled last month that Saathoff could testify, but defense attorneys have been trying to limit the scope of what he can say on the stand. They contended the lack of an interview with Ramos should preclude the psychiatrist's testimony on criminal responsibility.

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

The Final Word



(Shared by Bruce Lowitt)

Today in History - September 21, 2020



By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, Sept. 21, the 265th day of 2020. There are 101 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 21, 1981, the Senate unanimously confirmed the nomination of Sandra Day O'Connor to become the first female justice on the Supreme Court.

On this date:

In 1792, the French National Convention voted to abolish the monarchy.

In 1937, "The Hobbit," by J.R.R. Tolkien, was first published by George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. of London.

In 1938, a hurricane struck parts of New York and New England, causing widespread damage and claiming some 700 lives.

In 1970, "NFL Monday Night Football" made its debut on ABC-TV as the Cleveland Browns defeated the visiting New York Jets, 31-21.

In 1976, Orlando Letelier (leh-tel-YEHR'), onetime foreign minister to Chilean President Salvador Allende (ah-YEN'-day), was killed when a bomb exploded in his car in Washington D.C. (The bombing, which also killed Letelier's assistant, Ronni Moffitt, was blamed on Chile's secret police.)

In 1982, Amin Gemayel, brother of Lebanon's assassinated president-elect, Bashir Gemayel, was himself elected president. National Football League players began a 57-day strike, their first regular-season walkout ever.

In 1985, in North Korea and South Korea, family members who had been separated for decades were allowed to visit each other as both countries opened their borders in an unprecedented family-reunion program.

In 1987, NFL players called a strike, mainly over the issue of free agency. (The 24-day walkout prompted football owners to hire replacement players.)

In 1989, Hurricane Hugo crashed into Charleston, South Carolina (the storm was blamed for 56 deaths in the Caribbean and 29 in the United States). Twenty-one students in Alton, Texas, died when their school bus, hit by a soft-drink delivery truck, careened into a water-filled pit.

In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed the Defense of Marriage Act denying federal recognition of same-sex marriages, a day after saying the law should not be used as an excuse for discrimination, violence or intimidation against gays and lesbians. (Although never formally repealed, DoMA was effectively overturned by U.S. Supreme Court decisions in 2013 and 2015.)

In 2001, Congress again opened the federal coffers to those harmed by terrorism, providing \$15 billion to the airline industry, which was suffering mounting economic losses since the Sept. 11 attacks.

In 2008, baseball said farewell to the original Yankee Stadium as the Bronx Bombers defeated the Baltimore Orioles 7-3.

Ten years ago: The mayor and ex-city manager of the Los Angeles suburb of Bell were among eight current and former city officials arrested in a corruption scandal that authorities said cost the blue-collar city more than \$5.5 million in excessive salaries and illegal personal loans. Two men filed a lawsuit accusing Atlanta megachurch pastor Bishop Eddie Long of coercing them into sexual relationships when they were teenage members of his congregation. (Long, who denied the allegations, later reached out-of-court settlements with them and two other men.)

Five years ago: Pope Francis traveled to Cuba's fourth-largest city, Holguin, where he celebrated a Mass marking the anniversary of the day he decided as a teenager to become a priest by pressing a subtle message to Cubans: Overcome ideological preconceptions and be willing to change. Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker abandoned his bid for the 2016 Republican presidential nomination. A federal judge in Albany, Georgia, sentenced former Peanut Corporation of America owner Stewart Parnell to 28 years in prison for his role in a deadly 2008-9 salmonella outbreak blamed for nine deaths.

One year ago: In a tweet, President Donald Trump said his July conversation with Ukraine's president was "perfectly fine and routine," and added: "Nothing was said that was in any way wrong." Officials reported a handful of arrests from a three-day gathering near Nevada's once-secret Area 51 military base; it had been prompted by

an appeal from an internet hoaxster for people to “storm” the base to see space aliens.

Today’s Birthdays: Author-comedian Fannie Flagg is 79. Producer Jerry Bruckheimer is 77. Former Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear is 76. Musician Don Felder is 73. Author Stephen King is 73. Basketball Hall of Famer Artis Gilmore is 71. Actor-comedian Bill Murray is 70. Former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd is 63. Movie producer-writer Ethan Coen is 63. Actor-comedian Dave Coulier is 61. Actor David James Elliott is 60. Actor Serena Scott-Thomas is 59. Actor Nancy Travis is 59. Actor Rob Morrow is 58. Actor Angus Macfadyen is 57. Retired MLB All-Star Cecil Fielder is 57. Actor Cheryl Hines is 55. Country singer Faith Hill is 53. Rock musician Tyler Stewart (Barenaked Ladies) is 53. Country singer Ronna Reeves is 52. Actor-talk show host Ricki Lake is 52. Rapper Dave (De La Soul) is 52. Actor Billy Porter is 51. Actor Rob Benedict is 50. Actor James Lesure is 49. Actor Alfonso Ribeiro (rih-BEHR’-oh) is 49. Actor Luke Wilson is 49. Actor Paulo Costanzo is 42. Actor Bradford Anderson is 41. Actor Autumn Reeser is 40. TV personality Nicole Richie is 39. Actor Maggie Grace is 37. Actor Joseph Mazzello is 37. Actor Ahna O’Reilly is 36. Rapper Wale (WAH’-lay) is 36. R&B singer Jason Derulo is 34. Actor Ryan Guzman is 33. Actors Lorenzo and Nikolas Brino are 22.

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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