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Connecting

October 06, 2020

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this the 6th day of October 2020,

The AP and Report for America placed 17 journalists in statehouses around the country to address a decline in the number of journalists covering state government across the industry. Report for America is a nonprofit dedicated to covering local news and eliminating news deserts. The journalists began in June and will be with AP through December 2021. The corps began its work during the pandemic, protests, a national reckoning on race and amid one of the most consequential presidential elections in our lifetimes.

As our colleague **Noreen Gillespie**, AP's deputy managing editor for U.S. News, notes, the group wasted no time in making its presence felt across the AP. See our lead story in today's Connecting.

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

AP's Report for America journalists making their presence felt

Noreen Gillespie ([Email](#)) - Our Report for America corps members are now familiar names in the news report – and we are seeing so much impact from their work. Take a moment to look at some of the stories they've been involved with over the past few weeks and be inspired by the journalism they are creating.

RACIAL INJUSTICE



Piper Hudspeth Blackburn, our corps member in Kentucky, brought us to Appalachia to see how Black residents are finding an opportunity for their history and struggles to be recognized more widely. [The story showed](#) how the national reckoning on race is being felt in a region that isn't known for its diversity. Piper has also been a key member of the coverage team covering the [Breonna Taylor case](#), including the [audio recordings of the grand jury](#).

Patty Nieberg, in Colorado, has been part of the coverage team looking at the Elijah McClain case. Her reporting led her to [look at the use of ketamine](#) – and she revealed that it is increasingly found in arrests despite a lack of police training, conflicting

medical standards and nonexistent protocols that have resulted in hospitalizations and deaths. It's become another flashpoint in the national discussion of police brutality.

Mohamed Ibrahim continues to play an important role in coverage of the George Floyd. Ibrahim reported on the state's passage of several police accountability measures prompted by Floyd's death, including the disappointment of activists who saw them as woefully inadequate. Ibrahim also was the lead on video coverage for a closely watched pretrial hearing for the four officers charged in Floyd's death.

Sophia Eppolito, Utah, teamed up with R&E team member Felicia Fonseca to look at a place where Native mascots still persist – high school. While Washington's NFL team is changing its name, Eppolito and Fonseca showed that it's not uncommon to find Braves, Indians, Warriors, Chiefs and Redskins in schools across the country. In Bountiful, Utah, Lemiley Lane, who is Navajo, transferred to the high school last year. She left an assembly when she saw the "Brave Man," a white student wearing a headdress. "I couldn't stay there because I felt uncomfortable; I felt unwelcome," she told Sophia.

NONPROFIT COLLABORATION



Sam Metz traveled to the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation for a story that showed how tribes see ballot collection as a critical way to boost historically low Native American turnout. And they are targeting bans on the practice in several states, including Arizona and Montana, as more states move to mail-in voting during the pandemic. The story was a hit for new AP nonprofit customer Indian Country Today, which is working closely with AP to develop content that reaches Native audiences.

REPORT FOR AMERICA X AP = FRONT PAGE DOMINANCE!



Audiences around the country woke up to AP/R4A bylines all over local front pages on Sept. 14. **Sara Cline**, Oregon, teamed with Lindsay Whitehurst on the expanding California wildfires, and **Casey Smith** looked at how districts around the country were scrambling to fill the roles of teachers who resigned, retired or took leave because of the pandemic. A quick count found their bylines on more than a dozen front pages.

TRACKING THE VIRUS

Leah Willingham traveled to Philadelphia, Miss., to show the devastation the virus has wrought on the Choctaw tribe. She brought us to a cemetery that's running out of space – a sign of how many lives have been lost. [Eighteen-year-old Kristina Taylor](#) told her of learning just before her mother was admitted to the hospital that she had been named valedictorian. In their last moments together, she read her mother the speech and showed her the beadwork her sister had prepared for her cap. Leah also has led the way on [teacher deaths](#) and looked at how [Black families are seeking out Black doctors](#) amid the pandemic.

EYES ON VOTING

North Carolina-based corps member Bryan Anderson anchored a story as North Carolina kicked off nationwide balloting by being the [first state to send absentee ballots to voters](#) who requested them. The piece, which featured a collaboration with a national political reporter, a VJ and a photographer, drew 20,000 page views in its first 12 hours and earned multiple front pages. **Farnoush Amiri** has also been covering [legal developments in Ohio](#) around ballot rules.

More Report for America News...

- **Acacia Coronado**, Texas, **Mohammed Ibrahim**, Minnesota, **Sam Metz**, Nevada, and **Patty Nieberg**, Colorado are among the team members who are going to be focusing on voting problems in battleground states on Election Day, working with state government editor Tom Verdin. This is a critical lane in our overall coverage as we seek to break news on potential ballot problems and voter suppression efforts in all 50 states.
- **Farnoush Amiri**, Ohio, and **Sophia Eppolito**, Utah, recently spoke at a panel hosted by Women@AP called "Beginning Again in the Middle of a Pandemic" to tell their stories about moving and starting a new job as the U.S. shut down.
- **Did you know** that the Report for America program's work is available to nonprofit news outlets, as well as AP's customers? More than 17 nonprofit outlets have signed up to receive and distribute the corps members work so far in the program, and we're looking to grow this number. As a growing force in local news in America, we're proud that AP-R4A bylines are showing up in more of these outlets. Inquiries about how to get this work to a nonprofit outlet should go to **Jake Kreinberg** or **Jim Pollock**.
- **Ted Anthony**, director of digital innovation, is working with the corps members to produce a series of first-person dispatches about their experiences reporting across some of 2020s top stories. These dispatches will also appear on Report for America's website. Stay tuned for the project's debut.
- **Report for America** is [one of six finalists](#) in 100&Change, a global competition for a single \$100 million grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

We're thrilled for our partners in the statehouse news program!

This is far from the complete list of stories our corps members worked on collectively over the past month – keep your eyes out for all of their work! And thank you to the whole group of 17 who have been inspiring us with their work from datelines we don't often see, and dedication to inclusive storytelling.

Look for another update after election day!

On a fateful day in history - 39 years ago





Bill Foley October 6, 1981

Bill Foley (Email) - On October 5th, 1981 Egyptian President Anwar Sadat had a meeting with his Vice President, Hosni Mubarak at his Nile side residence in Giza. Afterwards, back at the AP office on Kasr el Nil in downtown Cairo, I processed and edited the film of the meeting. This was back in the day when it took one 15 minutes to transmit one black and white photograph, providing there was no problem with the phone lines. As I edited and printed the photograph of the meeting, I thought that Sadat appeared tired and small, compared to his vice president, Hosni Mubarak, who looked strong and robust.

The next day, October 6th, the anniversary of the Egyptian victory over the Israeli army in 1973, only one of them would survive an attack by Islamic militants enraged by Sadat's peace deal with Israel.

The first 6th of October "parade" I photographed was in 1978, and we photographed Sadat and Mubarak as they drove around ancient military hardware parked in the desert on the outskirts of Cairo. By 1981, the Egyptians were enjoying the fruits of

Sadat's trip to Jerusalem in 1977, and the Camp David Accords, helped along by U.S. President Jimmy Carter. The Americans and Europeans sent new planes, tanks, and other assorted military equipment as they replaced the old tired Egyptian arsenal.

This photograph (above) of Anwar Sadat I have always called "The Last Smile". In the moment I made this photograph, I thought that he looked very happy and that all was right with the world. He was looking up at his new air force jets as they flew overhead. A few minutes later, Khaled Islambouly and his colleagues jumped off an army truck as it passed the reviewing stand, ran up to Sadat firing automatic rifles killing him. Sadat was dead, the reviewing stand was chaos with people running in all directions.

39 years after Sadat's assassination, and 10 years after the "Arab Spring" which saw President Hosni Mubarak removed from office and Muslim Brotherhood leader Mohamed Morsi elected President of Egypt in 2012. After Egypt's brief fling with democracy, President Morsi was overthrown by the Egyptian army in 2013 and thrown into prison. Former Egyptian General Fattah El Sisi remains President of Egypt.

More thoughts on protest/riot in Stylebook

Lee Mitgang ([Email](#)) - I'd like to add a quick thought on the AP Stylebook change on the use of "riot."

I largely agree with the stylebook's cautions about the term "riot" (though I also suspect such distinctions by AP will remain at the mercy of members' headline writers). I think it's important, for example, to dig into whether a gathering with little or no violent intent by organizers and participants is deliberately goaded by outsider groups or the police into violent actions or simple self-defense. In those cases, the label "riot" to describe the event is reductive and unfair. In general, I think readers' understanding of such gatherings or protests is best served more by thorough reporting than by trying to calculate whether an event has somehow crossed a debatable line that earns it the far more judgmental, pejorative label "riot".

Connecting mailbox

Jerry Pye leaves things better than he found them

Ric Brack ([Email](#)) - Thank you for the profile on my friend and former colleague Jerry Pye (in Monday's Connecting). You can tell where he's been because he leaves things better than he found them, and that's certainly the case with the newspapers he ran in Northeast Texas. Congratulations to a true gentleman (and his beloved Ruby) on a well-deserved retirement.

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Frankly Speaking: Frank Daniels Jr.

Gary Pearce on Politics and Public Policy in North Carolina

Frank Daniels Jr. has the right name. If he's anything, he's frank.

When he says something, it's direct and to the point. With the bark off. And maybe with a profanity thrown in. You don't have to guess what he's thinking.

Maybe they'll teach some of that at the new executive-in-residence program named in honor of Frank at the UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media.

It's a richly deserved and fitting honor for a giant of North Carolina journalism.

Frank's nephew David Woronoff, publisher of The Pilot in Southern Pines, said, "Everyone can use a Frank Jr. in their lives." I'm lucky to have had Frank Jr. in my life. I started my career at The News & Observer, where Frank was president and publisher from 1971-1996.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Julie Wood.

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Got this clue?





< Big name in nonprofit journalism >

Chris Connell ([Email](#)) - Note the last clue in the Sunday New York Times crossword.

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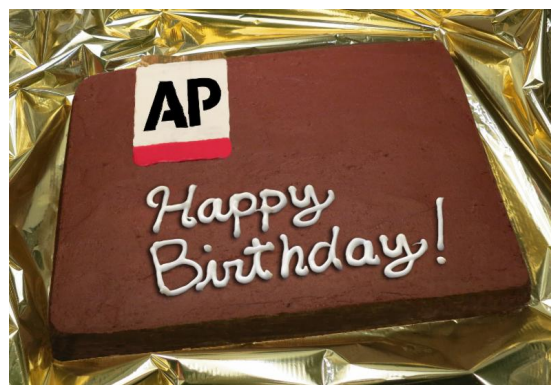
Two Editors in Poultney, Vermont



Kevin Walsh ([Email](#)) - The Two Editors Inn in Poultney, Vermont. Dating back to the 1830s, the name of the building refers to Horace Greeley and George Jones, who became friends as teenagers in the small town of Poultney.

Greeley went on to become the founder and editor of the New York Tribune ("Go west, young man..."). Jones co-founded the New York Daily Times, which later became the New York Times.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Marcia Budd - tantabudd@aol.com

Gary Graham - garygraham74@gmail.com

Adriana Wiersma - awiersma7@gmail.com

Stories of interest

As Virus Invades West Wing, White House Reporters Face Heightened Risks (New York Times)



Kayleigh McEnany, the White House press secretary, on Friday. She said on Monday that she had tested positive for the coronavirus. Credit: Anna Money maker for The New York Times

By Michael M. Grynbaum

Visitors to the White House will notice a makeshift sign taped to the door of the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room, entry point for the reportorial corps that regularly covers President Trump and his administration. "Masks Required Beyond This Point," it reads. "Please wear masks over both your nose and mouth at all times."

The sign was not put up by the White House. The correspondents had to do it themselves.

Throughout a pandemic that has now landed squarely in the West Wing, Trump officials — who routinely shunned masks — declined to institute thorough safety protocols to protect the White House press corps, according to interviews with reporters who now face the prospect of a rapidly escalating outbreak in their daily work space.

“The only place on the White House grounds where a mask has been required is the White House press area, and the only people who have routinely violated that rule have been White House staff,” Jonathan Karl, ABC’s chief White House correspondent, said in an interview.

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

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L.A. Times Editor Norman Pearlstine to step down (LA Times)

By MEG JAMES

Los Angeles Times Executive Editor Norman Pearlstine announced that he would soon step down and that the paper was launching a search for a new top editor.

Pearlstine, who celebrated his 78th birthday over the weekend, made the announcement Monday morning during a meeting with top editors and then in a note to staff members.

“It has been an honor to serve as your executive editor since Patrick and Michele Soon-Shiong acquired the Los Angeles Times in June of 2018,” Pearlstine wrote. “Now, we have agreed that it’s time to begin an open search for my successor.”

Pearlstine went on to say that Soon-Shiong “has asked me to remain as executive editor during the search and to work with him on it. I have also accepted his offer to continue as an advisor after my successor is named.”

Read more [here](#).

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How to Cover a Sick Old Man (New York Times)

By Ben Smith

When John Bresnahan was starting out as a reporter in the mid-1990s, he approached Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, who had run for president in 1948 as a segregationist and was still shuffling through the Capitol. Senator Thurmond, born in 1902, gave no indication that he'd understood Mr. Bresnahan's question and responded with a non sequitur.

The young reporter saw his older colleagues shaking their heads and snickering. The kid had expected the elderly senator to be able to carry on a conversation! They didn't report on Senator Thurmond's infirmity — that wasn't how things were done — but they all knew about it.

These days, Mr. Bresnahan is the congressional bureau chief for Politico. A Navy veteran with the demeanor of a guy you've dragged out of a dive bar in the eighth inning of the Yankees game, he has become Capitol Hill's grim reaper, a rare reporter with the stomach to print some obvious truths: that some top lawmakers aren't all there.

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

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WATCH Newstown: Medill Professor's Documentary on the Closing of the Youngstown Vindicator (Local News Initiative)

When Northwestern University professor and video journalist Craig Duff heard that the 150-year-old Youngstown Vindicator was closing, he resolved to go back to the area where he grew up in northeast Ohio and document how the community was coping with the loss of its newspaper.

What the veteran of CNN, Time.com and The New York Times learned is that people from inside and outside of Youngstown were determined to take action to keep the public informed. While the fate of the "Vindy" is symbolic of the crisis facing many local news outlets, Duff's documentary highlights the dedication of journalists and the importance of their work.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Richard Chady.

The Final Word

Giftng big league foul balls sweet way to connect with fans



San Diego Padres fan Vinicio López holds up a foul ball, Sunday, Sept. 6, 2020, in Alameda, Calif. (AP Photo/Janie McCauley)

By JANIE McCAULEY

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — It began when lifelong baseball fan Kimberlee MacVicar intimated that in her 52 years, she had never corralled a foul ball.

“I’ve waited half a century, so I’m not in a rush,” she texted me on July 24 — opening night in Oakland.

With nobody else to scavenge for baseballs during this strange COVID-19 season devoid of fans, I had a clear advantage as a regular covering Bay Area baseball and one of the few people allowed inside the stadium. So I saw to it that the next day, MacVicar received a ball hit foul by slugger Mark Canha as her Athletics defeated the Angels.

This sparked an idea: Why not share the souvenirs, spreading some joy to those who can’t go to the ballpark?

A’s management signed off on the project. The Coliseum grounds crew took to tipping me off as to where to find the prizes.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Sylvia Wingfield.

Today in History - October 06, 2020



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Oct. 6, the 280th day of 2020. There are 86 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 6, 1973, war erupted in the Middle East as Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel during the Yom Kippur holiday. (Israel, initially caught off guard, managed to push back the Arab forces before a cease-fire finally took hold in the nearly three-week conflict.)

On this date:

In 1884, the Naval War College was established in Newport, Rhode Island.

In 1927, the era of talking pictures arrived with the opening of "The Jazz Singer" starring Al Jolson, a feature containing both silent and sound-synchronized sequences.

In 1928, Chiang Kai-shek became president of China.

In 1939, in a speech to the Reichstag, German Chancellor Adolf Hitler spoke of his plans to reorder the ethnic layout of Europe [-] a plan which would entail settling the "Jewish problem."

In 1949, President Harry S. Truman signed the Mutual Defense Assistance Act, providing \$1.3 billion in military aid to NATO countries.

In 1969, the New York Mets won the first-ever National League Championship Series, defeating the Atlanta Braves, 7-4, in Game 3; the Baltimore Orioles won the first-ever American League Championship Series, defeating the Minnesota Twins 11-2 in Game 3.

In 1976, President Gerald R. Ford, in his second presidential debate with Democrat Jimmy Carter, asserted that there was “no Soviet domination of eastern Europe.” (Ford later conceded such was not the case.)

In 1979, Pope John Paul II, on a week-long U.S. tour, became the first pontiff to visit the White House, where he was received by President Jimmy Carter.

In 1981, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was shot to death by extremists while reviewing a military parade.

In 2004, the top U.S. arms inspector in Iraq, Charles Duelfer (DEHL'-fur), reported finding no evidence Saddam Hussein's regime had produced weapons of mass destruction after 1991.

In 2014, the Supreme Court unexpectedly cleared the way for a dramatic expansion of gay marriage in the United States as it rejected appeals from five states seeking to preserve their bans, effectively making such marriages legal in 30 states.

In 2018, in the narrowest Senate confirmation of a Supreme Court justice in nearly a century and a half, Brett Kavanaugh was confirmed by a 50-48 vote; he was sworn in hours later.

Ten years ago: A presidential commission said the Obama administration had blocked efforts by government scientists to tell the American public just how bad the Gulf oil spill could become and committed other missteps that raised questions about its competence and candor during the crisis. Roy Halladay pitched the second no-hitter in postseason history, leading the Philadelphia Phillies over the Cincinnati Reds 4-0 in Game 1 of the NL division series. Social networking app Instagram was launched by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger.

Five years ago: Gen. John F. Campbell, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, recommended before Congress that President Barack Obama revise his plan to cut the current U.S. force of 9,800 and keep more than 1,000 U.S. troops in the country beyond 2016. Takaaki Kajita of Japan and Arthur McDonald of Canada won the Nobel Prize in physics for key discoveries about neutrinos, a cosmic particle that whizzes through space at nearly the speed of light, passing easily through Earth and even people's bodies. Convicted killer Juan Martin Garcia was executed by Texas for fatally shooting another man in a robbery that yielded just \$8.

One year ago: The White House said U.S. forces in northeast Syria would move aside and clear the way for an expected Turkish assault, essentially abandoning Kurdish fighters who'd fought alongside American forces against Islamic State militants.

(Turkey would launch the assault days later.) The FBI said California prison inmate Samuel Little, who claimed to have killed more than 90 women across the country, was considered to be the deadliest serial killer in U.S. history, and that all of his confessions appeared to be credible. Ginger Baker, the drummer who helped shatter boundaries of time, tempo and style in popular music during his work with Cream and other bands, died at the age of 80. Comedian Rip Taylor died in Beverly Hills, California, at the age of 88.

Today's Birthdays: Broadcaster and writer Melvyn Bragg is 81. Actor Britt Ekland is 78. The former leader of Sinn Fein (shin fayn), Gerry Adams, is 72. Singer-musician Thomas McClary is 71. Musician Sid McGinnis is 71. Rock singer Kevin Cronin (REO Speedwagon) is 69. Rock singer-musician David Hidalgo (Los Lobos) is 66. Pro Football Hall of Famer Tony Dungy is 65. Actor Elisabeth Shue is 57. Singer Matthew Sweet is 56. Actor Jacqueline Obradors is 54. Country singer Tim Rushlow is 54. Rock musician Tommy Stinson is 54. Actor Amy Jo Johnson is 50. Actor Emily Mortimer is 49. Actor Lamman (la-MAHN') Rucker is 49. Actor Ioan Gruffudd (YOH'-ihn GRIH'-fihth) is 47. Actor Jeremy Sisto is 46. Actor Brett Gelman is 44. Rhythm-and-blues singer Melinda Doolittle is 43. Actor Wes Ramsey is 43. Actor Karimah Westbook is 42. Singer-musician Will Butler is 38. Actor Stefanie Martini is 30.

Got a story or photos to share?

Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Second chapters** - You finished a great career. Now tell us about your second (and third and fourth?) chapters of life.
- **Spousal support** - How your spouse helped in supporting your work during your AP career.
- **My most unusual story** - tell us about an unusual, off the wall story that you covered.
- **"A silly mistake that you make"** - a chance to 'fess up with a memorable mistake in your journalistic career.
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.
- **Volunteering** - benefit your colleagues by sharing volunteer stories - with ideas on such work they can do themselves.
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?



- **Connecting "selfies"** - a word and photo self-profile of you and your career, and what you are doing today. Both for new members and those who have been with us a while.

- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.

Paul Stevens

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