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## Connecting October 14, 2020

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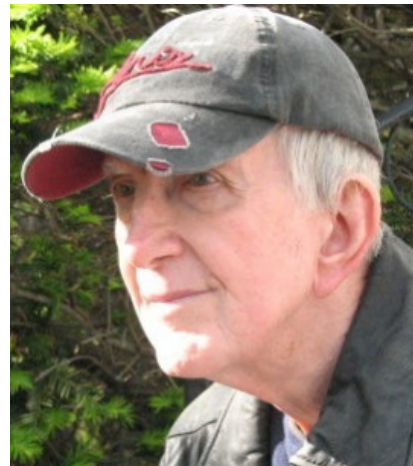
Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this the 14<sup>th</sup> day of October 2020,

**“I could no less stop writing than stop breathing.”**

That telling quote from longtime AP sports writer **Ken Rappoport** summarized his passion for the written word – exemplified in his 37-year career with The Associated Press and his work as an author of books.

Ken died Tuesday at the age of 85, and we lead with a great story on his life, and death, by current AP sports writer **Barry Wilner**. As noted at the end of the story, the family is holding a limited memorial service due to the coronavirus pandemic. Memorial



donations in his memory can be made to Beth Israel in Northfield, New Jersey. Condolences can be sent to the family through the J.S. Goldstein Funeral Home at <https://www.jsfunerals.com/>.

Connecting would welcome your memories of working with Ken. Send them along today.

Each week, usually on Mondays, Connecting brings you the AP Best of the Week and AP Best of the States stories that focus on top work by AP journalists around the world. I know many of you enjoy reading them and noting that, even in these tough economic times and reduced budgets and staffing, the AP delivers great journalism.

Our colleague **Arnold Zeitlin** wrote to say that in a recent Best of the Week, there was a family tie to the story honored by the AP – that tie being his daughter **Veronica** who is with the Department of Labor. We bring you that story in today's issue.

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

## Former AP sports writer Ken Rappoport dead at age 85



By **BARRY WILNER**

Some people light up a room with their smile. Ken Rappoport could energize an entire arena or stadium with his laugh.

Not to mention his zest for life, sense of humor and compassion for anyone who knew him.

Rappoport, a long-time sports writer for The Associated Press and author of more than 100 books, died Tuesday at age 85 after a brief illness.

With the AP, Rappoport was a lead reporter on college basketball, baseball, pro football and hockey. He joined the wire service in 1963 and retired in 2000.

“Kenny Rapp” was a fixture on the night desk for AP when he wasn’t covering events, and even in the busiest, most tense times, he kept his colleagues relaxed and on point.

“Working nights at AP Sports, with a steady stream of game copy flooding in, could get pretty combustible,” said Terry Taylor, the AP’s sports editor from 1992-2013. “The one person who never lost his cool was Ken Rappoport,

whose presence lightened our mood whenever he reported for duty at 7 p.m.

“Kenny possessed a hearty high-pitched laugh that could be heard well beyond the walls of our workspace. He made us feel good. He was dependable, knowledgeable, versatile and, above all, a true friend to many.”

A graduate of Rider College, now Rider University, in New Jersey, Rappoport entered the Army and served in Germany. He worked as a reporter for the Doylestown Intelligence before being hired by the AP. Throughout a career marked by versatility he became a mentor to dozens of sports writers and editors, regardless of their beats.



“An enormously comforting presence for any young sports staffer, just to know he was there,” AP national writer Hillel Italie said.

“I wouldn’t have gotten to know him if not for Wayne Gretzky signing with the Kings,” added AP sports writer Bernie Wilson, who was based in Los Angeles in 1988. “Kenny was a huge help in getting me up to speed in covering a sport I’d never covered before. It was always super reassuring when he was on the other end of the line, especially during the ’89 playoffs.

“If we were all as nice as Kenny was, the world would be so much better.”

Rappoport was a regular at World Series, Final Fours and Stanley Cup playoff games.

“I definitely remember his laugh and him being one of the nicest guys around,” said AP sports writer Doug Feinberg. “And of course who could forget him coming back from New York Rangers games and bringing a whole tray of brownies and cookies from Madison Square Garden for the office.”

Rappoport also made his mark as an author of sports books that include such, well, classics as “The Classic,” and “The Big Dance,” both in-depth histories of the NCAA basketball tournament. He also wrote highly acclaimed books “They Changed The Game,” “Girls Rule,” “On The Clock” and “The Little League That Could,” plus histories of the Army-Navy rivalry and many college sports programs.

“In the pre-internet days, I found one of his hockey books at the Glendale (California) library and after reading it, felt like I’d covered the NHL for 10 years,” Wilson said.

Rappoport also had a passion for photography, travel — his favorite city was Paris — and Mel Brooks movies. That contagious laugh was never heartier than when Kenny

Rapp was watching "Young Frankenstein" or "Blazing Saddles."

After leaving the AP, Rappoport continued his prolific writing, saying, "I could no less stop writing than stop breathing." He lived in Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey, for much of his retirement.

He is survived by Bernice, his wife of 59 years who he met on a blind date; daughters Felicia and Sharon and son Larry; sons-in-law James and Evan; daughter-in-law Becka; and grandchildren Griffin, Camryn, Kayla, Adina, Shayna, Madeleine and Samuel.

The family is holding a limited memorial service due to the coronavirus pandemic. Memorial donations in his memory can be made to Beth Israel in Northfield, New Jersey. Condolences can be sent to the family through the J.S. Goldstein Funeral Home at <https://www.jsfunerals.com/>.

Click [here](#) for link to this story. Shared by Mark Mittelstadt, Pat Milton. (Photo above, right, shows Ken in 1985; courtesy of AP Corporate Archives.)

## *New Connecting series:* **Tales of Ripping the Wire**

**Paul Bowker (Email)** - My sense of importance rocketed in summer 1977 when I was "trusted" to rip the wire as a Saturday night sports desk assistant at the Cape Cod Times.

I suddenly became a wire editor at a daily newspaper as I ripped the yellow sheets of paper rolling through the clackety-clack of the AP and UPI wire machines. I would cut apart each story, ripping them with a pica pole, then assembling them in the order I thought to be important. Pica pole? In 2020, so many newsies don't even know what that is. I still have one at home.

Anything about the Red Sox made top of the pile.

Soon, I was told to start writing headlines at the top of these stories, counting the characters in the headlines so they would fit. A 3/30 meant three-column headline, 30-point. You had to know how to count these heads to make them fit, unlike now when you create a text box in InDesign, write a headline, and just keep clicking the size up or down until it fits.

Counting headlines made us write better, tight heads.

I truly miss the sound of those wire machines, the bells, the constant clackety-clack, reminding us that the news cycle never stops.

And I will never forget my first day at the Kansas City Star in 1980, when I discovered that a metro didn't have one or two wire machines, but a room full of them. Now we have Twitter. Sigh.

## A Best of the Week and a family tie

From a recent AP Best of the Week award:

While covering the Rohingya crisis, Minnesota-based investigative reporter Robin McDowell and Jakarta, Indonesia-based Margie Mason knew tens of thousands of refugees fleeing Myanmar were vulnerable to exploitation when they arrived in Malaysia. With a huge labor shortage in the palm oil sector, they wondered: Were desperate men being tricked or sold to help harvest fruit that ends up in the supply chains of some of America's most iconic food and cosmetic brands? That initial question launched a story that involved hundreds of interviews, many of them with frightened workers conducted under fraught circumstances. Many of the workers spoke of brutal conditions including child labor, outright slavery and allegations of rape. McDowell and Mason worked for months with New York-based editor Kristin Gazlay to land the deeply reported story.

It prompted our colleague **Arnold Zeitlin** ([Email](#)) - to write:

I'm proud to report, Paul, that my younger daughter, Veronica Zeitlin McKenna, is a go-to person at the Department of Labor (after many years at USAID) for human trafficking, including the abuses in Malaysia, as a division chief for research and policy in the Bureau of International Labor Affairs at the U.S. Department of Labor in DC.

Veronica wants to make it clear that she is one of about 30 people on the team at the Labor Department who turned out the report involving Malaysia and 76 other countries where goods such as palm oil are produced with child or forced labor. They also released last week a report detailing the ways in which the worst forms of child labor manifest in 131 countries.

She joined the Labor Department last year after nearly 10 years addressing human trafficking and migration issues at USAID. Before that, she worked at the State Department's Trafficking in Person Office conducting assessments of foreign government efforts to combat trafficking for the annual State Department TIP Report. Prior to joining the U.S. Government, she worked on child protection issues at UNICEF in

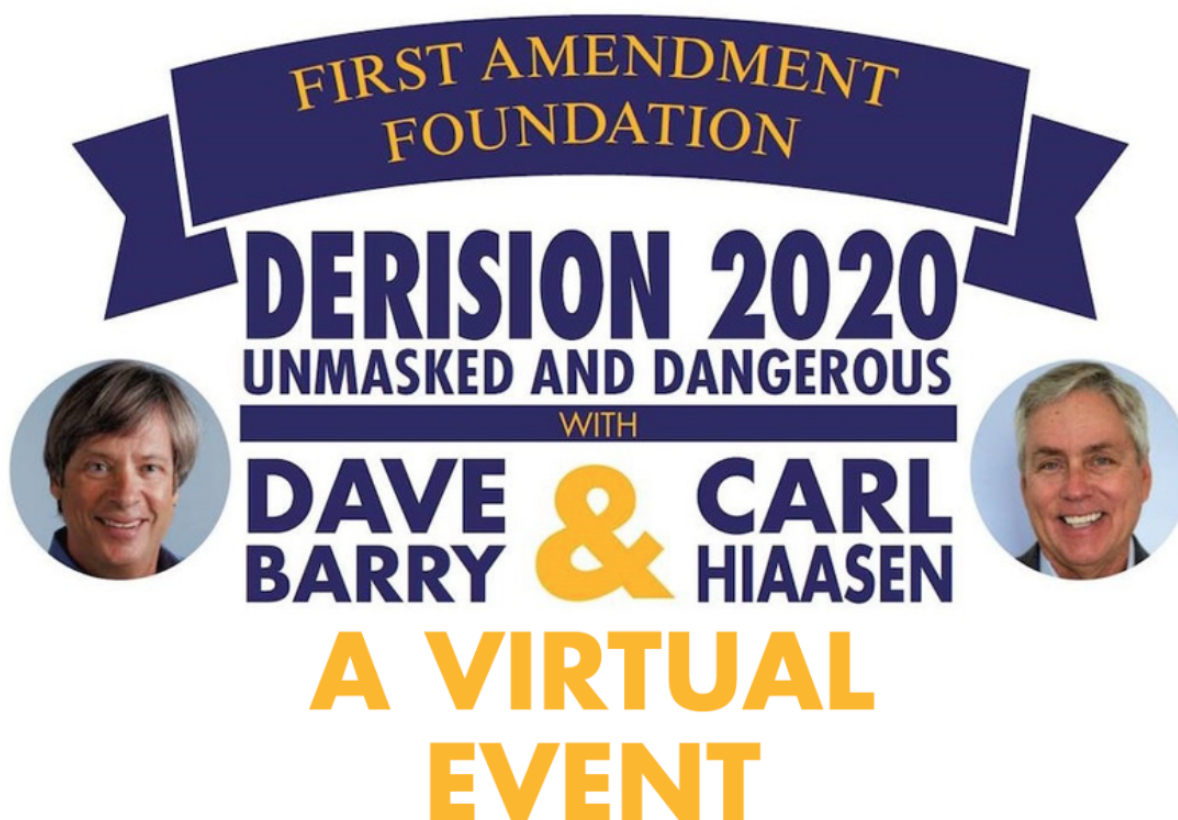


Senegal. Before joining the public sector, she was an associate at a New York based law firm.

Veronica is a graduate of Columbia University with a bachelor's degree in anthropology. She was graduated from the University of Virginia Law School and passed the New York bar exam.

She is the only one of my children to try journalism. She worked for a while for a Dorchester, Ma weekly called The Bay State Banner. Veronica lives in Bethesda, Maryland, with her husband, James McKenna, a physician leadership coach, and their 6-year-old daughter.

## You're invited to Virtual Derision 2020



**Jim Baltzelle** ([Email](#)) – Friends of the First Amendment:

By now, you might have heard that Dave Barry and Carl Hiaasen are hosting a Virtual Derision 2020 event on Oct. 21 to support the First Amendment Foundation. I wish we could pile in SUVs like we did in 2018; or a few cars like we did in 2016. It sure would be good to see everyone in person. But this virtual event will be fun, too.

The breaking news, just in, is Jimmy Buffett is going to perform. Details to follow, as this just was confirmed.

I hope you all are doing well and can watch the show, Oct. 21. I attached a flier. The website is [here](#), if you want to buy a ticket.

Tickets per household start at \$25 and there are some autographed books available still at the VIP levels.

## The Teletype – and working Baseball Desk in the 1970s

**Bruce Lowitt** ([Email](#)) - This isn't a tale about stripping the wires, but it is about the teletype machine, and one of my favorite memories of working the Baseball Desk in New York Sports in the 1970s.

There were a dozen or so teletypes along one wall, each one producing play-by-play of a game from a telegrapher at the ballpark. And there were two of us in the office to handle the stories as they came in, written by AP staffers or stringers.

The way it worked, after seven innings the telegrapher would type the game situation to that point:

**DET 1 5 0  
BAL 4 9 1**

And a minute later he would send the lede, the generic five- or six-paragraph pyramid lede in all caps that would begin something like:

**BALTIMORE (AP) – JIM PALMER PITCHED A FIVE-HITTER WITH 10 STRIKEOUTS AND LEE MAY HIT A THREE-RUN HOMER TO LEAD THE BALTIMORE ORIOLES PAST THE DETROIT TIGERS 5-1 TUESDAY NIGHT.**

After the story arrived the play-by-play would resume and we would update the story when necessary, changing the score, adding hits or strikeouts and so on. If the game turned around (maybe Detroit went ahead in the eighth or ninth inning or it went into extra innings) we'd scrap the ballpark lede and write a new one based on the play-by-play.

The fun was handling four or five (or more) games all ending within a few minutes of each other, the two of us keeping track of all of them and making changes as they occurred.

And if a pitcher took a no-hitter through seven innings, the baseball desk would take over, writing the story from the play-by-play and putting in additional stuff – how many no-hitters having been pitched that season, the last one and total pitched by



that team, the last time the losing team had been no-hit, the pitcher's history and so on – and we'd get a great fielding play and other stuff from the writer at the ballpark.

And when the pitcher lost the no-hitter in the eighth or ninth inning, we'd scrap much of what we'd written and turn it into just another game story, albeit with a few more details.

All of this brings me to a Chicago Cubs game in Wrigley Field being staffed by a stringer. After the seventh inning the usual lines came across, something like:

**CIN 3 10 1**  
**CHI 6 12 0**

Then ... silence. Minutes went by with no story. Finally, breaking a rule that writers weren't supposed to type messages on the teletype machine, I typed:

??

The telegrapher responded:

**MIN**

Okay. I could wait. A couple of more minutes passed. So I asked:

???

And he replied:

**YOU WON'T BELIEVE IT**

This was going to be good.

Then the lede began arriving:

**CHICAGO (AP) – THE SHADOWS WERE JUST BEGINNING TO CREEP ONTO THE FIELD AS THE SUN SET BEHIND ...**

Oh, jeez.

I tore off the seven innings of play-by-play, gave it a quick read, making marks where runs had scored, and wrote a pyramid lede.

Just another adventurous day on the Baseball Desk, editing (or, in this case, ignoring) a creative writer, one who'd never learned how to write a pyramid lede.

Then again, the AP pyramid lede may be going the way of the teletype machine – and the Baseball Desk. As the late slugger-turned-Mets broadcaster Ralph Kiner used to call home runs: “It's gone! Goodbye!”

## Overnights @ 50 Rock

**Dennis Ferraro (Email)** - My career at The AP started in the mid 70's as an Office Assistant.

It was after my freshman year at CCNY (City College of New York) and I started as vacation relief over that first summer and the subsequent summers. As the relief person I filled in for all three shifts.

In addition to the normal duties as an office assistant during the night and overnight shifts I provided lunch relief to the cable clerk and switchboard operator.

Covering the switchboard was a welcome distraction especially during the overnight.

On more than one occasion I would answer the phone from an inebriated caller who wanted to know how the AP could pick so and so as number one over such and such and demanding to speak to the sports editor. I would listen politely before transferring them to the sports editor.

The AP cafeteria, also a 24/7 operation, and at that hour was just about the only game in town for a hot meal or a sandwich. It was refuge to some of Rock Center's custodial crew. Stepping off the elevator and with a nod make their way to the cafeteria. On more than one occasion one of NY's Finest would arrive, inquiring if it was true that we had a cafeteria and this time it was there, turn to ask for directions. With a “it's your funeral warning” I pointed to the corridor to his right and told him straight back.

Other times Felice Quinto would saunter off the elevator straight from Studio 54 with a story to be told and rolls of film of his nights work to be developed.

Then there would be the occasional run to Chinatown.

The AP staffer could not survive on the haute cuisine of the cafeteria alone. Working the 4th floor with menu and reporters notebook in hand I would take orders and cash from those interested.

Order complete, I would call in the order. Borrowing the technicians NYP license plated Vega station wagon I made my way downtown.

Once there the manager would sit me down and serve me hot tea and a bowl of crispy noodles while the order was being finished.

Order complete, I loaded it into the Vega made my way to 6th Ave then north for the trip up to Rock Center parking in a designated "NYP ONLY PARKING" spot.

Back at the office, food distributed and car keys returned to the Glass House it was time for lunch and wait for dawn.

Once, at the very start of December and again in the wee hours that Sinatra would sing about. The 4th floor and the street outside was suddenly ablaze in multi-colored lights. I got up from my desk and walked to the windows along 50th Street to investigate the source. It was The Tree. The Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree was lit. Evidently the electricians were testing the results of their labor before showtime later that evening.

## What would old-time editors think?

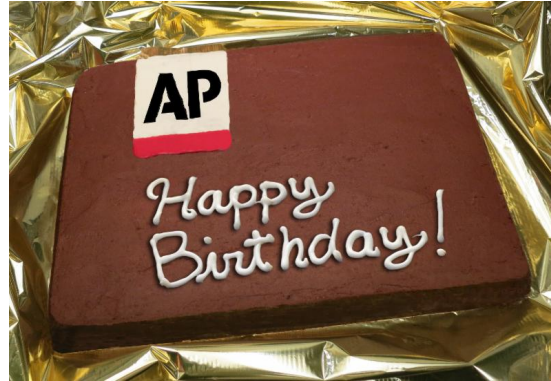
**Malcolm Barr Sr. ([Email](#))** - While seconding Lyle Price's thoughts regarding Adolphe Bennotas re Adolphe's parody of journalistic cliches, I hesitate to think of what one of our old-time editors would have done with Lyle's 101-word sentence of non-punctuated praise. Just saying!

## Tip of hat to Contrarian Grammarian



**Rick Cooper (Email)** - On behalf of all of us enjoying the Contrarian Grammarian thread I want to share the attached meme with you.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



to

Jerry Ceppos - [jceppos@lsu.edu](mailto:jceppos@lsu.edu)

## Stories of interest

*How a Denver Photojournalist Captured a Shooting as It Unfolded* (New York Times)



**A Denver Post photographer captured an encounter between Lee Keltner, left, and Matthew Dolloff on Saturday. Credit...Helen H. Richardson/The Denver Post, via Associated Press**

**By Bryan Pietsch**

DENVER — The harrowing set of photos taken by a Denver Post photographer of a fatal shooting after street protests on Saturday did not make the newspaper's front page the next day.

The photographer, Helen H. Richardson, wasn't dawdling. After capturing the shooting frame by frame, she spent three hours at police headquarters being questioned as a witness.

"It's 4 o'clock, and I have a deadline," she recalled telling the police.

Ms. Richardson described how she came to take the photographs in a phone interview on Monday. She was near Civic Center Park in Denver on Saturday afternoon covering a far-right "Patriot Muster" rally while a far-left counterprotest took place nearby. After people started to disperse, she was at the southern end of the park, near the Denver Art Museum, when an argument broke out.

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

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## ***Cable news ratings up 72 percent over 2019***

**By DAVID BAUDER**

NEW YORK (AP) — It's not difficult to figure out which television networks are benefiting from the presidential election, and which ones should worry about next year.

Collectively, the news networks CNN, Fox News Channel and MSNBC averaged just under 10 million viewers in prime time last week, or 72 percent more than the same week in 2019, the Nielsen company said.

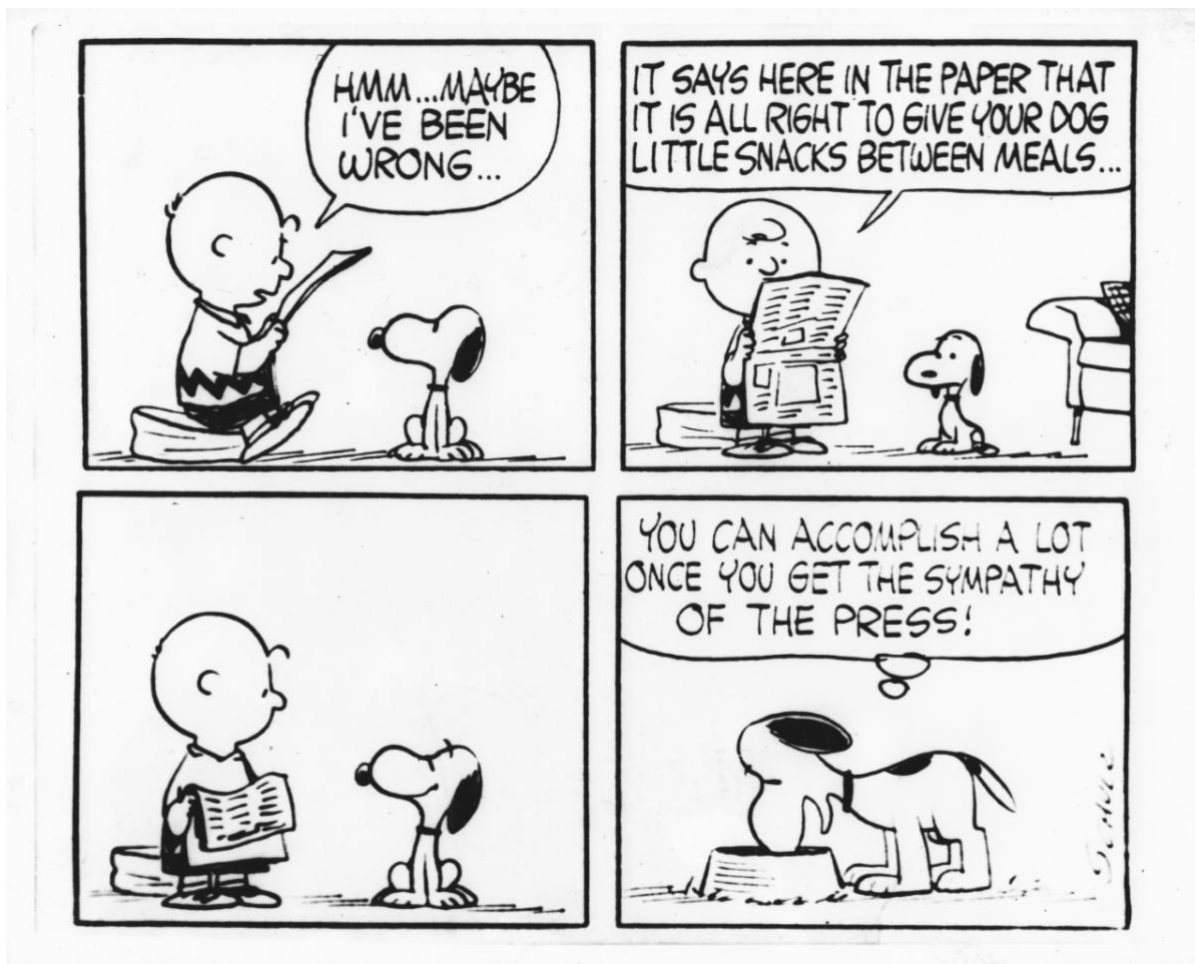
At a time most networks are grateful not to lose too many viewers year-to-year, Fox News' average of 4.42 million last week was up 63 percent, MSNBC's 2.75 million was up 38 percent and CNN's 2.59 million represented an eye-popping 172 percent increase.

Gravity usually has a way of dealing with what goes up, and there's concern about what will happen to the news networks when the election is over. That's especially the case if the more conventional candidate, Democrat Joe Biden, beats President Donald Trump.

Read more [here](#).

## The Final Word

*An oldie but still relevant*



Shared by Claude Erbsen.

### Today in History - October 14, 2020



## By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Oct. 14, the 288th day of 2020. There are 78 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 14, 1964, civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. was named winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

### On this date:

In 1890, Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th president of the United States, was born in Denison, Texas.

In 1933, Nazi Germany announced it was withdrawing from the League of Nations.

In 1939, a German U-boat torpedoed and sank the HMS Royal Oak, a British battleship anchored at Scapa Flow in Scotland's Orkney Islands; 833 of the more than 1,200 men aboard were killed.

In 1944, German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel took his own life rather than face trial and certain execution for allegedly conspiring against Adolf Hitler.

In 1947, U.S. Air Force Capt. Charles E. ("Chuck") Yeager (YAY'-gur) became the first test pilot to break the sound barrier as he flew the experimental Bell XS-1 (later X-1) rocket plane over Muroc Dry Lake in California.

In 1960, the idea of a Peace Corps was suggested by Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy to an audience of students at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

In 1964, Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev was toppled from power; he was succeeded by Leonid Brezhnev as First Secretary and by Alexei Kosygin as Premier.

In 1968, the first successful live telecast from a manned U.S. spacecraft was transmitted from Apollo 7.

In 1981, the new president of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak (HOHS'-nee moo-BAH'-rahk), was sworn in to succeed the assassinated Anwar Sadat. Mubarak pledged loyalty to Sadat's policies.

In 2001, as U.S. jets opened a second week of raids in Afghanistan, President George W. Bush sternly rejected a Taliban offer to discuss handing over Osama bin Laden to a third country.

In 2014, a second nurse at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas came down with Ebola after contracting it from a dying patient. (The nurse, Amber Joy Vinson, was later declared free of the disease.)

In 2017, a truck bombing in Somalia's capital killed more than 500 people in one of the world's deadliest attacks in years; officials blamed the attack on the extremist group al-Shabab and said it was meant to target Mogadishu's international airport, but the bomb detonated in a crowded street after soldiers opened fire. The board of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences revoked the membership of movie mogul Harvey Weinstein, after published reports about allegations of sexual harassment and rape against Weinstein.

Ten years ago: Chile's 33 rescued miners posed with President Sebastian Pinera and were examined by doctors a day after they were freed from their underground prison. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (ah-muh-DEE'-neh-zahd) taunted arch-enemy Israel from just across the tense border in Lebanon, rallying tens of thousands of Hezbollah supporters.

Five years ago: Hundreds of soldiers fanned out in cities across Israel and authorities erected concrete barriers outside some Arab neighborhoods of east Jerusalem in a stepped-up effort to counter a monthlong wave of Palestinian violence. The state of Texas executed Licho Escamilla (LEE'-cho es-kuh-MEE'-uh) for the fatal 2001 shooting of Christopher Kevin James, a Dallas police officer who was trying to break up a brawl involving Escamilla.

One year ago: President Donald Trump announced sanctions targeting Turkey's economy in response to Turkey's assault against Kurdish fighters and civilians in Syria; the assault had begun after Trump announced that he was moving U.S. troops out of the way. Two researchers from MIT and one from Harvard won the Nobel Prize in economics for research into what works and what doesn't in the fight to reduce global poverty. Canadian writer Margaret Atwood and British author Bernardine Evaristo shared the Booker Prize after the judging panel for the prestigious fiction trophy refused to pick just one of them as the winner.



Today's Birthdays: Classical pianist Gary Graffman is 92. Movie director Carroll Ballard is 83. Country singer Melba Montgomery is 83. Former White House counsel John W. Dean III is 82. Fashion designer Ralph Lauren is 81. Singer Sir Cliff Richard is 80. Singer-musician Justin Hayward (The Moody Blues) is 74. Actor Greg Evigan is 67. TV personality Arleen Sorkin is 65. World Golf Hall of Famer Beth Daniel is 64. Singer-musician Thomas Dolby is 62. Actor Lori Petty is 57. Philadelphia Phillies manager Joe Girardi is 56. Actor Steve Coogan is 55. Singer Karyn White is 55. Actor Edward Kerr is 54. Actor Jon Seda is 50. Country musician Doug Virden is 50. Country singer Natalie Maines (The Chicks) is 46. Actor-singer Shaznay Lewis (All Saints) is 45. Actor Stephen Hill is 44. Singer Usher is 42. TV personality Stacy Keibler is 41. Actor Ben Whishaw is 40. Actor Jordan Brower is 39. Director Benh Zeitlin is 38. Actor Skyler Shaye is 34. Actor-comedian Jay Pharoah is 33. Actor Max Thieriot is 32.

## 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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