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## Connecting

October 15, 2020

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of October 2020,

**Jonathan Lemire**, White House reporter for The Associated Press, was the subject of a nearly hour-long interview Wednesday night as part of the New York Press Club Virtual Speaker Series.

He was interviewed by **Scott Detrow**, political correspondent for National Public Radio - who also posed questions asked from the virtual audience. I found it a compelling interview of one of AP's reporting stars on a wide range of topics, including events following President Trump's announcement that he had contracted coronavirus.

Lemire, also a political analyst for MSNBC and NBC News (and a Connecting colleague), talked of his early days with the New York Daily News and with the AP, the "difficult challenge to navigate the waters of the West Wing," and what's ahead.

Click [here](#) to view. Shared by Myron Rushetzky.

## REMEMBERING KEN RAPPOPORT

He showed you need balance in your life. A gentle man in every sense of the word. He gave me my career.



That's what several of your Connecting colleagues had to say about **Ken Rappoport**, longtime sports writer for the AP in New York, who died Tuesday at the age of 85. We lead with those memories in today's issue.

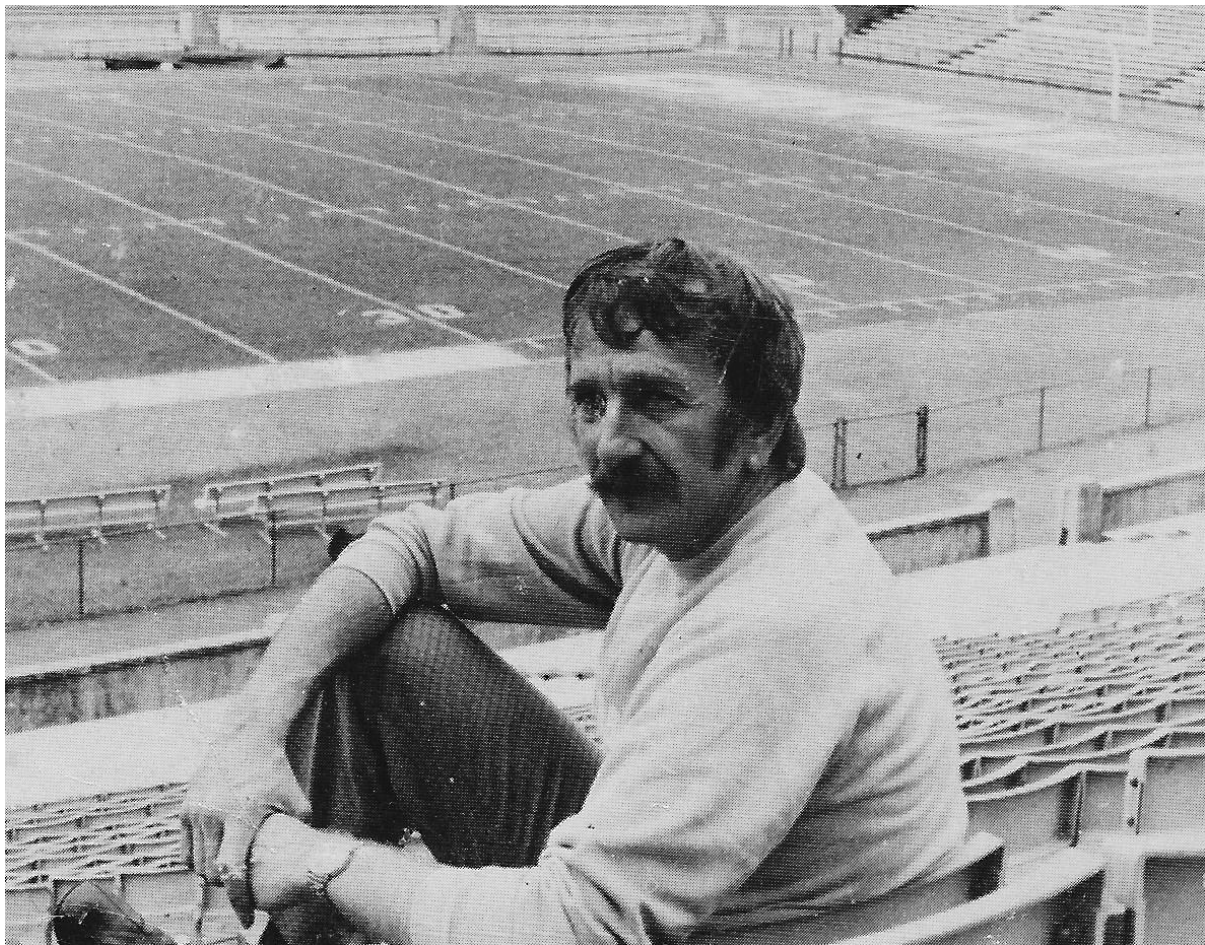
## WRITTEN A BOOK IN THE PAST YEAR?

**AUTHORS ALERT:** If you have written a book in the past year, Connecting would like to feature it in our annual listing of books authored by Connecting colleagues. The book issue will appear in a couple weeks – so this is an invitation to send me the following: Name of book, jpg image of the cover and your headshot, and 300 words on the book including where it can be purchased. Send along the information soon.

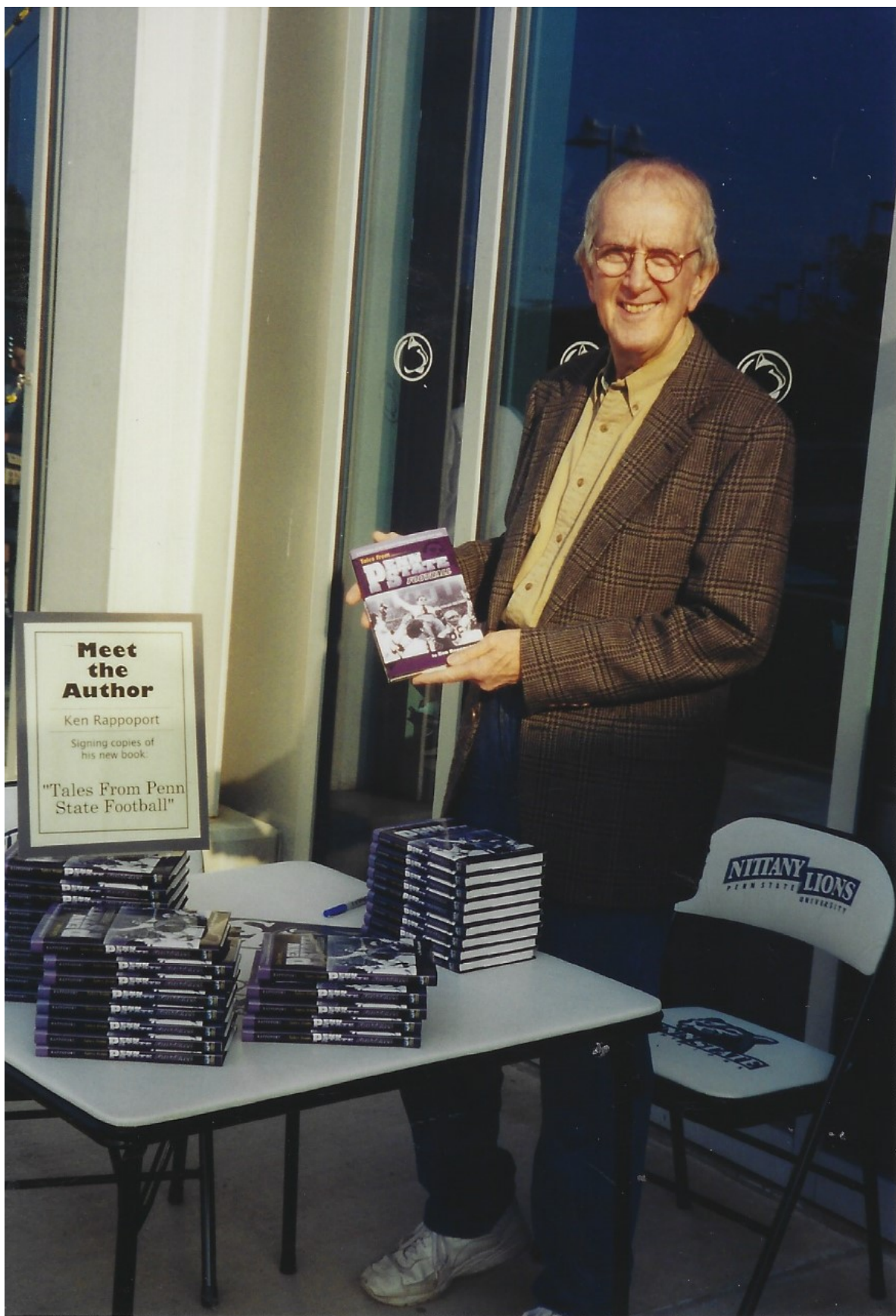
Have a great day - be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

## Ken Rappoport taught life's lessons to AP colleagues



**Ken Rappoport at Kenan Stadium at the University of North Carolina in a photo taken from the back of his 1976 book, Tar Heel North Carolina Football.**



At Penn State University, a Meet the Author photo in 2003.

**Robert Kimball (Email)** - I knew Ken Rappoport from my 15-month stint on the Broadcast Wire in 1982-83 before our transfer to AP Radio in DC. We were next to AP

Sports at 50 Rock. Despite my brief connection, he gave some simple advice that I still think about - you need balance in life. Nothing deep - just basic stuff.

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**Andy Lippman (Email)** - I too remember Ken for his smile and cheerful manner. It was almost like he was making his own kind of music, and his hands were always moving like he was conducting the orchestra.

He also was really helpful to me during my time in New York Sports - a time I really needed help. He'd come over and carefully explain what I might have done differently, or he'd gently put his hand on my shoulder and whisper a "well done."

He was a gentle-man in every sense of the word.

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**Bruce Lowitt (Email)** - Along with a lot of laughs, Kenny Rappoport gave me my career.

In 1970, I had just been promoted from Night Sports Editor in Los Angeles to New York Sports and I was miserable. Not because of the job - I enjoyed working the desk - but because I'd loved LA. I'd left NY in 1967 for California when The AP had answered my ad in Editor & Publisher.

More to the point, I was 25 and single and had just moved into a spectacular \$330-a-month apartment in LA - one bedroom, fully furnished, A/C, dishwasher, washer-dryer, underground parking and a swimming pool brimming with young nurses, teachers and the like.

Three weeks later I was subletting a \$350-a-month apartment in Manhattan - fifth-floor, one room with an alcove for a kitchen, alternate-side-of-the-street parking, an elevator that occasionally worked, and no social life.

Hence, miserable.

I had been promised by LA buro chief Tom Pendergast that I could give New York a six-week trial run and if I didn't want to stay I could return to LA. And I was seriously thinking about it.

One night, Kenny, sensing my gloomy mood, asked what was wrong. I told him.

"Let me ask you this," he said. "What do you want to do. I mean, your career?"

Write sports, I told him.

"Well," he said, "if you go back to LA, you're going to wind up on rewrite, on the broadcast desk, who knows what else, and maybe you'll write some sports. But here, even if there's a war going on, you're going to be writing sports and covering games. So what do you want to do?"

The next afternoon I told Assistant Sports Editor Murray Rose I'd decided to stay in New York and called Pendergast to thank him for the promotion and that I wouldn't be taking him up on his offer.

And over the years I covered countless Major League Baseball and National Football League games, the World Series, Super Bowls, college football and basketball championships, Indianapolis 500s, the Olympics and who knows what else - all because Kenny Rappoport opened my eyes. I thanked him often - and now I thank him again.

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**Michael Rubin (Email)** - Such sad news about Ken Rappoport. In my time at AP/LA I worked a lot of sports and we were always on the phone with NY Sports for one reason or another. All I can say is it was always welcome when the voice on the other end said, "Sports, Rappoport..." He usually had some sort of personal comment to go with whatever business we were conducting, a quip, a joke, something to smile about.

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## *Ken and his family*



Left to Right: Griffin Bell, Bernice Rappoport, Felicia Niven, Ken Rappoport, Shayna Lowenstein. Felicia is Ken's daughter. Bernice is Ken's wife. Griffin and Shayna are Ken's grandchildren. This photo was taken in Paris.



Left to Right: Adina Lowenstein (granddaughter), Shayna Lowenstein, Felicia Niven and Ken Rappoport. That one was taken en route to Manhattan. (Photos courtesy of family)

## Stripping the wires – your memories

**Gene Herrick** ([Email](#)) - Memories of our colleagues who removed sheets of paper from those ancient teletype machines reminds me of performing that unique task in my job as a young “Office Boy” in the Columbus bureau back in 1943.

Then, we called it “Pulling” the copy. Same thing, just a different era. Removing the copy took alertness, patience, and, if you were intelligent, you could receive one heck of an education if you read some of the copy.

It was an exciting time in history during my time. It was our nation’s war time – in Europe, and the Pacific. News was always exciting, what with “Bulletins”, “95’s, and “Flashes.” Getting that copy off of the machines and delivering it, usually by pneumatic tubes, was extremely important.

Maintaining the teletype machines was significant. Not running out of paper was important, as was keeping the ink and ribbons in perfect working order also kept us busy. Ah yes, the damned paper jams. One had to be alert all of the time. I remember our “A” wire, the big AP news wire, which had the ribbon weaving through as many as six pieces of teletype machine paper. Many the time, when the “A” wire had a “Flash,” there would be all of those bells ringing, and the many “Line Feeds,” where the paper jumps up many times. I would run to the machine and help pull up the paper to keep it from “Jamming.” As other of our colleagues have said, “XXXT.”

Handling a paper jam, especially the “A” wire, was about as important as anything at that moment.

I had many other duties as well. I learned to read the “Re-punch tape,” winding it on my hand, and giving to the operator. I often used that tape to send copy on the “State” wire when the operator went to lunch.

I used every opportunity to learn about the various jobs, and by doing so, it later led to my being asked to be an AP staff photographer, which opened the door to a career of covering some of the great stories during my era, including being a War Correspondent in Korea, and the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement.

Ah yes, what great memories.

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**Andy Lippman (Email)** - The thought of ripping the wires brought back so many memories.

When I was in my first fulltime job as night person in Tucson, I had to go into the wire room to punch tape for my stories. I had to shut the door and when I was transferred a year later, I literally had mild hearing loss. The noise was that deafening.

Then when I was transferred to Cincinnati, I wondered why there were so many machines lining our bureau. They would start at all hours of the day or night. There was the FF-plus wire, and the sports-plus and the racing wire. And we had to rip all of these wires. I finally discovered that the then COB in Columbus, the late great Burl Osborne, would take the publisher out for a fancy dinner and he would come back with a contract from the publisher for a new service.

Ripping the wire became how you marked your day. You came into the office and read in by reading torn copies of the wire. Another copy of the wire was "booked" by ripping and then taking a small silver spike and hammering it through the thick pile of paper and then you would fasten it together and mark it. In Tucson, we also included our "flimsies", the carbon copies of our stories.

You repeated this at least once a cycle, and then you had to find a place to put the darn things because you were supposed to keep them for a certain amount of time. In Cincinnati and Tucson, we would eventually move them to a storage area-which was another part of the routine every few weeks. In Los Angeles, the clerks would rip copy and when we built a new bureau, I had to include a big room where we could store all the "booked" copy. It sits empty now.

I don't know where Paul got the photo of Mary Tyler Moore, but I could name that look on her face at one glance.

Will this machine ever stop running? And why are there so many of them, and only one of me.

## Connecting mailbox

### *Cliches that should be stuck on spike*

**Mike Tharp (Email)** - Recent cliches which should be stuck on a spike:

"We've got a lot to unpack." Oh, really? You brought a suitcase to the studio?

"He's gonna have to walk back that statement." Along with his dog named Deny?

"We're at a hinge/inflection point." Is that anything like a crossroads?

"Our new toolbox will help us understand this." So do you want a Phillips or flat head screwdriver?

"Potentially." As in could?

"She's gotta be in any conversation about this." How about discussion?

"The community." About 99% of the time, this refers to inner-city blacks.

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## *Scenes from Colorado*



**Fall colors in a stand of aspen trees, are headed into their last days of the season Tuesday in Rocky Mountain National Park in southwest Larimer County, Colorado.**



The next day, Wednesday, the Cameron Peak wildfire burning since mid-August, blows up in strong winds along the front range in northern Colorado.

Photos by John Epperson ([Email](#))

## Stories of interest

## ***Former NBC News VP Slams Network's Decision to Air Donald Trump Town Hall*** (Newsweek)

BY DANIEL VILLARREAL

Cheryl Gould, the former Vice President of NBC News, has publicly criticized the network for agreeing to host Republican President Donald Trump's town hall after Trump refused to attend a virtual debate against his Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden.

"I am dismayed—more like disgusted—by NBC's decision to air Trump's 'I won't play by the rules so let me make my own rules' town hall opposite Biden's," Gould wrote in a public Facebook post. "Is this what the new leadership at NBC thinks is the right thing to do? To be complicit in Trump's tantrum? A shameless grab for ratings!"

"I wouldn't be shocked if this were Fox News. But NBC? My former home?" Gould continued. "I've never been happier to say the word 'former.'"

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

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## ***Here's a list of the 10 greatest works of journalism of the past 10 years. Care to argue about it?*** (Washington Post)

By Margaret Sullivan  
Media columnist

With so much news slamming us at every moment, it's hard to see any of it as having enduring value. Who can even remember what happened last week?

But not everything is ephemeral. Some journalism really does last.

Years ago, when New York University faculty ranked the best journalism of the 20th century, they came up with some selections whose classic nature is unarguable. The list was led by John Hersey's "Hiroshima," a feat of reportage that used novelistic techniques to tell the stories of six survivors of the atomic bomb; it took up an entire issue of the New Yorker magazine in 1946. Second place went to Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring," the prescient warning about man-made damage to the planet. The Washington Post's Watergate reporting made the list, too.

Now there's a new ranking from the university's Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute that looks at this past decade, 2010 to 2019, and is intended to "honor really great

work that has already stood the test of time,” according to the project’s organizer, journalism professor Mitchell Stephens.

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

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## ***Allegation on Biden Prompts Pushback From Social Media Companies*** (New York Times)

By Katie Glueck, Michael S. Schmidt and Mike Isaac

The Biden campaign on Wednesday rejected a New York Post report about Joseph R. Biden Jr. and his son Hunter that the nation’s leading social media companies deemed so dubious that they limited access to the article on their platforms.

The report, appearing just three weeks before the election, was based on material provided by Republican allies of President Trump who have tried for months to tarnish Mr. Biden over his son. It claimed that the elder Mr. Biden had met with an adviser to a Ukrainian energy company on whose board Hunter Biden served.

A spokesman for the Biden campaign, Andrew Bates, said that Mr. Biden’s official schedules showed no meeting between Mr. Biden and the adviser, Vadym Pozharskyi.

“We have reviewed Joe Biden’s official schedules from the time and no meeting, as alleged by the New York Post, ever took place,” Mr. Bates said.

The Post story cited an email Mr. Pozharskyi allegedly sent to Hunter Biden thanking him for “giving an opportunity to meet your father” and to spend “some time together.” The authenticity of the email correspondence cited by The Post could not be independently verified.

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

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## ***Why Are Political Journalists More Scared of Revealing Their Votes Than Baseball Writers?*** (Reason)

By MATT WELCH

Since I have been trying without success for 16 years now to appeal to my fellow journalists' avowed principles while beseeching them to follow Reason's (and Slate's) lead in disclosing which presidential candidate staffers plan to vote for, let me this year try a more mercenary tack: Y'all are leaving some choice traffic on the table.

As of Tuesday morning, our quadrennial survey of staff voting intentions was this week's most popular item on the website. Having journalists publicly live up to their commitment to transparency is apparently a man-bites-dog story.

What's strange about this stubborn transparency-for-thee stance, aside from the fact that many publications are missing those sweet clicks, is that reporters not on the politics beat have long since come around to the virtues of self-disclosure. Sixteen years ago, very few members of the Baseball Writers Association of America (BBWAA) revealed ahead of time, let alone publicly defended, their annual votes for the sport's Hall of Fame. By 2014, the percentage of disclosers inched above 50. Last year, it was 84.1.

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

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## ***Garrison Keillor: Enough of the news, onward with friendship***

By GARRISON KEILLOR

SOMEDAY WE SHALL look back at these golden October days with wonder and amazement, how good life was even in a pandemic during a lunatic time. Here in New York City, everyone wears a mask, there is a high level of civility, and though riding down Columbus Avenue feels like we're driving across a freshly plowed field, life is good. I sat in a sidewalk café with a friend on Sunday, unmasked, telling old stories, enjoying freedom of speech. She complained about the winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature: "I wrote poems like hers when I was in the ninth grade. 'The leaves are turning brown, the leaves are falling, death is near.' Who put the Swedes in charge of literature?"

Back in Minneapolis, where I'm from, you couldn't say that. Too many Swedes around and too much PC and self-righteousness. Back there, among young lefties, I am a Privileged White Male, not a person but a type, but in my New York neighborhood, which tends Jewish, an old WASP is sort of a novelty. I walk around amid all colors and ethnicities and interesting accents and hairstyles, and I'm just a guy in jeans and a black T-shirt. This is a big relief. One big pleasure of urban life is looking at other people and it's hard to do that if they are glaring at you as a symbol of all that is wrong. New Yorkers don't.

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

## Today in History - October 15, 2020



### By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Oct. 15, the 289th day of 2020. There are 77 days left in the year.

#### Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 15, 1976, in the first debate of its kind between vice-presidential nominees, Democrat Walter F. Mondale and Republican Bob Dole faced off in Houston.

#### On this date:

In 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte, the deposed Emperor of the French, arrived on the British-ruled South Atlantic island of St. Helena, where he spent the last 5 1/2 years of his life in exile.

In 1917, Dutch exotic dancer Mata Hari (Margaretha ZelleGeertruida MacLeod), 41, convicted by a French military court of spying for the Germans, was executed by a firing squad outside Paris. (Maintaining her innocence to the end, Mata Hari refused a blindfold and blew a kiss to her executioners.)

In 1940, Charles Chaplin's first all-talking comedy, "The Great Dictator," a lampoon of Adolf Hitler, opened in New York.

In 1945, the former premier of Vichy France, Pierre Laval, was executed for treason.

In 1946, Nazi war criminal Hermann Goering (GEH'-reeng) fatally poisoned himself hours before he was to have been executed.



In 1954, Hurricane Hazel made landfall on the Carolina coast as a Category 4 storm; Hazel was blamed for some 1,000 deaths in the Caribbean, 95 in the U.S. and 81 in Canada.

In 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed a bill creating the U.S. Department of Transportation. The revolutionary Black Panther Party was founded by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale in Oakland, California.

In 1969, peace demonstrators staged activities across the country as part of a "moratorium" against the Vietnam War.

In 1991, despite sexual harassment allegations by Anita Hill, the Senate narrowly confirmed the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court, 52-48.

In 2001, Bethlehem Steel Corp. filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

In 2003, eleven people were killed when a Staten Island ferry slammed into a maintenance pier. (The ferry's pilot, who'd blacked out at the controls, later pleaded guilty to eleven counts of manslaughter.)

In 2017, actress and activist Alyssa Milano tweeted that women who had been sexually harassed or assaulted should write "Me too" as a status; within hours, tens of thousands had taken up the (hash)MeToo hashtag (using a phrase that had been introduced 10 years earlier by social activist Tarana Burke.)

Ten years ago: The Obama administration reported that the federal deficit had hit a near-record \$1.3 trillion for the just-completed budget year. Workers hugged, cheered and set off fireworks as a huge drill broke through a last stretch of rock deep in the Swiss Alps for construction of the 35.4-mile Gotthard Base Tunnel; the railway tunnel would go into operation in 2016.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama abandoned his pledge to end America's longest war, announcing plans to keep at least 5,500 U.S. troops in Afghanistan at the end of his term in 2017 and hand the conflict off to his successor. Ken Taylor, Canada's ambassador to Iran who'd sheltered Americans at his residence during the 1979 Iran hostage crisis, died in New York at age 81.

One year ago: Elizabeth Warren, carrying a new status as a front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination, came under attack from rivals at a debate in Ohio; they accused her of ducking questions about the cost of Medicare for All and her signature wealth tax plan. The Washington Nationals scored seven runs in the first inning on the way to a 7-4 win and a sweep of the St. Louis Cardinals in the National League Championship Series; the wild-card Nationals advanced to the World Series, where they would defeat the Houston Astros. Actor Felicity Huffman reported to a federal prison in California to start a two-week sentence for paying a college admissions consultant to have a proctor correct her daughter's SAT answers. (She was released two days before the end of the sentence.) Newly-elected inductees to the

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame included, posthumously, Whitney Houston and The Notorious B.I.G.; they were joined by Depeche Mode, the Doobie Brothers, Nine Inch Nails and T-Rex.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Barry McGuire is 85. Actor Linda Lavin is 83. Rock musician Don Stevenson (Moby Grape) is 78. Baseball Hall of Famer Jim Palmer is 75. Singer-musician Richard Carpenter is 74. Actor Victor Banerjee is 74. Former tennis player Roscoe Tanner is 69. Singer Tito Jackson is 67. Actor-comedian Larry Miller is 67. Actor Jere Burns is 66. Movie director Mira Nair is 63. Britain's Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson, is 61. Chef Emeril Lagasse (EM'-ur-ul leh-GAH'-see) is 61. Actor Tanya Roberts is 61. Rock musician Mark Reznicek (REHZ'-nih-chehk) is 58. Singer Eric Benet (beh-NAY') is 54. Actor Vanessa Marcil is 52. Singer-actor-TV host Paige Davis is 51. Country singer Kimberly Schlapman (Little Big Town) is 51. Actor Dominic West is 51. Rhythm-and-blues singer Ginuwine (JHNN'-yoo-wyn) is 50. Actor Devon Gummersall is 42. Actor Chris Olivero is 41. Christian singer-actor Jaci (JAK'-ee) Velasquez is 41. Actor Brandon Jay McLaren is 40. Rhythm-and-blues singer Keyshia Cole is 39. Actor Vincent Martella is 28. Actor Bailee Madison is 21.

## 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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