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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this the 20th day of October 2020,

The 2020 General Election is two weeks away – and there's definitely been an election theme to recent issues of Connecting ... including today's.

The upcoming election may be the most difficult to cover in our lifetime. Which leads to this question: What was the most difficult election you covered and why – and how did you work through any apprehension or fear to get it right? I look forward to hearing your stories – and I am sure your colleagues, both retired and active duty, will as well.

"Election 2020: Ready for this Moment." Click <u>here</u> to view this AP vimeo.

A kudo to AP Washington chief of bureau **Julie Pace**, for her appearance Monday night at a Zoom forum at Northern Kentucky University – from retired longtime editor **Craig Klugman** who said: "She represented the AP well."

Have a great day - be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

Sally Buzbee: How The Associated Press Plans to Report The Election Results



A voter is seen dropping off their vote by mail ballot for the 2020 presidential election at the Supervisor of Elections office in Palm Beach, Florida in October mpi04/MediaPunch /IPX

By SALLY BUZBEE Executive Editor, The Associated Press For Nieman Reports

For more than 170 years, the world has relied on The Associated Press to count the vote in U.S. elections and deliver the results. We have done this through the Civil War,

the pony express, periods of unrest, and world wars.

Counting the vote and calling races is a critical function of the American democracy, and of America's decentralized election system. It is an essential role that AP has played for nearly two centuries and one that AP will again deliver on in November.

As it does in every election, AP will collect and verify U.S. election returns in every county, parish, city and town across the country, covering races down to the legislative level in every state. This year AP will declare winners in 7,000 contests, doing the work so that the public knows as soon as possible who wins not only the White House, but control of Congress and every state legislature. Thousands of broadcasters, newspapers, digital outlets, and others will rely on AP's results.

This is no small effort. It involves thousands of people working together to collect and check the vote. Only then do we distribute the results to our customers, and only then will you read the results online, see them on the air, or hear them through your Amazon Alexa.

AP calls a race when there is a clear indication of a winner. We are not making a projection or saying a candidate is the "apparent winner." Our APNewsAlerts say they won. We work as hard as we can to call winners as soon as we can, but we're guided first by making sure we have all the information we need to make an accurate race call.



To make our calls, we consider first and foremost the vote count and the amount of vote still to be counted, plus polling data from AP VoteCast—which surveys voters online, on the phone and by mail—and our own analytical tools, as well as an enormous amount of research.

Because the U.S. election system is decentralized, each state has its own laws, processes and procedures. That effectively means we are managing 50 different elections on election night. Each state handles mail-in voting differently and has different rules about when it can begin processing and counting absentee ballots, for example. Our research is extensive and ongoing, and that's on purpose. We must communicate as transparently as possible to the news organizations and customers that depend on us, so they too know what to expect.

It is clear that the 2020 election is unlike any in years past. It appears likely this will be the first election in American history in which more than half of the electorate has their ballot in the box before Election Day. The U.S. is grappling with the coronavirus pandemic and the racial justice movement. Americans are increasingly polarized.

The AP is covering all of these stories the best way we know how: with cold, hard facts. Our journalism reaches more than half the world's population every day, and

that means the stakes are high. Our job is to get it right. We do this by being accurate, unbiased and precise in our coverage; by debunking misinformation; by holding the powerful to account. Our reporters do this every day, not just in Washington but across the country. AP journalists in all 50 states are talking to voters about what matters to them. This kind of reporting is crucial to understanding what will happen when Americans cast their ballots.

A question I am often asked is how soon we will be able to call the winner of the White House. In large part, that will likely depend on how close the race ends up being, and it is still too soon to know that now.

If we cannot declare a winner on election night, it won't be the first time. In fact, AP was the first to call Donald Trump the winner in 2016—at 2:29 a.m. ET the day after Election Day. In 2004, AP did not call the presidency for George W. Bush until 11:07 a.m. ET, again the day after Election Day. And in 2000, AP stood alone when it assessed the race between Bush and Al Gore and decided it was too close to call.

Not knowing the winner on election night does not necessarily indicate fraud or disaster. It may simply mean that states are taking their time and being careful about tabulating votes.

At the AP, we will also be careful. We certainly want to tell the American people—and the world—who has won the presidency as soon as possible, but accuracy comes first.

You can trust that The Associated Press will declare a winner when there is no chance the trailing candidate will catch the leader. It may take longer than we might like. But rest assured, when we are certain who will next sit behind the Resolute Desk, AP will call the race and inform the public, as we have done with a history of accuracy since 1848.

Click here for link to this story.

AP Definitive Source: Advancing the Power of Facts

Nancy Nussbaum (<u>Email</u>) - Our latest webinar in our continuing U.S. Presidential Race series covered the social spread of Misinformation and AP's Fact Checking operation. Presenters were Amanda Barrett, deputy managing editor, and Karen Mahabir, fact check and misinformation editor. The presentation highlights recent examples of fact-check items we have done and underscores AP's fact-checking commitment. We also provide advice for AP members to spot misinformation and want to do their own fact-checking.

Derision 2020: Join this benefit for First Amendment Foundation



Protecting Your Right to Know Since 1985

Jim Baltzelle (Email) – Here's an update on Derision 2020, a night of hilarity with Dave Barry and Carl Hiaasen to benefit the First Amendment Foundation. Jimmy Buffett, who was looking forward to joining his friends, had to drop out last minute but he asked the great Mac McAnally to step in for him! Both of them put the word out on their social media accounts, too. Very kind of them. Tickets start at \$25 per household and are available through https://www.floridafaf.org The event is Wednesday from 7:30-8:30 p.m. (EDT) on Zoom.

Pamela C. Marsh, president of the foundation, adds: "I'm pleased to announce that Mac McAnally will perform at Derision 2020. If you're unfamiliar with Mac, he's an award-winning **singer-songwriter** who is highly respected in the music industry. He's worked for years with Jimmy Buffett, Kenny Chesney and others. He's been the Country Music Association's Musician of the Year ten times, and has been inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame. Mac is also just a super nice person, who loves our cause. He will be an excellent entertaining addition."

Watching films in my hometown – two of them with AP ties

Amy Sancetta (<u>Email</u>) - The 11th Annual Chagrin Documentary Film Festival was held in my hometown recently. Normally a festival with well over 100 films shown at venues all over the community, the coronavirus pandemic created challenges for festival founder and director Mary Ann Quinn Ponce and her committee. This year, besides creating Drive-in Doc venues on the grounds of the local multiplex theater and Riverside Park, the festival was available for live-streaming from the comfort of home.

That is how we watched many of the films this year, and were elated to watch two with AP ties.



The first is a full-length documentary titled Beethoven in Beijing, written, co-directed, and co-produced by Jennifer Lin, the wife of former AP Philadelphia newsman Bill Stieg. The film documents how an unlikely visit to China by the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1973 touched the hearts and minds of the Chinese people after decades without the music because of the Cultural Revolution. The film is completely engaging with terrific interviews, great archival footage, and a storyline of how music knows no borders. It's absolutely marvelous. I wonder if anyone could find former AP WX photographer Charles Tasnadi in the archival footage in the film of Nixon's famed visit to China.

The second AP sighting came in the most unlikely of places. In a short documentary entitled The Great Toilet Paper Scare, the filmmaker explored how an off-handed joke by Johnny Carson about a toilet paper shortage helped lead to the real thing, with millions of fearful Americans rushing to stores for the sacred roll of paper in 1973.



The film opens with scenes of the 1973 gas crisis. The first time the viewer sees anything about a toilet paper shortage comes when the screen is filled with a clipping of a newspaper headline and story on the shortage by Bill Ahearn (former AP executive editor)! Pretty funny to see the clipping in this ridiculous little documentary.

What usage hills are worth dying on?

Doug Fisher (Email) - Retired Sr. Instructor, University of South Carolina - Ed Williams' (or is that Williams's?) note about nauseous/nauseated (in a recent Connecting) again raises the question about what usage hills it remains worth dying on. (And it is most often usage and idiom, not grammar, that provokes spirited discussions.)

I also get those notes from former students and even some pros I never taught who seek guidance, but I take a much less prescriptivist tone these days on many of the queries.

With nauseous/nauseated, I maintain the distinction in my writing. As pros I think we should. I mentioned it to my editing, writing and reporting classes. (Or is that editing, writing, and reporting?)

And then I didn't worry much about it because so many bigger things have emerged that need editing attention. (For instance, I used to scrounge for examples to illustrate and test on what I called needed items "missing in plain sight" in stories or non sequiturs or blatant numeracy issues. When I retired this year, my problem had become which ones to select from a weekly bushel of them.)

Even Brian Garner, considered one of the leading authorities on modern usage, has pretty much given up on **this one**.

Over/more than. Gantlet/gauntlet. Which/that. Who/whom. Lay/lie. Beg the question. Could/couldn't care less. Respected and reasoned commentators (such as Garner, John McIntyre, the late Bill Walsh) have suggested it's time to reevaluate (or is that re-evaluate) these and many others, as AP has done with some. But as we know, AP is only one style, hardly definitive. And, gawd, let's not get into the Oxford comma.

So what hills do we still think are worth dying on? It's an exercise I went through every summer in prep for teaching the next year. And over (or is that during) the years I jettisoned some things long before AP, such as (or is that like) over/more than, because there just comes a point of diminishing returns.

I think it would be a useful yearly exercise for all of us. But it can't be the parlor game of prescriptivists/descriptivists/peevers. It can't be our shibboleths. Certainly, we are free to use whatever we want in our own writings, but this has to be bigger; what would we try to impose on others (because to some extent that's what teaching, editing and style are) and specifically why? Are we ignoring language/usage/idiom evolution long past where it has become part of the language and not worth worrying about because of (or is that due to) our training?

Sometimes, it can't even be right/wrong -- language evolves without any respect for what is "right."

Humor - we can use much more of it

Lyle Price (Email) - This is an item perchance more suited to the volunteer department of Connecting, but I actually sent it out to a couple of e-mail pals as an illustration of humor to lighten these overly grim times and thought it might brighten the day for some of you readers. Humor, in my opinion, being more of which we can use nowadays. My volunteering after retiring from a journalistic career led me to helping to tutor a ninth-grade language arts (i.e., once known as "English") class on a once-a-week basis and to tutor an after-school program as a homework helper, in that case twice a week.

Then a school administrator asked why I didn't become an emergency substitute teacher -- a status granted in the state of Washington to persons with a college degree but lacking teaching credentials. So I did that (with pay!) for ten years at about an average of 90 school days a year. I finally stopped that and other paid work such as ushering behind home plate at Seattle Mariner games for nine seasons (concurrent with sub teaching) in order to focus on writing satirical short stories about life.

Attached is a copy of the song I used to sing from time to time in classrooms -depending upon how I sized up a problem that might face me in classroom management--by far the most difficult task faced by a teacher, in my opinion. I sang it once over the phone to the school superintendent in the school district that employed me (I was a friend of his). The words were intended to let kids (I limited it to middle and high school ages) know that I knew the score--and they always howled with laughter.

The Song of the Sub (To the Melody "Streets of Laredo") @ 2005 By Lyle W. Price

Oh, I see by your nametag That you are a sub. So I welcome you here – But this is the rub: There are things in this classroom That you ought to know. I'll sing them to you So you're ready to go!

Oh, I see you're a sub And I know that I'm late. But the school bus broke down And my tummy does ache. Spent all night on my homework, It made my eyes weep. And that's why in your class I'm going to sleep. Oh, I see you're a sub But you must understand: I must go to the bathroom And skip shop and band. Can I go to my locker And look for a book? It's just 'cross the hallway --Don't give me that look. Oh, I see you're a sub And I know what to ask: Can I get out of spelling And any hard task? Can I go to the nurse For a band aid or some such? 'Cause my brain's all worn out From thinking too much! Oh, I see you're a sub I'll be good, won't call names --If only you'll let me Play video games! When I see your nice face I've just got a hunch You'll loan me two dollars So I can buy lunch! (Inspired by students)

How I connected with 'Connecting' And what it means to me

Norm Abelson (Email) - One day, a couple of years ago, I was looking through my seemingly bottomless collection of papers, on another mission to thin out my junk. I came upon three booklets – one of them with a red cover and two in green. They were Associated Press stylebooks I got when I first joined The AP in the 1950s. One of them was from teletype days, the second from early teletypesetter times, and the third a general style book.

I couldn't bring myself to toss them, but what to do? I Googled "AP archives," got a positive response and mailed the booklets to Valerie Komor, AP's chief archivist. I got a nice thank-you note back from her, saying she had given my name to Paul Stevens to sign me on to his daily newsletter, called Connecting.

(Since then I have sent a batch of other related materials to the Archives, and am honored to have a little corner of my own in the collection. Valerie and her associate, Francesca Pitaro, both delightful to work with, are always on the search for AP-related

archival material. It's a wonderful way to preserve the history of The AP and the lives of the people who made it the respected and admired institution that it is.)

It wasn't long before my first issue of Connecting showed up on the computer. I was immediately taken by the content of the stories, the quality of the writing, the outstanding photography. It became a daily part of my life, a new way to connect with people whose work I admired, and whose lives were endlessly interesting to read about. Soon Paul was kind enough to give me space for some of my own history and thoughts.

We are currently enclosed in a world full of restrictions and disconnections. Physical distancing. Face covering. No hugging or hand-shaking. Months of empty schools, libraries, movie theaters, offices, museums, newsrooms, churches, stores, neighborhood bars.

The loneliness of it all. Still, what thinking person can possibly argue that these and other measures haven't been necessary for our safety during these perilous times. Yet who can say they aren't also antithetical to our human needs. Being physically close, touching, recognizing each other's faces, gathering in groups, working and learning and recreating together are basic to all of us.

There has been a painful break in these connections that we pretty much took for granted. So it's no surprise that Connecting, always a necessary pleasure, has taken on an even bigger role during this pandemic. It provides a kind of togetherness in a time of separations.

Each weekday I can't wait for Connecting and its contributions. Remembrances. Experiences. Relationships. Opinions. Sad losses. Humor. Perhaps most of all is the feeling of being part of a small army of folks connected by and through their words and images.

Connecting is an absolute treasure, especially in these trying times. So let's virtually click our glasses and raise this toast:

There's a man we all know name of Paul who labors from winter through fall; he does a great job of directing how we connect on Connecting, thus has earned the bravos of us all.

'Still a kid from home': From Indian Lake to the NBA bubble



Former Post-Star sports reporter Tim Reynolds, now reporting for the Associated Press, interviews Los Angeles Lakers star LeBron James when he played for the Miami Heat.

By DAVID BLOW Special to The Post-Star, Glens Falls, NY

After nearly 80 days, Indian Lake native Tim Reynolds has just gotten out of the NBA's Disney World bubble after chronicling the playoffs and the lives of NBA superstars and their quest for a championship during a pandemic for the Associated Press.

But over the last three decades, the former Post-Star sportswriter has also covered nine Olympic games, starting in Salt Lake City.

He's attended and written about eight World Series, Super Bowls (where he saw Prince sing "Purple Rain" in the rain) and one Stanley Cup Final.

He is a frequent guest on sports podcasts and radio and TV sports shows and has nearly 70,000 Twitter followers, which he humbly says is nothing compared to most people.

Oh, he also got bit on the shoulder by Shaquille O'Neil when he reached in front of him with his recorder to interview Dwayne Wade.

But in addition to chatting daily with NBA superstars, he has met presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama and interviewed Donald Trump before he became president. He also chatted with nervous members of Santana and Metallica before national anthem performances and has traveled the world, writing about sports.

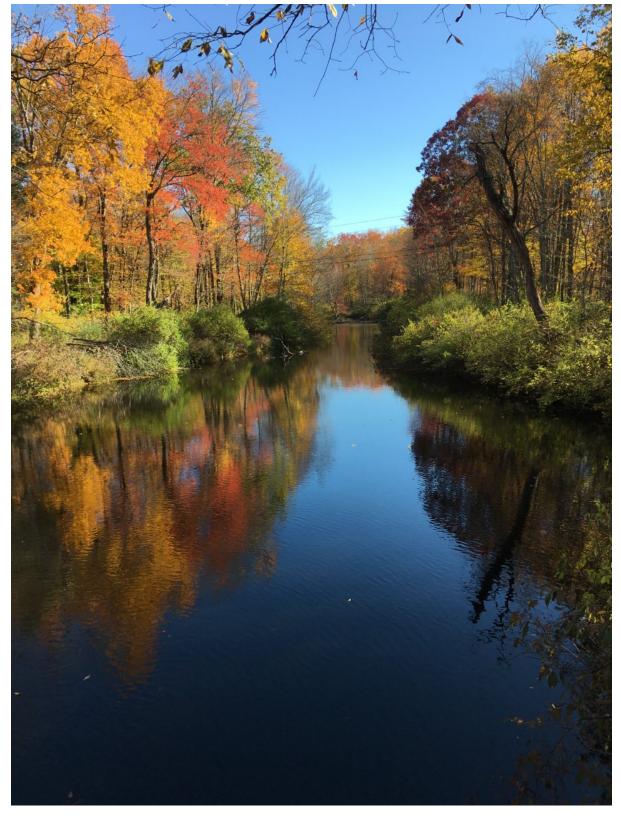
Not bad for a kid from an Adirondack town of fewer than 2,000 people, though he repeatedly deflected any praise during a 90-minute interview, saying he's simply been lucky to be in the right place at the right time.

"LeBron just won the championship, I didn't. I just write about it," he said.

And he said he owes it all to his roots and mentors in Indian Lake, and to former Post-Star Sports Editor Ken Tingley, who took a chance on an 18-year-old Adirondack kid with no experience for a sports clerk job.

Read more here. Shared by Chris Carola.

Fall foliage – East Nassau, NY



Marc Humbert (<u>Email</u>) - Fall foliage, Tsatsawassa Creek, East Nassau, NY. This is taken from our bridge across the creek that flows into Tsatsawassa Lake where we live, east of Albany.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



То

Bob Nordyke – <u>bobpress@aol.com</u>

Stories of interest

How I Left Journalism and Learned to Live (Vice)

By Justine Reix

Journalism school should come with a warning label: "Beware: may be hazardous to your health." When I posted a call-out on Twitter asking to hear from people who had left the profession, I didn't expect the deluge of around 100 messages that flowed into my inbox, or the reasons some of them gave.

It's no wonder a recent French study found that people in their thirties are turning their backs on the precarious career. So many enter the industry with noble ambitions of breaking world-changing stories, and leave once the realisation has set in that their every day just revolves around clicks, content and Chartbeat.

I spoke to several ex-journalists in France about why they left the field, and how they've found happiness in new careers.

Read more here. Shared by Marcus Eliason.

-0-

The New Yorker suspends Jeffrey Toobin after CNN analyst exposed himself on Zoom (LA Times)

The New Yorker has suspended journalist Jeffrey Toobin after a Zoom incident the staff writer claims happened by "mistake."

The publication took action after the lawyer and author, who is also CNN's chief legal analyst, exposed his genitals during a virtual meeting last week with staffers from the New Yorker and WNYC radio, according to a Monday report from Vice.

"I made an embarrassingly stupid mistake, believing I was off-camera," Toobin said in a statement to Vice. "I apologize to my wife, family, friends and co-workers.

"I believed I was not visible on Zoom," he added. "I thought no one on the Zoom call could see me. I thought I had muted the Zoom video."

Read more **here**. Shared by Doug Pizac.

-0-

The World Series has framed my life. After 44 straight, I'm sitting this one out. (Washington Post)

By Thomas Boswell Columnist

Since 1975, I've covered every World Series game for The Washington Post. My streak will end Tuesday at 252 games. Including travel days, I've spent over a year covering the World Series.

Last month, I decided not to go to this World Series, because I don't think it's smart for a 72-year-old man in a pandemic. But I still hated making that call.

No matter the reason, I'll miss the marvelous misery of covering the World Series this year.

And, believe me, it's both marvelous and miserable. Every MLB writer comes home from the World Series feeling like Lawrence of Arabia staggering out of the desert.

Read more here. Shared by Bill McCloskey.

The Final Word



Shared by Bruce Lowitt

Today in History - October 20, 2020



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Oct. 20, the 294th day of 2020. There are 72 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 20, 1973, in the so-called "Saturday Night Massacre," special Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox was dismissed and Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson and Deputy Attorney General William B. Ruckelshaus resigned.

On this date:

In 1803, the U.S. Senate ratified the Louisiana Purchase.

In 1936, Helen Keller's teacher, Anne Sullivan Macy, died in Forest Hills, N.Y., at age 70.

In 1947, the House Un-American Activities Committee opened hearings into alleged Communist influence and infiltration in the U.S. motion picture industry.

In 1967, a jury in Meridian, Mississippi, convicted seven men of violating the civil rights of slain civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner; the seven received prison terms ranging from 3 to 10 years.

In 1976, 78 people were killed when the Norwegian tanker Frosta rammed the commuter ferry George Prince on the Mississippi River near New Orleans.

In 1977, three members of the rock group Lynyrd Skynyrd, including lead singer Ronnie Van Zant, were killed along with three others in the crash of a chartered plane near McComb, Mississippi.

In 1987, 10 people were killed when an Air Force jet crashed into a Ramada Inn hotel near Indianapolis International Airport after the pilot, who was trying to make an emergency landing, ejected safely.

In 1990, three members of the rap group 2 Live Crew were acquitted by a jury in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., of violating obscenity laws with an adults-only concert in nearby Hollywood the previous June.

In 2001, officials announced that anthrax had been discovered in a House postal facility on Capitol Hill.

In 2004, A U.S. Army staff sergeant, Ivan "Chip" Frederick, pleaded guilty to abusing Iraqi detainees at Abu Ghraib prison. (Frederick was sentenced to eight years in prison; he was paroled in 2007.)

In 2011, Moammar Gadhafi, 69, Libya's dictator for 42 years, was killed as revolutionary fighters overwhelmed his hometown of Sirte (SURT) and captured the last major bastion of resistance two months after his regime fell.

In 2018, Saudi Arabia announced that journalist Jamal Khashoggi (jah-MAHL' khahr-SHOHK'-jee) had been killed in Saudi Arabia's consulate in Istanbul; there was immediate international skepticism over the Saudi account that Khashoggi had died during a "fistfight."

Ten years ago: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (ah-muh-DEE'-neh-zhahd) and visiting Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez hailed what they called their strong strategic relationship, saying they were united in efforts to establish a "new world order" that would eliminate Western dominance over global affairs. NPR fired news analyst Juan Williams after he talked about feeling nervous on airline flights with people in Muslim attire during an interview on Fox News Channel. Bob Guccione, 79, founder of Penthouse magazine, died in Plano, Texas.

Five years ago: The United States and Russia signed an agreement to minimize risks of air collisions as they separately carried out airstrikes in Syria. Chinese President Xi Jinping began a much anticipated state visit to Britain, where he was welcomed as an honored guest at Buckingham Palace and Parliament. Former Virginia Sen. Jim Webb said he was dropping out of the Democratic race for president.

One year ago: Voters in Bolivia went to the polls for a presidential election that threeterm incumbent Evo Morales would claim to have won. (Morales would resign in November when the police and army withdrew support after weeks of demonstrations over allegations of election fraud.)

Today's Birthdays: Japan's Empress Michiko is 86. Rockabilly singer Wanda Jackson is 83. Former actor Rev. Mother Dolores Hart is 82. Actor William "Rusty" Russ is 70. Actor Melanie Mayron is 68. Retired MLB All-Star Keith Hernandez is 67. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., is 65. Movie director Danny Boyle is 64. Former Labor Secretary Hilda Solis is 63. Actor Viggo Mortensen is 62. Democratic vice presidential nominee Sen. Kamala Harris is 56. Rock musician Jim Sonefeld (Hootie & The Blowfish) is 56. Rock musician David Ryan is 56. Rock musician Doug Eldridge (Oleander) is 53. Journalist Sunny Hostin (TV: "The View") is 52. Political commentator and blogger Michelle Malkin is 50. Actor Kenneth Choi is 49. Rapper Snoop Dogg is 49. Singer Dannii Minogue is 49. Singer Jimi Westbrook (country group Little Big Town) is 49. Country musician Jeff Loberg is 44. Actor/comedian Dan Fogler is 44. Rock musician Jon Natchez (The War on Drugs) is 44. Actor Sam Witwer is 43. Actor John Krasinski is 41. Rock musician Daniel Tichenor (Cage the Elephant) is 41. Actor Katie Featherston is 38. Actor Jennifer Nicole Freeman is 35.

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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