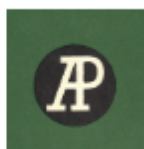


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## Connecting November 05, 2020

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this the 5<sup>th</sup> day of November 2020.

Today's Connecting is dominated by election news - as a handful of states too close to call has pushed the presidential election into a third day. Got comments to share? Please send them along.

**AUTHORS ALERT:** One last reminder - 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 soon – 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.

Have a great day - be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

## After tense night, election mystery remains for media



A television in the White House briefing room shows Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden speaking Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2020, in Washington. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

By DAVID BAUDER and LYNN ELBER

After an extraordinary night of shifting vote counts and a rebuke of President Donald Trump, news organizations kept vigil Wednesday as Americans waited to learn who their next president would be.

Methodical vote counting Wednesday left Democrat Joe Biden on the cusp of the presidency. The Associated Press said he has won enough states for 264 electoral votes and a win in one of four uncalled states — Georgia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania or Nevada — would make him the president-elect.

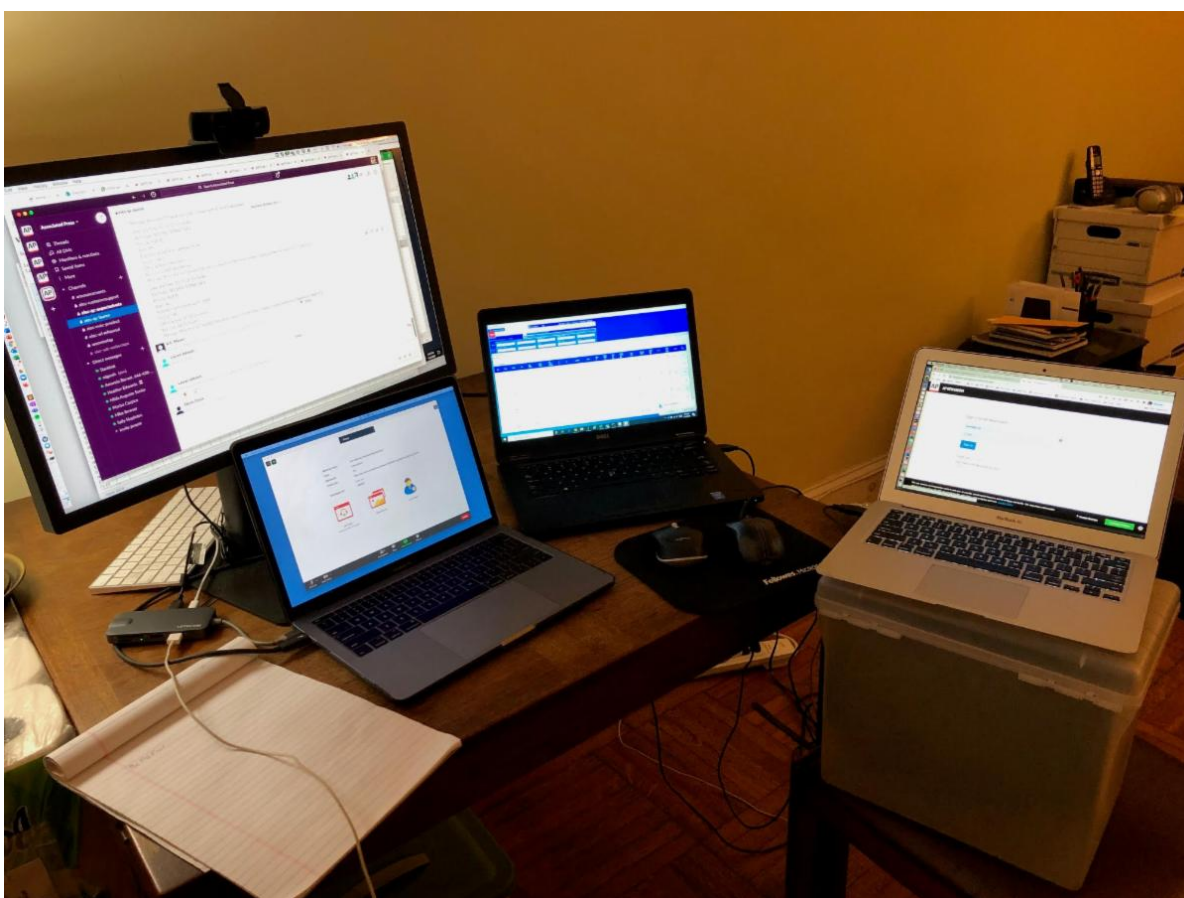
Cable and broadcast news divisions followed the story closely, even as they learned that election night coverage was a relative dud with viewers.

An estimated 56.9 million people watched coverage over 21 networks during primetime hours Tuesday, down sharply from the 71.4 million viewers on election night 2016, the Nielsen company said.

It was a cable news night, with Fox News Channel leading the way with 13.6 million viewers, followed by CNN (9.1 million) and MSNBC (7.3 million), Nielsen said. The legacy broadcast networks — ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox — followed in that order.

Read more [here](#).

## Your thoughts on Election 2020



**Ruth Gersh ([Email](#))** - In this era of virtualization, it might be interesting to ask folks what their election night setup looked like at home. Here's mine.

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**Ed Tobias ([Email](#))** - A suggestion for the news organizations that have been paying a lot of money for political polls: Stop paying for them! Also, stop reporting them.

The pollsters have lost credibility with the majority of, if not all, news consumers. And the news media's credibility is impacted by that lousy polling.

I don't have a problem with surveying people's hot-button topics but, for the sake of those readers, viewers and listeners – as well of the sake of the nation – let's put an end to trying to predict how votes will be cast.

Maybe the money saved could be used by those news organizations to hire a few more journalists.

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Chris Sullivan (Email) - A friend sent this, supposedly a 2-year-old's work as the vote count dragged on Wednesday.

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**Dan Sewell (Email)** - To paraphrase Yogi Berra, "It ain't over til The AP says it is."

Ohio Bureau Chief Eva Parziale called the state for Donald Trump at 12:19 a.m. Wednesday, but the national presidential election remains in doubt. We've already discussed 2000, which ended with a Dec. 12 U.S. Supreme Court ruling.

Some other Overtime Election experiences:

2004: Eva called Ohio for George W. Bush at 11 a.m. Wednesday, with the state clinching his re-election over John Kerry. I was at The Cincinnati Enquirer, but we were involved because of Warren County's questionable decision to lock down the board of elections because of a supposed terror threat.

1988: AP's Florida Chief of Bureau Gary Clark called the U.S. Senate race for Republican Connie Mack III (the Hall of Fame baseball manager's grandson) over Rep. Buddy MacKay a week after Election Day. Others had called the race election night for MacKay, whose hometown Ocala's newspaper proclaimed on its front page: "Hey, Buddy, You're a Senator!"

Mack and his wife had gone to a secluded getaway to rest after the campaign. A Washington Senate staffer friend gave me his number at the getaway. When I called to tell him we had declared him the winner, his first reaction was "Who gave you this number?" I told him I couldn't tell him, so he said, "It doesn't matter anyway." And he gave me an AP-exclusive reaction interview.

2006: Rep. Jean Schmidt held a lead of a couple thousand votes over Democratic challenger Victoria Wulsin in Ohio's 2nd U.S. House District. Eva held off until counties started reporting their provisional and other outstanding ballots over the next 2 weeks. We determined that the Republican-heavy Warren County could clinch it for Schmidt, so I went there and waited at the Board of Elections for their total, phoned Eva, and AP called the race ahead of anyone else.

This is my 12th presidential election as a journalist, 10th for AP. I suspect it will be my last, so of course it's not an easy one!

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**Mark Hamrick (Email)** - Thinking about all of the years I spent in newsrooms on Election Days (and nights), and thankful for all in journalism, especially to those who've taken great risks by going out into the field (and to rallies) over these past days and months. I'm seeing by way of Connecting that AP in Washington is forgoing "newsroom pizza" in favor of boxed meals for staffers working together (in-person) during the pandemic. Since I have joked about the idea that a story isn't big unless pizza is involved, I'll be curious to see if this change sticks. Lower calorie counts is probably a good idea.

Stay safe out there!

## I believe in science – and started COVID-19 vaccine trial

**Amanda St. Amand** ([Email](#)) - I believe in science.

COVID-19 is a highly contagious disease, made worse by its unpredictability. You may have a slight cough. You may end up on a ventilator. You may have no symptoms. You may suffer lung damage, heart damage, kidney damage. You may die.

America recorded more than 100,000 new cases today - the day after Election Day - and more than 1,100 deaths.

We are not "rounding the corner" and it is not going to "just disappear" as the tenant at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue repeatedly claims.



Those are some of the reasons I enrolled in a COVID-19 vaccine trial that started (for me) Tuesday at Washington University in St. Louis. I want to find a vaccine to save lives. I want to honor the more than 233,000 Americans who have died of this virus. I want to be part of the solution, not part of the problem like people who refuse to take COVID-19 seriously.

I believe in science.

*(Amanda Davis St. Amand is digital editor for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch after earlier work for the AP that included Phoenix news editor.)*

## Lessons from Horst Faas



**Ford Burkhart showing his passport to a China border guard at border with Hong Kong in 1973. Photo by Horst Faas.**

**Ford Burkhart** ([Email](#)) - Henry Bradsher writes of Horst Faas and his "eye for opportunity." Indeed. We were in China together, me a skinny 31 year old from the Foreign Desk, joining up with a team from UPI, for a month in 1973, shortly after Nixon's trip to China.

When our minders took us to the countryside, to see a widget factory built by peasants etc., this green correspondent was listening to the party line, while Horst and his cameras were slipping out the back door to get the shot that the AP photo desk needed. "Stop. Stop! You aren't allowed to go there. I have to get permission," our minder would be shouting. Horst, in this thickest German accent, would fire back, "Ja, ja, ja. I talk to you about that next week." Meanwhile Horst had the shot.

And he knew his stuff. Like where to get the best jiao tze's in Shanghai. And where a good party might be unfolding. The essentials.

Another lesson: When we wrapped up our travel, I was sure I'd been a royal pain in the rear to a veteran abroad. But in a few days, a package arrived from Horst. A set of 8 x 10 glossies of me, at work in Beijing, at the border, with Chou En-lai, in the Forbidden City. Priceless. Maybe that kindness was the most important lesson of all.



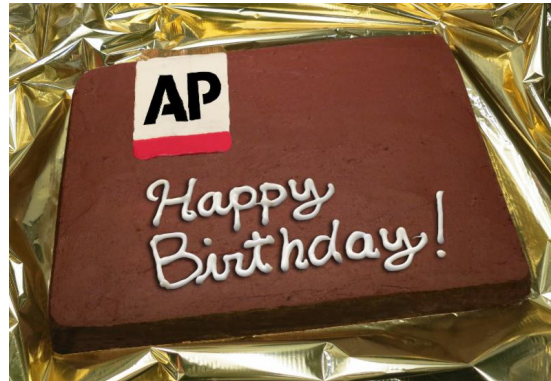


April 15, 1865, the morning after Lincoln was shot. It sits across from my seat at the dining room table, so I see it every morning while eating breakfast and reading the current day's morning paper. I frequently marvel at how small the type was in those old papers. I was reminded of that when I saw the Poynter presentation of the "Hoover Wins" paper in Wednesday's Connecting.

How the hell did those people back then see the words?



## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Darrell Condon - [darrellcondon@gmail.com](mailto:darrellcondon@gmail.com)

Amy Sancetta - [james4ellie@gmail.com](mailto:james4ellie@gmail.com)

## Stories of interest

*How newspaper front pages treated an Election Day with no clear winner* (Washington Post)



A man holds a copy of the New York Times outside the White House on Wednesday. (Hannah McKay/Reuters)

By Marisa Iati

Election officials are “still counting” ballots. Voters “wait” for a result. The nation is “tense,” “divided” and “in tumult.”

That’s how the front pages of newspapers across the United States described the still-unresolved presidential race as Tuesday turned to Wednesday, print deadlines loomed and editors searched for the right words to describe the uncertainty.

Many newspapers focused on the ambiguity of the race and the unsettled national mood, with headlines that included “The nation waits,” “Wait of the world” and “Waiting to exhale.” The front pages of the Wall Street Journal and the Los Angeles Times highlighted the close race in several uncalled swing states.

The Washington Post went with “A nation divided,” while USA Today chose “A tense nation wonders what’s next.” The Arizona Republic led with “Divided nation waits.”

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Bad polls, fake news, and that damned needle: Here's how the media covered a twisty Election Night*** (Nieman Reports)

By NIEMAN LAB STAFF

That was quite a ride, wasn't it? Or, rather, this election is quite a ride, given that it's still going on. The quadrennial media rituals — “too early to call,” a sudden awareness of the nation's counties, Steve Kornacki — all returned for the 2020 presidential election. As of Wednesday afternoon, no news organization has been able to declare an overall winner, and there are still meaningful votes left to count.

There weren't a ton of meaningful innovations in last night's media coverage — unless you count “caution” as an innovation, which maybe you should. The added complexity of massive early voting and the still-fresh scars from 2016 generally led to outlets more willing to let the night develop. But it certainly wasn't a happy night for many viewers, readers, and obsessive doomscrollers. Here are a few of the things we noticed.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***We still don't know much about this election — except that the media and pollsters blew it again*** (Washington Post)

By Margaret Sullivan  
Media columnist

By early morning Wednesday, there was a lot that millions of anxious Americans didn't know.

Mainly, they didn't know who the president-elect is. That, in itself, wasn't unexpected, nor is it terrible.

**Follow the latest on Election 2020**

But after consuming hours of news on Tuesday night, and observing the election results thus far, there are a few things that we can be certain of.

That we should never again put as much stock in public opinion polls, and those who interpret them, as we've grown accustomed to doing. Polling seems to be irrevocably broken, or at least our understanding of how seriously to take it is.

The supposedly commanding lead that Joe Biden carried for weeks didn't last very long into Tuesday evening. This was a lead, remember, that many predicted could result in a landslide Biden victory, help turn the Senate blue, and bring the Democrats amazing victories in red states like Ohio and Florida.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

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## ***Nearing 24 hours of election coverage, TV news anchors are running on fumes ... and Diet Coke*** (Poynter)

By Tom Jones

Do these folks ever sleep? That's the question we all had as we tuned into network coverage of this Election Day Continued.

Many saw anchors such as NBC's Lester Holt and ABC's George Stephanopoulos when they shut off their TVs late Tuesday night and then saw them again when they turned on their TVs Wednesday morning.

Consider this exchange on Fox News when Dana Perino asked Bill Hemmer if he got any sleep.

Hemmer said, "Forty-five minutes. What about you?"

Perino said, "I doubled that. ... But I have to tell you, that hour-and-a-half sleep that I had was like nothing I think — I don't think I've ever experienced a deep sleep like that."

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Fox News Made a Big Call in Arizona, Buoying Biden and Angering Trump*** (New York Times)

By Michael M. Grynbbaum and John Koblin

It was just after 12:30 a.m. on election night, and Fox News was under fire.

“Arnon, we’re getting a lot of incoming here, and we need you to answer some questions,” the network’s chief political anchor, Bret Baier, said pointedly.

“Shoot!” Arnon Mishkin replied, his face breaking into a smile.

Roughly an hour earlier, Mr. Mishkin’s decision desk team at Fox News had made a bold call that instantly changed the tenor of the night: Arizona had gone to Joseph R. Biden Jr. The projection buoyed supporters of the Democratic candidate and sent President Trump’s aides into conniptions.

Even Mr. Trump himself took a whack, referring dismissively to Mr. Mishkin during an early-morning appearance at the White House as “the gentleman that called it.”

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

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## ***America wakes up to a near worst-case scenario / Will Bunch Newsletter*** (Philadelphia Inquirer)

By WILL BUNCH

For months, the 2020 election has been spun — and rightfully so — as more than a choice between two candidates, but as a battle for the soul of America.

Nobody said this was going to be easy. As a bright November sun finally rose Wednesday morning, a bleary-eyed nation fitfully woke up just as divided and, arguably, just as broken as when we finally went to sleep hours earlier.

An Electoral College map that still looks winnable for Joe Biden — thanks to his strength with suburban voters in Arizona, Michigan, Wisconsin and here in Pennsylvania — still faces a 1970s' arcade game worth of pop-up highway obstacles to navigate, starting with President Trump’s all-too-predictable 2 a.m. declarations of victory and non-existent Democratic fraud. Unfortunately, Trump and the GOP’s button-down lawyers may have days to press these bogus claims, as the predicted slow vote count — including right here in Philadelphia — was on a pace to last through this week, and possibly beyond.

But — and I hate to sound so deflated and cynical, especially as some of you are drinking your late-morning coffee — the coming days of vote-counting chaos, punctuated by protests, probably isn’t the worst of it. For one thing, although a few

races are yet to be called, it looks very likely that Mitch McConnell and a GOP Senate will remain in power, meaning that even if Biden can pry Trump away from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, the nation faces bitter gridlock, with serious action on climate change, health-care reform and a makeover of the Trump/McConnell extreme right-wing, white-male judiciary now dead on arrival.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Dan Perry.

## The Final Word

*When your presidential candidate loses, here's what to do* (USA Today)

By KAROL MARKOWICZ | OPINION CONTRIBUTOR

There's a good chance your presidential candidate will lose on Tuesday. It doesn't matter if you support Donald Trump or Joe Biden, your chance of disappointment is approximately the same. You hear people on your side wonder: What will we do if our guy loses?

Here's what you will do.

You will wake up the next day, or whenever the results are finally confirmed, and be sad. You will feel let down. You thought you knew your fellow Americans and then they went and did this! How could they?

There will be a chorus of voices telling you America is over. Articles will be written and talking heads will be on your television saying America has never been in such a dark place before. You know a little history, enough to be suspicious of these statements, but you're so disillusioned you're inclined to believe them. Don't. We have been through worse and we have survived.

### Don't act like the country is ending

You will hear conspiracy theories. It was the Russians who fixed the election — even though our Electoral College system makes that very difficult. You will hear that busloads of illegal voters were seen arriving at polling places, though photographs are mysteriously never produced.

Mixed in will be true stories of voting irregularities, the kind that exist in every free system that has ever been. We must work to fix those holes. Our system is imperfect, so people will try to shake your faith in it. Don't let them.

Read more [here](#).

## Today in History - Nov. 5, 2020



### By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Nov. 5, the 310th day of 2020. There are 56 days left in the year.

#### Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 5, 2009, a shooting rampage at the Fort Hood Army post in Texas left 13 people dead; Maj. Nidal Hasan, an Army psychiatrist, was later convicted of murder and sentenced to death. (No execution date has been set.)

#### On this date:

In 1605, the "Gunpowder Plot" failed as Guy Fawkes was seized before he could blow up the English Parliament.

In 1781, the Continental Congress elected John Hanson of Maryland its chairman, giving him the title of "President of the United States in Congress Assembled."

In 1872, suffragist Susan B. Anthony defied the law by attempting to cast a vote for President Ulysses S. Grant. (Anthony was convicted by a judge and fined \$100, but she never paid the penalty.)

In 1912, Democrat Woodrow Wilson was elected president, defeating Progressive Party candidate Theodore Roosevelt, incumbent Republican William Howard Taft and Socialist Eugene V. Debs.

In 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt won an unprecedented third term in office as he defeated Republican challenger Wendell L. Willkie.

In 1968, Republican Richard M. Nixon won the presidency, defeating Democratic Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey and American Independent candidate George C. Wallace.

In 1992, Malice Green, a Black motorist, died after he was struck in the head 14 times with a flashlight by a Detroit police officer, Larry Nevers, outside a suspected crack house. (Nevers and his partner, Walter Budzyn, were found guilty of second-degree murder, but the convictions were overturned; they were later convicted of involuntary manslaughter.)

In 1994, former President Ronald Reagan disclosed he had Alzheimer's disease.

In 2003, President Bush signed a bill outlawing the procedure known by its critics as "partial-birth abortion"; less than an hour later, a federal judge in Nebraska issued a temporary restraining order against the ban. (In 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act.)

In 2006, Saddam Hussein was convicted and sentenced by the Iraqi High Tribunal to hang for crimes against humanity.

In 2014, a day after sweeping Republican election gains, President Barack Obama and incoming Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell pledged to try to turn divided government into a force for good rather than gridlock, yet warned of veto showdowns as well.

In 2017, a gunman armed with an assault rifle opened fire in a small South Texas church, killing more than two dozen people; the shooter, Devin Patrick Kelley, was later found dead in a vehicle after he was shot and chased by two men who heard the gunfire. (An autopsy revealed that he died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.)

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle, boarded Air Force One to fly to Mumbai, India, the first stop of a 10-day tour through India, Indonesia, South Korea and Japan. A judge in Los Angeles sentenced Johannes Mehserle (yoh-HAH'-nes MEZ'-ur-lee), a white former transit officer, to two years in prison in the shooting death of Oscar Grant, a Black man, on an Oakland train platform; the minimal sentence provoked angry protests. (Mehserle ended up serving 11 months.) Cable channel MSNBC suspended host Keith Olbermann for two shows for making unapproved political donations. Actor Jill Clayburgh died in Lakeville, Connecticut, at age 66. Opera singer Shirley Verrett, 79, died in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Five years ago: A woman who kept mentally disabled adults captive in the basement of a Philadelphia home and in other states for their disability checks was sentenced by a federal judge to life in prison; Linda Weston, 55, apologized during the hearing, saying: "I believe in God and God knows what happened." Lisa Mearkle, a small-town police officer who fatally shot an unarmed motorist in the back as he was lying



facedown on the ground, was acquitted at her murder trial in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania.

One year ago: Virginia Democrats took full control of the statehouse for the first time in more than two decades, as suburban voters turned out in big numbers to back Democratic candidates. Residents of Tucson, Arizona, voted overwhelmingly not to become an official "sanctuary city" with more restrictions on how and when police could enforce immigration laws. Voters in Kansas City, Missouri, overwhelmingly approved removing the name of Dr. Martin Luther King from one of the city's most historic boulevards, less than a year after the city council decided to rename The Paseo for the civil rights icon.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Harris Yulin is 83. Actor Chris Robinson is 82. Actor Elke Sommer is 80. Singer Art Garfunkel is 79. Singer Peter Noone is 73. TV personality Kris Jenner is 65. Actor Nestor Serrano is 65. Actor-comedian Mo Gaffney is 62. Actor Robert Patrick is 62. Singer Bryan Adams is 61. Actor Tilda Swinton is 60. Actor Michael Gaston is 58. Actor Tatum O'Neal is 57. Actor Andrea McArdle is 57. Rock singer Angelo Moore (Fishbone) is 55. Actor Judy Reyes is 53. Actor Seth Gilliam is 52. Rock musician Mark Hunter (James) is 52. Actor Sam Rockwell is 52. Country singers Heather and Jennifer Kinley (The Kinleys) are 50. Actor Corin Nemec is 49. Rock musician Jonny Greenwood (Radiohead) is 49. Country singer-musician Ryan Adams is 46. Actor Sam Page is 45. Actor Sebastian Arcelus is 44. Actor Luke Hemsworth is 40. Actor Jeremy Lelliott is 38. Actor Annet Mahendru (MAH'-hehn-droo) is 35. Rock musician Kevin Jonas (The Jonas Brothers) is 33. Actor Landon Gimenez is 17.

## 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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