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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this the 18th day of February 2021,

Connecting leads with some wonderful remembrances of **Bill Beecham**, longtime Salt Lake City chief of bureau, who died Tuesday.

It is obvious in reading them that he left a legacy that will be remembered for many years to come.

We also bring more of your stories of the reasons behind your unique email address. Share your own, please.

ZOOM SENDOFF FOR JOHN ROGERS: A Zoom farewell for John Rogers, Los Angeles newsman who is retiring after 33 years with AP, will be held Thursday, Feb. 25, at 1:30 p.m EST. If you are interested in taking part, drop a note to AP California news editor **Frank Baker** at fsbaker@ap.org

SENILITY PRAYER – Our colleague **Max Thomson** shared this on Facebook but was careful to note that he is not the originator and is not sure who is:

The Senility Prayer: "God, Grant me the Senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones that I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference. Amen."

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

Heidgerd residence becomes an AP remote bureau during Texas outages



Dallas AP staffer Jamie Stengle relocated to neighbor and AP-retiree Diana Heidgerd's home after subzero temperatures knocked out power to Jamie's condo. (Diana at left in photo at right.)

Diana Heidgerd ([Email](#)) - Our spare bedroom has once again become a working haven for Dallas AP journalists amid bitter winter weather this week that at one point left about 4 million Texas households without electricity.



We were lucky — so far no outages at the Heidgerd household. Not so lucky was Dallas newswoman Jamie Stengle, a neighbor whose condo lost power Monday and see-sawed with occasional bursts of electricity over the next few days.

So our cat Vinny's favorite room turned into Heidgeerd AP with a strong WiFi signal for Jamie to write about the continuing cold weather. Her latest story includes details on cold-stunned turtles rescued along the Texas Gulf Coast.

[Thousands of cold-stunned sea turtles being rescued in Texas](#) (apnews.com)

Several other Dallas AP staffers also lost electricity this week and our come-stay-over invitation was extended to them. We'll see if our home becomes a wider shelter.

It's been a real change of pace for Dallas at a time when temperatures in mid-February usually climb into the 60s. I even dug out my "Going home to South Dakota" bright orange heavy winter coat — so named in case I got stuck in a snowbank and more easily could be found!

Remembering Bill Beecham

People like Bill were and may still be rare in the industry. Cherish them.



Bill Beecham raises a glass for a toast with his friend and colleague David Briscoe in 2013.

David Briscoe (Email) – I'm not sure I can get through this.

But if my dear departed friend of five decades got through just shy of 80 years of terrible challenges and wonderful triumphs before passing away on Tuesday, I can get through this tribute. He did it mostly with grit and humor few dying men can muster.

It wasn't the emotion with Bill. There was plenty of that. One or both of us wept through almost every conversation. More, it was about sharing the intensity of wire service journalism at its peak, the competition to get stories onto the national and international wires, the exhilaration of the pursuit before the rise of "fake news" and the particular challenges of living and working in a Utah culture that claimed all truth but preferred not sharing some of the darker truths about itself.

The proper obituary would say Bill Beecham passed away at 79 in a Salt Lake City care facility after nursing a long series of illnesses. The truth is that he died, as so many have in the time of COVID, separated from his family and friends, suffering a long list of ailments including COVID, pneumonia, collapsed lung, diabetes that resulted in the amputation of one leg, heart failure that could not be treated, and a few unmentionables. He also suffered the pain of demons, departures and desperations that no old person should encounter in the final years.

Just in recent months, his sister, Kate Moore, passed away as did another dear friend in AP journalism, Bob Kuesterman.

There were no funerals, no trips to be with loved ones, no real mourning. The Kuesterman story itself is a testament to the kind of friendships Bill nurtured — ups and downs for sure, but solid in the end. Until COVID closed the doors on visitors and then Bob got sick himself, Bob literally visited his ailing friend every day at his bedside. They exchanged memories, heartache and the past joys of our old-style journalism. Bob's sudden death from a fast-moving cancer was a shock for Bill and for me.

Through all of the challenges, Bill Beecham never let personal problems affect his work. His AP career and his loyalty to the world's biggest news gathering organization were solid for 35 years. For a time, he and I had what we considered the best and most autonomous jobs in journalism — AP bureau chiefs with skilled staffs serving media outlets around the world with the most accurate and reliable news we could provide — everything from high school sports to impactful investigative pieces.

Bill and I both rose from AP grunt journalists to salesmen, supervisors, and news directors for our territories, with company cars and expense accounts but with salaries that were nowhere near competitive with media stars who did much less. Those jobs are now largely gone. It was The AP, not Bill Beecham, that changed — not its core mission but the ways it tried to accomplish it. (But that's another story.)

I have to say that Bill left AP under a cloud, but it wasn't a cloud of his making. He settled an age discrimination case with AP in his favor and remained loyal to the greatness of the mission of good journalism to the end. As a result, he retired in 2004 but stayed on the payroll until 2006.

Bill genuinely loved journalism and The AP.

"I've seen a lot of changes here. But I love this company. I've given them 35 years of my sweat and my blood, I have no regrets whatsoever," Bill told The Salt Lake Tribune at his retirement.

He had planned to take a teaching job in Japan but was turned back when the school that paid his way there said he was too old for the job. It was also the start of his serious medical problems.

Without making this too much about me, everything about Bill Beecham was personal, parallel and paradoxical for me. We were the closest of friends but at times the toughest of rivals. Bill didn't speak to me for a whole year after I got the news editor's job he wanted. But our work together and the friendship survived even that.

We are both septuagenarian white guys, balding, overweight (until Bill lost the leg and worked hard to train a prosthetic limb.)

We were both Old School AP loyalists with beautiful Asian wives, wonderfully successful children, and careers grounded in Utah journalism and culture. I was born and raised Mormon. I went on to other parts of the world of news. Bill, ironically, stayed in Utah. He had grown up Catholic and gave up studies for the priesthood to marry Fumiko, whom he had met while with the military in Japan. They were married for 52 years.

We also had profound differences. I was Peace Corps and he was U.S. Navy. In journalistic roles, we were a good team. He was the bad cop and I was the good cop, or at least that's the way I saw it. Our work together culminated in 1975 with a series of stories that calculated the wealth of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which then called itself Mormon. Bill instigated the project out of a strong feeling that church influence and power, especially in the Western United States, warranted an examination of its finances. Nothing substantive had been done up to that point.

He was the driving force behind the stories and I brought a lifetime of living Mormonism.

We worked for months with interviews of top church leaders, documents and public records. Bill even found a full accounting of the tithing receipts of one local group of churches in a local library. We extrapolated from that for US-only tithing receipts and then divided by 10 to be extremely conservative with our estimate. We didn't even count tithing income from the millions of Mormons living abroad.

Still we found \$1 billion a year in income from donations and business profits, which were documented with required public filings and other sources. The church, which we allowed the unusual (and controversial) opportunity of reading the story before publication without being allowed to edit, would neither confirm nor deny our estimates, except to provide a quote saying all its money went to God's work.

The footnote to the story is that none of the AP Utah members (including the church-owned Deseret News and the independent Salt Lake Tribune) used the stories, and the AP national wire failed to carry even a shorter version. Bill and I have speculated

on church interference but got some satisfaction when the stories won the first annual General Excellence award from the Society of Professional Journalists (Sigma Delta Chi) Utah chapter, despite the fact it was never printed in Utah.

The story got wide use by moving on state wires wherever there was interest in Mormonism. It became a starting point for other investigations and book-length studies that led most recently to the 2019 whistleblower complaint that the church had misled members in setting aside \$100 billion in a tax-free investment account.

Another memorable story for Bill was covering the first US execution in 10 years. Journalists were barred from witnessing the actual firing squad killing of Gary Gilmore, who begged to be executed for double murder, but Bill was at the prison when it occurred and was able to cobble together a vivid account from publicist Larry Schiller, who was working for Norman Mailer who wrote “The Executioner’s Song” about the case. Schiller got Gilmore to invite him as a witness.

Over the years, Bill and I talked about the impact of the execution on him, and I invariably got it wrong, telling people (including Paul Stevens) that he witnessed the actual firing squad. Bill was deeply opposed to capital punishment but handled the assignment with skill and meticulous accuracy— much more meticulous than I am, obviously. (I’m solely responsible for an error in Wednesday’s Connecting that Bill witnessed the firing squad.)

Bill, who came back to Salt Lake after I moved on, served as bureau chief for 22 years. He wrote or supervised a long list of other stories that got national attention — the Elizabeth Smart kidnapping; Melvin Dumar, who claimed to be heir to Howard Hughes; Barney Clark and the first artificial heart, and pipe bombings by master Mormon forger Mark Hoffman.

Bill’s son Kevin’s memories and words for the AP obituary touched my heart. He and his family went through trying times, but the family will now build on the good memories.

Personally, I will build on one of the greatest professional and personal friendships of my life — a bromance that included doses of pride and satisfaction mixed with bitterness and not a few disappointments along the way. Such is as it should be.

As far as I know, no plans for celebration of Bill’s life. We shed enough tears and pre-COVID hugs together. In better times we might gather with friends and family for a round of Diet Coke and some funny, uplifting stories.

The printed words will have to do and I think that’s the way Bill wanted it. He had an authoritative radio voice, but print was his forte anyway.

Fumiko is not easily reachable. She would rather not receive phone calls from people who are not close to her. **Her mailing address is: 3571 E 3100 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84109.**

According to Kevin, Bill’s remains were quickly scheduled for cremation on Wednesday. Fumiko said she would pick up his urn on Thursday.

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Denver CoB Joe McGowan was honored by the Colorado Press Association in 1998. This photo shows, from left: Salt Lake City CoB Bill Beecham, AP Managing Editor Darrell Christian, Joe McGowan and VP for Human Resources Jim Donna who gathered to honor Joe at the Denver Press Club.

Headshot at right of Bill Beecham taken in 1980. (Photos/AP Corporate Archives)

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Doug Pizac ([Email](#)) – I first met Bill in 1994 when I flew to Salt Lake City for a job interview. I had spent over a year lobbying NY to create a one-person photo bureau there which was in the heart of the western U.S. that had no staff photographer to cover Utah, Idaho, northern Nevada, western Montana and western Wyoming at the ready. As soon as I stepped off the plane and saw the scenery, I knew it was where I was meant to work what with the Utah Jazz now making yearly post-season appearances, summer wildfires on the rise, and the big push to snag the Winter Olympics that came in 2002. And having no predecessor to follow, I could set my own high standards and work ethics which Bill appreciated and urged which helped me grow professionally. We immediately synced as we bounced ideas off of each other on what goals we saw could be accomplished.



Over my course of 30+ years with AP my career had me working for several COBs as admins passed through bureaus on their way up the corporate ladder, and had experiences with many more during my travels to and dealings with various sections of the country. Overall, I consider Bill Beecham the best of them all. Not only did we come from common roots -- good old-fashioned journalism that came first regardless of budget -- but he cared for his staff and defended their work and them.

Yes, some former staffers expressed their dismay at his gruffness at times and said he was the worst boss ever, but those attitudes changed once they experienced other bosses (in and out of AP) before realizing what a gem they had but didn't know it. He trusted his staff despite sometimes being contradictory with them. His challenges were to force the exploration of the story to eliminate weak points and strengthen its focus.

My dealings with him was a three-prong approach to projects I wanted to do. First, was it a good idea with wide appeal to readers; second, what would be the logistics involved to get it done; and third, most importantly how was it going to be paid for. Good answers for each nearly always won his approval.

Bill's trust in me also extended to my yearly photo budget for supplies and stringer use. While it was unheard of to share financials with staff, he told me what my yearly budget was that NY granted. With that number I was able to schedule events months in advance -- saving money here and there for spending later when needed. Our biggest challenge was dealing with NY accounting halfway through the year. With Utah having no big summer events but heavy during winter with football, basketball, winter sports, etc., our budget would be a little bit over by May, then drop off considerably during the summer, and go way up in the fall when needs arose. AP-NY would want to cut our funds each August since we were technically under budget -- a use it or lose it scenario. Bill fought like heck to keep the money intact for upcoming expenditures. He equated our region's needs to snow removal where you spend little/no money during the summer but heavy during the fall/winter/spring months. And each year when he entrusted me with the budget numbers where I gave him monthly expense reconciliations and predictions, on December 1st I gave him a year-end choice of being on-budget, a little under or a little over which I massaged by using a stringer or not on 1-2 optional assignments. It worked, and it worked beautifully.

People like Bill were and may still be rare in the industry. Cherish them.

After our departures from AP his diabetes got hold of him whereupon he lost the lower half a leg and remained in a rehab facility for years until his death. The late Bob Kuesterman -- the bureau's overnight supe -- made regular visitations that became daily, former COB David Briscoe saw him on his trips from Hawaii, and I saw him which extended after Betty and I moved out-of-state. Whenever I came back to do a photo shoot for a client I made sure to see him. One visit had all four of us together where we shared memories, good laughs and enjoyed each other's company. It was a good time for all of us.

Bill will be sorely missed not for just what turned out to be a great friendship, but as an administrator who understood the business and produced remarkable work for AP

through his own stories and those of his staffs. Everyone should be so lucky to have a great boss like him and learn from. Rest in peace.

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Hal Spencer (Email) - I am sad at the news of Bill's death after some rough last years. We crossed paths many times over the years. What stood out for me was Bill's utter love of The Associated Press, and especially its core purpose to serve the members. He was indefatigable and an AP man from head to toe.

-0-

John Wilson (Email) - Bill was one of the kindest and helpful COBs I ever never really worked for. As SX (Spokane's old call sign) correspondent in the mid 1980s, the bureau had a major responsibility in coverage of the Idaho Panhandle, largely because the members felt closer to Spokane than they did to Boise. He was always available to talk about stories or members, making great suggestions, because he'd recently had the Spokane job. But the distances were a problem, so after I'd been there a couple of weeks, he drove up to have a late lunch at his favorite Mexican hole in the wall. I should have known what was happening when the waiter came to the table with a large pitcher of ice water. I said something like "I'll have what you're having." Mistake. The second pitcher was mine. But he said I passed the test. Bill was a great guy, knew everyone in the Intermountain West and loved it, and will be missed.

-0-

Bill Winter (Email) - I was fortunate to spend a year-plus working alongside Bill Beecham in AP's Helena bureau. Bill was just what I've always thought an AP journalist should be -- smart, dedicated to determining and distributing the truth, tough but not abrasive, thorough, and capable of seeing and delighting in the frequent absurdities of human behavior.

RIP, sir. You will be remembered as a fine journalist, a very good person.

More of your stories behind your unusual email address

Steve Graham -

sdgraham@duckswild.com - When asked about my domain name, also used by my wife, Karen, I usually reply, "because we're up at the quack of dawn."

Seriously, I've been a duck lover for years and learned many years ago that getting my own domain name solved the problems involved when switching email providers - especially since email addresses



have become so widely used as usernames on websites. With my own domain name, I just take my address with me when I switch providers.

For more than 30 years, we've lived in places where we can watch waterfowl out our window (Wednesday morning's photo below) and the three computers on our home network are named Mallard, Pintail and Mudhen (my little black laptop) OK, a mudhen technically isn't a duck, but it sort of fits.

When I chose the domain name, it didn't occur to me that the University of Oregon's athletic nickname is "the Oregon Ducks," and living here in "Ducks" country I frequently have to explain that no, I didn't go to Oregon, I graduated from Colorado and am not particularly enthralled by buffaloes.

-0-

Mike Harris - Hapauto@aol.com - My email address is unique. But, when I was still working for the AP, it made a lot of sense. Hapauto@aol.com is the first initial of my last name - Harris - followed by ap auto, my beat for the last 30 years of my 41-year AP career. And, of course, ap.org changed to aol.com. Some friends and family thought I should change it to something easier for them to remember after I retired in 2009, but I like to keep it as a connection to the past and to the fun I had as AP's Auto Racing Writer.

-0-

Mark Mittelstadt - markmitt71@yahoo.com - As AP rolled out electronic mail for its staff, the protocol for naming personal accounts was the first letter of the employee's first name followed by his or her last name. So for many years my AP e-mail address was mmittelstadt@ap.org.

Mittelstadt, a German name combining "mitte" (middle) and "stat" (town), is relatively uncommon in the United States. The 2000 US Census found only 875 of us with the same exact last name. There are variations as Germans migrated and settled here, including Mittelstedt, Mittelstaedt and Mittelstand. And frequently the "e" and the "l" are transposed, creating even more versions.

It was a bit of a surprise, then, in 1992 when the Dallas bureau assigned to Washington, D.C., a regional writer named Michelle Mittelstadt. Since mmittelstadt already was taken, the New York IT folks named her account kmittelstadt@ap.org.

That was confusing to Dallas bureau desk editors who, following AP convention, sent notes to mmittelstadt@ap.org seeking clarification of a story or asking whether an event or news of Texas interest would be covered. At the time bureau chief in New Jersey, I was surprised to get the first couple notes. Upon learning of Michelle's email address, I would forward the note to her and CC: the originating Dallas editor to let them know how to reach their regional writer.

I could always tell when there was a new editor in Dallas; requests to Michelle would again come my way. Eventually it became a joke between us. I sometimes responded the request probably was intended for "my sister Michelle" as I forwarded it to her. She might reply thanking "her brother Mark" for sending it along. Visiting New

Jersey's own regional writer in Washington, I met Michelle in person. We had a good laugh and wondered at the odds of there being two mmittelstadts in a workforce of around 3,200.

The errant emails stopped when Michelle was hired by the Dallas Morning News in 2000. She is now director of communications and public affairs for the Migration Policy Institute in Washington. Her email - mmittelstadt@migrationpolicy.org

We never knew whether we were related. But with a name like ours, who knows?

-0-

Joyce Rosenberg - psyjourn313@gmail.com - Some people figure part of my email address out. No one gets all three (until now!):

PSYchoanalysis

JOURNalism

3/13 -- my wedding anniversary

There's also a little bit of the Moody Blues in there, because 'psyjourn' makes me think of their album "Seventh Sojourn" although it's one I'm not all that familiar with. I do like their others, but that's for another discussion!!

-0-

Bill Schiffmann - bikerbill@hotmail.com - I have had my email for decades. When I was with the AP in San Francisco, I rode for almost 20 years with a motorcycle club based in Walnut Creek, and we were out almost every weekend when the weather allowed. One Sunday I rode into the parking lot where we gathered, and as I was parking a friend yelled from a few bikes away, "Hey, it's biker Bill. The name stuck, I got a license plate for my Harley that read BKR BIL, and then used it for my email.

-0-

Marty Steinberg - marcello.steinberg@gmail.com - The reason I picked it is obvious to those who know that I developed a simultaneous second career as a cellist. Years ago, after a gig near Atlantic City, a Russian colleague came up with a nickname for me: Marcello. I loved it! It was a perfect combination of Marty + cello, plus, I love Italian culture and music -- from Vivaldi to Morricone. It also doesn't hurt to have a name like Marcello to win over brides and other clients in New Jersey, home to many Italian Americans. But I never hide my surname from them. I love hearing potential clients' reactions when I explain the origin of Marty "Marcello" Steinberg.

Your memories of Rush Limbaugh

Jim Hood (Email) – Rush Limbaugh owes his success to Dr. Dean Edell, and to a couple of long 1980s-era lunches involving AP luminaries Roy Steinfort, Bob Benson and me.

When a very entertaining guy named Eddie McLaughlin retired as president of ABC Radio, the company's retirement gift was a big shiny satellite channel. Eddie had been toying with some radio syndication ideas and his friends at ABC were curious to see what would happen if he had a distribution channel.

As I recall — and there is definitely room for error regarding dates and details — Eddie invited Roy, then AP's VP for Broadcasting, and me to lunch to talk about his concept. AP at the time was also considering syndicated talk programming and we either had or soon would launch a series of weekend talk shows.

Eddie's primary interest was Dr. Dean Edell, a doctor who had a daily show on ABC-owned KGO, San Francisco. He had determined that stations needed three or four hours of midday programming to fill gaps in their schedule. Edell was very personable and a top draw in San Francisco, sort of a more colorful version of CNN's Sanjay Gupta.

But was four hours too long for one guy? Eddie thought he needed something else to fill an hour or so. He had "this kid," as he called him, named Rush Limbaugh who did a talk gig in Sacramento and thought he might be able to fill an hour or so. I knew Rush slightly and didn't much like his show but thought it would work as fill material to test the concept.

Fast forward a year or two. Rush Limbaugh was taking over the radio business and the minds of millions of ditto heads. In one of his impromptu spiels, he impetuously announced he was starting a newsletter and asked all of his fans to send in \$10, or some such amount.

Eddie arrived one Monday morning to find his office buried in envelopes with checks for \$10. "What the hell do I do now," he asked plaintively at another lunch, this time with Bob Benson and me. Bob had been a Deputy Director of AP Broadcasting who would soon return whence he had come, to ABC Radio.

Our advice: Find somebody to start writing the newsletter. I knew from past experience that taking in some subscription money obligates you to start producing a product or face unpleasant consequences. As I recall, Bob and I tossed out some names and perhaps referred one or two people to Eddie but what happened after that, I don't know.

Dr. Edell had a successful syndication career, finally retiring in 2010 and is, as far as I know, still among the living, although the other players are all deceased, present company so far excepted.

I should close by saying that I managed to avoid ever hearing more than a few minutes of Limbaugh's show. On one occasion, I jumped into a cab in New York and realized the driver was hanging on Rush's every word.

"Could you turn the radio off?" I asked. The driver, a devoted ditto head, refused and I told him to let me out. He did and we went our separate ways.

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Doug Tucker (Email) - RIP, Rush. Gosh. You'll be missed more than any of us can imagine. As you slipped away this past sad week, my thoughts kept drifting back to the old, old days when you were a sort of front office Jack-of-all-trades for the Kansas City Royals and I covered the team for The Associated Press.

We weren't close friends. But we were friends. You threw the key block one day when I scored a touchdown in our flag football game. And it was me who kept you out of hot water after your appearance before a group of businessmen during a long player strike. I suspected that Royals founder Ewing Kauffman would not appreciate your speculation about ownership's plans. And you knew I was right.

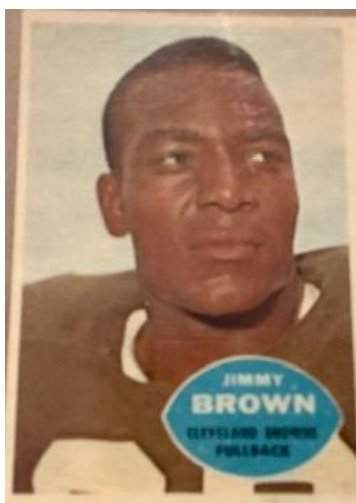
In my long career, I was fortunate to cover quite a few big stories, to be on the front lines of many historic events. I even captured a few national awards that I probably didn't deserve. But sitting here today, I am proudest of the honor of being the first journalist in the world to write a story about Rush Limbaugh. You thanked me because the newspaper in your hometown of Cape Girardeau, Mo., used the story and your mom was thrilled.

But it was a natural. At your suggestion, the Royals had put you in charge of coordinating the in-stadium music. In the meantime that spring, the team's big star staged a bitter holdout demanding more money. Then when he approached the plate for his first at-bat you cued up "If I Were A Rich Man," and the sold-out stadium rocked.

It was an early taste of the wit and humor that much of America would soon come to love. You were fun and smart in those days, always quick with a quip. Your charisma and intelligence were obvious. But none of us had any idea you were about to move on and find your true destiny and take your place among the most important media figures in the country. In the world.

What a shame you must leave at such a perilous time for our country. We need you now more than ever. Thank you for all that you did.

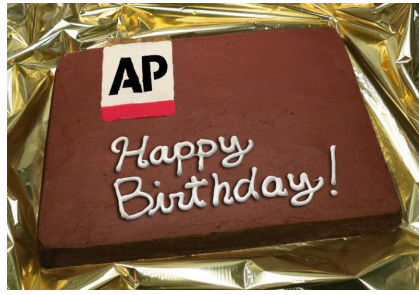
Jim Brown is 85? Really?



Dennis Conrad (Email) - I was stunned looking at the birthdays listed in Wednesday's "Connecting." To see that Jim Brown is now 85 had me look for my Topps card of him.

I got the 1960 card when I was in Meadow Park Elementary School on what was then Hamilton Air Force Base, in Marin County, California. I had a bunch of other football cards from then as well but decades later when working for AP in Illinois, I decided to exchange all of them for old baseball cards at a sports memorabilia store in St. Louis. But I couldn't let go of Jim —and another guy by the name of Johnny Unitas.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Peggy Andersen – andersenpeggy@gmail.com

Paul Caluori – pcaluori@optonline.net

George Hanna – geralhanna@comcast.net

Jurate Kazickas – juratekaz@gmail.com

Michael Rubin - MRubinCom@aol.com

Stories of interest

Rush Limbaugh, voice of American conservatism, has died (AP)



FILE - In this Feb. 4, 2020 file photo, Rush Limbaugh reacts as first Lady Melania Trump, and his wife Kathryn, applaud, as President Donald Trump delivers his State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington. Limbaugh, the talk radio host who became the voice of American conservatism, has died. (AP Photo/Patrick Semansky, File)

By MATT SEDENSKY

Rush Limbaugh, the talk radio host who ripped into liberals and laid waste to political correctness with a gleeful malice that made him one of the most powerful voices in politics, influencing the rightward push of American conservatism and the rise of Donald Trump, died Wednesday. He was 70.

Limbaugh said a year ago that he had lung cancer. His death was announced on his show by his wife, Kathryn.

Unflinchingly conservative, wildly partisan, bombastically self-promoting and larger than life, Limbaugh galvanized listeners for more than 30 years with his talent for sarcastic, insult-laced commentary.

He called himself an entertainer, but his rants during his three-hour weekday radio show broadcast on nearly 600 U.S. stations shaped the national political conversation, swaying ordinary Republicans and the direction of their party.

Blessed with a made-for-broadcasting voice, he delivered his opinions with such certainty that his followers, or “Ditto-heads,” as he dubbed them, took his words as sacred truth.

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

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Loved and loathed — the death of talk radio legend Rush Limbaugh (Poynter)

By: Tom Jones

If there was a Mount Rushmore for talk-show radio hosts, there’s little question that the first figure chiseled into that mountain would be Rush Limbaugh. Few connected with audiences like the conservative radio host who died Wednesday at the age of 70 after a battle against lung cancer.

For more than three decades, Limbaugh’s nationally syndicated radio show that aired on more than 650 stations from coast to coast drew millions of devoted listeners and helped set the conservative political agenda in this country. And, yet, that very same show — because of Limbaugh’s bigotry, gaslighting and crass hatefulness — helped to split a nation and lay the groundwork for the political discourse that currently defines our country.

So as we look back at Limbaugh’s legacy today, there is no simple description.

He was both brilliant and bitter, masterful and malicious, alluring yet repulsive, superbly talented and yet supremely contemptible.

He was the good, bad and ugly of American media and American politics.

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

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The 'audacious lie' behind a hedge fund's promise to sustain local journalism (Washington Post)

By Margaret Sullivan
Media columnist

When Alden Global Capital announced Tuesday that it was positioned to buy the Chicago Tribune and several other major newspapers, its statement might have sounded promising.

But only if you knew nothing about how this hedge fund has sucked much of the life out of the newspapers it already owns in places like Denver and San Jose.

"Our commitment to ensuring the sustainability of robust local journalism is well established, and this is part of that effort," the statement said.

The hedge fund's record with newspapers is well established, but that's about the only truth in that statement.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Terry Anderson.

The Final Word

(After Army, launched small Virginia weekly newspaper)
**A Black Soldier's Heroism, Overlooked in 1965,
May Finally Be Lauded in 2021** (New York Times)



Col. Paris Davis, who retired from the U.S. Army Special Forces, photographed this month in Alexandria, Va. While fighting in the Vietnam War in 1965, Mr. Davis performed a stunning series of heroic acts during an 18-hour battle, including dragging three wounded men to safety after he had been shot five times. Credit...Michael A. McCoy for The New York Times

By Dave Philipps

Capt. Paris Davis was in the thick of a pre-dawn raid on an enemy camp in Vietnam when a grenade blasted out several of his teeth and, more troubling, tore off part of his trigger finger. Then enemy fire started pelting the Special Forces team he commanded. His most experienced sergeant was shot down. Then the demolitions specialist. Then the only medic.

It was June 18, 1965, and according to after-action reports, 26-year-old Captain Davis was suddenly the last American standing with a ragtag company of 90 South Vietnamese volunteers, pinned down by hundreds of enemy troops.

Certain that he was as good as dead, he began fighting without fear of consequence, pulling his M-16 trigger with his pinkie, sprinting repeatedly into open ground to rescue teammates, and refusing to leave the fight, even after being shot several times.

He made it out alive, and was immediately nominated for the military's highest award, the Medal of Honor. But the Army somehow lost the nomination. His frustrated commander resubmitted it, and inexplicably the nomination disappeared again.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Michael Rubin.

Today in History - Feb. 18, 2021



By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Feb. 18, the 49th day of 2021. There are 316 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 18, 1970, the "Chicago Seven" defendants were found not guilty of conspiring to incite riots at the 1968 Democratic national convention; five were convicted of violating the Anti-Riot Act of 1968 (those convictions were later reversed).

On this date:

In 1546, Martin Luther, leader of the Protestant Reformation in Germany, died in Eisleben.

In 1564, artist Michelangelo died in Rome.

In 1930, photographic evidence of Pluto (now designated a "dwarf planet") was discovered by Clyde W. Tombaugh at Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona.

In 1943, Madame Chiang Kai-shek (chang ky-shehk), wife of the Chinese leader, addressed members of the Senate and then the House, becoming the first Chinese national to address both houses of the U.S. Congress.

In 1960, the 8th Winter Olympic Games were formally opened in Squaw Valley, California, by Vice President Richard M. Nixon.

In 1967, American theoretical physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer died in Princeton, New Jersey, at age 62.

In 1972, the California Supreme Court struck down the state's death penalty.

In 1983, 13 people were shot to death at a gambling club in Seattle's Chinatown in what became known as the Wah Mee Massacre. (Two men were convicted of the killings and are serving life sentences; a third was found guilty of robbery and assault.)

In 1988, Anthony M. Kennedy was sworn in as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1997, astronauts on the space shuttle Discovery completed their tune-up of the Hubble Space Telescope after 33 hours of spacewalking; the Hubble was then released using the shuttle's crane.

In 2001, veteran FBI agent Robert Philip Hanssen was arrested, accused of spying for Russia. (Hanssen later pleaded guilty to espionage and attempted espionage and was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.) Auto racing star Dale Earnhardt Sr. died in a crash at the Daytona 500; he was 49.

In 2003, an arson attack involving two South Korean subway trains in the city of Daegu claimed 198 lives. (The arsonist was sentenced to life in prison, where he died in 2004.)

Ten years ago: The United States vetoed a U.N. resolution that would have condemned Israeli settlements as illegal and called for a halt in all settlement building; the 14 other Security Council members voted in favor of the measure.

Five years ago: In what was seen as a criticism of Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, Pope Francis said that a person who advocated building walls was "not Christian"; Trump quickly retorted it was "disgraceful" to question a person's faith. (A Vatican spokesman said the next day that the pope's comment was not intended as a "personal attack" on Trump.) Dallas-based Heritage Auctions said a rare copy of a comic book featuring the first appearance of Spider-Man had been sold to an anonymous collector for \$454,100.

One year ago: Japanese health authorities confirmed 88 more cases of the coronavirus aboard the quarantined cruise ship Diamond Princess, bringing the number of cases on board to 542; U.S. officials said Americans who chose to remain on board could not return home for at least two weeks after coming ashore. Health officials in the Chinese city of Wuhan announced that a hospital director who'd mobilized the hospital's resources to deal with the thousands of sick people arriving daily had died from the virus. President Donald Trump commuted the 14-year prison sentence of former Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich for political corruption; Blagojevich left prison hours later and returned home to Chicago. (Trump also issued pardons or clemency to former New York City police commissioner Bernie Kerik, financier Michael Milken, and a long list of others.) The Boy Scouts of America filed for bankruptcy

protection in the first step toward creating a huge compensation fund for men who were molested as youngsters decades ago by scoutmasters or other leaders; the organization urged victims to come forward.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. John Warner, R-Va., is 94. Singer Yoko Ono is 88. Singer-songwriter Bobby Hart is 82. Singer Irma Thomas is 80. Singer Herman Santiago (Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers) is 80. Actor Jess Walton is 75. Singer Dennis DeYoung is 74. Actor Sinead Cusack is 73. Actor Cybill Shepherd is 71. Singer Randy Crawford is 69. Rock musician Robbie Bachman is 68. Actor John Travolta is 67. Actor John Pankow is 66. Game show host Vanna White is 64. Actor Jayne Atkinson is 62. Actor Greta Scacchi (SKAH'-kee) is 61. Actor Matt Dillon is 57. Rock musician Tommy Scott (Space) is 57. Rapper Dr. Dre is 56. Actor Molly Ringwald is 53. Actor Sarah Brown is 46. Country musician Trevor Rosen (Old Dominion) is 46. Actor Ike Barinholtz is 44. Actor Kristoffer Polaha is 44. Singer-musician Sean Watkins (Nickel Creek) is 44. Rock-singer musician Regina Spektor is 41. Opera singer Isabel Leonard is 39. Roots rock musician Zac Cockrell (Alabama Shakes) is 33. Actor Shane Lyons is 33. Actor Sarah Sutherland is 33. Actor Maiara Walsh is 33.

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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