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## Connecting

March 15, 2021

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning on this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of March 2021,

*The Associated Press was there — for all of it. From the day the World Health Organization officially declared the coronavirus a pandemic to the first clinical trial of a vaccine and chronicling the path to a new normal, here is a taste of AP's storytelling about every corner of the world as a jumbled, sometimes wrenching, year unfolded.*

That's the key graf in an outstanding recap of AP's coverage of the pandemic that moved on the wire over the anniversary weekend of COVID-19. The story by AP's **Aya Elamroussi**, a news associate who works for the Central Desk in Chicago, leads today's issue.

Related are the latest accounts from Connecting readers on their lives before the pandemic struck. We would welcome yours.

**"We've been waiting 2 years to say this...It's Bracket Week!"** So proclaimed CBS Sports in an overnight email inviting participation in its NCAA March Madness bracket

challenge. Me, I have both my schools in the hunt - Iowa, a No. 2 seed, and Kansas, a No. 3. Of course, I predict they will meet in the finals of the West Regional and that I'll win however that game turns out. Let the games begin and may the participants all stay safe.

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

## One very jumbled year: Glimpses of AP's pandemic journalism



Emergency room nurse L'Erin Ogle poses with coronavirus signs after getting off a 12-hour shift at a nearby hospital where she works Monday, March 8, 2021, in Overland Park, Kan. After a year of working long hours taking care of COVID-19 patients, Ogle feels obligated to speak out when she sees misinformation related to the pandemic in her community. (AP Photo/Charlie Riedel)



**Gabriella Formenti, a doctor from the village of Tavernola Bergamasca in northern Italy, poses at her home Monday, March 8, 2021. Near the beginning of the pandemic, Formenti started feeling exhausted and had a high fever. Hit by the virus, she wound up intubated in an intensive care unit. Eventually she woke up but could move only her head, having lost muscle mass. Today, Formenti undergoes rehabilitation and is often out of breath and weak. Forced by her condition to retire, she greatly misses her patients.(AP Photo/Luca Bruno)**



The Rev. Fabian Arias performs an in-home service on Saturday, May 9, 2020, beside the remains of Raul Luis Lopez who died from COVID-19. (AP Photo/John Minchillo)

By AYA ELAMROUSSI  
The Associated Press

Hugging loved ones. Shaking hands. Going to school. Grabbing dinner at a restaurant. Visiting elderly family members.

Most Americans didn't know this week last year was their last chance at normalcy. And while people have learned to adjust, the coronavirus pandemic has upended — and taken — millions of lives across the globe. Add the upheaval of a nation's reckoning with racism and injustice along with a historic presidential election, and the pandemic year becomes more than about the virus. It's also the year racial, socioeconomic and health care issues have demanded attention.

The Associated Press was there — for all of it. From the day the World Health Organization officially declared the coronavirus a pandemic to the first clinical trial of a vaccine and chronicling the path to a new normal, here is a taste of AP's storytelling about every corner of the world as a jumbled, sometimes wrenching, year unfolded.

## THE ECONOMY

From India to Argentina, untold millions who were already struggling to get by on the economic margins had their lives made even harder by pandemic lockdowns, layoffs and the loss of a chance to earn from a hard day's work. Uncertainty became the order of the day.

In America, the most heavily hit were the front line workers who pack and deliver supplies, care for the sick and elderly, and keep streets and buildings clean. They are mostly women, people of color and more likely to be immigrants. Mothers, in particular, have been disproportionately pushed out of the workforce in the U.S. as the pandemic leaves parents with fewer child care options and the added burden of navigating distance learning.

Meanwhile, small businesses around the world have been fighting for survival amid the economic fallout from the pandemic. AP journalists told the stories of those struggling businesses, which help define and sustain neighborhoods. The stakes for their survival are high: The U.N. estimated that businesses with fewer than 250 workers account for two-thirds of employment worldwide.

Read more [here](#).

## Recalling your life as you lived it - before the pandemic



**Kia Breaux (Email)** - This photo, taken Feb. 5, 2020, now makes me cringe. My sons, John, 15, and Jaden 11, just HAD to go to the Kansas City Chiefs' Super Bowl victory parade and rally that ended at Union Station. As a native Kansas Citian and lifelong Chiefs fan, I found it hard to say no. It was the first time in 50 years the Chiefs won the championship. It took insider knowledge to learn the date of the parade ahead of time so we could map out a strategy to attend. It just so happened that my husband Rod, who works in communications for the city, was scheduled to work that day behind the scenes near the rally stage at the end of the parade route. Conveniently,

the AP bureau is located across the street from Union Station. That gave us access to clean restrooms and a place to hang out until the post-parade crowd cleared. We rented a hotel room within walking distance the night before the event. Rod had to report to work at the crack of dawn and the kids and I got moving not long afterward. By the time the kids and I ate breakfast and started to make our way to the stage, it was too late. The overnight campers had blanketed the area. The kids and I had to navigate a sea of people to get near the stage where Rod was working. It makes me sick to think back at the number of people we touched to push our way to the front of the crowd. We had a prime view of the parade's finale and rally and the kids have memories that will last a lifetime. However, if I knew then what I know now, the kids and I would have celebrated the Chiefs' victory from home!

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**Paul Bowker (Email)** - I celebrated with my daughter, Alyssa, with a stay at Disney World in early March, 2020, just a couple of days before the pandemic shutdowns began to happen across the nation. She was in her senior year at Valparaiso University, so we went to Disney for her spring break. When she flew back to Chicago, the plane was more than half empty. She graduated, but Valpo never held a graduation ceremony.

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**Patrick Casey (Email)** - Took this shot on Jan. 29, 2020, in a Beijing restaurant because it seemed exceptionally weird that my waitress was wearing a mask and rubber gloves. Had heard rumors then of some sort of outbreak in Wuhan but didn't realize the extent of it or that the meal would be my last in a restaurant for more than 13 months.

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**Mike Harris** ([Email](#)) – This is a picture from 2020 spring training in Mesa, AZ. Left to right my wife Judy, friend Lesley Kallis and me. This was taken before a Cubs game just over one year ago. We came home to Newton, MA, from that trip only a couple of days before the pandemic was declared.

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**Bill Kaczor** ([Email](#)) - Former Tallahassee staffers (from left) Lorraine Cichowski, Bill Kaczor, Brent Kallestad and David Powell were among Florida AP alumni who attended a reunion in February 2020 in Winter Park. It was one of the last times many of us ate in a restaurant or gathered in a large group without social distancing and masks.

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**Jim Reindl (Email)** - This photo was taken at our house in Timor-Leste on March 21, 2000. It's a literal last supper. We'd already been ordered out by the Embassy because of the pandemic, and we boarded a plane for the harrowing trip back to the States the next afternoon. We left everything behind but a suitcase each of clothes fully expecting to be back by summer. We've never been back. Little did we know that by year's end we would have lived on three continents in one year, four if you count Graca's time back in Brazil.



The New York AP headquarters newsroom shortly after move-in at 200 Liberty Street and what it looked like before the pandemic struck and staff began working from home. That's Denis Paquin, Deputy Director of Photography for Global Sports & Operations, at the computer terminals in the foreground.

## New-member profile: Tami Abdollah

**Tami Abdollah** ([Email](#)) - is a national correspondent for USA TODAY covering criminal justice and focusing on the inequities in the justice system. Right now, she has been busy covering the trial of Derek Chauvin, an ex-Minneapolis police officer accused of murdering George Floyd by pressing his knee against Floyd's neck for more than 9 1/2 minutes.

Previously, the native Angeleno served as a senior reporter who helped launch a tech and business journalism startup called dot.LA, which was co-founded by Zillow-founder Spencer Rascoff. At dot.LA she wrote a five-part investigative series on a cannabis company founded by two 20-something college friends backed by a Russian oligarch who invested \$164 million into the project. Less than two years later, the money was spent and the oligarch dead.

Abdollah previously served as a national security/cybersecurity reporter for The Associated Press in its Washington, D.C., bureau. She was The AP's first cybersecurity reporter in its WDC bureau and covered the infamous 2016 presidential election, the Russian hacks and the fallout. Abdollah also temporarily worked with a team of reporters to cover President Donald Trump's business conflicts and ethics.

Before her move to Washington, D.C., Abdollah was AP's law enforcement reporter in its Los Angeles bureau. She broke a series of exclusive stories on systemic failures following a gunman's attack on the Los Angeles International Airport. Abdollah also covered the Sony Pictures hack, and tons of police issues.



She has also worked at the Los Angeles Times and L.A.'s NPR affiliate KPCC, and has written for the Wall Street Journal and The Daily Beast while living and traveling abroad. Abdollah spent nearly a year in Iraq as a U.S. government contractor. She has traveled the world on as little as \$5 a day, taught outdoor advanced rock climbing safety classes, and is an avid climber and mountaineer.

## Connecting mailbox

### *What the hell due hit say?*

**Gene Herrick** ([Email](#)) - Tothur day I dun red the follown pearegraf in a yarn in Coneccting. As day talk in thes parts of the montins, what the hell due hit say?

“NFTs (non-fungible tokens) are pieces of digital media that are created on the blockchain, a cryptographic process that gives each item a level of authenticity because once published to a blockchain, the digital file is immutable and cannot be altered. This provenance, coupled with the uniqueness or historical significance of the item combine to create each NFT’s value.”

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### *More who worked for both AP and CNN*

Over the weekend came more names of those journalists who worked for AP and for CNN during their careers:

**Susan Skiles Luke** noted: “I worked for the AP (Southern Illinois correspondent) and CNN’s Headline News (associate producer). I was proud to just carry my weight among

a lot of smart people.

**Kevin Bohn** added these names: Julian Styles, Vaughn Morrison, Denise Vance, Angie Yack, Josh Replogle, Yvonne Lee and Paul Courson.

**Dave Lubeski** recalled that "several AP Radio people jumped to the start-up CNN in the early 1980s. John Holliman has already been mentioned as was Candy Crowley and Frank Sesno, who had been APR London correspondent and the network's second White House correspondent. He replaced Walter Rogers on the White House beat. Oh yes, Rogers left AP Radio to work at CNN, so there's another name. Other names I haven't seen from AP Radio who made the jump include Kirsten Lindquist and Bob Berkowitz."

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## *Connecting sky and snow shots*



**John Epperson** ([Email](#)) - Cumulus clouds as seen Wednesday afternoon east of Loveland, Colo., roll out of the Front Range of the Rockies onto the flatland ahead of an anticipated weekend snowfall.



**Marc Wilson** ([Email](#)) - Over 30 inches of snow at our house Sunday and in Loveland, Colo.



Lee Siegel ([Email](#)) - A scene from Yaquina Head, Oregon, last Thursday.

### *Best of the Week*

## Solid sourcing leads to AP's most-used story of 2021: 6 Dr. Seuss books retired for racist images



Photo/Christopher Dolan/The Scranton (Pa.) Times-Tribune/via AP

It's difficult to find an American home without a Dr. Seuss book either on a shelf or tucked in a box in the basement or attic.

But in recent years, the late author — born Theodor Seuss Geisel in Springfield, Massachusetts — has come under scrutiny for imagery increasingly viewed as racist and insensitive. The National Education Association, which founded Read Across America Day in 1998 and deliberately aligned it with Geisel's birthday, has for several years deemphasized Seuss and encouraged a more diverse reading list for children. At the same time, he's adored by millions for the positive values in many of his works, including environmentalism and tolerance.

Mark Pratt, a breaking news staffer in Boston, has written several stories exploring various aspects of Geisel's complicated past, and the company that preserves and protects his legacy knew it could trust him.

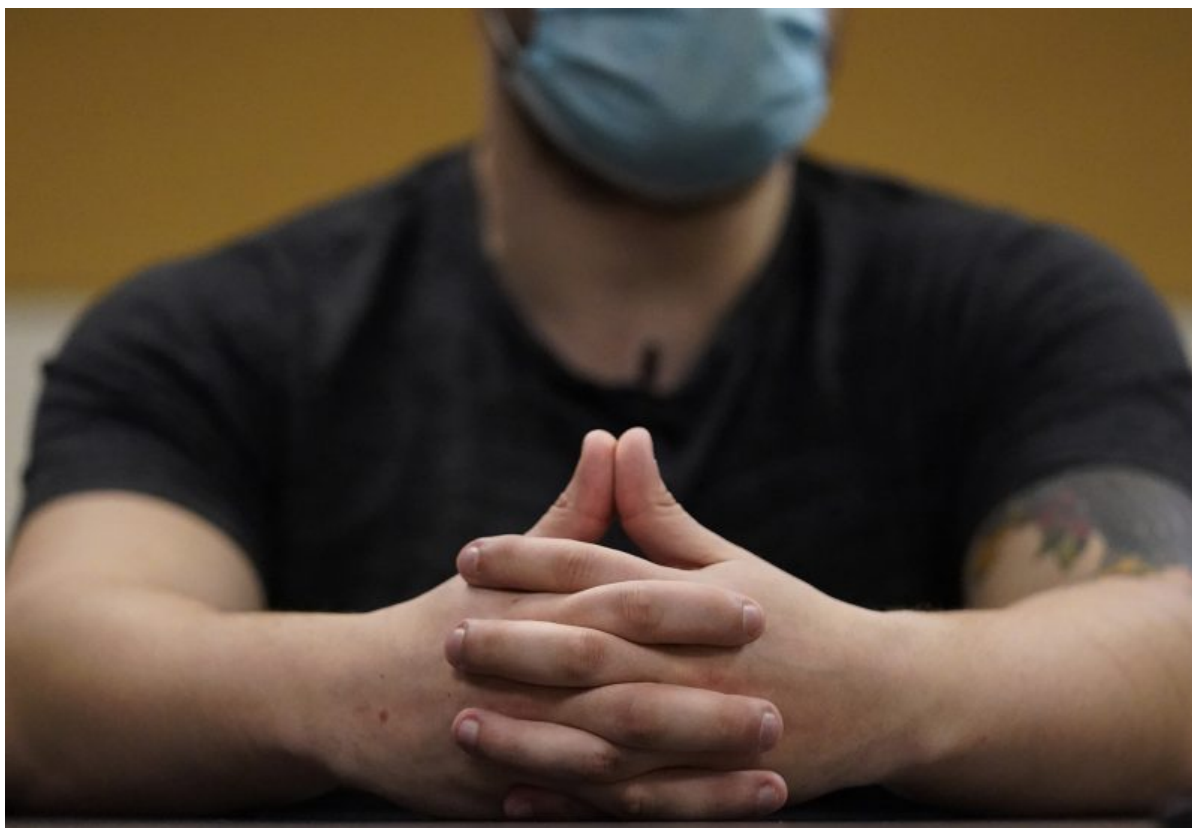


So Dr. Seuss Enterprises gave Pratt early word on a story that would become a global bestseller for AP, generating off-the-charts customer use for three days, and eventually becoming the single most-used AP story of 2021 to date: It was ceasing publication and sales of six Seuss books, including “And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street” and “If I Ran the Zoo,” because of their offensive imagery.

Read more [here](#).

### *Best of the States*

## **AP Exclusive: Hundreds claim abuse by staffers at New Hampshire youth detention facility**



**AP Photo/Charles Krupa**

Concord-based reporter Holly Ramer, who has owned the story of abuse allegations at New Hampshire’s state-run youth detention center for more than a year, used source work to break news once again: A lawsuit filed in early 2020 has grown to include 230 men and women who say they were abused as children by 150 staffers over the course of six decades.

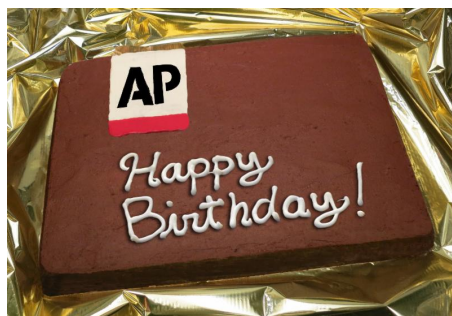
The March 1 story, which deputy East news director Joe Danborn called “another sledgehammer installment of what’s growing into a signature body of work,” was based on exclusive interviews with the plaintiffs’ attorney and three victims, who

described sickening allegations including broken bones, gang rape and impregnation. Powerful images by Boston photographer Charlie Krupa and video journalist Rodrique Ngowi complemented the piece.

The lead plaintiff said he was not willing to speak to any other media except Holly, citing her previous work and overall sensitive treatment of the topic, including during interviews.

Read more [here](#).

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Jack Limpert - [jlimpert@washingtsonian.com](mailto:jlimpert@washingtsonian.com)

Janis Magin - [Janismagin@yahoo.com](mailto:Janismagin@yahoo.com)

## Stories of interest

***Online harassment of female journalists is real, and it's increasingly hard to endure*** (Washington Post)

By Margaret Sullivan  
Media columnist

Julia Carrie Wong remembers a time, years ago, when she felt that being a part of digital culture was fun.

"I used to really enjoy online spaces, having a personality and a voice," recalled the 37-year-old technology reporter for the Guardian.

That changed radically several years ago after she wrote on Twitter in support of a journalist who had been targeted by a white-nationalist site.

The trolling began. Wong had once described herself, in a first-person story, as half-Chinese American and half-Jewish, so her online attackers blasted vicious slurs against both parts of her heritage. They circulated photos doctored to show horns on her head. They talked about where she lived.

It has only gotten worse since then. In 2019, Wong wrote a story about the man accused of killing 23 people at an El Paso Walmart after allegedly penning a missive posted to 8chan, an anonymous discussion board. Swarms of toxic online denizens of that site and others came after her, bombarding her with death and rape threats.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Harry Dunphy.

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## ***What is journalism for? The short answer: truth***

(Guardian)

By Clive Myrie

Who, what, where, when and why? Five questions that are at the heart of our trade. Answer those questions in relation to any news story, and we're doing our jobs as journalists. They underpin everything we do, what we write in a newspaper or online, what we say on TV or on the radio.

It feels to me, however, that we sometimes need to ask one of those questions of ourselves: why? It doesn't have to be every day or all the time, but given the power we have, it's important. What is the point of the media in a democracy? What are we here for? We can influence massive societal changes. Indirectly we even wield political power, able to influence policy, perhaps even able to help change governments. And with power as we're all well aware, comes great responsibility. Former Sunday Times editor Harold Evans understood this down to the marrow in his bones, and he chose throughout his storied career to leverage that power for the greater good of society.

But who should police this? Is it enough to let the industry itself be the gatekeeper of how far a broadcaster or newspaper should go in trying to make a profit or build an audience? Or are independent regulators the only way to ensure media companies use the power they have wisely?

Read more [here](#). Shared by Sonya Zalubowski.

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## ***These are the pioneering women of photojournalism***

(CNN)



Frances Benjamin Johnston is surrounded by children looking at her camera. Johnston was one of the first-ever female photojournalists, working for the Bain News Service that was founded in New York City in 1898. Her career spanned 60 years and included working in the White House for several administrations. She is also known for her photos of architecture, including historic buildings in the South. Library of Congress

Photo editing by Heather Fulbright, Rebecca Wright, Brook Joyner and Brett Roegiers

Story by Kyle Almond, CNN

Photojournalism has traditionally been a male-dominated field.

But throughout history, women have made their mark on the industry.

Yunghi Kim is one of them, and she wants to make sure her peers get the recognition they deserve. Especially those who started their career in the film era, before the advent of the digital camera.

"They were courageous. They were fearless," she said. "And they were trailblazers because they were in a sea of men."

Kim says there is a "silent generation" of women photojournalists who are often overlooked. Maybe their work was never digitized. Maybe their work is sitting right now in the basements of newspapers, magazines and photo agencies, buried in an archive they can't access and may never be able to.

So Kim took it upon herself to do something about it. She started a website, Trailblazers of Light, to honor these pioneers of photojournalism.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***What's A Newspaper Without A Newsroom? Many, Like The Wichita Eagle, Are Finding Out*** (KMUW)

By TOM SHINE

The one constant in the newspaper industry over the last decade or so has been change.

The shifting media landscape has led to significant staff reductions at most newspapers, many of which no longer produce a print product seven days a week.

Dozens of newspapers, including The Wichita Eagle and Kansas City Star, have sold their longtime headquarters, contracted with a different paper to do their printing and moved into smaller office space.

The latest industry trend has newspapers closing their newsrooms entirely. Instead, reporters, photographers and editors will work remotely, as many have done since the pandemic started a year ago.

Read more [here](#).

## **Today in History - March 15, 2021**



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Monday, March 15, the 74th day of 2021. There are 291 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:**

On March 15, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson, addressing a joint session of Congress, called for new legislation to guarantee every American's right to vote. The result was passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

**On this date:**

In 44 B.C., Roman dictator Julius Caesar was assassinated by a group of nobles that included Brutus and Cassius.

In 1493, Italian explorer Christopher Columbus arrived back in the Spanish harbor of Palos de la Frontera, two months after concluding his first voyage to the Western Hemisphere.

In 1820, Maine became the 23rd state.

In 1913, President Woodrow Wilson met with about 100 reporters for the first formal presidential press conference.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied bombers again raided German-held Monte Cassino.

In 1964, actor Elizabeth Taylor married actor Richard Burton in Montreal; it was her fifth marriage, his second. (They divorced in 1974, remarried in 1975, then divorced again in 1976.)

In 1972, "The Godfather," Francis Ford Coppola's epic gangster movie based on the Mario Puzo novel and starring Marlon Brando and Al Pacino, premiered in New York.

In 1975, Greek shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis died near Paris at age 69.

In 1985, the first internet domain name, symbolics.com, was registered by the Symbolics Computer Corp. of Massachusetts.

In 1998, Dr. Benjamin Spock, whose child care guidance spanned half a century, died in San Diego at 94.

In 2005, former WorldCom chief Bernard Ebbers was convicted in New York of engineering the largest corporate fraud in U.S. history. (He was later sentenced to 25 years in prison.)

In 2019, a gunman killed 51 people at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, streaming the massacre live on Facebook. (Brenton Tarrant, an Australian white supremacist, was sentenced to life in prison without parole after pleading guilty to 51 counts of murder and other charges.)

Ten years ago: The Syrian civil war had its beginnings with Arab Spring protests across the region that turned into an armed insurgency and eventually became a full-blown conflict.

Five years ago: Democrat Hillary Clinton triumphed in the Florida, Ohio, North Carolina, Illinois and Missouri presidential primaries; Donald Trump strengthened his hand in the Republican race, winning in Florida, North Carolina, Illinois and Missouri, but falling in Ohio to the state's governor, John Kasich (KAY'-sikh), while Florida Sen. Marco Rubio ended his campaign after his home-state loss. In a major reversal, the Obama administration barred offshore drilling off the Atlantic Coast. Dallas Seavey won his third straight Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race in a record time of 8 days, 11 hours, 20 minutes, 16 seconds.

One year ago: The Federal Reserve took massive emergency action to help the economy withstand the coronavirus by slashing its benchmark interest rate to near zero and saying it would buy \$700 billion in treasury and mortgage bonds. After initially trying to keep schools open, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said the nation's largest public school system would close in hopes of curbing the spread of the coronavirus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that gatherings of at least 50 people be canceled or postponed for the next eight weeks. President Donald Trump called on Americans to stop hoarding groceries and other supplies. Pastors across the United States delivered sermons to empty pews; many religious institutions had started using the Internet to stream their services.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Judd Hirsch is 86. Jazz musician Charles Lloyd is 83. Rock musician Phil Lesh is 81. Singer Mike Love (The Beach Boys) is 80. Rock singer-musician Sly Stone is 78. Rock singer-musician Howard Scott (War; Lowrider Band) is 75. Rock singer Ry Cooder is 74. Actor Frances Conroy is 68. Actor Craig Wasson is 67. Rock singer Dee Snider (Twisted Sister) is 66. Actor Joaquim de Almeida is 64. Actor Park Overall is 64. Movie director Renny Harlin is 62. Model Fabio is 60. Singer Terence Trent D'Arby (AKA Sananda Maitreya) is 59. Rock singer Bret Michaels (Poison) is 58. R&B singer Rockwell is 57. Actor Chris Bruno is 55. Actor Kim Raver is 54. Rock singer Mark McGrath (Sugar Ray) is 53. Rock musician Mark Hoppus is 49. Country singer-musician Matt Thomas (Parmalee) is 47. Actor Eva Longoria is 46. Rapper-musician will.i.am (Black Eyed Peas) is 46. Rock DJ Joseph Hahn (Linkin Park) is 44. Rapper Young Buck is 40. Actor Sean Biggerstaff is 38. Actor Kellan Lutz is 36. Actor Caitlin Wachs is 32.

## Got a story or photos to share?

Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Second chapters** - You finished a great career. Now tell us about your second (and third and fourth?) chapters of life.

- **Spousal support** - How your spouse helped in supporting your work during your AP career.

- **My most unusual story** - tell us about an unusual, off the wall story that you covered.

- **"A silly mistake that you make"**- a chance to 'fess up with a memorable mistake in your journalistic career.

- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.

- **Volunteering** - benefit your colleagues by sharing volunteer stories - with ideas on such work they can do themselves.

- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?

- **Connecting "selfies"** - a word and photo self-profile of you and your career, and what you are doing today. Both for new members and those who have been with us a while.

- **Most unusual place a story assignment took you.**

**Paul Stevens**

**Editor, Connecting newsletter**

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