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Connecting

June 09, 2021

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this the 9th day of June 2021,

We lead today's Connecting with the report that Israel's ambassador to the United States said Hamas militants tried to disrupt Israel's Iron Dome rocket defense system from a Gaza building housing The Associated Press and other news outlets, prompting the Israeli air force to destroy the high rise last month. The AP said it has not seen evidence to support the claim.

Ambassador Gilad Erdan issued his statement Tuesday - a day after meeting the AP's president and chief executive, **Gary Pruitt**, and **Ian Phillips**, vice president for international news, at the AP's New York headquarters.

We congratulate our colleague **Ted Mendelsohn** on his recent retirement from The Associated Press capping a 28-year career in the AP department that works to build revenue to fund the AP's worldwide journalism (and yes, fellow retirees, to help fund the pension). Ted was hired by our colleague **Chris Pederson** – who, Ted notes, sensed that there was a technology evolution and saw that AP could benefit from engaging

and doing business with companies who use digital technology to deliver news and information.

Ted's future plans include pursuing volunteer and charitable work, such as helping young entrepreneurs getting going in digital media and/or teaching about innovation and how to apply it to opportunities.

"On the more selfish side, I am going to travel," he told Connecting. "I love driving convertibles, and I plan to do back-country roads in many parts of the US. And as more and more of the Covid-19 restrictions, I'd like to get back to international travel. I have not really spent time in the Far East, and I would love to spend a fair amount of time exploring it. Other than that, hanging out with my daughters and grandsons sounds pretty good to me."

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy.

Paul

Israel claims Hamas tried to hamper defenses from Gaza tower



A ball of fire erupts from a building housing various international media, including The Associated Press, after an Israeli airstrike on Saturday, May 15, 2021 in Gaza City. (Mahmud Hams /Pool Photo via AP)

By JOSEF FEDERMAN

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israel's ambassador to the United States said Tuesday that Hamas militants tried to disrupt Israel's Iron Dome rocket defense system from a Gaza building housing The Associated Press and other news outlets, prompting the Israeli air force to destroy the high rise last month. The AP said it has not seen evidence to support the claim.

Ambassador Gilad Erdan issued his statement a day after meeting the AP's president and chief executive, Gary Pruitt, and Ian Phillips, vice president for international news, at the AP's New York headquarters.

The Israeli air force bombed the 12-story al-Jalaa tower on May 15, roughly an hour after ordering all occupants to evacuate. No one was injured, but the building was destroyed. The building was home to offices belonging to the AP, the Al Jazeera satellite channel as well as dozens of families.

The airstrike came during an 11-day war between Israel and Gaza's ruling Hamas militant group.

In a statement on Twitter, Erdan said he told AP executives that the building was used by Hamas to disrupt the Iron Dome, which intercepted hundreds of incoming rockets fired by the militant group during the fighting.

Erdan said the airstrike did not intentionally target journalists.

"AP is one of the most important news agencies in the world and Israel does not suspect its employees were aware a covert Hamas unit was using the building in this way," he said.

"I reaffirmed that Israel upholds the importance of press freedom and strives to ensure the safety of journalists wherever they are reporting. Israel is willing to assist AP in rebuilding its offices and operations in Gaza," he added.

The meeting with Erdan "was a positive and constructive conversation," the AP said in a [statement](#). The agency expressed its appreciation for his pledges to help rebuild an AP bureau in Gaza.

The AP renewed its call to see evidence backing Israel's claim that Hamas militants were operating in the building.

"Israeli authorities maintain that the building housing our bureau was destroyed because of a Hamas presence that posed an urgent threat," the AP said. "We have yet to receive evidence to support these claims. AP continues to call for the full release of any evidence the Israelis have so that the facts are public."

The AP has repeatedly urged Israel to share any evidence supporting its claims of Hamas activity in the building. It also has urged an [independent investigation](#) into the incident.

AP statement on meeting with Israeli ambassador

The Associated Press issued this statement on Tuesday following a meeting on Monday with Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. and U.N. Gilad Erdan to discuss the destruction of the building that housed AP's Gaza bureau:

The Associated Press appreciates the opportunity to meet with Ambassador Erdan to discuss the attack on the building housing our Gaza bureau and Israel's support for our efforts to rebuild the bureau. It was a positive and constructive conversation.

Israeli authorities maintain that the building housing our bureau was destroyed because of a Hamas presence that posed an urgent threat. We have yet to receive evidence to support these claims.

AP continues to call for the full release of any evidence the Israelis have so that the facts are public.

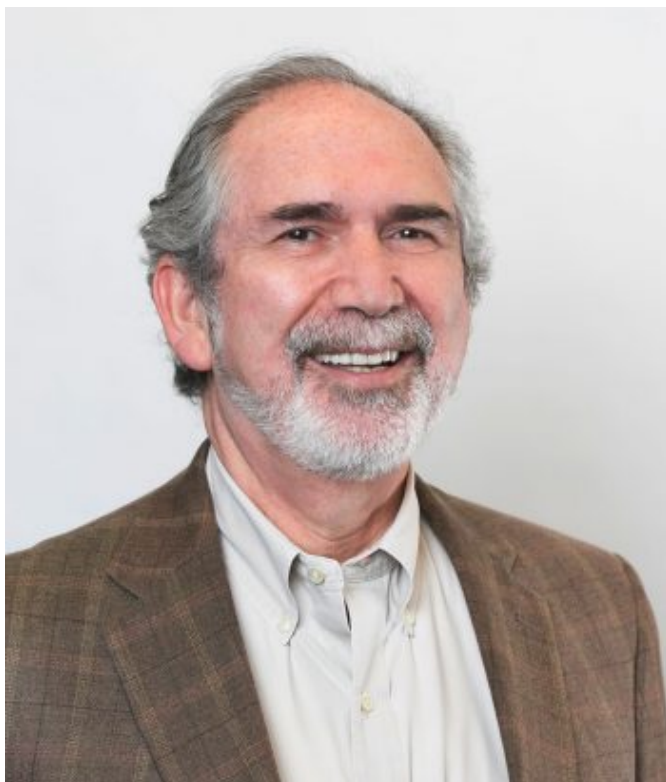
Click [here](#) for link to statement, shared by Lauren Easton.

Ted Mendelsohn on retirement: **'My tenure at AP has been far more than a job and even more than a career'**

Ted Mendelsohn ([Email](#)) - I was hired at AP by Chris Pederson in June 1993. Chris sensed that there was a technology evolution and saw that AP could benefit from engaging and doing business with companies who use digital technology to deliver news and information. He brought me on board to assess and exploit these opportunities. Ever since I graduated from college I was involved with digital media, a nascent industry in the early 1970s. I worked on inputting content into NY Times Information Bank, was instrumental in launching the very first totally digitally created encyclopedia and helped with the early evolution of electronic media monitoring at Burrelle's.

As soon as I joined the organization it became apparent that there was interest for AP's content from companies who packaged information for the corporate market and from an ever-increasing number of companies delivering news directly to the consumers. At the time, AP's largest consumer-facing customers were Prodigy and CompuServe.

The first major customer I was challenged to bring on board was America Online. There was



both internal resistance and desire to sign on with America Online. The company's subscribers were booming, while at the same time there was reticence to post AP on the site fearing clash with members. That push-and-pull (should we or shouldn't we) became very much part of my job: negotiating both with the customer and with AP management.

My negotiations with AOL (internally and externally) shed light on the challenges of the position. I was hired to be an entrepreneur inside a not-for-profit organization. Strange bedfellows. The digitally driven

news and information media was flourishing at warp speed, and we could not sit idly by. What made it even more challenging was the constant evolution of technology: more content from all media, IP rights issues, new formats, content re-focus, etc. At every step it was my job to work with Wick Temple and his membership team to explain benefits vs risks, and I had to make my case that the opportunity at hand was in AP's favor. My very first deal licensing images for commercial use was a long, drawn out affair because the discomfort of distributing AP images on a CD-ROM. A start-up was interested in purchasing images for a monthly CD magazine. One senior AP executive told me that we cannot "sell our crown jewels" to commercial media. What's the point of crown jewels if they can't be seen? That deal was the beginning of the end for the Leafdesk, AP's proprietary hardware/software solution for ingesting images, and the opening of the market for distributing AP's iconic images.

Over these nearly three decades of employment at AP I was privileged to be on a perch where I could observe the continuous ebb and flow of media business. Because of our reputation and our very rich portfolio of content, we were desirable content source in every evolutionary facet, and we had to continuously adjust our thinking and assess how best to deal with new market segments. The needs of content aggregators for corporate markets are different than what an ISP requires or a permanent hosting device (CDs) or a media monitoring company.

The business was challenging (and exciting) because it's rare for a platform to survive. For example, I mentioned Prodigy and CompuServe earlier. They no longer exist, and AOL is a shell of what it used to be. In fact, the ISP business has pretty much disappeared, replaced by various social media platforms.



Ted Mendelsohn, center, vice president of commercial and digital markets, accepts his 25-year service certificate from Dave Gwizdowski, senior vice president of Americas revenue, during a meeting at New York headquarters, June 28, 2018. (AP Corporate Communications)

When Chris brought me on board, I was a team of one. He had a small sales team selling directly to corporate and government agencies. The Commercial team now comprises of some 35 individuals, plus a number of folks who do commercial sales in Americas Media group. It's clear that ever since the digital market took hold, that AP's new revenue opportunities are tied to this technological evolution. While the "legacy" media is still the primary revenue source for the AP and still to a great extent defines AP, revenue growth comes from commercial sales and from services we provide.

Commercial licensing of content is but one aspect of the new growth. We have established ourselves as a preeminent factchecker on social media, our news app's audience continues to grow and advertising revenue and sponsorship is booming, we're building out opportunities in the financial markets, exploring new revenues with NFTs, we do commercial assignment work for brands and we are poised to exploit any new opportunity that might surface.

As we delve into these markets, it's incumbent for us to protect our IP rights, a major challenge at a time when information is easily shared.

In June 1993 when I stepped into the building at 50 Rock none of these issues were of concern. I feel so privileged to have been an integral part of directing AP's efforts into many of these new business ventures, often "dragging" the management group to recognize and accept the inevitable changes that were being presented.

I take great pride in knowing I built a very strong team who sees opportunities and where warranted exploits them. What I and my team worked hard on is to never look at an opportunity as a yes/no decision, but rather to dig into the possibilities and perhaps find something new and viable.

I take great pleasure in knowing that Tom Januszewski will take over the group. He and I have worked together for 20 years or so, and he brings expertise, knowledge and drive that will continue to make the department flourish. May sound cliché, but my tenure at AP has been far more than a job and even more than a career. It's been a major part of my life for the last 28 years, and I feel very lucky to have had this great ride.

Your thoughts on Kevin Walsh's Emily Wilder comments

Ray Newton (Email) - Bravo, Kevin Walsh. I'm proud to have known you as a student and later, AP staffer and leader.

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Michael Rubin (Email) - My AP career was briefer than Kevin Walsh's and likely preceded it by some time, but I fully agree with his comments in Tuesday's Connecting. I've followed coverage regarding Emily Wilder's dismissal and it strikes me that AP essentially acted due to the right wing smear campaign and not much else.

AP has yet to show any social media posts after Emily Wilder's hiring that didn't meet standards, she was a trainee who just started, so why the big blowup apart from the right wing efforts to cause a dustup? (In previous years I would call the people "conservative" but that no longer fits most definitions.)

I recall times when AP went all out to support staffers, and I also remember working with people who were absolute political virgins, not a piece of lint indicating their opinions. I'm thinking of the late Doug Willis, the Sacramento correspondent and political writer who, the word went, pushed his then-wife to leave a good job with a public service group because the wife of a major political figure had become involved. Doug never registered to vote. The same was true of the late Jim Lagier, who never voted until after he retired. (He then became a very vocal Democrat.)

AP has a history of total straightforward news coverage, reliably middle of the road regardless of situation, but people need to have that position on the news they cover, not be punished for things said in previous years regarding issues they aren't even involved with. Unless Ms. Wilder was looking for an immediate transfer to Gaza or Tel Aviv the firing makes little sense.

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Bill Wertz (Email) - Last week The Associated Press fired a young reporter named Emily Wilder for failing to adhere to the company's social media policy. While the AP hasn't yet shared much detail about the reasoning behind its action, it apparently thought Wilder was continuing the pro-Palestinian activism she pursued in college. Some have speculated that the AP was particularly sensitive to being considered pro-Palestinian because of recent news that it had been sharing office space with the militant group Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Wilder was working in Arizona,

not the Middle East, and wasn't having any impact on the AP's coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. So the issue worth discussing, it seems to me, is whether news organizations like the AP are justified in trying to limit the public expression of opinion by its reporters. I believe they are – for two reasons. First, people who are committed to one or more causes may not be as open-minded toward contrary opinions, which is essential in fair and balanced news reporting. Second, even if reporters are scrupulously fair, the credibility of their reporting is diminished if they are known to be partisans. Some questions were raised even 25 years ago when ABC News hired George Stephanopoulos, Bill Clinton's communications director. Imagine the outcry today if NBC News hired Kayleigh McEnany, Donald Trump's spokesperson, and later named her "Chief Washington Correspondent" (one of Stephanopoulos' titles). Some argue that reporters should "be free to be their true selves" and use their skills to bring about needed changes or "hold the powerful accountable" for their actions. Nothing wrong with that, but it should be the job of editorial writers, documentary film makers, speechwriters and others, not news reporters. It seems both reasonable and desirable to me for news organizations to hire reporters who demonstrate specific skills and abilities. Among them should be curiosity and open-mindedness toward ideas of all kinds from all different directions, skepticism toward one and all, and a willingness to leave the expression of opinions to others.

New-member profile: Mavis Amundson

Mavis Amundson ([Email](#)) - I'm a retired journalist and regional historian living in Bellevue, Washington. My journalism career spanned three decades, including stops at weekly and daily newspapers in Washington and Oregon.

I got my start in 1979 as secretary-assistant to John Brewer, who was then AP bureau chief in Seattle. I vividly remember the catastrophic eruption of Mount Saint Helens in 1980, an event that preoccupied the Seattle bureau for weeks.

I left AP in 1983 for a reporting internship at the Ballard News Tribune, a weekly newspaper in a Scandinavian neighborhood in Seattle. From there, I was a general assignment reporter for the Robinson Newspapers, a chain of weekly newspapers in South King County. Later, while my husband worked on his master's degree at the University of Oregon, I covered cops briefly at The Register Guard in Eugene, Oregon. Still later, I worked as a copy editor for two Seattle suburban dailies.



One of my favorite jobs was editing a monthly senior supplement, a tabloid section, at the Peninsula Daily News in Port Angeles, Washington, a working-stiff town in the foothills of the Olympic Mountains. I enjoyed hearing the stories of people who lived

and worked in the area. I talked to loggers and cooks, truck drivers and fishermen, housewives and entrepreneurs, all of whom helped build communities in this rugged corner of the Northwest.

Publisher Frank Ducceschi encouraged me to collect many of these stories, which we turned into a book, "Sturdy Folk," about life and work on the Olympic Peninsula. After leaving the newspaper, I researched and wrote two more nonfiction histories of the Olympic Peninsula, "The Great Forks Fire," about a forest fire that nearly destroyed a small town, and "The Lady of the Lake," a true-crime story set on Lake Crescent in Olympic National Park.

I continued to follow all things AP over the years.

Connecting mailbox

'Busting the logo'

Adolphe Bernotas ([Email](#)) - I too, Charlie Hanley, am scratching my head about the WNYC-FM reporter being fired for including AP material in a story.

WTF! If this practice had been around when I was at AP, most of the newsrooms in New England (and likely in other places) would have been emptied!

Not only would some members pop in a few AP grafs here and there in their stories; some would take the whole damn story, delete the AP logo from the first line, and let it rip as their own. (The more honorable members would have a line somewhere in the story that AP contributed to the report.)

It was known as "busting the logo." A common greeting in the bureau was "they busted the logo on your story, again."

The most shameless and prolific practitioner of passing off AP stories as its own was a member whose publisher sat on the AP's board of directors. There was more: We would supply carbon books to reporters of the newspaper (in whose building AP and UPI were tenants). They would drop off a carbon of a story at AP, then walk down the hall a few yards and do likewise at UPI. This by an AP-only wire member.

When I brought up these practices with a bureau chief, I essentially was told to sit down and shut up.

For a while, the correspondent and I engaged in a silly but fun inside joke: Anticipating busted logos, we would begin some stories like this: A Presidential visit...; Apparent violations of ...; Approximately a dozen...; A political result...; A poor showing...; A Portsmouth library...

It would be interesting to hear from former AP managers in Connecting on how they dealt with staffers who raised these questions and members about violations of the "membership cooperative" ethos.

And...

Paul Stevens (Email) – During my Kansas City bureau chief days, one of my targets for conversion from UPI to AP service was the small daily newspaper in Bob Dole’s hometown of Russell, Kansas – the Russell Daily News. I was always welcomed kindly by the owners, but never got past the fact that UPI delivered its service at half the price of the AP assessment.

One of my strongest sales pitches was the work of veteran Topeka Correspondent Lew Ferguson and his staff. Their work dominated that of UPI and all other news organizations covering the statehouse. The owner knew that, but...

I began getting complaint calls from nearby members that the Daily News was running Lew Ferguson bylines on the front page under the AP logo, although it was not a member. Numerous calls of friendly but firm warning to the publisher were to no avail – and I knew I had lost the war when he apologized one day and said, “Oh, I told the editor to remove the byline and AP logo.” Never did succeed in getting AP into the Daily News – and when a new owner took over, it converted to a weekly.

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Recalling forgotten chapter of athlete activism

Fred Frommer (Email) - I wrote a [piece](#) for the Washington Post this week which recounts a long-forgotten chapter of athlete activism, when several MLB players refused to play on the day of RFK’s funeral 53 years ago this month. When I first started reporting this story, my idea was to focus on RFK’s shout-out to pitcher Don Drysdale, who pitched his sixth straight shutout on the night RFK won the 1968 California primary, after watching the [AP film](#) of Kennedy’s victory speech. But as I looked into it more deeply, it became clear there was a bigger story about how players took a stand on behalf of the slain candidate.

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Reunion of AP broadcast editors



David Tirrell-Wysocki ([Email](#)) - On the long drive back to Tennessee from a family vacation in Maine, retired Nashville Broadcast Editor Randall Dickerson (right) stopped in New Hampshire for lunch with retired AP colleagues Dave Tirrell-Wysocki (left, Concord) and Bob Salsberg (center, Boston). Randall's patient wife, Lin, took the photo after enduring another hour of AP yarns, all in broadcast style, of course. (Oh, if you see Randall, ask him about his final AP interview – with Dolly Parton.)

Stories of interest

Emily Wilder and journalism's longstanding Achilles' heel – partisans who cry bias (The Conversation)

Matthew Jordan
Associate Professor of Media Studies, Penn State

When the Associated Press fired Emily Wilder for violating its social media policy, it caused a firestorm in the media industry. Critics noted that the firing came only days after GOP activists called her biased, re-animating an ongoing debate about how responsible news organizations should deal with such accusations.

Wilder's alleged violations had nothing to do with her reporting. As a student at Stanford, she had been sympathetic to the Palestinian peace movement. After being hired by the AP, she also questioned, in a tweet, how the media framed its coverage of

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This was enough to feed a right-wing social media frenzy that eventually led to a story in the conservative Washington Free Beacon containing the claim, “AP’s objectivity in question.”

Without pointing to anything in her work, management, within days of partisan attackers going after her, fired her to protect the AP from the appearance of bias, and told Wilder in its dismissal letter that the campaign against her prompted a probe of her social media conduct.

The AP has acknowledged that “mistakes of process” were made in the way they handled the situation but despite that, the outcome would have been the same.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Kevin Walsh.

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Tearful reunion after mom saw AP photo of daughter at border (AP)



Emely, 8, of Honduras, stands alone after turning herself in upon crossing the U.S.-Mexico border in La Joya, Texas, May 13, 2021. (AP Photo/Gregory Bull)

By ACACIA CORONADO

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Six years had passed since Glenda Valdez kissed her toddler goodbye and left for the United States — six years since she held Emely in her arms.

But here she was, at Texas' Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, tearfully embracing the little girl she left behind. And it happened only because she had glimpsed a televised photo of Emely, part of an Associated Press story on young people crossing the Mexican border alone.

"I love you so much," she whispered in Spanish in her 9-year-old daughter's ear. "My God, thank you."

It was a fairy tale ending — for the moment — to a complicated story, one that began in Honduras and with an unhappy relationship, according to Valdez, 26.

Emely's father, she said, was absent and did not provide for them. When Valdez emigrated in pursuit of a better life, the girl was left in the custody of Valdez's mother. But Emely's father took her back.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Linda Deutsch.

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Do journalists "hide behind" sources when they use numbers in the news? (Nieman Lab)

By MARK CODDINGTON AND SETH LEWIS

Numerical information is a central piece of journalism. Just look at how often stories rely on quantitative data — from Covid case numbers to public opinion polling to economics statistics — as their evidentiary backbone. The rise of data journalism, with its slick visualizations and interactives, has reinforced the role and influence of numbers in the news.

But, as B.T. Lawson reminds us in a new article in Journalism Practice, though we have plenty of research on this decade-long boom in data journalism, much of the research "overstates the significance of the data journalist within the news media. Yes, data journalists are now a mainstay of most news organizations, but they are not the only journalists using numbers. Far from it."

Indeed, in contrast to the 1960s and 70s era of computer-assisted reporting, when a small minority of specialized reporters worked with data but most reporters did not, nowadays virtually all journalists are expected to engage with numbers as part of their work. Which brings up a potential problem: Some research suggests that journalists rarely challenge the numbers they receive, leading them to accept and reproduce the discourse around those numbers from their sources.

Read more [here](#).

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Former president Trump returns as a diminished TV draw (AP)

By **DAVID BAUDER**

NEW YORK (AP) — Former President Donald Trump reached less than a million measurable television viewers over the weekend in his return to the public stage at a North Carolina political event.

Newsmax averaged just under 700,000 viewers between 8 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Saturday when Trump spoke, the Nielsen company said. His speech was also carried live on One America News Network and C-SPAN, but their audience is not measured by Nielsen.

Fox News Channel did not carry the speech by the former president beloved by many of its viewers. The network averaged more than 1.5 million viewers for its typical Saturday night fare of Jesse Watters and Jeanine Pirro.

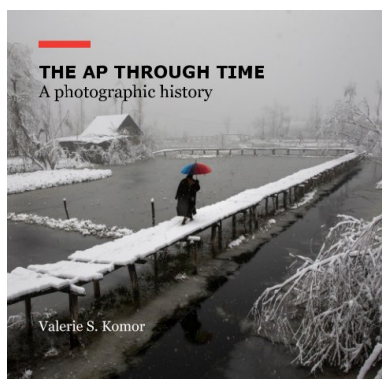
Although Trump couldn't eclipse Fox's regular lineup, at least for Newsmax, showing the former president live appeared to be a good business decision for the network. So far this year, Newsmax has averaged 202,000 viewers in prime time, including the more heavily trafficked weeknights, Nielsen said.

Read more [here](#).



A special section celebrating AP's 175th

AP Through Time: A Photographic History



AP Through Time: A Photographic History” - created by Director of Corporate Archives, Valerie Komor, is a keepsake commemorating AP’s 175th year. Small in size (6 ¾ x 6 ¾ in.), it is organized chronologically in eight segments that trace the broad outlines of AP’s development from 1846 to the present: Beginnings, Evolution, New Century, Modernity, Expansion, One World, Speed, and Transformation. Click [here](#) to view and make an order.

AP at 175 video

This video celebrates the unique role AP has played since 1846.

Oops!

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UPCOMING WEBINARS

To celebrate AP’s 175th anniversary, the Corporate Archives has organized “AP at 175: Conversations with History,” a series of three webinars.

The final one is:

AP correspondents bring home the world: Their history in their own words: Prof. Giovanna Dell’Orto in conversation with Vice President and Editor at Large for Standards John Daniszewski.

When: Thursday, June 17, 2021 11:00 AM-12:00 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Where: Zoom: <https://ap.zoom.us/j/94209986199>

Giovanna Dell'Orto, Ph.D., is a former newswoman with The Associated Press (in Minneapolis, Rome, Phoenix and Atlanta). Now Associate Professor of journalism at

the University of Minnesota, she teaches and researches the interplay of news production, news content and international affairs. She is the author or senior editor of six books on this topic, including an oral history of AP foreign correspondence from the Second World War to the 2010s, published by Cambridge University Press in 2015. Join Zoom Meeting

<https://ap.zoom.us/j/94209986199>

Meeting ID: 942 0998 6199

Today in History - June 9, 2021



By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, June 9, the 160th day of 2021. There are 205 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 9, 1969, the Senate confirmed Warren Burger to be the new chief justice of the United States, succeeding Earl Warren.

On this date:

In 1588, construction began on the present-day Rialto Bridge in Venice, Italy, with the laying of the first stone; the structure was completed in 1591.

In 1870, author Charles Dickens died in Gad's Hill Place, England.

In 1940, during World War II, Norway decided to surrender to the Nazis, effective at midnight.

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Current Tax Payment Act of 1943, which reintroduced federal income tax withholding from paychecks.

In 1954, during the Senate Army-McCarthy hearings, Army special counsel Joseph N. Welch berated Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, R-Wis., asking: "Have you no sense of

decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency?"

In 1972, heavy rains triggered record flooding in the Black Hills of South Dakota; the resulting disaster left at least 238 people dead and \$164 million in damage.

In 1973, Secretariat won the Belmont Stakes, becoming horse racing's first Triple Crown winner in 25 years.

In 1978, leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints struck down a 148-year-old policy of excluding black men from the Mormon priesthood.

In 1980, comedian Richard Pryor suffered almost fatal burns at his San Fernando Valley, Calif., home while freebasing cocaine.

In 1983, Britain's Conservatives, led by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, won a decisive election victory.

In 2004, the body of Ronald Reagan arrived in Washington to lie in state in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda before the 40th president's funeral.

In 2008, retail gas prices rose above \$4 per gallon.

Ten years ago: The entire top echelon of Newt Gingrich's presidential campaign resigned in a mass exodus that left his bid for the Republican nomination in tatters; the former House speaker vowed defiantly to remain a candidate. (Gingrich would remain in the race until May 2012.) Alabama passed a tough law against illegal immigration, requiring schools to find out if students were in the country lawfully and making it a crime to knowingly give an illegal immigrant a ride. (Federal courts later blocked parts of the law.)

Five years ago: President Barack Obama endorsed Hillary Clinton to succeed him and urged Democrats in a web video to line up behind her.

One year ago: Hundreds of mourners packed a Houston church for the funeral of George Floyd, a Black man whose death during a Minneapolis arrest inspired a worldwide reckoning over racial injustice. In a primary election plagued by hours-long lines, voting machine malfunctions and provisional ballot shortages, Georgia Democrats chose Jon Ossoff to face Republican Sen. David Perdue in November. (Perdue finished 88,000 votes ahead of Ossoff in November, forcing a January runoff that was won by Ossoff.) The Senate unanimously confirmed Gen. Charles Brown Jr. as chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force, making him the first Black officer to lead one of the nation's military services. The Paramount Network said it was dropping the long-running reality series "Cops" after 33 seasons on the air.

Today's Birthdays: Comedian Jackie Mason is 93. Media analyst Marvin Kalb is 91. Former baseball manager and player Bill Virdon is 90. Sports commentator Dick Vitale is 82. Author Letty Cottin Pogrebin is 82. Rock musician Mick Box (Uriah Heep) is 74. Retired MLB All-Star Dave Parker is 70. Film composer James Newton Howard is 70. Mystery author Patricia Cornwell is 65. Actor Michael J. Fox is 60. Writer-producer Aaron Sorkin is 60. Actor Johnny Depp is 58. Actor Gloria Reuben is 57. Gospel singer-actress Tamela Mann is 55. Rock musician Dean Felber (Hootie & the Blowfish) is 54.

Rock musician Dean Dinning is 54. Musician Ed Simons is 51. Actor Keesha Sharp is 48. Bluegrass singer-musician Jamie Dailey (Dailey & Vincent) is 46. Actor Michaela Conlin is 43. Actor Natalie Portman is 40. Actor Mae Whitman is 33. Actor Lucien Laviscount is 29.

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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