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Connecting

July 02, 2021

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Happy Independence Day weekend on this Friday, July 2. Stay safe and healthy while celebrating.

Peg



Best of the week

Sourcing, data, subject expertise reveal record 300K rejected U.S. gun purchases

Lindsay Whitehurst

At a time when gun sales in America are reaching record highs and political divisions run deep, Salt Lake City reporter Lindsay Whitehurst has become a recognized authority on shifting weapons laws at the state level. She has cultivated sources on both sides of the issue and earned a reputation as a fair and accurate interpreter of the debate over guns.

That's why, after working for months with sources at Everytown for Gun Safety, a major player in the gun control lobby, the nonprofit turned to her with a trove of exclusive records on attempted firearms purchases that were denied by the FBI last year.

Whitehurst dove into the FBI data that showed gun sale rejections at an all-time high. Nearly half of the denials were for convicted felons, at a time when fights for universal background checks continue to fail. And although lying on a firearms background check is a federal offense, Whitehurst also learned that such cases are rarely prosecuted, raising the question of why — in a volatile America — authorities are not investigating those who try to buy despite being banned.

For probing these questions, and her leadership on a beat that touches on some of the nation's most fundamental and contentious rights, Whitehurst earns AP's Best of the Week award.

Read more [here](#).



Best of the states

Photographer's vision merges past, present for front-line nurses

Jae C. Hong

With the U.S. slowly emerging from COVID-19, it might be easy to assume that the pandemic will soon be in the past, but for many, particularly health care workers, the trauma of what they experienced while caring for deathly sick patients will stay with them for years.

To capture the idea that the past can be part of the present, Los Angeles photographer Jae Hong focused on intensive care nurses at a Southern California hospital who had taken care of extremely ill COVID patients and, despite all efforts, had lost many. That ward closed this spring, but the memories endure for these nurses.

Hong's approach called for a photo technique not typically used in reporting the news: He made multiple exposure portraits of 10 of the nurses in the hospital, resulting in haunting images that show each nurse in the present, yet still somewhere in the past.

Accompanied by revealing interviews, the piece played widely in the U.S. and beyond, and attracted attention on social media.

For arresting, interpretive photography that evokes the lingering effects of the pandemic on these front-line medical workers, Hong earns this week's Best of the States award.

Read more [here](#).

Inside AP

Marcio J. Sanchez meets woman in Pulitzer-winning photo

Nearly a year after a Pulitzer Prize-winning photo was made by Los Angeles-based photographer Marcio J. Sanchez, investigative reporter Martha Mendoza identified the subject: Brenna Bell, an environmental activist and attorney who works to protect forests. Mendoza arranged a Zoom call to introduce Sanchez to Bell, who was unaware the photo won a Pulitzer.



A demonstrator hides under a barrier as federal officers release tear gas during a Black Lives Matter protest at the Mark O. Hatfield United States Courthouse, July 29, 2020, in Portland, Ore. The image was part of a series of photographs by The Associated Press that won the 2021 Pulitzer Prize for breaking news photography. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)

Connecting mailbox

In search of gasoline

Lelieu Browne ([email](#)) - The July 4th holiday weekend is coming with anticipation of an increase in fuel prices and even shortages of gas. That brought me back to a memorable experience during our journalistic life.

Back in the 1970s, my husband Malcom was The New York Times bureau chief of Eastern Europe. Not a week passed without us taking a trip somewhere.

One winter, Malcolm and I were in Poland to cover the 7th Polish Party Congress. Malcolm had spent more time covering Poland than any other country under Soviet control. After heavy and complicated political coverage, he wanted to use his two days left before flying back to Yugoslavia to write something lighthearted - a feature on bison conservation at a national park 120 miles east of Warsaw.

We rented a little Polish Fiat and started out early in the morning with our Polish assistant/interpreter Andy. There wasn't much to see on the road and not much traffic. At that time, not too many Polish could afford a car. But by the time we arrived at Zanbrow, cars were replaced by Russian-style, harnessed, horse-driven carts. Old wooden houses painted green and yellow replaced ugly community buildings. The only trace of the 20th Century was the paper mill from which the huge chimney blew out black smoke over the village.

"I would like to stop for gas when we see one filling station," said Malcolm. Filling stations used to be non-existent in most parts of Eastern Europe.

"When you reach Hajnowica, I would like to stop at a bakery to buy some bread," said Andy. "The bread is good here. You'll see it yourself."

In Hajnowica, we found the bakery, a wooden shack on the main street, where a line was forming. It was Saturday morning. All shops were supposed to close Saturday afternoon and Sunday. People coming out of the bakery carried two or three huge loaves, each one weighing at least a pound. Andy came back with his arms wrapped around two or three loaves. He immediately distributed the bread, the smell of which filled the car with the wonderful fragrance of fresh wheat. It was still warm.

"The tank is down to half," Malcolm said, drawing us back to reality. "I would be happier if we could find a filling station."

"It's all right, there is a station at Bialowieza if we cannot find one here," said Andy.

"In that case, we might as well go there. It's only 15 miles from here," said Malcom.

Bialowieza had the look of a ski resort with its isolation from civilization and snow-covered ground. Its population was around 2,000 families, living on farming and timbering. Some 224 square miles of forest were rigidly protected and left in its natural state. Nobody was allowed to go in without a guide. Its dark tall oak trees reached out in the sky, many of them more than 100 years old and 120 feet high. The park was left as a graveyard for old fallen trees. Its stillness and wilderness carried certain reverence.

Because of its enormous source of game, Bialowieza had a special status even back in the Middle Ages and was then a hunting reserve for Polish kings and Russian czars. During World War I, the Germans killed off all the wild animals for food. The last bison was shot in 1919. Now rare bison and tarpan are kept in the conservation park.

"Now the first thing to do is to look for that filling station," said Malcolm.

"Oh! There is no station here. I had asked the guide this morning, and he told me that is being built," said Andy. "Never mind, we can always get gasoline at Hajnovka where we got the bread yesterday."

"Well, this time there is no excuse, the tank is one-fourth full," said Malcolm.

Unfortunately, none of us remembered that it was Sunday. The station was closed by the time we reached it. In front of the door, a notice with the address of the next available station was pinned. It was approximately 12 miles.

By the time we got to the village, we realized we were deceived again because the village was in complete darkness. We were told that Bielek, a bigger place about 20 miles further might have a filling station. I noticed the gas needle dwindling half way to zero.

Malcolm was optimistic we could get to Bielek, which we did without any problem. Unfortunately, while the filling station was brightly lit, there was no attendant to be seen.

Bransk was the next town, about 12 miles further. The same story, the station was brilliantly lit but not a soul in sight.

"Prepare to spend the night in the car with the sky our roof," said Malcolm.

"This is ridiculous!" said Andy. "I suggest that we go to look for the manager at his home."

Malcolm reluctantly followed him. The town is small enough that they found the house. Andy came out of the house and walked to another.

"The manager's son has the key, but he is out for dinner," said Andy.

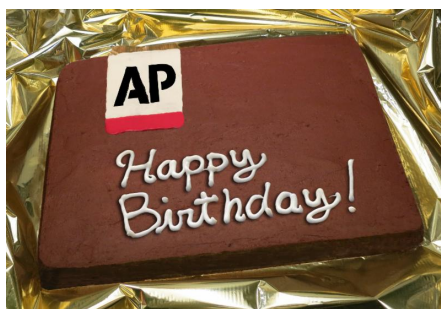
Malcolm's anger flared. "Well, the only thing to do is to go to the police. I have a letter prepared by the Inter-Press (Polish News Agency, which was responsible for setting up trips and interviews for foreign press). The letter plainly asks all the authorities to give you help if there is any difficulty. This is the opportunity to test it out."

Malcolm went to the police station and came out accompanied by an officer. He took them to the fire department. They were rebuffed at the beginning by the service fireman under the pretext that his boss was not there. Thanks to the persuasion of the police officer, we were offered 5 liters (more than a gallon) of benzene that they helped pour into our gas tank. How far would that take us to? We were tired, frustrated and depressed. And we had a plane to catch in the morning.

"How do you know, a functioning pump." I jumped with joy when we approached a brilliantly lit gas station at Zambrow. While the car was being fed, I opened a single bottle of soda I saved from the hotel and passed it around. It took us three hours to make a 60-mile trip.

We arrived in Warsaw around 9:30 p.m., exhausted but relieved. Andy was so anxious to get home that he left his loaf of bread behind in the car. It was no longer fresh, but I felt sad to throw it away. So, I left it on the hotel table for someone else before we left Warsaw.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



July 2

Donna Davidson - ddavidson@AP.org.

July 3

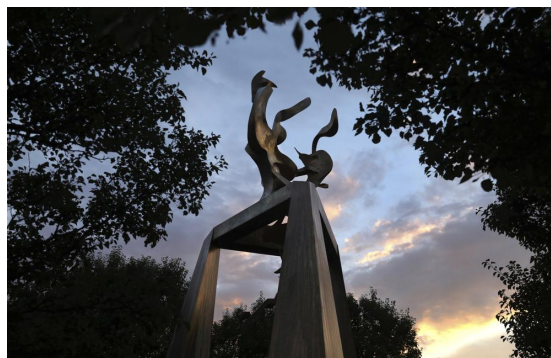
None

July 4

Chris Lehourites - clehourites@gmail.com

Mike Stewart - bmstewart@ap.org

Stories of interest



Monument unveiled to activist, journalist Ida B. Wells

CHICAGO (AP) — A monument to journalist and civil rights activist Ida B. Wells-Barnett was unveiled Wednesday in Chicago.

Officially called The Light of Truth Ida B. Wells National Monument, the commemoration created by sculptor Richard Hunt was dedicated in the South Side neighborhood where Wells lived out her life.

The monument has three bronze columns that support intertwined bronze sheets twisted into coils and spirals. One observer had trouble describing the abstraction at the top of the monument, asking if it was a hat or a crown of thorns. She was more certain about the columns.

"It is interesting," spectator Roberta Trotter told the Chicago Tribune. "I just want to know what the artist thinks before I say more. But I do see a strong base. That, I understand — Ida was a strong woman."

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

Republicans less likely to trust their main news source if they see it as 'mainstream'; Democrats more likely

(Pew Research Center)

By Jeffrey Gottfried

Most Americans place at least some trust in the media outlet they turn to most frequently for political news. But their trust varies widely by political party and whether they see the outlet in question as part of the “mainstream media” or not – though in very different ways between Republicans and Democrats.

Overall, roughly eight-in-ten U.S. adults (83%) have at least some trust in the accuracy of the political news they get from their main news source, with 38% expressing a “great deal” of trust in it, according to a Pew Research Center survey conducted March 8-14, 2021. Americans tend to have more trust in their main source for political news than they do in the news media more broadly: About two-in-ten adults (18%) express a great deal of trust in the accuracy of the political news they get from national news organizations (though a majority – 64% – have at least *some* trust).

Read more [here](#).



Celebrating AP's 175th

AP store for 175th, vintage merchandise



The AP has created a store with 175th anniversary merchandise available for purchase, as well as items branded with some of AP's most historic logos. The site can be reached by clicking [here](#).

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!

The embed code for this video is not valid.



Today in History - July 02, 2021



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, July 2, the 183rd day of 2021. There are 182 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 2, 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution saying that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States."

On this date:

In 1867, New York's first elevated rail line, a single track between Battery Place and Greenwich Street, went into operation.

In 1881, President James A. Garfield was shot by Charles J. Guiteau (gee-TOH') at the Washington railroad station; Garfield died the following September. (Guiteau was hanged in June 1882.)

In 1917, rioting erupted in East St. Louis, Illinois, as white mobs attacked Black residents; nearly 50 people, mostly Blacks, are believed to have died in the violence.

In 1937, aviator Amelia Earhart and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared over the Pacific Ocean while attempting to make the first round-the-world flight along the equator.

In 1961, author Ernest Hemingway shot himself to death at his home in Ketchum, Idaho.

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy met Pope Paul VI at the Vatican, the first meeting between a Catholic U.S. chief executive and the head of the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law a sweeping civil rights bill passed by Congress.

In 1976, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Gregg v. Georgia*, ruled 7-2 the death penalty was not inherently cruel or unusual.

In 1982, Larry Walters of San Pedro, California, used a lawn chair equipped with 45 helium-filled weather balloons to rise to an altitude of 16,000 feet; he landed eight miles away in Long Beach.

In 1986, ruling in a pair of cases, the Supreme Court upheld affirmative action as a remedy for past job discrimination.

In 1990, more than 1,400 Muslim pilgrims were killed in a stampede inside a pedestrian tunnel near Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

In 2018, rescue divers in Thailand found 12 boys and their soccer coach, who had been trapped by flooding as they explored a cave more than a week earlier.

Ten years ago: Petra Kvitova beat Maria Sharapova 6-3, 6-4 to become the first left-handed woman to win the Wimbledon title since Martina Navratilova in 1990.

Five years ago: Hillary Clinton was voluntarily interviewed for 3 1/2 hours by the FBI at the agency's Washington headquarters about her use of a private email server as secretary of state. Holocaust survivor and Nobel laureate

Elie Wiesel (EL'-ee vee-ZEHL'), 87, died in New York. Oscar-winning director Michael Cimino, 77, died in Beverly Hills, California.

One year ago: The government said employers added 4.8 million jobs in June, and the unemployment rate fell to 11.1%, still a Depression-era level, as the job market improved for a second straight month. The coronavirus infection curve rose in 40 of the 50 states heading into the July Fourth holiday weekend. A statement posted on his Twitter account revealed that former GOP presidential candidate Herman Cain was being treated for the coronavirus at an Atlanta-area hospital, less than two weeks after attending President Donald Trump's campaign rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma. (Cain died on July 30 of complications from the virus.) Five of the nine casinos in Atlantic City, New Jersey, reopened amid the pandemic. British socialite Ghislaine Maxwell was arrested in New Hampshire on charges that she had helped lure at least three girls – one as young as 14 – to be sexually abused by the late financier Jeffrey Epstein.

Today's Birthdays: Former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos is 92. Jazz musician Ahmad Jamal is 91. Actor Robert Ito is 90. Actor Polly Holliday is 84. Racing Hall of Famer Richard Petty is 84. Former White House chief of staff and former New Hampshire governor John H. Sununu is 82. Former Mexican President Vicente Fox is 79. Writer-director-comedian Larry David is 74. Luci Baines Johnson, daughter of President Lyndon B. Johnson, is 74. Actor Saul Rubinek is 73. Rock musician Roy Bittan (Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band) is 72. Actor Wendy Schaal is 67. Actor-model Jerry Hall is 65. Actor Jimmy McNichol is 60. Country singer Guy Penrod is 58. Rock musician Dave Parsons (Bush) is 56. Actor Yancy Butler is 51. Contemporary Christian musician Melodee DeVevo (Casting Crowns) is 45. Actor Owain (OH'-wyn) Yeoman is 43. Race car driver Sam Hornish Jr. is 42. NHL center Joe Thornton is 42. Singer Michelle Branch is 38. Actor Vanessa Lee Chester is 37. Figure skater Johnny Weir is 37. Actor Nelson Franklin is 36. Actor-singer Ashley Tisdale is 36. Actor Lindsay Lohan (LOH'-uhn) is 35. Actor Margot Robbie is 31.

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

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