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Connecting August 16, 2021

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Colleagues,

Hello on this Monday, Aug. 16, 2021.

In what surely will become an iconic photo - made by AP - the Taliban takes over the office of the Afghan president after the fall of Kabul on Sunday, which has journalists worldwide fearful for their colleagues, friends, guides and translators, and their families, still in the country.

This morning, AP's **Brian Carovillano** wrote to staff about colleagues in Afghanistan, as well as earthquake-rocked Haiti: "First, and most importantly, we can report that everyone IS safe, thanks to the smart instincts of our colleagues, deep local knowledge and outside support from people across the company." Read more below. As well as commentary from Connecting colleague Mort Rosenblum, who spent years covering the globe for AP.

Connecting's mailbox was full again over the weekend with more of your memories of **Larry Heinzerling**. He was the epitome of AP Family. "A rock and a rock star," Ye Old Editor said.

We also bring the sad news of the deaths of Bob Stiff and Karen Moore. Stiff was a former editor of the St. Petersburg Times and husband of Cindy (Rose) Stiff, a former AP Miami news editor. Moore was the wife of retired AP Helena newsman Steve Moore.

Keep you and yours healthy and safe.

Peg

pcoughlin@ap.org

The fall of Afghanistan



Taliban fighters take control of the Afghan presidential palace after Afghan President Ashraf Ghani fled the country in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Sunday. (Zabi Karim, AP)

AP updates staff on colleagues in Afghanistan, Haiti

Colleagues,

From Afghanistan to Haiti, this weekend presented significant challenges for AP to put out a strong news report to its customers and the world, while keeping our journalists, our support staff and their families safe.

First, and most importantly, we can report that everyone IS safe, thanks to the smart instincts of our colleagues, deep local knowledge and outside support from people across the company.

Our Kabul staff and freelancers, across departments, are currently assessing their options. Some had already left the country to relocate their families; many others have now obtained visas that will allow them to leave if they desire and when circumstances allow. The situation is clearly alarming and changing by the hour in Kabul. At the moment, getting a flight out is basically impossible due to the mass exodus and airspace restrictions related to the evacuation of the U.S. embassy. Know that we are working in all quarters to ensure that, for those who want to leave, AP is doing everything it can to facilitate that as soon as it's possible.

After a chaotic Sunday, things have settled down on the streets of Kabul, and our team and their families are largely laying low and being very careful. They are also still reporting the news, but their first, second and third priority is keeping themselves and their loved ones safe.

Across AP, there's an ongoing, 24-7 effort to ensure our colleagues have everything they need, and AP managers are coordinating closely with other news organizations with staff inside Afghanistan. We continue to work with staff and freelancers – including some former AP personnel – to weigh their options with regard to both short-term travel solutions and longer-term resettlement programs. Many of you have generously offered to help. Some have jumped in and are helping to propel the journalism. And the AP's [Emergency Relief Fund](#) is certainly an invaluable resource for colleagues in need at times of crisis. All of this is greatly appreciated and yet another sign of how AP people help each other, all over the world.

Meanwhile in Haiti, our team of freelancers also performed heroics over the weekend, and have been bolstered by a cross-format team arriving from the wider region even as a major storm bears down on the island. Everyone is safe, but working as a journalist in Haiti is fraught with danger even in the best of time, due to gang violence and other threats. We are also taking steps to ensure their safety comes first.

In both cases, this weekend represented the best of the AP -- brave and illuminating coverage across formats in the toughest conditions. People from far and wide jumping in to help. As ever, safety is our main focus. So far, both teams have continued to cover the news brilliantly without undue risk. If that changes they will prioritize safety and security, even if that means scaling back on some news coverage.

All the best,

Ian, David and Brian

Afghanistan - 'We tried to tell you'



By MORT ROSENBLUM

The Mort Report

FLAYOSC, France — Here we go again. Americans clamor for the exits, leaving behind innocent blood and sophisticated weapons for jubilant irregulars who humiliated them with antiquated guns and makeshift bombs.

I've seen this, over and over, from Vietnam in the 1970s to Iraq not long ago. Players differ, but not the plot. Societies react badly to uninvited foreign saviors. However noble your intentions, you can't deliver democracy at gunpoint.

Imperial déjà vu dates back millennia. A raging flood not long ago in this Provence backwater exposed paving stones on the route from Britannia to Rome, where all roads once led. Every empire eventually fades by military overreach or internal rot — or both.

By Roman ruins east of here in Frejús, a memorial cemetery recalls France's centuries-long mission civilisatrice. A mission to civilize. JFK brushed off Charles de Gaulle's warnings about trying to reshape an ancient culture. The United States, he said, had nobler intentions.

Most Americans, not imperialists, want to do the right thing and come home. But few know what the right thing is. Generals loath to admit defeat by a ragtag rabble see lights at the end of tunnels. One president passes stalemate on to the next. And people keep dying.

Reporters who get close enough to see and smell the story are shouted down by a different sort of journalist who speculates about what is happening from a safe distance. When reality bites, they can only grumble with an unhelpful refrain: We tried to tell you.

Afghanistan especially. News anchors stumble at such names as Lashkar Gah, the Helmand Province capital. Yet anyone who bothered to notice would have watched the endless Helmand meat grinder. Brits, then Americans, died to take square meters they later lost.

Despite risk and hardship, experienced pros were ready to go - and to train young tyros to join their ranks. But bosses balked at high expense and responsibility if employees ran into trouble. America mostly saw distant reality skewed through the looking glass.

Read more [here](#).

Connecting mailbox

More memories of Larry Heinzerling

Paisley Dodds ([email](#)) - Larry was one of the kindest and calmest people on the International Desk, and for those of us who also worked under Nick Tatro, that speaks volumes.

He always had time to listen, and sometimes that meant sympathetically lending an ear to women (me and others) whose cycles were being thrown into chaos by the overnight shifts.

He had the best stories, too. I loved the one about him flying to get Tina Susman released after she was kidnapped in Somalia. Tina was my first boss in Johannesburg, so it's probably best to let her tell that one! (She did in Friday's Connecting.)

I also remember Larry's daily struggles when he was trying to stop smoking. We had a lot of heartfelt talks over two years. I wish we would have had more. He had a heart of gold.

Denis Gray ([email](#)) - This one really hurts. What a man.

I think we all know journalists who are superb at their craft but can't manage their way out of paper bag. Larry had it all: Terrific reporter and writer, star bureau chief, senior manager who could inspire staffers and guide us in unravelling the mysteries of the dreaded BUDGET. And rare among those high up in corporate ladders, he proved that one could be kind, compassionate and gentle while getting the job done.

Without question he loved The AP but was not blind to its foibles and missteps, especially in the later stages of his career – a sign, to me, of a truly enlightened “corporate man.”

Our generation of foreign correspondents included many outstanding individuals. Most are now retired (the indestructible Eddie Lederer being an amazing exception). Some, like George Esper and Richard Pyle, have passed away. Larry was one of the finest, perhaps *the* finest of us all.

One proof of his generous character and warm personality was the number of AP people who remained his friends after his retirement. I was privileged to be among them.

My wife and I will long remember a trip we took with Larry and Ann up the mighty Mekong River from the fairy-tale city of Luang Prabang in Laos to Thailand. We deeply regret that we did not join them on one of their Habitat for Humanity missions to help build houses for the underprivileged.

May he rest in peace and serve as an example for a future AP generation.

Gene Herrick ([email](#)) - Larry Heinzerling was a bright, handsome young editor when I knew him in the Columbus, Ohio bureau, in the very early 1970s.

Larry added a sense of calmness, and a posture of knowing when, and what, he was doing, even though he hadn't been with AP all that long. All of the staff liked him, and especially when he displayed that big smile. I remember meeting his father, Lynn, who shared some of the same characteristics.

Larry represented AP in many important categories, and was a great journalist, and will be greatly missed.

Leyla Linton (email) - It is thanks to Larry that I moved from London to New York to join the North America desk at AP, where I experienced the happiest years of my career.

Larry was the best person I ever worked for - hugely supportive and generous and humane. He was decent and talented. I feel very lucky to have known him.

My deepest condolences to Ann and his family.

Debbie Seward (email) - Goodness and grace are how I remember Larry. I will always be grateful for the complete commitment and support he brought to The AP and his colleagues. He was, as you wrote, a wonderful man, colleague and friend.

Victor Simpson (email) - Larry led an AP team covering the return of the U.S. hostages from Iran after 444 days in captivity. He was there to take the flak from New York while we working stiffs tried to cover the story, as Bob Reid put it, and flak there was.

Since AP had no correspondent in Tehran, it was unclear when exactly the plane carrying the hostages left. It was a key historical point since the release was to happen on Jan. 20, 1981, shortly after the inauguration of President Ronald Reagan. The team, which included myself, Bob, Billy Mann and Walt Rodgers for AP radio, spent hours trying to find any information on the departure time. We never succeeded.

When the hostages did arrive in Frankfurt, Germany, and were taken to a U.S. hospital, they only took telephone calls from their hometown newspapers, so AP never got to talk to them. Through it all, Larry kept his cool and apparently handled it well since there were never any recriminations from New York.

Larry came to Rome where I was stationed as part of his campaign to help free kidnapped AP correspondent Terry Anderson. He accompanied Terry's sister, Peggy Say, to see Pope John Paul II and make his case, joined by my wife Daniela Petroff, a Vaticanista. Daniela recalls what a gentlemen Larry was, deftly dealing with the Pope and Terry's sister.

Jim Smith (email) - It's no surprise that Larry's death prompted such an outpouring of emotion across multiple generations of AP writers and editors. He touched so many of our lives and careers, and he taught us so much, not just about good journalism but about how to treat others.

From my first overseas assignment in Holland in 1980 and through often personally difficult years based in South Africa and finally Tokyo, Larry was a rock of support.

I join colleagues around the world in mourning his passing.

Wife of retired Helena newsman Steve Moore dies

Len Iwanski ([email](#)) - Karen Moore, the wife of retired Helena newsman Steve Moore, passed away Aug. 6 after celebrating her 80th birthday two days earlier. Karen had suffered the last few years from an auto-immune disorder.

Among the more than 50 people attending a celebration of life for Karen on Aug. 14 were AP Helena retirees Tom Laceky, Bob Anez and Len Iwanski, retired Helena technician Mike Cable, retired Portland COB Hugh van Swearingen and Helena newswoman Amy Beth Hanson.

“Unabashedly, I say thank you to all for being among the best acquaintances/friends of the best woman I’ve ever known!!!!” Steve wrote after the event in an email to those attending.

AP mini-reunion

Howard Goldberg ([email](#)) - Retired bureau chiefs Howard Goldberg and Sally Hale laugh about how much they might miss calling elections. The photo was made by Rick Hale on the Hales' back patio in Camas, Washington, when Howard was passing through on Aug. 12, 2021. Howard notes that although the photo is blatantly staged, it is still storytelling: The plants are under an umbrella during record-setting heat in the Pacific Northwest.



Keep on keepin' on, Gene!

Norm Abelson ([email](#)) – I was both moved and heartened by Thursday's well-crafted piece on Gene Herrick by Cliff Schiappa.

I was moved by the obvious affection of one Connecting colleague for another. I was heartened that I may continue to stay in the game myself when – and if - I reach Gene's exalted age, some

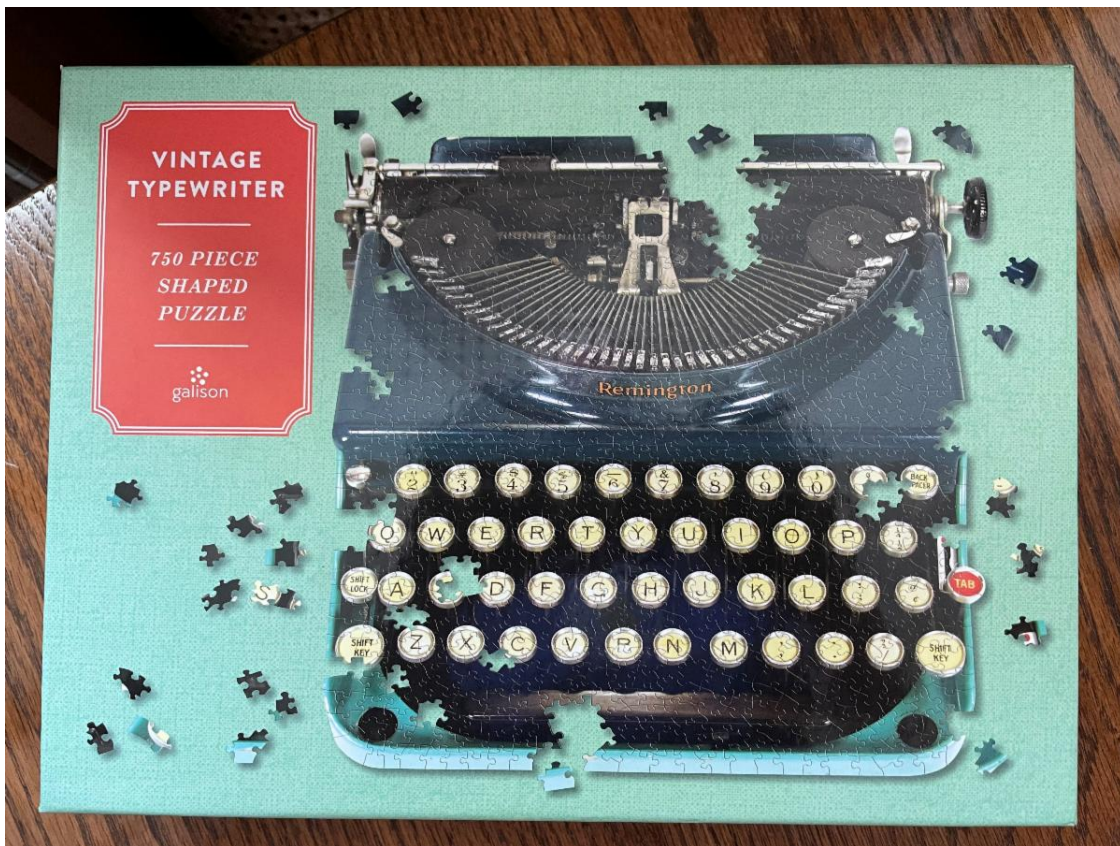
four years from now. I'm a mere stripling at 90 ½.

Cliff managed to present Gene both as an AP icon, and also as a heck of a regular guy. I am proud to count Gene as one of my Connecting buddies.



Puzzle me this

Paul Albright ([email](#)) - Found this online.



AP Beat of the Week

AP story resonates globally: New Hampshire hermit loses home, finds himself back on the grid

A vividly detailed AP story about an 81-year-old man's quest to remain in an isolated New Hampshire cabin hooked readers around the world, led to an outpouring of support for his predicament and eventually prompted the man to reconsider his hermit lifestyle.



In this undated photo provided, David Lidstone, 81, smiles in the woods of Canterbury, New Hampshire.)Courtesy of Jodie Gedeon, AP)

The chain of events began when Concord, New Hampshire-based reporter Kathy McCormack began looking into the legal fight involving David Lidstone, a spritely, small-statured man with a long white beard known to local boaters and kayakers as “River Dave.” Lidstone had been living peacefully in an A-frame cabin along the Merrimack River for 27 years, growing his own food, cutting his own firewood and tending to his chickens. But in 2015, the property owner learned of Lidstone’s presence and moved to evict him. Lidstone refused to leave, and was jailed in July.

While he was in jail, a fire burned down the cabin.

McCormack turned the dramatic developments into a powerful story by fleshing out the details of Lidstone’s life and the local efforts to help him stay put. Through court records and interviews with family and friends, she learned he was a U.S. Air Force veteran, had four children and had been severely injured in a logging accident. And unlike another man living off the grid in Maine — the “North Pond Hermit” — McCormack reported that Lidstone had no police record. She ended by noting that it was unclear where Lidstone would go once released from jail.

The story was an immediate hit on social media and ultimately captured more than 535,000 pageviews on APNews, making it the site’s most popular story of the week.

In the following days, McCormack and colleagues continued to chronicle Lidstone’s saga, including the outpouring of support which he gratefully received and his release from jail after a judge determined he likely wouldn’t return to the woods since the cabin burned down.

In an all-formats package just a week after the initial story, Lidstone noted the global reaction to his story and told McCormack he thinks it’s time to give up his reclusive

lifestyle.

Boston photographers Elise Amendola and Steven Senne made storytelling images after Lidstone's release from jail and Boston's Rodrique Ngowi delivered on the video. Significant assists came from fellow reporters Michael Casey, Patrick Whittle and Holly Ramer, with key edits to the evolving story by Donna Edwards and Ryan Kryska.

"I've hidden too many years," said Lidstone, who has been staying with friends. "Maybe the things I've been trying to avoid are the things that I really need in life."

For bringing this engaging story to life and her persistence in following it through, McCormack wins AP's Best of the Week award.

Read the story [here](#).

Connecting Regional Reunion: September in Texas

***AP 175th Anniversary Texas Reunion T-shirts
now available/order online!***

NOTE: Organizers are monitoring pandemic concerns and urging all participants to be fully vaccinated. Plans continue, at this time, for the AP Connecting Regional Reunion to be held as originally scheduled next month.

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The deadline to register for the Sept. 17-18-19, 2021, AP Connecting Regional Reunion in the Dallas-Fort Worth area has been extended to Monday, Aug. 23.

About 70 people have already registered for the event co-hosted by Mike Holmes of Omaha, Brent Kallestad of Tallahassee and Diana Heidgerd of Dallas. To register, email Diana at heidgerd@flash.net

NEW: AP 175th Anniversary Texas Reunion T-shirts (men's sizes only) are now available to order online & wear during the September gathering. Cost: \$20 apiece, includes mailing & handling. Please order by Sept. 3.

_ Click on this link: <https://associatedpress175.spiritsale.com> Check out the example of the T-shirt, front & back, with AP 175th anniversary logo. One color only – gray.

_ Select the T-shirt size(s), the number you wish to order and add to cart.

_ Click on cart, fill out shipping information and click again to place your order. You will receive an initial email with your order confirmation.

_ You will later receive a second email, upon completion of the order, for you to pay via a secure credit-card link. The T-shirts will be delivered by U.S. Postal Service.

Reunion Weekend/Schedule:

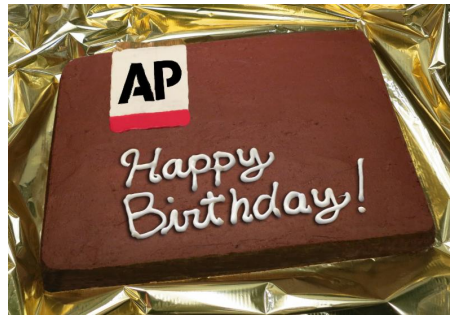
_ Pay your own way for events Saturday night, Sept. 18 (Tex-Mex group dinner) and the Texas Rangers vs. Chicago White Sox game on Sunday afternoon, Sept. 19. The all-

you-can-eat seats at the game are \$45 each and reservations must be made in advance via Diana. Please order game tickets by Friday, Aug. 20.

_ A bonus BBQ dinner event, hosted by David & Ellen Sedeño, is scheduled for Friday night, Sept. 17. Please also register in advance for this gathering.

_ Details on the group hotel, confirming your place at all three events and ordering/online an AP 175th Anniversary Texas Reunion T-shirt are in the registration form. Email Diana: heidgerd@flash.net

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Ray Krell - raykrell@gmail.com

Stories of interest

Bob Stiff, former St. Petersburg Times editor, dies at 89



Bob Stiff, a veteran news reporter and editor who spent nearly 25 years at the then-*St. Petersburg Times* and its sister paper, the *Evening Independent*, died Aug. 14, 2021, of COVID-19-related complications, his wife said. He was 89.

Stiff spent 54 years working in the newspaper business, most recently retiring from *The Dispatch* in North Carolina as its executive editor in 2006.

He began working as a reporter at age 21 at the Painesville Telegraph in Ohio in 1953, later moving to become a bureau chief and editor.

He joined the *St. Petersburg Times*, which would later become the *Tampa Bay Times*, as a copy editor in 1961. Stiff worked his way up to become the assistant managing editor.

Stiff was named editor of the *Evening Independent*, St. Petersburg's afternoon paper, in 1967, according to a news story. During his 17 years at the helm of the paper, which was owned by the Times Publishing Co., his focus on local, community news helped lead to employees referring to it as "the people's paper." The *Independent* was also known for its "Sunshine Offer," a promotion that gave readers the newspaper for free following days without sunshine.

Cindy Stiff, his wife, said her husband believed that readers needed to know about their communities. She said his columns would often leave people laughing or shaking their heads.

Read more [here](#).

Prominent fact-checker Snopes apologizes for plagiarism

NEW YORK (AP) — The co-founder and CEO of the fact-checking site Snopes.com has acknowledged plagiarizing from dozens of articles done by mainstream news outlets over several years, calling the appropriations "serious lapses in judgment."

From 2015 to 2019 — and possibly even earlier — David Mikkelson included material lifted from the Los Angeles Times, The Guardian and others to scoop up web traffic, according to BuzzFeed News, which broke the story Friday.

Mikkelson used his own name, a generic Snopes byline and a pseudonym when he lifted material, including single sentences and whole paragraphs on such subjects as same-sex marriage and the death of David Bowie, without citing the sources, BuzzFeed and Snopes said.

He has been suspended from editorial production pending the conclusion of an internal review but remains CEO and a 50% shareholder in the company, according to a statement from Snopes' senior leadership.

"Let us be clear: Plagiarism undermines our mission and values, full stop. It has no place in any context within this organization," the statement said.

Read more [here](#).



Celebrating AP's 175th

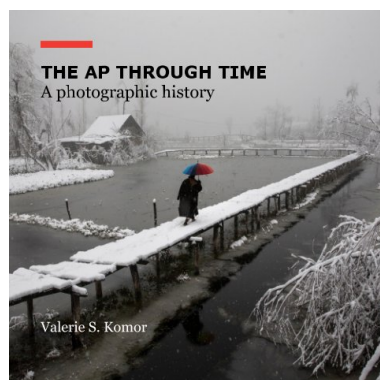
AP store for 175th, vintage merchandise



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.

Click [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 - Aug. 16, 2021



By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, Aug. 16, the 228th day of 2021. There are 137 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 16, 1977, Elvis Presley died at his Graceland estate in Memphis, Tennessee, at age 42.

On this date:

In 1777, American forces won the Battle of Bennington in what was considered a turning point of the Revolutionary War.

In 1812, Detroit fell to British and Native American forces in the War of 1812.

In 1861, President Abraham Lincoln issued Proclamation 86, which prohibited the states of the Union from engaging in commercial trade with states that were in rebellion — i.e., the Confederacy.

In 1954, Sports Illustrated was first published by Time Inc.

In 1962, the Beatles fired their original drummer, Pete Best, replacing him with Ringo Starr.

In 1977, a judge in New York ruled that Renee Richards, a transgender woman, had the right to compete in the U.S. Open without having to pass a sex chromosome test. (In the opening round of the Open, Richards lost to Virginia Wade in straight sets, 6-1, 6-4).

In 1978, James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., told a Capitol Hill hearing he did not commit the crime, saying he'd been set up by a mysterious man called "Raoul."

In 1987, 156 people were killed when Northwest Airlines Flight 255 crashed while trying to take off from Detroit; the sole survivor was 4-year-old Cecelia Cichan (SHEE'-an).

In 1991, Pope John Paul II began the first-ever papal visit to Hungary.

In 2002, terrorist mastermind Abu Nidal reportedly was found shot to death in Baghdad, Iraq; he was 65.

In 2014, Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon declared a state of emergency and imposed a curfew in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson, where police and protesters repeatedly clashed in the week since a Black teenager was shot to death by a white police officer.

In 2018, Aretha Franklin, the undisputed "Queen of Soul," died of pancreatic cancer at the age of 76.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama, on a Midwest bus tour, implored Iowans during a stopover in Peosta to share ideas with him about how leaders could give an economic jolt to the nation's heartland. Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and French President Nicolas Sarkozy, meeting in Paris, called for greater economic discipline and unity among European nations but declined to take immediate financial measures.

Five years ago: Simone Biles captured her fourth gold of the Rio Games with an electric performance in the floor exercise. Political commentator and TV host John McLaughlin, 89, died in Washington, D.C.

One year ago: A riot was declared in Oregon's biggest city as protesters demonstrated again outside a law enforcement building in Portland; officers used crowd control munitions to disperse protesters who they said had thrown rocks, glass bottles and other objects at officers. House Democrats demanded that leaders of the U.S. Postal Service testify at an emergency oversight hearing on mail delays, amid concerns that the Trump White House was trying to undermine the agency as states expanded mail-in voting options. California's Death Valley recorded a temperature of 130 degrees amid a blistering heat wave, the third-highest temperature ever measured.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Ann Blyth is 93. Actor Gary Clarke is 88. Actor Julie Newmar is 88. Actor-singer Ketty Lester is 87. Actor John Standing is 87. College Football Hall of Famer and NFL player Bill Glass is 86. Actor Anita Gillette is 85. Movie director Bruce Beresford is 81. Actor Bob Balaban is 76. Ballerina Suzanne Farrell is 76. Actor Lesley Ann Warren is 75. Rock singer-musician Joey Spampinato is 73. Actor Marshall Manesh is 71. Actor Reginald VelJohnson is 69. Former TV host Kathie Lee Gifford is 68. R&B singer J.T. Taylor is 68. Movie director James Cameron is 67. Actor Jeff Perry is 66. Rock musician Tim Farriss (INXS) is 64. Actor Laura Innes is 64. Singer Madonna is 63. Actor Angela Bassett is 63. Actor Timothy Hutton is 61. Actor Steve Carell (kuh-REHL') is 59. Former tennis player Jimmy Arias is 57. Actor-singer Donovan Leitch is 54. Actor Andy Milder is 53. Actor Seth Peterson is 51. Country singer Emily Robison (The Chicks) is 49. Actor George Stults is 46. Singer Vanessa Carlton is 41. Actor Cam Gigandet is 39. Actor Agnes Bruckner is 36. Singer-musician Taylor Goldsmith (Dawes) is 36. Actor Cristin Milioti is 36. San Diego Padres pitcher Yu Darvish is 35. Actor Shawn Pyfrom is 35. Country singer Ashton Shepherd is 35. Actor Okieriete Onaodowan is 34. Country singer Dan Smyers (Dan & Shay) is 34. NHL goalie Carey Price is 34. Actor Kevin G. Schmidt is 33. Actor Rumer Willis is 33. Actor Parker Young is 33. Rapper Young Thug is 30. Actor Cameron Monaghan is 28. Singer-pianist Greyson Chance is 24.

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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