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Connecting
September 28, 2021

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The offices of Associated Press Television News: The Interchange building near Hampstead Road Locks on the Regents Canal, England, once part of a huge rail to canal interchange. Photo/David P. Howard via Wikimedia Commons.

Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this Sept. 28, 2021,

Today's Connecting brings you the intriguing history of **AP Television News**, the video division of The Associated Press, that provides many of the world's broadcasters with a round-the-clock continuous feed of news, sports, entertainment and feature video content.

Our colleague **Brad Kalbfeld**, who was instrumental in various aspects of AP's video news operations for more than 20 years, is the author of the lead story and we thank him for his efforts.

Video is a major component of the AP's budget – providing about a third of total AP revenue. And AP Television News was where the next president and CEO of the AP (effective Jan. 1, 2022), **Daisy Veerasingham**, got her start with AP 17 years ago as a sales director in London.

In a recent interview, Veerasingham said live video is a "core foundation" for the AP and that equipping its journalists to shoot and edit from the field is among her top objectives.

Here's to a great day ahead – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

Entry into video – a move critical in securing AP's future



Nigel Baker (left), and Stephen Claypole in the APTV control room at the AP's London bureau, 1997. Claypole was APTV's managing director, and, at the time APTV launched in 1994, Baker was associate editor. (AP Photo/Corporate Archives)

Brad Kalbfeld (Email) - November 13, 1994: 4 a.m. In a dimly lit control room in the AP bureau on Norwich Street in London, a group of AP executives watch a countdown on a video monitor. Once the count reaches zero, the screen goes to black, then up comes video -- exclusive video -- of a 12-barrel rocket launcher called "Orkan" deployed in Bosnia. The parts for the launcher came from Iraq and Iran.

It was the first feed of the APTV Global Video Wire, and it was the culmination of a years-long strategic initiative to secure AP's future by getting it into video.

The executives in the control room included Stephen Claypole, managing director and chief executive of APTN; Jim Williams, AP's vice president and director of Broadcast Services; Pat O'Brien, AP's senior vice president and chief financial officer; Nigel Baker,

running APTV's daily news operation; and me. We were but a small contingent of the army of people who had worked to make AP video a reality.

At the head of that army was President and CEO Lou Boccardi. "Winning board approval to start APTV was a life-changing event for AP," he says.

AP had made halting efforts to get into video before, always in the context of increasing revenue and gaining market share in television. Those attempts began in 1947, when TV news was in its infancy. AP produced a newsreel service for several months before deciding that there wasn't yet enough demand.

Television in the United States underwent explosive growth in the decades that followed, but AP's television services were limited to the Broadcast wire, a color slide service called PhotoColor, and, for the biggest stations, the A-wire. In the late 70s, Broadcast Vice President Roy Steinfort made enhancing AP's place in television, where UPI was already strong, a priority. Broadcast studied the cost of creating a domestic video newsfeed, but found the costs too high, and held unsuccessful talks with CBS in the mid-80s on a joint venture to cover international news in video.

By then, the satellite newsgathering revolution was occurring: video uplinks had become small enough and the supply of satellite space big enough that distributing video became affordable. One of the pioneering companies in that field was Conus Communications in Minneapolis, and the top editor there was an old local news colleague of Jim Hood, AP's deputy director of Broadcast Services.

AP and Conus did a deal to create a Washington video service, TV Direct, for U.S. television stations. It would use Conus cameras crews, video editing, and satellite transmission facilities. AP would provide the reporters, build a video infrastructure to connect key Washington venues to the Broadcast News Center, produce a daily set of television graphics, and handle sales and contract administration.



AP Broadcast Senate Correspondent Louise Schiavone does a TV Direct stand-up report in front of the U.S. Capitol as Conus executive producer Joe Benton looks on.



TV Direct graphics artists Ann Bobarsky (left) and Lely Yashar producing images on launch day in 1986.

It launched in 1986, and with it, we created AP's first cadre of full-time multimedia reporters: Bob Moon at the White House, Louise Schiavone at the Senate, and Mary Belton at the House. Each of them did daily video and audio reports and wrote Broadcast wire copy. Initially, the video reports were correspondent standups -- like a radio on-scene report, but on camera -- with no sound bites or cover video. We soon hired an AP video producer and video editor and created full reporter packages. We covered the 1988 conventions, traveled with President Reagan, and covered such major stories as the Iran-Contra affair and Soviet leader Gorbachev's visit to Washington in 1987. We went to Moscow with Reagan in 1988 and provided full video coverage.

By the early 1990s, the flaw in the joint venture -- shared editorial control -- had become apparent, as did the limited market for Washington-only video. We had the clear sense that the project was holding us back from more ambitious plans.

Williams and his team -- Daryl Staehle, head of sales and marketing; Lee Perryman, head of technology products; Greg Groce, head of administration; and me, Broadcast's managing editor -- had gained valuable experience in video production, technology, and sales. We had spun off the graphics service into the world's first online television graphics library, AP GraphicsBank, which became an instant success, upending the satellite-delivered graphics business. If graphics could be delivered over the internet, how far behind would video be? And if video became ubiquitous, and

newspapers began integrating it into their websites, how would AP fare if we didn't have any?

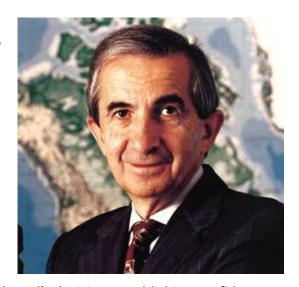
It was an entirely different question from the previous incremental efforts to boost revenue and compete with UPI. Boccardi, O'Brien, and Williams concluded that having a video component was essential to AP's success in the 21st century.

The question was where to start. The domestic market was saturated: CNN and the TV networks provided video news feeds. The international market looked slightly less daunting. There were two major players: Visnews (soon to be Reuters TV) was on top, with Worldwide Television News (WTN, which ABC had purchased from UPI) second. If we got a toehold, AP's breadth and quality could help us compete with and perhaps overtake the two big players.

To provide the detailed research and action plan, Williams assigned Perryman to orchestrate a department-wide project to conduct market research and write a business plan.

It would be financially complex, so O'Brien's involvement in every aspect of the planning and execution of the project was essential; Boccardi calls him "a pillar" to the effort. The Boston Consulting Group conducted market research. There were visits to key broadcasters on every continent. A phone bank of multilingual researchers called television newsrooms around the world to ascertain their needs and their assessments of how the current services were performing.

The strategy would require a significant capital investment, and it would take a few years for the new service to break even, but AP's long-term health was on the line. Boccardi set about describing the stakes -- and AP's ability to meet the challenge -- to the board of directors. "I recall one board meeting where I said (if I may paraphrase myself), 'If we don't do this now, the people sitting in this room a decade from now in your chairs (and my chair) will be asking why they (that would be us) didn't do this back when they could have.' "



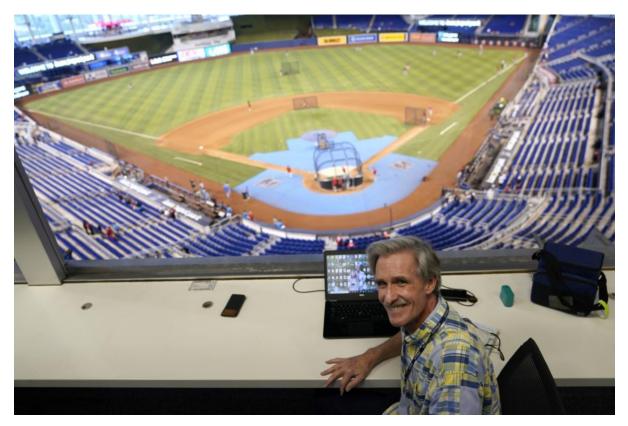
Boccardi saw a second critical factor in the board's decision: establishing confidence that AP could pull off such a big, costly, complex project. In a sense, the first years of his tenure had provided the foundation, by demonstrating that AP could be disciplined and do big things without losing its roots. The company was just completing its successful digitization of Photos, for example, so he felt AP had the board's confidence as he brought video to the table.

The grueling two-year effort -- all the research, the sales calls, the constant trans-Atlantic travel by O'Brien and Williams -- gave Boccardi the business plan needed to win board approval. It was achieved in 1994, and we launched on Nov. 13 of that year. Just four years later, AP purchased WTN from ABC, merging it with APTV and rechristening the service APTN.

By 2000, the AP annual report noted that APTN "serves more broadcast newsrooms than any of its competitors."

"I saw it as an essential piece of the AP," Boccardi recalls. "Not that we would abandon what got us here, but rather that there was a market opening and we could move into it. It was hard to see great growth ahead on the print side. Events have validated that vision. President and CEO Gary Pruitt told me the other day that video represents about a third of our revenue now. It is not hard to conclude that we'd be a much-diminished outfit without it."

New-member profile: Steve Wine



A photo from the last game I covered – Marlins vs. Reds on Aug. 29. Photo by the AP's Lynne Sladky.

Steve Wine (Email) - I'm enjoying the adjustment to retirement after concluding my 37-year career with the AP on Sept. 1. I worked in Omaha in 1984-87, and then for 34 years as a Miami sports writer. In almost every way I finished my career a better reporter and writer than when I started. There's no substitute for experience.

And yet ...

When I decided to turn in my laptop, I began to compile a list of the interview subjects who had yelled at me, and the first name in that chronology was Digger Phelps.

He was the basketball coach at Notre Dame when the Fighting Irish came to Creighton to play shortly after I had joined the AP. I covered the game, one of my biggest

assignments to that point, and Creighton won in a mild upset.

No writers from Indiana were at the game, and I was the only reporter at Phelps' postgame news conference, which took place in a hallway. Besides losing, he had lost his best player with an injury, so he was in a lousy mood and let me have it in response to my routine questions.

When we parted, I took a few steps, wheeled and stomped back toward him. All these years later, I still can't believe what I said next.

"Coach, I'm sorry you lost the game and one of your players got hurt, but it's not my fault. There's no reason to take out on me, and I don't appreciate it."

Pause.

"You know what?" Phelps said. "You're right."

He apologized, and we then had a pleasant chat that ended with a handshake. He gave me his business card and said to call him if I ever needed anything. But that's still the only conversation we've had, and in the decades of interviews that followed, I'm not sure I was ever again so vocal about calling a foul. Oh, to be young and brash.

Barbara Levin, wife of AP correspondent, dies at 92



Beth Levin (<u>Email</u>) – notified Connecting that her mother, Barbara, a subscriber to the newsletter, has died. She sent along the obituary and the photo above that shows her mother and her AP dad, Gene Levin, in India, probably about 1954, which was her father's first overseas assignment with the AP. Here is the obituary of her remarkable life.

Barbara Tigay Saposs Levin passed away in Denver, Colorado, on September 4, 2021. She was born in Katonah, New York, on February 10, 1929. Her father, David J. Saposs, was a labor historian, and her mother, Bertha Tigay Saposs, was a homemaker and French teacher. Barbara grew up in Washington, DC, and attended college at the Sorbonne in Paris as well as the University of Wisconsin. Living in New York, she married Associated Press correspondent Eugene (Gene) Levin in 1953; shortly thereafter, they moved to New Delhi, India, where their daughters Beth and Amy were born. Barbara was fascinated by Indian art and enjoyed trips to Asia. Sons Stephen and Walter were born in Rome, Italy, where Barbara and Gene were stationed for nine years, before living in Tokyo for a year and a half. When the family was transferred to London in 1967, Barbara enjoyed taking adult education classes, exploring England, and collecting fine china. Every summer, she and Gene would take the four children on train and car trips through Southern Europe, often accompanied by nephews and

nieces. After the family moved to Denver in 1974, Barbara became a volunteer for the Colorado Historical Society's (History Colorado's) Oral History Project and a docent at the Denver Art Museum. Over time, she filled many unpaid roles at the Denver Art Museum and served one year as president of the volunteers. She enjoyed classical music, opera, and plays, as well as her book club and history group. She was passionate about dogs, especially Golden Retrievers. She and Gene continued traveling around the world, where they shared their enthusiasm for art, history, and good food. Barbara loved entertaining friends, and her dinner parties were legendary. After Gene passed away in 1999, Barbara remained active, traveling with friends and her sister, Corinne Saposs Schelling. She especially loved the company of her grandchildren: Jamie, Rebecca (Becky), Erica, and Matthew Levin. She is also survived by her four children. Beth, Amy (Eric Crane), Stephen, and Walter (Alisa Richard) Levin; three step-grandchildren, Melissa (Carl) Sauter, Gerald (Jody Dawaliby) Crane, and Samantha Crane; and three great-grandchildren, Elizabeth, Caleb, and Isaac Sauter. Due to COVID, plans for a memorial remain uncertain. The family has requested that any contributions be sent to the Denver Art Museum to benefit the Asian Art department.

And here is an AP story on the death of Gene Levin in 1999:

DENVER (AP) _ Eugene Levin, who covered the terrorist attack at the 1972 Munich Olympics and other major stories during a quarter-century with The Associated Press, died Monday after a battle with cancer. He was 71.

(At right, 1994 photo of Gene Levin; courtesy AP Corporate Archives)

In three decades following World War II, Levin worked in Europe and Asia as a correspondent and editor reporting on international news stories.



He covered four U.S. presidents, four popes, three Olympic games, the four-year Vatican Ecumenical Council and countless other events ranging from international strife and politics to scientific conferences and movie scandals.

Levin, a Denver native, began his career as a part-time correspondent for The Denver Post and the AP.

He was drafted in 1945 and a year later began working for Stars and Stripes, the military newspaper. His job included coverage of the war crimes trial of top Nazi leaders in Nuremberg.

He worked in the Chicago Tribune's Paris bureau for three years and joined the AP in 1950, working in New York, New Delhi, Rome, Tokyo and London over the next 24 years.

Levin was supervising editor for the 1960 Olympic Games at Rome, the 1964 Olympic Games at Innsbruck and the 1972 Olympic Games at Munich.

He wrote the first news bulletins from Munich when Arab terrorists took Israeli athletes hostage. The siege ended with the deaths of 11 Israelis, German policemen and five terrorists.

Levin also reported on President Eisenhower's visits to Pakistan and Greece, President Kennedy's visit to Italy and President Nixon's visit to London.

In 1974, Levin retired and settled in Denver, where he assisted his father in an importing business until 1992. Levin also taught journalism courses part-time for 24 years at the University of Denver until 1997, when he retired again.

He came out of retirement briefly in 1993 to help the Denver AP bureau cover the Colorado visit of Pope John Paul II.

Levin is survived by his wife of 46 years, Barbara Tigay Saposs, two daughters, Beth and Amy, two sons, Stephen and Walter, and three grandchildren.

Your encounters with famous people on an elevator

Ken Giglio (Email) - Back in the late 1980s, when I was still a local radio reporter in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, California, I had the chance – two chances, actually – to spend some time with Jonathan Winters. The first meeting was notable for the ethical dilemma it provided; the second one was memorable for how hard my sides ached from all the laughter.

While working as news director for KIST and KMGQ in Santa Barbara, I was told one day that Winters would be coming into our production studio to do some recording. The story I got was that he needed to re-record two words of voiceover for a commercial he had recently done in Los Angeles. Yes, this was well before anyone had VO studios in their homes. He lived in nearby Montecito and we were told that he had been advised against traveling the two hours south to LA for just two words, because he was recovering from a fall in his garage. So his manager reached out to us. Sure enough, he came in, did a few takes in the studio and then came out and sat in the newsroom and started to chat with me. It was just the two of us. He told me that he hadn't actually fallen. He said nobody else knew about it, but he had, in fact, had a heart attack.

I sat there with my eyes and mouth wide open, realizing that Winters had just given me a scoop that in all good conscience I didn't think I could use. He didn't know I was the news director. He thought I was just some guy in the radio station. So, I kept that exclusive to myself.

As a side note, he also asked me why it was that he couldn't find work in the industry anymore. This was after his stint on Mork & Mindy. He clearly was upset at the

thought that Hollywood found him too old or difficult or unpopular to still get good gigs. I believe I told him that there was something seriously wrong with Hollywood if no one could find a good use for him.

A couple years later, I had moved up the coast to work at a station in San Luis Obispo County. As it turned out, the owner of that station was Winters' next-door neighbor. One day, he and his manager visited our station to talk with us about joining our morning show as a regular contributor! Needless to say, I was beyond ecstatic.

While the big wigs were talking business, he sat in our sales office and began to ad lib jokes, tell stories and recreate character voices he had used back in his Ohio radio days decades before. He must have sat with us for an hour, having conversations with imaginary characters, "reading" made-up news stories from blank pieces of paper, and just giving us the greatest off-the-cuff, impromptu, private comedy show.

I really did laugh until my sides hurt, and then some. Alas, he never did join our morning show; I'm not sure why.

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Dave Tomlin (Email) - This one happened in the elevator lobby of the AP building at 450 W. 33rd St., and the "celebrity" was ME. It was the day after AP was involved in a legal spat over sports credentials somewhere in Europe. APTN included a video comment from me in its coverage. So a building handyman stopped me as I arrived for work and said with great excitement in heavily accented English, "Hey you. I know you! I saw you last night on Albanian Television." Terrific, I thought as I headed upstairs, my 15 seconds of fame was yesterday. In Albania.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Jeff Barnard - jbarnardgp@gmail.com

Linda Sargent - lindasgt@swbell.net

Stories of interest

Portland Newsroom Postpones Newscasts for Onthe-Job Stress Seminar (Newsweek)

BY MEGHAN ROOS

A television news station in Portland preempted its planned news programming on Monday so newsroom staff members could participate in a stress and trauma management seminar.

The decision to take a break from the day's news and focus on mental health came at a time when many journalists across the country have left their jobs, citing burnout amid the speed and persistence of the industry as news events such as the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the 2020 election cycle, the demand for an end to systemic racism and more captured the attention of local, national and international audiences.

Mike Warner, a photojournalist with the Portland-based KATU news station, tweeted a reminder to audiences Sunday night that the station's typical Monday programming would not proceed as scheduled.

Read more here.

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Anderson Cooper's son, Wyatt, is out of luck: Dad doesn't believe in big inheritances (Los Angeles Times)

BY CHRISTIE D'ZURILLA

CNN's Anderson Cooper does not worry much about money — and he's definitely not worried about leaving a "pot of gold" to his son.

That's right: Just as mom Gloria Vanderbilt did with him, Cooper is not planning to leave an inheritance to Wyatt Morgan Cooper, the 17-month-old son he shares with former partner Benjamin Maisani.

"I don't believe in passing on huge amounts of money. I don't know what I'll have. I'm not that interested in money," Cooper said on Saturday's "Morning Meeting" podcast, speaking with the financial insouciance of someone whose CNN contract reportedly delivers in the low eight figures annually.

"I don't intend to have some sort of pot of gold for my son. ... I'll go with what my parents said, which is, college will be paid for and then you gotta get on it."

Read more here.

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Press freedom groups want Seattle officers identified (AP)

By MARTHA BELLISLE

Seattle (AP) — Twenty-five media and transparency groups are asking the Washington Supreme Court to allow the release of the names of the Seattle police officers who attended events in Washington D.C. on Jan. 6 — the day of the insurrection.

The Reporters Committee for the Freedom of the Press and the news organizations filed an amicus brief Friday asking the court to deny an injunction filed by the officers that seeks to block the release of public records that identify the officers.

Police officers "are public servants who, when on-duty, wield tremendous power to detain, arrest, jail, and, in extreme circumstances, employ deadly force in connection with their duties," the groups said.

"Without access to officer names, the public has no insight into whether certain officers have been the subject of multiple misconduct investigations or whether police oversight boards are effectively evaluating and responding to repeated misconduct complaints, particularly when such complaints are deemed unsubstantiated," the brief said.

Read more **here**. Shared by Adolphe Bernotas.



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.

Today in History - Sept. 28, 2021



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Sept. 28, the 271st day of 2021. There are 94 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 28, 1920, eight members of the Chicago White Sox were indicted for allegedly throwing the 1919 World Series against the Cincinnati Reds. (All were acquitted at trial, but all eight were banned from the game for life.)

On this date:

In 1066, William the Conqueror invaded England to claim the English throne.

In 1781, American forces in the Revolutionary War, backed by a French fleet, began their successful siege of Yorktown, Va.

In 1787, the Congress of the Confederation voted to send the just-completed Constitution of the United States to state legislatures for their approval.

In 1850, flogging was abolished as a form of punishment in the U.S. Navy.

In 1924, three U.S. Army planes landed in Seattle, having completed the first round-the-world trip by air in 175 days.

In 1928, Scottish medical researcher Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin, the first effective antibiotic.

In 1939, during World War II, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union signed a treaty calling for the partitioning of Poland, which the two countries had invaded.

In 1962, a federal appeals court found Mississippi Gov. Ross Barnett in civil contempt for blocking the admission of James Meredith, a Black student, to the University of Mississippi. (Federal marshals escorted Meredith onto the campus two days later.)

In 1991, jazz great Miles Davis died in Santa Monica, Calif., at age 65.

In 1995, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO chairman Yasser Arafat signed an accord at the White House ending Israel's military occupation of West Bank cities and laying the foundation for a Palestinian state.

In 2000, capping a 12-year battle, the government approved use of the abortion pill RU-486.

In 2019, voters in Afghanistan went to the polls to elect a president for the fourth time since a U.S.-led coalition ousted the Taliban regime in 2001; the vote was marred by violence, Taliban threats and widespread allegations of mismanagement. (After a series of delays, the country's independent election commission announced months later that Ashraf Ghani had won a second term as president.)

Ten years ago: The Obama administration formally appealed a federal appeals court ruling striking down a key provision of President Barack Obama's health care law requiring Americans to buy health insurance or pay a penalty. (The U.S. Supreme Court later upheld the individual mandate.)

Five years ago: In a resounding rebuke, Democrats joined with Republicans to hand Barack Obama the first veto override of his presidency, voting overwhelmingly to allow families of 9/11 victims to sue Saudi Arabia in U.S. courts for its alleged backing of the attackers. Israeli statesman Shimon Peres, 93, died of complications from a stroke.

One year ago: The worldwide death toll from the coronavirus pandemic topped 1 million, according to a count by Johns Hopkins University. The University of Notre Dame's president, the Rev. John I. Jenkins, apologized for not wearing a mask at a White House Rose Garden ceremony for Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett after pictures surfaced that showed him shaking hands and sitting shoulder-to-shoulder with people without one. Northern California's wine country was on fire, as strong winds fanned flames, destroying homes and prompting orders for nearly 70,000 people to be evacuated. Brayden Point scored his playoff-best 14th goal and the Tampa Bay Lightning beat the Dallas Stars 2-0 to win the Stanley Cup and finish off a postseason that was staged nearly entirely in quarantine because of the pandemic.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Brigitte Bardot is 87. Actor Joel Higgins is 78. Singer Helen Shapiro is 75. Actor Vernee Watson is 72. Movie writer-director-actor John Sayles is 71. Rock musician George Lynch is 67. Zydeco singer-musician C.J. Chenier (sheh-NEER') is 64. Actor Steve Hytner is 62. Actor-comedian Janeane Garofalo (juh-NEEN' guh-RAH'-fuh-loh) is 57. Country singer Matt King is 55. Actor Mira Sorvino is 54. TV personality/singer Moon Zappa is 54. Actor-model Carre Otis is 53. Actor Naomi Watts is 53. Country singer Karen Fairchild (Little Big Town) is 52. Singer/songwriter A.J. Croce is 50. Country singer Mandy Barnett is 46. Rapper Young Jeezy is 44. World Golf Hall of Famer Se Ri Pak is 44. Actor Peter Cambor is 43. Writer-producer-director-actor Bam Margera is 42. Actor Melissa Claire Egan is 40. Actor Jerrika Hinton is 40. Neosoul musician Luke Mossman (Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats) is 40. Pop-rock singer St. Vincent is 39. Comedian/actor Phoebe Robinson is 37. Rock musician Daniel Platzman (Imagine Dragons) is 35. Actor Hilary Duff is 34. Actor Keir Gilchrist 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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