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**Connecting**  
October 29, 2021

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning on this Oct. 29, 2021,

We bring sad news of the death of **Elias "Ely" Antar**, whose 42-year career with The Associated Press included Cairo, Beirut, Paris, back to Cairo where he was chief of bureau, and to London where he was with AP-Dow Jones until he retired in 2002. He died Oct. 24 in London after a brief illness. He was 83.

It took an AP village to bring you the story of his death – to me, one of the magical and most rewarding parts of Connecting. Without that teamwork, Ely's death would have not generally been known and so well covered. And placed into the AP Archives, as happens with each issue of the newsletter.

Our thanks to colleague **Claude Erbsen** - a retired AP vice president who worked with Antar for many years - for his work in alerting AP and Connecting to Ely's death, gathering information on his career, talking with his wife Mona, and writing the story that leads today's issue; **Valerie Komor** and **Francesca Pitaro** of AP Corporate Archives for gathering background information and photos; **John Daniszewski**, vice president for standards, and **Zeina Karam**, AP news director for Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, for sharing a wonderful story by Ely that appeared in 1969 in *Aramco World*. And, Ely's daughter **Nicole Antar** for sharing this recent image (above) of Ely.



Our colleague **Reed Saxon** ([Email](#)) wrote with thanks for Thursday's Connecting story on Noah Berger and his in-depth background on wildfires and corporate photography. But, he said, it could use a little note at the bottom, saying that Berger and nine other AP staff and freelance photographers indeed won the [Breaking News Pulitzer](#) in 2021 for events associated with the death of George Floyd.

Have a great weekend – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

## Ely Antar – longtime AP journalist and AP-Dow Jones executive – dies at 83



Ely Antar at km 101 cease fire talks in 1973.

**Claude Erbsen (Email)** - Elias "Ely" Antar, a longtime AP newsman and bureau chief in the Middle East who became a key executive of AP-Dow Jones, died Oct. 24 in London after a brief illness. He was 83.

A seasoned and multilingual reporter with an encyclopedic knowledge of the Middle East, Ely served in Cairo, Beirut and Paris starting in 1960. He was Cairo COB from

1977 to 1980 when he moved to London to play a critical role in building AP's joint venture with Dow Jones & Co. providing economic and financial news services outside the United States. He remained in the position until his retirement in 2002.

A native of Cairo, Ely had a summer job at the Cairo AP bureau in 1960 while studying mechanical engineering in college, and had been planning a career in that field, when "he fell in love with journalism," his wife Mona recalls.

He covered the 1973 war between Israel and Egypt (the so-called Yom Kippur War) and the "Kilometer 101" front line ceasefire negotiations between Israeli and Egyptian commanders at a roadside marker just over 100 kilometers from Cairo, on the road between the Egyptian capital and the Suez Canal. At the time the Israelis had countered Egypt's attack, crossed the Suez, surrounded the Egyptian army, and were rapidly approaching Cairo.

Subsequently he was part of the press contingent that accompanied Egyptian president Anwar Sadat on his historic 1977 visit to Israel, the first official visit by an Arab head of state since the founding of Israel.

Former colleagues at AP and Dow Jones recall his irrepressible sense of humor, which he often used to defuse tense situations.



**Ely Antar, center, executive director of international business development for Dow Jones Newswires, retired in London in 2002. Celebrating with him are, from left: Vice President of Dow Jones Newswires Michael Bergmeijer, Antar's wife Mona, Antar, Vice President and Director of World Services Claude E. Erbsen, and President of Dow Jones Newswires Paul Ingrassia. (AP Photo)**

Now-retired longtime Chief of Middle East Services Nick Ludington said, "Ely was a distinguished representative for The AP, a gentleman of the old school."

He was also a voracious reader, and a life-long jazz enthusiast with a special predilection for the Modern Jazz Quartet, even though he had never attended an MJQ concert until Hedy and I surprised him with a visit to the Blue Note in Greenwich Village where they played during one of his visits to New York.

In addition to his wife Mona, he is survived by a daughter, Nicole, a son, Nadim, and two grandchildren.

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## Dinner At When?

*Or how a switch in time saved...ah...seven.*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Zeina Karam ([Email](#)), AP news director for Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, shared via our colleague John Daniszewski this story by Ely that appeared in 1969 in Aramco World.

**Written by Elias Antar**

It was certainly time for a change.

For many years Saudi Arabia had seven different systems of keeping time. Then, about a year ago, the kingdom decided it was time to choose a single system and what is expected to be a long—and time-consuming—transition period began. In the meantime old timers from Jiddah to Dhahran began to rehash all the old time-worn stories about the problems that the kingdom's whimsical time keeping systems used to cause.

The basis of all time keeping in Saudi Arabia used to be Arabic time, the traditional method of telling the hour. Geared to the sun, it was very simple: every day at sunset you simply adjusted your watch to 12 o'clock—12 midnight, that is. If everybody had done it, there would have been no problem.

But then, unfortunately, some nameless foreigner introduced western sun time. This, in its way, was also simple. Every day at sunset, you set your watch to read 6 o'clock instead of 12 o'clock. Western sun time was probably devised so members of the foreign community could keep some sort of relationship with the time zones of their home countries although local wits say it was because the British Embassy couldn't bear the thought of serving afternoon tea at 11 o'clock.

Read more [here](#).

## The Lipman Dialogues: Kathy Gannon

**Columbia Journalism School**

On Wednesday, Columbia's Lipman Center for Journalism and Civil Rights was joined by Kathy Gannon, AP news director for Afghanistan and Pakistan, for its inaugural

Lipman Dialogue. Click [here](#) to view.

Gannon was the only Westerner allowed into Kabul by the Taliban in the weeks before the U.S. invasion. She was seriously wounded, and watched her AP photographer friend Anja Niedringhaus die in an attack while covering elections in Afghanistan. Gannon has written about human rights and rights for women in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Founded in 2017, the Ira A. Lipman Center at Columbia University supports, funds and produces journalism focused on civil and human rights. Our objective is to further journalism's capacity to diminish human inequality by shedding light upon the ways in which it is perpetuated. The Lipman Dialogues are part of that mission. They are succinct, timely discussions with people at the center of issues relating to civil and human rights.

## Dealing with Marty Crutsinger from 'the other side'

**Malcolm Barr** ([Email](#)) - Re Marty Crutsinger, a message from the "other side." During the 1980s and into the mid-1990s, I had almost daily dealings with Marty as News Director, U.S. Department of Commerce. My personal e-mail to him (see below) says it all, I guess:

" It was a pleasure doing business with you in the Commerce Department newsroom, Marty! Congratulations on your upcoming retirement after 50 years at the AP. Stay well, and enjoy! Malcolm Barr Sr."

My decade with the AP ended in 1969 in Washington following the strike. I entered the fedgov through the doors of the U.S. Senate (Press Secretary to U.S. Sen. Hiram L. Fong (R-Hawaii), then cruised through three government departments (Labor, Justice and Commerce) where one memorable moment came in 1980 when at the National Press Club I launched the anti-crime dog McGruff on to the national scene. Shortly thereafter, I met Marty in the Commerce Department. These many years later, his is the only face I recall among the Commerce Department press corps which assembled in the 5th floor newsroom at least three times a week.

Marty's spot, as I remember, was front row, to my right, facing out.

Again, as you end your distinguished career with The Associated Press, good luck and good health, Marty. It was, indeed, my pleasure.

## Three Things I Discovered at My 50th College Reunion (Well, maybe four)



**Ed Tobias:** “I actually discovered four things at the reunion. The fourth is that I can still dance...sort of!”

**Ed Tobias** ([Email](#)) - My wife and I recently returned from a long weekend in upstate New York, where we attended my college reunion at

Ithaca College. It was a biggie — my 50th — and had been delayed a year due to COVID-19.

The sun was shining, and it felt like spring for the three days we were there, which is unusual for Ithaca, New York, in October. As students, we used to say there are only three seasons in Ithaca: winter, July, and August. The fact that we could walk the campus in shorts and golf shirts made the weekend extra special.

Of course, I don't walk, except for short distances using two canes and a Bioness L300 Go functional electronic stimulator to counter my foot drop; usually, I ride my lightweight scooter. While riding it around campus and in town, I discovered a few things I didn't learn in the classroom.



### ***Good friends will always be good friends***

I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised by the way my old friends treated me, but I was. Nobody seemed shocked by my mobility problems, nor did anyone express false concern or pity about my health. Instead, we picked up as if we had just returned from summer vacation, swapping stories and sharing inside jokes.

Some friends who knew about my MS went out of their way to try to make things easier for me. My buddy Bob, who lives near the college, had a group of us over for brunch and somehow managed to obtain a ramp to bridge three steep steps at the entrance to his home. I didn't use it, because it was too steep and narrow for me to walk or ride on. Bob understood immediately. He must've made a significant effort to obtain the ramp, but he didn't seem at all bothered that I didn't use it.

### **You can't always get there from here**

Some places we expect to be accessible, especially in a socially "enlightened" college town like Ithaca, may not be. Some of my classmates helped me in and out of a college reunion dinner venue that was barely accessible by lifting me — while still on my scooter — over a gully in order to reach the dining area. Why hadn't planners at the college realized that a series of steps as long and large as those in the first "Rocky" movie would be impossible for someone with limited mobility to handle?

### **But I still know where I'm going**

Even after 50 years and a lot of changes to the town, I can still find my way around pretty well. The McDonald's is still where I remembered it, on Route 13, several billion burgers later. I easily found the campus fire station on west Green Street, where I lived as a volunteer during my senior year. No GPS needed. And the State Diner is still on State Street, of course.

That diner, which used to be open 24/7, was the scene of many late-night meals of eggs, over light, hash browns, and coffee. It's still open seven days a week, but from 7



a.m. to 4 p.m. — sort of like me.

Despite the cognitive issues that many of us with MS face, it was reassuring to discover that I could still get around my college town without the help of Waze or my wife. It was disappointing to discover that accessibility isn't a given, but learning that old friendships don't disappear with time was priceless.

I think I already knew that, though.

(A version of this post first appeared as [my column](#) on the MS News Today website.)

## Mentors needed for San Quentin News

**John Eagan** ([Email](#)) - *retired AP staffer* - For the past 13 years, I have been a mentor/adviser for the inmate-produced San Quentin News ([sanquentinnews.com](http://sanquentinnews.com)).

I would like to invite other AP retirees and journalism pros who live in the San Francisco Bay Area to consider also volunteering. I'm 86 years old, and am slowing down, as you could clearly understand.

Working with the men in San Quentin is a remarkably interesting and rewarding activity. I and other volunteers have groomed dozens of talented, skilled journalists. The newspaper has won numerous awards, including the James Madison Award from the Society of Professional Journalists and five awards from the California News Publishers Association.

Current mentors/advisers include men and women, most retired but some still working in journalism.

The greatest need is for skilled and talented editors to work with the inmates.

If interested, please contact me at: Cell: 415.686.5761 or email: [johngator64@gmail.com](mailto:johngator64@gmail.com)

## A retirement party for Susan Clark

A retirement party for Susan Clark, honoring her 44 years of AP service, all in New York headquarters, was held Wednesday at Seamore's, Brookfield Place, in New York City. Attendees were required to adhere to the city's covid guidelines.

Susan retired on Sept. 30. Her email - [susanclark60@yahoo.com](mailto:susanclark60@yahoo.com)

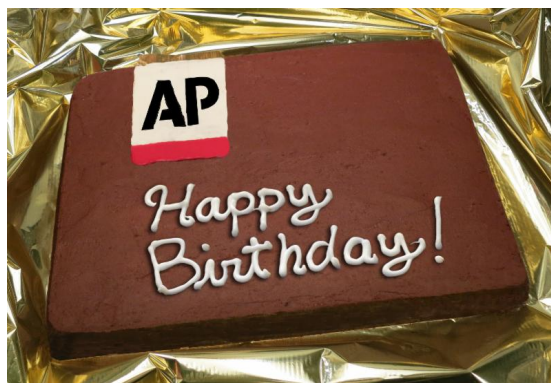


From left: Susan's son Brian, her husband Stewart, her former AP colleague Bobbie Seril, Susan and at far right, AP Senior Contracts Manager Julia Arcese.



From left: Lori Greene, Director of Procurement; Susan; Jeremy Carmel VP/ Treasurer and Ken Dale, CEO.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Warren Lerude - [wlerude@unr.edu](mailto:wlerude@unr.edu)

*On Saturday to...*

Cheryl Arvidson – [cheryl@carvidson.com](mailto:cheryl@carvidson.com)

Richard Chady – [rchady1@gmail.com](mailto:rchady1@gmail.com)

*On Sunday to...*

Gene Blythe - [gblythe43@bellsouth.net](mailto:gblythe43@bellsouth.net)

Betsy Brenner – [efbrenner@gmail.com](mailto:efbrenner@gmail.com)

Mike Graczyk – [migraczyk@aol.com](mailto:migraczyk@aol.com)

## Stories of interest

*In the middle of a crisis, Facebook Inc. renames itself  
**Meta*** (AP)

By BARBARA ORTUTAY

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Like many companies in trouble before it, Facebook is changing its name and logo.

Facebook Inc. is now called Meta Platforms Inc., or Meta for short, to reflect what CEO Mark Zuckerberg said Thursday is its commitment to developing the new surround-yourself technology known as the “metaverse.” But the social network itself will still be called Facebook.

Also unchanged, at least for now, are its chief executive and senior leadership, its corporate structure and the crisis that has enveloped the company.

Skeptics immediately accused the company of trying to change the subject from the Facebook Papers, the trove of leaked documents that have plunged it into the biggest crisis since it was founded in Zuckerberg’s Harvard dorm room 17 years ago. The documents portray Facebook as putting profits ahead of ridding its platform of hate, political strife and misinformation around the world.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***A Farewell to Readers, With Hope*** (New York Times)

By Nicholas Kristof

*Mr. Kristof was a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist and reporter for The Times for 37 years. He is now a candidate for governor of Oregon.*

My life was transformed when I was 25 years old and nervously walked into a job interview in the grand office of Abe Rosenthal, the legendary and tempestuous executive editor of The New York Times. At one point, I disagreed with him, so I waited for him to explode and call security. Instead, he stuck out his hand and offered me a job.

Exhilaration washed over me: I was a kid and had found my employer for the rest of my life! I was sure that I would leave The Times only feet first.

Yet this is my last column for The Times. I am giving up a job I love to run for governor of Oregon.

It’s fair to question my judgment. When my colleague William Safire was asked if he would give up his Times column to be secretary of state, he replied, “Why take a step down?”

So why am I doing this?

Read more [here](#). Shared by Dennis Conrad, Sibby Christensen.

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## ***MSNBC Producer Scorches the Earth in Stunning Resignation Letter: TV News is a ‘Cancer,’ Amplifies***

## 'Fringe Voices and Events' (MEDIAite)

By Rudy Takala

An MSNBC producer who resigned last month published a scathing resignation letter Monday in which she blasted the television news industry for blocking "diversity of thought and content" while amplifying "fringe voices and events ... all because it pumps up the ratings."

"I don't know what I'm going to do next exactly but I simply couldn't stay there anymore," former producer Ariana Pekary wrote in the piece published on her blog. "My colleagues are very smart people with good intentions. The problem is the job itself. It forces skilled journalists to make bad decisions on a daily basis."

Pekary said her colleagues sought content that would boost the network's ratings rather than inform viewers. "Context and factual data are often considered too cumbersome for the audience," Pekary said. "There may be some truth to that (our education system really should improve the critical thinking skills of Americans) – but another hard truth is that it is the job of journalists to teach and inform, which means they might need to figure out a better way to do that."

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 - Oct. 29, 2021



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Oct. 29, the 302nd day of 2021. There are 63 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 29, 2018, a new-generation Boeing jet operated by the Indonesian budget airline Lion Air crashed in the Java Sea minutes after takeoff from Jakarta, killing all 189 people on board; it was the first of two deadly crashes involving the 737 Max, causing the plane to be grounded around the world for nearly two years as Boeing worked on software changes to a flight-control system.

**On this date:**

In 1618, Sir Walter Raleigh, the English courtier, military adventurer and poet, was executed in London for treason.

In 1929, "Black Tuesday" descended upon the New York Stock Exchange. Prices collapsed amid panic selling and thousands of investors were wiped out as America's "Great Depression" began.

In 1956, during the Suez Canal crisis, Israel invaded Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. "The Huntley-Brinkley Report" premiered as NBC's nightly television newscast.

In 1957, former MGM studio boss Louis B. Mayer died in Los Angeles at age 75.

In 1960, a chartered plane carrying the California Polytechnic State University football team crashed on takeoff from Toledo, Ohio, killing 22 of the 48 people on board.

In 1987, following the confirmation defeat of Robert H. Bork to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court, President Ronald Reagan announced his choice of Douglas H. Ginsburg, a nomination that fell apart over revelations of Ginsburg's previous marijuana use. Jazz great Woody Herman died in Los Angeles at age 74.

In 1994, gunman Francisco Martin Duran fired more than two dozen shots from a semiautomatic rifle at the White House. (Duran was later convicted of trying to assassinate President Bill Clinton and was sentenced to 40 years in prison.)

In 1998, Sen. John Glenn, at age 77, roared back into space aboard the shuttle Discovery, retracing the trail he'd blazed for America's astronauts 36 years earlier.

In 2004, four days before Election Day in the U.S., Osama bin Laden, in a videotaped statement, directly admitted for the first time that he'd ordered the September 11 attacks and told Americans "the best way to avoid another Manhattan" was to stop threatening Muslims' security.

In 2012, Superstorm Sandy slammed ashore in New Jersey and slowly marched inland, devastating coastal communities and causing widespread power outages; the storm and its aftermath were blamed for at least 182 deaths in the U.S.

In 2015, Paul Ryan was elected the 54th speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

In 2017, all but 10 members of the Houston Texans took a knee during the national anthem, reacting to a remark from team owner Bob McNair to other NFL owners that "we can't have the inmates running the prison."

Ten years ago: A Taliban suicide bomber rammed a vehicle loaded with explosives into an armored NATO bus on a busy thoroughfare in Kabul, killing 17 people, including 12 Americans. A “white Halloween” storm with record-setting snowfalls brought down trees across the northeastern U.S., knocking out power to millions; 39 deaths were blamed on the weather. Joe Paterno broke Eddie Robinson’s record for victories by a Division I coach with No. 409 in Penn State’s sloppy 10-7 win over Illinois.

Five years ago: Hillary Clinton lashed out at the FBI’s handling of a new email review, leading a chorus of Democratic leaders who declared the bureau’s actions just days before the election were “unprecedented” and “deeply troubling.”

One year ago: The Commerce Department estimated that the U.S. economy grew at a sizzling 33.1% annual rate in the July-September quarter — by far the largest quarterly gain on record — rebounding from an epic plunge in the spring, when the coronavirus closed businesses and threw tens of millions out of work. Six people were dead and millions were without power after Hurricane Zeta tore across the South, leaving shattered buildings and thousands of downed trees as it weakened to a tropical storm. An attacker identified as an Islamic extremist who had recently arrived from Tunisia stabbed three people to death at a church in the French city of Nice before being seriously wounded by police. The Vatican ended Pope Francis’ general audiences with the public amid a surge in coronavirus cases in Italy and a confirmed infection at the previous week’s encounter.

Today’s Birthdays: Former Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is 83. Country singer Lee Clayton is 79. Rock musician Denny Laine is 77. Singer Melba Moore is 76. Actor Richard Dreyfuss is 74. Actor Kate Jackson is 73. Country musician Steve Kellough (Wild Horses) is 65. Actor Dan Castellaneta (TV: “The Simpsons”) is 64. Comic strip artist Tom Wilson (“Ziggy”) is 64. Actor Finola Hughes is 62. Singer Randy Jackson is 60. Rock musician Peter Timmins (Cowboy Junkies) is 56. Actor Joely Fisher is 54. Rapper Paris is 54. Actor Rufus Sewell is 54. Actor Grayson McCouch (mih-KOOCH’) is 53. Rock singer SA Martinez (311) is 52. Actor Winona Ryder is 50. Actor Tracee Ellis Ross is 49. Actor Gabrielle Union is 49. Actor Trevor Lissauer is 48. Olympic gold medal bobsledder Vonetta Flowers is 48. Actor Milena Govich is 45. Actor Jon Abrahams is 44. Actor Brendan Fehr is 44. Actor Ben Foster is 41. Rock musician Chris Baio (Vampire Weekend) is 37. Actor Janet Montgomery is 36. Actor India Eisley is 28.

## 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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