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## Connecting December 23, 2021

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**Debra Silimeo, long-time communications pro and former AP Radio staffer with Mark Hamrick on right, playing George.**



**Lisa Matthews, current NPC president from AP Washington with Sam Litzinger, retired CBS News Radio anchor, formerly of AP Radio.**

Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this Dec. 23, 2021,

**Mark Hamrick** as George Bailey. **Lisa Matthews** as Josephine the Angel. **Mike Hempen** in three roles of Ernie, Freddie, Tommie (Little Boy).

There's certainly an AP flavor to the cast for a new radio production of "It's a Wonderful Life" airing on more than 50 CBS Radio Network stations across the country this holiday season. Lisa and Mike are current AP Washington staffers.

**Mark Hamrick** ([Email](#)) – who plays both young and old George Bailey, the role originally held by Jimmy Stewart – shares that the production done by and at the National Press Club (where Lisa Matthews is this year's president and he is a former president and current Broadcast Committee Chair), in one day in a studio at the Club, helped by former CBS Radio News General Manager and former Club president **Mike Freedman**.

Veteran broadcasters **Irv Chapman**, **Dan Raviv** and **Sam Litzinger** are also featured prominently.

The Club posted the program to its website, The production runs over an hour. Click [here](#) to view.

We bring you more Christmas stories in today's edition. Connecting will take time off through the rest of the week and be with you again next week.

Have a wonderful holiday – and be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

## A Christmas Eve celebration when Pope Paul VI visits Holy Land

**Hal Buell** ([Email](#)) - One of my most memorable Christmas Eve celebrations reaches back to December, 1963. I was assigned to head up coverage of Pope Paul VI's forthcoming trip to the Holy Land. It was the first time a Pope would leave Italy in 150 years. He would visit Biblical sites in Israel and Jordan, Jewish and Arab states legally at war, though in an armistice period.

The first contingent of AP staff arrived in Amman well before Christmas to set up the complicated news and photo coverage. Complicated? If the wind was at your back you could pitch a baseball from the AP setup in Jordanian Jerusalem into the setup in Israeli Jerusalem. But it took two days to get from one to the other. The single connection between divided Jerusalem was the Mandelbaum Gate. But that was a one-way trip. Either way. But no return permitted. To go back and forth one had to fly from Amman to Beirut, then from Beirut to Cyprus, then from Cyprus to Tel Aviv. And back the same way to Amman. Why the routing? Because neither side would accept flights from the "enemy." Israel would not accept flights from Arab countries, and Jordan would not accept flights from Israel.

But I digress. Back to Christmas Eve.

So ... it's Christmas Eve and the London Communications COB and I decide to rent a car and driver and go to Bethlehem to attend services celebrating the birth of Christ at the Church of the Nativity.

The drive was memorable. The night air was winter crisp, pure and fresh. A deep black sky offered the twinkle of uncounted stars so clear one could, it seemed, reach out and touch them. Shepherds really stood or sat here and there watching over their flocks. An occasional campfire flickered on a hillside. The road twisted and turned through the countryside. It seemed, for those moments, that only the engine's purr altered the illusion what otherwise was passage through a centuries-old Biblical landscape.

Alas, illusions are just that, illusions...and illusions often disappear with brutal suddenness.

Our driver made a sharp, nearly circular sweep around a hill and instantly we looked down on Bethlehem from a kind of helicopter view. A huge neon-lighted star mounted atop a building dominated the scene. Huge understates its size. Gigantic, perhaps, and shockingly vivid it was, with a long neon contrail flowing across the length of the roof. Across the bottom of the flowing contrail a large English phrase: Bethlehem Bar and Grill. Nearby a fleet of bus tops created a sweeping pattern of steel rectangles.

No shepherds here. No flickering stars, either.

We left the car and entered the The Church of Nativity. The actual birthplace is very small, a tiny grotto, closet-like in size, and room only for the priests that say Mass. A broadcast relays the Latin liturgy. Since we were late, we stood quietly at the edge of the gathered crowd and listened. Suddenly, a scuffle nearby captured our attention. We turned to see what it was, and a local nearby told us, "Not to worry...just a pick pocket...the police got 'im."

The ceremony we heard, but didn't see, ended. We found driver and car for the ride back to our hotel well ahead of what was surely to be a caravan of buses I slept all the way back to our hotel.

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## No list to Santa!



**Keith Myers** ([Email](#)) - Your story about Santa Claus made me think of a picture I made at Metro North Mall (in Kansas City, Mo.) probably in the 1980s. This little fella wasn't going to give up his Christmas list to Santa!

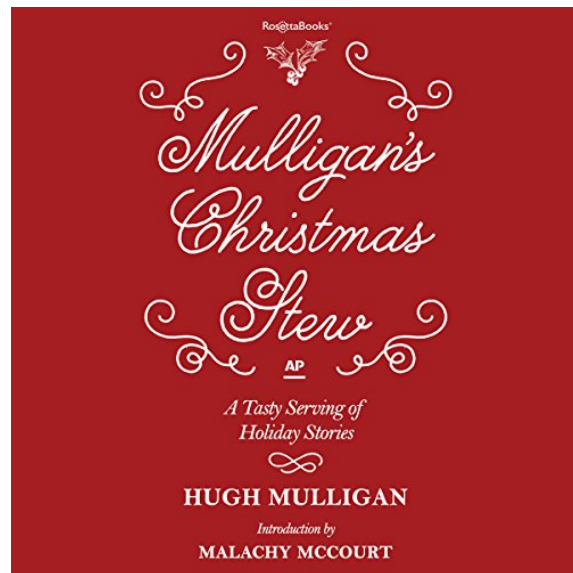
## Mulligan's Christmas Stew brings a holiday smile

**Andy Lippman** ([Email](#)) - I've spent this holiday season reading "Mulligan's Christmas Stew" a collection of columns the wonderful Mr. Mulligan wrote about the holiday. There is also a terrific oral history that Valerie Komor did with Hugh, in which he talks about his career and some of the places he went, people he met, and stories he covered. Valerie did a terrific job prepping for the interview and really got him going on,

and back on track when he skipped to another topic.

I had the book and just had never read it, and was thinking about Hugh when I found it on my bookshelf. Some of the columns repeat themselves because they go from 1956-1977. You can order the book on [Amazon](#) by the way.

For those of you that never met, or heard of him, Mulligan was a great feature writer and columnist. He held the coveted designation of AP Special Correspondent. He and I became friends over the course of my career, and I had him as a speaker at every stop I had as a chief of bureau. He had a stutter but by the end of his talk almost everyone was listening intently to whatever topic he was talking about.



And he always was kind to young reporters - and older ones and occasionally the reporter's parents. I once invited Hugh to dinner with my parent s- who loved Ireland and had visited many times. My dad liked Hugh so much that every St. Patrick's day, Hugh got a box of lemons from the Lippman family lemon tree in Paradise Valley, Arizona. He told us that he used them for his martinis while his wife used them in her baking.

Hugh came out once for the Kentucky Derby, and met one of our sports reporters - a woman from eastern Kentucky. They talked for awhile and Hugh finally exclaimed, "Jane, I'm putting you in my SOYT club."

"What's that," she asked.

"Stamp out young talent," he laughed.

His friendship and his memory are a gift that keeps on giving - especially this year after reading his book.

## Connecting mailbox

*How I wish I could have told Wayne Slater a story he wrote had shelf life of 40 years*

**Nancy Shulins** ([Email](#)) - "Death arrived in a big white Lincoln for Jimmy Six, king of the dope trade. It was 7 a.m. He hadn't even had time to put on his glittering fistful of finger rings."

Those words, written 40 years ago and stored verbatim somewhere in my brain, flashed across my mind as I read in Tuesday's Connecting that the author of that well-crafted lead had been killed in a car crash.

Although I never crossed paths with Wayne Slater, I felt a keen sense of loss. To say I was a fan is putting it mildly. The Jimmy Six story had been my introduction to Slater's work, five years into my AP career. I immediately printed it and added it to the file I reserved for the best of the best.

In workshops and seminars for AP staff and member newspapers, I often cited that story as a shining example of journalistic alchemy: how through exceptional reporting, one writer unearthed the sort of visual detail that elevates a story about a lowly dope dealer into a true work of art.

As the late Jack Cappon, my longtime editor, liked to say, true color in a story is detail, not adjectives. Slater's story is filled with color, every bit of it rendered from detail.

"On the street," Slater wrote of James Window Lewis, whose nickname came from the sixes he rolled as a gambler, "he was all flash and dazzle, a fancy dude with precious stones in his teeth, gold chains jangling from his wrists and throat, riding in a cream-colored Chrysler Imperial."

He kept his heroin in "brightly colored children's balloons from the dime store. He called them his Easter eggs and hid them outside under trees in shallow holes in the lawn."

Jimmy Six "was six feet tall, 200 pounds, with a broad nose, a barrel chest and a slick black jettty of hair combed back on the sides of his head.

"In his closets he kept a rainbow of suits and broad-brimmed hats, and against a wall he arranged a clashing line of boots and shoes. Mostly, though, he loved to dress in white: a white suit, white tie, white Panama and show-white patent leather boots."

The man who police estimated pulled down between \$450,000 and \$1 million a year was shot twice in the chest, once in the stomach, Slater reported. "He stumbled after his assailants but collapsed and died on the second-floor balcony. He was wearing a plain blue robe soaked with blood. His rings were still on the table inside with his suits and boots and broad-brimmed hats."

All these years later, I can think of no other single story that taught me as much as Slater's profile of Rock Island, Illinois's Public Enemy No. 1.

How I wish I had written him a letter telling him so. How I wish I could tell him that a story he wrote early on in his career has had a shelf life of 40 years.

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## *Memories of trip to Tangiers*

**Tom Fenton (Email)** - Andrew Selsky's Tangier tale reminded me of a similar trip Ellie and I made a few years ago. After a late-night wedding in Sevilla, I was eager to visit Tangiers, having occupied the Tangier seat on Cables for a time. I was told that once upon a time the other end of that wire came ashore in Tangiers; hence the name.

With about two hours sleep, we drove to Algeciras and caught the ferry – one of the few people not on a guided tourist tour or local resident. Somewhat Like Andrew's experience, we were met on the dock by about 200 men in bath robes.

We struck out along the waterfront like we knew where we were going and little by little, our entourage grew smaller. After leaving the dock area we eventually got to a rather nice beach area fronted by a wide, four-lane boulevard. We lost the last of our followers by turning into a nice hotel. We had lunch on a balcony overlooking the boulevard and beach and did people watching over a leisurely meal.

The most amazing sight were the families that pulled up to park along the strand – often a mom, a couple of kids and a dad. Sometimes the men were dressed in speedos while the kids were in bathing suits that would seem normal anywhere. The women, however, sat on the beach clad from head to toe and watched the others play.

After the meal we got a hotel driver to show us the town and to deliver us to the dock in time for the late-afternoon ferry. We figured we could get by well in Spanish but the driver only had German; so, that was what we used for the rest of the afternoon. Apparently Spanish and Spaniards were not well thought of there. Apparently they are still sore at a Spanish occupation in the 1500s and then again after World War II.

The driver showed us Malcolm Forbes' house where he hosted a party for Elizabeth Taylor, the British pet cemetery, which he thought was a most unusual thing, and the center of town, the casbah, and the 15th Century ramparts. What struck in the old city center was on one of the narrow, ox-cart-wide streets, we met an oncoming car. Instead of backing up the two cars met bumper to bumper and laid on their horns for the longest time. Eventually the other guy backed up a block. I guess he realized he was dealing with a cab driver.

When we got back to Algeciras after two very long days, I wanted to go get bangers and mash in Gibraltar, but Ellie had had enough; so, we headed back to Sevilla. Always regret not seeing Gibraltar.

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## ***Why not speak in Portuguese?***

**Bruce Handler (Email)** – *in a note to Andrew Selsky* – I enjoyed your Morocco yarn. I had a similar experience.

It was 1972 or 1973, and I was on vacation with my first wife (also an AP alum) in Spain, when we saw that ferry to Tangier, Morocco, and decided to hop on.



When we got to the other side, we were surrounded by the usual port-district crowd of merchants, tourist guides, kids and -- who knows? -- drug dealers and slave traders.

"Hey, mister! You American? New York? Texas? Wanna see the market? You want hotel?" Naturally, we replied with the expectable, "Not now! Go away! Leave us alone!"

Then some guy yelled, "Why you come Morocco anyway? Maybe tonight someone kill you."

Ooops! Maybe that ferry trip wasn't such a great idea after all.

But the next day, we figured out how to make this problem go away. As my wife and I were living in Brazil at the time, we discovered that by smiling and conversing quietly with the pursuing throngs, we could provoke quizzical stares among the locals and eventually get them to disband -- if we did it in Portuguese!

"Volta amanhã, por favor. Ainda não resolvemos o nosso itinerário aqui no seu lindo país." ("Please come back tomorrow. We still haven't figured out what we want to see in your lovely country.")

Silence. Then, slowly, the people would walk away, looking for some other gringos to annoy.

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***This, my granddaughter, is a typewriter***



**Tom Eblen** ([Email](#)) shows his granddaughter, Nora Wynn, how to use a circa 1942 Remington Remette portable typewriter (a favorite of World War II correspondents) at his home in Lexington, Kentucky. The picture was taken by Tom's daughter (and Nora's aunt) Shannon Eblen, who was visiting from Philadelphia. Tom worked for the AP in Tennessee and Kentucky before moving on to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and Lexington Herald-Leader, from which he retired in 2019. He bought the typewriter on eBay many years ago. He said, "I love old manual typewriters, but have to admit I love my MacBook Pro much more."

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***Nick Ut traveling...in Antarctic***





Nick Ut ([Email](#)) - I travel to Antarctic in Chile, South America. Sending pictures of penguins and humpback whale.

## 'Nuts!': Gen. Anthony McAuliffe's legendary Bastogne retort

## Marc Lancaster WW2 on Deadline

When retired Gen. Anthony C. McAuliffe died in 1975, both the headline and the first sentence of his New York Times obituary prominently featured perhaps the most famous one-word sentence in United States history: "Nuts!"

The fact that McAuliffe rated a lengthy news obituary in the paper of record was attributable mostly to that single word, typed at his direction and handed to a perplexed German emissary on December 22, 1944 in besieged Bastogne, Belgium.

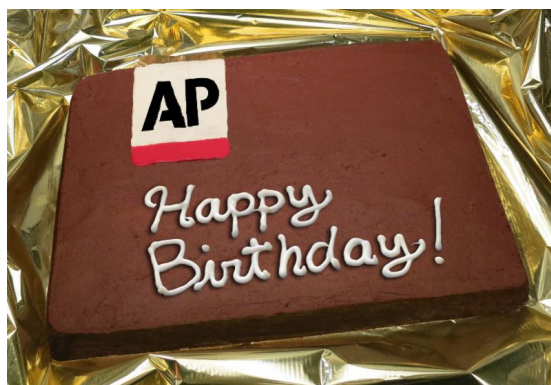


Now firmly entrenched in U.S. military lore, McAuliffe's show of defiance in the midst of the Battle of the Bulge was an immediate media sensation at the time -- though it took a few days for all the pieces to be assembled.

The first mention of the U.S. forces trapped in Bastogne rejecting a German surrender demand appeared in American newspapers on December 26 -- just as the Nazi stranglehold on the crossroads was beginning to break. It came courtesy of a delayed dispatch from Tom Yarbrough of The Associated Press with a Dec. 22 dateline.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Paul Albright.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Donna Bryson](#)

[Sergio Florez](#)

*On Friday to...*

[Bill Wertz](#)

*On Christmas Day, Saturday...*

[Ed Bell](#)

[Mike Cochran](#)

[Chris Connell](#)

[Roger Petterson](#)

[Anita Snow](#)

*On Sunday to...*

[Darrell Christian](#)

[Tom Cohen](#)

[Peggy Simpson](#)

## Stories of interest

### ***Kristof faces residency questions in Oregon governor's race*** (AP)

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Elections officials in Oregon are seeking more information to determine whether former New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof is eligible to run for governor.

Kristof announced his candidacy last October and on Monday officially filed paperwork to run as a Democrat.

Oregon Public Broadcasting reported that the Oregon Secretary of State's office on Tuesday asked Kristof's campaign for information to determine whether Kristof meets candidate residency requirements.

Oregon state law says candidates for governor must be state residents for at least three years before elections.

A legal opinion by lawyers working for Kristof said he has always considered Oregon his home, even though his job required him to live around the world. Kristof said he wants to run for governor in the state where he grew up to address problems like rural poverty and drug addiction.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Paul Albright.

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## ***Inland Foundation and Illinois Press Association Partner on Community News Grant Program***

SPRINGFIELD – The Inland Press Foundation is partnering with the Illinois Press Association to launch a grant program to help Illinois newspapers strengthen their vital local news reporting.

The Inland Foundation will begin accepting applications for the Community News Grant program from Illinois daily and nondaily newspapers on Jan. 3, 2022. The grants will be supported for two years.

The grants will fund newspaper reporting on critical topics such as schools and education, local government, health care, the environment, and infrastructure. They will cover half the cost of adding a reporter to a newspaper's staff. The newspaper will pay the remaining half of that salary.

To be eligible, publications must be bona fide daily or non-daily newspapers in Illinois who publish a minimum of 48 issues per year. They must have an average of at least 25% news content, with paid subscribers representing more than 50% of total circulation. The program will give special consideration to independent and family-owned newspapers.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Marc Wilson.

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## ***Edible cicadas, essential workers and other local news stories from 2021*** (Poynter)

**By: Kristen Hare**

I spent most of 2020 recording layoffs and closures. I did that in 2021, too, but there was a little more space to identify some of what local newsrooms and journalists were doing that worked.

Here are a few of my favorite stories from the year.

The LAT built space for communities to remember with a digital Día de Muertos altar

Three journalists at the Los Angeles Times created a digital space for their community that normally exists only in the physical world — a virtual Día de Muertos altar.

Fidel Martinez, Martina Ibáñez-Baldor and Vanessa Martínez “wanted to digitize the feeling that you get while visiting one of these altars,” Martinez said.

They hoped to get about 50 submissions. They got more than 1,000.

One lesson from the project: “You can do cool things for audiences and they’ll respond.”

Read more [here](#).

## The Final Word

### *Florida Woman Bites Camel - Some thoughts on the art of the newspaper lede.* (New Yorker)

By Calvin Trillin

It’s said that when James Thurber, as a young newspaper reporter, was told by an editor that his story’s first paragraph, what newspaper people might refer to as his lede, suffered from wordiness, he handed in a rewrite whose opening paragraph was, in its entirety, “Dead.”

There followed a second paragraph: “That’s what the man was when they found him with a knife in his back at 4pm in front of Riley’s saloon at the corner of 52nd and 12th streets.”

Like that editor, I admire those short, punchy ledes often employed by crime reporters, my longtime favorite being what Edna Buchanan wrote in the Miami Herald about an ex-con who became violent in the Church’s fried-chicken line and was shot dead by a security guard: “Gary Robinson died hungry.”

But I also admire the ambition of those long ledes which you sometimes see in the obituaries that appear in the New York Times—ledes whose first sentence manages to stuff the highlights of an entire lifetime in a clause between the decedent’s name and the fact that he has expired. For instance: “Thomas S. Monson, who as president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since 2008 enlarged the ranks of female missionaries but rebuffed demands to ordain women as priests and refused to alter church opposition to same-sex marriage, died on Tuesday at his home in Salt Lake City. He was 90.”

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





## 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 - Dec. 23, 2021



**By The Associated Press**

**Today is Thursday, Dec. 23, the 357th day of 2021. There are eight days left in the year.**

### **Today's Highlight in History:**

On Dec. 23, 1783, George Washington resigned as commander in chief of the Continental Army and retired to his home at Mount Vernon, Virginia.

### **On this date:**

In 1788, Maryland passed an act to cede an area "not exceeding ten miles square" for the seat of the national government; about two-thirds of the area became the District of Columbia.

In 1928, the National Broadcasting Company set up a permanent, coast-to-coast network.

In 1941, during World War II, American forces on Wake Island surrendered to the Japanese.

In 1948, former Japanese premier Hideki Tojo and six other Japanese war leaders were executed in Tokyo.

In 1954, the first successful human kidney transplant took place at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston as a surgical team removed a kidney from 23-year-old Ronald Herrick and implanted it in Herrick's twin brother, Richard.

In 1962, Cuba began releasing prisoners from the failed Bay of Pigs invasion under an agreement in which Cuba received more than \$50 million worth of food and medical supplies.

In 1968, 82 crew members of the U.S. intelligence ship Pueblo were released by North Korea, 11 months after they had been captured.

In 1972, a 6.2-magnitude earthquake struck Nicaragua; the disaster claimed some 5,000 lives.

In 1986, the experimental airplane Voyager, piloted by Dick Rutan (ruh-TAN') and Jeana (JEE'-nuh) Yeager, completed the first non-stop, non-refueled round-the-world flight as it returned safely to Edwards Air Force Base in California.

In 1997, a federal jury in Denver convicted Terry Nichols of involuntary manslaughter and conspiracy for his role in the Oklahoma City bombing, declining to find him guilty of murder. (Nichols was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.)

In 2001, Time magazine named New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani its Person of the Year for his steadfast response to the 9/11 terrorist attack.

In 2003, a jury in Chesapeake, Virginia, sentenced teen sniper Lee Boyd Malvo to life in prison, sparing him the death penalty.

Ten years ago: After days of stalemate and rancor, Congress approved a two-month renewal of payroll tax cuts for 160 million workers and unemployment benefits for millions; President Barack Obama immediately signed the bill into law. Two car bombers blew themselves up in Damascus outside the heavily guarded compounds of Syria's intelligence agencies, killing at least 44 people and wounding dozens more in a brazen attack on the powerful security directorates.

Five years ago: The United States allowed the U.N. Security Council to condemn Israeli settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem as a "flagrant violation" of international law; the decision to abstain from the council's 14-0 vote was one of the biggest American rebukes of its longstanding ally in recent memory. Actor and writer Carrie Fisher was transported to a Los Angeles hospital after suffering a severe medical emergency on an international flight; she died four days later at age 60.

One year ago: Pfizer said it would supply the U.S. government with an additional 100 million doses of its COVID-19 vaccine under a new agreement between the pharmaceutical giant and the Trump administration. Two new studies provided encouraging evidence that having had COVID-19 may offer some protection against future infections. After months of fighting the coronavirus, the Fire Department of New York began vaccinating its own members, starting with the front-line EMTs who had responded to more than 1 million emergency medical calls throughout New York City in 2020.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Ronnie Schell is 90. Former Emperor Akihito of Japan is 88. Actor Frederic Forrest is 85. Rock musician Jorma Kaukonen (YOR'-mah KOW'-kah-nen) is 81. Actor-comedian Harry Shearer is 78. U.S. Army Gen. Wesley K. Clark (ret.) is 77. Actor Susan Lucci is 75. Singer-musician Adrian Belew is 72. Rock musician Dave

Murray (Iron Maiden) is 65. Actor Joan Severance is 63. Singer Terry Weeks is 58. Rock singer Eddie Vedder (Pearl Jam) is 57. The former first lady of France, Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, is 54. Rock musician Jamie Murphy is 46. Jazz musician Irvin Mayfield is 44. Actor Estella Warren is 43. Actor Elvy Yost is 34. Actor Anna Maria Perez de Tagle (TAG'-lee) is 31. Actor Spencer Daniels is 29. Actor Caleb Foote 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.



**Paul Stevens**  
 Editor, Connecting newsletter  
[paulstevens46@gmail.com](mailto:paulstevens46@gmail.com)

