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## Connecting December 28, 2021

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this Dec. 28, 2021,

I hope your Christmas was merry and your holidays safe and happy.

Life can be cruel – and while most of us celebrated the holidays and the coming new year, the family of one of our Connecting colleagues was saying its goodbye to **Jim Puckett**, whose 41-year AP career was highlighted by his service to Kansas and Missouri broadcast members as the night broadcast supervisor in Kansas City,

Surrounded by the love of his wife and two daughters, Jim died at home after battling pancreatic cancer. We bring you a story on his death as our lead item.

Connecting reminds you to share your New Year’s resolutions for the coming year – 2022 is just four days away.

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

## Jim Puckett dies: Served as longtime AP night broadcast supervisor in Kansas City



**Jim Puckett in Kansas City bureau**

Jim Puckett, longtime Kansas City night broadcast supervisor who retired in 2010 after a 41-year career with The Associated Press, died on Christmas Day (Saturday) after a battle with pancreatic cancer. He was 76.

His wife Marsha said she and their two daughters, Diane and Sally, were with him when he passed away at their home in Grain Valley, Mo.

Puckett graduated from the broadcast sequence at the University of Missouri School of Journalism in 1967. He worked as a disc jockey and newsman in Columbia and Mexico, Mo., and served in Vietnam during a two-year stint in the U.S. Army. Among

his duties in Vietnam were writing short stories about GIs and sending them to local media back in the States.

Puckett was hired by the AP in 1969 in St. Louis, where he spent the next three years on the rewrite desk, covering spot news and doing feature writing. He transferred to his native Kansas City in 1972 to work fulltime on the broadcast desk.

A week after Puckett arrived in Kansas City, President Truman was hospitalized with an illness that led to his death the day after Christmas 1972. "During the Truman illness, we all were pressed into 'death watch' duty," Puckett recalled in an interview years later. "It was an exciting time in the bureau, and it showed me that a routine shift can become high-pressure in a second."

Kent Zimmerman, who served as news editor for much of Puckett's time in Kansas City, said, "Jim was a steady performer as a broadcast writer for the AP, first in St. Louis and then for many years as the night broadcast editor in Kansas City. He had a key role in preparing state and regional news for radio stations in Missouri and Kansas and for the important 10 p.m. TV newscasts in the two states."

He is survived by his wife, daughters Diane Puckett and Sally Whitaker, and grandsons Ezra Whitaker and Levi Whitaker.

Puckett's body was donated to science. His wife said a memorial service may be planned in the spring.

## Memories of Jim Puckett

**Jim Bagby (Email)** - Considering that Jim Puckett made his living with words designed mainly for people to speak aloud, he personally was a man of very few words.

For about 30 years, I was the broadcast editor in the Kansas City AP bureau, starting at 6 a.m. daily. For most of that time, Jim was the night broadcast editor, finishing his shift sometime after midnight. That meant that other than the radio and TV (later cable) members in Missouri and Kansas, I was the primary beneficiary of his solid, dependable overnight news report.

That's because the copy that the laconic brother Puckett produced made up the bulk of the all-important morning drivetime report. And for the many small-market radio stations, most with a one-person news staff or only a deejay at break of day, our trademark rip-and-read copy then (and I assume now) was especially important. But that was Jim's specialty.



So I knew when I rolled in at sunrise, I could concentrate on fresh news, rather than sending out corrections to the overnight report or, worse, answer questions about why we didn't have such-and-such a story. Between iconic overnight editor Wes Cook and Jim, it was a good bet that anything that broke overnight was on the wire.

And if I called the office late at night to check on something I'd heard on the 10 o'clock news or elsewhere, invariably Jim would respond, easily, "Oh, yeah...we got it out." At any social function, if we could get him there, his conversation was a lot the same. Me: "Great to see you! How you doing?" Jim: "Oh...fine."

He was. And he will be missed by all who worked with him.

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**Doug Tucker (Email)** - I last talked with Jim about three weeks ago. It's not simple talking old times with somebody doing battle with terminal illness. But Jim took an awkward situation and made it seem light.

We spent about 20 minutes catching up on our years in that messy, noisy office on the third floor of the Kansas City Star building and the old-time ink-stained characters who worked with us.

We laughed about the night he tripped on the back stairs and opened a bloody but not really serious gash on his head.

We talked about the major stories we covered together. Former President Truman's lengthy illness and funeral. The 1976 National Republican Convention. The deadly Plaza flood.

But after a while Jim ran down. He was weary. He said he was looking forward to getting together for lunch with all his old AP colleagues. We promised to talk again soon.

I wish we had. Rest In Peace, Jim.

## Nancy Keating, matriarch of influential family, dies at 94

CINCINNATI (AP) — Nancy Keating, a charitable volunteer and matriarch of a large family with deep and philanthropic ties to the Cincinnati area, has died. She was 94.

She died peacefully at her home Friday, son Mike Keating said in an email.

Keating was the wife of the late William J. Keating, who after leaving Congress in the 1970s spent three decades as an Ohio newspaper executive and served on the board of The Associated Press. Her brother-in-law Charles Keating was a finance



executive who was a key figure in the 1980s national savings and loan crisis.

“Mom was very kind, very wise and had a wonderful sense of humor,” Mike Keating wrote. “She was always patient and calm with us. As they say, you can’t pick your parents, but we were so blessed and so fortunate to have mom and dad as our parents.”

Nancy Keating was president of her senior class and valedictorian at St. Ursula Academy in Cincinnati. She attended the University of Cincinnati, where she was active in student politics.

She christened the submarine USS Cincinnati in 1977 and served on the commission that marked Cincinnati’s 200th birthday. She was a longtime soup kitchen and Meals on Wheels volunteer, her son wrote.

Her husband was a founding partner of a major law firm, was an assistant Ohio attorney general, judge and city council member, and was elected to the U.S. House in 1971 as a Republican. In 1974, he gave up his seat to run the Cincinnati Enquirer. Increased circulation and profits, a Pulitzer Prize and acquisition by the Gannett Co. followed.

He served on the AP’s board for 15 years from 1977 to 1992 and chaired the global news cooperative for the last five of those years. He held executive positions at Gannett, where he served as general counsel, a regional newspaper president, and architect of the joint operating agreement that combined the business operations of Detroit’s two competing daily newspapers.

Keating for decades was a key civic leader in Cincinnati. His great-nephew Gary Hall Jr. won swimming gold medals in the 1996 and 2000 Olympics. The University of Cincinnati aquatic center is named for William Keating, while he and his brother helped fund St. Xavier’s natatorium, named for their father Charles H. Keating.

William J. Keating attributed his success to his wife and her support, Mike Keating wrote.

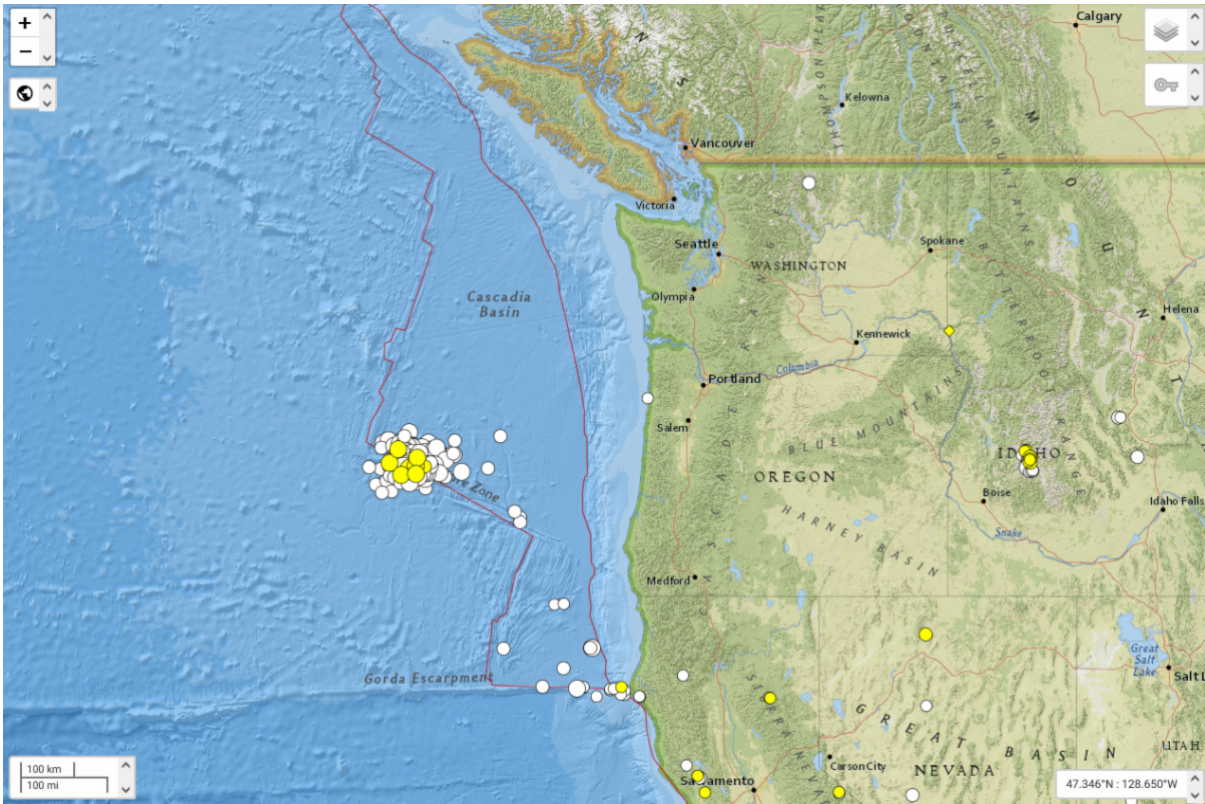
“He would often say ‘It’s always Nancy and Bill Keating. I put her first because she was first to me in everything I ever did. She made me a better man,’” her son wrote.

She was preceded in death by her husband in 2020 and her son Bill Jr. in 2017. Survivors include six other children, 28 grandchildren and 31 great-grandchildren. The family plans private services but no visitation. Geo. H. Rohde & Son Funeral Home is handling arrangements.

## AP Retiree Blasts Military PR, Gets Results



An F-15 Eagle from the 142nd Fighter Wing takes off from Portland Air National Guard Base in Oregon. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman John Hughel)



This map shows epicenters of the "swarm" of almost 120 mild to moderate earthquakes that ruptured the Blanco fracture zone about 250 to 300 miles off the Oregon coast beginning Dec. 7, 2021. (U.S. Geological Survey.)

**Lee Siegel (Email)** - A “swarm” of small to moderate earthquakes began rupturing the Blanco fracture zone about 250 to 300 miles off the Oregon coast, on Dec. 7, 2021. Most of the jolts couldn’t be felt on land, but some people reported feeling the strongest, a pair of magnitude-5.8s.

When the swarm began, I monitored the U.S. Geological Survey website and sent regular quake updates to my local twice-weekly, The Newport News-Times, and the online Yachats News, farther down the coast.

By Dec. 14, there had been more than 120 quakes in the swarm, and many coastal residents were nervous – even though the quakes weren’t on the Cascadia subduction zone, which threatens an eventual magnitude-9 catastrophe and tsunamis. At about 1:30 p.m. PST that day, three quick, strong blasts rocked at least a 55-mile stretch of the central Oregon coast. Facebook lit up with people believing a quake had hit.

But there was no quake at 1:30 p.m. Then, at 1:56 p.m., a magnitude-4.4 jolt happened 250 miles offshore, too far for anyone onshore to feel it. Yet the USGS website soon had reports from dozens of people who claimed they felt it – even though what they really felt were the mysterious booms 26 minutes earlier.

County emergency officials called the Oregon Air National Guard but couldn’t get a public statement out of them. And when a News-Times reporter called and emailed their PR person, they were unreachable.

I was pissed. So at 8 p.m., I fired off the nasty email below to the PR guy and Air Force Col. Todd Hofford, commander of the 142nd fighter wing in Portland, after guessing his email address. He emailed me two hours later, promising to get information to me and local reporters in the morning. He called the two newspapers, and then me, telling us that during an offshore combat training exercise, one of four F-15 Eagles violated flight rules, creating three sonic booms. I sent my notes to both papers, and I got credit on the [Yachats News story](#) published in the Oregonian.

The point of this story: during my career, I always found that being pushy and aggressive was an effective way to get tight-lipped military folks to open up. Now I've been invited by the colonel to visit the base, see the F-15 Eagles and coach his PR folks.

My email pulled no punches – a sweet catharsis I never could indulge at AP:

*Dear 142nd Wing public affairs folks,  
Real smooth move blasting residents up and down the Oregon coast with sonic booms Tuesday afternoon, then not answering your phone when reporters called and leaving no option for voice mail – and not answering email. That's one hell of a way to operate a public affairs office!*

*If you folks had the slightest bit of common sense, you would have been aware that there has been a swarm of more than 100 earthquakes as large as magnitude 5.8 about 250-290 miles of Oregon's coast since Dec. 7. All Portland newspapers and TV stations reported on it. While that is too far away for most of the quakes to be felt on shore, a couple over magnitude 5 were felt – and people here were on edge.*

*So what do you think people thought when your jets boomed past us sometime around 1:30 p.,m. PST Tuesday? Earthquake. And after a real quake, a magnitude-4.4 some 250 miles offshore, happened at 1:56 p.m. PST, lots of folks who felt your booms went to the U.S. Geological Survey website and reported they felt the quake, which simply is not possible for a that small a quake that far away. (I am a retired science writer who has covered seismology for 40 years.)*

*So thanks for helping public confusion and anxiety.*

*And why? Do you think the Chinese and Rooskies don't know what's going on?*

*What possible harm to national security could there be to let the public know, "yeah, it was some Air National Guard jets," or, "it was an exercise," or even a very vague, "we can confirm it was sonic booms, not quakes"?*

*In my four decades as a science writer, I often encountered military PR people. I realize many are young and inexperienced, not old pros, and fearful of saying too much. So if whomever gets this falls into that category, please take my comments as they are intended, to help you do better and serve the public better next time. And maybe discuss with your commander how to handle such a situation better in the future.*

*Regards,*

*Lee J. Siegel, retired science writer for The Associated Press, The Salt Lake Tribune, [space.com](http://space.com) and University of Utah*

## **An AP tie to camel story**





**Kelly Kissel (Email)** - You should have known there'd be an AP connection to the camel story in Thursday's Connecting, regarding the woman who bit the animal's private parts to save herself from being suffocated.

Youssef Rddad, then an AP temporary staffer in Minneapolis, was one of the first people I interviewed for a reporting job at The Advocate (in Baton Rouge, La.) after I left AP in 2018. After a few things fell through the cracks, I was finally able to bring him aboard in mid-2019.

With two ex-AP staffers on the story, there was no way this story wasn't going to be "journalism gold," as a friend described it the other night.

I put [this together](#) for our online audience after The New Yorker item came out.

It kind of fits with Thursday's "Nuts" story too, if you think about it.

## 450 W. 33rd



**Marty Steinberg** ([Email](#)) - While strolling up the NYC High Line, how could I not take a peek at 450 W. 33rd, AP's former headquarters. It's now renamed to 5 Manhattan West, and the brutalist architecture is mercifully re-covered by a somewhat better design. The elevators look the

same but the lobby is now enlarged and opened up. The building's occupants now include Amazon, Whole Foods and Peleton's studio. Ally Love's picture decorates the entrance.



*Best of the Week*

Powered by facts:

**AP investigation undercuts Trump voter fraud claims, prompts rare interview**



AP Photo/Wong Maye-E

Former President Donald Trump's refusal to concede defeat in the 2020 presidential election and his efforts to spread the false claim that widespread voter fraud cost him a second term raised a critical question: How much voter fraud occurred, specifically in the six crucial battleground states where the Republican disputed his loss to Democrat Joe Biden?

Turns out, just fewer than 475 potential cases of fraud, or 0.15% of Biden's total margin of victory in the pivotal states.

The finding was the result of an exhaustive AP investigation led by state government team leader Tom Verdin and elections reporter Christina Cassidy, backed by a team of reporters, data journalists and others — and earns top honors in this week's Best of the Week.

Read more [here](#).

## Stories of interest

### ***Outlets hurt by dwindling public interest in news in 2021*** (AP)

By DAVID BAUDER

NEW YORK (AP) — The presidential election, pandemic and racial reckoning were stories that drove intense interest and engagement to news outlets in 2020. To a large degree, 2021 represented the inevitable hangover.

Various metrics illustrate the dwindling popularity of news content.

Cable news networks were the main form of evening entertainment for millions of Americans last year. In 2021, weekday prime-time viewership dropped 38% at CNN, 34% at Fox News Channel and 25% at MSNBC, according to the Nielsen company.

The decline was less steep but still significant at broadcast television evening newscasts: 12% at ABC's "World News Tonight" and the "CBS Evening News;" 14% at NBC's "Nightly News," Nielsen said.

The Trump era saw explosive subscriber growth for some digital news sites like The New York Times and Washington Post. Yet readers aren't spending as much time there; Comscore said the number of unique visitors to the Post's site was down 44% in November compared to November 2020, and down 34% at the Times.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Peg Coughlin.

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### ***How the Soviet Union's collapse explains the current Russia-Ukraine tension*** (NPR)

AP reporter, fotog witnessed Gorbachev speech on Soviet Union's collapse...

Click [here](#) to view. Shared by Richard Chady.

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## *Intimate portraits of a hospital COVID unit from a photojournalist-turned-nurse* (NPR)

VICTORIA HANSEN

Alan Hawes pulls up images on his computer that are raw and intimate, like the anguished eyes of a 72-year-old man in a hospital bed, trapped behind a mask.

"He was extremely scared, and I think that comes across in the photo," says Hawes.

"He's just kind of looking into the lens like, 'Help me.' "

A photojournalist for nearly two decades, Hawes, 52, is used to taking pictures of people when they're most vulnerable.

Now he works as a registered nurse at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, and the man in the picture was a patient.

"He told me, 'I don't ever want anyone to have to go through this.' "

Neither does Hawes. That's why he got the idea to start photographing his daily experiences with health care workers and COVID-19 patients in the critical care unit.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Richard Chady.

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## *A Dangerous Court Order Against The New York Times*

By The Editorial Board

The editorial board is a group of opinion journalists whose views are informed by expertise, research, debate and certain longstanding values. It is separate from the newsroom.

Half a century ago, the Supreme Court settled the matter of when a court can stop a newspaper from publishing. In 1971, the Nixon administration attempted to block The Times and The Washington Post from publishing classified Defense Department documents detailing the history of the Vietnam War — the so-called Pentagon Papers. Faced with an asserted threat to the nation's security, the Supreme Court sided with the newspapers. "Without an informed and free press, there cannot be an enlightened people," Justice Potter Stewart wrote in a concurring opinion.

That sentiment reflects one of the oldest and most enduring principles in our legal system: The government may not tell the press what it can and cannot publish. This principle long predates the Constitution, but so there would be no mistake, the nation's founders included a safeguard in the Bill of Rights anyway. The First

Amendment says, “Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.”

This is why virtually every official attempt to bar speech or news reporting in advance, known as a prior restraint, gets struck down. “Any system of prior restraints of expression comes to this court bearing a heavy presumption against its constitutional validity,” the Supreme Court said in a 1963 case. Such restraints are “the very prototype of the greatest threat to First Amendment values,” Justice Antonin Scalia wrote a generation later.

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

## The Final Word

### *Dave Barry's 2021 Year in Review* (Washington Post Magazine)

By DAVE BARRY

Is there anything positive we can say about 2021?

Yes. We can say that it was marginally better than 2020.

Granted, this is not high praise. It's like saying that somebody is marginally nicer than Hitler. But it's something.

What was better about 2021? For one thing, people finally emerged from their isolated pandemic cocoons and started connecting with others. Granted, the vast majority of the people who connected with us this year wanted to discuss our car's extended warranty. But still.

Another improvement was that most stores got rid of those one-way anti-covid arrows on the floor. Remember those, from 2020? You'd be halfway down a supermarket aisle, and you'd realize that you'd gone past the Cheez-Its but you couldn't turn around and go back because you'd be going AGAINST THE ARROWS, which meant YOU WOULD GET COVID.

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.

## Today in History - Dec. 28, 2021



## By The Associated Press

**Today is Tuesday, Dec. 28, the 362nd day of 2021. There are three days left in the year.**

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

On Dec. 28, 2014, the war in Afghanistan, fought for 13 bloody years and still raging, came to a formal end with a quiet flag-lowering ceremony in Kabul that marked the transition of the fighting from U.S.-led combat troops to the country's own security forces.

### **On this date:**

In 1612, Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei observed the planet Neptune, but mistook it for a star. (Neptune wasn't officially discovered until 1846 by Johann Gottfried Galle.)

In 1832, John C. Calhoun became the first vice president of the United States to resign, stepping down because of differences with President Andrew Jackson.

In 1895, the Lumiere brothers, Auguste and Louis, held the first public showing of their movies in Paris.

In 1908, a major earthquake followed by a tsunami devastated the Italian city of Messina, killing at least 70,000 people.

In 1945, Congress officially recognized the Pledge of Allegiance.

In 1972, Kim Il Sung, the premier of North Korea, was named the country's president under a new constitution.

In 1973, the Endangered Species Act was signed into law by President Richard Nixon.

In 1975, the "Hail Mary pass" entered the football lexicon as Dallas quarterback Roger Staubach tossed the ball to Drew Pearson for an improbable 50-yard touchdown with 24 seconds left to help the Cowboys come back to edge the Minnesota Vikings 17-14.



In 1981, Elizabeth Jordan Carr, the first American “test-tube” baby, was born in Norfolk, Virginia.

In 1991, nine people died in a crush of people trying to get into a rap celebrity basketball game at City College in New York.

In 2007, Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto was laid to rest as the country’s army tried to quell a frenzy of rioting in the wake of her assassination.

In 2015, a grand jury in Cleveland declined to indict a white rookie police officer in the killing of 12-year-old Tamir Rice, a Black youngster who was shot while playing with what turned out to be a pellet gun.

Ten years ago: North Korea’s new leader, Kim Jong Un, escorted his father’s hearse in an elaborate state funeral, bowing somberly and saluting in front of tens of thousands of citizens who wailed and stamped their feet in grief for Kim Jong Il. Turkish warplanes mistakenly killed 35 smugglers and other villagers in an operation targeting Kurdish rebels in Iraq. Kaye Stevens, a singer and actor who performed with the Rat Pack and was a frequent guest on Johnny Carson’s “The Tonight Show,” died in The Villages, Florida, at age 79.

Five years ago: Film star Debbie Reynolds, who lit up the screen in “Singin’ in the Rain” and other Hollywood classics, died at age 84 a day after losing her daughter, Carrie Fisher, who was 60. Former world No. 1 Ana Ivanovic (ee-VAH’-noh-vich) said she was retiring from tennis after a series of injuries meant she could no longer play at the highest level.

One year ago: Residents and staff members at a Seattle-area nursing home that had the first deadly COVID-19 outbreak in the United States began receiving vaccines. A Chinese court sentenced a former lawyer who had reported on the early stage of the coronavirus outbreak to four years in prison on charges of “picking fights and provoking trouble.” A white Columbus, Ohio, police officer, Adam Coy, was fired after bodycam footage showed him fatally shooting Andre Hill – a Black man who was holding a cellphone – and failing to administer first aid for several minutes. (Coy is scheduled to face trial for murder in 2022.) “Full House” actor Lori Loughlin was released from prison after spending two months behind bars for paying a half million dollars in bribes to get her two daughters into college.

Today’s Birthdays: Actor Nichelle Nichols is 89. Actor Dame Maggie Smith is 87. Former Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., is 75. Rock singer-musician Edgar Winter is 75. Actor Denzel Washington is 67. TV personality Gayle King is 67. Actor Chad McQueen is 61. Country singer-musician Marty Roe (Diamond Rio) is 61. Actor Malcolm Gets is 58. Actor Mauricio Mendoza is 52. Actor Elaine Hendrix is 51. Political commentator Ana Navarro is 50. Talk show host Seth Meyers is 48. Actor Brendan Hines is 45. Actor Joe Manganiello is 45. Actor Vanessa Ferlito is 44. R&B singer John Legend is 43. Rapper-musician-producer Terrace Martin is 43. Actor Andre Holland is 42. Actor Sienna Miller is 40. Actor Beau Garrett (TV: “The Good Doctor”) is 39. Actor Thomas Dekker is 34. Actor Mackenzie Rosman is 32. Pop singer David Archuleta is 31. Actor Mary-Charles Jones (TV: “Kevin Can Wait”) is 20. Actor Miles Brown is 17.

# 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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