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**Connecting**  
December 30, 2021

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Colleagues,

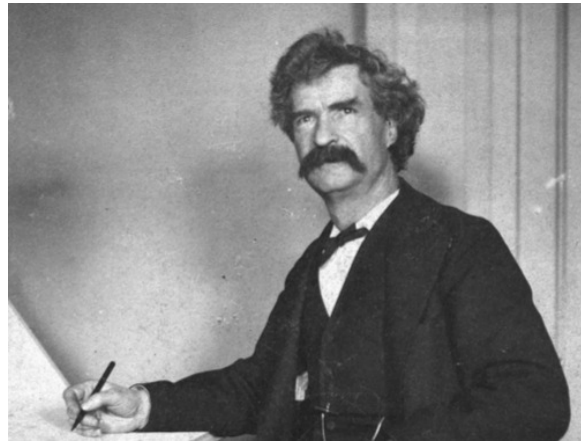
Good Thursday morning on this Dec. 30, 2021,

OK, no response to my call for New Year's resolutions. I get the message. I guess those published in Wednesday's Connecting by nonagenarians **Norm Abelson** and **Gene Herrick** intimidated the rest of us (me included). Or you made a resolution not to make a resolution.

Now, **Mark Twain** is not a Connecting member (even though he'd be eligible with his great AP quote from 1906, "There are only two forces that can carry light to all the corners of the globe – only two – the sun in the heavens and the Associated Press down here." And then he added, "I may seem to be flattering the sun.")

But I thought I'd share his take on New Year's and resolutions in a letter to the Virginia City Territorial Enterprise, written in January 1863:

*"New Year's Day--Now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual. Yesterday, everybody smoked his last cigar, took his last drink, and swore his last oath. Today, we are a pious and exemplary community. Thirty days from now, we shall have cast our reformation to the winds and gone to cutting our ancient shortcomings considerably shorter than ever. We shall also reflect pleasantly upon how we did the same old thing last year about this time. However, go in, community. New Year's is a harmless annual institution, of no particular use to anybody save as a scapegoat for promiscuous drunks, and friendly calls, and humbug resolutions, and we wish you to enjoy it with a looseness suited to the greatness of the occasion."*



**Frank Crepeau, Nate Polowetsky** – two names known to many of us, especially those like our colleague **Molly Gordy** ([Email](#)) – who worked on the Foreign Desk at 50 Rock from June 1980 to February 1983. She shares:

*"I was so pleased to read Kevin Noblet's tribute to Frank Crepeau in the Wednesday issue of Connecting. What I learned from Frank and Nate Polowetsky on the AP Foreign Desk is beyond price. Frank was the Yin to Nate's Yang, and together they guided generations of young journalists to a matchless standard of excellence and integrity. I wish I had thanked him more."*

**How about sharing your own memories of working with Frank and Nate – whether it was directly on the Foreign Desk or from an overseas post – or wherever.**

My most frequent contact with Nate was helping direct interested journalists in the domestic bureaus I ran toward an international assignment. I recall the days when the most direct path overseas was to work for a couple years in a line bureau, transfer to the International Desk in New York for another couple years, and then go from there. Language skills were essential, and Nate or others on the desk would interview a bureau staffer in the language of the country he or she wanted to go, to check their language proficiency.

Here's to a great second-to-the-last day of 2021. Be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

## Keep hyper-local news coverage alive with a donation

**Tony Winton (Email)** - Miami Fourth Estate is building hyper-local news coverage in Miami, starting with one community, Key Biscayne. We believe that local coverage of villages and towns is the most critical gap of the “news desert” and we want to hire professional journalists. We founded Miami Fourth Estate, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, as part of the growing nonprofit news movement, and we are a member of the Institute for Nonprofit News.

We are committed to quality journalism. Our board includes Susan Candiotti, a former CNN national correspondent, and Curt Anderson, an AP legal writer who’s worked in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C.

We are getting matching funds from the national NewsMatch program, but just recently, the Google News Initiative said it would make additional donations to nonprofit newsrooms with at least 100 new donors — if they sign up by Dec. 31.

Our target for this drive is \$50,000, and we have raised about \$14,000 in direct donations so far, exclusive of the matches from NewsMatch, a local donor, and now, Google News Initiative.

Please, spread the word. Most charities receive some of the biggest gifts at the end of the year.

Thanks — [here is the link](#) — we use a leading nonprofit donation system, Network For Good. And if anyone wants to be an “ambassador” we have a cool online tool that will help, just contact me — at my email - [twinton@kbindependent.org](mailto:twinton@kbindependent.org) or 305-912-5235. Happy New Year!

## Gorbachev’s farewell – three decades ago



**Brian Friedman (Email)** - Three decades ago, on Dec. 26, 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev resigned as president of the Soviet Union, and the country ceased to exist. Three days

later, he said farewell to his staff at a party, where the press was invited. I'm on the left, holding the cassette recorder with "AP" on it. Elsewhere in the crowd but not depicted is AP photographer Alexander Zemlianichenko.

I discovered this photo last week in the Irish Times, in a superb story by Conor O'Clery, a colleague who was in Moscow at the time.

The event capped a tumultuous year, in which hard-line party stalwarts pushed Gorbachev to abandon his political reforms and baby steps toward a market economy, in order to return the USSR to what they believed was its glory. That led to the unsuccessful coup and the 15 republics to seek independence – events that still reverberate today with the tensions between Russia and Ukraine.

## The biggest scoop I never got

**THE SUNDAY TIMES**

**Revealed: the secrets of Israel's nuclear arsenal**

**INSIGHT**

THE SECRETS of a subterranean factory equipped in the manufacture of Israeli nuclear weapons have been uncovered by The Sunday Times Insight team.

Hidden beneath the Negev desert, the factory has been producing atomic warheads for the last 30 years. Now it has almost certainly begun manufacturing short-range nuclear weapons, with yields big enough to destroy cities.

Information about Israel's capacity to manufacture the bombs comes from the testimony of Mordechai Vanunu, a 31-year-old Israeli who worked as a nuclear technician for nearly 10 years in Dimona – a top secret, underground bunker built to provide the vital components necessary for weapons production at Dimona, the Israeli nuclear research establishment.

Vanunu's evidence has set

Show ground: the reactor that produces plutonium

Show ground: the very centre of the bomb factory

**Carl Robinson (Email)** - After my AP days in Saigon, New York and Sydney (1968-78), I was Newsweek magazine's Sydney-based correspondent covering Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific through the 1980's. I was barely back from the Marshall Islands in Micronesia in July 1986 when I received an urgent call from someone named Alberto Bravo. "I have a big story for you and must see you right away," he insisted. The next evening, he arrived at our Sydney home with a Middle Eastern-looking companion named David.



Claiming he was a refugee from Colombia and a freelance journalist for the past dozen years, Bravo offered me “proof” that Israel had nuclear weapons, information from a former technician at the top-secret Dimona nuclear facility in the Negev Desert. After showing me several colour photos, he pointed to the silent David as that technician.

“He is motivated by peace,” Bravo explained, “and ready to take a chance. Israel has The Bomb.”

But he drove a hard bargain. A byline in Newsweek and a large, but unspecified, amount of money. I replied both were against magazine policy but would like to interview David anyway.

Well, hardly the sort of “scoop” one expects on the other side of the world from Israel – about whom rumours of its own nuclear weapons, including a South African connection, had swirled about for years.

I airfreighted a confidential but skeptical letter to my editors in NY for guidance and headed off to the year’s South Pacific Forum meeting in Fiji.

Once back in Sydney, the supposed Israeli technician dropped by again -- but this time alone -- and we spoke for more than three hours at our kitchen table over coffee and Chinese Pork Buns. David spoke nervously but quietly about his moving to Israel from Morocco when he was eight years old, his education and then nine years at Dimona. Working nights, David moved around a lot and, based on the plant’s annual production of 30 kilos of Plutonium, Tritium and Lithium, plus heavy water, was convinced that Israel had nuclear weapons. His 35 photos and 20 slides proved that, he said.

And just what was his motive, I asked? “I want to speak about this because it is good for the world to know what Israel is doing there. I’m doing it for peace. The Arab people have suffered too much.” He spoke of his involvement in Arab politics the past couple years living in nearby Beersheba and the official warnings he received. Clearly nervous, he wanted assurance Newsweek would help obtain citizenship in the US or Australia.

When the interview ended, I was certainly intrigued enough to ask David for further documentation – his passport, papers proving his employment, the pictures and negatives and, of course, his real name and contact details. He promised to hand them over in a few more days.

I then contacted and ran David’s figures past a nuclear scientist at the University of New South Wales who calmly responded, “Oh, just the Plutonium is enough for three nuclear bombs a year.” Damn! I was onto something.

But with no way of contacting David – or Alberto – or where they were, I could only wait. Ten days later, David finally called – as always, from a pay phone. He sounded frightened and too scared to go ahead. “I’ve changed my mind about telling the story,” he said. “Tear up the notes.”

When I asked his plans, David claimed he was off to the U.S. Well, if you change your mind, contact Newsweek, I suggested and gave him the names and phone numbers of

a couple editors in New York.

Sure, I was disappointed but knew enough about Israel's vaunted top-secret Mossad organisation to understand David's nervousness. I returned to more Aussie-based stories, including a feature on Paul Hogan and Crocodile Dundee.

Then, a couple months later in October 1986 as the America's Cup campaign began off Western Australia, the biggest scoop I never got splashed across the front page of London's The Sunday Times. Revealed: the secrets of Israeli's Nuclear Arsenal.

The shady and greedy Alberto Bravo – now revealed as Oscar Guerrero – had flogged David's story for a supposedly several hundred thousand dollars deal. But even before the story appeared, Mossad already counter-punched with a honeypot ambush in Rome and dragged Mordechai Vanunu back to Israel to stand trial for betraying his country's nuclear secrets. (In a secret trial, Vanunu was sent to 18 years in prison, 11 in solitary, and released in 2004 but under severe restrictions, especially on speaking to the media.)

Over the next couple months, Newsweek gallantly played "catch-up" on the Vanunu Story, including details of his conversion to Christianity at a Kings Cross Anglican Church in Sydney. But I've often wondered if Newsweek would've run the story even if David had come through with the goods. And given my small role in the story, I would like to meet David again someday in Israel – and perhaps share another Chinese Pork Bun.

## AP sighting - Colorado



**Michael Weinfeld** ([Email](#)) - On the surface, it looks like the AP has started competing with Uber & Lyft. But it's a company called AP Drives Colorado. They describe themselves as a VIP ride sharing business.

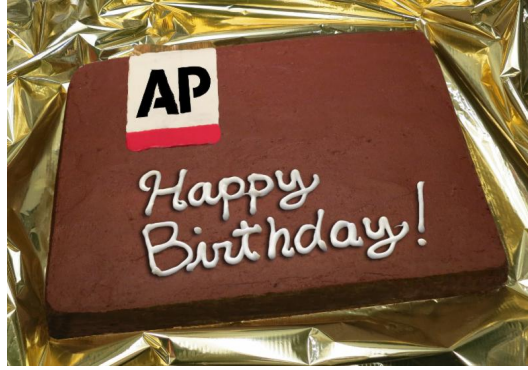
**My next retirement job after Connecting?**



**Ye Olde Connecting Editor** had to admit to temptation when he saw this sign along Brush Creek in the Country Club Plaza shopping and dining area in Kansas City – while there for a recent lunch with Connecting colleagues **Marty McCarty** and **George Varghese**. If I decide to bow out of becoming a gondolier if the pay or the hours are wrong, I’ll let you know in case you’re interested. Linda and I have traveled the waterways of Venice in a gondola and I’m hoping I remember enough from our Italian gondolier to pass the test.



# Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Bob Graves](#)

[Rick Plumlee](#)

[Ebony Reed](#)

## Story of interest

### *Hong Kong editors charged with sedition, US criticizes raid* (AP)

By ZEN SOO

HONG KONG (AP) — Two former editors from a Hong Kong online pro-democracy news outlet were charged with sedition and denied bail Thursday, a day after one of the last openly critical voices in the city said it would cease operations following a police raid on its office and seven arrests.

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam defended the raid on Stand News amid a wider crackdown on dissent in the semi-autonomous city, telling reporters that “inciting other people ... could not be condoned under the guise of news reporting.”

U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken called on Hong Kong authorities to release the detainees, and Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Melanie Joly said her country was deeply concerned about the arrests, which included singer Denise Ho, a Canadian citizen and activist.

According to a charge sheet, national security police filed one count each of conspiracy to publish a seditious publication against Chung Pui-kuen and Patrick Lam, former editors at Stand News. Police also said they would prosecute the company for sedition.

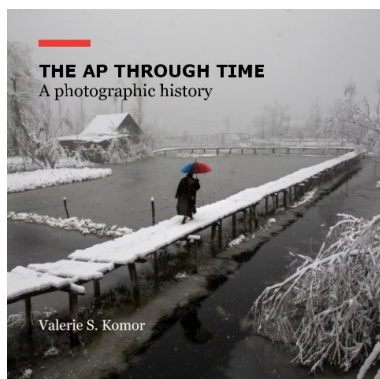




The AP has created a store with 175th anniversary merchandise available for purchase, as well as items branded with some of AP's most historic logos.

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. 30, 2021



## By The Associated Press

**Today is Thursday, Dec. 30, the 364th day of 2021. There is one day left in the year.**

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

On Dec. 30, 1922, Vladimir Lenin proclaimed the establishment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which lasted nearly seven decades before dissolving in December 1991.

### **On this date:**

In 1813, British troops burned Buffalo, New York, during the War of 1812.

In 1853, the United States and Mexico signed a treaty under which the U.S. agreed to buy some 45,000 square miles of land from Mexico for \$10 million in a deal known as the Gadsden Purchase.

In 1860, 10 days after South Carolina seceded from the Union, the state militia seized the United States Arsenal in Charleston.

In 1903, about 600 people died when fire broke out at the recently opened Iroquois Theater in Chicago.

In 1954, Olympic gold medal runner Malvin G. Whitfield became the first Black recipient of the James E. Sullivan Award for amateur athletes.

In 1972, the United States halted its heavy bombing of North Vietnam.

In 1994, a gunman walked into a pair of suburban Boston abortion clinics and opened fire, killing two employees. (John C. Salvi III was later convicted of murder; he died in prison, an apparent suicide.)

In 1999, former Beatle George Harrison fought off a knife-wielding intruder who'd broken into his mansion west of London and stabbed him in the chest. (The attacker was later acquitted of attempted murder by reason of insanity.)

In 2004, a fire broke out during a rock concert at a nightclub in Buenos Aires, Argentina, killing 194 people. Bandleader and clarinetist Artie Shaw died in Thousand Oaks, California, at age 94.

In 2006, a state funeral service was held in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda for former President Gerald R. Ford.

In 2009, seven CIA employees and a Jordanian intelligence officer were killed by a suicide bomber at a U.S. base in Khost (hohst), Afghanistan.

In 2015, Bill Cosby was charged with drugging and sexually assaulting a woman at his suburban Philadelphia home in 2004; it was the first criminal case brought against the comedian out of the torrent of allegations that destroyed his good-guy image as "America's Dad." (Cosby's first trial ended in a mistrial after jurors deadlocked; he was convicted on three charges at his retrial in April 2018 and was sentenced to three to 10 years in prison, but the Pennsylvania Supreme Court overturned the conviction in June 2021 and Cosby went free.)

Ten years ago: North Korea warned the world there would be no softening of its position toward South Korea's government following Kim Jong Il's death as Pyongyang strengthened his son and heir's authority with a new title: "Great Leader."

Five years ago: Two luxury retreats in New York and Maryland where Russian diplomats had gone for decades to play tennis, sail and swim were shut down by the Obama administration in retaliation for Moscow's cyber-meddling in the presidential election.

One year ago: Republican Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri said he would raise objections when Congress met to affirm President-elect Joe Biden's victory, forcing House and Senate votes. President Donald Trump asked the Supreme Court to overturn his election loss in Wisconsin; it was his second unsuccessful appeal in as many days to the high court over the result in the battleground state. Jonathan Pollard, who spent 30 years in U.S. prison for spying for Israel, arrived in Israel with his wife, kissing the ground as he disembarked from the aircraft. Dawn Wells, who played the wholesome Mary Ann on the 1960s sitcom "Gilligan's Island," died in Los Angeles at age 82 from what her publicist said were causes related to COVID-19. Samuel Little, who authorities said was the most prolific serial killer in U.S. history with nearly 60 confirmed victims, died at the age of 80 in California, where he was serving a life sentence.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Russ Tamblyn is 87. Baseball Hall of Famer Sandy Koufax is 86. Folk singer Noel Paul Stookey is 84. TV director James Burrows is 81. Actor Fred Ward is 79. Actor Concetta Tomei (toh-MAY') is 76. Singer Patti Smith is 75. Rock singer-musician Jeff Lynne is 74. TV personality Meredith Vieira is 68. Actor Sheryl Lee Ralph is 66. Actor Patricia Kalember is 65. Country singer Suzy Bogguss is 65. Actor-comedian Tracey Ullman is 62. Radio-TV commentator Sean Hannity is 60. Sprinter Ben Johnson is 60. Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is 58. Actor George Newbern is 58. Movie director Bennett Miller is 55. Singer Jay Kay (Jamiroquai) is 52. Rock musician Byron McMackin (Pennywise) is 52. Actor Meredith Monroe is 52. Actor Daniel Sunjata is 50. Actor Maureen Flannigan is 49. Actor Jason Behr is 48. Golfer Tiger Woods is 46. TV personality-boxer Laila Ali is 44. Actor Lucy Punch is 44.

Singer-actor Tyrese Gibson is 43. Actor Eliza Dushku is 41. Rock musician Tim Lopez (Plain White T's) is 41. Actor Kristin Kreuk is 39. Folk-rock singer-musician Wesley Schultz (The Lumineers) is 39. NBA star LeBron James is 37. R&B singer Andra Day is 37. Actor Anna Wood is 36. Pop-rock singer Ellie Goulding (GOL'-ding) is 35. Actor Caity Lotz is 35. Actor Jeff Ward is 35. Country musician Eric Steedly is 31. Pop-rock musician Jamie Follesé (FAHL'-es-ay) (Hot Chelle (shel) Rae) is 30.

## 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)

