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## Connecting

January 04, 2022

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this Jan. 4, 2022,

Our colleague **Henry Bradsher**, whose AP service included Moscow chief of bureau in the '60s, has no need to make a New Year's resolution about volunteering.

He and his wife **Monica** have been doing just that for years – and in our lead-off article today, he highly recommends it to his Connecting colleagues.

Today's issue brings you more stories about two AP Foreign Desk stalwarts – **Frank Crepeau** and **Nate Polowitzky**. Thanks to our colleague **Molly Gordy** for getting this series started. Both left quite a legacy.

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

Paul

# Volunteering – the gift that keeps on giving for retirees



In this 2018 file photo in the Baton Rouge Advocate, volunteers with First United Methodist Church accept the Crystal Apple award given out annually by the group, Volunteers In Public Schools. The ceremony was held at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church. The Crystal Apple goes to individuals or groups who for 10 years or more have volunteered in East Baton Rouge Parish public schools. Pictured (from left) Mary Treppendahl, Joan Pennington, Judy Lithgoe, Henry Bradsher and Monica Bradsher, all volunteers with the church; they're joined, at right, by Bernard Terrace Principal Demetric Alexander and her daughter, Paige, 5.

**Henry Bradsher** ([Email](#)) - Retirement can easily be filled up with all sorts of things, aside from getting regular exercise, enjoying the company of family and friends, catching up on things that one long meant to read, or watching too much television (and in one case, working hard to put together Connecting).

But a useful way to fill some of the time is providing some of the many kinds of volunteer work that any community needs. Look around: there are doubtlessly many good organizations that want help.

For my wife, a former teacher and education editor, and for me, a primary volunteer activity is helping in the public schools. We have for years been tutoring children in a primary school in Baton Rouge. My wife is the organizer, trainer and coach for volunteers at the school, as well as tutoring. I have been working mostly with

kindergarten children from single-parent homes who do not even know the alphabet or, in some cases, how to tie their shoes (or how to keep their required masks up over their noses in this covid time).

Getting children off to a strong start in reading is vital. Some studies show that the reading level of children by later grades indicates what the prison population will be a decade or two later. Those who never master reading are likely to end up in crime. So tutoring is important for the community.

Another worthwhile volunteer activity is teaching adult education courses – volunteer because the pay barely pays for gas to lecture sites, and certainly not for the time spent preparing lectures.

My wife and I teach in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) classes run from Louisiana State University. OLLI programs throughout the country are always looking for instructors.

Our six-week classes spring and autumn on history, culture, and other subjects that interest us require a lot of preparation of PowerPoint graphics, which this television generation expects rather than just looking at someone talking. Both of us have developed large followings who take any course we offer, either in person or Zoomed during the pandemic. (Technical note on graphics: photos, paintings, maps, etc., can be picked up from Google Images without worrying about copyright, because use for educational purposes for small audiences is legal.)

Teaching an OLLI course does not, however, necessarily require the kind of preparation that we do. A retired editor of our local newspaper has been recruiting various local leaders to talk to her classes about civic government and other topics, plus the paper's columnists. Other teachers relate such a wide variety of subjects as gardening, painting and religion.

AP retirees can offer a lot of background and current analysis on a wide variety of subjects. OLLI in many cities would doubtlessly be eager to have you offer courses.

For years, we have helped foreign students at LSU in a volunteer program, but that has slowed with the pandemic.

And for about two months every year for 14 years, I lectured on cruise ships worldwide, earning free passage on small, high-luxury lines for myself and my wife (some overlap between lectures prepared for cruises and adult education courses at home). Such gigs are increasingly difficult to get, however, but many journalists have fascinating enough stories to tell. It is worth getting in touch with cruise lines to seek opportunities – if the cruise industry escapes pandemic problems.

## GC – for gramatically correct

**Doug Pizac (Email)** - In recognition of John Wylie's #2 New Year's resolution on demanding newspapers restore excellent copy editors and proofreaders, here's a prime example of that need. The headline should read "Sears to sell its corporate

headquarters outside Chicago.” The goof is from last month’s The Columbian newspaper in Vancouver, WA.

I would like to propose that we journalists start using initials similar to the adjective PC that stands for politically correct. For us, let’s create GC -- for grammatically correct. In this instance, the headline and others like it are Not GC. Maybe with enough embarrassing Not GC labels papers will take more notice and do what’s right. Unfortunately, that may not happen as it will cost money to hire proofreaders who can spell and have a good understanding of proper grammar.

## More memories of Frank Crepeau, Nate Polowetzky

**Terry Anderson** ([Email](#)) - Nate told me once, as I was preparing for my first foreign assignment (to Tokyo): "I won't judge you on a single story, or a couple. But I will judge you after six months or so on whether you have given me a picture of a people, a country, a society that helps me understand it." No matter how irritating that peculiar, piercing voice could be in a late-night call about what the NY Times has and why don't we have it, you always knew he cared deeply about what you were doing, and how important it was.

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**Chris Carola** ([Email](#)) - I’ve enjoyed reading the stories by old AP Foreign Desk hands on their memories of Frank Crepeau and Nate Polowetzky. I didn’t know Frank, but during my first stint with AP, from June 1982 to March 1985, Nate was a prominent figure – to say the least – on the fourth floor at the company’s longtime HQ at 50 Rock in Manhattan. I remember him as always gracious to the non-journalist staffers – office assistants, news clerks, administrative assistants – and a tough but respected boss to own staffers.

As an office assistant (aka “copy boy”) back then, my duties included changing the paper rolls and ribbons on the desk printers in the various editorial departments, including the Foreign Desk. While doing that chore one day, Nate was on an overseas phone call with a bad connection, shouting in that gravelly voice that I imagined got that way from too much good whiskey and cheap cigarettes during many foreign postings. As I recall it, the conversation from his end went this way: “Oh, so you’re in Nairobi, huh? That’s great ... you’re supposed to be in Mombasa, you dumb (expletive)!”

I stifled a chuckle while a couple staffers sitting at their computers nearby looked like they wanted to hide under their desks.

Another duty for office assistants was to spell the telephone operators-receptionists stationed in the fourth-floor lobby in front of the bank of elevators. Back then, making an overseas call at AP required the phone operators to make the international call and then patch it through to the Foreign Desk. Nate would walk up, ask me to call Moscow

or Beirut and let him know when I got through. I thought that was pretty darn cool for a guy barely a year out of journalism school.

Later, after being promoted to dayside news clerk on the General Desk, part of my daily routine included compiling the play report, a rundown of how AP stories did against those on the same topic put out by UPI and other competitors. Certain U.S. hub bureaus with newspaper members who received AP and UPI stories had to report daily which wire service's story got published. AP won the final tally most days, but if it didn't, the lead of the UPI story had to be sent in for inclusion in the play report, which was distributed to bureaus via AP's internal messaging system.

If there was a particularly big international story from the previous day, Nate would wander over to my desk, place a hand on my shoulder and say, "OK, Chris, how'd we do?" If AP's story got the most play, Nate would walk away happy. If UPI got better play, he'd read their lead, often commenting aloud that they got it wrong. Nevertheless, some AP foreign correspondent was about to get a call from Nate. It was during that time that I learned how competitive our business was, and how much it meant for AP to beat the competition.

In June 2014, while attending the 25-year-reunion at AP's then-HQ on West 33rd Street, I walked up to a cluster of former and current Foreign Desk stalwarts – Edie Lederer, Charlie Hanley, Marcus Eliason and the late Richard Pyle – and told my story of an irate Nate berating that unfortunate AP Kenya correspondent years ago, doing my best to imitate Nate's distinctive voice. It elicited laughter from that Murderers' Row of AP foreign correspondents and touched off a round of their own humorous stories about Nate, with Marcus coming closest to nailing Nate's growl.

It was obvious from their reminiscences that they still held Nate Polowetzky in the highest regard, two decades after his passing.

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**John Miller** ([Email](#)) - I had forgotten all about the call from Nate Polowetzky that Charlie Hanley wrote about in Monday's newsletter. But it wasn't the funniest call I had from one of my favorite bosses.

I remember one time I was manning the day desk in the Rome Bureau when I answered the phone and Nate was on the other end. Of course, he was hopping mad and yelling in his high-pitched voice about a story that had appeared that day in the New York Times. I believe the call went something like this:

Nate: "Why the hell didn't we have that story?"

John: "Uh, Nate. We did that story six months ago."

Nate: "I don't care. Do it again!"

CLICK

Needless to say, we did the story.

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**Dave Tomlin (Email)** - Here's a Nate Polowetzky memory that illustrates two sides of his remarkable personality — aggressive profanity and erudition.

I was in my first week in the Newspaper Membership department, heading out the front door of 50 Rock for lunch with Jim Mangan and Jim Lagier when we ran into Nate. Mangan introduced me to him as a headquarters newcomer, "fresh from the field".

"What are you doing up in the f\*\*king 7th floor shoveling f\*\*king s\*\*t?" Nate demanded to know. "Why don't you come down to the Foreign Desk and do some real work."

No right answer to any of those questions, and he didn't wait for one. Instead he asked a follow-up.

"Hey, are you related to the artist Bradley Walker Tomlin?"

In fact, Tomlin was my paternal grandfather's younger brother and a lesser-known member of the New York School of abstract expressionist painters that included his close friend Jackson Pollock and a dozen or so others.

It was the first time I'd personally encountered anyone who'd even heard of him. I said so, and Nate responded with some comments about Tomlin's work and his place in art history that made it clear he was more familiar with both than I was.

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**Steve Wilson (Email)** - Have enjoyed reading all the memories of Nate Polowetzky and Frank Crepeau.

I have one particularly lasting memory of Nate that encapsulates two sides of his character: the intimidating, gruff boss and the warm, appreciative human being.

The year was 1984. It was 3 a.m. and I was alone in the AP's tiny New Delhi office, slumped next to my typewriter. I had just filed a first-person account recounting my scary 20-hour experience aboard an Indian Airlines plane hijacked by 10 Sikh militants. The copy had been transmitted to New York by teletype and I was waiting for any questions from the desk. I was wiped out, physically and emotionally spent.

The phone rang. The growling voice on the other end of the line was unmistakable. Perhaps I was hoping for: "So glad that you're safe and well. Thanks for your great work after such a trying ordeal. Go home and get some rest." Not exactly. Nate barked: "How could you send 1,000 words for Saturday AMs?!" The next sound I heard was the line slamming dead.

My story did eventually move on the wire and, to my surprise, at mostly full length, despite the limited space in Saturday papers.

A few days later, a memo arrived in the inter-office mail from NY. It was from Nate. I trembled at the thought of what might be inside. It turned out be a “hero-gram” thanking and praising me for my work and dedication. It is a note I will always cherish.

## Longtime senior reporter, veteran journalist Jack Mayne has passed away

By Scott Schaefer & Sue Favor  
B-Town Blog, Burien, WA

It is with very heavy hearts and tears in our eyes that we report that longtime South King Media senior writer/associate publisher and veteran journalist Jack Mayne has passed away.

Mayne died peacefully at home, just a few days shy of his 85th birthday.

For the longtime Seattle-area resident and lifelong editor and journalist, investigating, writing and editing the news wasn't just a profession – it was his life's work.

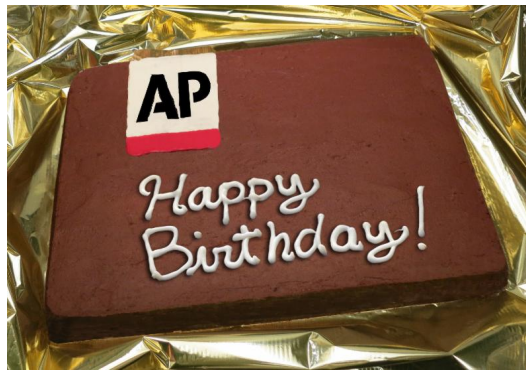


Mayne (we refer to him by his last name as per his insistence on AP Style) grew up in San Francisco, and after a brief stint in the British Royal Navy, graduated from San Francisco State University.

He got his start in journalism at the Vancouver Province, after which he worked for the Associated Press as its New England bureau chief. Mayne was the city editor at the Arizona Republic and Seattle Post-Intelligencer, after which he became editor of the Valley Daily News in Kent, then the Journal American in Bellevue. He was also a prolific freelance international journalist who reported from South Africa, China and over 80 other countries, and even covered the 1982 colonial war over the desolate Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic. Mayne also worked for the West Seattle Herald, and wrote for South King Media from 2012 up until his passing (his final story was about the SeaTac City Council on Nov. 14, 2021).

Read more [here](#). Shared by Michael Doan.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Dan George

Noreen Gillespie

## Stories of interest

***If American democracy is going to survive, the media must make this crucial shift*** (Washington Post)

By Margaret Sullivan  
Media columnist

In the year since the Jan. 6 insurrection, mainstream journalists have done a lot of things right. They've published major investigations, pointed out politicians' lies and, in many cases, finally learned how to clearly communicate the facts of what happened leading up to that horrendous riot at the U.S. Capitol — and what is happening now as pro-Trump Republicans steadily chip away at the very checks and balances that saved American democracy last year.

Much of this work has been impressive. And yet, something crucial is missing. For the most part, news organizations are not making democracy-under-siege a central focus of the work they present to the public.

"We are losing our democracy day by day, and journalists are individually aware of this, but media outlets are not centering this as the story it should be," said Ruth Ben-Ghiat, a scholar of autocracy and the author of "Strongmen: Mussolini to the Present."

That American democracy is teetering is unquestionable. Jan. 6 is every day now, in the words of a recent New York Times editorial that noted the growing evidence: election officials harassed by conspiracy theory addicts, death threats issued to politicians who vote their conscience, GOP lawmakers pushing measures to make it harder for citizens to vote and easier for partisans to overturn legitimate voting results.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Harry Dunphy.



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## ***The media's coverage of Jan. 6 is still just beginning***

(Poynter)

By TOM JONES

As we move closer to the one-year anniversary of the Jan. 6 insurrection, the major theme that has emerged is how we — the quote-unquote “media” — cover our democracy, both in its current state and, more importantly, its future.

It's easy to look back at all that happened a year ago and say that our democracy might have bent, but it didn't break. Our government survived that day. The legitimate election was certified. Joe Biden did become president. Despite his protests, Donald Trump moved out of the White House.

So all turned out well, right?

Not so fast. We now know how close we came to our government being toppled. And we've also seen how the stage is set for, potentially, a day when our democracy might not withstand those who can — and will — attempt to overthrow fair and free elections in their hunger for power.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Investigation of journalists by Customs unit is under review*** (AP)

By BEN FOX

WASHINGTON (AP) — An internal review has been launched into the actions of a special Customs and Border Protection unit that used sensitive government databases intended to track terrorists to investigate as many as 20 U.S.-based journalists, including one from The Associated Press.

The review is focused on activities of the Counter Network Division, which under the administration of former President Donald Trump used the databases to investigate leaks to the media and to screen journalists as potential sources of information, as was detailed in a report by Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General.

The purpose of the internal probe is “to ensure that the activities in question during the prior administration remain an isolated incident and that proper safeguards are in place to prevent an incident like this from taking place in the future,” CBP spokesperson Luis Miranda said Monday.

The review was initially reported by Yahoo News, which last month was also first to report on the OIG investigation.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Adolphe Bernotas.

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## ***Extraditing Julian Assange Threatens Journalists Worldwide*** (The Nation)

By HASAN ALI

On December 14, while addressing the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate, the ambassador-designate to Pakistan, Donald Armin Blome, pledged that he would champion the press in his new post. “Pakistani journalists and members of civil society face kidnappings, assaults, intimidation and disappearances,” he said, promising to advocate for expanded protections and to hold the perpetrators of these actions to account.

As a Pakistani journalist myself, I ought to have been relieved. In spite of all the talk of its impending decline, the United States remains the world’s preeminent superpower, and you would think that an incoming ambassador throwing his weight behind the media would augur better days for our embattled fraternity. Instead, I cannot help but question his moral authority to lecture anyone in the world on the issue of press freedom. Three successive administrations of the country he represents have mercilessly gone after Julian Assange, the long-tortured founder and publisher of Wikileaks, whom the United States government is trying to place in the dock on trumped-up charges of incitement and espionage.

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

## **The Final Word**

The Eagles were  
right



We are all just  
prisoners here, of our  
own device!

**Today in History - Jan. 4, 2022**



## By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Jan. 4, the fourth day of 2022. There are 361 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 4, 2007, Nancy Pelosi was elected the first female speaker of the House as Democrats took control of Congress.

### On this date:

In 1821, the first native-born American saint, Elizabeth Ann Seton, died in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in his State of the Union address, called for legislation to provide assistance for the jobless, elderly, impoverished children and the disabled.

In 1948, Burma (now called Myanmar) became independent of British rule.

In 1964, Pope Paul VI began a visit to the Holy Land, the first papal pilgrimage of its kind

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson delivered his State of the Union address in which he outlined the goals of his "Great Society."

In 1974, President Richard Nixon refused to hand over tape recordings and documents subpoenaed by the Senate Watergate Committee.

In 1987, 16 people were killed when an Amtrak train bound from Washington, D.C., to Boston collided with Conrail locomotives that had crossed into its path from a side track in Chase, Maryland.

In 1990, Charles Stuart, who'd claimed that he'd been wounded and his pregnant wife fatally shot by a robber, leapt to his death off a Boston bridge after he himself became a suspect.

In 1999, Europe's new currency, the euro, got off to a strong start on its first trading day, rising against the dollar on world currency markets. Former professional wrestler Jesse Ventura took the oath of office as Minnesota's governor.

In 2002, Sgt. 1st Class Nathan Ross Chapman, a U.S. Army Special Forces soldier, was killed by small-arms fire during an ambush in eastern Afghanistan; he was the first American military death from enemy fire in the war against terrorism.

In 2006, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon suffered a significant stroke; his official powers were transferred to his deputy, Ehud Olmert (EH'-hood OHL'-murt). (Sharon remained in a coma until his death in January 2014.)

In 2015, Pope Francis named 156 new cardinals, selecting them from 14 countries, including far-flung corners of the world, to reflect the diversity of the Roman Catholic church and its growth in places like Asia and Africa.

Ten years ago: Defying Republican lawmakers, President Barack Obama barreled past the Senate by using a recess appointment to name Richard Cordray the first director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama urged congressional Democrats to "look out for the American people" in defending his legacy health care overhaul, while Vice President-elect Mike Pence stood firm in telling Republicans that dismantling "Obamacare" was No. 1 on Donald Trump's list. Macy's said it was eliminating more than 10,000 jobs and planned to move forward with 68 store closures after a disappointing holiday shopping season.

One year ago: At a campaign rally in Georgia for the Republican candidates in the state's U.S. Senate runoff elections the following day, President Donald Trump declared that he would "fight like hell" to hold on to the presidency and appealed to Republican lawmakers to reverse his election loss. Bracing for possible violence, the nation's capital mobilized the National Guard ahead of planned protests by Trump supporters in connection with the congressional vote to affirm Joe Biden's election victory. A British judge rejected the United States' request to extradite WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to face espionage charges, saying it would be "oppressive" because of his mental health. (An appellate court later overturned that ruling; Assange's lawyers are seeking to appeal.) Death claimed actors Gregory Sierra, 83, known for the 1970s sitcoms "Barney Miller" and "Sanford and Son," and Tanya Roberts, who was in the James Bond movie "A View to a Kill" and the TV sitcom "That '70s Show"; she was 65.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Barbara Rush is 95. Opera singer Grace Bumbry is 85. Actor Dyan Cannon is 83. Author-historian Doris Kearns Goodwin is 79. Country singer Kathy Forester (The Forester Sisters) is 67. Actor Ann Magnuson is 66. Rock musician Bernard Sumner (New Order, Joy Division) is 66. Country singer Patty Loveless is 65. Actor Julian Sands is 64. Rock singer Michael Stipe is 62. Actor Patrick Cassidy is 60. Actor Dave Foley is 59. Actor Dot Jones is 58. Actor Rick Hearst is 57. Singer-musician Cait O'Riordan is 57. Actor Julia Ormond is 57. Former tennis player Guy Forget (ghee fohr-ZHAY') is 57. Country singer Deana Carter is 56. Rock musician Benjamin Darvill (Crash Test Dummies) is 55. Actor Josh Stamberg is 52. Actor Damon Gupton is 49. Actor-singer Jill Marie Jones is 47. Actor D'Arcy Carden is 42. Christian rock singer

Spencer Chamberlain (Underoath) is 39. Actor Lenora Crichlow is 37. Comedian-actor Charlyne Yi is 36. MLB All-Star Kris Bryant is 30. Actor-singer Coco Jones is 24.

## Got a story or photos to share?

Connecting is a daily newsletter published Monday through Friday that focuses on retired and former Associated Press employees, present-day employees, and news industry and journalism school colleagues. It began in 2013 and past issues can be found by clicking Connecting Archive in the masthead. Its author, Paul Stevens, retired from the AP in 2009 after a 36-year career.

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:

- **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.
- **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?
- **Most unusual place a story assignment took you.**



**Paul Stevens**  
Editor, Connecting newsletter

**paulstevens46@gmail.com**