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Connecting May 18, 2022

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this May 18, 2022,

At the end of each Connecting issue are suggestions for story themes that you might pursue and share with your colleagues. It's a way to spur contributions.

Among the ideas: A Silly Mistake that You Made during your career. Our colleague **Mark Elias** fesses up and contributes a story about his own memorable miscues.

Now Connecting is not pretending to be a confessional for you to share your journalistic sins and gain absolution. But if there is a misteak you would like to share, you've got a forum. Most likely, the statute of limitations has passed...

Thanks to Mark for getting the ball rolling.

LOOKING FOR CONTEST JUDGES:

Becky Day. - I'm happy to say that New York state is hosting a newspaper contest. A new organization, Journalists Association of New York, JANY (formerly the New York State Associated Press Association), is bringing back the same type of contest that ran when state contests were supported by AP. The contest is open now and May 27 is the entry deadline. I need judges - editors and journalists outside of New York. I really need folks who can judge the entries from the New York state newspapers from NYC to Buffalo. If you can judge (or if you have colleagues that can be contacted), let Becky Day know, janycontests.becky@gmail.com or 209-552-6541

CORRECTION: The photo of AP bureau chiefs in Tuesday's edition was taken during a chiefs' meeting in New York in the late '90s - not in the 80s. Most likely, it was the 1997 meeting. (Thanks to Dennis Conrad, Ann Bertini, Elaine Hooker for spotting.)

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

Stupid mistakes made during my career

<u>Mark Elias</u> - These were a couple of stupid mistakes I made before I officially started my career, but they never diminished my desire. Let's call it a teaching moment on steroids.

Although I now live in West Palm Beach, Florida, I was a Chicago-based staff photographer from 1983 to 1994. I now write about the auto industry and photograph for many automotive manufacturers and other outlets.

Surprisingly, I made two mistakes on one summer's day in 1977, so let's just say I learned a lot.

Mistake # 1: When it happened, I was a summer intern in Washington, D.C., for Senator James Abourezk of South Dakota. At the same time, I had been making pictures for years for the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese's monthly journal. My father was the chancellor of the archdiocese.

The Patriarch of the Archdiocese (the church's chief honcho) had traveled from Syria to tour the churches in the U.S. During the trip, a visit to the White House was scheduled so the Patriarch could visit President Carter in the Oval Office. The Church's PR office knew I was in Washington, DC, and asked if I could be at the White House when the senator and the patriarch visited. Arrangements were made and a schedule was set.

I arrived and waited with the White House press corps until they were shown into the Oval. I was surrounded by my journalistic heroes, ranging from Bob Daugherty, Bernie Boston, Helen Thomas, and others. They had done this before and plowed their way into the room while this 18-year-old was shoved towards the back of the pack.

Once inside, I set my bag down and went to work, trying to find a spot where I could shoot between the pros who were all crowded elbow-to-elbow, seeking the best image. I shot with a pair of Canon FTb QL (That's QL for Quick Load. Remember this,

as it becomes relevant in Mistake # 2) cameras, between heads and other body parts, the best I could. I was switching cameras to vary the shots. I think the session went about two minutes before White House aides yelled "Lights!" as a cue to exit. The regular pack was used to this and quickly left the office, while I was shoved to the back of the pack once again. As I was the last to leave, I noticed the patriarch, the senator and several priests were still standing, waiting for President Carter to take a seat.

And then it dawned on me why they were still on their feet: My camera bag was sitting on Carter's chair! Realizing my mistake, I muttered some lame apology, but if looks could kill, I was a dead man.

Mistake # 2: As I walked outside the press room, I started to rewind the film into the cassettes to take to the lab. As I started with the first camera, I noticed a very easy release as I wound the lever that returned the film to the cassette. The camera was FALSE LOADED, meaning the Quick Load mechanism did not take up the film leader. Bullets of sweat were starting to build up inside of my forehead, but I remembered to do everything to stay cool on the outside. I even kept on winding the film so those around me would think that everything was cool. Thankfully, the Quick Load mechanism on the other camera worked perfectly with film traveling through the camera successfully. From that point on, I always made it a point to constantly check to see the film advancing.

A few years ago, I sent a letter to President Carter to apologize for the camera bag incident. He recalled the visit of the patriarch, but somehow the details of the bag escaped his memory.

Gary Clark: A standard bearer for the AP

Hank Ackerman – in a note to John Lumpkin, shared with Connecting colleagues - Yours is a lovely and faithful account of Gary Clark and his AP chief of bureau "calling." It so beautifully complements the memories of Dan Sewell, Michael Giarrusso and Brent Kallestad and Fay's and the Clark lovely family tribute shared by Paul last week. Gary's trajectory and meaning for his family and the cooperative are highly held in yours and their words and will hopefully be featured in future AP history.

In your mention of his AP "calling, "I remember a luncheon with you at your favorite BBQ place in downtown Dallas. I asked about the role of a bureau chief. You replied:

- 1.Travel the territory, be aware of the importance of its news and lead your staff to cover it.
- 2. Be close to member newspapers and broadcast stations, their publishers and editors enabling sharing of news and photos.
- 3. Increase AP's membership: "if you can't sell the service, you shouldn't be a chief."

Gary met all of your criteria and more. He was also a standard bearer. Gary represented AP at the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association meetings for 10 years from Miami and 16 years from Atlanta. But he could also putt and drive with the

best of the publishers and group owners -- the Cox, Knight-Ridder and New York Times groups in particular.

I took your three thoughts back to NY. They entered my conversations with chiefs at every turn. As has Gary's example in my retirement.

Mell and I had the opportunity to visit Gary and Fay in Tallahassee in late April, about two weeks before he died. In getting to their home's patio garden, we passed through the family room. True to Dan's note about the Red Sox, Gary and Fay had laid out six Boston Red Sox baseball hats. A white hat emblazoned with a green four-leaf clover was in the center. Near their fireplace stood a golf bag with a half dozen putters.

Fay, Mell and I talked about all those bureau chiefing times since 1982. Despite his condition, Gary was able to listen and focus, acknowledging our common memories with the lift of a brow or a smile. Fay told us of their move to Tallahassee several years ago. Daughter Shannon and family are there. So, also, is career-long friend and colleague, Brent Kallestad, and in nearby Florida and Georgia, a coterie of friends who surely will be with him on Wednesday.

Over 25 years, I had the fortune of having hundreds of connections with Gary after I succeeded him in New Orleans, after he succeeded me in Atlanta and during 10 years when I worked with him and other chiefs from Newspaper Membership. Gary was a bell weather for me, a sounding board, an anchor of my thoughts about the membership. We talked regularly, traded hundreds of emails over 25 years (his always pithy, mine longer!), attended meetings, visited members and groups together. He understood the AP membership, particularly the smaller family-owned operations such as The Macomb (Miss.) Daily which must have been much like the place of his early work at the Keene (NH) Sentinel. His perspective on AP news and on membership extended from New Hampshire, to North Dakota, to Minnesota, to Hawaii, to Louisiana-Mississippi, to Florida, to Alabama-Georgia. Few in AP had such a wide range of management and news experiences. He was very much a newsman first; the Florida Society of Newspaper Editors recognized this in electing him their president in 1991.

Gary's work was enhanced by his careful selection of and work with his staff. He hired talented administrative staff, newsmen and women, photographers, sports writers and worked in partnership with gifted news editors.

On their patio, I shared recollections with Gary.

One thought came back and spurred a reflection:

The day after I arrived in New Orleans in March 1982. Gary and I flew to Tupelo in the morning, to Greeneville in the afternoon and back to the bureau that afternoon.

Gary had waited until the last day of his New Orleans assignment to sign The (Northeast Mississippi) Daily Journal to the evergreen AP membership agreement -- a big, big deal for any chief of bureau in a time when AP and UPI (and a few other syndicates) were vying to extend their footprints.

As we were seated at the Daily Journal conference table, Gary introduced me as the new AP guy to publisher George McLean. A lean former mathematics professor at Southwestern College (now Rhodes University) in nearby Memphis, McLean had bought the newspaper out of bankruptcy some years before and had given it to the Tupelo community to hold in perpetuity. He was determined it would be a shining light for northeast Mississippi's largest city. The Daily Journal had subscribed for many years to UPI. The switch to The Associated Press was huge and it obviously weighed upon McLean. Upon greeting me, McLean sternly looked at Gary, saying, "If this doesn't work out, I'm going to find you." A Presbyterian doesn't say this lightly.

Later that day, we flew to Greeneville to meet with publisher Charlie Fischer. He headed the even-then legendary Delta-Democrat Times, a paper previously run by the Hodding Carter family, a beacon of progressivism in the vast Mississippi River delta region. Fischer welcomed us in the newsroom in shorts. I think he hoped that Gary and I might join him on the golf course. We couldn't. Even so, he signed the papers Gary carried in his briefcase.

The lesson of the day remained with me strongly -- AP membership and the bureau chief's connection to it was all about trust and fulfillment.

Gary's relationships with members reflected from true and warm connections with fellow chiefs. He had in spades what you aptly termed "the calling" that I believe, too, many of the more than 40 (as of 2000) domestic chiefs of bureau had gained during 1980s and 1990s. These were years under the leadership of Keith Fuller and then, Lou Boccardi, and newspaper membership chiefs Jim Mangan and, especially, Wick Temple. Fay, who accompanied Gary in all things AP, called them the "Camelot years."

So I was so appreciative Paul, Dan, Michael, Brent John and Fay and family of reading your tributes. Gary was a friend of so many of us. A man of pithy observations, broad, broad smile, and the trademark blue jacket with AP lapel pin. A man of enduring trust. And, yes, of humor.

Blast from a Past (AP World)



Courtesy of AP Corporate Archives

Connecting mailbox

Bureau entrances

<u>Rick Cooper</u> - You said there would be many of us who would pick the entrance to 50 Rock as one of the most iconic bureau/AP location entrances. You proved it with the picture of the assembled Chiefs of Bureau group later on in the issue.

BTW, my vote for the least iconic bureau entrance would be the entrance to the Miami (FL) bureau when it was located in the Miami Federal Reserve Bank building in the 1980s. Totally unmarked and underground.

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Three rules for COBs

<u>Mike Holmes</u> - I enjoyed John Lumpkin's tribute to Gary Clark - and his ode to the Chiefs of Bureau who kept the AP machinery turning for all those years. But in his modesty, he neglected to mention JOL's Three Rules for COBs:

- 1. More state news.
- 2. Say "yes" to members.
- 3. Visit the hell out of 'em.

For those promoted to COB after being lucky enough to work for John, his three rules never let us down.

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Connecting sky shot – Santa Monica Mountains



<u>Donna Davidson</u> —This was a milestone day. I haven't been hiking in years because my legs aren't strong anymore. But this area inspired me to purchase walking sticks and get out on this trail in the Santa Monica Mountains near Malibu, California. I went 1.6 miles, which may not mean that much to real hikers, but for me the ability to get out there was a beginning.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



John Epperson

Stories of interest

Press secretary hopes her rise helps kids 'dream bigger' (AP)



White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre laughs during her first press briefing as press secretary at the White House in Washington, Monday, May 16, 2022. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik)

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE

WASHINGTON (AP) — Karine Jean-Pierre, the new White House press secretary, hopes she can inspire young people to "dream big and dream bigger" now that she has broken a barrier by becoming the first Black and gay woman to be chief spokesperson for the president of the United States.

Jean-Pierre reflected Monday on what it means to become one of the most visible members of President Joe Biden's administration as she spoke about a letter that students at her former elementary school in New York wrote telling her how proud they are of her.

"Representation matters, and not just for girls, but also for boys," Jean-Pierre told reporters during the first of what likely will be hundreds of daily press briefings she will hold.

"And so what I hope is that young people get to dream big and dream bigger than they have before by seeing me stand here and answer all of your questions," she said.

If Jean-Pierre's Haitian parents had had their way, their daughter would be wearing a white doctor's coat and stethoscope instead of the special lapel pin that identifies her as a Biden staffer.

Read more **here**.

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Attack hits local Black publications hard, taking one of their own. (New York Times)

By Alexandra E. Petri

It was late Tuesday morning, and Al-Nisa Banks was on deadline to close her weekly paper, The Challenger Community News, a family-owned publication operated by Black women that has been highlighting the voices of African Americans in Buffalo and other parts of Western New York for nearly 60 years, before it hits newstands on Thursday.

One of its distribution points is the Tops market where Saturday's racist shooting left 10 people dead and three injured. Among those killed was Katherine Massey, a freelancer for The Challenger who Ms. Banks said was community-minded and a prolific writer. Her last column addressed gun violence and regulations.

Ms. Banks, who is now the editor and publisher, has been at the paper, which has a staff of about 12 and a network of contributors, for four decades. "This area is no stranger to racism," Ms. Banks, 75, said. Saturday was another salvo, she added.

For Ms. Banks, the magnitude of the moment and the responsibility The Challenger has to the public feels particularly heightened. The Challenger plans to delve more into history's role in Saturday's massacre and bring the story full circle.

Read more **here**. Shared by Dennis Conrad.

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Ukrainians' struggles resonate with 'war baby' volunteer in Wexford (Irish Times)



Avril Walters has offered her support to Ukrainians arriving into Rosslare Harbour in recent weeks. Photograph: Liam MacEoin

Sylvia Thompson

The displacement of Ukrainian people both within their own country and across Europe in the last few months has been described as the largest movement of refugees since the second World War.

This reference has a personal resonance for Avril Walters, the 82-year-old Wexford-based volunteer, who has offered her support to Ukrainians arriving into Rosslare Harbour in recent weeks. "I have great empathy with the Ukrainians as they arrive here because I was a war baby," says Avril.

"I was born in the middle of the Blitz in London and I can remember being dragged down into air-raid shelters with my grandparents, sitting on blankets with crowds of people."

Her grandparents were Jewish immigrants from Poland whose name Volker was changed to Walters by immigration officials when they arrived in London. Their terraced home and shop was bombed during the war. "They lost everything. The whole East End of London was bombed out. My father was a fire fighter who used to dig people out of the rubble so when I watch the war in Ukraine on the television, I remember the sirens," she explains.

After the war, Walters moved with her family to the northern suburbs of London but says that her childhood was marred by bullying and harassment. "There was a lot of mistrust after the war. Anybody who was an immigrant did suffer because you weren't seen to be part of the team. Because I was Jewish, I was always frightened of being singled out as a child."

In early adulthood, she found a more inclusive group of people through her work as a secretary and copywriter of wire news for the Associated Press of America. "It was an international office and I integrated well. I hope it will be the same for these Ukrainian people arriving in Ireland."

Read more <u>here</u>. Shared by Eileen Murray via Myron Belkind.

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ABC tries something brave: drama with journalist as hero

By DAVID BAUDER and LYNN ELBER

ABC is bringing actress Hilary Swank and the writer of the 2015 Oscar-winning film "Spotlight" together for a new drama about a journalist working in Alaska.

The Thursday series "Alaska" headlines a fall schedule announced Tuesday that also includes an hourlong celebrity version of "Jeopardy!" and leans heavily on returning favorites.

Swank will play Eileen Fitzgerald, described as a "recently disgraced" reporter who leaves a high-profile New York life behind to seek personal and professional redemption up north. The creator is Tom McCarthy, who wrote the film about the Boston Globe's investigation of sexual abuse by Catholic priests.

Craig Erwich, ABC entertainment president, calls it a brave show for this era.

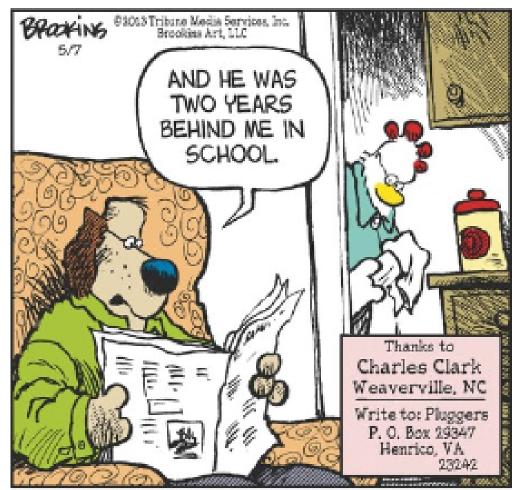
"Telling stories about journalists as heroes is something that's going to get a lot of conversation," Erwich said in an interview Tuesday. "It's a very optimistic look at the profession."

Read more **here**. Shared by Adolphe Bernotas.

The Final Word







A plugger's priorities change with age. As a child, he read the funnies first. As a young man, the sports section came first. In middle age, it was the business section. Now, it's the obits.

Shared by Len Iwanski

Today in History - May 18, 2022



By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, May 18, the 138th day of 2022. There are 227 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 18, 1980, the Mount St. Helens volcano in Washington state exploded, leaving 57 people dead or missing.

On this date:

In 1652, Rhode Island became the first American colony to pass a law abolishing African slavery; however, the law was apparently never enforced.

In 1863, the Siege of Vicksburg began during the Civil War, ending July 4 with a Union victory.

In 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court, in Plessy v. Ferguson, endorsed "separate but equal" racial segregation, a concept renounced 58 years later by Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka.

In 1910, Halley's Comet passed by earth, brushing it with its tail.

In 1927, in America's deadliest school attack, part of a schoolhouse in Bath Township, Michigan, was blown up with explosives planted by local farmer Andrew Kehoe, who then set off a bomb in his truck; the attacks killed 38 children and six adults, including Kehoe, who'd earlier killed his wife. (Authorities said Kehoe, who suffered financial difficulties, was seeking revenge for losing a township clerk election.)

In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a measure creating the Tennessee Valley Authority.

In 1934, Congress approved, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed, the so-called "Lindbergh Act," providing for the death penalty in cases of interstate kidnapping.

In 1973, Harvard law professor Archibald Cox was appointed Watergate special prosecutor by U.S. Attorney General Elliot Richardson.

In 1981, the New York Native, a gay newspaper, carried a story concerning rumors of "an exotic new disease" among homosexuals; it was the first published report about what came to be known as AIDS.

In 1998, the U.S. government filed an antitrust case against Microsoft, saying the powerful software company had a "choke hold" on competitors that was denying consumers important choices about how they bought and used computers. (The Justice Department and Microsoft reached a settlement in 2001.)

In 2015, President Barack Obama ended long-running federal transfers of some combat-style gear to local law enforcement in an attempt to ease tensions between police and minority communities, saying equipment made for the battlefield should not be a tool of American criminal justice.

In 2020, President Donald Trump said he'd been taking a malaria drug, hydroxychloroquine, and a zinc supplement to protect against the coronavirus despite warnings from his own government that the drug should be administered only in a hospital or research setting. Moderna announced that an experimental vaccine against the coronavirus showed encouraging results in early testing.

Ten years ago: Social network Facebook made its trading debut with one of the most highly anticipated IPOs in Wall Street history; however, by day's end, Facebook stock closed up only 23 cents from its initial pricing of \$38. In his first meeting with President Barack Obama, French President Francois Hollande (frahn-SWAH' oh-LAWND') declared he would withdraw all French combat troops from Afghanistan by year's end.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump denounced the appointment of a special counsel to investigate his campaign's potential ties with Russia, repeatedly calling it an unprecedented "witch hunt" that "hurts our country terribly." Roger Ailes, who created and ruled Fox News Channel for two decades before being ousted for alleged sexual harassment, died in Palm Beach, Florida, at age 77.

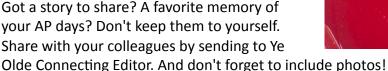
One year ago: Palestinians across Israel and the occupied territories went on strike in a rare collective protest of Israel's policies; the action came as Israeli missiles toppled a six-story building in Gaza and militants in the Hamas-ruled territory fired dozens of rockets that killed two people. The New York attorney general's office said it was conducting a criminal investigation into former President Donald Trump's business empire, expanding what had previously been a civil probe. Actor and writer Charles Grodin, whose films included "Midnight Run" and "The Heartbreak Kid," died in Connecticut of bone marrow cancer at 86.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Priscilla Pointer is 98. Baseball Hall of Famer Brooks Robinson is 84. Actor Candice Azzara is 81. Bluegrass singer-musician Rodney Dillard (The Dillards) is 80. Baseball Hall of Famer Reggie Jackson is 76. Former Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., is 74. Country singer Joe Bonsall (The Oak Ridge Boys) is 74. Rock musician Rick Wakeman (Yes) is 73. Rock singer Mark Mothersbaugh (Devo) is 72. Actor James Stephens is 71. Country singer George Strait is 70. Actor Chow Yun-Fat is 67.

International Tennis Hall of Famer Yannick Noah is 62. Rock singer-musician Page Hamilton is 62. Contemporary Christian musician Barry Graul (MercyMe) is 61. Contemporary Christian singer Michael Tait is 56. Singer-actor Martika is 53. Comedian-writer Tina Fey is 52. Rock singer Jack Johnson is 47. Country singer David Nail is 43. Actor Matt Long is 42. Actor Allen Leech is 41. Christian singer Francesca Battistelli is 37. Actor Spencer Breslin is 30. Actor Violett Beane is 26. Actor Hala Finley is 13.

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 as a newsman in Albany and St. Louis, correspondent in Wichita, chief of bureau in Albuquerque, Indianapolis and Kansas City, and Midwest vice president based in Kansas City.





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.

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