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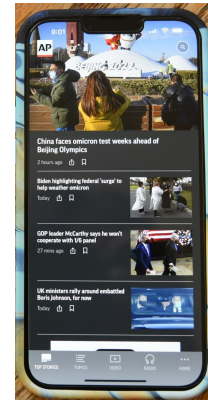
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Connecting

July 19, 2022

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this July 19, 2022,

Behind every good reporter is an editor...

Who needs an editor?

Our nonagenarian colleague **Norm Abelson** explores the topic of “Editors – friends or foes?” in our lead story for today’s Connecting.

Many of us have been on both sides of the fence in our working careers. If you have an opinion to share, I hope you’ll do so.

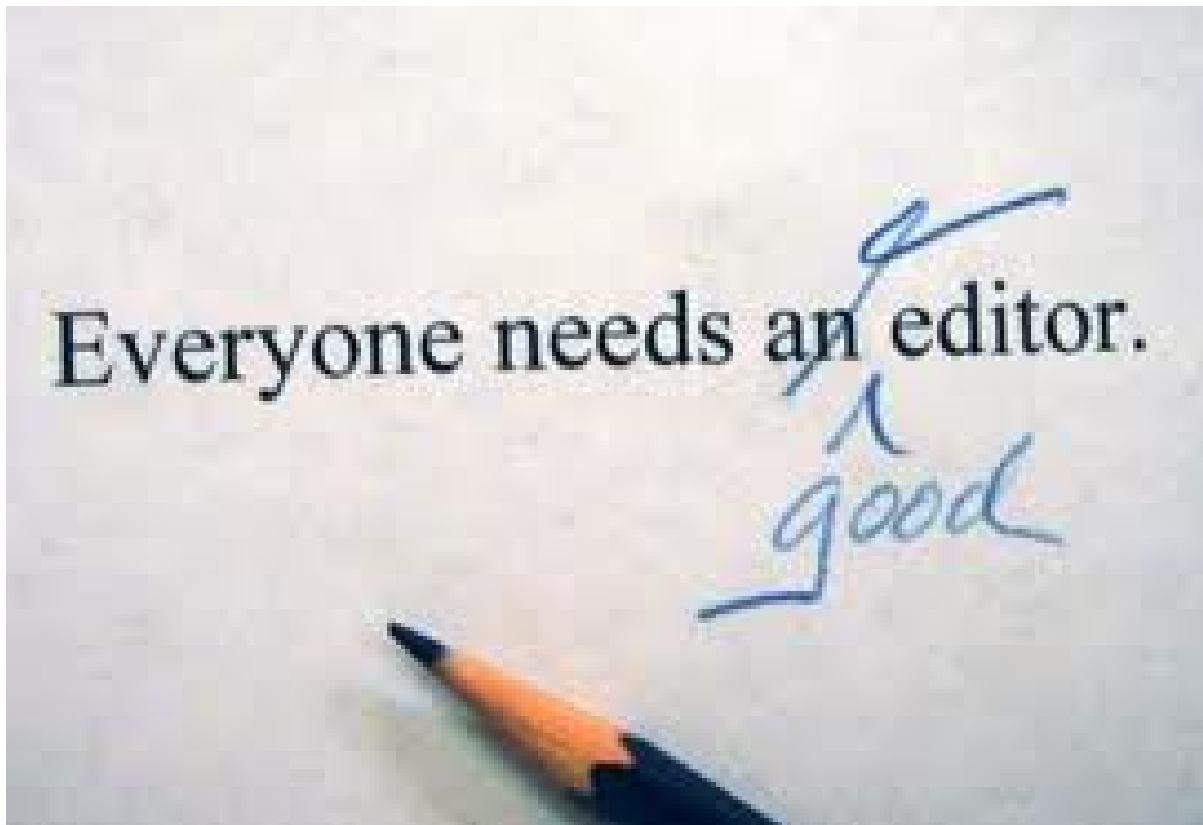
It’s a subject that hits home for Ye Olde Connecting Editor – whose audience is nearly 1,800 editors and reporters who are instinctively quick to point out an error that inevitably creeps its way into the newsletter. Especially when I’m assembling it close to midnight the night before and OllieNo is pacing to head to bed.

(Yep, "an" instead of "and" in second graf - just testing you.)

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

Paul

Editors - friends or foes?



[Norm Abelson](#) - No doubt, editing is an intrinsic part of the writing process, and in my mind can be just as creative.

I first experienced being edited back in my AP days, in the 1950s and 60s. Frank, an old school editor who ate copy boys like me for breakfast, scared the hell out of me. Still, he was the one who assigned and oversaw my first by-lined piece. And he trusted me, a copy boy, to cover the A-wire story of famed TV celebrity Arthur Godfrey's press conference before major surgery.

Joe was the kind-hearted night editor who spent a lot of time teaching me how to compose an AP story, and to get some of my brief efforts on the wire. And to be a cheerleader.

In my first writing assignment as an AP reporter, Bill took me aside, after wearing his blue pencil down to the nub editing some of my first weak efforts. I was pretty discouraged. He said words like these: "Don't worry, kid; you'll get the hang of it; you'll make it."

In recent years, I've been asked often by students in writing classes I taught, how I felt about being edited. Some wanted to know what constituted a good editor. One, I'd reply, who turns out your work improved, not their version of your work. I can recall times when I was editing, whether a news story or a book, I would come up with a killer word or phrase to stick into someone's work. "Just brilliant," I would think to myself. But then I'd remember my own advice – was I improving the writer's work or just going on a little ego trip. Mostly, (full disclosure: but not always) I'd dump my own diamonds over the side.

Others posed questions such as, "Isn't it difficult to turn over a piece you produced with so much sweat to someone who might make changes?" I'd tell them I'd rather get sharp - even painful - criticism from one good editor than later from a bunch of unhappy readers. We were, after all, writing for the readers; if we were writing only for ourselves, and didn't want to be edited, we should keep a diary.

Here's one truism from my experience: No matter how professional the writer or how green the editor, there will be flaws that the author will never spot, but that will strike the editor almost at once. When searching for non-professional editors (ones, you know, who don't get paid) always I looked for voracious readers, folks who belonged to book clubs and always were deep in the middle of one or more volumes. Good fortune came my way. Both my late wife, Dina, and current life partner, Magdalene, fit the bill perfectly. (Of course, I signed an agreement in blood to accept their edits gracefully, with a minimum of pouting.)

Also, I learned a good lesson about "ownership" of a creative endeavor years ago from my friend, Arthur, a damn fine artist. This one evening, all was quiet after hours at the Boston Museum of Fine Art. I was there helping Arthur and the museum curator who had selected the pieces, hang a show of his paintings, set to open the next day. When we finished, Arthur looked at his work, and excitedly appraised one as "really terrific; beautiful."

I asked if he wasn't being a little egotistical. He answered this way: "Not a bit. Once they're out of my hands, they're not mine. I don't own them anymore – the curators do, the viewers do, and, I hope, the buyers. So, for the first time I can be objective." Well, it's that way with my own writing. I've read some of my published work with pride; and, oh yeah, at other times with a shudder.

Have I always been happy with my editors? Of course not. But, looking back, I'd say the great majority of their suggestions and changes improved and clarified my writing. As for the few illiterates who heartlessly did do damage to my deathless prose – what the hell do they know.

New-member profile: Peter Gehrig

Peter Gehrig - My name is Peter Gehrig (yes, like Lou but no relation) and I am a nearly 45-year AP veteran. These years were spent on the German language service of AP, AP GmbH, which besides the French, Dutch, Spanish, Swiss and Swedish services provided news to the media in those countries and Latin America.

I have just recently found out about Connecting after following its predecessors over the years.

My career with AP began on Aug. 1, 1968, in Frankfurt, Germany, as a teletype operator. I had just left the German navy after 4 years with stints at the Military Committee of NATO in Washington D.C. and Brussels and was looking for a job. The man at the Frankfurt employment center asked about my qualifications. When I answered: "I am very good at planning thermo-nuclear wars in Central Europe" he shrugged, replying: "There is not much demand for that in Frankfurt, right now, I am afraid." He gave me the AP address near the infamous Frankfurt Bahnhof and I applied as a teletype operator for the overnight shift. It was there I got my first exposure with AP's international staff not only in Frankfurt but chatting with Marcus Eliason in the Tel Aviv bureau over RTT to pass the boring night hours.



After a summa cum state exam as a Simultaneous Interpreter the AP offered me a job on the foreign news desk in Frankfurt which turned English copy into German news material. I moved through the ranks under COBs like Dick O'Malley, Tom Fenton, Larry Heinzerling, Steve Miller and news editors like Frank Crepeau and Otto Doelling, to name just a few. In 1990 I was promoted to Editor in Chief of the German language service, the position I held until the AP GmbH was sold to a group of investors. The AP GmbH had a staff of about 120 persons covering both national and international news.

In my career I covered international sports and political events for the AP, both for the national and the international services. To many of my former colleagues on the international side I am still connected via FB. Dave Minthorn, Larry Gerber, Steve Graham, Terence Petty, Bob Reid, Dan Perry, John Daniszewski, Kathy Gannon, Larry Thorson, Marcus Eliason, Dave Lubeski, Karen Sloan to name just a very few.

As for anecdotes: My favorite "waiter" is named Lou Boccardi. We were at a Vienna conference together once. On our way back at the Vienna airport lounge, the then AP President and CEO got up and asked matter-of factly: Can I get anyone anything? I answered: Yes, a piece of Sacher cake and a coffee, no milk or sugar, please, meaning it more as a joke. Sure as hell, a few minutes later Lou came back, served the cake and coffee with a perfect bow asking: Will that be all? We still joked about it years later.

Connecting mailbox

About the NYC blackout of 1977



Photo Credit: AP / Steve Oualline

People in a midtown Manhattan bar drink by candlelight after a lightning strike on a power station along the Hudson River on July 13, 1977 plunged the city into darkness.

Jo Steck - Did you know that I had the very first AP picture transmitted from the work on the black out? When the lights went out the photo desk was useless, and I was the only one who knew how to actually operate a camera! I grabbed the camera and went over to Broadway and shot a picture of civilians out in the street directing traffic in the dark!

Chip Hires was a photo desk intern that summer, heir to the Hires Root Beer fortune, and he commuted back to the mainline in Philly every night after work. He was my "bodyguard." He and I ran all over Manhattan that night shooting pictures. Got up at 8 am, walked 2 1/2 miles to my apartment on the East River. Elevators weren't working so we had to walk 31 floors to my apartment, slept six hours and walked back two and a half miles to the AP office. No water in my apartment except for what was in the ice cube trays, all melted. No shower, and one of those super-hot humid New York nights. Good times! I shot a picture of an armed guard with a shotgun on Fifth Avenue guarding the diamond district. I had about eight shots transmitted.

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On Monday edition's Harper Lee memories

Lil Mirando - I never had the honor of meeting Harper Lee. However, I did have the honor of knowing Lee Sentell while working in Decatur, Ala., and can testify that he, as city editor of The Decatur Daily, appreciated the appropriate use or restraint of commas. He sold me his beautiful desk for \$30 because, being fresh out of the University of Alabama, I had no furniture except a mattress and a folding chair. Nearly

50 years later, I still have that fine desk buried in my study somewhere under stacks of papers and books, including Harper Lee's later novel. Thanks for the memories.

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*A view of the 59th Street Bridge - to the tune of,
'Slow down, you move too fast, you got to make the
morning last...'*



[Kathy Willens](#) - I woke up Monday morning to the unfamiliar sounds of a pair of thunderclaps. It hasn't rained in so long I didn't realize what they were. I peered out my window at Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital to see this dramatic view of the Queensborough Bridge, a.k.a. the 59th Street Bridge, for all you Paul Simon fans. I shot this with my iPhone through a window that didn't appear to have been washed in years!

I'm back in for observation after a week of stomach issues. I don't think it's cancer-related as this came during a three-month hiatus from chemo and other treatments but I don't know for sure yet.

I missed the annual New York Press Photographers Association annual awards dinner, something I'd been looking forward to attending for a long time. It would have been one of my only group social events in a year!

But as former NYPPA President Ray Stubblebine learned, one can still take pictures in retirement and good ones too. He won a First Place in Pictorial! Congratulations Ray Stubblebine!

Record heat in Britain



A police officer gives water to a British soldier wearing a traditional bearskin hat, on guard duty outside Buckingham Palace, during hot weather in London on Monday. (AP Photo/Matt Dunham)

Welcome to Connecting



[John Carland](#)

[A.J. Hostetler](#)

Stories of interest

Media Confidence Ratings at Record Lows (Gallup)

BY MEGAN BRENNAN

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Americans' confidence in two facets of the news media -- newspapers and television news -- has fallen to all-time low points. Just 16% of U.S. adults now say they have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in newspapers and 11% in television news. Both readings are down five percentage points since last year.

Gallup has tracked Americans' confidence in newspapers since 1973 and television news since 1993 as part of its annual polling about major U.S. institutions. The latest readings are from a June 1-20 poll that saw declines in confidence ratings for 11 of the 16 institutions measured and no improvements for any.

Television news and newspapers rank nearly at the bottom of that list of institutions, with only Congress garnering less confidence from the public than TV news. While these two news institutions have never earned high confidence ratings, they have fallen in the rankings in recent years.

A majority of Americans have expressed confidence in newspapers only once -- in 1979, when 51% did. But there is a wide margin between that and the second-highest readings of 39% in 1973 and 1990. The trend average for newspapers is 30%, well above the latest reading of 16%, which is the first time the measure has fallen below 20%. The percentage of Americans who say they have "very little" or volunteer that they have no confidence is currently the highest on record, at 46%.

Confidence in television news has never been higher than its initial 46% reading in 1993 and has averaged 27%, considerably higher than the current 11%. This is the fourth consecutive year that confidence in TV news is below 20%. And for just the second time in the trend, a majority of Americans, 53%, now say they have very little or no confidence at all in TV news.

Read more [here](#).

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Pulitzer Board Rejects Trump Request to Toss Out Wins for Russia Coverage (New York Times)

By Katie Robertson

The board of the Pulitzer Prizes, the most prestigious award in journalism, on Monday rejected an appeal by former President Donald J. Trump to rescind a prize given to The New York Times and The Washington Post for coverage of Russian interference in the 2016 election and Russian ties to Mr. Trump's campaign and members of his administration.

The board said in a statement that two independent reviews had found nothing to discredit the prize entries, for which the two news organizations shared the 2018 Pulitzer for national reporting.

The reviews, part of the formal process that the Pulitzers use to examine complaints about winning entries, were conducted after the board heard from Mr. Trump and other complainants.

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

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GOP establishment steps up push to block Trump ally in Ariz. (AP)

By JONATHAN J. COOPER

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey has already helped block one of former President Donald Trump's allies from winning the Republican nomination for governor in a crucial battleground state. Now he's hoping for a repeat in his own backyard.

Ducey is part of a burgeoning effort among establishment Republicans to lift up little-known housing developer Karrin Taylor Robson against former television news anchor Kari Lake, who is backed by Trump. Other prominent Republicans, including former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, have also lined up behind Robson in recent days.

On Monday, Robson's campaign announced the endorsement of former Vice President Mike Pence, who will campaign with her on Friday — the same day Trump is scheduled to hold a rally for Lake, creating a split-screen moment underscoring the divide between the GOP establishment and Trump.

The push for Robson is reminiscent of how many leading Republicans, including Ducey, rallied around Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp in the final stretch of his ultimately successful bid to fend off a Trump-endorsed primary challenger.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

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Dutch court jails 2 men for 5 years for attack on reporter (AP)

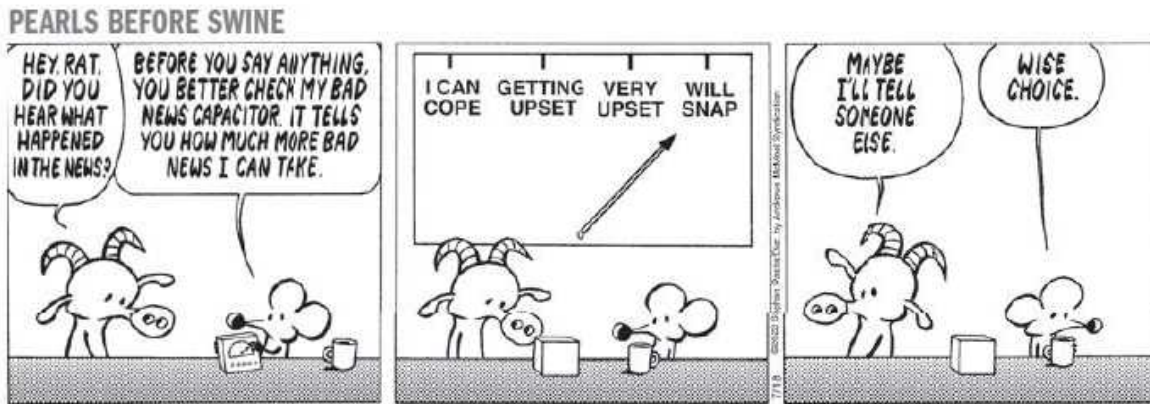
THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — A Dutch court sentenced two men to five years in prison Monday after convicting them of attempted murder and arson for throwing a Molotov cocktail into a journalist’s home in a late-night attack last year.

The court said the two men, identified by Dutch media as Tjeerd P. and Jaimy W. in line with privacy guidelines, launched the attack because one objected to what he considered the negative tone of the reporter’s coverage of demonstrations against the Dutch government’s coronavirus lockdown measures.

The court in the northern city of Groningen said the attackers threw a beer bottle filled with kerosine through a window in the front door of the reporter’s home in the early hours of Aug. 19, last year, causing a small fire.

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

The Final Word



Shared by Adolphe Bernotas.

Today in History – July 19, 2022



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, July 19, the 200th day of 2022. There are 165 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 19, 2005, President George W. Bush announced his choice of federal appeals court judge John G. Roberts Jr. to replace Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. (Roberts ended up succeeding Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, who died in Sept. 2005; Samuel Alito followed O'Connor.)

On this date:

In 1812, during the War of 1812, the First Battle of Sackets Harbor in Lake Ontario resulted in an American victory as U.S. naval forces repelled a British attack.

In 1969, Apollo 11 and its astronauts, Neil Armstrong, Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin and Michael Collins, went into orbit around the moon.

In 1975, the Apollo and Soyuz space capsules that were linked in orbit for two days separated.

In 1979, the Nicaraguan capital of Managua fell to Sandinista guerrillas, two days after President Anastasio Somoza fled the country.

In 1980, the Moscow Summer Olympics began, minus dozens of nations that were boycotting the games because of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan.

In 1989, 111 people were killed when United Air Lines Flight 232, a DC-10 which sustained the uncontained failure of its tail engine and the loss of hydraulic systems, crashed while making an emergency landing at Sioux City, Iowa; 185 other people survived.

In 1990, baseball's all-time hits leader, Pete Rose, was sentenced in Cincinnati to five months in prison for tax evasion.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton announced a policy allowing homosexuals to serve in the military under a compromise dubbed "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue."

In 2006, prosecutors reported that Chicago police beat, kicked, shocked or otherwise tortured scores of Black suspects from the 1970s to the early 1990s to try to extract confessions from them.

In 2014, a New York City police officer (Daniel Pantaleo) involved in the arrest of Eric Garner, who died in custody two days earlier after being placed in an apparent chokehold, was stripped of his gun and badge and placed on desk duty. (Pantaleo was fired in August 2019.) Actor James Garner, 86, died in Los Angeles.

In 2016, Republicans meeting in Cleveland nominated Donald Trump as their presidential standard-bearer; in brief videotaped remarks, Trump thanked the delegates, saying: "This is a movement, but we have to go all the way."

In 2020, President Donald Trump refused to publicly commit to accepting the results of the upcoming election, telling Chris Wallace on “Fox News Sunday” that it was too early to make any such guarantee.

Ten years ago: A controversy pitting gay rights against religious freedom began as a cake shop owner in Lakewood, Colorado, refused to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple. (The Supreme Court would rule that Colorado’s Civil Rights Commission displayed anti-religious bias when it sanctioned the shop owner; the court did not rule on the larger issue of whether businesses can invoke religious objections to refuse service to gays and lesbians.)

Five years ago: Sen. John McCain’s office said the 80-year-old Arizona Republican and former presidential nominee had been diagnosed with a brain tumor, glioblastoma. President Donald Trump told The New York Times that he would have chosen someone else to be attorney general if he’d known that Jeff Sessions would recuse himself from the FBI probe into possible ties between Trump’s campaign and Russia.

One year ago: A Florida man, Paul Allard Hodgkins, who breached the U.S. Senate chamber on Jan. 6 carrying a Trump campaign flag received an eight-month prison term; it was the first resolution for a felony case in the Capitol insurrection. The Biden administration took a step toward its goal of shutting down the Guantánamo Bay detention center for terror suspects, releasing into the custody of his home country a Moroccan (Abdullatif Nasser) who’d been held without charge almost since the U.S. opened the facility 19 years earlier. Ben & Jerry’s said it would stop selling its ice cream in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and contested east Jerusalem, saying sales in the territories sought by the Palestinians were inconsistent with the company’s values.

Today’s Birthdays: Actor Helen Gallagher is 96. Singer Vikki Carr is 82. Blues singer-musician Little Freddie King is 82. Actor George Dzundza is 77. Rock singer-musician Alan Gorrie (Average White Band) is 76. International Tennis Hall of Famer Ilie Nastase is 76. Rock musician Brian May is 75. Rock musician Bernie Leadon is 75. Actor Beverly Archer is 74. Movie director Abel Ferrara is 71. Actor Peter Barton is 66. Rock musician Kevin Haskins (Love and Rockets; Bauhaus) is 62. Movie director Atom Egoyan is 62. Actor Campbell Scott is 61. Actor Anthony Edwards is 60. Actor Clea Lewis is 57. Percussionist Evelyn Glennie is 57. Classical singer Urs Buhler (Il Divo) is 51. Actor Andrew Kavovit is 51. Rock musician Jason McGerr (Death Cab for Cutie) is 48. Actor Benedict Cumberbatch is 46. Actor Erin Cummings is 45. TV chef Marcela Valladolid is 44. Actor Chris Sullivan (“This is Us”) is 42. Actor Jared Padalecki is 40. Actor Trai Byers is 39. Actor Kaitlin Doubleday (“Nashville”) is 38. Actor/comedian Dustin Ybarra is 36. Actor Steven Anthony Lawrence is 32.

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.

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

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