

SHARE:

[Join Our Email List](#)

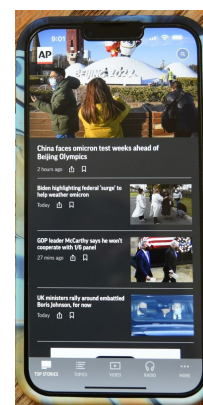
[View as Webpage](#)



Connecting

July 20, 2022

Click [here](#) for sound of the Teletype



[Top AP News](#)
[Top AP Photos](#)
[AP Merchandise](#)

[Connecting Archive](#)
[AP Emergency Relief Fund](#)
[AP Books](#)

Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this July 20, 2022,

Today's Connecting brings you word of the upcoming release of a biography on one of the AP's and newspapering's finest journalists – **Burl Osborne**.

"Burl: Journalism Giant and Medical Trailblazer", authored by **Jane Wolfe** and published by **Andrews McMeel Publishing**, is set for release on Sept. 6, 2022, according to a press release issued recently.

In 1960, Osborne began his AP career as correspondent in Bluefield, W. Va. He was bureau chief in Louisville and Columbus, assistant bureau chief in Washington and served as AP's managing editor from 1977-80

before leaving New York for Dallas to become editor and publisher of the Dallas Morning News, president of A.H. Belo Corporation's publishing division and a member of its board.

Osborne was elected to the AP Board of Directors in 1993 and served for 14 years, the last five as chairman, from 2002 to 2007. He retired as publisher emeritus of the Morning News in 2007 and died in 2012 at the age of 75. Click [here](#) to read the AP story on his death, written by AP national writer **Adam Geller**.

The book also relates the health issues that he faced and overcame from the time he was diagnosed with a fatal kidney disease as a child growing up in rural Kentucky. He pioneered home dialysis treatment and became only the 130th person to undergo a live kidney transplant in 1966—then an unproven, high-risk operation.

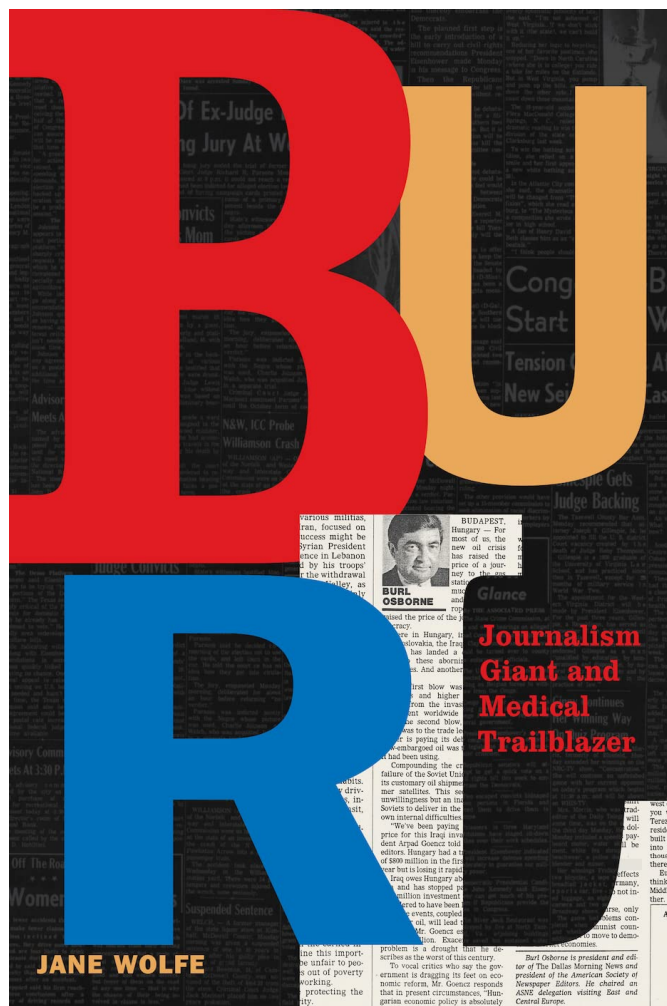
Burl's wife **Betty Osborne** – the force behind the biography – is today part of our newsletter family. Regarding Betty, I thought I would share this from [his obituary](#):

“His unending love for his soul mate and muse, Betty, whom he met in 1971 and whom he married in 1974, was as legendary among those who knew them as were his accomplishments in journalism. They traveled the world together, finished each other's sentences and spoke every day – save for 10 or so when Burl was traveling for business in far flung places with no phones or cell reception.”

I know many of you worked with him over his two decades with the AP, and beyond. If you would like to share a favorite memory, please send it along.

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul



Biography of Burl Osborne spotlights legendary journalist who won one of the

last great newspaper wars in the U.S.



Excerpted from Books news release

Best-selling biographer Jane Wolfe's latest book – "Burl: Journalism Giant and Medical Trailblazer" (Sept. 6, 2022, Andrews McMeel Publishing) – looks at legendary journalist Burl Osborne's extraordinary life and career.

The book is scheduled for release Sept. 6 and can be pre-ordered through [Amazon](#) and other book outlets.

"Burl" is the story of one man's unlikely rise from the coal mines of Appalachia to the pinnacle of journalism. After being diagnosed with a fatal kidney disease as a child, Burl Osborne pioneered home dialysis treatment and became only the 130th person to undergo a live kidney transplant in 1966—then an unproven, high-risk operation.

While managing his challenging illness, Burl distinguished himself early as a writer and reporter with The Associated Press, eventually rising to become managing editor. Then, against the advice of his colleagues and the newspaper's own doctors, he sought an even greater challenge: joining The Dallas Morning News to lead the fight in one of America's last great newspaper wars.

Throughout his life and career, he garnered respect from business and political leaders, reporters, editors, and publishers around the country. "Burl" thrusts readers

into the improbable and remarkable life of a man at the forefront of both medicine and a golden age of journalism.

Wolfe is the author of two previous biographies, “The Murchisons: The Rise and Fall of a Texas Dynasty” (St. Martin’s Press) and “Blood Rich: When Oil Billions, High Fashion, and Royal Intimacies Are Not Enough” (Little, Brown & Co.). She is also a freelance writer for several publications, including the New York Times and Town & Country magazine. Although she lived in Dallas from 1980 until 2019, she now resides in the city where she was born, Columbus, Ohio, and where her family for more than a century owned The Columbus Dispatch.



(L–R) David Woo (*Morning News* photographer), Burl, President Reagan, and Carl Leubsdorf January 8, 1985 (Credit: Official White House photo)

Excerpts from q-and-a with Wolfe:

The news industry has a lot of legends — why did you choose to write about Burl Osborne? What sets him apart?

Burl was that rare publisher and editor for whom integrity and fairness were his guiding principles. He learned early on – as a TV news reporter at the very start of his career – that if he was neither too far left nor too far right, and if he played his stories straight down the middle, he would not only be more credible but also have more success as a journalist. It was an early lesson in fairness from a journalism teacher he respected – and he never forgot it.

I was impressed by his extraordinary drive and energy, which were especially remarkable given his kidney problems. After his early kidney transplant, with just one working kidney, he rose quickly up the ladder with the Associated Press, causing one reporter to quip, "Imagine what he could do with two kidneys!"

Did anything surprise you when looking into Burl's life and career?

Many things surprised me. He was very smart but subjected his body to great danger. After his first kidney transplant, his surgeon in Denver warned him to stay off of the ski slopes because the massive amount of steroids he was taking made his bones brittle. A fall on the slopes would likely mean one or more broken bones. Burl ignored the surgeon's advice and skied fast and often.

He also took chances driving too fast. When he was still in high school, he was lucky to walk away from a car that he totaled in a very bad accident. Later, when he owned a Ferrari, he raced it at over 120 miles an hour on freeways around Dallas and at least once nearly crashed into another car.

Remembering Burl – his zest for life, always in a hurry



Jonathan Osborne and his wife Brigitte with Betty and Burl, Austin, Texas circa 2010.

Betty Osborne - Burl was five years post-transplant when we met. He had such a zest for life and lived every day to the fullest. Always in a hurry. Every day with him was like that until the day he lost the race.

As I began the sad process of sorting through his papers, I knew that his story needed to be shared for future generations. When told he wouldn't live past his teenage years, he proved the doctor wrong. When told he would die if he had a kidney transplant in 1966, he proved those doctors wrong. When folks said that this AP guy coming to Dallas couldn't run a newspaper, he proved the naysayers wrong.

A prolific writer, he left a treasure trove of medical records, newspaper clippings, AP bylines from his early reporting days, correspondence, speeches, editorials, industry magazine articles, emails. He kept everything. Jane Wolfe and I found his college thesis and his graduate thesis in a shredding bin that we thankfully recovered.

Burl inspired many and gave hope to those with chronic kidney disease by writing stories for the AP wire about his kidney failure, home kidney dialysis and transplant. He inspired many in journalism by showing what good journalism could be. He understood his role as a member of the press. He learned very early the power of the printed word. He insisted on fairness and accuracy in his own writing and reporting and expected nothing less from the reporters in his newsrooms. He was a tireless champion for a free press. He was a founding board member of The Committee To Protect Journalists, on whose board he served until his death,

When Burl died, one of the local TV stations began its coverage: "A giant in the industry has died." This inspired the title of the biography.

Burl aspired to be the best that he could be and inspired others to follow along with him. With this biography our hope is that future generations of journalists will read his words and be inspired to be their best too.

Reading his story, our hope is that others who face the life-or-death decisions of transplantation will be inspired to give it a try. And, may reluctant organ donors find Burl's story encouraging enough to donate.

Please enjoy the read.

Editors and reporters

[Harry Atkins](#) - Best editor ever: Paula Froke. First, second and third. Nobody else is even in the race. (Paula is now editor of the AP Stylebook.)

-0-

[Tom Kent](#) - I very much enjoyed Norm Abelson's comments on editing. Put me down as an advocate for editors. I know that, fundamentally, writing and editing are conflicting crafts. In bureaus where I was both a writer and editor I could change attitudes toward the editing process multiple times in a day, depending on whether I was rescuing an awful mess (in my view) turned in by someone else, or watching an incompetent editor (in my view) waste a half-hour ravaging a story of mine that was just fine as I'd turned it in.

That said, I recognized from the start that I had signed up to work for a company that had very definite ideas of what news copy should look like. The editor was in charge,

and the most important byline was the AP logo. It was the AP, not the writer, who owned, distributed and had to stand behind that story in every way.

As time went on, we talked more at the AP about the need to preserve “the writer’s voice,” especially in enterprise copy. We had some terrific writers whose work, indeed, deserved substantial respect at the editing desk. Many other writers, though, complained about the most minor of changes. Often, the writer was technically right: the editor changed something for no good reason. But rarely did the editor change the meaning of the copy. How many messages and calls of complaint was this worth? Why not just accept some random changes as the price for having your stories and byline published worldwide within minutes?

The best solution, of course, is deliberate, collaborative editing with the writer and editor working closely together. This should happen whenever possible, and it often does. But it can’t be guaranteed, given the pace and complexity of AP’s work.

I continue to write a good deal now, mainly about world affairs. Editors often ask for cuts, move paragraphs around or make stylistic changes that I see no need for. My feeling is: if their actions don’t change what I want to say and will get the story out more quickly, so be it. When I feel my personal voice must be heard, I’ll write a novel.

-0-

Margaret Lillard - One of the most reassuring and rewarding things anyone said to me during my time on the General Desk was when I, then weekend supervisor, had to call Charlie Hanley about an apparent error in a story that had been pre-packaged (meaning, edited keenly by someone more senior than me) for spot release on Saturday.

Once we had the issue sorted out, I apologized to Charlie for questioning his work. "Not a problem at all," he said. "The day I think I don't need an editor is the day I need to find another line of work."

I share that quote regularly to this day, including very recently with my two summer interns here at the N.C. Sierra Club. They have standing orders to tell me if they see any problems in my writing!

Memories of the 1977 NYC blackout

Dan Sewell - On the evening of July 14, 1977, during the NYC blackout, newly acquired (from the Mets) Reds pitcher Tom Seaver was working on a no-hitter in Cincinnati.

As The AP summer intern staffing the game, I was getting really nervous. As was the procedure then, I was dictating play-by-play to NY Sports (maybe it was Dick Joyce that night?).

Then, Willie Montanez got a 7th-inning hit, and the guy in Sports says “Good-bye,” and hangs up.

So I suddenly had to regroup and figure out my lede.

It wasn't difficult: George Foster hit 3 home runs and Tom Seaver took a no-hitter into the seventh inning as the Reds...

The New York Post, with "Tom Terrific" in their headline, used my story on the back cover while the front section was filled with blackout stories.

-0-



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.

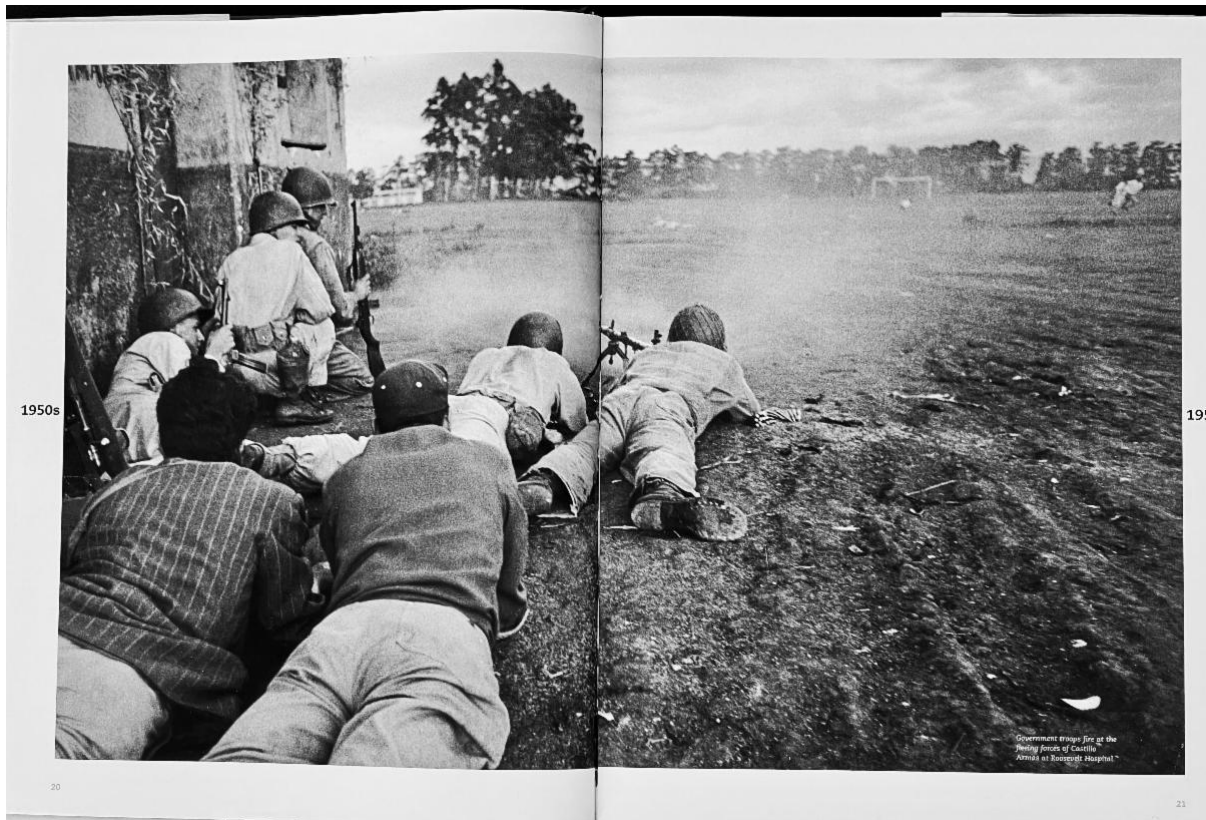
(EDITOR'S NOTE: This story appeared in Tuesday's Connecting with an incorrect credit to Jo Steck. She shared the story but it was written by Steve Oualline, former NY and LA photo editor and supervisor.)

Steve Oualline - Did you know that I had the very first AP picture transmitted from the work on the blackout? 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.

A full-circle moment, fulfilling Dirck Halstead's last wish



David Kennerly - Dirck Halstead had just graduated from high school in 1954 when he heard that photographer Robert Capa had been killed covering the Vietnam War. Dirck write about it in his book, "Moments in Time."

"Robert Capa dead? Couldn't be. Robert Capa was my hero. To me he was the epitome of a war photographer: handsome, brave, had an affair with Ingrid Bergman . . . I heard that Capa was being brought to the United States for burial in Amawalk, New York . . . On the day of the ceremony, I arrived at the Quaker cemetery early . . . A few minutes before

the burial was supposed to take place, John Morris who was then the head of Magnum Photos, came up and asked me to leave. At this point, a rough wooden casket, almost like a shipping box, was ushered into the cemetery . . . I began to cry. John Morris suddenly looked stricken, and he asked me to wait. A moment later he came back and said, 'You know, you are a photographer, he would have wanted you here.' So I photographed the burial and wrote a story for the Patent Trader about what Capa meant to me."

A week later Dirck gave John Morris a set of the funeral prints. He told Dirck that there was a story that might interest him about a group of American students going to Guatemala to build a school. Dirck had also heard about a possible war brewing there. "I thought this was my big chance," he said. Dirck approached LIFE Magazine about the assignment, and they said they would give him \$1,000 and free film. "That was a goldmine to a kid who had been getting ten dollars a picture!" The LIFE editors didn't know that they were sending a 17-year-old kid into danger.



Before Dirck left the states he visited his hero's grave. "As I walked to Capa's tombstone the wind started to kick up. A clap of thunder echoed through the cemetery as rain started to pour down. I stood over his grave as the rain ran down my face. For a moment I thought I could feel the great photographer's presence. Whatever it was, I allowed it to mingle with mine. I was convinced that I had taken on Robert Capa's spirit and that I was going to be covering my first war."

And he did. It was a short one, but Dirck made some good action photos of the combat. LIFE wrote in their contents page about Dirck and a letter to his parents: "Dear Folks—as I sit here at my typewriter pounding out this letter, I can hear gunfire in the distance . . . You guessed it—I'VE COVERED MY FIRST BATTLE!"

LIFE used his picture big. A career was born.



Photo of David Kennerly, by Rick Smolan

When I left Dirck's ashes at Capa's gravesite in a Canon battery case it was a full-circle moment. The spirit and presence of one great photographer was joined with another. It was Dirck's last wish.

Capa had to be smiling.

A Columnist? You Could Be One Too

[Michael Doan](#) - Move over, Mike Royko and Herb Caen. I have my own local column!

I am certainly no comedian, but writers have told me over the years that occasionally I revealed a tongue-in-cheek style. "You should write a column," I was told. Naah!

The writing styles of AP, U.S. News and Kiplinger Letters do not lend themselves to humor or irony. But for many of us, that urge lingers.

As we gradually moved from Washington, D.C., to South Boston, VA., I wrote occasional local news articles for the two (yes two!) content-starved newspapers. When I suggested a column in the News & Record last spring, the editor welcomed it right away. (I'm not getting paid.)

So what do I write about? Not politics—I don't like to offend people. Well, mostly I write about myself and my experiences, hoping that others can relate to them. I try to put a local angle to them when possible. I reviewed a local musical and the 4th of July parades last month. My first column was my love/hate relationship with our dogs. Then I wrote about the odd circumstances that led me to be co-owner of a bed & breakfast. I had been writing this one in my mind for 30 years but never found a place to publish it.

I'll bet you have such stories too. Besides the newspaper, I have put the columns on Facebook, where they have gotten a good response. I have put them all [here on Blogspot](#).

Stories of interest

What do 6 of the most iconic photos since Civil War say about how we see history?

Stan Alost and Tim Goheen
Guest columnists, The Columbus Dispatch

Stan Alost is professor and graduate director at Ohio University's Scripps College of Communication/School of Visual Communication. Tim Goheen is director of Ohio University's School of Visual Communication.

The recent 50th anniversary of the "Napalm Girl" photo from Vietnam is a compelling reminder of the power of a single frame ... a terrified 9-year-old after a bombing in 1972.

That photo by Nick Ut for The Associated Press is among the most influential pictures of all time. A half-century later, when nearly everyone has a phone camera, is the power of photography enhanced or diluted?

Read more [here](#). Shared by Ken Klein.

-0-

Words of War: A Literary Lifeline for the Battlefield

(New York Times)

Even the newest of correspondents knows not to go into a war zone without the right training, the right gear and the right exit plan. But some seasoned reporters have learned that they need something more to sustain them through the bleak days and nights of carnage. Something to remind them of the humanity beneath the inhumanity. For some, it is poetry.

Few correspondents are more seasoned than Alissa J. Rubin, who in 15 years at The New York Times has served as a bureau chief in Baghdad, Kabul and Paris and before that covered conflict in the Balkans. We asked her to talk about what she reads when her job brings her to the battlefield.

By Alissa J. Rubin

When I think about poems for a war zone or really for covering anything sad or traumatic — so much, of course, is sad that isn't war — some of the ones that come to mind may at first strike some people as off the point. But each one I describe here calls on us to find the humanity amid the brutality, to pay attention to the details, and shows us how the smallest thing can be infinitely large, that it can convey tragedy but also remind us that beauty still exists, that there can be life even in the rubble — and, yes, even love.

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

Today in History – July 20, 2022



By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, July 20, the 201st day of 2022. There are 164 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 20, 1969, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin became the first men to walk on the moon after reaching the surface in their Apollo 11 lunar module.

On this date:

In 1917, America's World War I draft lottery began as Secretary of War Newton Baker, wearing a blindfold, reached into a glass bowl and pulled out a capsule containing the number 258 during a ceremony inside the Senate office building.

In 1944, an attempt by a group of German officials to assassinate Adolf Hitler with a bomb failed as the explosion only wounded the Nazi leader. President Franklin D. Roosevelt was nominated for a fourth term of office at the Democratic convention in Chicago.

In 1951, Jordan's King Abdullah I was assassinated in Jerusalem by a Palestinian gunman who was shot dead on the spot by security.

In 1976, America's Viking 1 robot spacecraft made a successful, first-ever landing on Mars.

In 1977, a flash flood hit Johnstown, Pennsylvania, killing more than 80 people and causing \$350 million worth of damage. The U.N. Security Council voted to admit Vietnam to the world body.

In 1990, Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan, one of the court's most liberal voices, announced he was stepping down.

In 1993, White House deputy counsel Vincent Foster Jr., 48, was found shot to death in a park near Washington, D.C.; his death was ruled a suicide.

In 2006, the Senate voted 98-0 to renew the landmark 1965 Voting Rights Act for another quarter-century.

In 2007, President George W. Bush signed an executive order prohibiting cruel and inhuman treatment, including humiliation or denigration of religious beliefs, in the detention and interrogation of terrorism suspects.

In 2010, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted almost totally along party lines, 13-6, to approve Elena Kagan to be the Supreme Court's fourth female justice.

In 2013, longtime White House correspondent Helen Thomas, 92, died in Washington.

In 2015, the United States and Cuba restored full diplomatic relations after more than five decades of frosty relations rooted in the Cold War. The U.N. Security Council unanimously endorsed a landmark deal to rein in Iran's nuclear program.

Ten years ago: Gunman James Holmes opened fire inside a crowded movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, during a midnight showing of "The Dark Knight Rises," killing 12 people and wounding 70 others. (Holmes was later convicted of murder and attempted murder, and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.) After years of preparation and months of buildup, London's Olympic moment finally arrived as Royal Marine Martyn Williams carried the Olympic torch from a Royal Navy Sea King helicopter into the Tower of London on the shore of the River Thames (tehmz).

Five years ago: O.J. Simpson was granted parole after more than eight years in prison for a hotel room heist in Las Vegas. (He was released on October 1.)

One year ago: New York prison officials handed convicted rapist Harvey Weinstein over to authorities in California, where the former movie mogul faced additional sexual assault charges. Giannis Antetokounmpo (YAH'-nihs an-teh-toh-KOON'-poh) scored 50 points as the Milwaukee Bucks beat the Phoenix Suns 105-98 to win the NBA finals, 4-2; it was the first championship for the Bucks in 50 years. Jeff Bezos (BAY'-zohs) blasted into space from West Texas on his rocket company's first flight with people on board, becoming the second billionaire in just over a week to ride his own spacecraft. (Virgin Galactic's Richard Branson had moved up the launch of his own flight from New Mexico and beat Bezos to space by nine days.)

Today's Birthdays: Author Cormac McCarthy is 89. Former Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski, D-Md., is 86. Artist Judy Chicago is 83. Rock musician John Lodge (The Moody Blues) is 79. Country singer T.G. Sheppard is 78. Singer Kim Carnes is 77. Rock musician Carlos Santana is 75. Rock musician Jay Jay French (Twisted Sister) is 70. Rock musician Paul Cook (The Sex Pistols, Man Raze) is 66. Actor Donna Dixon is 65. Rock musician Mick MacNeil (Simple Minds) is 64. Country singer Rodney Foster is 63. Actor Frank Whaley is 59. Actor Dean Cain is 58. Rock musician Stone Gossard (Pearl Jam) is 56. Actor Reed Diamond is 55. Actor Josh Holloway is 53. Singer Vitamin C is 53. Actor Sandra Oh is 51. Actor Omar Epps is 49. Actor Simon Rex is 48. Actor Judy Greer is 47. Actor Charlie Korsmo is 44. Singer Elliott Yamin (yah-MEEN') (American Idol) is 44. Supermodel Gisele Bundchen is 42. Rock musician Mike Kennerty (The All-American Rejects) is 42. Actor Percy Daggs III is 40. Actor John Francis Daley is 37. Dancer-singer-actor Julianne Hough is 34. Washington Nationals pitcher Stephen Strasburg is 34.

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
 Editor, Connecting newsletter
paulstevens46@gmail.com

