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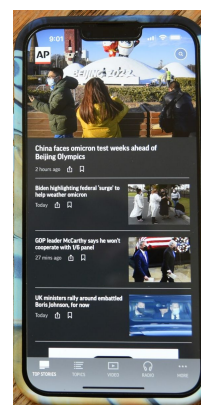
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# Connecting

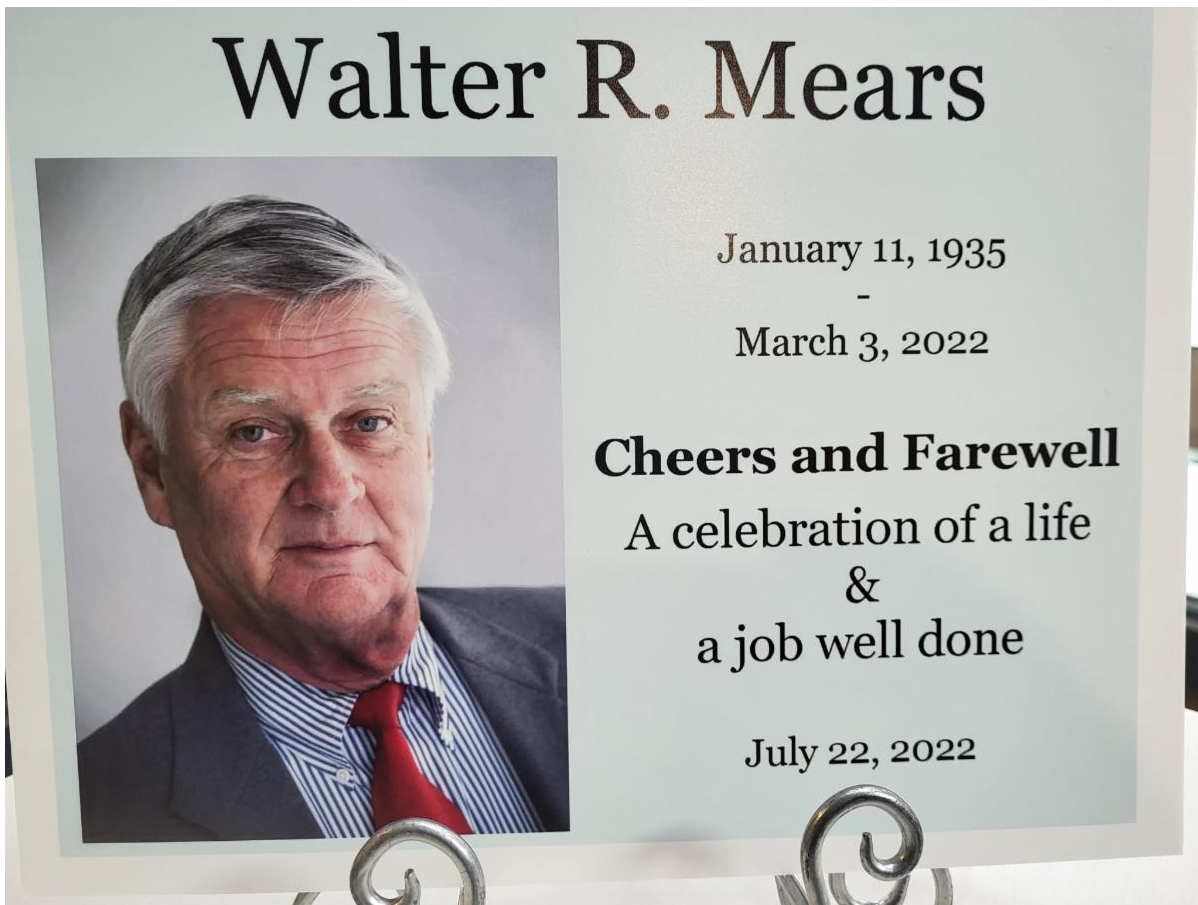
July 25, 2022

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Former Washington CoB Ron Fournier shares a toast to Walter Mears and some memories including "how Walter had a way about finding the best in all of us, often over a couple glasses of Jack Daniel's." (Photo/John Diamond)





One of Walter's trusty manual typewriters on display - with his letterhead.

Good Monday morning on this July 25, 2022,

**Walter R. Mears**, one of journalism's best-ever political writers, was remembered fondly Friday night by family and former colleagues who gathered to honor the Associated Press legend at the National Press Club in Washington.

Mears, who won the Pulitzer Prize for his political reporting, died March 3 at the age of 87. Click [here](#) for his obituary.

By all accounts shared with Connecting, it was a great night. Click [here](#) for a video that Walter's daughters, **Stephanie Stich** and **Susan Mears**, composed and which was shown continuously throughout the special night.

"The girls and their families shared dad/granddad stories and enjoyed the stories that Walter's news colleagues shared," wrote colleague **Margaret Callahan**, who worked as a confidential secretary in the Washington bureau.

**Julie Pace**, AP's executive editor, was there – and so were two other former Washington bureau chiefs: **Ron Fournier** (now president of Truscott Rossman integrated communications company in Detroit) and **Sally Buzbee** (now executive editor of The Washington Post).

"I was at the event to honor the memory of my professional hero," said retired Washington Congressional correspondent **David Espo**, "and the man who helped my career more than anyone else by far."

We lead today's Connecting with stories and photos from the memorial.

Today's issue comes to you from a hotel room in my hometown in Fort Dodge, Iowa, where I will be attending the funeral of a longtime family friend this morning. **Janet Habhab**, wife of our colleague **Albert Habhab**, died at the age of 92. The Habhabs were best friends to my parents. I was privileged to write a story about her life for The Messenger. Click [here](#).

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

Paul

## A fond -30- to Walter R. Mears

**Julie Pace** – *AP executive editor and former Washington bureau chief* - Walter's memorial was a wonderful celebration – both of his legendary career in journalism and of the close bond he had with his family, which was evident in the warm remarks from his daughters and grandchildren. It was also a great tribute to the lasting impact he had on AP. I was heartened to hear that so many of the qualities that made Walter one of the best – his doggedness, his fairness and objectivity, his love of a big story – are still ones we value at AP today.

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**Margaret Callahan** - *AP Washington confidential secretary, 1976-1984*: Stephanie and Susan (Walter's daughters) did an excellent set up in the room with the slide show playing on a loop, and 2 tables set up with scanned photos from the slide show so if you saw yourself or just wanted one of Walter, it was yours to take. On one of the

tables Susan had brought one of Walter's typewriters which you could also use to type a memory or thought and leave for the family. The girls also had pieces of Walter's stationery on the table as well for the taking and I got a piece from when he was Chief of Bureau which I would have typed correspondence on for him. Reid Miller and his wife Pauline Jelinek were there.

It was touching to me to chat with the girls because they remembered the one night I stayed with them to be an adult in the house while Walter and Joyce attended an out-of-town function. Stephanie was possibly a sophomore in school and Susan a pre teen. It was December 8, 1980, because Stephanie had left me a note to see when I woke that John Lennon had been shot. That was Walter's influence on her with being attentive to the days' news.

Along with Merrill Hartson, we were some of the first folks there and the last to leave!

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**John Diamond** - I shared a story about how, in the early 1990s, when I was the New England regional reporter in the DC bureau, I was writing about the recently released LBJ tapes (anything JFK-related would be sent my way). In among the important calls involving high matters if state were a few late-night calls Johnson placed to the UPI Washington bureau, invariably to complain about some minor inaccuracy in their White House copy. The startled night desk would at first sound like they weren't sure it really was the President calling. (Johnson had the tickers right there in the Oval). So I took the material to Walter's office and asked him if he'd seen these. He took a look and said, 'Oh, that used to happen all the time. We started to suspect UPI was doing it on purpose. But Helen Thomas would get things wrong, Johnson would call the bureau to complain, and they'd get in a couple of questions in and put an exclusive interview with the President on the wire. I'd get called in the middle of the night to try and match it...'





**Reid Miller, former Washington assistant bureau chief (left), talks with retired AP Washington newsman Merrill Hartson. Photo/Margaret Callahan.**



Frank Aukofer, retired Washington bureau chief for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and a former president of the National Press Club, types out a memory of Walter Mears on one of his manual typewriters. Photo/Margaret Callahan.

## How an AP reporter broke the Tuskegee syphilis story



By ALLEN G. BREED

SOUTHPORT, N.C. (AP) — Jean Heller was toiling away on the floor of the Miami Beach Convention Center when an Associated Press colleague from the opposite end of the country walked into her workspace behind the event stage and handed her a thin manila envelope.



“I’m not an investigative reporter,” Edith Lederer told the 29-year-old Heller as competitors typed away beyond the thick grey hangings separating news outlets covering the 1972 Democratic National Convention. “But I think there might be something here.”

Inside were documents telling a tale that, even today, staggers the imagination: For four decades, the U.S. government had denied hundreds of poor, Black men treatment for syphilis so researchers could study its ravages on the human body.

The U.S. Public Health Service called it “The Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male.” The world would soon come to know it simply as the “Tuskegee Study” — one of the biggest medical scandals in U.S. history, an atrocity that continues to fuel mistrust of government and health care among Black Americans.

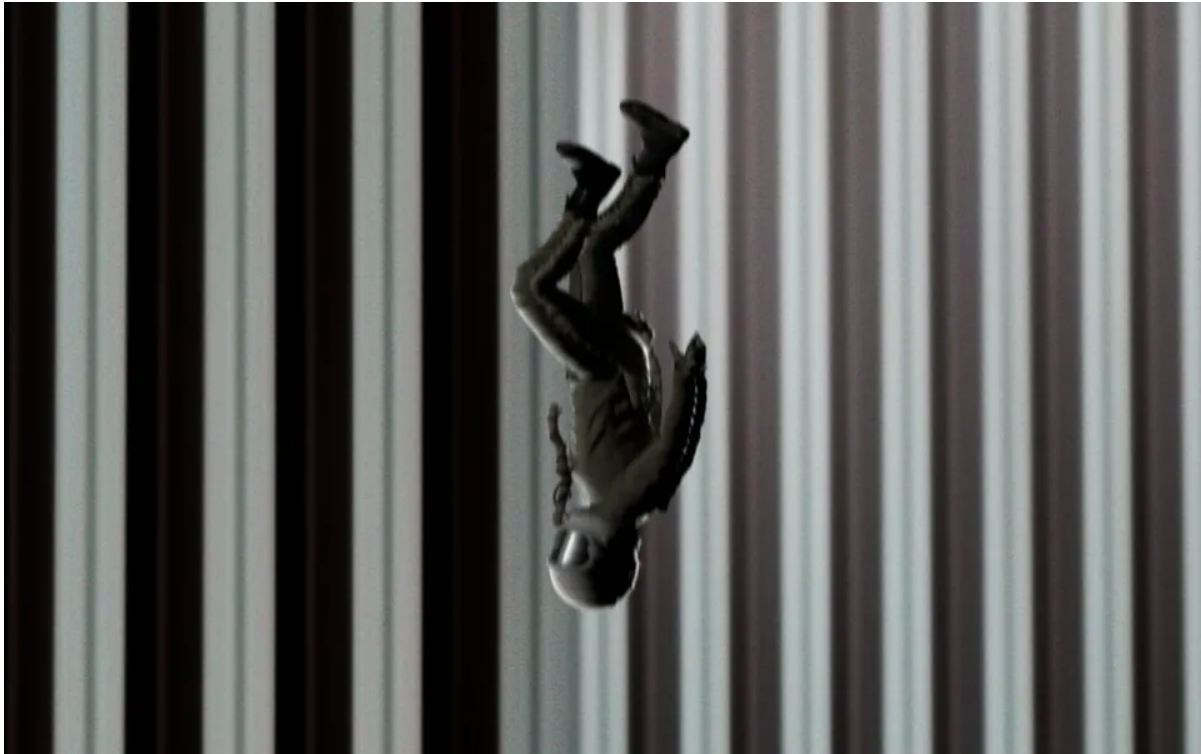
“I thought, ‘It couldn’t be,’” Heller recalls of that moment, 50 years ago. “The ghastliness of this.”



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

Click [here](#) for story: AP exposes the Tuskegee Syphilis Study: The 50th Anniversary

## GameStop is letting someone sell an NFT that references a famous 9/11 photo



**Igor Bonifacic**  
Yahoo Finance

Less than two weeks into its soft launch, GameStop's NFT marketplace is already courting controversy. Among the NFTs listed on the platform is an artwork called "Falling Man" that was spotted by Web3 is Going Great. There's no mistaking it, the NFT references one of the most iconic photos of the early 21st century. "The Falling Man" is part of a series of images captured by Associated Press photojournalist Richard Drew on the morning of September 11th, 2001. Of the 2,753 people who died inside the World Trade Center and surrounding area that day, it's estimated that at least 100 individuals fell to their death while the towers were still standing.

"This one probably fell from the MIR station," says the NFT's description, referencing Russia's decommissioned space station. The artwork's creator is selling two different versions of "Falling Man," with the cheapest listed at 0.65 Ethereum or about \$990. As Web3 is Going Great points out, GameStop operates a curated NFT marketplace. Artists must apply and pass a vetting process before they can list their tokens for sale. The company takes a 2.25 percent cut of sales. GameStop did not immediately respond to Engadget's comment request.

Artistic theft is a major issue in the NFT space. On platforms like OpenSea where people can mint tokens for free, fake and plagiarized content abounds. While you could make the argument that "Falling Man" doesn't fall into those categories and that artists should be free to reference past works and tragedies, it's also true that this NFT trivializes the falling man's fate, reducing his final moments into something to be sold for a profit.

**Update 07/24/22 9:00AM ET:** The Falling Man NFT is no longer listed on GameStop's marketplace. The company has yet to return Engadget's request for comment or tweet about the takedown. However, in a direct message to one individual, the company said it was taking action against the creator of the NFT. "This NFT will be removed from our marketplace entirely," the company said. "This user has already had their minting ability removed from their account, and we have already been in direct contact with the creator about these actions."

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

## About pay scales

[Peter Gehrig](#) – *commenting on Larry Thorson's post on pay scales in Friday's Connecting:* When I started with AP as a teletypist in 1968, I got 700 Deutschmarks a month. Divide that thru four, at which the Greenback rated then, and you get Dollars. As a rookie newsperson two years later, I got 1,100 Deutschmarks. The Dollar was 3.5:1.

As a German Navy rating in D.C. in 1965 I had 1,800 Deutschmarks, a little over 400\$ with overseas and housing allowance and all. That helped me to an 80\$ p.m. efficiency at 16th and Columbia Rd with plenty to spent at the PX at Arlington and elsewhere. As we could import cars tax free under the NATO agreement a Beetle convertible was around 2,000\$ with a retail value well above that after one year. Larry sparked glorious memories on this end.

### *Best of the Week*

## A 'graveyard': Distinctive images capture the impact of major drought on Nevada's Lake Mead



### AP Photo/John Locher

Las Vegas-based photographer John Locher has seen no shortage of drought in his years covering a major chunk of the Southwest desert. But this year felt different, particularly when it came to Lake Mead, a popular tourist destination and important source of water, where levels have plummeted.

News organizations across the West have been covering the drought, so Locher wanted to do something that went beyond the obvious images. Over the course of several weeks, he made repeat visits to the sprawling lake, talking to people, exploring different areas and running down visual leads he found posted on YouTube and other social media sites.

Little by little, a theme began to emerge: The receding body of water — a reservoir created by the Hoover Dam — had effectively exposed a graveyard, not just of sunken or stranded boats, but also of wildlife. Dead and desiccated fish, some of which a visitor had arranged in the cracks of the dried-out lakebed, stood as a sort of epitaph. One unfortunate boater spent three weeks on his houseboat going nowhere — he was beached on dry land.

Locher captured all of this, creating a visual essay that conveyed both the life of the people and the death of the lake and its habitat. He worked with interim West news director Stephanie Mullen and climate photo editor Alyssa Goodman on the editing and presentation, and with Los Angeles-based reporter Brian Melley for help drafting the text.

Read more [here](#).



*And a second winner...*

## AP examines how Supreme Court's abortion decision is already affecting women's health



**Julie Ann Nitsch is hospitalized in Texas before surgery to remove her fallopian tubes, in a 2022 photo provided by Nitsch. Nitsch, a sexual assault survivor, says she chose sterilization at age 36 rather than risk getting pregnant by another rapist with restrictive abortion laws in effect. JULIE ANN NITSCH VIA AP**

Soon after the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision, it became apparent the ruling would have a profound effect on women's health care — in ways intended and not.

Chicago-based AP medical writer Lindsey Tanner wanted to know exactly how that was playing out. She used aggressive reporting and deep sourcing to do it, by looking for people sharing their stories on social media and working contacts from previous stories.

She reached out to doctors and found a sexual assault survivor who was sterilized because of the ruling. She found examples of fearful doctors declining to immediately treat women having medical emergencies. She spoke to an obstetrician who delayed inducing a miscarriage until a woman seemed "sick enough."

"For physicians and patients alike, this is a frightening and fraught time, with new, unprecedented concerns about data privacy, access to contraception, and even when

to begin lifesaving care,” Tanner quoted Dr. Jack Resneck, the president of the American Medical Association.

Read more [here](#).

## Welcome to Connecting



[Lisa Zagaroli](#)

## Stories of interest

### ***Nielsen says 17.7 million watched Thursday's Jan. 6 hearing*** (AP)

By DAVID BAUDER

NEW YORK (AP) — An estimated 17.7 million viewers watched Thursday night's hearing of the House committee investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

The Nielsen Company said that is second to the 20 million who saw the first committee hearing on June 9, the only other one of the eight sessions held in prime time.

Ten networks aired this past week's hearing live, down from the 11 that showed the June 9 session. The conservative network Newsmax dropped out this time.

The six daytime hearings average 11.2 million viewers, with a peak audience of 13.2 million on June 28, when ex-White House aide Cassidy Hutchinson testified about

former President Donald Trump's behavior.

An estimated 13.6 million of Thursday's viewers, or 77 percent, were age 55 and older, Nielsen said. Only 705,000 viewers were 18 to 34.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***As Jan. 6 Panel's Evidence Piled Up, Conservative Media Doubled Down*** (New York Times)

**By Jeremy W. Peters**

After the Jan. 6 committee's final summer hearing last week, the talk on the sets of CNN and MSNBC turned to an intriguing if familiar possibility about what might result from the panel's finding. The case for a criminal prosecution of former President Donald J. Trump, many pundits said, was not only justified but seemed more than likely given the evidence of his inaction as rioters sacked the Capitol.

If that felt like déjà vu — more predictions of Mr. Trump's looming downfall — the response to the hearings from the pro-Trump platforms felt like something new, reflecting the lengths to which his Praetorian Guard of friendly media have gone to rewrite the violent history of that day.

Even as the committee's vivid depiction of Mr. Trump's failure to intervene led two influential outlets on the right, The New York Post and The Wall Street Journal, to denounce him over the weekend, many top conservative media personalities have continued to push a more sanitized narrative of Jan. 6, 2021. They have turned the Capitol Police into villains and alleged the existence of a government plot to criminalize political dissent.

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

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## ***The audacious PR plot that seeded doubt about climate change*** (BBC)

**By Jane McMullen**

On an early autumn day in 1992, E Bruce Harrison, a man widely acknowledged as the father of environmental PR, stood up in a room full of business leaders and delivered a pitch like no other.

At stake was a contract worth half a million dollars a year - about £850,000 in today's money. The prospective client, the Global Climate Coalition (GCC) - which represented



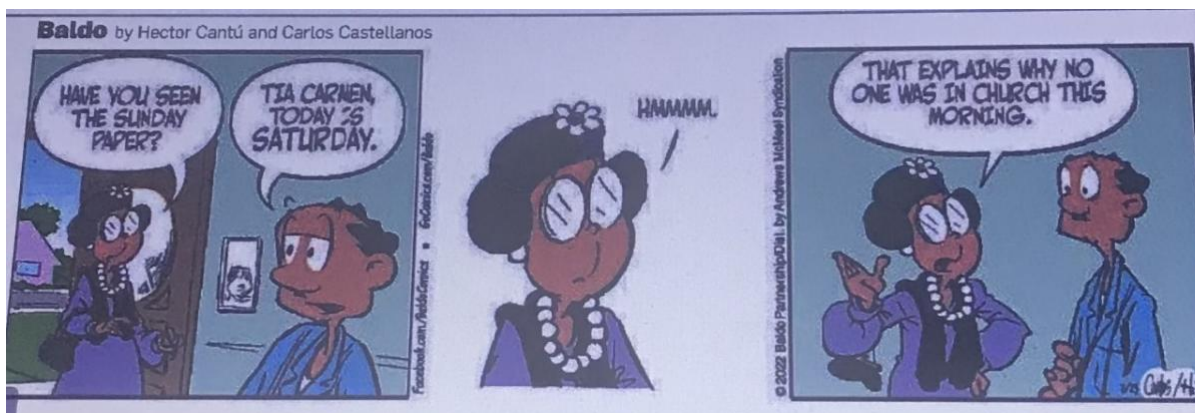
the oil, coal, auto, utilities, steel, and rail industries - was looking for a communications partner to change the narrative on climate change.

Don Rheem and Terry Yosie, two of Harrison's team present that day, are sharing their stories for the first time.

"Everybody wanted to get the Global Climate Coalition account," says Rheem, "and there I was, smack in the middle of it."

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

## The Final Word



Shared by Bruce Lowitt

## Today in History – July 25, 2022



By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, July 25, the 206th day of 2022. There are 159 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 25, 1972, the notorious Tuskegee syphilis experiment came to light as The Associated Press reported that for the previous four decades, the U.S. Public Health Service, in conjunction with the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, had been allowing poor, rural Black male patients with syphilis to go without treatment, even allowing them to die, as a way of studying the disease.

**On this date:**

In 1866, Ulysses S. Grant was named General of the Army of the United States, the first officer to hold the rank.

In 1943, Benito Mussolini was dismissed as premier of Italy by King Victor Emmanuel III, and placed under arrest. (However, Mussolini was later rescued by the Nazis, and re-asserted his authority.)

In 1946, the United States detonated an atomic bomb near Bikini Atoll in the Pacific in the first underwater test of the device.

In 1956, the Italian liner SS Andrea Doria collided with the Swedish passenger ship Stockholm off the New England coast late at night and began sinking; 51 people — 46 from the Andrea Doria, five from the Stockholm — were killed. (The Andrea Doria capsized and sank the following morning.)

In 1960, a Woolworth's store in Greensboro, North Carolina, that had been the scene of a sit-in protest against its whites-only lunch counter dropped its segregation policy.

In 1978, Louise Joy Brown, the first "test tube baby," was born in Oldham, England; she'd been conceived through the technique of in-vitro fertilization.

In 1994, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (YIT'-sahk rah-BEEN') and Jordan's King Hussein (hoo-SAYN') signed a declaration at the White House ending their countries' 46-year-old formal state of war.

In 2000, a New York-bound Air France Concorde crashed outside Paris shortly after takeoff, killing all 109 people on board and four people on the ground; it was the first-ever crash of the supersonic jet.

In 2010, the online whistleblower Wikileaks posted some 90,000 leaked U.S. military records that amounted to a blow-by-blow account of the Afghanistan war, including unreported incidents of Afghan civilian killings as well as covert operations against Taliban figures.

In 2016, on the opening night of the Democratic national convention in Philadelphia, Bernie Sanders robustly embraced his former rival Hillary Clinton as a champion for the same economic causes that enlivened his supporters, signaling it was time for them to rally behind her in the campaign against Republican Donald Trump.

In 2019, President Donald Trump had a second phone call with the new Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, during which he solicited Zelenskyy's help in gathering potentially damaging information about former Vice President Joe Biden;

that night, a staff member at the White House Office of Management and Budget signed a document that officially put military aid for Ukraine on hold.

In 2020, federal agents fired tear gas to break up rowdy protests in Portland, Oregon, that continued into the early morning, demonstrations had been taking place in Portland every night for two months in the aftermath of the Minneapolis death of George Floyd.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama embraced some degree of control on the sale of weapons but also told the National Urban League in New Orleans he would seek a national consensus on combating violence. NBC announced it had topped the \$1 billion mark in advertising sales for the upcoming Olympic Games in London, topping the \$850 million in ad sales for the Beijing games in 2008.

Five years ago: A bitterly-divided Senate voted to move forward with Republican legislation to repeal and replace "Obamacare." Sen. John McCain, returning to the Capitol for the first time since he was diagnosed with brain cancer, cast a decisive "yes" vote. (Three days later, McCain joined with two other Republican senators and Democrats in defeating the repeal effort.) House Majority Whip Steve Scalise, who was critically wounded in a shooting at a baseball practice on June 14, was released from a Washington hospital.

One year ago: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi named a second Republican critic of Donald Trump, Rep. Adam Kinzinger, to a special committee investigating the Capitol riot; he joined Rep. Liz Cheney as the committee's two Republicans, both selected by Democrats. Golfers Bryson DeChambeau and Jon Rahm, who'd won the past two U.S. Open golf tournaments, dropped out of the Tokyo Games after testing positive for COVID-19.

Today's Birthdays: Folk-pop singer-musician Bruce Woodley (The Seekers) is 80. Rock musician Jim McCarty (The Yardbirds) is 79. Rock musician Verdine White (Earth, Wind & Fire) is 71. Singer-musician Jem Finer (The Pogues) is 67. Model-actor Iman is 67. Cartoonist Ray Billingsley ("Curtis") is 65. Rock musician Thurston Moore (Sonic Youth) is 64. Celebrity chef/TV personality Geoffrey Zakarian is 63. Actor-singer Bobbie Eakes is 61. Actor Katherine Kelly Lang is 61. Actor Illeana Douglas is 57. Country singer Marty Brown is 57. Actor Matt LeBlanc is 55. Actor Wendy Raquel Robinson is 55. Rock musician Paavo Lotjonen (PAH'-woh LAHT'-joh-neh) (Apocalyptica) is 54. Actor D.B. Woodside is 53. Actor Miriam Shor is 51. Actor David Denman is 49. Actor Jay R. Ferguson is 48. Actor James Lafferty is 37. Actor Shantel VanSanten is 37. Actor Michael Welch is 35. Actor Linsey Godfrey is 34. Classical singer Faryl Smith is 27. Actor Mason Cook is 22. Actor Meg Donnelly (TV: "American Housewife") is 21. Actor Pierce Gagnon is 17.

## 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.**

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