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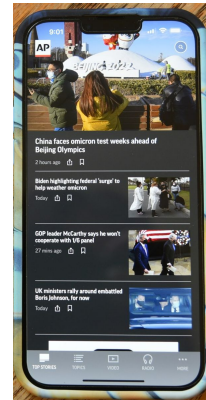
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# Connecting

August 10, 2022

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this Aug. 10, 2022,

It was the scoop of his lifetime.

**Peter Schorsch**, who runs Florida Politics, was the first to reveal that the FBI was raiding Donald Trump's Florida home on Monday night.

The story has dominated Page Ones and the airwaves ever since. In the lead story of today's Stories of Interest, Schorsch discussed with BuzzFeed his tweet that the feds were executing a search warrant at Mar-a-Lago, the former president's Palm Beach residence, citing two anonymous sources.

Connecting would like to hear from you on what you consider the biggest scoop of your career. I look forward to your submissions.

The family of our late colleague **Marcus Eliason**, who passed away last Friday in New York, reports he is being buried today in Kadima, Israel, and the family will sit shiva on Thursday and Friday afternoons (1-5 p.m.) at the house of his brother, Benjamin, in Kadima. A celebration of Marcus's life is planned for Sunday, August 21, in New York at a place to be announced.

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

Paul

## Marcus Eliason: The older brother I always wished for

[Arlene Levinson](#) - My heart is broken with Marcus gone from our world. We met when he was newly arrived in NYC on the Features desk, and I was a prolix national writer unfit for a wire service. He would complain my copy was too densely rich to cut, a great compliment. Of course, he did, and made it better. And of course, we became friends, for me the older brother I always wished for. When I left the AP in 2004 for my second act, the durability of that friendship was the best going-away gift.

Loving, generous, a brilliant auto-didact, gentle and awesome in his modesty ... he never boasted, but only occasionally and with unflinching humor and marvel, mentioned in passing the famous and infamous he interviewed, an adventure or mishap, in the astounding career others here have retold.

More than anything, Marcus embraced all of us with his capacious heart. Such a privilege to have been in his orbit with his beloved Eva.

All condolences to the Eliason family and you AP friends, who remain dear to me always.

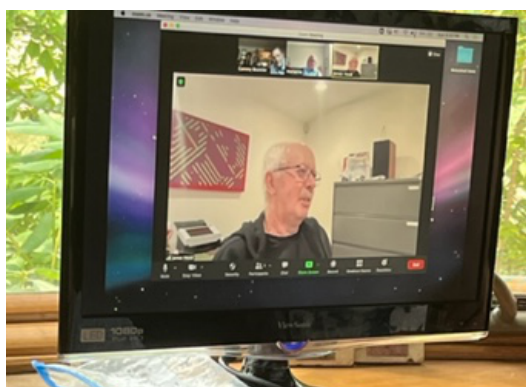
## Survivors bid farewell to the AP Broadcast Wire they once knew



**ABOVE:** Front row: John Davidson, Cammy Bourcier, Janet Brandstrater, Mike Hammer. Second row: Mark Meinero, Angela Chan-Meinero, Charlie Reina, Vicky Barker, Solange DeSantis, Andy Katell, Fred Yager.

**AT RIGHT:** Jim Hood on Zoom

By [Jim Hood](#)



Commentators, politicians and other blowhards daily decry the miasma of disinformation that spreads throughout the land, poisoning public discourse, eviscerating civility and birthing tyrants and other evildoers.

Not everyone agrees on the root causes of what seems like societal disintegration, but the sorry state of journalistic enterprises is certainly a contributor. Newspapers are disappearing, magazines are comatose, cable news is a horror and there is no local radio news to speak of outside major markets.

Until a few weeks ago, a small band of wordsmiths provided hourly news summaries for distribution to radio and TV stations, providing a lifeline for those seeking fact-based journalism. These summaries wrapped up the top developments of the hour, ranking them in order of freshness and relevance and carefully couching them in neutral, nonpartisan prose.

The summaries were what is now called curated, a dumb term used to mean built by hand.

Beginning in 1940, responding to the war-driven thirst for news, the Associated Press produced these summaries and distributed them to thousands of radio and television stations and networks worldwide. At its peak, the AP Broadcast Wire, as it was called, employed about 40 staffers on the 4th floor at 50 Rockefeller Plaza. It and they moved

to Washington, D.C., in the 1980s and were merged (some might say submerged) into the AP Radio Network.

Oddly, only one other major broadcast wire existed. UPI had dominated the field for a time but was overtaken by AP in the 1970s. AP's inauguration of the APTV high-speed service in the early 1980s was the fatal blow that robbed UPI of its profitable "supplemental" services (newspaper wires) and contributed to its eventual demise.

Victory was short-lived, however, as the very notion of hourly radio newscasts lost its gleam as Google and its ilk decimated first news and then advertising, blundering into both fields armed with nothing but hubris and some pretty good code. Gone was the day when a publisher or broadcaster could charge a premium for advertising in or adjacent to the news, for Google sold only tonnage and drew no distinction between gold and gravel.

As local broadcast news faded, so did subscribers to the AP Broadcast Wire. Its fortunes dimmed and finally faded entirely to black, aged 82, on June 27, when the last "curated" news summary was sent. Thereafter, an AP advisory said, the wireside staff in the DC bureau would send out an occasional document for use by local broadcasters. The exact nature of this product is not entirely clear, but the corporate view seems to be that it will suffice. Perhaps it will, since most local radio stations are now automated and thus bereft of curators.

So, with the whimper that often displaces the anticipated bang, the AP Broadcast Wire fell silent, leaving its lingering band of news-war veterans bereft.

Former 50 Rock staffers Cammy Bourcier and Andy Katell organized a wake at Cammy's Bergen County, New Jersey, home on Sunday, July 31. As at all such events, the veterans reminisced, trading stories about the Iran hostage crisis, the Papal and Presidential shootings and other events both profound and trivial.

Mike Hammer was the sole current AP staffer in attendance, being still employed at the DC bureau, where his assignment is to train wireside staffers to write for broadcast. This is one of those skills not highly prized in journalism, so he is to be admired for his efforts but not held responsible for their outcome.

Verbal darts flew and hands were wrung as it sank in that the last standing hourly broadcast-script recitation of known facts was gone, its replacement's suitability for the task still in doubt. But soon, corks popped and the talk turned to the post-AP lives of the 50 Rock crew. (I should note that the group consisted, except for Hammer, of AP staff who had declined to move to DC when the wire and radio network merged. They were True Believers, not wanting to leave vigorous, raucous NYC for the bloated smugness of DC).

Those in attendance and their current gigs: Vicki Barker, CBS News correspondent in London; Cammy Bourcier, Retired AP Broadcast, PR producer, now happily teaching and tutoring Hebrew; Janet Brandstrader, Independent writer, editor, researcher; John Davidson, retired from radio news; Solange DeSantis, busy freelance writer/editor, who seems to be unsuccessful at retirement; Ed Golden, (via Zoom) editor at WBZ, Boston; Mike Hammer, still at AP (and editor of Today in History; Andy Katell, returned to AP from retirement to help cover Ukraine-Russia part-time; Mark Meinero, retired

from CNNMoney (CNN Business); Marianne Pryor (via Zoom), retired from ABC News; Charlie Reina, abandoned journalism for cabinet-making; Fred Yager, prolific author and public affairs executive; and Jim Hood (via Zoom), Deputy Director, AP Broadcast, in exile.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The AP announced earlier that it would retire the remaining state NewsMinute, SportsMinute and Right Now fixtures and that the change came after two years of customer conversations “where we learned that newsrooms need a more digitally savvy offering from AP. So in place of these fixtures, long known as the 'rip and read' scripts for radio and television, we'll deliver long-form text, access to video, audio and graphics, and access to summaries on all stories. This change, the AP said, “is in direct response to the modern needs of our member newsrooms. It's also an opportunity for AP journalists to focus on what we do best – original breaking news.”

## Dan Sewell: Retirement didn't quite suit this old reporter, so let's talk politics



**Dan Sewell**  
Cincinnati Enquirer Contributor

Back to the future.

I was supposed to be retired. But the end last year of a career in daily journalism that spanned 44 years didn't leave me satisfied that my writing days were over.

Having spent most of my life with the Associated Press, the global news organization committed to covering the news without fear or favor or expressing personal opinions, and with The Enquirer in editing roles, I enjoyed the new freedom of deciding what I thought about things and writing about my personal views.

Not always a good thing, especially on Twitter (find me @dansewell), where it's too easy to quickly get locked into an argument with strangers or even friends.

So I've been dabbling with more thoughtful column-writing as an Enquirer contributor, and that has now grown into this weekly political column.

And I hope you will offer me your ideas, tips and feedback.

While it takes some ego to expect people to want to read my opinions, it's also helpful to have some humility and admit that I don't have all the answers.

Read more [here](#).

## Visuals: Nixon resigns, Ford sworn in

[Chick Harrity](#) - I was fortunate enough to be assigned to the White House in August of 1974 and covered Nixon resigning and Ford being sworn in. Here are some of the photos from the day.



Nixon, Pat and Tricia in the East Room of the White House as he resigns. (AP Photos by Chick Harrity)



Nixon goodbye wave as he gets into helicopter to depart.



Ford in East room as he is sworn in about an hour later.





Ford had to commute to the White House from his home in Alexandria, Va., for a couple of days so that staff could remove all of the Nixon's belongings from the WH. This is him leaving his home for work two days after the swearing-in. The members of the tight pool would drive to his home and get in the motorcade in the morning for a trip to the White House and then ride back with him at the end of the day. This is him on Sunday morning leaving to play golf two days after he was sworn in.

## Embarrassing moments

**Hal Bock** - In the mid-'60s, I was a rookie baseball writer assigned to a game at Yankee Stadium. The Yankee dynasty was in disarray and Ralph Houk came down from the front office to take over as manager of a team of aging players. Houk was a WWII veteran who had fought at the Battle of the Bulge among other places. A tough guy.

Protocol in those days was to call the sports desk to see if there were any special requests. When I did, I was told that a member in Springfield, Mass. (Red Sox country) wanted Houk asked why he had been unable to get the team winning.

Uh Oh.

After the game, the press gathered in Houk's office for his thoughts. I waited until all the regulars were done and had moved into the dressing room and then approached Houk with my loaded question. Before asking, I tried to explain that I was just the

messenger, relaying the question from a member newspaper. He either didn't understand or didn't care. What he did was jump up and get in my face with a stream of expletives.

I retreated into the clubhouse with Houk right behind me, barking insults. Now the players like Whitey Ford and Mickey Mantle turned around to see what the fuss was all about. I escaped the room in one piece.

The next night behind the batting cage, Houk approached me. "Hey, kid," he said. "Sorry about last night."

I don't recall what I said but I know I was grateful to have survived the whole affair.

## My first pet: Chester

Estes Thompson - Chester was my buddy. The mostly black, shaggy dog was a gift from my brother, Roddy, when I was 12. He felt bad for me after his daughter was born in Richmond, Va., where he attended medical school, and I was excluded from the maternity floor because of my age.

I named the friendly bundle Chester because we thought most of his heritage was Manchester terrier. He and I snuggled in the backseat of Dad's sedan during the three-hour ride home from Richmond to our small town of Chatham, Va., one rainy Sunday evening. After that we roamed all over town together, me on my bike with Chester running alongside. When I went in a store, he waited outside,

Chester developed his own constituency. The man who ran a diner in an old trolley car downtown fed Chester at his back door and gave him rides home after he followed me across town to school. More than once a sheriff's deputy stopped in front of our house to let Chester out of the backseat after giving him a lift home.

My pal developed a limp after a larger dog beat him up and bit his leg. That became part of his charm. Some people thought he got his name from Marshal Dillon's limping sidekick on the western series "Gunsmoke." The fight was odd because Chester wasn't aggressive and even got along with cats.

When I left home for college, Chester took up with my dad. He followed Pa to work at his medical office, watched the late news on TV and licked ice cream bowls and slept in his bedroom instead of mine.

I was immeasurably sad when my mom called to tell me Chester, whose vision had deteriorated, was hit by a truck as he crossed the street on his way home one day.

## Welcome to Connecting



## [Raghuram Vadarevu](#)

# Stories of interest

## ***How A Local Florida Journalist Scooped Every Reporter In The Country On The FBI Raid At Mar-A-Lago*** (BuzzFeed)

By Clarissa-Jan Lim

Peter Schorsch was under no illusions that his scoop about the FBI raiding Donald Trump's Florida home on Monday evening was nothing short of earth-shattering.

"There's smaller, personal accomplishments that you feel good about," he told BuzzFeed News on Tuesday. "But let's not be coy. This was 100% the biggest scoop that I probably will ever get."

It had been nearly 24 hours since Schorsch, who runs Florida Politics, tweeted that the feds were executing a search warrant at Mar-a-Lago, the former president's Palm Beach residence, citing two anonymous sources.

"Not sure what the search warrant was about," he wrote. "TBH, Im not a strong enough reporter to hunt this down, but its real."

Read more [here](#).

**AND...**

## ***How a former Florida political operative broke the Mar-a-Lago FBI story*** (Washington Post)



**Peter Schorsch, publisher of the website FloridaPolitics.com, broke the news about the Mar-a-Lago FBI search in a tweet. (Allison Davis)**

**By Elahe Izadi**

The text came from someone Peter Schorsch knew from his many years in Florida political circles.

“Yyyyyuuuuugggggeeeee scoop,” his source wrote on Monday afternoon.

Intrigued, Schorsch, a former political operative who is now the publisher of the website FloridaPolitics.com, picked up the phone, expecting to hear a tip about Sunshine State resident Donald Trump. Perhaps the former president had dropped by a local business or something? He and the tipster traded gossip and chitchat for about 20 minutes before turning to the topic at hand. “Oh, by the way,” the person said, “did you know Mar-a-Lago is being raided right now?”

“Excuse me?!” replied Schorsch. He scrambled to get off the phone call and start making some others.

Within five minutes, Schorsch had gathered enough intel to validate the tip. Instead of publishing a story, though, he unloaded knowledge directly to social media — with a few modest caveats that belied the explosive nature of the news.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***While Gannett journalists brace for layoffs, those at the top rake in big bucks*** (Media Nation)

BY DAN KENNEDY

With Gannett targeting its journalists for yet another round of layoffs, I thought it would be a good time to take a look at the people at the top. A reminder: Gannett is an amalgamation of the old Gannett and GateHouse Media, which was notorious for cost-cutting and which dominates the new Gannett.

There's a wealth of information — and a lot of wealth generally — in the money-losing newspaper chain's 2022 proxy statement. It begins with Michael E. Reed, the chairman and chief executive officer, who was paid \$7,741,052 in 2021. Of that total, Reed received \$900,000 in base salary, \$6,074,000 in stock awards and \$767,052 in "Non-Equity Incentive Plan Compensation."

Next up is Douglas E. Horne, the chief financial officer and chief accounting officer, whose payout added up to \$1,753,698, of which \$600,000 was base salary, \$581,318 came in the form of stock awards, \$562,380 was for that aforementioned incentive plan and \$10,000 was in other income.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Longtime ESPN reporter M.A. Voepel comes out as transgender*** (New York Post)

By Ryan Glasspiegel

Longtime ESPN reporter Mechelle Voepel has announced a transition from female to male, and a new name: M.A. Voepel.

"In sports media, we're lucky to tell stories of others' journeys. We have our own, too. Part of mine is being transgender, and I'm transitioning to male," Voepel tweeted Tuesday. "Byline now M.A. Voepel, pronouns he/him. Please feel free to call me Voepel, MV, Michael, Mike; I'm good with them all."

"I have the great honor of receiving Gowdy Award next month from Naismith Hall of Fame, and wanted to do that as authentic self, hence this announcement now. Fear can keep us paralyzed for decades, especially when we think we will lose all that is dear to us, including career."

Voepel first joined ESPN in 1996, covering women's basketball, the WNBA and later volleyball.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Paul Albright.

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## ***Exclusive: NYT plans advertising expansion into non-news products*** (Axios)

The New York Times is planning to aggressively expand its advertising business across its bundled products, like games and sports, executives tell Axios.

Why it matters: Over the past 10 years, the Times has pivoted its strategy to focus on attracting more consumer revenue via subscriptions.

Now that it's reached a critical mass of subscribers outside of news, it sees an opportunity to build more ad products that cater to those users.

Details: A central part of the Times' ad expansion strategy will be managed by veteran ad executive Mohit Lohia, who will be joining the Times from Amazon this month.

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

## **Today in History – Aug. 10, 2022**



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Wednesday, Aug. 10, the 222nd day of 2022. There are 143 days left in the year.

### **Today's Highlight in History:**

On Aug. 10, 1945, a day after the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Imperial Japan conveyed its willingness to surrender provided the status of Emperor Hirohito remained unchanged. (The Allies responded the next day, saying they would determine the Emperor's future status.)

### **On this date:**

In 1792, during the French Revolution, mobs in Paris attacked the Tuileries (TWEE'-luh-reez) Palace, where King Louis XVI resided. (The king was later arrested, put on trial for treason, and executed.)

In 1821, Missouri became the 24th state.

In 1885, Leo Daft opened America's first commercially operated electric streetcar, in Baltimore.

In 1944, during World War II, American forces overcame remaining Japanese resistance on Guam.

In 1962, Marvel Comics superhero Spider-Man made his debut in issue 15 of "Amazing Fantasy" (cover price: 12 cents).

In 1969, Leno and Rosemary LaBianca were murdered in their Los Angeles home by members of Charles Manson's cult, one day after actor Sharon Tate and four other people were slain.

In 1977, postal employee David Berkowitz was arrested in Yonkers, New York, accused of being "Son of Sam," the gunman who killed six people and wounded seven others in the New York City area. (Berkowitz is serving six consecutive 25-years-to-life sentences.)

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed a measure providing \$20,000 payments to still-living Japanese-Americans who were interned by their government during World War II.

In 1993, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was sworn in as the second female justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1995, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols were charged with 11 counts in the Oklahoma City bombing (McVeigh was convicted of murder and executed; Nichols was convicted of conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to life in prison).

In 2006, British authorities announced they had thwarted a terrorist plot to simultaneously blow up 10 aircraft heading to the U.S. using explosives smuggled in hand luggage.

In 2019, Jeffrey Epstein, accused of orchestrating a sex-trafficking ring and sexually abusing dozens of underage girls, was found unresponsive in his cell at a New York City jail; he was later pronounced dead at a hospital. (The city's medical examiner ruled the death a suicide by hanging.)

Ten years ago: A man in an Afghan army uniform shot and killed three American service members in southern Afghanistan; the Taliban claimed the shooter joined the insurgency after the attack. At the London Olympics, the United States won the women's 4x100-meter track relay in a world-record time of 40.82 seconds to give the Americans their first victory in the event since 1996.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump, continuing his criticism of Senate GOP leader Mitch McConnell following the failed effort to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, suggested that McConnell might have to rethink his future as majority leader unless he could deliver on Trump's legislative priorities on health care, taxes and infrastructure. North Korea's military described as a "load of nonsense" Trump's warning that the North would face "fire and fury" if it threatened the United States.

One year ago: New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced his resignation over a barrage of sexual harassment allegations; he denied intentionally mistreating women and said the push for his ouster was politically motivated. (Cuomo would be succeeded by Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul, who became the state's first female governor.) The Senate approved a \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure plan, as a rare coalition of Democrats and Republicans came together to overcome skeptics and deliver a cornerstone of President Joe Biden's agenda. Vote-counting machine maker Dominion Voting Systems filed defamation lawsuits against right-wing broadcasters and a prominent Donald Trump ally over their baseless claims that the 2020 election was marred by fraud. Soccer star Lionel Messi signed his eagerly anticipated Paris Saint-Germain contract to complete the move that confirmed the end of a career-long association with Barcelona.

Today's Birthdays: Actor James Reynolds is 76. Rock singer-musician Ian Anderson (Jethro Tull) is 75. Country musician Gene Johnson (Diamond Rio) is 73. Singer Patti Austin is 72. Actor Daniel Hugh Kelly is 70. Folk singer-songwriter Sam Baker is 68. Actor Rosanna Arquette is 63. Actor Antonio Banderas is 62. Rock musician Jon Farriss (INXS) is 61. Singer Julia Fordham is 60. Journalist-blogger Andrew Sullivan is 59. Actor Chris Caldovino is 59. Singer Neneh Cherry is 58. Singer Aaron Hall is 58. Former boxer Riddick Bowe is 55. Actor Sean Blakemore is 55. R&B singer Lorraine Pearson (Five Star) is 55. Singer-producer Michael Bivins is 54. Actor-writer Justin Theroux is 51. Actor Angie Harmon is 50. Country singer Jennifer Hanson is 49. Actor-turned-lawyer Craig Kirkwood is 48. Actor JoAnna Garcia Swisher is 43. Singer Cary Ann Hearst (Shovels & Rope) is 43. Actor Aaron Staton is 42. Actor Ryan Eggold is 38. Actor Charley Koontz is 35. Actor Lucas Till is 32. Reality TV star Kylie Jenner is 25. Actor Jeremy Maguire is 11.

## 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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