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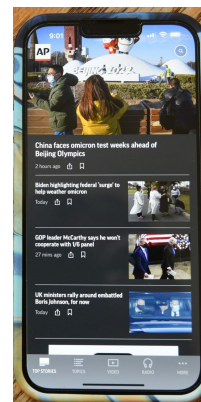
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# Connecting

August 31, 2022

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this Aug. 31, 2022:

It was a landmark event that ended an era: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation that finalized the USSR's demise. The AP's Moscow photo chief at the time, Liu Heung Shing, was the only foreign photographer who captured the pivotal moment on Dec. 25, 1991.

Gorbachev, who set out to revitalize the Soviet Union but ended up unleashing forces that led to the collapse of communism, the breakup of the state and the end of the Cold War, died Tuesday after a long illness. The last Soviet leader was 91.

In other breaking news, we finally have an update from the [tall/fall](#) guy:

[Ye Fractured Olde Connecting Editor](#) so appreciates your notes of support that have brightened my days at the hospital. (Ahem, calling me Hip or Hipster is OK, but Humpty Dumpty? Another noted I'd do anything to avoid joining him for a Kansas home football game this weekend!) The doc can avoid surgery as long as I keep the

hip stabilized and let the bones heal, a blessing. But to ensure this, my next stop will be a physical terrorist facility for a week or two. So when I'm settled, the newsletter will come from there. Meantime, continue to send your submissions to Peg Coughlin at [pcoughlin@AP.org](mailto:pcoughlin@AP.org)

In that vein, we're starting another Connecting thread: Your most noteworthy injury, whether time, place, circumstance, commentary, etc. Ye Olde Connecting Editor has received and is sharing a number.

Be well,

Peg



*The AP Moscow photo chief, Liu Heung Shing, who was the only foreign photographer who captured Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation on Dec. 25, 1991 that marked the end of the USSR, gestures during an interview with the Associated Press at the Shanghai Center of Photography in Shanghai, China on Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021. It was a momentous event that ended an era 30 years ago - Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation drawing a line under the USSR's existence. The AP Moscow photo chief, Liu Heung Shing, was the only foreign photographer who captured the final moments of the Soviet Union on Dec. 25, 1991. (AP Photo/Ng Han Guan)*

## As Gorbachev resigned, AP photographer snapped historic shot

By The Associated Press

It was a landmark event that ended an era: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation 30 years ago finalized the USSR's demise. The AP's Moscow photo chief at the time, Liu Heung Shing, was the only foreign photographer who captured the pivotal moment on Dec. 25, 1991.

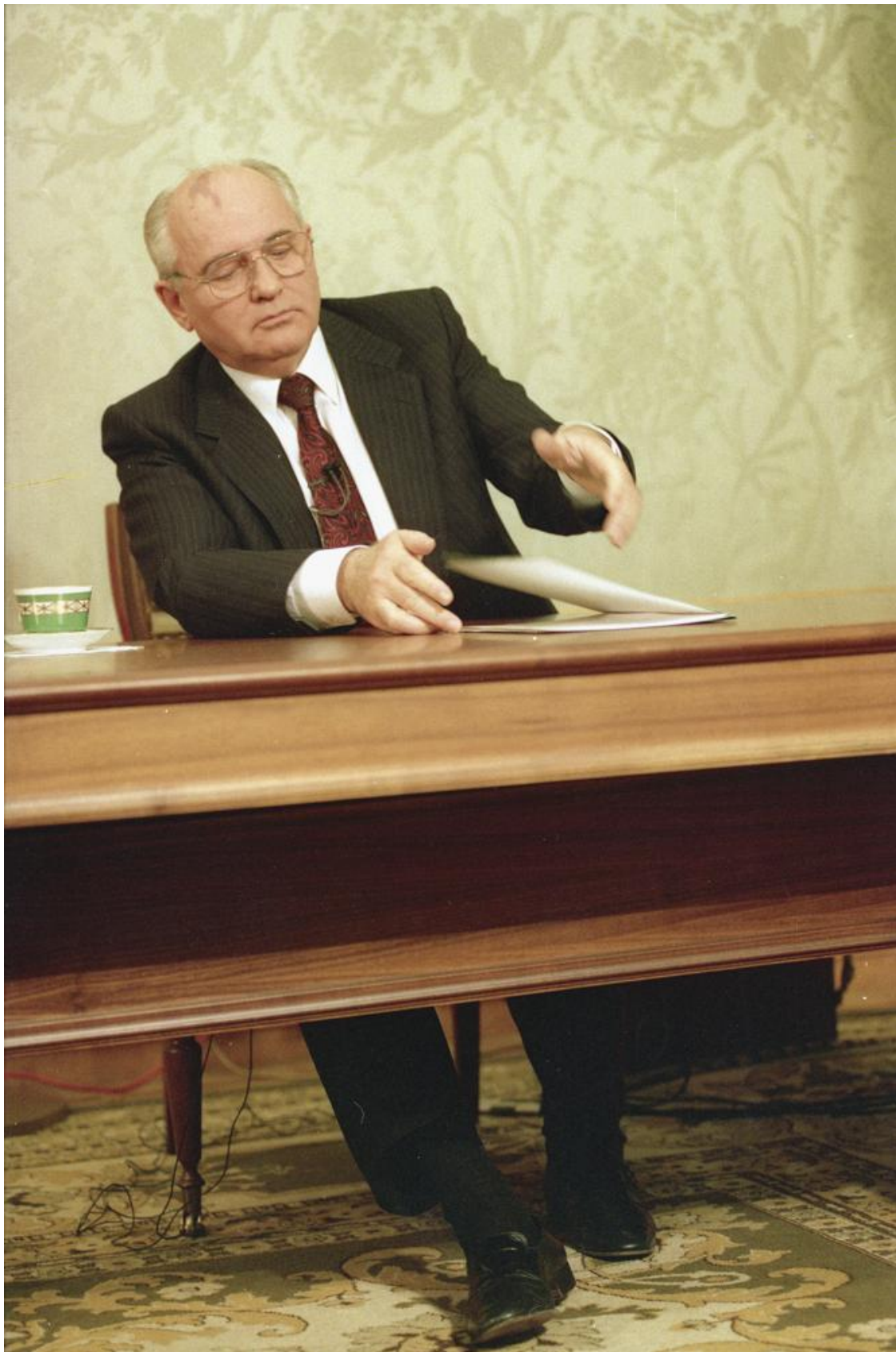
In the fall of 1991, the Soviet Union was speeding up quickly to its dissolution. On Dec. 8, 1991, the leaders of the three Slavic Soviet republics met to declare that the Soviet Union was no more, and to create the new Commonwealth of Independent States, which was joined by eight other republics two weeks later.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Liu Heung Shing worked as The Associated Press Moscow photo chief in 1990-1993. Liu and his AP colleagues won the 1992 Pulitzer Prize for Spot News Photography for documenting the Soviet collapse.

Read more [here](#).

Shared by Sibby Christensen



***FILE - Mikhail Gorbachev, eighth and final leader of the Soviet Union, closes his resignation speech on the table after delivering it on Soviet television in the Kremlin, Moscow, Wednesday, Dec. 25, 1991. It was a momentous event that ended an era 30 years ago - Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation drawing a line under the USSR's existence. The AP Moscow photo chief, Liu Heung Shing, was the only foreign***

*photographer who captured the final moments of the Soviet Union on Dec. 25, 1991.  
(AP Photo/Liu Heung Shing, File)*

## Connecting RX

Bill Hancock - From personal experience, my own artificial hip is doing just fine; I don't even think about it. I fell at the Leaning Tower of Pisa and shattered mine. So in this age of one-upsmanship, I will always have the more sensational hip-injury story. ...

-0-

Jim Reindl - Years ago when I was a kid and milk was delivered in a milk chute by a human being, our chute was on the backdoor landing, two steps down from the kitchen. One morning my mom went to get the milk and tripped on the stairs coming up. She fell, the glass bottles shattered, and she cut her arm quite badly, necessitating an early morning trip to the ER. When she followed up with the family doctor, he told her, "Next time, order beer; you'll be more careful."

## Remembering radio

John Willis - I came out of radio to The AP in Omaha back in the '70s. The wire machine was THE tool in local radio newsrooms, which generally had one person, and he/she also had a four- hour shift on the air spinning records in the smaller markets.

Meanwhile, I learned quickly from experience that the first thing to do when I got a member station call about trouble with the machine. The first question I would ask is, "Is the machine plugged in?"

More than once over the many years. I was told, techs would scramble and drive for hours to get to a member station to find the machine was unplugged. Happened to me one morning. The Des Moines staffer asked me to check the plug. Apparently our overnight janitor hit the cord with a broom or something and that pulled the plug partly out of the socket. Saved: One 200-mile round trip to Fairfield, Iowa, by an AP tech.

## Connecting series:

*More of your stories about  
getting the call to jury duty*





[Estes Thompson](#) - I became the go-to guy in the Raleigh bureau for getting out of jury duty. It was simple: Respond in writing as soon as you get the notice. People handling jury pools in the courthouse are more likely to accept your request weeks before the court term started than on the day of jury selection. Keep it simple and try to adhere to allowed excuses in the law. Since I retired I got a notice from the federal court in Richmond that I might be considered for jury duty. I filled out the online questionnaire and over wrote the section on medical issues. At the end there was a lifesaving sentence: People over 70 aren't required to serve on federal juries!

-0-

[Paul Davenport](#) - I've been called for jury duty in county and municipal courts a few times.

One time I served on a jury for a criminal case involving drunken driving but ended up being sent home when I was designated as an alternate before deliberations began at the end of the trial. That was frustrating. During jury selection for that case, I was somewhat irked after one prospective juror cited an inability to be unbiased in drunken-driving cases. After that person was immediately excused, other people began using virtually the same words in what seemed to be transparent attempts to also be excused. It worked.

In another case, a written questionnaire given myself and other prospective jurors asked whether jury service would pose an undue burden. I wrote something to the effect that it'd likely burden my employer if I were selected for jury service. Once we were in court for followup questioning, the judge asked me what I meant in my written answer. I truthfully said it wouldn't bother me at all to serve but that I thought my manager wouldn't welcome having to find somebody on short notice to replace me on my solo desk shift. The judge scowled but excused me from service.

## Stories of interest

# Frustrations mount at Washington

# Post as its business struggles

By [Benjamin Mullin](#) and [Katie Robertson](#)  
The New York Times

In the years after Jeff Bezos bought The Washington Post in 2013, business boomed. Drove of readers bought digital subscriptions, and the newsroom roughly doubled in size, adding hundreds more journalists.

But The Post's business has stalled in the past year. As the breakneck news pace of the Trump administration faded away, readers have turned elsewhere, and the paper's push to expand beyond Beltway coverage hasn't compensated for the loss.

The organization is on track to lose money in 2022, after years of profitability, according to two people with knowledge of the company's finances. The Post now has fewer than the three million paying digital subscribers it had hailed internally near the end of 2020, according to several people at the organization. Digital ad revenue generated by The Post fell to roughly \$70 million during the first half of the year, about 15 percent lower than in the first half of 2021, according to an internal financial document reviewed by The New York Times.

Fred Ryan, the chief executive and publisher, in recent weeks has floated with newsroom leaders the possibility of cutting 100 positions, according to several people with knowledge of the discussions. The cuts, if they happen, could come through hiring freezes for open jobs or other ways. The newsroom now has about 1,000 people.

A spokeswoman for The Post said the organization was not reducing head count, and instead would be adding steadily to the newsroom and "exploring positions that should be repurposed to serve a larger, national and global audience." She said the document showing ad revenue declines depicted an incomplete picture of The Post's business, but she declined to detail how.

Read more [here](#).

## *Opinion: NBC is mulling over a move that could change broadcast TV*

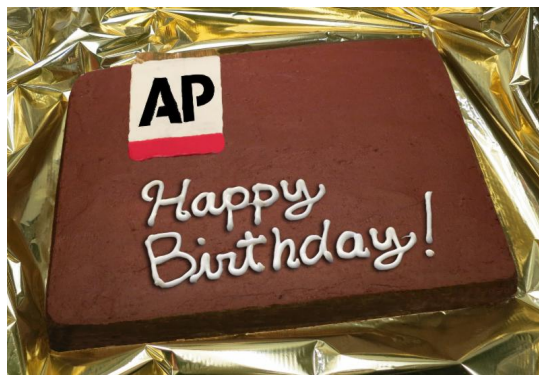
By Tom Jones  
Poynter

NBC is considering something once thought unthinkable — giving up what has traditionally been one of the prime pieces of real estate on TV. According to The Wall Street Journal's Joe Flint, NBC is considering giving the 10 to 11 p.m. prime-time hour back to local affiliates.

Now, to be clear, this is nowhere close to a done deal. It's just something the network is thinking about, and they haven't discussed it yet with the affiliate board. The earliest it would happen, if it happened at all, would be the fall of 2023.

Read more [here](#).

# Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[John Dowling](#)

[Dana Fields](#)

[Jeff Ulbrich](#)

## Today in History – Aug. 31, 2022



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Wednesday, Aug. 31, the 243rd day of 2022. There are 122 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:**

On Aug. 31, 2010, President Barack Obama ended the U.S. combat mission in Iraq, declaring no victory after seven years of bloodshed and telling those divided over the war in his country and around the world: "It is time to turn the page."



On this date:

In 1881, the first U.S. tennis championships (for men only) began in Newport, Rhode Island.

In 1886, an earthquake with an estimated magnitude of 7.3 devastated Charleston, South Carolina, killing at least 60 people, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

In 1962, the Caribbean nation of Trinidad and Tobago became independent of British colonial rule.

In 1980, Poland's Solidarity labor movement was born with an agreement signed in Gdansk (guh-DANSK') that ended a 17-day-old strike.

In 1992, white separatist Randy Weaver surrendered to authorities in Naples, Idaho, ending an 11-day siege by federal agents that had claimed the lives of Weaver's wife, son and a deputy U.S. marshal. (Weaver was acquitted of murder and all other charges in connection with the confrontation; he was convicted of failing to appear for trial on firearms charges and was sentenced to 18 months in prison but given credit for 14 months he'd already served.)

In 1994, the Irish Republican Army declared a cease-fire. Russia officially ended its military presence in the former East Germany and the Baltics after half a century.

In 1996, three adults and four children drowned when their vehicle rolled into John D. Long Lake in Union, South Carolina; they had gone to see a monument to the sons of Susan Smith, who had drowned the two boys in Oct. 1994.

In 1997, Prince Charles brought Princess Diana home for the last time, escorting the body of his former wife to a Britain that was shocked, grief-stricken and angered by her death in a Paris traffic accident earlier that day.

In 2005, New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin reported "a significant number of dead bodies in the water" following Hurricane Katrina; Nagin ordered virtually the entire police force to abandon search-and-rescue efforts and to instead stop increasingly hostile thieves.

In 2016, on Mexican soil for the first time as the Republican presidential nominee, a firm but measured Donald Trump defended the right of the United States to build a massive border wall along its southern flank, standing up for the centerpiece of his immigration plan during a joint press conference with Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto.

In 2019, a gunman carried out a shooting rampage that stretched ten miles between the Texas communities of Midland and Odessa, leaving seven people dead before police killed the gunman outside a movie theater in Odessa.

In 2020, at a rally in Pittsburgh, Democrat Joe Biden resoundingly condemned violent protesters and called for their prosecution; he accused President Donald Trump of causing the divisions that had ignited the violence. Trump reiterated that he blamed radical troublemakers who he said were stirred up and backed by Biden.

Ten years ago: In a speech to an annual Federal Reserve conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Chairman Ben Bernanke sent a clear message that the Fed would do more to help the still-struggling U.S. economy, but did not specify exactly what, or when. Writer Richard Bach, author of "Jonathan Livingston Seagull," was seriously hurt after his small plane went down in Washington state.

Five years ago: Rescuers began a block-by-block search of tens of thousands of Houston homes, looking for anyone who might have been left behind in the floodwaters from Hurricane Harvey. The Trump administration ordered Russia to close its consulate in San Francisco and offices in Washington and New York, intensifying tensions between Washington and Moscow; Russia was given 48 hours to comply. Iraq's prime minister said the northern town of Tal Afar had been "fully liberated" from the Islamic State group after a nearly two-week operation.

One year ago: President Joe Biden said the U.S. airlift to extract more than 120,000 Americans, Afghans and allies from Afghanistan to end a 20-year war was an "extraordinary success," even though more than 100 Americans and thousands of Afghans who wanted to leave were not yet out; he defended his decision to withdraw all U.S. troops, saying he was "not going to extend this forever war." Hundreds of thousands of people in Louisiana sweltered in the aftermath of Hurricane Ida with no electricity, no tap water and precious little gasoline; the mayor of New Orleans ordered a nighttime curfew after the storm left the city in darkness. The Texas Legislature passed a sweeping GOP rewrite of election laws after months of protests by Democrats; the measure would tighten already-strict voting rules, banning 24-hour polling locations and empowering partisan poll watchers.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Jack Thompson is 82. Violinist Itzhak Perlman is 77. Singer Van Morrison is 77. Rock musician Rudolf Schenker (The Scorpions) is 74. Actor Richard Gere is 73. Actor Stephen Henderson is 73. Olympic gold medal track and field athlete Edwin Moses is 67. Rock singer Glenn Tilbrook (Squeeze) is 65. Rock musician Gina Schock (The Go-Go's) is 65. Singer Tony DeFranco (The DeFranco Family) is 63. R&B musician Larry Waddell (Mint Condition) is 59. Actor Jaime P. Gomez is 57. Rock musician Jeff Russo (Tonic) is 53. Singer-composer Deborah Gibson is 52. Actor Zack Ward is 52. Golfer Padraig (PAH'-drig) Harrington is 51. Actor Chris Tucker is 50. Actor Sara Ramirez is 47. R&B singer Tamara (Trina & Tamara) is 45.

## 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

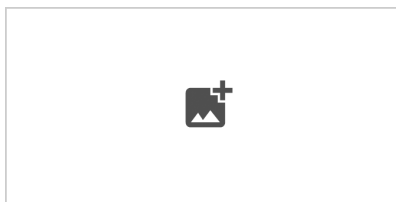
Kansas City, and Midwest vice president based in Kansas City.

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](mailto:paulstevens46@gmail.com)



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