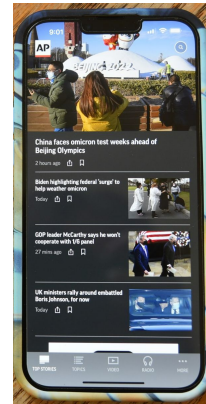


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# Connecting

Dec. 19, 2022

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning on this Dec. 19, 2022,

Happy Hanukkah to all celebrating the Jewish holiday which began Sunday evening and continues for eight nights.

**Phoebe Lark Schwartz** may be too young to know it, but she got her first birthday wish when she turned 1 a couple weeks ago: She has her grandpa, who she knows as Zayde, all to herself.

Her grandpa is **Jerry Schwartz** – and in its long history of outstanding journalists, The Associated Press counts him as one of its very best.

Ye Olde Connecting Editor is proud to bring you, after a bit of cajoling, a Retirement Profile from the man who worked 45 years in New York headquarters, as a writer and editor who was a positive influence for hundreds upon hundreds over his great career. He truly made AP a better place by his presence.

One of my favorite replies in his profile:

"I've edited brilliant writers who needed only subtle editing; I've edited others who required considerably more. I may have complained from time to time, but honestly, I loved them all. AP people are the best – ambitious in all the best ways, eager to do better and be better. Every story was a journey, and it was my privilege to be along for the ride. I'm not ready to stop doing this – I hope to freelance – but I will forever miss working with the people who make the AP the AP."



Said colleague **Ted Anthony**, director of new storytelling and newsroom innovation: "He's been my friend for 29 years, the godfather of my oldest son, the person who for so much of my journalism career has been my true north. Thank you, Jerry, for all you have given and for all the goodness you leave behind. I have never met a better man."

Schwartz, one of 65 employees who took the AP's Special Retirement Option, left the AP offices for the last time on Nov. 22 – as chronicled in the photo below by national writer **Matt Sedensky**.

Another AP national writer, **Allen Breed**, produced [this video](#) for a Zoom farewell party held on that final day, replete with a telegraph (OK, Jerry is not THAT old to have operated one of those...). "I have known Jerry since at least the mid-1990s," Breed said. "He ghost-edited a long narrative of mine that first got me noticed by the head of News Features."

"The telegraph at the beginning is actually producing Morse code for what appears on screen. I used an online translator to create it, and borrowed a vintage film clip from the Library of Congress. The music is 'The Associated Press March,' composed back when all newspapers commissioned the Sousas of the world to toot their horns. **Angie Wang** helped me animate Moses Beach's portrait, and National Writer **Tim Sullivan** provided the voice talent."

If you have a favorite story of working with Jerry, please share it with your colleagues.

Today's issue brings you more memories of our colleague **Bruce Handler**, longtime AP Rio de Janeiro bureau chief who died last week.

Here's to the new week. Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

## Connecting retirement profile

# Jerry Schwartz



Leaving AP offices for the last time, on Nov. 22. Photo/Matt Sedensky

**So, how come you're writing a self-profile at this point?**

I retired last month after 45 years at the AP, all of them in New York. Also, Paul Stevens is a very persistent man.

**Wow. Forty-five years! When you started, did dinosaurs roam the Earth? Were you AP Employee No. 2, after Edie Lederer?**

Very funny. No dinosaurs, though most of my colleagues still worked on typewriters and some of them had been at the AP since FDR was president. To give you a better idea, I believe I was the last person at the AP who served on the General Desk with the legendary Ed Dennehy. And I can't imagine there are many people who can say they were hired for their first job by Lou Boccardi.

**Tell us, Grandpa, about life in the Jimmy Carter era. And how DID you wind up at the AP, anyway?**

OK, I'll try to make this brief. My mother says I started reading the (late, lamented) Philadelphia Bulletin when I was 3. She's off by about five years, but I was an avid reader – always starting with the comics, then the sports section, and reading the rest of the paper from back to front. When I realized that journalism was something one

might do for a living, I shelved my ambition to operate a forklift. I served as editor of my junior high school and high school newspapers, and of The Daily Collegian of Penn State (the single most formative experience in my life). I also worked off and on for the (late, lamented) Today's Spirit of Hatboro, Pennsylvania.

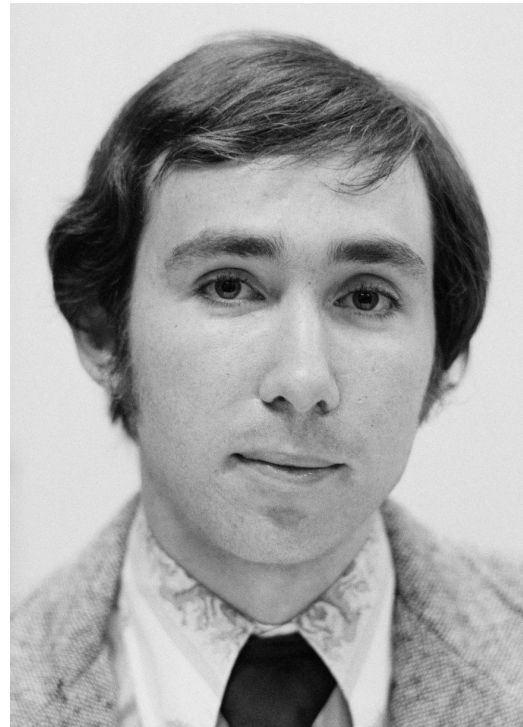
When I was a junior, I was selected for the first Dow Jones Newspaper Fund copy editing internship at the AP, which is how I came to be interviewed by Lou in his corner office on the fourth floor at 50 Rockefeller Plaza. He wanted to make sure that a callow, 21-year-old college student on the General Desk would not destroy an organization that had taken almost 130 years to build. Though I was in fact unqualified – and though I forgot to leave my resume behind when I left – he hired me anyway.

The desk was a memorable mix of old-timers like Dennehy and Joe Kane and young'uns like Jim Donna, Mike Silverman and Jim Fitzgerald. I did not disgrace myself, but lived in constant terror of screwing up, and would often go home with massive headaches brought on by the CHUNG-CHUNG-CHUNG of the wire machines.

Crucially, that was the Bicentennial summer, which was a big deal for reasons that may be hard to fathom almost a half century later. So while I spent most of my time as an editor on the General Desk and in sports (where I recall editing stories about things like mumbly peg and flag soccer), I also worked as a reporter in the very busy New York City bureau, covering the Democratic National Convention and Bicentennial festivities like the visits of the tall ships and Prince Charles.

It was a total blast.

I impressed the bureau chief, a wild man named Craig Ammerman, and it was he who hired me when I graduated, a year later.



### **Go on. My eyes are just resting.**

There were, in those days, more than 30 people working in the bureau, roughly the number of folks who might cover an entire continent for the AP today. We had a two-person overnight six days a week – FOR NEW YORK CITY ALONE. Yet we thought we were a tight operation, perhaps because of skinflint measures like the mandate to keep a log of every phone call out of the city. You say you had to dial Yonkers? Log it.

Again, there were old-timers, like Art Everett, Tom Crane, Joe Schroeder (whose real name was C.J. Schoener, but never mind). Among other things, they taught me how to disassemble a pay phone's handset so UPI couldn't file. And how to dictate on the fly. But the anarchic side of the operation consisted of men and women in their 20s – people like Rick Pienciak, who cursed more creatively than anyone I've ever met. And

Rick Hampson, Larry McShane and Mitchell Landsberg, the creative and humane nucleus of what may have been the most talented bureau the AP has ever seen.



**Jerry Schwartz, left, and Rick Hampson of the New York bureau received a special achievement award from the Deadline Club, the New York City chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi. They were honored for a series on the deteriorating condition of bridges and highways in the Metropolitan New York area.**

ABOVE, from AP Log, March 28, 1983; BELOW, from AP Log, June 22, 1987. Courtesy of AP Corporate Archives



**New York Bureau newsmen Jerry Schwartz, left, and Samuel Maull outside the courthouse, above. In the**

There was nothing better in all the world than being young and a reporter in New York City in the 1970s and '80s. I covered the AIDS crisis. Teamed up with my hero, Sam Maull, to cover the trial of subway gunman Bernhard Goetz. Built a weird conglomerate of beats, including comic books, American Judaism, the news media and, of course, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Helped unravel the web of lies around the passing of Nelson Rockefeller, who was said to have died alone in his Rockefeller Center office. Neither of those things was true. He was in a nearby apartment with a young assistant whose name is forever imprinted in my memory, though I will not repeat it here. I also will never forget listening in as Marc Rosenwasser asked an EMT who went to the scene whether the former vice president of the United States was wearing underpants.

#### **And yet you became an editor.**

Well, yes and no. I never wasn't an editor. Even as I reported, I was the weekend supervisor, and often helped my colleagues with their features – so often that Sam Boyle, my last COB, made me the bureau's enterprise editor. Yes, that was in addition to my usual work. And no, the title didn't come with a raise.

There is a truism: At the AP, if you can do something, you will do it. OK, yes, I made up the truism, but that doesn't mean it isn't true.

In 1987, I covered Pope John Paul II's epic U.S. visit, along with Vic Simpson, Harry Rosenthal and Hugh Mulligan. My job was mostly corralling the last two, and in return these AP greats instructed me on the finer points of padding expense accounts. In San Antonio, the Texas ACOB came down to desk the story. As I recall, Kristin Gazlay paid

little attention to me at the time, but two years later – newly installed in New York as national enterprise editor – she offered me the job as her deputy.



National Writer Jerry Schwartz, left, interviews columnist Jimmy Breslin in his New York apartment. (Photo: Jim Cooper)

AP World, Summer 2002, courtesy of AP Corporate Archives.



**Kristin Gazlay and former national writer Matt Crenson (center) from more than 20 years ago.**

I could spend the rest of this profile extolling Kristin. She is, without a doubt, one of the most talented, most intelligent, kindest, funniest, wisest people I've ever known. I am so lucky to have had her as a partner for the better part of more than three decades; I'm even luckier to have her as a friend.

We edited TV columns. We edited the Georges - Esper and Cornell. We edited AMs, PMs and Sunday advances, short and long stories (though few were as long as the behemoths we wrangled in later years). We started out good and, with experience, we got better.

### **And yet you become a writer.**

I did. Kristin left to become London news editor, and I figured it might be my last chance to report again – editors are rarely allowed to make the return trip across the Rubicon as they age.

There was nothing better in all the world than being a national writer at the turn of the century. I profiled the American border on a single day. And a small town in Indiana and its favorite son, a man with Down syndrome. (Jack Cappon reprinted that one in "The Word.") And a man who snuck out of his house to donate a kidney to a stranger, against his family's wishes. My favorite was the story of Bill Dorsey, a small-town funeral director who paid \$1,858.90 to fly around the world in 61 hours, never leaving an airport, just because he wanted to fly.

That piece moved on Sept. 9, 2001. It didn't get a lot of use, because flight became a lot more freighted a couple of days later ...

### **Oh yes. You wrote the main story on Sept. 11. Roll out your old war stories.**

I won't. Except to recall that Jon Wolman literally grabbed me by the elbow and brought me to the General Desk. And to confirm that I was the first to use the term "ground zero," though a friend very correctly suggested that it was inevitable that SOMEONE would have done it. And to say that while I got thousands of bylines, I got way too much credit; as we all know, the AP is at its best on the big breaking story, and on the biggest breaking story of our lives it was at its very, very best.

### **Let's wrap this up.**

But I'm only at mid-career! I haven't even mentioned my work with the heroic stylebook team, waging unceasing war against the unstylistic. Or writing "The Associated Press Reporting Handbook," a 2001 book that wasn't a bestseller – you could call it a seller. Or "Breaking News," the AP history for which I wrote one chapter and ghost wrote another (for our late and illustrious colleague, Howard Benedict).

### **This will have to be serialized over a full week of Connecting. You've got a full-blown case of Newsfeatures logorrhea.**

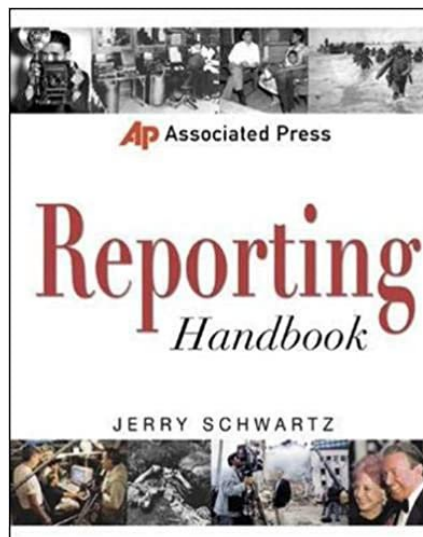
I come by the disease honestly; I took the top job in Newsfeatures in 2004, in great measure because I had three boys to put through college. Aside from a few reporting



turns, I've edited ever since – at Newsfeatures, as interim health and science editor, as deputy editor of Top Stories, as editor at large.

Sometimes, I detect a note of pity when I tell people this. One of my favorite editors, G.G. LaBelle, was known to explain the allure of editing with a joke about the man who wielded the broom at the end of circus parades. Urged to find a new job, he responded, "What? And leave show business?"

But it was never like that. I've edited brilliant writers who needed only subtle editing; I've edited others who required considerably more. I may have complained from time to time, but honestly, I loved them all. AP people are the best – ambitious in all the best ways, eager to do better and be better. Every story was a journey, and it was my privilege to be along for the ride. I'm not ready to stop doing this – I hope to freelance – but I will forever miss working with the people who make the AP the AP.





The Schwartz family (taken by photo editor/photographer Maye-E Wong)

Finally, confirm or deny: You have the world's most adorable granddaughter.

Confirm. Phoebe Lark Schwartz just turned 1. Her parents are Danny, an illustrator, and Heather, a production manager at Penguin Random House. The rest of the crew consists of Joshua, a history post-doc at Cornell; his partner, Jeannette, a registrar at the Museum of Modern Art; and Benjamin, a lobbyist for J Street in Washington. And Nina Ovryn, my wife of almost 40 years, a graphic designer who is far more talented than I. It is a remarkable family, and there is nothing better in all the world.

**Jerry Schwartz' email - [jerroldas99@gmail.com](mailto:jerroldas99@gmail.com)**

## What will be your epitaph?

**Jim Spehar** - Like Norm Abelson, the obit line on my headstone could be short and sweet.

When I was a county commissioner, a lengthy land use hearing involved a project proposed by three longtime friends. After lengthy discussion which included significant neighborhood opposition, their project was approved with some modifications in an attempt to mollify neighbors upset that open space they thought was part of their golf course fairways would soon contain homes blocking their views. We axed a couple of lots, set height limits, etc.

While exiting the hearing, one of those friends made this comment: "You're an asshole, but you're a good asshole." That obviously demanded some explanation. He replied that my insistence that county land use regulations be followed, which upset many developers, actually made his life easier. Adhering to those rules meant quick approval and development with known costs and a known market. Asking for exceptions meant a long wait, a complicated process and guessing at future costs and market conditions.

"That's what I want on my tombstone," I replied. "He was an asshole, but he was a good asshole."

We'll see...

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**Michael Putzel** - Norman Abelson. That's all. He wrote.

## More of your memories of Bruce Handler



[Susana Hayward](#) - I was deeply sad to wake up to the news that Bruce died. He was my first bureau chief in my first official assignment as Brazil correspondent in 1986.

In these retirement years, we'd become good pen pals and recently, as he was dealing with health challenges, we corresponded frequently. His last email was a week ago. He'd had a tough time tolerating radiation and had lost a lot of weight. "Basically, I'm a wreck," he said, "But I'm still good at internet games." He was a whiz at Wordle, in both English and Portuguese. He loved doing this almost as much as watching the Cubs.

Bruce was a hands-off boss, as long as you did your job, and he supported even my most outlandish story ideas in remote corners of Brazil.

I'm sending a photo of us after I opened a new office in Brasilia, probably in 1988. You may note the telex - Brazil's government prohibited the import of computers in a law called "informatica." It was two years into my assignment before Bruce was able to smuggle a Tandy for me. He loved this photo and had wanted me to send it to the World Services magazine. For some reason, I never got around to it. So I'm sending it now.

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[Walter Colton](#) - Those of us who knew Bruce were saddened by his passing. An excellent journalist from Chicago who made Niteroi his home. Why did he stay? Because, he wrote last July: "I just like it."

His note to me of July 17:

Walter—

I thought long and hard about your query, and the answer really is pretty simple. I stayed in Brazil all these years, because I like it! I'm happy! That's basically it. I had a satisfying career, with the AP and with Newsweek/Washington Post. The career break for the Professional Journalism Fellowship at Stanford came just at the right time. When I had the offer to go back to Brazil as AP bureau chief, I accepted immediately. After I retired, I did what I had long dreamed of doing: Spend most of the day on the golf course and travel all over Brazil and South America to play golf. After the sadness of losing my wife, I had the great good luck to be living in a wonderful Niteroi neighborhood, with a small-town atmosphere, where everybody knows me, where people are amazingly cordial and friendly and where I can get around without a car! Also, the weather's nice. Where else could I have all this?

You tell me.

I know you wanted something more profound, but this is the truth.

Bruce

Fortunately, I got to have a couple of nice visits with him in his pleasant Niteroi neighborhood in recent years (before Covid). He loved watching the Chicago Cubs and playing Wordle.

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**David Daniel** - Bruce and I frequently played (I guess I still will, though a great deal of joy has gone out of it) Merriam-Webster word quizzes. You should check them out. They're challenging (some more than others) and fun. You need to set up a free account with a username. If you score well enough, you get to go on the leaderboard of the top 25 scores. Our usernames were Blivet and DrBear. We were frequently on the leaderboard but could never beat DykeonaBike. She (?) is always in first or second place with perfect or near perfect scores. It was a matter of great frustration for us both that we could never beat her! Bruce would rant about her, and even use her as a reference. One time, after one of his many "Queen Bee" wins at Spelling Bee, I told him he should write to the NYT and see if they have records of the most "Queen Bees." He said, "Nah, there's always a DykeonaBike out there somewhere to spoil it." If you try the M-W word quizzes, you'll see her.

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**Monte Hayes** - The news of Bruce Handler's death is, indeed, sad and a shock. Over the years of shared coverage in Latin America, Bruce became a close friend. In the mid and late '80s, Bruce often backed me up in Lima, Peru, where I was bureau chief and dealing with the murderous Shining Path guerrilla group as it expanded its attacks from its base high in the Andes, often with massive car bombs that terrorized the inhabitants of the capital.

Bruce was a calming presence when he parachuted in from his base in Rio. Nothing seemed to rattle him. He usually had a little smile accompanied with a humorous

observation, even in the most stressful moments. I looked forward to his visits although his arrival signaled that the situation in Peru was dire. We became such good friends that I visited him in Niteroi in the early '90s with my wife and daughter. As expected, he was a gracious host

In the last few years, we renewed our friendship after years of not being in touch. I called him from time to time in Niteroi, where he explained that he was restricted in his outings because of nerve damage to the soles of his feet. But he was always in good spirits regardless of the status of his health.

The last time I communicated with him some weeks back he was very upbeat about defeating a skin cancer he was treating with radiation. It's hard to imagine Bruce ever had down day. I will miss my friend.

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**Dennis Redmont** - Bruce was a a dear friend and the news editor in RIO ,when I worked as COB 1970-75.We covered many events under the Brazilian dictatorship and shared many scary moments during the wave of diplomatic kidnappings ,the push into the Amazon, etc . And then... The soccer madness etc.

Of course, ED MILLER was in charge in Sao Paolo, where we ran an international translation of AP news. The period coincided with the surpassing of the UPI stranglehold on many South American subscribers.

Bruce was truly a multitasker and a living Wikipedia. His finger on the cheek while interviewing people was a trademark, as the photo in Connections showed.

## Indianapolis bureau's digital meet-up features old friends, new stories



**John Strauss** - Great memories from five decades of service, with staffers including three former bureau chiefs, three news editors and three Statehouse correspondents--not a bad turnout for the Indianapolis bureau's second "Zoom reunion" last week.

Here's the roll call from our group photo:

Top, L-R: Beth Harris, John Strauss, Jim Reindl, Ed Staats (our special Kentucky guest).

Middle: Lisa Perlman Greathouse, Doug Richardson, Ed Breen (distinguished former member editor), Diane Balk Palguta.

Bottom: Lindel Hutson, Susan Wyman and Tom Wyman, Jan Carroll, Bob Daugherty.

Technical glitches prevent us from seeing Andy Lippman and Paul Stevens. Yours truly tussled with some of the technology, but it was a great chance for folks to share life updates, and stories from back in the day. In Indianapolis, those memories include the hectic sports nights and surprise encounters with newsmakers, including the time Jan Carroll recognized the man sitting next to her in a courtroom. It was Tony Kiritsis, featured in national headlines a few years earlier for taking somebody hostage in a business dispute. The conversation also included kudos for Paul and the Connecting newsletter.

As usual, we learned something from the experience. If you decide to do your own digital reunion, we recommend:

- Having a paid Zoom account, which allows longer meetings and other helpful features.
- Start the planning early since there will inevitably be time and date conflicts.
- Cast a wide net. In any bureau, there are "generations," and a good reunion benefits from having stories across a wide time span.
- Start with a round-robin of short updates. Hear from everybody to get started, and the conversation will build from there.
- Take your time. We actually opened the room early, and some of us stayed on later, after most of the group had left.
- Consider making some time for those we've lost. A moment of silence for the friends no longer with us would be a good idea.

## Another Connecting holiday recipe

[Ed Williams](#) - My simple and easy sausage ball recipe

Sausage balls

2 cups Bisquick baking mix.

One and a half cups grated cheese. (I prefer extra sharp cheddar.)

1 pound ground sausage. (I prefer Tennessee Pride hot.)

Several tablespoons of water.

Mix it all together.

That's all there is to it!

Bake at 350° for about 20 minutes.

## ***BEST OF THE WEEK — FIRST WINNER*** **AP spotlights remarkable rise of federal prison official accused of misconduct**



**The Federal Correctional Institution is shown in Dublin, Calif., Monday, Dec. 5, 2022.  
 AP PHOTO / JEFF CHIU**

Mike Balsamo in Washington, D.C., and Mike Sisak in New York trained a lens on a single Bureau of Prisons official, Thomas Ray Hinkle, who received promotions across four decades despite repeated allegations of abuse, misconduct and even admissions by him that he'd beaten inmates in the past as part of a gang of guards called "The Cowboys."

After being tipped earlier this year to Hinkle's past, Sisak and Balsamo went about securing and scrutinizing 1,600 pages of documents that provided details of the allegations and developed key sources within the prisons system who corroborated the accusations. Finally, toward the end of the reporting process, they secured comment from Hinkle and the bureau, both of which acknowledged his previous excesses but said he was a changed man.

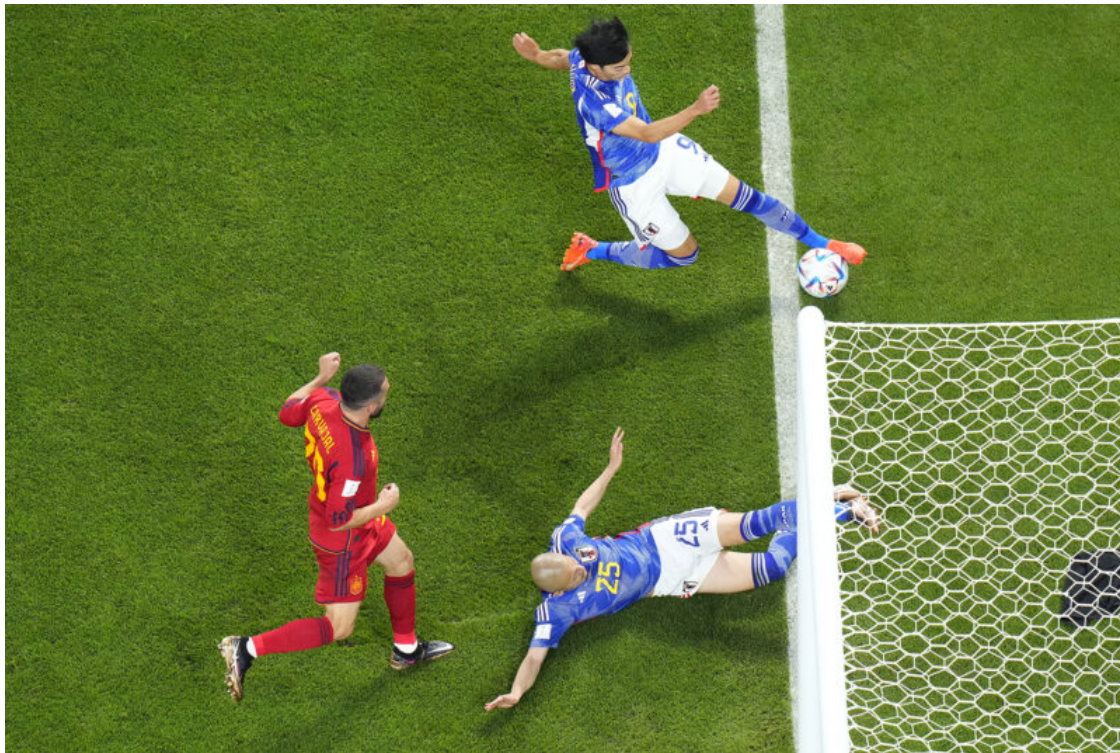
Balsamo and Sisak made sure that the story underwent legal and standards reviews before publication. They also worked with the Washington video team and the Digital Audiences team to ensure material was available for an explanatory video and social promotion, particularly on Instagram. Washington's Jon Elswick worked with them to develop a set of images of documents and prison exteriors to make the story as visually rich as possible given the prison bureau's refusal to cooperate.



Read more [here](#).

## *BEST OF THE WEEK — SECOND WINNER*

# AP Photographer Petr Josek gets the only image that proves the ball was in!



**Japan's Kaoru Mitoma just barely prevents the ball from crossing the endline against Spain at Khalifa International Stadium in Doha, Qatar, Dec. 1, 2022. AP PHOTO / PETR JOSEK**

Tens of thousands of images by some of the world's best sports photographers move from the World Cup each day. Rarely does one photo rise above all the others to make a worldwide stir among fans. Prague-based photographer Petr Josek did just that when he made the only photo of the key move that led to Japan's winning goal against Spain and ensured their qualification to the next round.

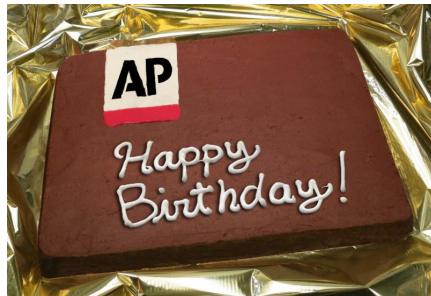
The photo was taken in a fraction of a second. But it was Josek's skill honed over years and clear thinking in the moment that made it happen. Josek took a working-at-heights certification course so that he could operate from the catwalk at the World Cup in Qatar. This is critical because, as Deputy Director for International Photos Tony Hicks put it, "The reason he got that picture is because he's a walking, talking, thinking photographer and not a robot." The certification provides the access but it's your knowledge, anticipation and application that gets you the best images.

Josek knew the game, of course, but he also knew the teams. Japan demonstrated in Game 1 that they were capable of coming back from a deficit in the first half to turn around in the second half and win the game. Josek also knew he could count on the AP photo team: There were four AP photographers on the pitch and a fifth shooting

from the stands. This freed him up to try something that had the potential to be special and different.

Read more [here](#).

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Sibby Christensen](#)

## Stories of interest

### *Twitter poll closes with users voting for Musk exit as chief* (AP)

By MATT O'BRIEN

More than half of 17.5 million users who responded to a Twitter poll created by billionaire Elon Musk over whether he should step down as head of the company had voted yes by the time the poll closed Monday.

There was no immediate announcement from Twitter, or Musk, about whether that would happen, though Musk said that he would abide by the results. Musk attended the World Cup final on Sunday and may be midflight on his way back to the U.S. early Monday.

Musk has taken a number of unscientific polls on substantial issues facing the social media platform, including whether to reinstate journalists that he had suspended from Twitter, which was broadly criticized in and out of media circles.

Musk has clashed with some users on multiple fronts and on Sunday, he asked Twitter users to decide if he should remain in charge of the social media platform after acknowledging he made a mistake in launching new speech restrictions that banned mentions of rival social media websites on Twitter.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Opinion | The Slow-Motion Self-Demolition of Washington Post Publisher Fred Ryan*** (Politico Magazine)

Opinion by JACK SHAFER

The First Law of Meetings states that a boss should never convene a meeting, especially an employee meeting, unless he can safely control its substance and outcome.

Washington Post Publisher Frederick J. Ryan Jr. botched this simple dictate on Wednesday at an all-employee town hall. Ryan surprised the staff by disclosing that layoffs beyond the November dismissal of the entire Washington Post Magazine staff and the paper's dance critic were in the cards for early 2023. A cascade of stinging questions fell like hail on Ryan's comments, prompting his whimpering pushback that he wasn't about to "turn the town hall into a grievance session" and a retreat from his own meeting, as this video documents.

What was Ryan thinking? What sort of executive calls a meeting less than two weeks before Christmas to promise attendees that the sack of coal of more layoffs is a certainty in the new year? Did he expect the news to go down like bourbon-fortified eggnog? Following the disastrous meeting, Ryan took another shot at announcing the impending layoffs by issuing an email to staffers that was equally undiplomatic. "It is not a decision that has been taken lightly," he wrote, assuaging nobody.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Larry Blasko.

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## ***Opinion Holiday gloom at The Washington Post***

(Washington Post)

**By Erik Wemple**  
Media critic

In December 2006, David Carr, the media columnist for the New York Times, wrote a column about The Washington Post and mentioned that layoffs could be in the works. Leonard Downie Jr., then The Post's executive editor, responded with fury: "We want to quash any stupid, false rumors like this one," said Downie.

That didn't mean The Post wasn't slashing its payroll. Thanks to its rich pension fund, the company laid out a series of buyouts in the 2000s — generous packages bulging with cash and health benefits — that aging Posties had trouble resisting. But at least they weren't layoffs.

What Publisher Fred Ryan announced at a town hall event on Wednesday — those are layoffs. "In the coming year we will be eliminating a number of positions," said Ryan, who explained it was important to align The Post's editorial offerings with readers' interests. The cutbacks, he later emphasized in a staff email, wouldn't exceed "a

single-digit percentage of our workforce.” A 9-percent layoff would reduce The Post’s newsroom by about 100 staffers.

The announcement bewildered Post employees who had crowded into the paper’s fourth floor conference space for the year-end meeting. It arrived as a harsh coda to a series of upbeat presentations on bold initiatives, including ambitious climate coverage, an innovative news-delivery product, and changes afoot in the opinions section. Never bury the lead in a crowd of journalists.

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

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## ***Frank Shakespeare, TV Executive Behind a New Nixon, Dies at 97*** (New York Times)

**By Douglas Martin**

Frank Shakespeare, a self-described “conservative’s conservative” who used skills he had learned in the television industry to help elect Richard M. Nixon as president and then led the United States Information Agency, putting a hard edge on the Nixon administration’s message abroad, died on Wednesday in Deerfield, Wis. He was 97.

His daughter Fredricka Shakespeare Manning confirmed the death, at her home, where Mr. Shakespeare had also been living. His death was also announced by the Heritage Foundation, the conservative Washington think tank, where he was chairman of its board of trustees in the 1980s. He also held ambassadorships in Portugal and at the Vatican.

Mr. Shakespeare joined the 1968 Nixon presidential campaign while on leave as a CBS executive. As an adviser he was principally responsible for coming up with a novel way to present the candidate on television, in large part to make viewers forget Nixon’s stiff TV performances in 1960, when as vice president he was the Republican presidential standard-bearer.

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

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## ***Opinion Not another column about Elon Musk*** (Washington Post)

**By Alexandra Petri**

In “The Madness of King George,” there are several scenes where very learned doctors dedicate considerable time and effort to squinting at the contents of the king’s chamber pot. Watching the movie, you think, “Well, at least we are at a stage of civilization where we don’t have to do that! We do not live in a world that hinges so completely on the condition of one or two powerful men that it is worth our while to

spend hours every day examining their stools in minute detail and trying to draw conclusions from them." But then Elon Musk buys Twitter, and — I can think of no better analogy for what has ensued.

One of the most correct tweets about Twitter is that every day it has a new main character and the goal is not to be it. But now Musk is the main character every day, and in addition to encouraging some of Twitter's worst voices, he is astoundingly boring. Here is a sample of his tweets: "The woke mind virus is either defeated or nothing else matters." "Thanksgiving cuisine is such a delightful symphony of flavor!" At one point he tweeted a mildly amusing AI-generated conversation, only to reveal he hadn't even crafted the prompt himself. Not to mention all the memes about psyops, although I guess that counts as a mention.

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

## Today in History – Dec. 19, 2022



**Today is Monday, Dec. 19, the 353rd day of 2022. There are 12 days left in the year.**

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

On Dec. 19, 1998, President Bill Clinton was impeached by the Republican-controlled House for perjury and obstruction of justice. (Clinton was subsequently acquitted by the Senate.)

### **On this date:**

In 1777, during the American Revolutionary War, Gen. George Washington led his army of about 11,000 men to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, to camp for the winter.

In 1907, 239 workers died in a coal mine explosion in Jacobs Creek, Pennsylvania.

In 1946, war broke out in Indochina as troops under Ho Chi Minh launched widespread attacks against the French.

In 1950, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower was named commander of the military forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In 1960, fire broke out on the hangar deck of the nearly completed aircraft carrier USS Constellation at the New York Naval Shipyard; 50 civilian workers were killed.

In 1972, Apollo 17 splashed down in the Pacific, winding up the Apollo program of manned lunar landings.

In 2001, the fires that had burned beneath the ruins of the World Trade Center in New York City for the previous three months were declared extinguished except for a few scattered hot spots.

In 2002, Secretary of State Colin Powell declared Iraq in “material breach” of a U.N. disarmament resolution.

In 2003, design plans were unveiled for the signature skyscraper — a 1,776-foot glass tower — at the site of the World Trade Center in New York City.

In 2008, citing imminent danger to the national economy, President George W. Bush ordered an emergency bailout of the U.S. auto industry.

In 2011, North Korea announced the death two days earlier of leader Kim Jong Il; North Koreans marched by the thousands to mourn their “Dear Leader” while state media proclaimed his youngest son, Kim Jong Un, a “Great Successor.”

In 2016, a truck rammed into a crowded Christmas market in central Berlin, killing 12 people in an attack claimed by Islamic State. (The suspected attacker was killed in a police shootout four days later.) A Turkish policeman fatally shot Russian ambassador Andrei Karlov at a photo exhibit in Ankara. (The assailant was later killed in a police shootout.)

Ten years ago: Four State Department officials resigned under pressure, less than a day after a damning report blamed management failures for a lack of security at the U.S. diplomatic mission in Benghazi, Libya, where militants killed the U.S. ambassador and three other Americans. Park Geun-hye (goon-hay), daughter of late South Korean President Park Chung-hee, was elected the country’s first female president.

Five years ago: A bus carrying cruise ship passengers on an excursion to Mayan ruins in southeastern Mexico flipped over on a narrow highway, killing 11 travelers and their guide and injuring about 20 others; eight Americans were among those killed. U.S. health officials approved the nation’s first gene therapy for an inherited disease, a treatment that improves the sight of patients with a rare form of blindness. David Wright, a Massachusetts man who was convicted of leading a plot inspired by the Islamic State to behead conservative blogger Pamela Geller, was sentenced in Boston to 28 years in prison.

One year ago: Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia said he could not support his party’s signature \$2 trillion social and environment bill, dealing a seemingly fatal blow to President Joe Biden’s leading domestic initiative. (Congress would approve a smaller but still substantive compromise measure in August 2022.)

The NHL and its players association temporarily clamped down on teams crossing the Canadian border and shut down operations of two more teams in hopes of salvaging the season as COVID-19 outbreaks spread across the league. Gabriel Boric, a leftist millennial who rose to prominence during anti-government protests, was elected Chile's next president. Despite rising concerns over the omicron variant, "Spider-Man: No Way Home" achieved the third best opening of all time; studio estimates showed that the Sony and Marvel blockbuster grossed \$253 million in ticket sales in North America.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Elaine Joyce is 79. Actor Tim Reid is 78. Musician John McEuen is 77. Singer Janie Fricke is 75. Jazz musician Lenny White is 73. Actor Mike Lookinland is 62. Actor Scott Cohen is 61. Actor Jennifer Beals is 59. Actor Robert MacNaughton is 56. Magician Criss Angel is 55. Rock musician Klaus Eichstadt (Ugly Kid Joe) is 55. Actor Ken Marino is 54. Actor Elvis Nolasco is 54. Actor Kristy Swanson is 53. Model Tyson Beckford is 52. Actor Amy Locane is 51. Pro Football Hall of Famer Warren Sapp is 50. Actor Rosa Blasi is 50. Actor Alyssa Milano is 50. Actor Tara Summers is 43. Actor Jake Gyllenhaal (JIH'-lihn-hahl) is 42. Actor Marla Sokoloff is 42. Rapper Lady Sovereign is 37. Journalist Ronan Farrow is 35. Actor Nik Dodani is 29.

## 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.



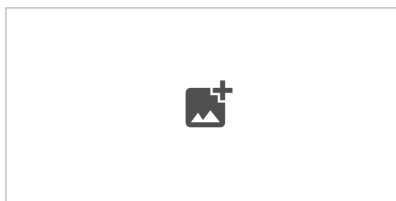
Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to [Ye Olde Connecting Editor](#). And don't forget to include photos!

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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