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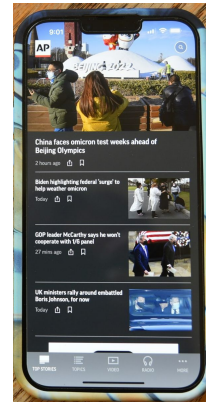
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Connecting

Jan. 17, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this Jan. 17, 2023,

How do you spell Relief?

With apologies to R O L A I D S, one way is – B U Z B E E. Another is – L I P P M A N. Yet another is – S E A G R A V E.

Connecting would like to explore the relief positions that once were part of the AP culture – vacation relief, legislative relief, maternity relief and maybe others – and would like to hear from you if you started your career as a relief staffer or were involved in hiring relief staffers.

Relief positions as we knew them disappeared from the AP about 25-30 years ago – the victim of budget management and changes to reporting needs. They were once a frequent entryway into the AP for young journalists besides the more normal route of hiring those with fulltime newspaper or broadcast experience. If you succeeded in the

relief position, which was temporary in nature, the length dependent on the budget allotted to a bureau for relief, you could move into a regular news position.

For the record, **Sally Buzbee** started with AP as legislative relief in Topeka – and a few decades later, after AP positions that included Cairo bureau chief, Washington bureau chief and executive editor – is executive editor of The Washington Post, the first woman to hold that top position. **Andy Lippman** was vacation relief in Phoenix – the start of a career that took him to chief of bureau positions in Louisville, Indianapolis and Los Angeles and then general executive. **Jane Seagrave** was legislative relief in Santa Fe – and rose to become a senior vice president and chief revenue officer of the AP before leaving to be publisher of the Vineyard Gazette (founded in 1846) on Martha's Vineyard, a position she holds today.

So tell us your story if you began your career in a relief position – what did you do, how did it help you through the rest of your career? Or tell your story of hiring talented new people via the relief route.

My thanks to colleague [Melissa Jordan](#) for suggesting this project months ago. "AP was the only place I ever worked where temporary 'relief' positions were a real thing, like backfilling for maternity leaves or staffing up for legislative sessions" she said. "It brought in lots of talent. Everywhere else I worked just told others to suck it up and cover the extra work."

CORRECTION: The name of the Frank Snepp book mentioned in Monday's Connecting in the cutline for the Vietnam remembrance is Decent Interval, not Decent Interview.

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

Congratulations to Gene Herrick



Several Connecting colleagues wrote Monday to share news that colleague Gene Herrick's iconic photo of Martin Luther King after his release from jail in Montgomery in 1956 – the lead photo in Monday's Connecting issue on MLK Day - was featured well in The Washington Post. Great minds recognize a great photo.



Colleague **Martha Malan** noted: "They even credited him!" Colleague **Sibby Christensen** wrote Gene, "Gene - You must be getting a kick out of getting photo credits in the papers today. Congratulations!"

And colleague **Neal Ulevich**, a Pulitzer Prize-winning AP photographer, summed it up best about our 97-year-old colleague:

"All hail Gene Herrick, a photographer who made a difference."

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Gene's email - gherrick@jetbroadband.com

Remembering Jane See White

EDITOR'S NOTE: Our colleague Jane See White died Jan. 11, and Connecting will publish an obituary when it is available from her family. If you would like to share memories of Jane, who worked for AP in New York as a national writer from 1976-82, please send it along.

Charlotte Porter - Jane See White was one of my heroes before I ever met her.

I picked up a copy of the AP Log sometime in the mid-70s and saw a picture of her on the front page, in a crowd following a naked man down the street near Rockefeller Center. As I recall the story, it was a holiday morning, and Jane was one of the few people about. But Naked Guy had certainly managed to attract those few. Jane corralled a photographer in the bunch to take his pictures to 50 Rock and later went in and filed a story, one of those oddball New York City stories that the rest of the world loved so much.

Not long afterward, I was transferred to New York, where I met Jane. At one point she did a stint on the General Desk, helping out with rewrite, and I was one of her editors. I remember being blown over by her magnificent use of language -- in a story about a man whose survival was a medical miracle, she wrote that he was back at home doing fatherly tasks, including "rousing slugabed teenage sons."

She left AP in the 80s, so it wasn't until about 1991 that we became close friends. By then, I was the bureau chief in Phoenix, and she had just been hired at the Phoenix Gazette. She brought her toddler daughter, Laura, and folded me into her life. Jane was one of the smartest and most fun people it has been my blessing to know. She was the first person I knew to adopt Amazon -- and quickly hooked me -- and it was my privilege to perform a crowning ceremony for her when she turned 50.

There are others who have known her longer and more intimately, and I hope you will hear a lot from them. I'm just glad I had a chance to be part of her life for a while.

Connecting series: Saving a life – all part of the job?

Dennis Conrad – I saved a life. Maybe my own. Maybe even more.

I don't own a gun, never have, never will. I have always thought guns were for the police and military, not me. The closest I have been to a gun was the revolver my father had when I was in high school and my father, retired from 30 years in the Air Force, got a job with the Orlando Police Department. When I lived with my father on military bases, he didn't have a gun as he worked on airplanes then and it was decades past his time in the 1930s as an MP with the Army Air Corps. Being from a farm in Cottageville, West Virginia, my father knew how to shoot when it counted, though, even when he was 50 years old. When some 700 in his unit took a required test with a carbine, just before his retirement in 1967, he and one other enlisted man who was much younger were the only ones to walk away with the "expert" certificate. When I asked my father who had been accustomed to "sharpshooter" ratings how in the world he had moved up to "expert," he grinned and said, "I wore my glasses."

A great story, right?

Well, it came handy one day several years ago when I took my dog Oliver to the huge Southern Village dog park in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. That morning we were the only ones there except for another dog and a middle-aged man sitting on a bench and looking rather sad, perhaps heavily medicated. I approached the man and tried to make cheerful conversation with him - almost like a Las Vegas comic telling jokes about dog parks past. Maybe 20 minutes or so went by, he stood up, smiled, shook my hand and said he needed to leave. He said his name was Tom. I told him my name as well. And I told him I would join him in leaving. We got to the gate and then something happened that I never ever could have imagined. With a great big grin, he suddenly whipped out a handgun. In an instant, I had to decide what was his intent. Was he planning to kill me? Was he just showing me that he carried a gun for self-defense? Was he going to kill himself? I had what seemed a split second to decide whether I was going to overwhelm the smaller though much younger man or try something else to defuse a possibly dangerous situation. "You know my father never owned a gun all the years I was with him but ..."

Yes, I told him the story about Dad. And I was smiling the whole time, believe me.

And he tucked his gun away.

I will never know if I was a lifesaver. The more I think about it I may have saved Tom's life that morning when he sat alone with his Glock on a bench in Southern Village. I also wonder if it had happened with a grandchild by my side would my reaction have been to go on the offense in OUR self-defense. Another result in possibly misjudging Tom is that all of us could have died in a struggle for the gun.

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Bruce Lowitt - This doesn't qualify in the usual sense, but Hal Bock is a hero to me for possibly saving a life in a press box.

He and I were working a World Series (the year and teams involved are not mentioned to protect the guilty), the players had left the field, and I was just finishing my 800-or-so-word lede, when the tiny screen on my Teleram suddenly went blank.

WTF?

The sportswriter seated beside me, who had finished and transmitted his story, had reached down to the outlets between us and inadvertently unplugged my computer instead of his. And in those days, computers didn't reliably back up the copy.

I let out a howl loud enough to shake the ballpark. Hal, seated nearby, stopped writing his column, leaped up, rushed over and grabbed me and said "Go! Go!" shoving me away and preventing me from throttling the other writer.

I walked away, envisioning myself sitting in the ballpark for the next couple of hours, angrily trying to rewrite my story (and we all know that, having to do so, it would have been a poor imitation of the original).

A few minutes later Hal called me back. He had somehow managed to save about three-quarters of my story. As the writer beside me apologized profusely and I diplomatically replied "GTF away from me!" I rewrote (not as well) what had been lost.

Hal had saved a story, a life and, I suspect, my career if I'd done what I contemplated doing that night.

Two postscripts:

When I returned home, I wrapped bright red tape around the plug and a portion of the computer wire to prevent similar mishaps.

And that sportswriter and I crossed paths again at other big events and became friends to this day.

Oh, and Hal Bock is still my hero.

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Life-saver Jack Briggs at one of his 16 Olympics assignments for AP Radio.

[Dave Lubeski](#) - I have another lifesaver story of sorts to go along with the heroism of Tom Canavan and Ralph Russo in the press box and Ed Tobias's newsroom rescue story. Mine is also a newsroom story at AP Radio, but it's in no way of the magnitude of Canavan and Russo's save, or Ed's story involving the defibrillator.

It was quite a few years ago on a Saturday in the newsroom on K Street with college football keeping everyone busy. I had a later shift that day, but when the incident occurred, Jack Briggs was anchoring sportscasts and a temporary vacation relief hire was at the writing desk.

The temp went out for lunch and brought back two hot dogs from the vendor on the corner. Jack went into the on-air studio for his show and when he came out, he noticed the temp was silently making strange gestures, trying to get Jack's attention. Jack was baffled at first, but then realized the temp was choking. A last bite of his first hot dog slipped out of the bun and lodged in his throat. Jack grabbed the temp from behind and successfully performed the Heimlich Maneuver.

I arrived a couple of hours later. The temp's shift had ended and he had gone home. Briggs and others in the newsroom told me the story. I asked what happened after the Heimlich cleared the temp's airway. Jack's answer: "Nothing much. He sat down and ate his other hot dog"

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Casey Stashenko, then 14, sits in one of the members' chairs in the New York State Assembly in April 2013 prior to a session in which he was honored by the Assembly

for saving the life of his father Joel Stashenko by performing CPR on him after Joel had suffered a sudden cardiac arrest. (Photo by Mike Groll)

[Joel Stashenko](#) - I cannot speak with any knowledge of acting as a lifesaver for someone in the throes of sudden cardiac arrest, such as the one Damar Hamlin suffered while playing in Cincinnati on Jan. 2. But I do know what it is like to be the one whose life was saved.

In my case, my heart stopped beating soon after I returned to my home outside Albany, N.Y., from a day at the New York Law Journal on May 30, 2012. I was found by my wife Claudia Hutton not breathing and with my lips turning blue. My 13-year-old son Casey immediately began to give me CPR according to instructions he and his eighth-grade classmates had just received in a health class at his middle school. The EMTs who arrived within about 10 minutes of my wife's 911 call credited Casey with keeping me alive and preventing brain damage due to a lack of oxygen. They subsequently shocked my heart three times with a defibrillator in the ambulance enroute to the hospital, where I spent 17 days in an induced coma and at an intentionally chilled temperature, had a pacemaker/defibrillator implanted in my chest and eventually was able to return to work by July 2012. Afterward, I could remember nothing of the hours before my heart stopped and of no sensations like some people report during near-death experiences, such as the approach of a blinding light. Subsequent testing revealed a condition known as Long QT Syndrome, which causes a sudden disruption in the electronic impulses that keep the heart beating.

Fittingly, both my son and the EMTs who responded to my wife's 911 call were honored as the lifesavers they were. Casey spoke before hundreds of people at a black-tie American Heart Association banquet in Manhattan at which he got to meet Jerry Stiller and Tom Wolfe. Casey and my wife, well-known in Albany as a spokeswoman for several state agencies, were enlisted by the Heart Association to lobby the state Legislature for a bill the group had been pushing for years to require that all New York school students receive instruction on performing CPR as part of their health curriculum. Though it was ethically inappropriate for me to be involved as I resumed covering the courts and the Legislature for the Law Journal, Claudia and Casey reported that many legislators remembered me from the more than 15 years I had spent covering the Legislature in Albany for The Associated Press, including as Capitol Editor from 1996-2005. Perhaps our experience made a small bit of difference. In 2015, the CPR instruction bill passed, and the state Board of Regents implemented regulations requiring CPR instruction beginning in the 2015-16 school year.

Whether he is ever able to resume his athletic career, I suspect that Damar Hamlin will come to regard -- if he does not already -- Jan. 2, 2023, as I do May 30, 2012: A day of rebirth when he has given the gift of extended time that life seems to deny so many others.

Rachel Ambrose celebrates her 80th



[Andrea Cavanaugh](#) - She might kill me for sending this to you.



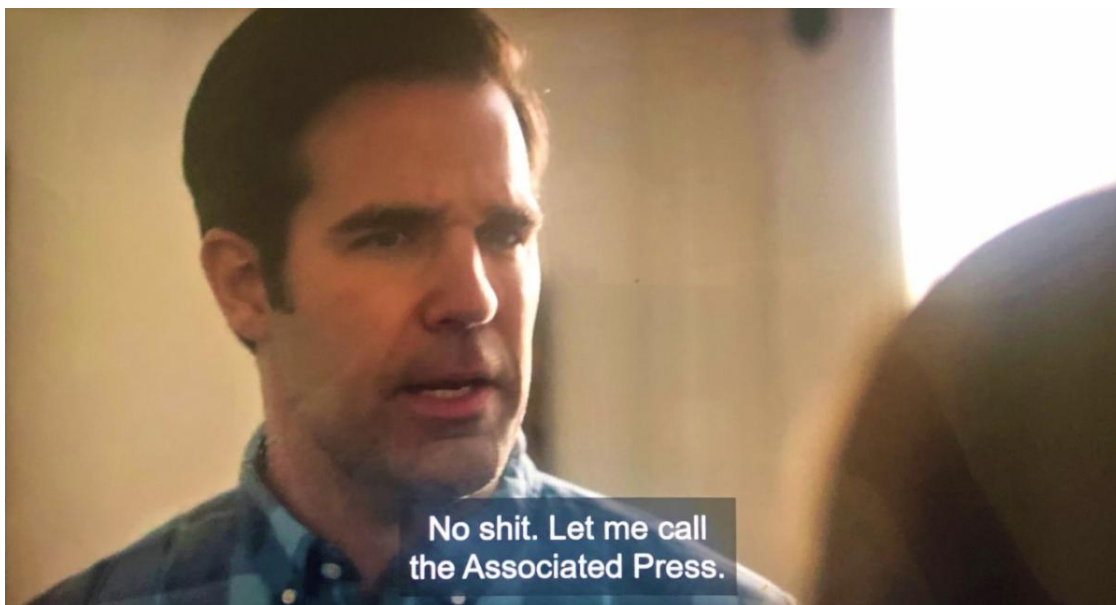
From left: Rachel Ambrose, Linda Deutsch, Kitty Felde, Jeff Wilson.

Linda Deutsch - Rachel Ambrose's family invited 45 of her closest friends to lunch celebrating her 80th birthday. In spite of monsoon weather this hearty group trekked to Redondo Beach. You may recognize some AP family members who joined other journalists and members of Rachel's wide array of friendship groups. Her son, daughter in law and grandchildren put on the party. She said I was the California friend and colleague who has known her longest. We were the two lone women in the AP bureau in 1967. Great party for a great lady.

Execution photo story

[Estes Thompson](#) - I loved the execution photo story in Monday's Connecting. In my 33 years with AP, most in North Carolina, I witnessed 25 executions: two by gas and the rest lethal injection. I constantly argued for opening the death chamber to still photos and video. My pitch was if you officials say it's a deterrent, people should see it.

AP Sighting – on ‘Catastrophe’



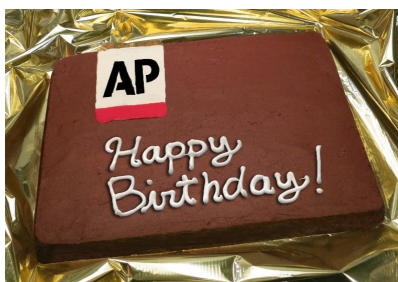
A domestic spat gets really ugly on the Amazon series "Catastrophe." Shared by [Steve Loeper](#).

Nick Ut landscape photo honored



[Nick Ut](#) - I won for this picture of a California landscape near Victorville in Beijing, China, this month. It is from the photo collection "People and Nature," a finalist for the Press Photo Award of the first Silk Road Global News Awards.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Jim Salter](#)

Story of interest

Phantom Candidates and Ghost Newspapers (The Bulwark)

by STEVEN WALDMAN

After the New York Times and other publications reported that newly elected Rep. George Santos probably didn't descend from Holocaust survivors or run an animal-

protection charity, or [gestures broadly] any of it, many suggested that it would have been more helpful for the press to dig into this before the election.

“This would all have been exposed before the election if local newspapers were not running on fumes,” tweeted former Senator Claire McCaskill.

A few news cycles later it emerged that actually the local press had reported on the Santos story. A local paper, the North Shore Leader, had declared that the Republican nominee was “most likely just a fabulist—a fake.”

So which is it: The triumph of the local press or a sign of its demise? More the latter, though for some surprising reasons.

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

Today in History - Jan. 17, 2023



Today is Tuesday, Jan. 17, the 17th day of 2023. There are 348 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 17, 1961, President Dwight D. Eisenhower delivered his farewell address in which he warned against “the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex.”

On this date:

In 1917, Denmark ceded the Virgin Islands to the United States for \$25 million.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied forces launched the first of four battles for Monte Cassino in Italy; the Allies were ultimately successful.

In 1950, the Great Brink's Robbery took place as seven masked men held up a Brink's garage in Boston, stealing \$1.2 million in cash and \$1.5 million in checks and money orders. (Although the entire gang was caught, only part of the loot was recovered.)

In 1955, the submarine USS Nautilus made its first nuclear-powered test run from its berth in Groton (GRAH'-tuhn), Connecticut.

In 1966, the Simon & Garfunkel album "Sounds of Silence" was released by Columbia Records.

In 1977, convicted murderer Gary Gilmore, 36, was shot by a firing squad at Utah State Prison in the first U.S. execution in a decade.

In 1994, the 6.7 magnitude Northridge earthquake struck Southern California, killing at least 60 people, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

In 1995, more than 6,000 people were killed when an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.2 devastated the city of Kobe (koh-bay), Japan.

In 2016, Iran released three Americans, former U.S. Marine Amir Hekmati, Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian and pastor Saeed Abedini, as part of a prisoner swap that also netted Tehran some \$100 billion in sanctions relief.

In 2020, U.S. health officials announced that they would begin screening airline passengers from central China for the new coronavirus; people traveling from Wuhan, China, would have their temperature checked and be asked about symptoms.

Ten years ago: Algerian helicopters and special forces stormed a gas plant in the stony plains of the Sahara to wipe out Islamist militants and free hostages from at least 10 countries. Nearly all the militants were killed; at least 40 hostages died in the standoff. Oprah Winfrey's OWN network broadcast the first of a two-part interview with Lance Armstrong, in which the disgraced cyclist told Winfrey he had started doping in the mid-1990s.

Five years ago: Snow, ice and record-breaking cold closed runways, highways, schools and government offices across the South; at least 15 people died. A broad rally propelled the Dow Jones industrial average to close above 26,000 points for the first time. The rival Koreas agreed to form their first unified Olympic team and have their athletes parade together for the first time in 11 years during the opening ceremony of the upcoming Winter Olympics in South Korea.

One year ago: Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov angrily rejected U.S. allegations that Moscow was preparing a pretext to invade Ukraine, as Russian troops who were stationed near Ukraine's border launched more drills. Organizers of the Winter Olympics in Beijing said they would offer event tickets only to "selected" spectators because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Today's birthdays: Former FCC chairman Newton N. Minow is 97. Actor James Earl Jones is 92. Talk show host Maury Povich is 84. Pop singer Chris Montez is 81. Actor Joanna David is 76. Actor Jane Elliot ("General Hospital") is 76. Rock musician Mick Taylor is 75. Singer Steve Earle is 68. Singer Paul Young is 67. Actor-comedian Steve Harvey is 66. Singer Susanna Hoffs (The Bangles) is 64. Movie director-screenwriter Brian Koppelman is 62. Actor-comedian Jim Carrey is 61. Actor Denis O'Hare is 61. Former first lady Michelle Obama is 59. Actor Joshua Malina is 57. Singer Shabba Ranks is 57. Actor Naveen Andrews is 54. Electronic music DJ Tiesto is 54. Rapper Kid

Rock is 52. Actor Freddy Rodriguez is 48. Actor-writer Leigh Whannell is 46. Actor-singer Zoey Deschanel is 43. Dancer Maksim Chmerkovskiy (TV: "Dancing with the Stars") is 43. Singer Ray J is 42. Actor Diogo Morgado is 42. Country singer Amanda Wilkinson is 41. Former NBA player Dwyane Wade is 41. Actor Ryan Gage is 40. DJ-singer Calvin Harris is 39. Folk-rock musician Jeremiah Fraites is 37. Actor Jonathan Keltz is 35. Actor Kelly Marie Tran (Film: "Star Wars: The Last Jedi") is 34. Actor Kathrine Herzer is 26.

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.

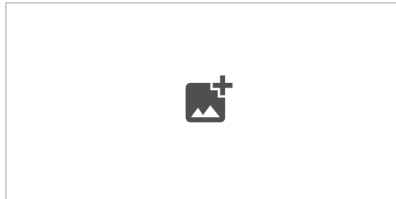
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?

- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.

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