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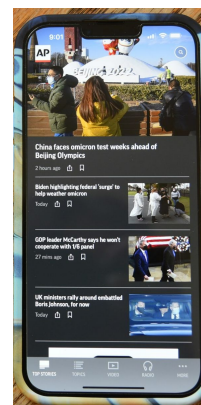
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Connecting

May 3, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this May 3, 2023,

Today's issue brings more of your thoughts about working - or not working - in a newsroom...a follow to a recent column by Maureen Dowd in The New York Times that struck a chord among Connecting colleagues.

DAISY VEERASINGHAM'S TRIBUTE TO ANJA: Click [here](#) for a video by AP's President and CEO Daisy Veerasingham that was presented at Sunday's opening of Forum Anja Niedringhaus in her hometown in Germany. (See Tuesday's Connecting) (Thanks to Lauren Easton, Sunny Hammar for sharing)

Christine Longère, chairman of FAN, told Connecting: "Thank you so much for reporting on the opening of the Forum Anja Niedringhaus in the Connecting Newsletter. We are very happy that the FAN is now realized. The opening ceremony was a great event with minister, mayor and many friends and former colleagues of Anja. Now people can see Anja's legacy in a very attractive environment."

Click [here](#) to access the FAN web site.

Have a great day - be safe, stay healthy, live the day to your fullest!

Paul

Requiem for the Newsroom

[James Carlson](#) - I always felt the thrill of the newsroom atmosphere, from the time I was putting pages together for the high school newspaper, then taking them by city bus to the downtown printer for more copy editing and printing. Later I got a parttime job as a copy kid at the old Milwaukee Journal and had to run to grab typed stories from reporters or editors when they rang a bell, so the copy could be shipped by pneumatic tube on the way to the presses. Of course, veteran sportswriter, editor and columnist Oliver Kuechle never used the bell and instead would bellow "BOY" every time he had a column ready to go.

Through all my years at the AP, the office remained a place where staffers did their own thing but also shared knowledge, tips and occasional hilarity.

Plus, there was the "uh oh" effect. When I would arrive for my second shift duties and read the day's file, I would inadvertently issue that sound on noticing something didn't seem right. When news editor Roger Schneider was within earshot, he would respond with a shout. "Uh oh? Uh oh what?" One time I noticed a breaking story on the corruption sentencing of a local alderman listed the wrong charges. I had watched the live TV report at home and knew the guy was convicted of something else. The "uh oh" set off some quick checking and a correction. The charges had been amended some months earlier.

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[Denis Gray](#) - Aside from the camaraderie, team spirit and fun newsrooms afforded, I wonder how many ideas for great stories emerged in face-to-face contacts and how many will be lost if newsrooms die. In my career, I can count dozens born when we all sat down together or just chatted one-on-one over the proverbial water cooler. If I were still with the AP, I know my enthusiasm would falter if I had to get out of bed every morning and go to my computer to begin the day. I still do freelance writing, but out of my home and greatly miss the "good old days." Although I know that working from home has advantages for some, but still feel sad when I read that another AP bureau and its newsroom have closed down.

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[Ken Herman](#) - Sign me on with those who think we've lost something important with the demise of the energetic newsroom as many of us knew it. In my career, it took many forms, perhaps none odder than my office when I was AP's Harlingen, Texas correspondent.

As Stephen Singer pointed out in Tuesday's Connecting, "Many AP correspondents, too, have toiled by themselves in tiny offices close to, but not part of, a member newspaper's newsroom."

In the late '70s, I was AP's one-person Harlingen operation in Texas' Rio Grande Valley along the Mexican border. The bureau was in a tiny office that was sort of part of a member's newsroom. My office was a tiny one in the back of a mobile home that served as the newsroom for KGBT, a local and excellent television and radio news operation.

My desk was within a scant few feet of ever-clattering, old-world wire machines, including one with a keyboard utilized to file my stories by punching that old yellow paper tape that would run through the machine and, very, very slowly, send my stories north to Dallas. I think it took about a week to get there.

But more important than the machines were the KGBT newsroom folks who became my friends and colleagues. It helped that wife Sharon was a reporter/anchor at the station.

Hard to imagine what life would have been like if those folks (a colorful lot) had not been nearby to offer human contact as respite from the cacophony of the little room I worked in.

When people ask what I miss in retirement, I often mention the unique atmosphere of a newsroom. But I now also realize I'd miss it even if I was still working.

In large part, what I miss most doesn't exist anymore.

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Andrew Selsky - As always, I've loved reading your newsletter. Here's a photo from the first newsroom I was employed in, the Cleburne Times-Review, a daily in Texas. Photographed is Managing Editor Dan Bodine (on the left) and City Editor (the late) Rob Fraser, seen making a face for my camera.

This was in 1982. We used typewriters. If I wanted to insert a graf before handing the copy off to the editor or composing room, I'd cut it with scissors and glue in the inserted material. It wasn't a big newsroom. Besides Rob and Dan, there was a cops reporter, a sports reporter and me (covering breaking news and a few beats). The staff photographer usually worked off-site. But we had fun and it was a busy place at times. When we worked late Friday evenings, preparing the Sunday edition, Dan would send me out in his pickup truck to the next county for beer, Johnson County – of which Cleburne was the county seat – being “dry.”

The Times-Review was, in essence, my journalism school. I learned the trade there, not having studied journalism in college.

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Dave Tomlin - I was on the dictation bank at the old Washington Star just a few years before Maureen Dowd and a few after Carl Bernstein. We all probably warmed some of the same chairs. I was only there from the fall of 1969 to the summer of 1970, but I remember it vividly, just as they have described it, as a fast-paced, entertaining place to work, with a lot of irascible personality.

One of the worst jobs for us dictationists was transcribing stories called in overnight to the Dicta-belt machine by the Star's religion writer, whose name I don't recall. The recording quality was poor, the reporter mumbled, and his tedious pieces always included words like “eucharist” and “chasuble” that none of us recognized.

One early morning in a fit of frustration, the sassy city desk clerk who was also chief dictationist signed off his weekly religion column as follows: “NEXT WEEK: How Many Angels Can Dance on the Head of a Pin.” She assumed the copy desk would catch the prank, but they didn't and into the paper it went. Two calamities ensued: the city desk clerk was fired, and the religion guy had to write about angels dancing on pinheads the following week.

But my favorite memory was the day a frantic assistant city editor on deadline screamed, “David!” There must have been 150 people in the sea of desks that jammed the Star's general newsroom. Among them were at least a half dozen Davids, and we all sprang to our feet.

“Not you, stupid,” shouted the editor. So we all sat down.

Thelowittlowdown.com

Bruce Lowitt - I have been writing a politics-and-sports satire blog, free on the internet, for the past two years, called THELOWITLOWDOWN.com

The morning after Monday's firing of Tucker Carlson by Fox and Don Lemon by CNN, I wrote one that begins:

In a trade of cable television network news anchors that stunned the Republican Party, CNN acquired Tucker Carlson from Fox and sent Don Lemon to its litigation-burdened rival.

It concludes:

Donald Trump, running his presidential reelection campaign from his lair in Florida, tweeted: I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT CNN WAS THE BEST AND MOST HONEST NEWS NETWORK AND THIS HIRING OF MY FAVORITE SICOFANT (sic) JUST PROVES MY WISDOM. I NEVER CARED FOR FOX BECAUSE THEY MUSCLED CARLSON AND HANNITY THE WAY YOU HAVE TO MAKE A DOG WEAR A MUSCLE TO KEEP IT FROM BARKING.

I invite readers of Connecting to check out <https://thelowittlowdown.com/> to read everything in between, and the rest of my offerings.

AP project on third-grader reading problems

[Henry Bradsher](#) - The AP's project on third-grader reading problems probably was a useful alert to readers about a major problem in our country that needs a well-educated work force. I have not, unfortunately, seen it published in my excellent, comprehensive local paper, Baton Rouge's Advocate (which wins all of Louisiana's journalism prizes, deservedly, although there's hardly any competition anymore, especially since Gannett gutted many other state newspapers).

However, the reading problem begins well before third grade.

When I began tutoring in an elementary school more than two decades ago as part of a local volunteer program, I was working with third-graders who were having trouble reading at grade level. I enjoyed helping them master such "chapter books" as "The Magic Tree House" series.

But many reading experts, including my wife, who has a master's degree from Harvard's Graduate School of Education, realized that third grade is not the critical level. It is kindergarten, rather than first grade being "the foundational year for reading" as Connecting's summary says. So I moved down to kindergarten tutoring.

Kindergartners need to learn the alphabet, the sounds of letters, how to tease out the phonetics of words. If they have not mastered these, they are not prepared for first grade.

Too many of the two kindergartners whom I tutor every Wednesday morning come from homes in which a single overworked parent has had no time for instruction, even in how to tie their shoes. Separately, I spend about 40 minutes with each of them -- about as long as their interest lasts. It is an effort to overcome the handicaps that most children from two-parent middle class families have not had.

In the past, in Connecting discussions of what journalists can do in retirement, I have urged the kinds of volunteer work that every community needs. Helping in schools can be an important contribution to national health. Among other things, those kids who never master reading and fail to get acquire the educational requirements for decent jobs are a major part of the crime problem.

Missing Gordon Lightfoot

[James Carlson](#) - We're missing Gordon Lightfoot too. My wife and I often sang his "Christian Island" while sailing Lake Michigan during vacations from my AP job and her teaching job.

We loved playing and singing so many of his tunes, and we often heard him perform when he came to Milwaukee, as he did frequently in the 1970s.

Like one of our neighbors said, he was the sort of person you didn't expect to ever die.

AP sighting - Bob Thomas



A picketer walks along the Walk of Fame on Hollywood Boulevard during the writers strike in 2007. (Gary Friedman/Los Angeles Times)

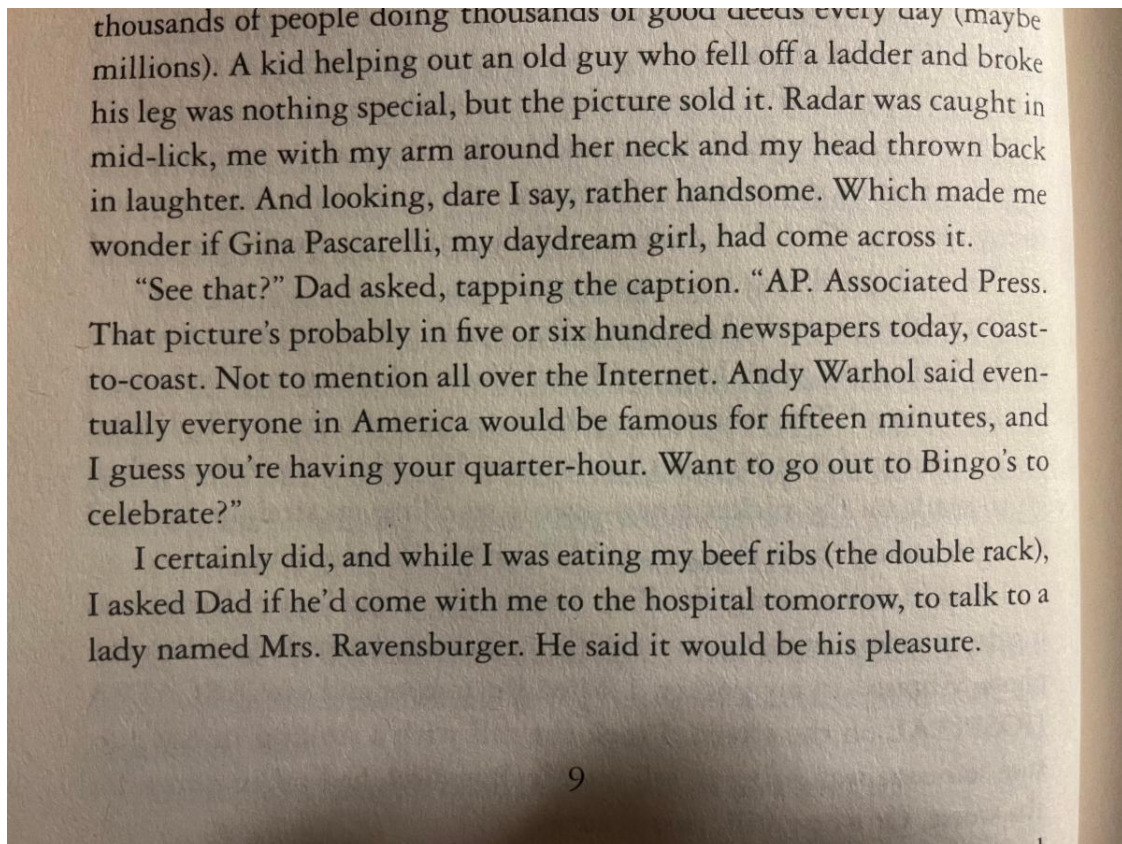
[Janet Thomas](#) - Did anyone notice the name on the star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame under protester's feet as belonging to the late, great Bob Thomas in the LA Times article regarding the writers strike?

When the photo was first published in 2007, my father was very proud of the photograph taken by Gary Friedman.

It was published in Monday's Los Angeles Times in a [story](#) about the writers' strike.

(Connecting colleague Janet Thomas is the daughter of the late Bob Thomas, AP entertainment writer in Los Angeles for more than six decades. He died in 2014.)

AP and Stephen King



[Andrew Welsh-Huggins](#) – Thought this might be of interest to Connecting readers. I came across this AP reference today on page 66 of Stephen King's new novel, Fairy Tale.

Writing about his old friend John Mellencamp



[Doug Richardson](#) - My long piece about old friend John Mellencamp and his interracial band was on the front page of the Indianapolis Star this past Sunday.

This has been a labor of love for me. John and Fred Booker, the Black guy who shared the stage with John back in the '60s, have been friends for years. John and I have been friends for 60 years. JM was incredibly generous with his time. The last time we signed off, he said, "Well, Douglas, great catching up with you." I laughed and said that's an improvement: You always used to call me Doug-ass.

Click [here](#) to read the story.

Collaborating to tell India's climate story



T. P. Murukesan rows a canoe stocked with mangrove saplings along a waterbody off the shore of Vypin Island in Kochi, India, March 4, 2023. (AP Photo/Shawn Sebastian)



AP and PTI journalists attend a 5-day workshop in Kochi, India. (AP Photo)

By Nicole Meir

A first-of-its-kind collaboration between The Associated Press and the Press Trust of India resulted in seven powerful climate and environment stories co-published by both organizations.

The enterprise stories, centered around Kochi, a bustling coastal city in southwest India, are the product of a months-long effort between the two news agencies, supported by the Stanley Center for Peace and Security, to build climate journalism knowledge and skills and tell India's climate story.

Seven AP Climate team staffers paired up with journalists from PTI for a peer-to-peer mentorship to share best practices for climate and environmental coverage. PTI journalists shared their experiences covering India, the world's most populous country and one of the most important when it comes to climate.

A five-day on-the-ground workshop in Kochi allowed PTI and AP journalists to put into practice in real time the skills they developed to report on the impacts of climate change, ultimately helping to build out PTI's climate journalism capacity, from visual storytelling to field reporting. PTI is one of India's most important news organizations and a long-time AP customer.

Global Climate and Environment News Director Peter Prengaman said:

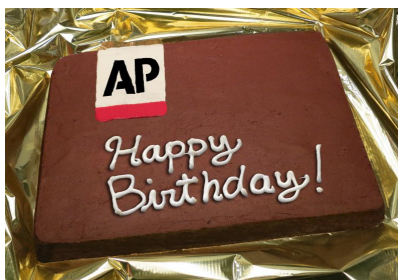
Collaborations are increasingly important in journalism, as they allow organizations to learn from one other and do stronger journalism than each could alone. That was certainly the case in India, where PTI, AP and the Stanley Center for Peace and Security combined forces to build something together. Perhaps best of all, AP and PTI journalists developed relationships that will lead to brainstorming, exchanging of ideas and possibly future collaborations around climate and environment stories.

The stories were used by more than 500 news organizations around the world, ranging from The Washington Post to the Times of India.

The stories are available [here](#).

Click [here](#) for link to this story.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Betsy Blaney](#)

Connecting '80s/'90s/100 Club

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Connecting publishes this list at the beginning of each month. If you are qualified for one of the age groups and would like to be listed, drop me a note. Please let me know of any errors.)

100s:

Fred Hoffman

90s:

Norm Abelson

Malcolm Barr

Henry Bradsher

Hal Buell

Joseph Carter

Albert Habhab

George Hanna

Hoyt Harwell

Gene Herrick

Gene Lahammer

Joe McGowan

Charlie Monzella

Bob Petsche

Arlon Southall

Sal Veder

Doris Webster

Joe Young

Arnold Zeitlin

80s:

Paul Albright

Rachel Ambrose

Peter Arnett
Harry Atkins
Frank Aukofer
Jim Bagby
Myron Belkind
Ed Bell
Dan Berger
Adolphe Bernotas
Brian Bland
Lou Boccardi
Hal Bock
William Roy Bolch Jr.
Ed Breen
Ben Brown
Charles Bruce
Ford Burkhart
Harry Cabluck
Sibby Christensen
Shirley Christian
Norm Clarke
Steve Crowley
Don Dashiell
Bob Daugherty
Mike Doan
Bob Dobkin
Otto Doelling
Phil Dopoulos
John Eagan
Claude Erbsen
Mike Feinsilber
Dodi Fromson
Joe Galu
Bill Gillen
Steve Graham
Bob Greene
Jerry Harkavy
Paul Harrington

**Chick Harrity
Merrill Hartson
Monte Hayes
Doug Kienitz
Dean Lee
Pierce Lehmbeck
Warren Lerude
Edie Lederer
Carl Leubsdorf
Bruce Lowitt
David Liu
Jim Luther
Larry Margasak
John Marlow
Dave Mazarella
Chuck McFadden
Yvette Mercourt
Reid Miller
Karren Mills
Peggy Mooney
Bill Morrissey
Harry Moskos
Ron Mulnix
Bruce Nathan
Greg Nokes
Larry Paladino
Jay Perkins
Lyle Price
Charles Richards
Bruce Richardson
Denis Searles
Richard Shafer
Susanne Shaw
Mike Short
Rick Spratling
Ed Staats
Karol Stonger**

Mark Thayer
Marty Thompson
Hilmi Toros
Kernan Turner
Jeffrey Ulbrich
Jack Walker
Mike Waller
Bob Walsh
Dean Wariner
Don Waters
Lew Wheaton
Jeff Williams
Byron Yake
Johnny Yost
Kent Zimmerman

Stories of interest

Carlson's Text That Alarmed Fox Leaders: 'It's Not How White Men Fight' (New York Times)

By Jeremy W. Peters, Michael S. Schmidt and Jim Rutenberg

A text message sent by Tucker Carlson that set off a panic at the highest levels of Fox on the eve of its billion-dollar defamation trial showed its most popular host sharing his private, inflammatory views about violence and race.

The discovery of the message contributed to a chain of events that ultimately led to Mr. Carlson's firing.

In the message, sent to one of his producers in the hours after violent Trump supporters stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, Mr. Carlson described how he had recently watched a video of a group of men — Trump supporters, he said — violently attacking “an Antifa kid.”

It was “three against one, at least,” he wrote.

And then he expressed a sense of dismay that the attackers, like him, were white.

Click [here](#) to read more.

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Good Musk is Back With His Micropayments Plan For Media (MEDIAite)

By Dan Perry

Elon Musk's image has taken a brutal beating over his shambolic takeover of Twitter, which led business people to question his reputation for brilliance and journalists to rethink their reliance on the platform. But I come to praise Musk, not bury him even deeper, for in recent days he has done a startlingly good thing.

I refer to his April 29 tweet announcing that as of May Twitter will "allow media publishers to charge users on a per article basis with one click." I hope people put aside their disdain for Musk's politics (whatever they may be today) and his blue checkmark fiasco and pay attention to this development – for it portends the rebirth of the "micropayments" model that despite much logic has left publishers paralyzed with fear. If Musk pushes them across this Rubicon, it could revolutionize the media business model and offer a needed lifeline.

To understand why that's needed, consider what has brought us to the brink.

Read more [here](#).

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The Messenger to launch May 15 with 150 journalists (Axios)

By Sara Fischer

The Messenger, a well-funded news startup founded by longtime media entrepreneur Jimmy Finkelstein, will launch in beta with 200 employees on May 15, the company's president Richard Beckman told Axios. Two-thirds of that headcount will be newsroom employees.

Why it matters: The company doesn't plan to raise any additional capital outside of the \$50 million it raised ahead of launch. In order to sustain its ambitious growth plans involving more than 500 additional hires, The Messenger will need to make a lot of money, quickly.

Driving the news: The Messenger's website will launch in beta May 15 with core coverage focused on news and politics, before rolling out nine additional editorial verticals between now and the end of the year.

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

Today in History - May 3, 2023



Today is Wednesday, May 3, the 123rd day of 2023. There are 242 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 3, 1979, Conservative Party leader Margaret Thatcher was chosen to become Britain's first female prime minister as the Tories ousted the incumbent Labour government in parliamentary elections.

On this date:

In 1802, Washington, D.C., was incorporated as a city.

In 1937, Margaret Mitchell won the Pulitzer Prize for her novel, "Gone with the Wind."

In 1947, Japan's postwar constitution took effect.

In 1948, the Supreme Court, in *Shelley v. Kraemer*, ruled that covenants prohibiting the sale of real estate to Blacks or members of other racial groups were legally unenforceable.

In 1960, the Harvey Schmidt-Tom Jones musical "The Fantasticks" began a nearly 42-year run at New York's Sullivan Street Playhouse.

In 1987, The Miami Herald said its reporters had observed a young woman spending "Friday night and most of Saturday" at a Washington townhouse belonging to Democratic presidential candidate Gary Hart. (The woman was later identified as Donna Rice; the resulting controversy torpedoed Hart's presidential bid.)

In 2006, a federal jury in Alexandria, Virginia, rejected the death penalty for al-Qaida conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui (zak-uh-REE'-uhs moo-SOW'-ee), deciding he should spend life in prison for his role in 9/11; as he was led from the courtroom, Moussaoui taunted, "America, you lost."

In 2009, Mexican President Felipe Calderon told state television that a nationwide shutdown and an aggressive informational campaign appeared to have helped curtail an outbreak of swine flu in Mexico.

In 2011, Chicago's Derrick Rose became at age 22 the NBA's youngest MVP.

In 2015, two gunmen were shot and killed by a police officer in Garland, Texas, after they opened fire outside a purposely provocative contest for cartoon depictions of the Prophet Muhammad.

In 2016, in a stunning triumph for a political outsider, Donald Trump all but clinched the Republican presidential nomination with a resounding victory in Indiana that knocked rival Ted Cruz out of the race.

In 2018, a federal grand jury in Detroit indicted former Volkswagen CEO Martin Winterkorn on charges stemming from the company's diesel emissions cheating scandal. (Under Germany's constitution, he could not be extradited to the U.S. to face charges.)

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama cast Mexico as a nation ready to take "its rightful place in the world" and move past the drug battles and violence that had defined its relationship with the United States; the president then headed to Costa Rica, where he told a press conference he didn't foresee any circumstance requiring the U.S. to send ground troops into Syria. Gunmen killed Chaudhry Zulfikar, Pakistan's lead prosecutor investigating the assassination of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, as he drove to court in the capital.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump insisted that his reimbursement of a 2016 hush payment to porn actress Stormy Daniels had nothing to do with his election campaign. Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey signed a plan to give striking teachers pay raises totaling 20 percent, ending a six-day walkout. In a reversal, House Speaker Paul Ryan announced that the chaplain of the House of Representatives would stay in his job; Ryan had sparked an uproar when he asked the Rev. Patrick Conroy to resign and said he was dissatisfied with Conroy's pastoral care to lawmakers.

One year ago: President Joe Biden blasted as "radical" a leaked Supreme Court draft opinion throwing out the Roe v. Wade abortion rights ruling after 50 years. Chief Justice John Roberts said he had ordered an investigation into what he called an "egregious breach of trust." Russian forces began storming the steel mill containing the last pocket of resistance in Mariupol, just as scores of civilians who evacuated the bombed-out plant reached relative safety in Ukrainian-held territory. Ron Galella, a photographer known for his visceral celebrity shots and his dogged pursuit of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, who sued him and won a restraining order, died at age 91.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Frankie Valli is 89. Sen. Jim Risch, R-Idaho, is 80. Sports announcer Greg Gumbel is 77. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., is 74. Pop singer Mary Hopkin is 73. Singer Christopher Cross is 72. Rock musician David Ball (Soft Cell) is 64. Country singer Shane Minor is 55. Actor Amy Ryan is 55. Actor Bobby Cannavale (ka-nuh-VAL'-ee) is 53. Music and film producer-actor Damon Dash is 52. Country musician John Driskell Hopkins (Zac Brown Band) is 52. Country-rock musician John Neff is 52. Actor Marsha Stephanie-Blake is 48. TV personality Willie Geist (TV: "Today") is 48. Actor Christina Hendricks is 48. Actor Dule (doo-LAY') Hill is 48. Country singer Eric Church is

46. Actor Tanya Wright is 45. Dancer Cheryl Burke is 39. Soul singer Michael Kiwanuka is 36. Actor Zoe De Grand Maison is 28. Rapper Desiigner is 26.

Got a story or photos to share?

Connecting is a daily newsletter published Monday through Friday that reaches more than 1,800 retired and former Associated Press employees, present-day employees, and news industry and journalism school colleagues. It began in 2013. 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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