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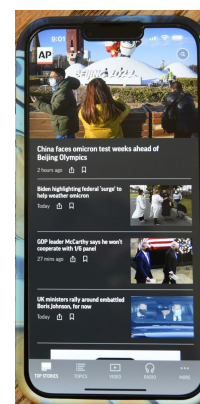
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# Connecting

May 31, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this May 31, 2023.

Connecting received word that former AP sports writer **Jim Cour** died on Sunday in the Seattle area and that former AP Los Angeles photo editor and photographer **Jerry Henkel** has died in Las Vegas. Obituaries for both are being prepared, and we will bring them to you when available.

If you have a favorite memory of working with Jim or Jerry, please send it along. (Thanks to Ted Warren and Doug Pizac for early word.)

Our colleague **Al Cross** makes some interesting points in our lead article for today's issue. Weigh in with your own reaction about "the media."

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

Paul

# Media should counter public view of being a singular monolith

[Al Cross](#) - I realize this may sound like a dinosaur snapping at a windmill, but I think the news media's failure to treat themselves as a plural (CJR hed: "How the media is covering ChatGPT") has contributed to the fall in our standing among the public.

Many see "the media" as a singular monolith coming at them from one point of view. Adding to this misperception is the media's use of "the media" when what they mean is "the news media," as opposed to partisan media, social media, etc.

I think every news medium ought to maintain an explainer like this on its home page or editorial page: "This publication offers journalism, which practices a discipline of verification: We tell you how we know something, or we attribute it; and we're mainly about facts, not opinion. Social media are mainly about opinion and have very little discipline or verification. Whom should you trust? We try to prove ourselves worthy of your trust. If we fall short, please let us know."

## New-member profile: Dennis Kois Sr.

[Dennis Kois Sr.](#) - I started at the AP's Milwaukee bureau with a part-time gig helping to cover sports. That happened about 1970, while I was getting my B.S. in Journalism at Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Once I graduated, I was hired full time, and worked in the Milwaukee bureau for several years before shifting to corporate communications.

My AP COB was Dion Henderson, and news editor was Bob O'Meara. Pete Seymour and Tim Curran were experienced AP reporters who were great mentors.

I took my AP credentials and experience and completed my career in Corp Comm at WE Energies and Johnson Controls, two challenging and fun workplaces.

Retired when I was 64, in 2010, and I remain a happy retiree, mostly thanks to my bride, Carolyn.



We split our time between Milwaukee (summer) and Naples, FL (winter).

Again, thanks for keeping the AP alums connected.

# An AP newsman's first assignment

Norm Abelson - It was a late afternoon in 1953 as I made my way from the statehouse news room to the empty chamber of the Maine House of Representatives.

I had recently been elevated from Boston copy boy to low man on the AP team covering the Maine legislative session. It was a temporary post, and I knew my performance would weigh heavily on whether I'd get a full-time job.

Now I had been given my first assignment: Go through the large box containing hundreds of proposed bills, pick out the newsiest, and write a piece for the next day when the session was to open. I can imagine, as I sat alone in that huge empty space, wanting to dump that lap full of documents and run.

I know the assignment seems straightforward. Maybe for someone who had been to J-school, had prior newswriting experience and/or had some knowledge of Maine issues. I had none of the three. What I did have was a powerful desire to be an AP news reporter. and somehow that carried me through.

I don't have a clue what I wrote in that first effort or others that followed, but they must have been okay because shortly after the Maine session ended, I was given a full-time position in Concord, N.H.

I never would have made it without the support and patience of my two Maine editors, Bob Crocker and Bill Langzettel. Belated thanks, guys.

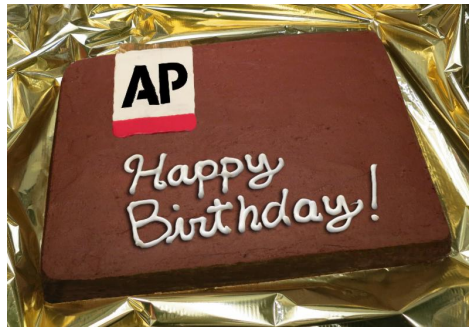
## Linda Deutsch, fangirl



**Linda Deutsch** - After seeing the fabulous “MJ The Musical” in New York, I couldn’t resist lining up and playing fangirl with fans at the stage door to meet the new star of the show, Elijah Rhea Johnson. I told him I knew Michael. He was duly impressed. He is thrilled to be taking over the role.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday





## [Kerry Huggard](#)

# Stories of interest

## ***With vocabulary more important than ever, National Spelling Bee requires different prep*** (AP)

By BEN NUCKOLS

OXON HILL, Md. (AP) — Navneeth Murali would strongly prefer for the Scripps National Spelling Bee to get rid of the onstage, multiple-choice vocabulary questions that were introduced to the competition two years ago.

“It’s sort of hit or miss, the onstage vocab format, and it’s sort of brutal in my opinion,” the 17-year-old former speller said.

The vocabulary questions are part of a series of changes to the post-pandemic bee, which is leaner and, in some ways, meaner. Accomplished spellers can be bounced from the bee without ever misspelling a word. And because there is no alternative path to the bee as there was in the late 2010s, the regional bees spellers must win to qualify can be incredibly tense, and sometimes shocking. Last year’s national runner-up, Vikram Raju, didn’t make it back in his final year of eligibility.

The tweaks help ensure the bee, which began Tuesday with the preliminary rounds and concludes Thursday, finishes on schedule with a sole champion. That’s an important consideration after the eight-way tie of 2019. But some in the spelling community say they make the competition more dependent on luck and less about rewarding spellers for their years spent mastering roots and language patterns and exploring the farthest reaches of Merriam-Webster’s Unabridged dictionary.

Read more [here](#).

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***A British Reporter Had a Big #MeToo Scoop. Her Editor Killed It.*** (New York Times)

**By Jane Bradley**

Inside the Financial Times newsroom this winter, one of its star investigative reporters, Madison Marriage, had a potentially explosive scoop involving another newspaper.

A prominent left-wing columnist, Nick Cohen, had resigned from Guardian News & Media, and Ms. Marriage had evidence that his departure followed years of unwanted sexual advances and groping of female journalists.

Ms. Marriage specialized in such investigations. She won an award for exposing a handsy black-tie event for Britain's business elite. A technology mogul got indicted on rape charges after another article.

But her investigation on Mr. Cohen, which she hoped would begin a broader look at sexual misconduct in the British news media, was never published. The Financial Times' editor, Roula Khalaf, killed it, according to interviews with a dozen Financial Times journalists.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Len Iwanski.

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## ***China, India Kick Out Nearly All of Each Other's Journalists as Rivalry Escalates*** (Wall Street Journal)

**By Keith Zhai**

SINGAPORE—India and China have ejected each other's journalists in recent weeks, virtually wiping out mutual media access and deepening a rift between the world's two most populous nations.

New Delhi denied visa renewals this month to the last two remaining Chinese state media journalists in the country, from state-run Xinhua News Agency and China Central Television, according to people familiar with the matter.

Indian media outlets had four remaining journalists based in China at the beginning of the year. At least two of them haven't been granted visas to return to the country, a Chinese official said. A third was told this month that his accreditation had been revoked but he remains in the country, people familiar with the matter said.

The reciprocal moves are likely to add to acrimony between the two neighbors, whose relationship has deteriorated since a deadly brawl on the contested Sino-Indian border in June 2020. Since then, a once-warming relationship between the two members of the so-called Brics grouping of emerging powers has grown testy, spilling over into a wide-ranging bilateral dispute.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Report for America partners with Investigative Editing Corps to help local newsrooms do more investigative work*** (Editor and Publisher)

### Staff | Report for America

To encourage more investigative reporting in local newsrooms and to help local reporters hone those skills, Report for America is partnering with Investigative Editing Corps to oversee up to 10 projects over the next two years in its host newsrooms.

Today, the organizations are announcing the first five newsroom partners, which were selected among newsrooms that applied for this opportunity earlier this year. Other projects will be selected on a rolling basis.

“This collaboration is all about helping local news organizations produce stories that matter to their communities,” said Rose Ciotta, founder of Investigative Editing Corps. “It also allows experienced editors to help train the next generation of investigative reporters at a time when democracy demands strong fact-based reporting.”

“We had a lot of interest among our host newsrooms and corps members for this help,” said Kim Kleman, executive director of Report for America. “They pitched terrific story ideas, but acknowledged little bandwidth and/or experience to see them through. We’re thrilled to be able to satisfy this need.”

Projects will last three to six months. Each project has been assigned a freelance investigative editor or editors, who work directly with the project team and newsroom leadership. Ciotta will manage the effort.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Len Iwanski.

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## ***Ballantine enters a Gannett “ghost paper” town, starting a five-day-a-week free, printed tabloid.*** (Editor and Publisher)

In 1952, Arthur and Morley Ballantine wanted to enter the news publishing industry, and they picked southwest Colorado as the place to do it — purchasing a publication that is now the Durango Herald.

Over the years, the company expanded, adding new titles, video services, digital services, and local phone directories to its publishing empire. And today, their son, Richard G. Ballantine is chairman of the board of Ballantine Communications, continuing a mission of serving the readers and businesses of the region.

Recently, the company announced it was opening offices and hiring staff just 60 miles away, in Farmington, New Mexico, to start a brand new, free tabloid called the Tri-City Record that will print five days a week.

Farmington has a population of 46,000+ and is the largest city in San Juan County (population 120,000). The city has been served by its newspaper of record, The Farmington Daily Times, for over 120 years. However, today that Gannett publication might be labeled by some as a "ghost paper," having dropped their staff numbers to a single reporter to work and serve the entire area.

Read more [here](#).

## The Final Word

### Non Sequitur by Wiley Miller



Shared by Len Iwanski.

## Today in History - May 31, 2023





**Today is Wednesday, May 31, the 151st day of 2023. There are 214 days left in the year.**

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

On May 31, 1889, some 2,200 people in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, perished when the South Fork Dam collapsed, sending 20 million tons of water rushing through the town.

### **On this date:**

In 1790, President George Washington signed into law the first U.S. copyright act.

In 1859, the Big Ben clock tower in London went into operation, chiming for the first time.

In 1921, a race riot erupted in Tulsa, Oklahoma, as white mobs began looting and leveling the affluent Black district of Greenwood over reports a Black man had assaulted a white woman in an elevator; hundreds are believed to have died.

In 1949, former State Department official and accused spy Alger Hiss went on trial in New York, charged with perjury (the jury deadlocked, but Hiss was convicted in a second trial).

In 1962, former Nazi official Adolf Eichmann was hanged in Israel a few minutes before midnight for his role in the Holocaust.

In 1970, a magnitude 7.9 earthquake in Peru claimed an estimated 67,000 lives.

In 1977, the Trans-Alaska oil pipeline, three years in the making despite objections from environmentalists and Alaska Natives, was completed. (The first oil began flowing through the pipeline 20 days later.)

In 1989, House Speaker Jim Wright, dogged by questions about his ethics, announced he would resign. (Tom Foley later succeeded him.)

In 2009, Dr. George Tiller, a rare provider of late-term abortions, was shot and killed in a Wichita, Kansas, church. (Gunman Scott Roeder was later convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison with no possibility of parole for 50 years.)  
Millvina Dean, the last survivor of the 1912 sinking of the RMS Titanic, died in Southampton, England at 97.

In 2014, Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, the only American soldier held prisoner in Afghanistan, was freed by the Taliban in exchange for five Afghan detainees from the U.S. prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. (Bergdahl, who'd gone missing in June 2009, later pleaded guilty to endangering his comrades by walking away from his post in Afghanistan; his sentence included a dishonorable discharge, a reduction in rank and a fine, but no prison time.)

In 2019, a longtime city employee opened fire in a municipal building in Virginia Beach, Virginia, killing 12 people on three floors before police shot and killed him;

officials said DeWayne Craddock had resigned by email hours before the shooting.

In 2020, tens of thousands of protesters again took to the streets across America, with peaceful demonstrations against police killings overshadowed by unrest; officials deployed thousands of National Guard soldiers and enacted strict curfews in major cities.

Ten years ago: A tornado in the Oklahoma City metro area claimed eight lives, including those of storm chasers Tim Samaras, his son, Paul, and Carl Young; 13 people died in flash flooding. Four firefighters searching for people in a blazing Houston motel and restaurant were killed when part of the structure collapsed. Actor Jean Stapleton, who played Archie Bunker's far better half, the sweetly naive Edith, in TV's groundbreaking 1970s comedy "All in the Family," died in New York at age 90.

Five years ago: The Trump administration imposed tariffs on steel and aluminum from Europe, Mexico and Canada in a move that drew immediate vows of retaliation. Western Europe got its first populist government as Italy's anti-establishment 5-Star Movement and the right-wing League formed a governing coalition. Comedian Samantha Bee apologized to Ivanka Trump and to her viewers for using an expletive to describe the president's daughter on Bee's TBS show "Full Frontal." President Donald Trump pardoned conservative commentator Dinesh D'Souza, who had pleaded guilty to campaign finance fraud; Trump said D'Souza had been "treated very unfairly by our government." The Golden State Warriors won Game 1 of the NBA finals over the Cleveland Cavaliers in overtime; Cleveland's J.R. Smith inexplicably failed to take a go-ahead shot after a missed free-throw as time ran out in regulation.

One year ago: A week after a gunman ran into an Uvalde, Texas grade school and started shooting, the first of 21 funerals was held. Hundreds of mourners turned out for an afternoon Mass to remember Amerie Jo Garza, with six pallbearers carrying her small casket into Sacred Heart Catholic Church. She was one of 19 students killed, along with two teachers. The European Union agreed to ban the overwhelming majority of Russian oil imports after tense negotiations. The move was the most significant effort to that point to punish Russia for its war in Ukraine. K-Pop sensation BTS visited the White House to discuss combating the rise in hate crimes targeting Asian Americans with President Biden.

Today's Birthdays: Actor-director Clint Eastwood is 93. Singer Peter Dinklage is 85. Humanitarian and author Terry Waite is 84. Singer-musician Augie Meyers is 83. Actor Sharon Gless is 80. Football Hall of Famer Joe Namath is 80. Broadcast journalist/commentator Bernard Goldberg is 78. Actor Tom Berenger is 73. Actor Gregory Harrison is 73. Actor Kyle Secor is 66. Actor Roma Maffia (ma-FEE'-uh) is 65. Actor/comedian Chris Elliott is 63. Actor Lea Thompson is 62. Singer Corey Hart is 61. Actor Hugh Dillon is 60. Rapper Darryl "DMC" McDaniels is 59. Actor Brooke Shields is 58. TV host Phil Keoghan is 56. Jazz musician Christian McBride is 51. Actor Archie Panjabi is 51. Actor Merle Dandridge (TV: "Greenleaf") is 48. Actor Colin Farrell is 47. Rock musician Scott Klopfenstein (Reel Big Fish) is 46. Actor Eric Christian Olsen is 46. Rock musician Andy Hurley (Fall Out Boy) is 43. Country singer Casey James (TV: "American Idol") is 41. Actor Jonathan Tucker is 41. Rapper Waka Flocka Flame is 37. Pop singer Normani Hamilton (Fifth Harmony) is 27.

# 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.

**Paul Stevens**

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