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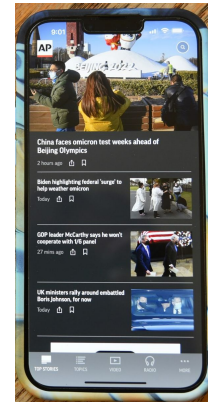
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Connecting

June 9, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning on this June 9, 2023,

June 30 is a significant date in the journalism career - and life - of Kansas City AP newswoman **Margaret Stafford**.

It's the date when she started her first job in journalism in 1980, at her hometown Norfolk (Neb.) Daily News. It's the date when she transferred from the Des Moines bureau to the Kansas City bureau (where I was wise enough, as bureau chief, to hire her) in 1987. And it's the date when she plans to retire, at the end of this month.

And oh yes, June 30 happens to be the date of her birthday.

We bring news of her retirement after 43 years in journalism, 39 of them with the AP, as our lead story in today's Connecting. Like me, Margaret is the offspring of a Nebraska newspaperman. Her dad, **Fred Stafford**, was an editor at the Norfolk Daily News and The Lincoln Star. He'd be proud of the mark she made in journalism.

Got a favorite story of working with Margaret? Please send it along.

Have a great weekend – be safe, stay healthy, live each day to your fullest.

Paul

Margaret Stafford started journalism career on a June 30, will retire on that same date



Margaret Stafford on a Grand Canyon trip in 2021.

Note to AP Midwest staff on Thursday from Amy Forliti, AP assistant news director for the Midwest:

It is bittersweet for me to share the news that Margaret Stafford, one of our longtime Kansas City staffers, will be retiring later this month after nearly 40 years with the AP. (That's not a typo! Nearly 40 years!)

I know many of you have worked with Margaret for decades. I've only gotten to her well over the last five and a half months under AP's reorganization. But in that short time, Margaret has been an absolute rock and someone all of us have come to rely on every day. Margaret knows what is news in the region, and she's quick to jump into any story that pops up. As the duties of the BNS role have changed in recent years, Margaret has pivoted – embracing the change and always willing to jump into stories in any state. Most recently, she played a key role in our coverage of the Ralph Yarl

shooting, the theft of Dorothy's ruby slippers from a Minnesota museum and the ongoing mystery of the Missouri doctor who was found dead after being missing for more than a week.

One day not too long ago, Margaret was asked to jump into the FuFeng story in North Dakota, and she quickly had to digest a complicated federal rule that would bar foreign entities from buying property near Air Force bases. It was a challenge – and when I asked her about it later she said, “I learned a lot of new things since noon today. AP is sure an interesting place to work.” Classic Margaret!

I asked Margaret to share some memories of her biggest stories or craziest AP moments. She said she didn't really have a favorite story – there were just too many to mention. But in her own words:

I started my journalism career after graduating from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln on June 30, 1980, at the Norfolk Daily News in Nebraska, where I grew up and my dad was the news editor for many years. I joined the AP in Des Moines, Iowa, in February 1984. Part of my time in Iowa was spent as a correspondent in Iowa City before I transferred to Kansas City on June 30, 1987. I plan to retire June 30, 2023. Are you sensing a pattern? It wasn't planned that way, just how it happened. June 30 is also my birthday.

Except for a stint as night supervisor and the last few years as BNS, I have spent all of my career doing general assignment reporting and rotating between different “tricks” as we used to call the various shifts. That gave me the chance to work on a wide variety of stories, either as primary reporter, helping edit, making calls from the office or on the old broadcast desk. In those roles, I've reported on and helped with stories including the Joplin tornado (and many, many other tornadoes), the 1993 floods and its aftermath, the drowning of 17 people in a “duck boat” sinking in Branson and an unusual fight in Kansas City over naming a street after Martin Luther King Jr. Unfortunately, many of the stories were about crimes, such as when a woman cut the baby out of a pregnant woman in Skidmore and one of the first cases in the country when a pharmacist was convicted of diluting patients' medicine.

As Margaret said, she apparently has a thing for June 30 – and that will be her last day with us. Margaret prefers not to have a region-wide Zoom farewell (and we can respect that!), but you may feel free to reach out to her as you'd like. We will have a small farewell gathering in Kansas City with the staffers who know her best. More details on that to come.

But for now, please join me in congratulating Margaret on her retirement. Margaret, we wish you all the best in this next chapter. Congratulations on your long, and always “interesting” AP career!

You will be missed.

Margaret Stafford's email - stafkielty@gmail.com

AP ties, ALL!

Dennis Conrad - John King made a point today of noting on CNN's "Inside Politics" show Thursday that all of those on the panel talking about Donald Trump, etc., had a tie at one time or another to the great The Associated Press news service: Julie Pace (current AP Senior VP and executive editor), Audie Cornish (now of CNN); Julie Hirschfeld Davis (now of NYT & CNN) and, of course, King himself. King suggested it may have been a first for the show.

Former AP journalist Amy Entelis named an interim CNN manager

Jim Hood - It's worth noting that one of the interim managers of CNN following the ouster of Chris Licht is Amy Entelis, who started her very successful career at the AP Broadcast Desk in New York, following graduation from the Columbia School of Journalism.

Amy spent a relatively short time with us, soon moving on to ABC News, where she filled various roles for 30 years. She went to CNN in 2012 and, among other things, headed up a documentary unit that won the network's first Academy Award this year, for "Navalny," about an imprisoned Russian writer.

Editors always like to brag about their successful hires, and I would certainly join that august group except for two things:

First, things run together after 40 or 50 years and, although I don't know who else would have hired her, I can't honestly say I remember doing so; and

Second, Amy was so profoundly talented and qualified that anyone in their right mind would have hired her on the spot.

It will be fascinating to see how she and her colleagues succeed in accomplishing a turnaround at CNN. Having done a few of those myself, I must say they take a lot out of you.

"Succession" – For Real

Mort Rosenblum - PARIS – Like so many others, I followed a pulse-pounding TV drama: backbiting jackals fought for control of a bedrock American news network they intended to pervert for political clout and power trips. Meantime, I also watched the finale of "Succession."

After that town-hall "interview" last month, Robert Reich posed the key question: "Why in hell did CNN give Donald Trump a full hour of prime-time television before an



audience of ardent supporters who applauded every lie and laughed at every sexist insult?"

Because "optics" muscles aside substance. News costs a lot to gather so replacing it with smoke and circus boosts profit. CNN is only one flagrant example of why Americans are largely blind to an overheated world in which despots and oligarchs are fast quashing their cherished values.

Ted Turner's CNN began with a barebones Atlanta studio in 1980, at first so quirky it was dubbed Chicken Noodle News. But its correspondents ranged the world for courageous, rock-solid reporting. Today, smeared with corporate sleaze, it is chicken something-else.

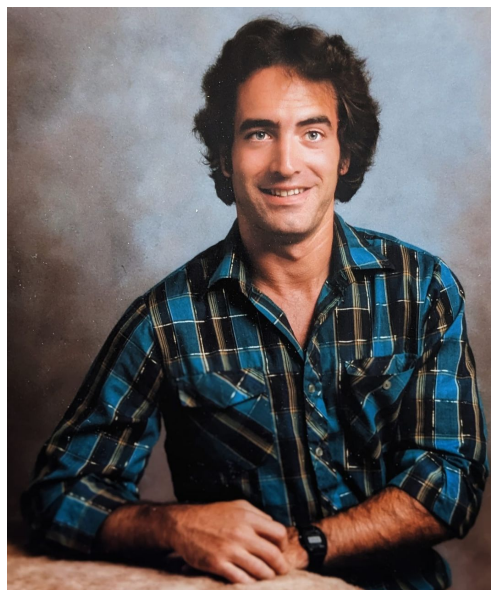
As I was finishing this report, a news flash forced a redo: David Zaslav, the "content" mogul who swallowed CNN a year ago, fired Chris Licht, the new CEO he had tasked with reshaping it. What comes next is anyone's guess. Mine is that it will be ugly.

CNN still provides some compelling coverage. But any news organization's authority depends on credibility and day-to-day standards. Its worst blunts its best. Even at Fox "News," a travesty to truth, a few good reporters play piano in a whorehouse.

Read more [here](#).

Memory of 40 years ago and start of journalism career

Michael Liedtke – *AP business/technology writer, San Francisco* - So it was 40 years ago that I started my first full-time journalism job at the now-defunct Hayward Daily-Review just two weeks after I graduated from San Jose State University and I have remained gainfully employed as a reporter at various Bay Area newspapers and, of course, the mighty AP ever since. I wasn't sure if the Daily-Review was going to hire me after a rather daunting interview with the newspaper's executive editor at the time, the meticulous Ernie Hines, but somehow I did.



Anyway, not long after I embarked on my journalism career in earnest, my dad (Cosmic Jim) gave me a coupon for one of those old photo studios in the Sears department stores and urged me to make an appointment to have a formal portrait done. I initially balked, but my dad implored me, "Mike, do it because you are never going to look like this again, or ever be at this stage of your life again, and you will be glad you have something that reminds you of this time, once you get old!" So I dragged my butt into the Sears at the Southland Mall in Hayward and rather sheepishly posed for this portrait when I was 22, a few months after I started to work at the Hayward Daily-

Review figuring out how to tell stories. I like to think the same bright-eyed kid is still inside of this hopefully wiser, albeit somewhat wizened, reporter with considerably less hair. Onward ho!

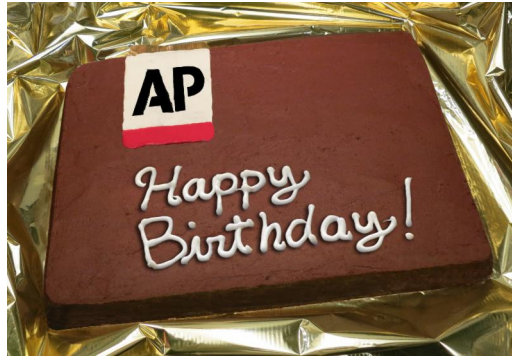
Connecting sky shots - Sydney



Carl Robinson – I thought you might enjoy this classic Sydney Harbour Bridge on a grey winter's day.

Also, an unusual shot from the less-photographed eastern side of the Sydney Opera House - which sits on a point east of the Bridge - as the sun broke through for an afternoon concert and reflecting brilliantly off its famous white tiles.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



On Saturday to...

[Hans Madsen](#)

[Bill Wilson](#)

On Sunday to...

[Scott Charton](#)

Stories of interest

The CNN chief messed up in many ways. Only one of them was fatal (Guardian)

By Margaret Sullivan

It was one of those pieces of news that was simultaneously stunning and utterly expected: Chris Licht was out of CNN.

No doubt, the chairman and CEO had been embattled, almost from the start of his tumultuous year-long reign. He took over from Jeff Zucker, who – whatever his faults – was popular with the staff because he understood what they did and supported it. Soon after arriving, Licht went on an ill-advised apology tour on Capitol Hill in which he sent the message that Republican lawmakers – even those who had supported overturning the 2020 election or downplayed the 6 January 2021 insurrection – would be welcome and treated well on the network.

With clear orders from above, the former CBS executive aimed the cable network's coverage at some sort of imaginary middle ground between Fox News on the right

and MSNBC on the left. There may be a middle in American politics, but cable news – which panders to its audience’s most extreme views – isn’t the place to find it.

No, cable news is where viewers go to get their outrage on. More important, aiming for the middle is extremely dangerous for democracy when there’s a party – the Republicans, of course – in the grip of those intent on dissolving democratic norms.

So, it didn’t start off well. Then three things happened, any one of which might have been fatal. Licht provided Donald Trump a “town hall” program last month, to be aired live, meaning that the former president’s inevitable and endless lies would be aired live, too. It was a bad decision, poorly executed, which played out disastrously.

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

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The Rise and Fall of Chris Licht and CNN (The Atlantic)

By Hanna Rosin

The Atlantic’s Tim Alberta spent long stretches of the past year talking with CNN’s then-CEO Chris Licht about his grand experiment to reset the cable giant as a venue more welcoming to Republicans. In a major profile of Licht, Alberta documented the many disasters along the way, which culminated in Licht’s ouster from the network this week.

In this episode of Radio Atlantic, I talk with Alberta about the rise and fall of Licht, and what it means for the media.

“This is a guy who had been working 80-hour weeks since he took the job and had been really pouring himself into trying to remake CNN into something different and something new,” Alberta recalled of the period leading up to a disastrous CNN town hall with Donald Trump that Licht oversaw. He had, “with the world watching, failed,” Alberta said. “And that was crushing for him.”

Alberta watched the implosion at CNN up close in real time. I ask him: Did Licht’s mission to redefine journalism fail because of Licht or because it is a fundamentally misguided mission?

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

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Fox News Says Tucker Carlson Violated His Contract by Launching New Twitter Show (People)

By Virginia Chamlee

Fox News has notified Tucker Carlson that his new Twitter show, which debuted this week, is in violation of his contract with the network, Axios reports.

According to the outlet, Fox News' general counsel sent a letter to Carlson's lawyers notifying them of the alleged breach shortly after he released the first episode of his Twitter show on Tuesday.

In a statement provided to Axios, Carlson's attorney said targeting his new show was akin to targeting his right to free speech: "Fox defends its very existence on freedom of speech grounds. Now they want to take Tucker Carlson's right to speak freely away from him because he took to social media to share his thoughts on current events."

In April, Fox News made the bombshell announcement that Carlson quietly left the network, issuing a statement that said they had "agreed to part ways," adding, "We thank him for his service to the network as a host and prior to that as a contributor."

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

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Wade Goodwyn, longtime NPR correspondent, dies at age 63 (NPR)

By Debbie Elliott

NPR has lost one of its singular and most recognizable voices. Longtime National Desk correspondent Wade Goodwyn died Thursday of cancer. He was 63.

For more than 25 years, Wade reported on his home state of Texas and the southwest United States, covering top stories including the Oklahoma City bombing, school shootings, hurricanes, the American Sniper murder trial, and the Boy Scouts sexual abuse scandal.

"For generations of public radio listeners, including me, he was one of NPR's iconic voices," said NPR CEO John Lansing in an email to staff. "Aside from that instantly recognizable voice, Wade was a uniquely gifted storyteller and a brilliant reporter. From the first words of one of his stories, you always knew you were being taken on a journey by a master of our craft. You were in for a true treat, whatever the subject matter,"

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

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The Star Tribune is offering high school grads across Minnesota free one-year digital subscriptions (Nieman Lab)

By **SOPHIE CULPEPPER**

It's the season for graduation presents, and this year, the Star Tribune is offering an unusual gift to Minnesota's entire graduating high school Class of 2023: a free, one-year digital subscription.

The new initiative, which was first announced in late April, is the latest experiment of the Star Tribune's News in Education program. Just before the 2020 presidential election, the Star Tribune expanded that program to offer free digital subscriptions to all Minnesota school districts with the goal of strengthening news literacy through access.

Ken Lawrence, who leads the News in Education program as the Star Tribune's education audience development manager, told me in an email that the graduation offer supports both the Tribune's journalistic mission and its digital growth goals. "Our primary motivation [with the News in Education program] is to support teachers and schools in teaching social studies, civics, and current events with a credible local news source," he said, noting that 287 educational institutions have signed up in the two full school years that free digital subscriptions have been available to them. He sees the graduation offer as an extension of that work. "In addition to aligning with our journalistic mission, this program supports our goal, we hope, of demonstrating the importance of Star Tribune, which will lead to more people making the choice for the Star Tribune — to make it part of their day and part of how they understand and engage with their community."

Read more [here](#).

Today in History – June 9, 2023



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, June 9, the 160th day of 2023. There are 205 days left in the year.

ON THIS DATE IN HISTORY

On June 9, 2004, the body of Ronald Reagan arrived in Washington to lie in state in the US Capitol Rotunda before the 40th president's funeral.

On this date:

1732 — James Oglethorpe received a charter from Britain's King George II to found the colony of Georgia.

1870 — Author Charles Dickens died in Gad's Hill Place, England.

1915 — Guitarist, songwriter and inventor Les Paul was born in Waukesha, Wis.

1940 — During World War II, Norway decided to surrender to the Nazis, effective at midnight.

1954 — During the Senate Army-McCarthy hearings, Army special counsel Joseph N. Welch berated Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, R-Wis., asking: "Have you no sense of decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency?"

1969 — The Senate confirmed Warren Burger to be the new chief justice of the United States, succeeding Earl Warren.

1972 — Heavy rains triggered record flooding in the Black Hills of South Dakota; the resulting disaster left at least 238 people dead and \$164 million in damage.

1978 — Leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints struck down a 148-year-old policy of excluding black men from the Mormon priesthood.

1983 — Britain's Conservatives, led by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, won a decisive election victory.

1986 — The Rogers Commission released its report on the Challenger disaster, criticizing NASA and rocket-builder Morton Thiokol for management problems leading to the explosion that claimed the lives of seven astronauts.

1993 — The science-fiction film "Jurassic Park," directed by Steven Spielberg, had its world premiere in Washington.

2020 — Hundreds of mourners packed a Houston church for the funeral of George Floyd, a Black man whose death during a Minneapolis arrest inspired a worldwide reckoning over racial injustice.

Ten years ago — Risking prosecution by the US government, 29-year-old intelligence analyst Edward Snowden was revealed as the source of The Guardian and The Washington Post disclosures about secret American surveillance programs. Rafael Nadal became the first man to win eight titles at the same Grand Slam tournament after beating fellow Spaniard David Ferrer in the French Open final. Inbee Park birdied the third hole of a sudden-death playoff with Catriona Matthew to win the rain-

delayed PGA Championship. “Kinky Boots” was named best musical at the Tony Awards; “Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike” won best play.

Five years ago — After leaving the annual G-7 summit in Canada, President Donald Trump pulled out of a joint statement with other summit leaders, citing what he called “false statements” by the host, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Trudeau warned that he wouldn’t hesitate to retaliate against new US tariffs. Justify, ridden by Mike Smith and trained by Bob Baffert, won the Belmont Stakes to become horse racing’s 13th Triple Crown winner and the second in the past four years. Simona Halep won her first Grand Slam trophy, beating Sloane Stephens in the women’s final at the French Open.

One year ago — At its first public hearing on the matter, the House panel investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection at the US Capitol, laid the blame firmly on Donald Trump, saying the assault was not spontaneous but an “attempted coup” and a direct result of the defeated president’s effort to overturn the 2020 election. The hearing included a never-before-seen 12-minute video of extremist groups leading the deadly siege and startling testimony from Trump’s most inner circle. The US Justice Department opened a sweeping civil rights investigation into the Louisiana State Police amid mounting evidence that the agency showed a pattern of looking the other way in the face of beatings of mostly Black men. Financial reports showed that Supreme Court justices took in \$800,000 in book royalties in the previous year, a lucrative supplement to their judicial salaries.

TODAY’S BIRTHDAYS: Media analyst Marvin Kalb is 93. Sports commentator Dick Vitale is 84. Author Letty Cottin Pogrebin is 84. Rock musician Mick Box (Uriah Heep) is 76. Retired MLB All-Star Dave Parker is 72. Film composer James Newton Howard is 72. Mystery author Patricia Cornwell is 67. Actor Michael J. Fox is 62. Writer-producer Aaron Sorkin is 62. Actor Johnny Depp is 60. Actor Gloria Reuben is 59. Gospel singer-actress Tamela Mann is 57. Rock musician Dean Felber (Hootie & the Blowfish) is 56. Rock musician Dean Dinning is 56. Musician Ed Simons is 53. Actor Keesha Sharp is 50. Bluegrass singer-musician Jamie Dailey (Dailey & Vincent) is 48. Actor Michaela Conlin is 45. Actor Natalie Portman is 42. Actor Mae Whitman is 35. Actor Lucien Laviscount is 31.

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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